

Trustees Annual Report of the Parish Uganda Link Group for the period November 2023 to November 2024

1. The Purposes of the Charity

The purposes of the Parish Uganda Link Group are to:

- provide access to food and clean water for families living in extreme poverty in the Parish of Kibiri, Kampala, Uganda and in other places in the Developing World;
- promote primary school education for children and young people in the Parish of Kibiri, Kampala, Uganda and in other places in the Developing World;
- provide appropriate medical resources and equipment to the Medical Centre and schools in the Parish of Kibiri, Kampala, Uganda and in other places in the Developing World.

2. What the Parish Uganda Link Group has done during the past year? – An account of our activities.

During the period since the last Annual General Meeting of the group the following activities have been undertaken.

Meetings – The Trustees met on six occasions during the year. The meetings were well attended and achieved a 92% attendance rate.

Education Support Initiative – Pupil Sponsorship Scheme

The administration and communication of the scheme continued to be managed by Kasia Wawrzyniek and Geraldine Murphy while Una McClements looked after the management of the scheme finances.

The year, from November 2023 to the end of October 2024, was very challenging with the increases in the cost of living threatening the sustainability of the number of sponsors and the capacity of the Ugandan school to continue to provide for the pupils in the scheme. The Parish Uganda Link Group has also been very conscious of the additional financial pressures on the sponsors but is pleased to report that the level of participation in the scheme has been maintained at a level comparable to 2022-23. As in 2022/23 the Ugandan schools reported that the Primary 7 children had enjoyed considerable success in their end of year examinations.

At the October 2023 meeting it had been reported that there would be a delay in receipt of

school reports from Uganda for circulation to the sponsors. It was also agreed that a 10% increase would be made to the fees requested of sponsors for both Day and Boarding pupils and that this increase would be communicated to our sponsors as soon as possible.



Waiting to go to class in St Dominic's PS

The communication with sponsors in November 2023 was very successful. At the February 2024 meeting it was reported that 95 pupils had been paid for either by sponsorship payments or from additional donations. The total needed to maintain the same level of sponsorship as in 2023 was £17,130 but payments and donations at that time has brought in £10,500.

At the May meeting it was reported that there were 35 pupils who were being reallocated. These have been assigned. There were eight pupils who were no longer being provided for by the scheme as their family homes had been displaced due to the substantial road works in their neighbourhoods. These works had led to the eviction of some people which has meant that their children have had to move to new schools. It was also reported that 108 sponsors have made their annual contributions and were providing sponsorship for 153 children.

A small number of sponsors had left the scheme due to bereavement or illness. Fortunately, most of these have been replaced by new sponsors. The small shortfall in funds required was met by additional funds drawn from the surplus in the scheme account. It was agreed that the payments to the Ugandan schools would continue to be staggered and be made on a termly basis. Members also agreed that a proposal to allow all payments to be made on a monthly/termly basis should be offered to all sponsors.

It was also reported in November that a local school, Holy Family PS, had provided a generous donation to St Dominic's PS. When asked, the Principal of St Dominic's indicated that most of the money would be used to provide much needed food for the children and

for further improvements to the school grounds.

Another excellent development in 2024 was the continued sponsorship of four children into post primary school. Two of these children are sponsored by St Colmcille's HS in Crossgar and it is hoped that a partnership between St Colmcille's and St Charles Lwanga Secondary School in Kibiri will continue to develop over the coming years.



Hard at work in a crowded classroom

Follow up activity to secure payments from sponsors continued into May and at the May meeting it was reported that three sponsors had left the scheme and that two new sponsors had joined the scheme. News from Kibiri indicated that work to the clinic was nearing completion. Plans to provide an information update for the parishioners of Kilmore and Killyleagh Parish were discussed.

Food Poverty Relief

During 2024 the group became aware that there is a significant level of food poverty in the two primary schools in Uganda. Fortunately some generous donations had been received by parishioners most of which was transferred to Kibiri to be used for food relief in the schools and among the elderly poor. Discussion of further payments will take place on an ongoing basis.

Community Clinic in Kibiri

In June 2024 it was reported that correspondence had been received from Father Bukenya seeking support with the parish clinic. When an indication of what was required was received it was clear that this greatly exceeded what the group was able to provide. Work to clarify the basic health needs of the community continues with the recently appointed parish priest.

A report about the clinic, received from Kibiri listed the wide range of services provided by the clinic. These include:

- **Ultrasound Services:** Diagnostic imaging to support accurate diagnosis and treatment.
- **Pharmacy:** A fully stocked pharmacy offering prescription medication and over-the-counter drugs.
- **Laboratory Services:** Comprehensive laboratory tests to support medical diagnoses.
- **Antenatal Care:** Specialized care for pregnant women, ensuring their health and the health of their babies.
- **Immunization (Free):** Providing free vaccinations to protect children and adults from preventable diseases.
- **General Consultation with a Medical Officer:** Access to consultations with qualified medical officers for general health concerns.

Fundraising 2023/24

In 2023/24 the group was not involved in any significant fundraising activities. Fortunately, the group received a number of individual donations which were used to alleviate the circumstances of the poorest families in Kibiri. The group was also very fortunate to receive a very generous donation from the Jenny Rowden memorial fund raising event which took place in Downpatrick in November 2023.

It is hoped that a number of fund raising activities will be activated in early 2025. As the group is a registered charity it will be possible to engage with fund raising activities that require proof of Charity Commission registration.

3. How the activities of the Group have provided benefit to its beneficiaries and how this can be demonstrated

The main beneficiaries of the Group's activities have been the families whose children have been in receipt of sponsorship to allow them to attend one or other of the two primary schools in Kibiri and the large number of people who have received food donations acquired using the funding provided by the group. The Pupil Sponsorship Scheme is an extremely well managed initiative and it is very fortunate that many children have been able to benefit from the scheme during 2024.

The Pupil Sponsorship Scheme is not only of great benefit to the pupils who are supported by it but it also takes the pressure off many Ugandan parents who find it very challenging, if not impossible, to find the funding to pay for their children's education. When attending school, the pupils in the scheme receive a meal every day as well as their school books.

During 2023/24 the Parish Uganda Group has been able to provide a modest amount of funding which has been used to provide much needed food for many of the poorest people in Kibiri. This has helped reduce the levels of starvation among the poorest people many of whom are elderly and unable to receive the support of family and neighbours.

Mitigation of Harm flowing from Group Purposes

The Group, as a Charity Commission approved body, follows best practice in terms of governance of our financial management practices and is careful to ensure that there is no likelihood of harm to recipients of our support. During 2023/24 we were in close contact with our Ugandan partners to ensure that those distributing food support were not in any danger.

4. Receipt of Private Benefit

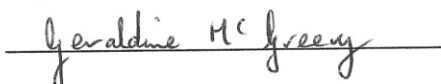
The Group is confident that no person has been in receipt of private benefit or been an unintended beneficiary of our charitable activities.

5. Compliance with the Charity Commission's guidance

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the Group Trustees have been careful to consider the Commission's guidance on public benefit to ensure that our activities have helped to achieve our purposes and provide the intended benefit to the beneficiaries.

6. Signatories to the Annual Report

Chairperson: Geraldine McGreevy



Secretary: Terry Murphy

