



Jacob's Well Appeal

Christmas 2020 Newsletter

Covid in Africa

Whilst the number of known Covid cases in most of Africa has been very low with very few recorded deaths, the social and economic impact on the continent has been horrific. In these economies people don't eat if they don't work, government imposed lockdowns have caused widespread starvation. Businesses have collapsed. Aid programmes have been postponed or cancelled, with foreign aid workers unable to visit the continent. Global extreme poverty is expected to rise in 2020 for the first time in over 20 years. The UN estimates that the Coronavirus pandemic has pushed an additional 150 million children into multidimensional poverty – deprived of education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation or water, a situation that is likely to worsen in the months to come.

Since the pandemic began, Jacob's Well Appeal has been seeking to help alleviate the crisis in a variety of ways. We have sent out tens of thousands of items of PPE to schools and hospitals, which have been much appreciated. We have also raised almost £30,000 to help overcome the Covid-induced poverty, which has been divided equally between projects in Soweto, South Africa and Burkina Faso, West Africa.

Our Partners, the ABC School in Bobo Dioulassou, Burkina Faso are struggling to cope with the three-fold crises of Covid, bad rain and increased terrorist activity. Almost one million people out of a population of 20 million have had to flee their towns and villages and are living as refugees. Huge areas of the countryside that used to grow the food for the big cities is now uncultivated. On top of this, wide-spread torrential rain at harvest time caused the destruction of large parts of the harvest. Add the Covid lockdown on top of that, and you can imagine how desperate the people there have become. Every day hundreds of poor families come to the school gates because they have nothing to eat. Each family is given a 40Kg sack of Maize, costing about £40. This will feed their family for around 2 weeks. Then they will be back again, as they have no other way of surviving. This is a huge drain on the school's finances, which is already struggling with no state help to feed and educate over 800 children.

We want to do all that we can to help feed these desperate people throughout the long winter. If you would like to give to this project, please label

any donation "COVID BURKINA".



Poor families come daily to the ABC School to receive grain



Taking home the precious donation of grain to feed her family

Developing "Liv-Land"

"Liv-Land" means "Land of Life" and is a site bought by the ABC school in Burkina a few years ago to expand the school's possibilities. Jacob's Well Appeal helped to build an **agriculture training school** there a few years ago, where the children can learn to rear pigs, egg-laying chickens and grow crops using the most effective methods. It is also the site of the **Home for Abandoned Girls and Boys**, which we helped to build recently. In the Girls home, there are now 14 girls, 5 of whom have lost their families through illness or death.

Some of their stories are tragic. For example, Penny (not her real name) is 14. She has never met her real father. Her mother remarried a man who did not accept Penny, so she was sent to her grandmother, who lives in an extremely poor family and already has seven other children and no job. (Continued inside)



Liv-Land with the Girls' House in the background

Sierra Leone

The tractors that arrived in Sierra Leone earlier this year have been very busy. The community in Mayolla have a rice Seed Bank which supports 25 communities and usually has to hire a tractor at great expense. Now they can use their own – not just for the Seed Bank but also to help in the communities.

In the last six months we have sent a container of medical aid to Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health. This container had a large supply of hospital beds and mattresses donated by Accora. When Drs Alistair and Margaret Robertson visited Sierra Leone in July 2019 the government was building two new hospitals in the capital. The nurses were working in very poor conditions whilst waiting for these new buildings and they were worried that they would have to still use the old beds with rusty frames and torn mattresses in the new hospital. It is wonderful to send such useful items to help improve the situation in Sierra Leone.

We also donated a minibus to the Sierra Leone Autistic School. As well as transporting the children to school, the minibus has also been used during lockdown to take donations of food to the children's families. Many have been unable to feed themselves due to businesses not operating.

The Rice Harvest, thanks to our SeedBank project



Below. Dr. Margaret Robertson inspects a hospital pharmacy in Sierra Leone which mainly consists of empty shelves! **Right.** The Autistic Society deliver food parcels to their pupils' families who would otherwise not eat



Developing Liv-Land (Continued)

Living with her Grandmother, Penny lived with a continual lack of food and no light so that she couldn't do any of her school work at home. The worst part of the situation was that there was constant arguing and tensions within the household. Penny was regularly traumatized by her grandmother

who called her a "bastard child" with no father. Her school performance suffered and she even failed her exams in 2019. Since Penny has come to live at Liv-Land, she is happy again and passed her exams this year. We are hoping to raise £1500 to install barbed wire around the whole plot of Liv-Land, due to increased burglaries and terrorist threats to the girls. If you would like to give to this project, please label any donation "Liv-Land".



Solar Panels for the hospital in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

We have been supporting the "Source of Life" hospital in the capital of Burkina Faso for a number of years. You may remember that we helped them to build a maternity unit and more recently a surgical unit. Now we are planning to send £25,000 to install solar panels on the hospital, which will provide over 40 KiloWatts of power. Electricity is very expensive in Burkina, with the hospital's average electricity bill over £1500 per month.

Shoe Box Gifts

A big "THANK YOU" for all those who have donated Shoe Box Gifts this year. Each year we send thousands of Shoe Boxes to the world's poorest children overseas. **Pictured Left.** Mr. Loncaster, Molescroft Primary School

Ghana

Despite the risks of Covid, our partners have continued to work hard with the projects we run in Northern Ghana. We have **dug a well** and planted more **fruit trees** as well as supporting the **dry season farming** for another season this year. Our **Seed-bank** project continues and we have also run ground nut and maize projects in poor communities near the border with Burkina Faso.

We are also running another **Literacy project** after a very successful project last year, with money from the Souter Trust. These projects target widows and women who are sole bread-winners for their families. These women struggle to bring up their own children and very often have to look after other family members despite having very little land to farm on. In Northern Ghana, when your husband dies, his land and wealth goes to his brother and not his wife. This can leave his own family destitute, if his brother will not support them. The women have not had the opportunity of education in their youth and so struggle to do anything beyond subsistence farming. By training them in basic reading and writing, maths and financial literacy, as well as a marketable skill, they are able to understand better how to make a profit from anything they make or grow. We train the ladies in a community and

A Dry Season Farming Project in N. Ghana



A Soap making workshop in N. Ghana

encourage them to form a small unit who can save and work together and this means that they are more likely to succeed. If they learn to make soap, for example, then the items they buy to make soap must be cheaper than the price they will get when they sell the soap. The price they can get at market for the soap is already set – if they make their soap pieces too large they can lose all their profit. These basic maths skills need to be taught. The women really appreciate the opportunity

to learn and work hard at achieving a good standard.

The situation in Ghana this year has been very difficult – the rains were very heavy. Roads literally turn into rivers (see picture to the right), and so become impassable by vehicles. Security has also been an issue, with an increase in attacks and robbery on individuals and communities. Our partner had their phone and money taken when visiting one of the projects. There has been an increase in police and army presence to try and maintain law and order.



Value and Destinations of Aid sent in 2020

Education	£31,174	Albania	Moldova	Sierra Leone
Food	£25,440	Algeria	Mozambique	Uganda
Hospital Construction	£16,879	Burkina Faso	Nigeria	Ukraine
Agriculture	£49,004	Ghana	Pakistan	United Kingdom
Household	£33,807	Iraq	Philippines	Zambia
Medical	£2,744,431	Kenya	Romania	Zimbabwe
Total	£2,900,735	Malawi	Rwanda	

Helping the poor here in East Yorkshire

For many years, as well as helping people overseas, Jacob's Well Appeal has been active in helping the poor and needy here in the UK. Over the years we have regularly given clothes, food and sleeping bags to the homeless and provided items for refugees, re-housed victims of domestic violence and other local people in crisis situations. We have also housed the local food bank, provided work-place opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and helped to rehabilitate people coming out of prison. Both our Beverley and Bridlington shops are places where vulnerable people can come and get various types of help in their time of need.

The **Bridlington shop**, in particular, has a strong focus on helping the poor and needy in their town, which, like many coastal communities, struggles with deprivation that causes many social problems. An initial act of kindness in giving out food to a few people in need has grown into a weekly food distribution to around 30 homeless people, 15 low income families and 30+ dysfunctional adults who struggle with life in different ways. Greggs provides unsold pastries and sandwiches 3 nights a week, a local businessman often donates large quantities of food, one of the local old people's homes collects food for the project and many kind individuals add items to their own grocery shopping which they then bring into the shop to be given out to those in need.

The shop volunteers also help out in other ways. They regularly help people to fill out benefit forms, try to help homeless people into flats, get them into the benefit system and try to reconnect them with friends and family members. They are also connected with other local groups and agencies and so can help to steer those in need towards the most appropriate place of help. During lockdown, volunteers from the shop delivered shopping twice a week to about 40 people, as well as helping vulnerable people with prescriptions and other necessities of life.

We are hoping to expand this important community outreach in the months ahead so that we can help more people in need. If you would like to support this work, please label any donations "UK POVERTY" so we can direct the money appropriately.



The newly-fitted out food store at the Bridlington Shop.

Legal Changes

The growth of Jacob's Well Appeal in recent years, alongside changes in charity law and increased regulation have caused us to enter into a process of changing the legal framework of our charity. We also wanted to add to our existing **purpose clause** to give us more scope for helping the poor here in the UK. So we have now become a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) with a new registration number of 1192373, though the charity name remains the same. We may contact you in the weeks to come if we need to update Gift Aid declarations and standing order donation forms.

DONATIONS: - Via Internet Banking

Account Name: Jacobs Well Appeal

Account Number: 71090704

Sort Code: 40-10-12

Do you have email? If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email, save costs and the environment, please send your email address to office@jacobswellappeal.org with your name and postal address, so we can update our database. Thank you!

Friends of Jacob's Well Appeal

The new legal structure, unlike the old one, will have no "members". If you are currently a member, a volunteer or just a supporter of JWA, you would be welcome to join the "Friends of Jacob's Well Appeal". This is a new charity that has been set up to support the work of JWA. It will be applying for grants to support the work of our volunteers, as well as the shops, offices and warehouse. There is no membership charge and we plan to run meetings and social events to keep everyone informed of what JWA is doing. If you would like to join please e-mail Paula@jacobswellappeal.org OR call into one of our shops or the office on Swinemoor Lane.

A HUGE thank you to all our amazing volunteers and to all those who support us by donating money, medical supplies, items to sell, knitting blankets and making shoe boxes. **If the monies raised exceed the amount needed for the projects mentioned in this newsletter, we will use the extra money to fund similar projects.**