

Bethel Community Outreach Northern Ireland - End of Year Report 2023/24

Child Sponsorship

It is obvious as in previous reports the current economic climate is still a cause for concern. As it is having an effect on child sponsorship programmes for many charities, none more so than our own charity however we remain reasonably optimistic thanks mainly to our faithful sponsors

Child Sponsorship

A special word of thanks to all our child sponsors and to those organisations that helped in any way to improve those lives in Uganda, we cannot do it without your help, especially in what has been another difficult year for everyone

To date the charity has raised an amazing £135,351.70 for the work in Uganda since its formation in 2010.

The increase in sponsors now helps a total of 93 students and donations shows again the importance in keeping sponsorship awareness of our work to the forefront here in N.Ireland and the UK.

Total number of givers

Last year was the best financial intake in the history of the charity with an income of £17920 beating the previous highest in 2018-19 of £15074.50. However this financial year has seen the total income money go down from £17920 in 22-23 to £ £16678.70, a reduction of £1241.30 but it still remains the second highest intake on record.

This year saw 5 new sponsors added to our books, balanced by 3 of our sponsors having become inactive during this financial period.

The decrease in sponsors and therefore donations shows again the important part played by Bishop Samuel Kawalya in keeping sponsorship awareness to the forefront during his visits to us here in N.Ireland and the UK and therefore keeping the balance a positive one

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Projects

The ongoing building targets at the Bethel Learning Centre in Masaka continue Bs. Samuel and his teaching staff have worked hard to deliver an education for the many needy children. They continue to delivered a schooling programme through dedication and commitment in very difficult circumstances with limited resources

The primary five classroom was constructed in December 23 and a new chalkboard mounted as well. It requires plastering, flowering and shuttering to complete which has since been completed in January 24

A previous project saw 4 acres of land purchased for growing crops in order to provide food for the children at school has produced its first maize crop. Currently they are using some of the ground for a coffee plantation which will bring in an income when the plants mature.

This has proved very useful in providing food for the school and there feeding programme equating to 20% of the feeding budget.

The coffee is now ready for commercial harvesting despite a setback due to a plant infection. Hopefully a good income can now be generated over the next few years

Social Support to the Community

Through Bs. Samuel guidance we have been able as in previous years to support small numbers of families with essentials such as mattresses, blankets, food and a number of their children through “Feed My Lambs project” – kids feeding program

The “Wells of Life Project” still continues as we desire to provide fresh clean drinking water to as many communities as possible in conjunction NGO partners BCO Ug.

Pastoral activities

As always we continue to build up relationships with local Ministers and Pastors so when Bs. Samuel visits us again he is able to share his vision for the work in Uganda at their churches.

We know that these meetings open up opportunities to ask if they would consider sponsoring a pastor, a teacher, children or a project in Uganda. Thankfully many over the years have responded to the call in various ways.

This is again is an area we hope to support more in the future, at present our main aim is to reach our target of 200 hundred sponsors for the children’s education programme.

Our continued aim is to improve our strategy both in the short, medium and long term in whatever way we can. There is a growing need to house orphan children at present and it would be an ambition to help build a small orphanage with our NGO partners BCO Ug.

Conclusions

In summing up the BCONI 2023/24 year Robin McAleese (Sec) concluded that even in what has been a difficult and challenging time it in the last few years it had been another reasonably successful year for the charity in particular the number of small but needed projects finally completed.

With the aim to find more child sponsors and our commitment to the projects foremost in our thoughts and prayers

Closing comments

Robin McAleese (Sec) concluded the report by thanking Kenneth Wilson (Chair) Wesley Kerr (Tres) for their help and continued support over the past year and previous years.

Trustees present

Kenneth Wilson (Chair) Robin McAleese (Sec) Wesley Kerr (Tres)
Friday 26th April 2024 @ 2 Castlehill Close Ballymoney Co. Antrim BT53 6RP