Jacob's Well Appeal

Summer 2026 Newsletter

Changing the lives of Orphans and Street Children

Did you know that there are almost 150 million children living and working on the street globally? That's more than double the entire UK population. Life for street children is dangerous and miserable. In many countries the police regularly "cull" street children to keep the numbers down. This pushes the children to live in sewers or other inaccessible places where they can't be found.

Children at the Good Shepherd Centre, Zimbabwe

Living exposed to the elements without proper nutrition and medical care means that many of these children die before they reach their 20th birthday. The ever-present threat of violent gangs, people-traffickers or the lure of substance abuse and alcohol addiction means that very few of these children enjoy happy, healthy and meaningful lives.

Many people feel that orphanages are the answer to street children. Jacob's Well has built and supported an orphanage in Uganda recently (see inside for the latest news there). Around the world, about 10 million children live in residential institutions. Whilst many of these are well run and provide the children with an environment that is better than life on the streets, others are less than ideal. The ratio of children to care-givers along with strictly enforced rules sometimes make them an environment that can be emotionally depriving and neglectful for many children.

The growing consensus among policy makers in government and NGOs is that institutional care should be replaced by supporting foster parents. Not only is it better for the children to grow up in a home with two parents and siblings who look out for you, it can also be significantly cheaper. Most studies suggest it costs at least 3 times more to place children in institutions than to support them in a long-term foster-care family. Ask yourself the question. If you were to die unexpectedly and your children or grandchildren had no-one to look after them, would you rather that they were placed in an institution or with a family?

Leonie Webster-Beynon, one of Jacob's Well trustees is working in several nations to help provide better care for orphans and street children. One of her long-term projects is in Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe where she is involved with the Good Shepherd Centre. Here 53 orphaned children live in two gender separated dormitories. They are cared for by two devoted house mothers. Each house mother receives a humble salary of just £96 per month, whilst carrying the enormous responsibility of nurturing more than 25 children each. Despite their dedication, no one person can provide the individual love, attention, and security that every child deserves under these circumstances.

The Good Shepherd Centre is working to move away from institutional dormitory living and create family-style homes where children can experience consistent relationships, healthy attachment, and the nurturing environment every child needs to thrive. Leonie is working alongside others to give the centre training in de-institutionalisation and trauma-informed care. This life-changing approach equips caregivers to help children heal from loss and trauma. But it can only be fully realised when children live in homes, not dormitories. The goal is to reduce the caregiver-to-child ratio from 1:27 to 1:8. This means employing four additional house mothers as well as raising money to transform the existing dormitories into family-style homes. If you would like to know more about this project or to support it financially, please let us know.

Warehouse Sales; Saturday 15th August and Saturday 21st November 9am - 1pm @ Jacob's Well Yard, Beverley, HU17 0JX

Charity Sales: Saturday 26th September and Saturday 24th October at Toll Gavel Church Drive, Beverley, HU17 9AA

Madagascar Colostomy Project

Jacob's Well is the major supplier of ostomy products for thousands of people in the developing world. An ostomy is a surgical procedure that creates an artificial opening in the abdomen, called a stoma. This allows waste (stool or urine) to exit the body when the normal pathway is damaged, diseased, or removed. The waste is collected in a specialized, wearable pouch known as an ostomy bag.

A patient receiving a donation of ostomy bags

We were first contacted from Madagascar in 2016 after our partner there, a lady called Sarindra, had emergency colostomy surgery only to find afterwards that there were no bags available anywhere in the nation. Her experience filled her with a determination to support other colostomy patients in Madagascar, most of whom do not have the means to access colostomy products and end up using normal plastic bags which don't fit properly which leads to hygiene issues as well as the risk of infection. Such patients are unable to go out from their homes and end up becoming isolated from their communities.

In 2023 Sarindra formed a charity called AP2D, (Actions pour le Progres et le Development Durable) with the goal of improving the quality of life of ostomy patients. Last October, Jacob's Well Volunteers Barbara and Alan Ribey visited Madagascar and met with Sarindra and Dr Cordade from AP2D. Thanks to the generous luggage allowance of Ethiopian Airlines they were able to hand over a 23kg suitcase full of colostomy products. They received fabulous feedback from patients whose lives were transformed by the products they received. In February 2026 Jacobs Well sent a full 40ft container of colostomy products and other medical equipment to AP2D who will ensure all patients in the capital city and surrounding area will receive all the consumables they need after their surgery. This container also includes a brand new mobile Ultrasound Scanner that we were able to purchase to help some of the hospitals in that region.

Water Projects in North West Ghana

In our last newsletter we asked for funding for a new borehole in Zenye. We are happy to report that Jacob's Well has now drilled this bore hole which has totally transformed the lives of the people who live there. They have not had a single case of diarrhoea or other gastric illness since getting a clean water supply. They say a huge "Thank you" to our supporters.

Jotekoraa is another very remote farming community of 1,500 people. They spent years saving up to pay a private contractor to install a borehole, but it soon stopped working as it hadn't been done properly. It would take them a long time to afford another one. Liz Lyle, one of our trustees, visited this village in March and met the school teacher who came from a community further north where a Jacob's Well funded borehole had transformed the lives of his family and many others. He asked if we could help in Jotekoraa too. Many of his pupils miss school because of waterborne illness. Currently they have to take water from the river a half hour walk away. Our trusted contractor who has never had a borehole run dry says the cost for this remote village would be about £8,000.

A Gift That Outlasts a Lifetime

When we think about the difference we can make, we often think about what we can give today - a donation, an hour of our time or a kind word. But there is another way to leave a lasting mark on the causes we care about: a gift in your will. Writing or updating your will is easier than you might think, and including a gift for our charity is a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy.

Legacy giving is one of the most powerful ways to support the work you believe in. It costs nothing now, and it doesn't affect the life you live today. But for the causes you choose to support, it can mean everything and can provide funding for a project for years to come. Receiving a large donation in a will enables us to do things that we can't normally afford to do. Some of the most impactful projects that Jacob's

(Wills continued) Well has done have been funded by legacy gifts. With legacy donations we have built hospitals where people previously walk away, built schools that provide education for children from slum areas and purchased agricultural equipment that has changed the food supply of a village for years to come.

If you want to remember Jacob's Well Appeal in your will, there are several ways you can do it. You can choose to leave an exact, specific amount of money. Alternatively, you could choose to leave a percentage of what is left after all other gifts and expenses have been paid. Or you can leave a specific item of value, such as a piece of art, an antique or a property. Leaving a gift in your will can also be incredibly tax-efficient. Gifts to registered charities are exempt from Inheritance Tax, which can potentially reduce the overall tax bill for your loved ones. There is a genuinely free will writing service you could use, recommended on Martin Lewis' Money Saving Expert.com web-site which has raised over £200 million for over 2,500 - different charities. www.freewills.co.uk.

A legacy gift is, in the truest sense, a gift of hope. It's a gift that reaches beyond our own lifetime and ensures that we can keep on helping others even after we are gone. If you're thinking about updating or writing a will, it's worth speaking to a solicitor or professional will-writer, who can make sure your wishes are recorded clearly and legally. Feel free to contact us if you need advice or want to talk about any specific projects that you would like to support.

Uganda – Namayingo News

Agnes, the leader of Namayingo, with some of the children.

Over the past couple of years, Jacob's Well has built and equipped a dormitory at a school in Namayingo, Uganda, taking around 100 children off the streets. They are now cared for by Christian staff , have a roof over their heads and are given nutritious food and health care. Jacob's Well subsequently financed the building of a toilet block and then dug a borehole so that the facility had clean water. Since our last newsletter we have been able to fit solar panels which has allowed activities of play and study beyond nightfall; it becomes very dark very early and suddenly in equatorial Africa.

Having electricity has enabled the use of the nine computers with the educational program RACHEL which we provided, being used both by the teachers in the preparation of their lessons, as well as the children themselves. Also these computers have had a wider impact, enabling the on-line study of programs dealing with sensitive issues, such as those problems that women might face in the home or community; Agnes herself provides the translation to various groups.

But the light provided out of hours has had a downside by attracting insects. There has been an increase in the number of cases of malaria, some very severe requiring hospitalisation. Presently there are no screens for the windows or doorways, although there are shutters, they are often left open as they obstruct ventilation. They only have nine mosquito nets which they use for the smallest and most vulnerable children.

Pressing needs at the moment include the purchase of more mattresses (£20 each) - half of the children still sleep on the concrete floor. Screens for the window to keep out mosquitos and mosquito nets (£5.50 each) are also urgently needed.

Urgent Repairs to the Municipal Hospital in Wa, North West Ghana.

One problem that we see time and again in Africa is that hospitals have no money to repair their buildings and so the buildings fall into a state of dangerous disrepair. Jacob's Well was recently approached by managers from the Physiotherapy Department in the Wa Municipal Hospital to see if we could fund urgently needed repairs to their building. A very heavy rainstorm in early June has severely damaged the roof of the department and some rooms are now out of use. Window frames have fallen out, walls are cracked and work-surfaces have been eaten by ants.

The physio department is close to our hearts as it is home to the workshop that we established in 2018 that makes equipment for disabled children from cardboard and newspaper. We previously refurbished the operating theatre in the Wa Municipal Hospital. That project was completed on time and within budget, rather than materials "disappearing", as often happens with building projects in Africa.

The schedule of repairs has been costed at £8,000, for a replacement tin roof, replacement windows, and rewiring. Donations welcome.

Life on the Edge: Cuba's Deepening Crisis

Cuba is enduring one of the worst humanitarian emergencies in its modern history. Since returning to office, the Trump administration has tightened sanctions further, including an effective oil blockade that has cut off much of the fuel Cuba relies on to run its power stations, hospitals, and transport network. Cuban officials call it an "energy blockade" designed to force political change; U.S. officials frame it as pressure on Havana's government to reform. Whatever the intent, the effect on ordinary Cubans has been severe.

The island has suffered repeated nationwide blackouts in 2026 alone, with some Havana neighbourhoods losing power for over 24 hours and rural areas going without electricity for more than 70 hours at a stretch. Cuba's ageing power plants depend on imported oil, and with supplies from traditional partners like Venezuela and Mexico squeezed, the grid periodically collapses entirely. Public transport has stalled in many areas; people wait for hours at bus stops, and airlines have struggled to refuel at Cuban airports.

Perhaps the most visible toll is in medicine. Hospitals report shortages of syringes, gauze, anesthetics, and basic drugs, and by late 2025 an estimated two-thirds of Cuba's essential medicines were in short supply. Blood banks operate with reduced capacity due to a lack of testing reagents. Cancer patients travel hundreds of miles for treatments that are then delayed because ambulances and generators lack fuel. UN officials have warned that surgeries are being suspended and that children are dying as a result of the shortages. Cuba's healthcare system, long a source of national pride, is buckling.

Our partner Rob Miller and the Cuban Ambassador to the UK oversee the packing of our latest container of aid to Cuba

This embargo has drastically intensified since May following an executive order passed by President Trump which authorises sweeping secondary sanctions against global companies trading with Cuba. One result is that two of the world's largest shipping giants have permanently suspended all bookings to and from Cuba, a move that will disrupt up to 60% of Cuba's imports. One of Jacob's Well's containers of aid was mid-voyage when the shipping line pulled out, and was stuck in Rotterdam for 6 weeks before we managed to find a vessel which would take it to Cuba. Our partner, Rob Miller, has 4 containers of urgently needed food aid stuck in Jamaica and hasn't found a way yet to move it the short distance to Cuba. In spite of the difficulties, we plan to keep trying to send aid, and have another container scheduled to leave Jacob's Well in September with hundreds of brand new pace makers that would unquestionably save many people's lives.

With imports scarce and salaries unable to keep pace with inflation, Cubans have turned to informal networks: bartering, small urban gardens, and bicycle taxis in place of buses or cars. The government has decentralized services, encouraging people to walk or use non-fossil-fuel transport and has cut energy consumption sharply, including rolling blackouts as a deliberate rationing tool. Many households depend on remittances from relatives abroad - but a growing share of Cubans have no family overseas to send money, leaving them especially exposed. The crisis has driven an historic wave of emigration, with an estimated quarter of the population leaving the island in the last few years.

Cuba's government blames U.S. sanctions entirely for the crisis. The Trump administration argues the pressure is meant to push Havana toward economic and political reform, and some economists point to Cuba's own state-controlled economy and years of internal mismanagement as compounding factors. Whatever the balance of causes, for millions of ordinary Cubans, the daily reality is the same: long blackouts, medicine that can't be found, and empty shelves.

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. Thank you!

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.**

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