



IRFF UK 2021 ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT



NEW PROJECTS!

We have started supporting new projects in South Africa and Sri Lanka. Enjoy reading our 2021 update!

IRFF INTRODUCTION

In 2021, IRFF UK continued its support for projects in Uganda, Ghana, Congo and South Africa, and despite the spreading of the Coronavirus world-wide, the charity has added two more countries to its benevolent support: Sri Lanka and the Gambia.



UGANDA

Restrictions due to the pandemic hindered the projects in Uganda, but support was given to keep Destiny School, the Mobile Medical Team, the Girl Health and Support Project and WAIT Uganda running.

DESTINY JUNIOR SCHOOL – KIBIRI

Not until the end of February 2021, were schools allowed to partly re-open in Uganda. Before then, most of the funds sent over were used to feed the children and staff who came to the school for support.

As the end of March approached, the teachers had the task of preparing the pupils at Destiny Junior school to sit their Primary Leaving Examinations successfully which would take place on the 30th and 31st March 2021.



Following the Ugandan Government's plan of reopening schools in a phased manner, Primary five and six pupils were allowed back at the school. It was found that the children had deteriorated academically given the fact that they have been at home for a long period because of the pandemic, so a lot of effort was required by the teachers to get these children to the required standard. More reading materials were needed to support this. In addition, some of children's clothes and shoes were torn and in a bad state.



Thanks to funding from IRFF UK, the bore hole (below) was finally being repaired, thus enabling the school to have a constant supply of water once again.

Headteacher Jesca and the others teachers at Destiny Junior school also introduced skills training as part of the learning to help keep the children occupied during the lockdown and holidays.

These included liquid soap making, growing tomatoes and other vegetables, and arts and crafts etc.



By July and August, after some of the restrictions were lifted, further activities were carried out, both at Destiny Junior school and the other projects in Uganda.

Headteacher Jesca and the entire staff at the school have continued to involve the children in liquid soap making, tailoring, gardening and the growing of mushrooms.

The children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly as part of the conditions enforced by the Government. The activities of liquid soap making, tailoring and gardening continued at the school.



During the months of September and October, learning for the children continued, although not all of it was taking place at the school.

The teachers visit the community following up their pupils by giving them assignments, exercises/activities in work books, and setting tests for them. Some pupils came to the school to pick their work, or drop off their books for marking.

The school has been offering lunch to those children who dropped by, and after lunch, they occupied themselves in different activities like music, dance and drama. Other children in the community were included in these activities.



During the final two months of 2021, things started to slowly resemble normality. A new classroom was constructed at Destiny Junior school, after a difficult year experienced by both the children and teaching staff! Funding for the classroom came from the local Government, as well as from IRFF UK.



For the large part of the year, teachers have attended to the pupils by giving them assignments and activities in work books. A variety of tests have been administered. They have been marked and graded as the pupils' performance.

Excitedly, on the 15th December 2021, the non-classroom teaching came to an end! The pupils celebrated with a special meal prepared by the school; then, the teachers gave out the results. The school year came to an end, with the children staying at their homes, except those who lived with Head teacher Jesca!



The Government of Uganda has fully opened all institutions and term one in 2022 began on the 10th January, with all pupils now allowed to turn up for classes.

MOBILE MEDICAL TEAM



At the beginning of the year, the Mobile Medical Team (MMT) was in the process of acquiring letters from the different local authorities to enable them to visit the communities given that a lot of the Covid restrictions for movement within Uganda had been lifted.

The team made assessments and evaluations by visiting 15 households which received their services of jigger uprooting and treatment. Out of the 15 households that were visited, people in five of them were completely healed.

Two homes were in a promising state, only lacking a supporting hand. People in the other homes were in bad situation since it was a while that the MMT visited them. They required immediate attention. The team also discovered that the community had known about the impact of their services and yearned to receive them.

Kigulu Prime Academy (a partner school with a MMT) had placed a request to the authorities to visit some households that were in a pathetic condition. They were only waiting for permission from the authorities to be granted before they could go to them and offer services on behalf of I.F.F. Uganda.



However, in May, there was better news! The MMT managed to carry out activities for 2 days. They disinfected households, and gave out food items and medical supplies to needy families. The team taught the communities how to remove jiggers by themselves because due to the Covid 19 pandemic, they were instructed to observe Special Operating Procedures (S.O.P.s) whilst in the field.

Paul Isabirye and the MMT carried out further activities in rural areas of Uganda: removing jiggers from the affected people and offering them treatment; giving out food items and soap to the needy; and improving health and hygiene by sanitising homes in various communities.



In September and October, the MMT happily reported that the areas they had visited earlier and given treatment to, were very appreciative because many people were healed from jiggers and were observing proper hygiene. Three members of the I.F.F Uganda Working Board (Paul, Jesca and Tadeo) were able to join the MMT on one occasion! They then visited a new area outside the zone where they had been working in.

The MMT continued to also spray houses and beddings with pesticides and offer food and soap where it was needed.



WAIT UGANDA AND GIRL HEALTH & SUPPORT PROJECT



The MMT have said that generally, there has been an improvement in all the people they have given treatment to. However, they discovered that a good number get re-infected because they are living in the same conditions, like dusty floors and walking bare footed. Such families could not afford to buy pesticides to spray in their houses.



Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 situation in Uganda, it was hard to re-start these projects as face-to-face meetings were not permitted. As soon as the schools were partly re-opened, plans were made to resume most of the activities of WAIT Uganda and the Girl Health and Support Project.

Their programme began with teaching about sanitization, and giving guidance and counselling. This was intended to awaken the young people from immorality and bad habits developed from staying home for a long period of time. The team hoped to engage both the students planning to go back to school and those who dropped out.

In addition to giving counselling and guidance, the team also taught the youth how to make liquid soap as a sustainable project for them. Tadeo Buyinza led the sessions.



Later in the year, further sessions of counselling and offering guidance took place, as well as introducing liquid soap making to more youth in the community.

As another service to the community, Tadeo and the youth donated hand washing sets and liquid soap to the nearby prison, which were gratefully received!

On Christmas eve 2021, the team of volunteers donated 30 pairs of crock shoes to the orphans in Kago parish. They also gave out 2 hand washing sets and 3 bags of cement during the blessing the newly-constructed children's building. The team thanked priest Mayanja for his cooperation with the activities of the Girl Health and Support project.



In September 2021, some volunteers (Francis, Tadeo and Ruth) participated in a two-day workshop with facilitators from Kampala, teaching skills on how to make animal and chicken feeds which are cost friendly compared to concentrates. The team was grateful to acquire such skills.



GHANA - WAIT



In January 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic, WAIT Ghana decided to change its usual school activities to visiting communities where more youth, especially the girls, needed financial support in order to acquire a skill which would enable them to earn a livelihood.



In light of this development, WAIT Ghana decided to support a total of four girls in Vocational Training: pastries and cake decoration, bread making, dress making, and hairstyling. With the help of an Assemblyman, two of the girls were selected from Korleman (Monica and Priscilla) and the other two from Manchie community (Angelina and Zeliatu) in the Ga West Municipality, Greater Accra Region.

Initially the plan was to be carried out at Dedeiman, a community under the same Municipality but because other NGOs were operating there, we decided to choose Korleman and Manchie since these communities have almost no support from the outside.

A word from the team in Ghana:

“Thank you for your initial support IRFF UK. However, we wish to support more youth, and would like to have a vocational centre where the trainees of today become the trainers tomorrow!

“For this reason, WAIT Ghana would like to propose that in order for this support to be a sustainable one, there is a need to purchase a 20ft. container of a reasonable size with all the necessary equipment and materials which can be used as an office space for vocational training, especially in the sector of pastries, cake decor and bread making. In this way, the trainees today can also train other batch of girls in future which will greatly cut down cost. This will also serve to raise funds for the organization here in Ghana as pastries can be sold and the income used to cater for needs”.

GAMBIA

On the 21st November 2021, the Girls Empowerment and Skills Training Project was officially launched at Sukuta Nema, where parents of the girls and members of the community were invited to grace. The speakers at the opening ceremony were as follows; prayer lead by a religious leader, overview of the project by Cherno B. Cham (project coordinator), project activities and expectations by Musa Jaiteh (trainer), a remark by the VDC Chairman, a remark by the Sukuta Youth chairman and the assistant chairlady, and remarks by community elders and some parents.

Four days later, the training begun with all the girls present except two who were not able to attend. After two weeks of training, the girls were given their first test of the practical work which was to tie a material to make a rapper. After three days of tying trials the girls had their first experience of dying with natural dye and few chemicals. In order to motivate them, the girls were asked to take the rappers and use as samples. The performance of the girls became so impressive as the days went by. They later bought t-shirts to dye and sell at the Sukuta Week celebration.

As of now, the project is going on as expected and they are very much optimistic of a great success at the end of the four months. As the training continues, they will be selling the materials and will keep the money in an account. The girls will be signatories to it in order to enable them to receive loans without interest so that they could start their own business after the training.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

By March 2021 IRFF UK was happy to know that this project had become self-sufficient with their help, but then the local volcano exploded and destroyed most of the foundation built up in Goma. 2021 has seen further support given to the Hope for Children (HFC) project by IRFF UK to get them back to self-sufficiency.

During 2021, IRFF UK supported HFC by providing funds to purchase machinery and materials in order to produce pastry products that would be sold for a profit. Money was also raised to help support the 60 children now placed in foster homes.



SHINE - SOUTH AFRICA

ArtWorks for Youth in Port Elizabeth, began winding down from July but was still being supported for a while.

However, a new project to support, the SHINE literacy programme at Walmer School also in Port Elizabeth, emerged in September - a powerful way to inculcate a passion for learning in young pupils.

The Shine chapter operates in two bright yellow containers in a primary school ground in the middle of Walmer Township, a very, very poor area of South Africa. The children who attend do not pay any fees!

Because the curriculum stipulates that learners must be taught in English from Grade 4, Shine takes Grade 3 learners and immerses them in books and reading, with comprehension in English. Many kids have not heard any English at all.

"We have noticed a huge difference in the level of proficiency this year compared to 2019. These kids have not heard any English for one year as school closed because of Covid 19. Literacy levels at home will be very low with no books in the house at all.

"Before Covid 19, we had started a library at breaktime, and it was enormously popular. We would slip a Word Finder sheet inside the book and you would think the learner had won the lottery. We want to return to that level of interaction as soon as we can. We had 40 volunteers working over 6 sessions." Karen Jack, volunteer

At Shine, they do not have massive wish lists, but really need to fix windows, and to buy ink for printing and to have the means to run campaigns and projects, sometimes by request of the teachers. They also want to erect a new fence.



SRI LANKA

In 2021, IRFF UK started supporting Yasodara Specialised School in Sri Lanka, a school which educates and provides a skill set for disabled, deaf and blind children. It has many projects on hold and IRFF UK is their first new funder for some time.

The initial funds from IRFF UK were allocated to the purchase of tables and renovation of the dining hall. Further support may well be offered in the near future!



“Thank you and your organization, which, without your generous support we would not have been able to complete this much overdue work. Your kind and caring support has meant so much to our school in the time of need. Many Thanks!”

Mrs N.V. Kamala Siriyalatha, Principal of the Yasodara Specialised School



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS OVER THE PAST YEAR!

Incredible projects were supported by IRFF UK in Uganda, Ghana, DR Congo, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Gambia in 2021.

2022 promises to be even more exciting and IRFF UK is inviting volunteers to join us from anywhere in the world.

Please feel free to visit our website (www.irff-uk.org) to read about all the projects carried out by IRFF UK and to sign up to our newsletter, and also check out our Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/irff-uk) to see if you'd like to get involved or support any of our projects.

Thank You for all your support in 2021!