



**CHILDREN  
OF THE NATIONS®**  
UNITED KINGDOM

*Raising Children Who Transform Nations®*

## **CHILDREN OF THE NATIONS UK**

**Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Charity Commission for Northern Ireland Number NIC101681

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

The Trustees present the annual report and financial statements for Children of the Nations UK for the year ended 31 December 2022.

### ***Reference and Administrative Information***

Charity Name: CHILDREN OF THE NATIONS UK

Charity Registration Number: NIC101681

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### ***Charity Trustees***

Dr Ruth Ford

Mr Christopher Gardiner

Rev Ben Preston

Mrs Gillian Drennan

Dr Lynne Speirs

Mr Dylan Carleton

Rev David McCullagh

### ***Independent Examiner***

*Gabrielle McQuillan, 117B Ballymena Road, Doagh*

### ***Bankers***

The Co-operative Bank p.l.c., P.O. Box 101, 1 Balloon Street,  
Manchester, M60 4EP. Registered in England and Wales No. 990937

# Children of the Nations UK

Trustees' Annual Report  
for the year ended 31 December 2022

## *Structure, Governance and Management*

### **The Trustees**

The charity trustees of Children of the Nations UK are responsible for the management and administration of the Charity's property and funds in accordance with our Trust Deed.

The Trustees must hold at least four meetings each year. The Trustees must arrange at each of their meetings the date, time and place of their next meeting unless such arrangements have already been made.

### *Description and Purpose*

The vision of Children of the Nations UK is to raise children who transform nations.

Our mission is to provide holistic, Christ-centred care for orphaned and destitute children, enabling them to create positive and lasting change in their nations.

We were established to support by means of financial assistance and voluntary work any charitable project for the prevention and relief of poverty, suffering and distress, the advancement of education, the promotion of the Christian faith, the promotion of sustainable development and the promotion, preservation, and protection of health of the inhabitants, and, in particular children and young people. We serve beneficiaries in Sierra Leone, Uganda, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Malawi and promote the benefit of those inhabitants who are in need of assistance as a result of their poverty or social and economic circumstances by associating with the statutory authorities, community and voluntary organisations and the inhabitants of the area of benefit in a common effort to provide residential accommodation, education and facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure-time occupation to improve their conditions of life and in particular:

- to relieve poverty and hunger in the area of benefit by any charitable means and in particular through the establishment or support of homes for orphans and destitute children by the provision of food, clothing and care;
- the relief of sickness among the beneficiaries by the provision of medical facilities and counselling and by the provision of advice, information and financial assistance with the costs of medical treatment and the provision of items and services required to ease their suffering;
- to encourage new, and strengthen existing, partnerships with churches and evangelical groups in the area of benefit in an effort to enable local churches to support local communities in religious education and poverty alleviation;
- to advance the education of children and young people on the basis of Christian principles through their educational and leisure activities so as to develop their spiritual, physical, mental and emotional capacities in such ways as the Trustees may from time to time think fit;

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Description and Purpose (continued)*

- to promote Christianity, provide Christian literature and educate people in the area of benefit through evangelism and the provision of biblically based teaching, discipleship training, meetings, bible studies and social activities;
- to recruit, select and send out volunteers for both short and long term service ;
- to advance any other exclusively charitable purpose as the Trustees, may from time to time, decide in accordance with the law of charity.

Children of the Nations' **core values** are statements of belief which drive our vision, mission, operating principles, and everything we do as an organisation.

**Faith:** We believe in placing our trust in God for His salvation, provision, and direction. We are confident that a relationship with Jesus Christ is essential to genuine transformation. We are driven by an assuredness that does not rest solely on logical proof or material evidence.

**Integrity:** We believe in strict adherence to moral and upright conduct, in accordance to Biblical standards, in all our actions including spiritual, financial, and personal pursuits.

**Prayer:** We believe God works through the power of prayer. We are committed to praying for our staff, children, communities, goals, and all the work in which we are engaged. Prayer reminds us that we are partnering with God to accomplish His work.

**People:** We believe that God created all people in His image and therefore all people have value. We believe people should be treated with love and respect. We are dedicated to caring for orphans and destitute children because of God's mandate in James 1:27.

Children of the Nations' **Operating Principles** are driven by our core values. These foundational methods are the compass for COTN operations and influence the way we carry out our mission. As such they must have a profound impact on what and how we communicate.

**Child Centred:** We believe the most effective way to create positive and lasting change in families, communities, and nations is through a deep investment in individual children. Providing long-term holistic care to children in the most destitute situations results in transformation – children with healthy minds, healthy bodies, emotional well-being, an authentic faith in Jesus Christ, and Biblical ethics/values. It is through the lives of these transformed young people that lasting cultural, social, economic, and political transformation will occur.

**Holistic Care:** Holistic care is essential in order to raise healthy, well-rounded children who will become change agents in their countries. We seek to create an environment that meets our

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Description and Purpose (continued)*

children's basic needs, encourages their individual desires and passions, and promotes excellence in achievement. Children of the Nations is committed to caring for our children in four main areas: physical health, social welfare, spiritual care, and education. We are dedicated to working towards end results that have been established for each area of care – long-term goals that support COTN's mission and vision.

#### Holistic Care End Results:

- **Physical Health:** We are committed to raising children who are physically healthy with the ability to demonstrate and promote health in their lives, communities, and beyond.
- **Education:** We are committed to raising children who reach their fullest potential through quality education, enabling them to display life skills and independent, creative thinking.
- **Social Welfare:** We are committed to raising emotionally healthy children who can integrate their past experiences into their lives, maintain connections with their communities, achieve lasting and meaningful relationships, and thrive at home, in school, and the workplace.
- **Spiritual Care:** We are committed to raising children who demonstrate a vibrant and authentic faith in Jesus Christ.

**Learning and Development:** Continual learning and growth are foundational to ensuring our mission is best accomplished. We welcome the knowledge, skills, and passions of our partners. We embrace process improvement and seek to create standard operating procedures that are 'living documents' that can be built and improved upon as we grow and learn as an alliance.

**Stewardship:** Our resources belong to God. He has entrusted us to care and use them in a responsible manner – therefore, all resources will be wisely used to best support the holistic care of the children and communities we serve. All development efforts will be done in a manner that restores and protects God's creation.

**Sustainability:** Children of the Nations defines sustainability as the ability to endure with increasing independence. We believe a sustainable approach to caring for the children and communities we serve is the most effective way to empower individuals and transform nations. Children of the Nations International is committed to designing, assessing, and improving the sustainability of our projects and programs. Children of the Nations is also committed to providing communities with sustainable development tools and methods in key areas including water, agriculture, renewable energy, and microfinance.

**Partnership:** We are convinced successful work begins with relationships and continues through partnerships offering unique skills and knowledge. We also believe individuals are most effective within their own culture. For these reasons, Children of the Nations is not a 'missionary sending' organisation – rather, in each country where we work, Children of the Nations is started through relationships and strives to operate as its own non-profit run by competent nationals who share our

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Description and Purpose (continued)*

core values and commitment to our vision and mission. Children of the Nations strategically partners with churches, groups, and organizations in each country to best accomplish our mission.

**Family and Community:** God designed people to live in community. Strong communities are needed for individuals to thrive. Children of the Nations is committed to providing children a “home” atmosphere where they have a place to belong and are accepted as a valued family member. We are committed to providing children with loving and secure caregivers as well as creating and maintaining an environment that celebrates how God created each individual and fosters love, respect, sharing, serving, participation, and fellowship.

**Accountability:** We are responsible to answer for our actions or lack of actions, in accordance with Biblical standards, including our use of time, finances, and in our work and relational conduct. Children of the Nations’ staff, children and operations are accountable to oversight from local and international boards – clear lines of authority are maintained. We seek to exercise authority with servant hearts, both to challenge our staff and praise their accomplishments, as well as protect the well-being of Children of the Nations.

### *Objectives & Activities*

In 2022 we continued to participate in this vision by providing administrative support to partners, program monitoring and evaluation, staff training, and by generating greater awareness of, and support for, our activities at home.

### *Achievements & Performance*

#### **Liaising with Implementing Partners**

A primary means of ensuring clear communication with Children of the Nations in Uganda, Malawi and Sierra Leone has been weekly meetings between Liaisons and the relevant Country Director. These meetings involve information gathering, problem solving and capacity building. Liaisons engage in a monthly meeting with the International President and facilitate monthly meetings between the International President and their respective Country Director. Liaisons also ensure monthly programme reports are completed as agreed and ensure accountability and grant compliance through detailed review of monthly financial reporting.

Our staff travelled to their implementing partners to support the Founder’s Tour events and connect with Boards and management teams in-person for the first time since the Covid-19 Pandemic.

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Achievements & Performance (continued)*

An informal review of Standard of Service compliance was conducted by our team with our implementing partners. Corrective actions that had been identified in 2021 were reviewed and plans were adjusted where this was necessary.

In Sierra Leone the Liaison supported the following processes:

- provided support to the National Board as they recruited and oriented a new Country Director and assisted the Interim Management Team as they provided leadership during the vacancy.
- conducted online training in trauma informed care with senior management and social work team.
- collaborated with leadership of World Light Africa on plans for centralised solar system for the main ministry site.
- facilitated video interviews with program graduates for use in future partner development initiatives
- collaborated on the development of annual operational plans and budgets for 2023

In Malawi the Liaison supported the following processes:

- facilitated short term mission trips for four groups from the US focused on a variety of activities including well child checks and staff training.
- supported the local board to carry out a forensic audit of their sustainable farming projects and develop a partnership with an international consultant to help maximise future productivity.

In Uganda the Liaison's research, communication and project management activities supported the following local processes:

- COTN Uganda's response to an outbreak of Ebola: strengthening infectious disease surveillance and creating plans to respond quickly and effectively to any local spread.
- ensuring that all children attending COTN schools continued to be fed daily despite a challenging external environment (food insecurity linked to poor rainfall and below-average crop production, rising fuel costs, high inflation etc).
- construction of 2 sets of latrines, one for the primary school and the other for the girls in the secondary school.
- an upgrade to the schools' water infrastructure (still in progress at the end of 2022).
- essential exterior and basic interior finishes for the secondary school boys' dorm to preserve what had already been built and to protect the structure from adverse weather conditions.
- the addition of fire exits to the boys' dorm, and the reinforcement of the concrete slab above the ground floor.
- the buildout of the second floor of the boys' dorm (still in progress at the end of 2022)
- construction of an A Level classrooms block (still in progress at the end of 2022)

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Achievements & Performance (continued)*

These steps seek to improve national programming which in 2022 in Sierra Leone, Malawi and Uganda included:

- 1,185 children attending school in Sierra Leone
- 1,140 children attending school in Malawi
- 783 children attending school in Uganda
- 184 students in tertiary education in Sierra Leone
- 68 students in tertiary education in Malawi
- 42 students in tertiary education in Uganda

### **Impact of Local Partnerships**

Children of the Nations Malawi's main Njewa Campus is utilised by 20 administrative staff and over 200 secondary school students, 160 of whom reside in on-site boarding accommodation during school terms. The Njewa Campus therefore requires a reliable energy supply for its office, computer lab, general lighting, cooking, cleaning, refrigeration, and air conditioning needs. However, access to electricity in Malawi is a major challenge with daily blackouts of six hours common, even increasing up to ten hours at times.

With the support of Action Renewables and another financial partner, Children of the Nations UK was able to provide £22,000 to World Light Africa (WLA) to begin upgrading the electrical system on the main ministry campus of COTN Malawi so that it is sustainable, efficient, and able to meet the demands of staff and students. This first phase of what will be a multiple phase process was to design and install a battery back-up system which could charge from the power grid and automatically turn on when there is a blackout.

The main components of this phase are 10 Homegrid Lithium-Iron Phosphate Batteries 4.8 kW-hr (At 80% discharge this is 3.84 kW-hr each) and two 6 kW Sunny Island Inverters. The batteries are stored as two stacks of five. A remote monitoring system allows WLA to see overuse and the health of the system in general, analysing and managing performance for peak efficiency. The design and installation was conducted by World Light Africa with their technicians from Kenya and the USA.

The battery storage system had an immediate impact by meeting the power needs of the offices, secondary school, computer lab, refrigeration appliances and kitchen ranges during blackouts. This solution means that the backup diesel generator has been retired, saving money and reducing environmental impact. The students are enjoying improved access to the computer lab at school and campus lighting ensures extended study in the evenings and early mornings is possible.

In addition to the energy upgrade in Malawi, funds generated in 2021 for University Vocational programming in Malawi, Uganda and Sierra Leone were granted to our partners in those places, a total grant of £10,640.06. In total 294 students were attending college in these programs in 2022 and

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### *Achievements & Performance (continued)*

the funds granted supported the payment of tuition fees, accommodation costs, student allowances and the provision of holistic care services. Of these funds, £1,500 was provided to enable a student from Children of the Nations Sierra Leone's programming to complete their Masters in Counselling in Uganda. Following their graduation this young person has taken up a counselling post at Children of the Nations Sierra Leone, supporting children in their programmes.

Child Sponsorship funds were also used to fund two months of the school feeding program at Children of the Nations Sierra Leone's main Ngolala ministry site. This would provide lunch for about 1,000 children every school day for two months.

A generous gift from The Jerusalem Trust allowed us to support Children of the Nations Sierra Leone to purchase age appropriate Bibles for the children in their programs. In October 2022, 292 Bibles were distributed according to the age and stage of the children – My Key Verse Bibles, My First Handy Bibles, RSV Bibles and ESV Youth Bibles. Funds from The Jerusalem Trust were also used to distribute the Bibles at two events for the children where they received light refreshments and learned that the Bible is the Word of God which changes lives.

We engaged directly with supporters in a number of ways throughout the year. Our staff team participated in events at Granshaw and Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Churches. In October, staff shared about overseas mission opportunities for student teachers during Stranmillis Christian Union's "Equip for Mission" week. At the end of the year we held our AGM at Belmont Presbyterian Church. One of our key fundraising events was our 5K in May campaign which saw 20 fundraising volunteers cycling, running and walking five kilometres every day in May. In total our events in 2022 raised £4,252.25 for university/vocational programs in Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda, to be granted in 2023.

### **Volunteers**

In 2022 COTN UK benefited from approximately 228 hours contributed by our volunteers.

Our partnership with Belfast Bible College continued with one placement student completing his placement year with us, creating some resources on community-based child protection best practice.

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time to support the ministry of Children of the Nations. We are very grateful for their commitment and contribution and in everything we give praise and honour to God.

### **Charity Administration and Operations**

Wednesday morning prayer continued to provide an opportunity for staff, Board members and volunteers to come together, share updates and pray. Prayer is a core value of our mission and this has been a very significant weekly rhythm.

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### ***Achievements & Performance (continued)***

Our staff team helped lead the annual COTNI Homecoming Conference, a five-day event for international staff held in Silverdale, Washington in May. Our staff served on the planning committee, emceed the event, facilitated social aspects of the event and delivered three hour-long presentations updating attendees on the activities and developments of COTN Sierra Leone, Uganda and Malawi. This event further informed international staff about progress and needs and equipped them with training and coordination for how to best share this with partners.

We added a part time Social Care Researcher and a part time Executive Assistant to our team, bringing some much-needed capacity.

### ***Public Benefit Statement***

Children of the Nations UK meets the public benefit requirements by working in the areas of the prevention and relief of poverty, suffering and distress, the advancement of education, the promotion of the Christian faith, the promotion of sustainable development and the promotion, preservation and protection of health of children. Our beneficiaries are primarily children and young people who have been orphaned, can no longer be supported by family members or are living with family members or guardians but in a destitute situation. We support families and communities who are in need of assistance as a result of their poverty or social and economic circumstances in Sierra Leone, Malawi, Uganda, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and such other countries that may be identified from time to time. We work with our partner charities in each of these regions to help deliver our charitable purposes which are interlinked and therefore benefits overlap between purposes. We further all of our charitable purposes through the provision of financial aid, expertise and volunteer placement.

### ***Financial Review***

The charity started the year with £79,710.12 and ended the year with £77,433.45.

Funds were raised in 2022 and earlier which will be granted to implementing partners for activities planned for 2023, including tertiary education scholarship funds and playpark construction in Malawi.

### ***Reserves Policy***

The Trustees' policy is to retain a level of free reserves or general reserves which matches its needs at the current time and in the foreseeable future. Free reserves are those unrestricted reserves not invested in fixed assets, which are available for general use.

# Children of the Nations UK

## Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

### ***Reserves Policy (continued)***

The main reason for holding reserves is to ensure that the charity has enough resources to fund its programmes and to hold sufficient resources to meet its commitments. The Trustees believe that our reserves policy is both responsible and prudent but have not specified a particular level of reserves to be held.

At 31st December 2022 the Charity had unrestricted funds of £9,331.76 and held £68,101.69 in restricted funds (closing balance was £77,433.45).

### ***Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others***

There are no funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

### ***Plans for future periods***

The Trustees are considering plans to inspire greater volunteer involvement and encourage financial giving from a larger group of supporters. They are also expecting the work of the international liaisons to build the capacity of implementing partners, particularly in Sierra Leone, Malawi and Uganda. We hope to continue raising financial support for Children of the Nations in each country, with a focus in 2023 on increasing the grant funding provided to our partners in Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

### ***Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities***

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements of the charity in accordance with applicable law and generally accepted accounting practice.

As the charity's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payment account.

The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 requires charity trustees to ensure that accounting records are kept which are sufficient to show and explain all the charity's transactions, which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and enable them to prepare statement of accounts which complies with regulation under the Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

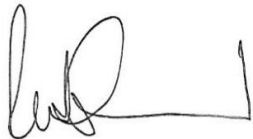
# Children of the Nations UK

Trustees' Annual Report  
for the year ended 31 December 2022

## *Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (continued)*

- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

Approved by the Trustee of Children of the Nations UK and signed on its behalf by



Dr Ruth Ford – Chairperson

29<sup>th</sup> October 2023