

OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH HARPENDEN

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP UPDATE ON PROJECTS

APRIL – NOVEMBER 2018

1. LUKOME PARISH CENTRE, GULU, NORTHERN UGANDA

After a donation of a further £850 for additional plumbing work and materials, including an electric pump and fencing, the work to construct the tank was completed in May ; however a crack in the structure developed , which meant that the tank was unable to retain rainwater . At a cost of £120 ,we consulted an external , independent engineer to visit the site ,review the first phase of the project, and recommend what was needed to make the tank operational and sustainable . We agreed to follow his recommendations and enlisted the support of the International Refugee Trust , and their partner organisation in Uganda , the Organisation for Community Action to manage the conclusion of the project . The work costing an additional £3261 was completed in October. Even though the project cost more than originally envisaged , the capacity of the tank is five times more than originally planned at 100,000 litres as against 20,000 litres and with what is now in place the community should have a reliable source of clean water. The final report from OCA concluded that “the work looks professionally done and has raised a lot of hope for the community”



Water tank repaired and ready for use



Left to right: Jimmy (independent engineer) , Fr. David and Richard (OCA lead) after inspecting the completed work

2. DROWNING PREVENTION AND WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME, THAILAND

In our March meeting, we agreed to donate £4000 to Safe Child Thailand to help roll out its Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Programme to an additional Thai province, Phetchabun, which is a poor province with almost 1 in 4 people living below the poverty line. Drowning is a leading cause of child death in Asia, and the Thai Ministry of Health estimates that over one thousand, three hundred children drown each year because they cannot swim. The programme aims to equip children with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent drowning through providing swimming lessons, water safety measures and basic first aid. The programme initially focused on disadvantaged children in Chiang Mai, providing a 15-hour course at a cost of £11 per child. Safe Child Thailand's local partner organisation on the initial programme was the Chiang Mai rotary club, and they are coordinating the roll out through rotary chapters in Phetchabun. In supporting the roll-out to Phetchabun, our donation should provide the course for over three hundred and fifty children. The programme was delayed by the intensity of floods in Thailand and with preparatory work now underway, the programme should be running by February 2019

3 JUST SMALL CHANGE, KISUMU , KENYA

A big thank you comes from Just Small Change for all the support the Parish has given them. Just Small Change organises a programme in Kisumu, Kenya, where it works with a local Catholic Non-Governmental Organisation, Our Lady of Perpetual Support (www.olpskenya.org). The Just Small Change tagline 'Overcoming livelihoods, overcoming poverty one small business at a time' summarises their work. They reach out to the vulnerable women (and occasionally men) who are poor, widowed, frequently uneducated and often sick (due to HIV) and who not only bring up their own children but orphans from other family members as well.

In June'18 the DWG provided £2,850 for 25 people to have 5 days of business training and a loan of £75 each which they have to start paying back after the first month 'grace' period.

The majority of those trained already had a small existing business. The business training has helped them to grow their businesses into a sustainable source of income to provide for their families' needs whether it be education, transport to school, health, better nutrition or housing. Others were able to start their first business.

We have received wonderful feedback from Just Small Change: Emily's husband ran away and left her with 5 children under 13. The training and loan have helped her to sell more rosaries and other beadwork so life is less of a struggle (see picture). Other businesses include selling Bean Stew in new metal bowls and fruit and veg (Alice); Using digging skills to now have a vegetable garden (Loice); And being able to afford to sell nutritious Maize and Beans rather than Fried Bread (Quinter) with plans to sell clothes too.

The DWG will be supporting the training of another 25 women early in 2019.



4 . FUTURE PROJECTS - COLUMBAN MISSIONARIES, AYACUCHO, PERU

The DWG plans to support the Columban Fathers again with a Project in Ayacucho, Peru. Anaemia and Malnutrition are major problems in this area for children under 3 as they cause the children to become sick and prevent normal growth. This affects their development in the future.

This project will improve the condition of the 'Centre for the Control and Promotion against anaemia and malnutrition' which is currently very poor and run down. At the Centre the Health Worker and staff provide training for mothers to help them improve their food and hygiene skills for children.

The Project also includes equipping a Reading Club in the local primary school where children can be helped with their reading and homework. And finally equipping a Meeting Room where the newly formed Children's Committee can meet and discuss the needs of the children within the local area eg. a safe play area.

As soon as the funds become available the DWG plans to send £1,290 to support this project.



5 . FUTURE PROJECTS - SHAMROCK SCHOOL, NEPAL

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. The school was founded as a trust in 2006 to help educate some of the poorest of its future citizens to become doctors, engineers, nurses, teachers and politicians. We were put in touch with the school manager , Andy Ryder, through an ex- parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes who had been visiting Nepal and had been taken to see the school. He was very impressed with what it was achieving.

Their challenge is to finance the school sustainably up to Year 12 although they would like to extend this but at the moment finances have limited this option. A few pupils go abroad to either finish their studies or work but most stay in Nepal. Often grateful ex-pupils return to the school to help and to pass on what they have learned. Their salaries provide money for their continuing higher education.

The school has just built two classrooms for which they have received funding but would be very grateful for funds to buy some furniture for them. Costs of the furniture were provided and we have received photos of both school and the furniture. In September we agreed to provide the money and it will be sent when funds from our various sources become available.



6 . FUTURE PROJECTS : MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE FAVELA CHILDREN OF BRASILIA

Through themed events , we intend to support the Recycling Sounds Institute (IRS), a Brazilian charity which teaches music to children in Brasilia who live around the largest rubbish dump in Latin America where many of their parents work. The money donated at these events will be used to buy stringed instruments for the children. There is no public funding so the children rely completely on donations.

A parishioner, Carole Cox earlier this year visited her daughter Rosie who now lives in Brasilia. She reported back to the Developing World Group (DWG) that, in the slums on the city's outskirts, the children hang about in groups and many of them get into trouble. A few years ago, some public spirited citizens got together to raise money to start a string orchestra for these children. Money was soon collected to buy violins and cellos, a music teacher was engaged and the orchestra was established. These greatly disadvantaged children develop self respect, acquire musical skills and learn to play as a team. Carole attended a wonderful concert given by the orchestra when she was there.