



December
2021

HELWEL TRUST NEWSLETTER

www.helweltrust.co.uk

supporting Rural Development Projects in
northern KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

2021 – the Good and the Bad

Despite all kinds of adversity (omicron variant being only the latest) our partners in KwaZulu-Natal have continued to deliver successfully the programmes we fund, and thanks to the continuing generosity of our Friends, we trustees have recently been able to commit to fund both TREE and ACAT in further three-year programmes of ECD practitioner training and Entrepreneurial Development, on the same scale as before. You can read some good news and see some examples of progress in this issue, in the context not only of pandemic and drought but also of the civil disturbances last July. I really feel that Helwel Trust has “made a difference” to many hundreds of people in rural KZN this year.

Andrew Pemberton (Chairman)



***Good - Happy faces
at the Toy Library
and in block production***

***Bad - ransacking in July
of TREE head office***

Early Childhood Development

TREE (Training & Resources in Early Education)

Since our last newsletter we have received both bad and good news from TREE. Everyone was fearful for TREE staff with the brief period of rioting and looting in Durban following, but not really justified by, the imprisonment of Jacob Zuma. It was so shocking to hear that this had extended to the TREE office and training centre, an organisation specifically helping Zulu communities and including Nkandla (Zuma's home district) where our current group of trainees are working. As most readers of this newsletter will have heard, the devastation was complete – literally nothing but the shells of the buildings was left.

So, what about the good news? This is surely the story of our wonderful partners in South Africa and our loyal supporters in the UK. A posse of volunteers cleared the debris in a few days and TREE staff somehow managed to keep going with vital administrative work from home. I was humbled to receive timely reports of our Early Childhood Development (ECD) trainees and the Community Toy library complete with photographs. The first priority was to get training going again. Fortunately our trainees were coming to the end of their course and they were only delayed by a couple of months finishing in September. They have now started on their **Sizanani** enrichment course of supervised practice and top-up learning and development over the next year, funded by Helwel Trust. Meanwhile structural repairs (even plumbing and electrics were stripped out) has continue apace with help from donors in SA and abroad. Now it is a matter of replacing furniture and other equipment as well as vehicles. How heartening that donors to the Helwel Hike have once again been huge generous and Helwel have been able to donate £10,000 towards this. Teresa Ngobese, Director in Durban, tells me that they are so heartened both by this and by the thoughts, prayers and support from Helwel. How on earth TREE are managing to continue training in these circumstances we are not sure, but they are! Even the office staff are having stand-up meetings because there are no chairs! As for Helwel trainees, our latest report

shows a lovely illustration of sheer determination from one of our previous cohort in Nkandla. The photographs demonstrate her progress with developing her ECD facility starting with a self-built hut. This also illustrates the real importance of recognised qualifications, thanks to the Helwel supported training by TREE, in enabling practitioners to access funding and infrastructure support.



*Cognitive development
at the Toy Library*

Our current group of 15 trainees are currently supporting 441 children. In addition, the community toy library near Nqutu extends these benefits to a wider population: in the words of our latest report “...supporting TREE programmes, local ECD sites and primary schools. It also exposes community members in general to different learning resources, that enhance lifelong learning and how parents can support children”. During the pandemic it has also been an effective hub in the distribution of food parcels.

The work goes on... **Rollo Clifford**

***Case study in the report from TREE about
Sinakhokonke Crèche in Nkandla district:***

*The crèche as seen
by Helwel Trust
on our group visit in 2019:*



Extract from most recent TREE report:



“TREE’s Sizanani programme, that further supports the practitioners beyond their first qualification, in partnership with Helwel Trust, has enabled the ‘ten thousand miles journey’ with this crèche. Other funders came on board and supported the crèche with this infrastructure.”

uKhanye Community Care Centre

Phyllis Sikhosana, who used to be a nurse at the Charles Johnson Memorial Hospital and now in her retirement is the Chair and mainstay of UCCC, sent a report for our AGM. The creche, in the Barker Memorial building, is doing very well. The new teacher is passionate and fully trained. Support has been secured from the Feed the Babies Fund for providing a healthy meal. A new group of TVET (Technical and Vocational Training) students are placed with UCCC this year and one is helping with the creche. Less good news is that there are the usual problems with bureaucracy and it's not been possible to get the required certificate to apply for sponsorships and funding for care of orphans and vulnerable children this year, but we have little doubt that these kids will nevertheless have been nurtured by this lovely community. More good news is that Covid related deaths and positive case are currently slowing down.

Carolyn Mowbray



Our uKhanye welcome party on the last group visit in 2019

Sustainable Households & Entrepreneurial Development

ACAT (Africa Co-operative Action Trust)

We are delighted to report that we are able to support ACAT for a further three years in their work in the Nqutu area of KZN. Furthermore, the brilliant success of the recent Hike has funded 36 water tanks.

The application from ACAT for a further funding stream is instructive: ACAT says that until the pandemic hit, the main challenges faced by households was access to water and stray livestock. With the pandemic, unemployment has soared across South Africa with the impact being greatest in the rural areas of KZN resulting in people's reduced buying power that directly affects entrepreneurs within ACAT's programmes (pre-pandemic 38% of the KZN population were living off less than £28 per month). This coupled with many COVID related deaths amongst parents, grandparents and pastors has resulted in a dramatic increase in child-headed households being supported by community members.

So much for the bad news. The good news is the impact that ACAT makes on addressing these issues.

Basic Life Skills courses have moved locally to prevent spread of infection. One person who joined an ACAT programme was Bongumusa Ngcobo who says, "My situation was very bad because I had just lost employment as a mine worker. I was not interested in agriculture, but I have seen that it is a way to produce food and income, and now I am fully involved in agricultural practices".





Meanwhile, Mr Ndlovu of Nkande zone joined the programme in 2020 because he “saw something interesting in other G5 members’ homesteads”. He wanted to acquire the same knowledge and skills in order to improve his own situation.

He says he wishes he had known about ACAT in his early life. He now has a thriving vegetable garden where he produces fresh vegetables for home consumption. He has also started a broiler production project where chickens are grown from day one up to 6 weeks old. He is working towards making his homestead sustainable. He says: “Previously I had no goal or vision, but today I am always thinking about how to improve my homestead. I am very interested in becoming a businessman who will help his community.”



In a land of drought and sudden heavy rainfall, the harvest of water is vital. ACAT have a scheme by which a loan is made to a community for a water tank with further loans being made following the repayment of the initial loan. With the loss of income generation has come the

inability to repay loans and the depletion of the water tank loan fund. On hearing the news of our grant for water tanks, Director of ACAT, Rick Phipson wrote, ‘..... we read about the GBP4500 from the proceeds of the Helwel Hike, which will go towards the water tanks fund, and are simply overwhelmed! Thank you, Helwel, very very much. Since this fund is administered as a subsidy of 50% of the purchase price of a water tank, this amount will benefit about 36 families in this coming year. We will inform our Field Team immediately, so that

the application process can start before the end of 2021, giving homesteads the best chance of starting to harvest rainwater before the end of summer’.

Thank you Helwel supporters for enabling us to play our very small part in helping our friends in KZN – it really does feel like the starfish story!

Liz Williams

Helwel Hike 2021

Dorset

It was absolutely wonderful that the easing of Covid restrictions enabled us to meet for a full Helwel Hike again in September 2021. We certainly made the most of enthusiastic reunions of old friends, loving the sunny weather in the magnificent Dorset hills. Rollo and Frances Clifford had planned an excellent route, starting from a lay-by in what seemed to be the middle of nowhere between Abbotsbury and Bridport and heading uphill for sweeping views over Chesil beach. Inevitably, following hike tradition, one dog was soon lost but rapidly found! Our route took us up and down hills and through woods. In one place we came upon the ruined St Catherine’s chapel with a little altar decorated with small mementos. After chasing off inquisitive cows, nearly



losing one of the hikers and finding three others who had been delayed in starting, we arrived for lunch in the courtyard of The Brewers Arms in Martinstown where we were joined by other Helwel supporters who had not been able to walk. With so much excitement on the walk we appreciated Robin Boston's additional shepherding on the walk. Some super-fit supporters continued with an extension of the walk but most continued the chatting over tea and cake in Rollo and Frances's beautiful garden.

Of course, the main reason for doing the hike was to raise funds for our partner charities in Zululand, in particular for ACAT to help rural farmers by subsidising water tanks and also for giving a donation to TREE for the essential initial repairs of their headquarters in Durban which were horribly damaged by rioters, following the political problems resulting from ex-president Zuma's time in office.

The sum raised is £12,249 – what an absolutely magnificent sum! A huge thankyou to all our donors and to new friends who joined us on the hike.

Carolyn Mowbray

Helwel Trust AGM

Held on November 12th 2021, via Zoom

Helwel Trust in “numbers” for financial year 2020-2021 (2019-2020)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| • Donor Income (including Gift Aid): | £44,896* | (£81,155**) |
| • Grants to programmes in KZN: | £41,782 | (£34,658) |
| • UK admin expenses: | £1,134 | (£1,122) |
| • Balance of funds at end of year: | £75,953 | (£74,023) |

**includes special appeal
to mitigate effects of pandemic*

***includes an exceptional
item of a £50,000 legacy*

From the Chairman's report:

"This year again we have had reports of drought and extreme weather events in Zululand, another confirmation of the effects of climate change. On top of that is the pandemic with its impacts on health and employment, resulting in yet more loss of livelihoods. In these difficult times we continue to be impressed by the resilience and activity of our partners TREE and ACAT who have managed to continue, albeit with some restrictions and delays, delivery of the programmes we are funding. TREE in particular suffered a shock in the destruction of much of their Head Office property, and they are a long way from being fully recovered; but the training of ECD practitioners has continued. We see from their reports that the Toy Library continues to be a success, now refreshed with some new equipment. Our friends at uKhanye have also had their challenges but continue strongly with their creche and with training of "TVET" students.

"I am really pleased that our income has held up for the last year, and that our Friends have shown such generosity, not only to support our regular programmes but also to support our Covid-related appeal last year and the appeal for TREE's recovery programme more recently. It is so good that we have flexibility to respond to circumstances whilst sustaining our core programmes. We have had some approaches from other NGOs working in KZN but we have decided not to form new partnerships that may divert resources away from our core programmes over the next three years.

"Finally, I thank you my trustee colleagues, for your work and your support, and particularly I thank those of you liaising with our KZN partners as there has been more communication needed than usual this year."

HELWEL TRUSTEES

At our November AGM we elected **Nigel Taylor** as a new trustee. Nigel worked at KwaNzimela many years ago and has subsequently followed a career in international development, holding positions in Tearfund and Oxfam, including some years in Southern Africa. Welcome, Nigel!

With great sorrow we pass on the news of the death of one of our former trustees, **Dr Bill Foster**. Bill worked for a time at the Charles Johnson Memorial Hospital. It was Bill, James Stuart and Howard Mowbray who started the Helwel Hike arising out of a request from James to 'sponsor' one of his children. Over the years the annual Hike has raised tens of thousands of pounds.

Make a donation to HELWEL TRUST

Online Donations: Our previous facility with Virgin Money Giving has come to an end, and we have chosen an alternative donation platform called **GoFundMe**, and created a target sum of £10,000 to raise through this channel.

To donate securely online, either for one-off gifts, or in response to fundraising events, please visit our website <http://www.helweltrust.co.uk/> where there is a link on the home page to our GoFundMe page. Alternatively, you can go to the Go Fund Me website and search for Helwel:

<https://www.gofundme.com/en-gb>

You can also use internet banking directly from your bank account to make one one-off donations or set up standing orders to our account, the details of which are as follows:

Sort Code: 20-33-83 (Barclays)

Account Name: Helwel Trust

Account Number: 90330264

Please put your surname (and event name if relevant) in the Reference. When you use internet banking please let Amanda Arthurton our donations secretary know if you can “Gift Aid” your donation (and have not already signed up for Gift Aid with us). Her contact details are given below.

We would prefer online donations rather than physical cheque; however, you can still post cheque donations to Amanda Arthurton, to her address at 18 Bellamy Street, London SW12 8BU. Again, please “Gift Aid” your donation if you can.

If you have questions, please write to Amanda, email her at amanda.arthurton@btinternet.com or call her on her mobile 07586 293 699.

Legacies: Please consider making a gift to Helwel in your Will. Please ask Amanda for more information if you need it.

Reminder: Shopping online for Helwel Trust

- Generating funds for Helwel Trust won't cost you a penny when you shop using the website www.thegivingmachine.co.uk. Online retailers, such as John Lewis, M&S and Amazon will make a donation to Helwel Trust every time you shop with them by this route.
- At www.justcardsdirect.com you will find a range of products, including cards for sale. 20+ charities, including Helwel Trust, benefit from the sales.
- Helwel Trust cards and envelope re-use labels are available to buy from Liz Williams: see our website for details : www.helweltrust.co.uk
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If you have received this newsletter by post or email and if you no longer wish to receive our Newsletters or Updates in future, please let us know by email (as above) or by post to Andrew Pemberton at The Grange, Selsley Road, N. Woodchester, Stroud GL5 5PJ Tel 01453 872813

For any information about **Helwel Trust**, please contact our Organising Secretary, Liz Williams at Swallow Barn, Common Road, Mitchel Troy, Monmouth NP25 4HZ Tel: 01600 711518 e-mail: helwel@outlook.com

If you would like to see a copy of our most recent submitted accounts, please visit the Charity Commission Website (www.charitycommission.gov.uk) and look up Helwel Trust (Registered No 271713).

**KZN Photographs taken by trustees and partners, thank you.
Edited by Andrew Pemberton.**

