



Spring 2020

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1115766

AFRICA GREATER
LIFE MISSION UK

Forced Change & Great Disappointment

The trustees of AGLMUK were notified, not long before we set off for our annual visit to Bulabakulu that Wakiso Children's School of Hope would not be opening for the start of the new academic year in February. It had been unilaterally decided that the school would be abandoning the Ugandan Government curriculum in favour of an international scheme known as Accelerated Christian Education (ACE). This decision was communicated to all parents (and then AGLMUK) at the end of the previous year in November 2019. This came as a complete surprise and raised all sorts of

questions - particularly around the financial viability of introducing a scheme that requires much more staff and material resources.

As a result of the prior notification we weren't expecting to see a school full of children (although we were told that it would be opening in March) but what we actually found was a school without even furniture - and dormitories without beds! There were a few families living at Bulabakulu and even some people that were nominally on the payroll of AGLM (not AGLMUK). You can imagine the reaction of the trustees and fellow team members. BUT - all is not lost by any means

Sponsored Primary School Children

Having been notified of the changes, the trustees, with the advice of Joseline and Barry, had already moved the 30 sponsored children to a new school which is known as Wakiso Town Primary School (Watops). It has 290 children in total but 210 of those are day scholars. "Our" 30 make up a significant proportion of the boarders.

The AGLMUK party visited Watops early in our visit and later returned to lead a couple of lessons, deliver football kit and other resources, and fit mosquito nets. We were very encouraged by the quality of the teachers and management of this well-established school and look forward to a few years of constructive partnership.



Tim and Sarah leading a song



Watops greeting for our party



Harriet and Joseline

Watops deputy and head teachers

AGLMUK - A Few Facts and Figures

Particularly in light of the disappointing news referenced above, it is probably important to reflect on the achievements of AGLMUK and its army of magnificent supporters - so here are a few reminders of what has been achieved. The Trust was founded and registered with the Charity Commission in August 2006. Over that 14 years:

- **Hundreds have received primary education (often including food & lodging)**
- **120 have received at least some secondary education**
- **38 have completed A levels**
- **14 on or completed university courses**
- **54 in or completed vocational courses/apprenticeships**

The Team in Uganda

AGLMUK would have been completely lost without the services of Barry Atugonza - known to many as "Uncle Barry". He has been our man on the ground for many years now and provides wise counsel to both AGLMUK trustees and all of the post-primary age young people.

Joseline was a teacher at Wakiso Children's School of Hope when Chris and Andy first visited in 2005. She was soon made headteacher. The birth of her first child coincided with the start of a period of management upheaval at the school as Joshua withdrew to concentrate on his Church. Joseline lost her headteacher role but AGLMUK never lost its very high opinion of her. She now looks after the sponsored primary children - as well as co-pastoring Praise Arena Church with her husband, Jude.

Harriet has been nurse at Bulabakulu for as long as we can remember and has always worked very well with Jessie. She completes the team.

For the moment, at least, AGLMUK has been granted continued use of the clinic and two adjacent rooms at Bulabakulu. These rooms will be used by the team as a base where students can assemble before and after term-times.



Harriet, Barry and Joseline

This will also serve as accommodation for sick children that are removed from school.

The Continued Need for Finance

Whilst you will know that AGLMUK trustees have taken the decision to undertake a gradual withdrawal, there is a continued need for money for many years to come. There are around 100 children and young people being supported by AGLMUK at present and this number will only gradually reduce. Thirty of that number, for instance, are only at primary school stage - and the intention is to see them through to responsible independent young adults. We need money for school fees, requirements such as books, toilet rolls, pencils, mosquito nets, laptops, apprenticeship fees, university fees and living costs, small business set-up costs and a host of



32 young people came to eat with us at our guest house on our recent trip. Whilst some of them were still at university many were now independent. They loved catching up with us, and each other.

other essentials. There is no end to the demand and Chris was having to say "I'm sorry, but we don't have the money for that" very many times every day on our recent visit. For instance, although the school was not operating there were several families living at Bulabakulu. Whilst they were living rent free, they had little or no income. We

took the decision to allow Barry to buy basic food for these families until they either move on or are paid a salary.

AGLMUK is not going to be taking on a whole lot of new projects but there is a very great need for finance to simply complete what we have started!

Credit Union for AGLMUK "Graduates"

There is a time in the life of every AGLMUK supported young person when they are told that there can be no more financial provision for them. This is tough but necessary. Uncle Barry is still around to provide advice but the supply of money is not endless. We used this newsletter before to talk about credit unions and we are very supportive of such initiatives as they encourage saving and provide affordable loans (for purposes approved by the committee of the union). Barry, Joseline and Joshua (one of the first to be sponsored through secondary school and now working for a bank) had decided that they would like to form a credit union for those that had been through the AGLMUK programme. The idea was launched at the meeting referenced in the photograph above and Joshua was kept busy after the meeting taking down the names of those that expressed an interest. AGLMUK supporters are likely to offer to kick-start the union by making grants of money that can be used for loans in the period before member's savings build up.

“Our” Henry Starts a School of his Own

Henry completed his primary education at Bulabakulu in 2009 at the age of 18. He was always involved in drumming, traditional dancing and started the choir there. For a while he went into schools, teaching traditional dance and was trained in drum making and repairs.

In the last 3 years he has started his own primary school with some parents in the area where he now lives.

It was a delight to visit him and catch up after such a long time. You can see from the picture that the school is a very basic structure - built by Henry. There are around 50 children and last year four sat and passed Primary 7. The government understandably want to see structural improvements but are letting them operate at the moment.



Henry with his wife and 2 of his 3 children outside the school

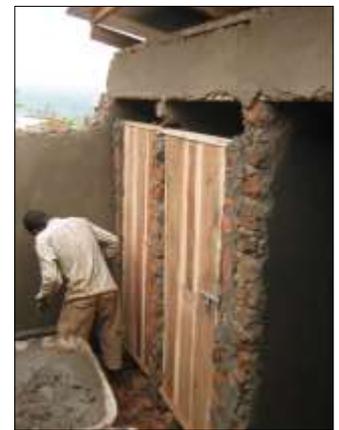
Urgent Repairs to Local Houses

Some of the families known to AGLMUK were seen to have urgent repairs necessary on their homes—and no money with which to undertake them. One such repair was Harriet’s toilet. The underground bit (the long-drop) was fine but the structure above it was leaning alarmingly. The doors didn’t fit anymore and collapse was only a matter of time. Local builders were hired to remove the old structure - a process that didn’t take long, and replace it with a much improved version.

The other house to be fixed involved fixing leaks in the corrugated iron sheeted roof, blocking up holes in a door to prevent snakes getting through and rendering the walls of one of the two rooms.



*Harriet's Toilet
Before demolition and
during reconstruction*



Community Clinic



It has been our practice for many years to run a health check on all of the children at the school as part of our visit. For years this was undertaken by Jessie and Harriet but over the last few years GPs from Llandrindod had joined us. The visiting team this year had no less than 3 doctors and a nurse. We still ran health checks on the 60 or so children and young people being sponsored through schools by AGLMUK but there were around 170 less children around than usual.

Harriet put the word around the local community that free health checks were available on a couple of days and, not unsurprisingly, quite a few people turned up to take advantage.

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Go to
www.everyclick.com

You can find ways of supporting and donating to AGLMUK - some that don't cost you a penny.



AGLMUK has a facebook page! We produce 2 newsletters a year but hope to be able to post more frequent updates on Facebook. We think if you just search for AGLM UK on facebook you should find it.

No Trip in 2021

As we stated in the Autumn newsletter there will be no trip by trustees in 2021. There are presidential elections due at around the time that we usually visit and it is commonly thought that this might be a time of unrest. President Museveni has been in power a very long time and the young people in particular often think it is time for change. It is likely that change won't come without significant resistance from the current incumbents. We should probably pray that Uganda will be well-governed and that there will be no violence.



THANK YOU to anyone and everyone that has contributed in any way during 2019/20.



Team of 2020

Back Row: Meriel, Patrick, Tim, Simonne, Ian, Toby

Front Row: Sarah, Andy, Chris, Jessie, Gill

Open Evening and Talks

There will be an AGLMUK open evening at Holy Trinity, Llandrindod at 7pm on Saturday 18th April. Please come along. It has been a time of great change and we can't get everything into the newsletter!

Delivery on behalf of "Legs4Africa"

Jessie and Tim came across a "Legs4Africa" stand at an event that they were attending. It appears that this organisation collects formerly-used artificial limbs (and component parts for such) from the UK and provides them to suitable partners in Africa. They look for volunteers who are travelling to various countries to take them as part of their luggage allowance. Tim and Jessie volunteered and duly picked up two full suitcases from Bristol.

The suitcases were delivered to the main state-run hospital of Kampala (Mulago) and a Leonard Cheshire Home, which was in the outskirts of the city. On both occasions the team was given a tour of the workshops that would be utilising the limbs.

