

Chair's Report May 2023

This report spans the period from the date of our eight and last AGM, November 2021, to today, 25th May 2023. As we have not held meetings as often as we would have liked, I have written a summarised two-phase report for information.

During this period, two visits were made to The Gambia by Trustees' representatives: in March 2022 and February 2023. During the whole period the Trustees continued to be in regular contact with our two clinical advisors (CATs) Chernor K JALLOW and Lamin NJIES who are our major link to Bendon Bursary beneficiaries. They closely monitor expenditure and assist the Treasurer with timely money transfers to The Gambia. Our Secretary has continued to keep EasyFundRaising high on the agenda and kept supporters updated.

EasyFundRaising continues to be an important contributor to the Charity so thank you to all our supporters. TK of ReviveMyDevice, Brockley, has also contributed significantly through his technical support in reconditioning laptops and phones generously donated by aidgambia TCHC supporters. TK charges cost price and does not charge for labour and is always interested in photos and news from The Gambia. As Chair, I would like to end this report by thanking all the aforementioned; aidgambia-TCHC could not maintain its present programme of activities without their continuing support.

November 2021 - November 2022

As in my last report, I will bullet point actions in the two phases that this report relates to:

- Extension of Bendon Bursaries; see attached list (xls) for full details
- Regular updates and contact facilitated by our two CATs
- Visit by two Trustees in March /April 2022. During that time meeting of Trustees with all Bursarians coordinated by the CATs. It was a very successful meeting - especially at the end when they were presented with reconditioned laptops. That was a complete surprise and they were extremely grateful.
- During the March / April visit the first aidgambiaTCHC Youth Health Cup took place between the two football academies we support - Avic Football Academy and Yarambamba Football Academy. The match was between U10s age group and was a fantastic success. It was reduced to 30 minutes each half because the boys were on Ramadan fast and even though the match kicked off early, it was still pretty hot! After a presentation by Lamin in his professional role as Clinical Advisor to the Trustees on the benefits of maintaining a healthy life style and the importance of health in terms of sport performance and mental health and the distribution of some pamphlets, the Youth Health Cup was presented by a local dignitary to Yarambamba who won a tightly contested game 1-0. Each player of both squads was presented with a ribboned medal to mark the occasion and they all celebrated in style.
- Lamin graduated from The American University of West Africa in May 2022. Trustees were delighted to receive many photos of his graduation ceremony. It was a long haul ...4 years so, well done Lamin and we are proud of his success!
- Supporters of the Charity and TK of ReviveMynDevice Brockley, enabled the provision of laptops to all Bursarians

November 2022 - May 2023

- EasyFundRaising continues to grow.so far we have raised over £1000.
- Trustee representatives visited The Gambia in January/ February 2023. A meeting was held with the two CATs, Cheror and Lamin, in which future plans re sustainability were unlined.
- At the meeting Trustee reps confirmed the following:
 - The Charity would continue to support both new Bendon Bursarians and maintain existing bursary commitments, hardware renovation and Youth Health football initiatives
 - Continue to support the two football academies with relevant equipment
 - Trustees will not initiate new projects but will be receptive to ideas communicated via CATs. It was noted that 'Our Lives' (Widening Participation Schools project) initiated by Trustees and enthusiastically received at meeting with Bursarians during previous visit had not been taken up.
- Replacement laptop taken to Chernor - his damaged one returned to UK. One outstanding laptop passed over to Jassy Marong (Bursarian).
- Sports equipment (footballs, training bibs and cones) handed to both football academies (very enthusiastically received) and met with AVIC Academy Director Bas Bessane to discuss future tournament.
- As a one off non-Charity action, Trustee reps took decision to extend phone distribution to others identified as a need at a time when The Gambia is Economically challenged, Three reconditioned phones were distributed to the delight of Awa, Abdullah and Karfa (this is a matter of note and information only).
- Trustee reps identified issues re medication which will be raised at next meeting to agree potential of identifying the drugs needed. Recognition that paracetamol, ibuprofen and naproxol always well received but perhaps with medical support could identify other medicines e.g. for high blood pressure – very common in The Gambia.

Actions from two phases noted for discussion.

1. Continue to take on new Bursary applications, extending current female cohort and also consider short courses
2. Continue to gather and recondition laptops and phones
3. Be flexible re health-related expenditure e.g. medicine kitty for visits
4. Sponsor further Youth Health Cup football matches
5. Need progress on Website
6. Discussion needed re Our Lives Project. To date we have received 4 brief stories. Need to decide whether to pursue, publish or shelve. A publication would be good for UK fundraising activity....
7. Need for Trustees to discuss and agree focus of aidgambia-TCHC for 2023-2025 given ages of Trustees. Proposal by Chair ...Maintenance and sustainability rather than an extension of activity. This has been raised with the CATs.