

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP

PROJECT REPORT FOR 2020



The Group funded a number of projects aimed at improving health, education and training in some of the most disadvantaged communities in Africa. Several were temporarily delayed by lockdown restrictions brought in to control the global coronavirus pandemic.

1	NZARA, SOUTH SUDAN	INCUBATOR FOR PREMATURE BABIES
	<p>In January 2020, the Comboni sisters, who run the St Therese mission hospital in Nzara, purchased a new incubator for premature babies with funds we had donated at the end of 2019 through the International Refugee Trust. Many babies are born early and in poor health in the region due to the appalling conditions their mothers endure during pregnancy and the incubator will support them through the critical period after their birth. The link below tells the story of triplets who were born in the maternity unit.</p> <p>https://rurugene.com/birth-of-triplets-in-nzara-county-seenas-a-blessing-after-the-brutal-murder-of-three-siblings-in-juba</p>	

2	OKWEDEROT PARISH, UGANDA	BOREHOLE
	<p>In February 2020, we donated £4,435 to the International Refugee Trust (IRT) to fund a borehole in Okwederot parish, northern Uganda. It will address the key problem for the local community of a lack of clean water, which leads to people using unsafe water sources thus exposing individuals to deadly diarrhoeal diseases, intestinal worms, cholera, typhoid, and yellow fever. They also suffer physical exertion collecting water from long distances. It is predominantly women and children (particularly girls) who collect the water, hence losing valuable time from vital domestic or income generating work and the children sacrificing their education. The installation was delayed by lockdown restrictions and then by heavy rains in the area, but was finally completed in November.</p>	

3**KISUMU, KENYA****BUSINESS TRAINING & MICROFINANCE**

We sent £2,850 in July 2020 to support a further phase of a programme in Kisumu, Kenya, where Just Small Change (JSC) works with a local Catholic Non-Governmental Organisation, Our Lady of Perpetual Support. They reach out to vulnerable women who are poor, widowed, frequently uneducated and often sick (Kisumu's HIV rate is 20%, three times the national average) and who not only bring up their own children, but orphans from other family members as well. The programme provides 5 days of business/financial training, small loans (£75 on average for first post training loans) and mentoring so that sustainable businesses can be developed. The income from them enables the women to feed/educate their children, plan for the future and, using their business training, to establish community groups. Due to coronavirus restrictions on travel and public gatherings, the training has been postponed to 2021 Q2/Q3. JSC's impact analysis report is available at <https://www.justsmallchange.org.uk/Reports> The picture below shows Caroline, a JSC client since 2017, working on her sisal rope business.

**4****ZIMBABWE****SANITARY KITS FOR SCHOOLGIRLS**

In February 2020, we donated £487 to a local charity, North Herts Team UK (Days for Girls), to provide and distribute 50 reusable sanitary kits to schoolgirls in Malawi, as well as a press for the Team for making them with. The girls would otherwise miss school during their monthly menstrual periods. The original plans for the distribution had to be abandoned due to coronavirus restrictions, so the charity collaborated with the Ratidzo trust to distribute the kits to girls in Zimbabwe instead. This was carried out in November.

5

NORTHERN UGANDA

EQUIPMENT FOR MOYO BABIES' HOME

In December 2020, we donated £1,650 to the International Refugee Trust (IRT) to enable the Sacred Heart Sisters who run the Moyo Babies' Home in northern Uganda to replace machinery and equipment (a paste grinding machine, strimmer and chain saw) which were beyond repair. This will save the costs of hiring equipment and labour. It will thus release funds to help the babies and children in the home, most of whom have been displaced from South Sudan and other parts of northern Uganda.



6

ZAMBIA

STARTER KITS FOR NEW BUSINESSES

In December 2020, we donated £900 to Workaid which we had pledged to them earlier in the year as part of the Big Give Christmas Challenge fundraising campaign. Workaid will provide starter kits - for example tool kits - to graduates from Youth Resources Centres (YRC) in Zambia so that they have the equipment that they need to start businesses. Workaid will supply more than 1,200 starter kits in total to 3,500 YRC graduates to enable them to set up businesses in small teams, thus helping them to escape poverty.

Meet Masika Rose
The training I obtained in sewing and garment cutting has supported me to begin a small business. I have managed to pay for my two children's school fees and their food as a single mother. The sewing machine I received from the YRC, and ongoing help from Maurice after I graduated, have really given me hope.



FUNDRAISING

The restrictions on having social events, given the Covid pandemic, meant that the Group was only able to hold one fundraising event, a Plant Sale, as compared with six in 2019. However, thanks to the generosity of parishioners and their friends, £9,870 was raised to fund DWG projects in 2020. The money came from standing orders, cash/cheque donations of £6,457 (including a donation from the Banish the Blues Supper organised by the Ladies Group), the annual Green Box collection which raised £1,204 and an HMRC gift aid rebate of £968. In addition, a further £1,241 was raised from the Plant Sale and the sale of Christmas Cards.



The Group decided to work with the High Street Methodist Church (HSMC) to organise Harpenden's first Jigsaw Puzzle Festival, which will take place on 4-5 June 2021. Hundreds of completed jigsaws will be displayed, which can be viewed/bought, and refreshments will be available. HSMC will donate half the overall proceeds to Azalea, a Luton-based charity which reaches out to those trapped in sexual exploitation, supporting them to build new lives away from violence and poverty. The DWG will donate the remaining half to Workaid. Workaid is a Chesham-based charity, which collects unwanted tools, refurbishes them and then ships them to training centres, prisons and self-help organisations in some of the world's most disadvantaged communities. The donation will help fund the shipping of refurbished tools in containers abroad to such organisations.

The DWG section (under Parish Groups) of the Parish website sets out information about the Group (objectives, projects, history, etc.) whilst the Parish Newsletter provides short updates. Should you have any ideas on the Group's work e.g. projects to support, or wish to join, please contact Jon Carr at jonlcarr@gmail.com. If you wish to donate via a standing order and/or register for Gift Aid please see the DWG Finance page on the parish website or contact Noel Whittle at noel.whittle@btinternet.com

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS SUPPORT IN 2020