



Jacob's Well Appeal

Winter 2025-6 Newsletter



Hurricane Devastation in the Caribbean

In late October, hurricane Melissa swept across the Caribbean, causing catastrophic damage with winds up to 185mph. The combination of huge waves along with over 50cms of rain falling in a very short time caused widespread flooding on top of the devastation from the extreme winds.

As the hurricane headed for Cuba, I rang Rob Miller, our partner from the charity Cuba Solidarity to get his take on what might happen and to see if there was anything we could do to help. Rob told us that people were preparing for a once in a life-time storm, the worst hurricane in living memory. 735,000 people were evacuated into safe places – one in every 15 Cubans, something that prevented many injuries and undoubtedly saved many lives.

When such a catastrophic event hits a poverty stricken country like Cuba where the infrastructure is weak and buildings are so flimsy, people lose their livelihood and will be in need of medical and food aid along with clothes and shelter for months or years to come. The storm damaged or destroyed nearly 992,000 homes across the eastern provinces, leaving countless families without shelter. Weeks later, 54,000 people are still unable to return home. Agricultural losses have been extensive, with thousands of acres of crops destroyed, threatening food security for months to come. Cuba's Foreign Affairs Minister described the situation bluntly at the United Nations: the island is dealing with the aftermath "with virtually no resources".

Cuba's already vulnerable healthcare system suffered a devastating blow. A staggering 642 medical facilities were damaged across the affected regions, crippling the nation's ability to respond to immediate health emergencies. Hospitals, clinics, and health centres that were barely functioning before the storm now face complete rehabilitation. This damage comes at a particularly critical time, as Cuba is simultaneously battling the ongoing shortages caused by the US sanctions and a critical arbovirus outbreak, creating a perfect storm of public health challenges.

It is in this context that our charity's efforts take on profound significance. This year, we have sent six containers of medical aid to Cuba - a lifeline for a healthcare system stretched beyond its limits. Two of those containers arrived just two weeks before Hurricane Melissa made landfall. Those supplies - medicines, medical equipment, and essential health resources - have become critical tools in the emergency response. Every bandage, wheelchair, and piece of medical equipment makes a tangible difference in such a situation.

As Cuba begins the long process of recovery, our continued support will be essential. In the weeks and months ahead, as Cuba rebuilds damaged hospitals and reconnects isolated communities, our continued support will help ensure that lack of medical resources does not compound the tragedy that Hurricane Melissa has already inflicted. The people of Cuba face a long road to recovery, but they do not walk it alone. Our next container for Cuba is scheduled to leave our yard in a couple of weeks' time.



Unloading in Cuba

In NORTHERN GHANA, Jacob's Well Volunteers, Liz and Helen visited Tamale, where they went to the Jacob's Well funded APT (Appropriate Paper Based Technology) workshop in the Physio Department at Tamale Teaching Hospital. Ghanaian children with cerebral palsy have little access to expensive chairs and mobility aids. The workshops make bespoke chairs and standing frames from cardboard and newspaper, allowing children to achieve sitting balance and increasing movement. Jacob's Well has currently funded four workshops in different regions of Ghana.

MARKET GARDENS IN NAAKATENG, The Women's Group that Jacob's Well funded have moved on from a dry season garden to an all year market gardening business. Jacob's Well have just helped them to purchase a Motorking (motorbike and trailer) to allow them to take their produce to market for the start of trading. Previously they had to hire a Motorking and driver to come and transport the vegetables to the nearest market, a journey of an hour. In reality it meant their vegetables didn't always get taken to market at the right time. The money earned pays for their children to go to school and helps with buying necessary medication for their families. (contd inside)



Curiosity Corner & Huge Furniture Barn

We get so many lovely things coming into Jacob's Well – far more than we can ever sell. New Clothes, sometimes with the labels still on them, beautiful toys, furniture and lots more. We are always looking for way to get money for these beautiful things. So now we have created two new regular selling opportunities. **Curiosity Corner.** Every Saturday, we turn the front of our warehouse into a huge charity shop. The old medical sorting room is now permanently set up with unusual things to sell. Small furniture items sit alongside beautiful antiques, ornaments and curiosities. All beautiful quality items sold at a knock down price. Outside in the warehouse are racks of clothes, bikes, scooters, toys and children's books with a few pictures and other items thrown in. A big thank you goes to Pam and Bruce for leading this venture which, though a lot of work has raised a lot of money to pay for our work overseas.



Curiosity Corner is open every Saturday from 10am – 4pm.

For larger furniture items and white goods, we have now opened our **Huge Furniture Barn** in a former Chicken Shed at High Eske, near Tickton. This is a huge space that is full of good quality, second hand furniture. Everything from Sofa's to wardrobes, chests of draws and more are crammed in here, alongside pet cages, lawnmowers, white goods, wheel chairs, prams and electrical goods. A big thank you to Rob Byass, the creator and caretaker of this project. The furniture barn has raised a lot of money which helps us to keep our containers rolling. It also saves beautiful furniture from ending up in landfill.



The Furniture Barn opens every Friday from 2-5pm or by arrangement. Ring Rob on 07944 271 324 or email Rob@RByass.karoo.co.uk

Directions High Eske Farm, Tickton, Beverley, HU17 9SG. Turn off the A1035 near Tickton onto Eske Lane. Follow Eske Lane to END of tarmac, turn right onto stone road. Follow signs to High Eske & Jacobs Well.



Ukraine

In a few weeks, the war in Ukraine will have lasted 4 years. Since it started, Jacob's Well has sent 46 Curtain-sided lorries full of aid to Ukraine. The value of the aid has been over £16 million. Aid items have included dressings, PPE, hospital equipment and machines, medication and other medical disposable items. Alongside this, we have sent bullet proof vests, food, rescue equipment, stretchers, clothes, blankets and thousands of gift boxes for the children suffering in this terrible war. We have also sent 9 ambulances, and donated a couple of vans to the relief effort. It has been a mammoth effort and represents the greatest effort that Jacob's Well has

made for any country since its foundation in 1982. Sadly the aid is needed today more than ever before.

On top of the aid listed above, Jacob's Well has filled with medical supplies over 50 vans and small trucks which other charities were driving to Ukraine. Many of these drivers take their load right up to the front lines of the war and come back with hair-raising stories of what it is like driving the aid up to the hospitals which are within shelling distance of the Russian army. One of our partners recently came back from Kherson in South-Eastern Ukraine. He described how the road into the city was covered with drone nets to try and protect vehicles from Russian drones. Kherson is still home to over 65,000 people, including women, children and old people trying to live their lives as normal. They are separated from the Russian army only by the river Dnipro. Russian shells land randomly on the city day and night every 20 minutes on a good day, increasing to every minute during more intense bombardments. The shelling involves various types of munitions, including artillery, mortars, multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS), aircraft bombs, and drones. Civilian infrastructure and residential areas are frequently targeted, resulting in daily casualties. Residents try to organize their daily lives around the timing of the most frequent attacks, which typically occur in the morning and late afternoon. Life is hard in Kherson, as in most of Ukraine. Ukraine retains only about one third of its pre-war electricity generation capacity with the grid frequently targeted by Russian attacks. Daily power outages last between 4-18 hours. Given that 70% of Ukraine's population live in urban multi-story buildings, when there is no power, there is no heating, water supply or toilets. The temperatures often reach -20C.

Doctors rely on shipments of aid coming from charities like Jacob's Well to treat those wounded daily in the war. As long as we can, we will continue to send valuable aid to people of Ukraine. Each truck we send costs around £5000. Put "Ukraine" in the reference box if you would like to donate to help cover our transport.

Namayingo Revisited

Recently, Chris Blackburn, one of our trustees, revisited Namayingo in Uganda, close to the North-Eastern corner of Lake Victoria, and the source of the Nile. Last year Jacob's Well built an orphanage there which houses 122 former street children who are now cared for by Christian staff with a roof over their heads, given nutritious food and health care. Jacob's Well subsequently financed the building of a toilet block and then dug a bore hole so that the facility had clean water, rather than having to walk 30 minutes to get dirty water from a pond. Since they have stopped using the pond the incidence of typhoid is very much reduced and there have been no resultant deaths. Chris' visit was to check the work, which has now been completed to a high standard.

The community of pastors, teachers and children is thriving with a noticeable improvement in health, atmosphere and well-being. The addiction recovery program that Chris established last year is continuing to run well, helping local people break free from addictions to alcohol, drugs and gambling. These addictions are the root cause of much of the area's violence, poverty, polygamy, abandonment of children and their subsequent abuse. The program leading to recovery from addiction to alcohol and drugs has been remarkably successful. Family relationships have been healed, and projects to help former addicts earn money through projects such as poultry and pig keeping are in full swing. The response among the gamblers has been less encouraging. Wives continue to be used as bets rather than money which the men often don't have.

One of the biggest problems the children face is lack of education. Pastors Agnes and Robert operate 5 schools across the area, but the teachers are untrained and unpaid. Up until now they have only provided tuition in reading and writing in English and basic Arithmetic. The nearest secondary school is 28 km away. Some of children make the return journey on foot! On this visit we provided nine refurbished laptops loaded with an educational program called **RACHEL** (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning). This programme is being used to educate the teachers and to give them the knowledge and resources to educate their pupils. The materials in the program are designed for use where there is no internet access, and extend from very basic primary school knowledge and methods of teaching, up to university level; included are volumes on healthcare and practical action, such as water purification and agriculture.

The next stage in our support is to provide **solar panels**, which will provide light internally to allow study at night, and externally to improve security. Importantly they will allow charging of the batteries of the laptops which we were unable to replace ahead of the trip; four of which cannot hold a charge even for a few hours of use; the nearest source of electricity for charging computers or phones is a half-hour walk away. We need around £6000 to pay for these solar panels, which, once fitted should provide free electricity for the whole facility.

We are grateful to those who have already donated. As we think about what gifts we might purchase for our families and friends for Christmas, what gift could be better than safe and sound sleep for children who have no other home? To date the dormitory only has 42 mattresses and no bunks for 122 children. These can be purchased for £12 for a mattress and £100 for a wooden double bunk. There is space in the dormitory for a further 80 vulnerable children; to donate please visit our website and put Uganda in the reference box.



Above Pastors Robert and Agnes receive the laptops with some of the schools' teachers.

Below the precious water pump which has changed so many lives for the better.



BOREHOLES IN GHANA. Liz and Helen visited **Zenye**, a mostly Christian farming community of around 300 people, whose water comes from a small lake about 1/2 Km away. This shrinks to a muddy puddle in the dry season and is also used by cattle, goats and any other animals in need of a drink. The nearest clean water borehole is around 2 miles, a long way to walk carrying water on your head. Every week children are admitted to hospital for rehydration treatment because of severe diarrhoea and vomiting. We would like to help them drill their own borehole which would greatly help to improve their quality of life but costs around £4,800. Let us know if you could help with this.

Value and Destinations of Aid sent in 2025 in £

Afghanistan 650; Burkina 140,704; Cameroon 112,754; Cuba 1,332,222; Ghana 9,684; Iraq 267; Kenya 1,365; Madagascar 5,000; Morocco 976; Pakistan 14,056; Rwanda 769; Sierra Leone 46,158; Syria 565; Uganda 17,654; UK Poverty 28,900; Ukraine 1,350,825; Zambia 1,165,165; Zimbabwe 2,416 **Total £4,230,132**



Helping a whole nation—Zambia

Earlier this year, Jacob’s Well sent its second container to **Stomacare Support, Zambia**, a charity set up to provide free colostomy and urostomy bags to patients who need them but can’t afford to purchase the disposable products. These products are the most valuable of all the product in our warehouse. The value of one container is around £1million. The products we sent are the main source of supply for the whole of Zambia.

World Ostomy Awareness Day 2025 was commemorated in Zambia on 2nd October 2025 at the University Teaching Hospital (UTH) in Lusaka. This annual global event is dedicated to raising awareness about ostomy care, reducing stigma, and promoting the rights and dignity of ostomates. The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Kennedy Lishimpi from the **Zambian Ministry of Health** (pictured). “An ostomy is not merely a medical procedure”, he said, “but a

life-saving intervention - a second chance at life for many”. He reminded the gathering that “while an ostomy may be an “invisible disability,” it is not a flaw to be hidden; it is a mark of survival that deserves respect”.

These containers are among the most expensive that we send and cost us in total around £12,000 to send.

Please reference any donations to help with this cost “Zambia”.

Jacob’s Well is working with a **charity in Madagascar** to set up a national distribution centre for Ostomy products in that nation too. We aim to launch this in early 2026.

Update on the Sunrise Centre, Madagascar

In October Barbara and Alan Ribey, visited the New Sunrise Centre in Nosy Be to check on the progress made since Jacob’s Well’s s initial investment of £23,000 back in 2023. At that time the Centre , was working hard to meet the complex educational and health care needs of 25 special needs children and their families rented accommodation. Since then, the number of students at Sunrise has increased to 92 including some from neighbouring islands. They attend between 2 and 5 days a week and are supported by paid teachers and assistants in the facility that Jacob’s Well built. There are 9 full time teachers, 5 Admin and maintenance staff as well as parent helpers. Transport, medical intervention, teaching and food all free and all staff, including the parent helpers, are paid a reasonable living wage. The curriculum is personalised to student needs and parents receive a daily report of progress in the student booklet. The Centre is very well resourced with a range of learning aids and therapeutic equipment, most of which has been sourced through donors. The annual running costs are around 30K, sourced from donations, and income from a new plastic recycling plant, funded through a grant from Gulf Aid. The plant will mean graduated students can be employed collecting waste plastic and moulding it into saleable items. There are also plans to build a hostel on nearby land providing accommodation and food for volunteers who currently use local hotels. This will also give employment for graduated students. The Sunrise Centre has been an enormous success which we hope will provide a model to be replicated in other parts of Madagascar in the future.



DONATIONS: - Via Internet Banking

Account Name: Jacobs Well Appeal

Account Number: 67235135

Sort Code: 08-92-99

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.

MEDICATION

Sadly we are no longer able to send patients’ medication abroad. If you send us your medication, even if it has never been opened, we will have to pay to have it destroyed. Please return it to your local pharmacy.

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.**

Jacob’s Well Appeal, Swinemoor Lane, Beverley, HU17 0JX. Tel. 01482 881162
Email office@jacobswellappeal.org Registered Charity No. 1192373 www.jacobswellappeal.org