

2022 ANNUAL REPORT FOR CHARITY COMMISSION

For OPERATION RESCUE UK & IRELAND

NIC 100397

REGISTERED ADDRESS :

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Enniskillen

Co. Fermanagh

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR PERIOD: 1st January 2022 - 31st December 2022

Purposes of the charity

Operation Rescue [UK & Ireland] was set up in 2012 to raise funds and channel support to the projects which are run by Operation Rescue, an indigenous NGO which seeks to help HIV/Aids orphans and street children who are living in great poverty in the northern part of Tigray province in Ethiopia. Currently Operation Rescue runs three community-based day centres in Mekelle, Adigrat and Adwa. During 2022, the total of children cared for was just short of 700.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

As is clear from the accompanying financial report, during 2022, £52,000 was sent to Operation Rescue to enable them to continue with this work.

2022 has again been an unprecedented year for the project and for the Trustees.

The ongoing civil war which began in November 2020 which followed the onset of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 meant that the project centres were not always able to stay open but when that was the case efforts were made to distribute food to the families of the children. At times, especially after the end of August, there were serious fears for the staff and children as news reached us of drone attacks which led to loss of life and the destruction of buildings, but we give thanks to God for His protection and provision. In those circumstances the advice from local government officials in Mekelle was to minimise the time when the children would be together in one place so arrangements were made for them simply to come at lunchtime so that they could get that vital meal. Communication through internet was generally not possible and our main means of communication throughout the year was via Telegram where audio and text messages were exchanged between Getachew, General

Manager, Merville Boyd and Kate Doherty [Trustees.] This was only possible when Getachew was able to go to a UN office at certain specified times. Hearing his voice and that of other staff at certain times was deeply reassuring as the conflict continued. This communication with ORE during the year enabled us to see the amazing work still being done by project staff in circumstances which have clearly been very traumatic. During the year there was deep anxiety about what was happening in Adwa and Adigrat where the other project centres are based as communications were completely cut off but again we are deeply thankful to God that, as in Mekelle, the centres have not been damaged and the staff and children protected apart from a small number caught up in the fighting.

It was with deep thankfulness to God that we learned of a peace agreement made between the Federal Government and the Tigray authorities in early November in South Africa. This was greeted with much relief by all at Operation Rescue although by the end of 2022 it was clear that much still remains to be done to enable anything approaching normal life to be resumed.

ORE supporters have continued to be amazing in their financial and prayer support. During the year money continued to flow into our account even though we made no specific appeal for funds. Up to June 2021 we were able to send regular contributions to ORE via electronic transfer, but this method of support ceased in June 2021 when the banks closed, and they have remained closed since then. Using methods including use of the Tigray Development Association, an umbrella organisation for NGOs and other contacts, it has been possible to send money to the project to purchase vitally needed supplies of food and it is to the enormous credit of the staff at the project that every receipt of money was followed by verification using Telegram, the only means of communication possible.

2022 was an incredibly difficult year in relation to banking arrangements. In May 2022 Nationwide announced it was closing all Treasurers' Trust accounts with 60 days notice. An extension was sought when it became clear that it was not going to be easy to find a new account and this was granted but Nationwide mistakenly closed the account in September without giving notice which created enormous problems regarding the 70 + Standing Orders coming into the account each month. A temporary Nationwide account enabled donations still to be received and it was a great relief when, in late November, a permanent new home for the account was found with the Danske Bank, to which application had been made 6 months earlier. The very trying experience over a period of 6 months exacerbated by many refusals from banks is deeply concerning as it seems to illustrate the low priority given to charities by banking institutions. As Trustees, we feel this is a matter of concern and one we would urge the Charity Commission to address.

As at other times in these last couple of years, we have thrown ourselves on God's mercy, bringing our many requests for peace and protection and for necessary aid to God in prayer. Our usual Trustees meetings were held using Zoom technology and always included times of prayer. Zoom meetings specifically for prayer were also called. During the year I sent out regular updates/requests for prayer by email to our supporters and it has been most gratifying to see the response from these. We are fortunate to have several churches here in Northern Ireland and in England who retain very close links with the project, maintained in most cases through links with trustees. We register our thankfulness for their financial and prayerful support over the years.

As we reflect on another year with no opportunity to make our usual visits to the project there is still such strong evidence of the deep bonds of love that connect us here at home with the staff in ORE.

We continue to entrust all at ORE into God's loving care and protection, believing that one day soon we can meet again with them to praise and honour God our Heavenly Father and also see progress resumed on a fourth centre at Maichew, a project close to our hearts.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities during 2022, the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that our activities have helped to achieve the purposes of our charity and provided benefit to the beneficiaries of the charity – the many children supported by Operation Rescue in Ethiopia.

There are no private benefits. There is no harm

Charity Trustees on the date the Annual Report was approved:

Mr Merville Boyd

Miss Shannon Boyd

Miss Sylvia Cooper

Miss Kate Doherty

Dr Irvine Lavery

Mr Victor Magowan

Mrs Lesley Stewart [known as Matchett from June 2022]

Miss Cherith Watson

The charity is administered according to its constitution which was initially adopted at a meeting of the charity on 21st February 2012. It was amended in

accordance with Article 6 on 1st August 2014 and was further amended in accordance with Article 6 on 28th March 2015.

Signed:

Kate Doherty

Date

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Chairperson
Operation Rescue UK & Ireland