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Public address

Brenda Stewart, Church Of God, 13 Glenmachan Road, Belfast, BT4 2NL

Trustee board

Trustee

Other trusteeships

Charity status

Mrs Patricia McConnell

None on record

Mr Ian Stewart

Pregnancy Choices Centres NI

Mrs Lorraine Stewart

None on record

Mrs Karen Moore

None on record

Brenda Stewart

None on record

SONshine Club Kenya Project Annual Report

1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022

Specifically, The SONshine Club is involved with sponsoring children through their primary school years. Children are recommended for sponsorship on the basis of need. A network of regional committees made up of local representatives put forward the names of children who they believe are in greatest need. Once a child is taken unto the sponsorship programme they are expected to stay on the programme until they complete Standard 8.

Although Primary education is 'free' in Kenya families face the challenge of providing uniform.

Statement of Purpose

The SONshine Club Kenya Project was established as a charity in 2006 in order to raise funds in Northern Ireland for the relief of poverty, the furtherance of education and the provision of improved health care in the region of Tharaka in Kenya.

We are continuing with this work under the direction of five original trustees;

Patricia McConnell, Brenda Stewart, Karen Moore, Ian and Lorraine Stewart. There have been no additional trustees joining the charity.

Public benefits

The program aims to change the living environment of the most needy children through enabling them to have access to education, monitoring their standard of health, encouraging their economic awareness and provision and yet promoting self-reliance and self-respect. The immediate relief of poverty through the provision of food & health/hygiene awareness enables the children to attend school instead of being sent out to work. Obtaining even a basic education increases their opportunity to seek employment which in turn helps alleviate poverty for the next generation. We work in collaboration with local community groups and our projects also provide employment for some local (Kenyan) people. This is in line with the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development goals Nos. 1,2 & 7 which aims at eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education and ensuring environmental sustainability. People in NI can also benefit by having the opportunity to travel to Kenya with an experienced group on a supervised visit. This enables them to work alongside local Kenyan communities and in so doing, become aware of their particular cultural practices and the challenges facing rural communities in Kenya. Some people who have previously travelled to Kenya with us have returned and gone on to become involved in further charitable activities.

What your organisation does

Each year the primary school children receive a uniform and shoes to ensure that they are able to attend school and receive a standard of education that will give them a hope for the future. Each family with a sponsored child is also enrolled in the national health insurance scheme, NHIS, which covers the costs of outpatient care and routine medical examinations. This has proved more cost effective than the annual medical check-up. One of our major ongoing successes is the Goat Rearing Project. We have a large herd of pedigree goats housed on our farm land in Tharaka. We draw from this herd to supply children with goats to rear. Numbers of the families group together in order to form a small local herd. As the goats grow and produce offspring the families can trade these goats and use the monies raised to improve their circumstances.

We continue to supply a range of gifts which differ from year to year e.g. mattresses, mosquito nets, solar lamps, water tanks and this could vary from region to region depending on requirements. So far we have built and equipped a primary school in a remote area, built and equipped a medical clinic, supplied two boreholes and a well for the provision of clean water, supplied pipes for irrigation projects, built homes for very needy families and enabled many local people to access urgent or emergency medical treatment. We also supplied two containers full of equipment, including two land-rovers, which are being used to provide mobile medical provision in a remote area. A large generator is now being used to provide power for a local hospital. The extensive range of tools are being used to equip several technical colleges for the education of local young people. Currently we are developing a farm project in an area which is routinely affected by drought and famine. The farm will supply food to the local population as well as providing employment for some local workers. There is also an educational element where local people are being introduced to sustainable farming methods.

- Trustees

Contact details

Beneficiaries

The SONshine Club Kenya project works solely in the area of Tharaka, Kenya. This area contains pastoral land, agricultural land and semi-arid land. The majority of our beneficiaries are primary school aged children of impoverished families. These children are supported through a sponsorship programme. The sponsors are individuals, families and organisations within Northern Ireland. The children are recommended for sponsorship by a locally based committee who assess who are the most needy within their community.

Other beneficiaries are a small group of elderly residents of the Gatagani region of Tharaka. These elderly live close to the SONshine Farm and benefit from occasional supplies of free food from the farm.

A primary School at Gatagani also benefits with occasional supplies of free food from the farm. The type and amounts of these food supplies depend upon the growing season and the productivity of the farm.

The charity employs an Office Manager, and Administration Assistant, a Farm Manager, three farming staff, a livestock manager and a cook. All of these are local Kenyans and benefit from the paid employment.

Public Benefit

The most obvious benefit to the children is the opportunity to attend school and obtain an education. Although primary school education is free in Kenya there are many 'extra' costs involved which poor families are often unable to meet. Our sponsorship programme ensures the children have uniforms and shoes for school.

There is a health benefit for the families of sponsored children as the entire family will be enrolled with the National Hospital Insurance Fund which provides out-patient treatment.

The supply of mosquito nets and solar powered lighting have another health benefit. The reduced incidence of malaria and the reduced incidence of burns from paraffin lamps are the immediate benefits.

An economic benefit accrues from the 'Goat Breeding' programme where sponsored children are supplied with high quality goats to enable them to collaborate with others and develop a breeding herd and thereby generate income by selling on the young goats. Families are encouraged to save this income to enable them to afford secondary education.

The employees benefit from work based health insurance.

Main Achievements

This reporting period was still seriously impacted by the Covid pandemic and this continued to have a major impact upon the work of The SONshine Club here in

Northern Ireland. There were no organised visits to Kenya, but thanks to the constantly improving communication facilities between here and Kenya there was a reasonably constant flow of information between the charity members here and the staff there. We commend the outstanding efforts of our staff to ensure that the programmes continued to provide the support needed by our sponsored children.

The farm continued to produce both agricultural crops and additional goats. The goat breeding programme is proving very successful and the staff are gaining great expertise in this area.

There is a general improvement to the road network around Tharaka but this is a slow process, therefore the vehicles continued to accumulate the 'scars' inflicted by virtual daily use on difficult road conditions.

Mitigation of harm.

All our work with the children is carried out with the full knowledge and approval of the relevant Child Education Authorities and the Child Protection Authorities. The staff are aware of and adhere to all applicable Kenyan regulations for the safeguarding of children.

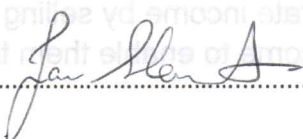
The staff are also aware of and adhere to applicable regulations concerning potentially vulnerable adults.

Private benefit


There is no private benefit accrued by any persons in Northern Ireland.

Statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Signed: 

Dated: 12.3.24

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