



# BETTER LIVES FOUNDATION

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2019



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UK Charity No.: 1122290



The Trustees Annual Report for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 continues from the previous years' Annual Report of the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

## **HISTORY, AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE CHARITY**

Better Lives Foundation was established in 2006 and was registered on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2008. Our work continues in Sierra Leone and India, with likeminded volunteers. We have been working to improve health and education conditions and our aim is:

- To provide quality medical care and education to the needy leading to long term healthcare independence.
- To improve the condition of people's health
- To promote good health through education
- To work in partnership with charities, especially local organisations
- To raise standards of sanitation and hygiene
- To improve access to clean water
- To make all projects, self-sufficient, independent and self-supportive

## **MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

Our approach with our volunteers' base is to provide support totally free of charge for medical and educational needs. Our newly established Agriculture program has steadily grown with a team of 40 volunteers. Our team of international volunteers have a vast heritage and wealth of experience and happily meet their own costs. Administrative costs are minimal and donations received are used for our projects.

The Trustees and volunteers meet regularly to discuss existing projects and consider plans for any new projects.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE CHARITY**

This has been an exciting year for the Charity, achieving many milestones. We continued to help in rebuilding the Ebola affected areas of Yonibana. Our hospital, "Yonibana Sai Hospital" situated in Tonkolili District, is in one of the most economically productive parts of Sierra Leone. A district with more than 500,000 people in Sierra Leone, West Africa.



- A medical camp was planned for May 2018. The Pre camp meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> April was very well attended by past and new volunteers. Packing took place throughout most of the month of April 2018.
- Trustee Kiran Patel & I left for Sierra Leone on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April.
- A week later, the second Team of volunteers arrived, started consultation after having unpacked and set up their "work stations".
- The 3rd Team of volunteers got stuck in, treating patients with a multitude of ailments.
- Unfortunately, there was a marked increase in malnourished children as local resources have been scarce since the Ebola outbreak.
- 2018 First Baby was delivered by myself (exactly 30 years after my own son was born!!) and Roselyn, our matron, baby weighing in at a very healthy 7lbs. The baby has been named "Devi" by the parents. Humbling honour indeed.
- The May Medical Camp was a tremendous success after the long break due to the Ebola outbreak since June 2014. The team consisted of 23 volunteers from the UK and supported by the local team of volunteers from Yonibana. Some of the results are:





- 6,569 - Patient Consultations
- 955 – Malaria Tests
- 131 – Adult Positives
- 306 – Children Positive
- Over 55 Malnourished Babies & Children



• During the first couple of weeks, we were already making a difference. A set of twins came in severely ill and malnourished in early May 2018 and by August 2018 they were making tremendous progress. The Malnourished children treated in our clinic were given milk and plumpynut paste (Peanut Butter) on a weekly basis and monitored regularly.

• Our Outreach program continues in the various surrounding villages identifying and treating malnourished children amongst other ailments.

• All teams are making sure hospital is kept clean and tidy at the end of each day upholding our International Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols.

• Training continued in the afternoons with improved positive results.

• Koosje Kosters, one of our volunteer, produced a few good videos and shared them on social media. This attracted more interest. Her students, trained in Physiotherapy, started to put their knowledge to good use.



- Hospital continued to stay open 3 days a week by SL qualified Volunteers following the May Medical Camp, under the management of Dr. Foday Fofanah. BLF Sponsored students now qualified, included Community Health Officers (CHO's), Community Health Assistants (CHA's), MCH Aids, SECHN and Nurses, Electrician, Carpenter, Tailor, Business Administrator and IT personnel are at the Hospital. Patients have been coming all the way from Magburaka, Bo, Moyamba and Freetown.



• Outreach trained Health promotion team talk to Patients in the hospital, while they wait to be seen by the CHO's. Topics covered are Hygiene, Dental Hygiene, Environmental Hygiene, Nutrition and Nourishment. They also counsel on HIV and Malaria prevention.

• Our fundraising efforts continue throughout the year. We registered with Smile.Amazon to benefit our passive fundraising. We circulated the details on Social Media so that when anyone shopped on line, can use [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk), Amazon will donate a percentage of their sale to Better Lives Foundation.

- First Saturday of every month is national cleaning morning in Sierra Leone. Up to 150 volunteers from the Yonibana Youth Organisation volunteer to clean the hospital and surrounding grounds.



• We started with few patients in the first two months of opening 3 days a week. The number increases drastically from August onwards. On the 11th August Dr Foday and team consulted 99 General patients plus identified 39 hernia patients over a period of time for future surgery. Following day on 12<sup>th</sup> August, the total number of patients treated were 95. Patients were arriving from other districts, far and wide.

• The local Government sent a [Letter of Appreciation](#) for the [High Quality Health Care](#) services our teams were rendering to the community in [Yonibana](#) and BEYOND! Very proud of [Dr Foday](#) and [TEAM!](#)



• An Awareness afternoon was organised in October at the London Irish Centre which was attended by over 50 people including Jacob Kanu from Sierra Leone. Several of these became volunteers for future camps and fundraising activities.

• We had an awareness presentation at The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine accompanied by Dr Kani Vershneya and Dr Radha Measuria. It was an excellent day talking to Doctors on our Exhibition space as well as delivering a presentation in the lecture theatre to all the doctors on the course. Many signed up to visit Yonibana Sai Hospital.



• Ian Harvey, Biology teacher in Cambridge, visited Yonibana Sai Hospital at the end of October. He is part of a team lead by Professor Ian Goodfellow, Cambridge. Dr Foday and team were very excited to meet Ian and his team from Makeni.

• In November, we announced a further Fundraising initiative for getting Solar Power at The Yonibana Sai Hospital.

• Another Medical Camp was scheduled and started in February 2019 with Volunteers arriving in 3 groups. The team continued its hard work in Yonibana dealing with minor and a few major cases. Several patients had to be referred to specialist at other hospitals.

• Whilst Volunteers were having a relaxing day. A Football match - Medic v. Non-Medics kicked off to loud music with a DJ in a carnival atmosphere. Dr. Nick was scoring goals for Team Medics, when there is an injury to, Abdul Kargbo, one of the Non-Medic team members. Serious play becomes a serious injury with a dislocated Patella. Thankfully Dr Kani, was at hand to treat the injury on the ground, resetting the dislocated patella.

• There was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the National Malaria Board of Sierra Leone. This was based on their assessment and were highly impressed with our team with the treatment of Malaria patients in both children and adults at our Hospital. As a result, Malaria Test Kits and Malaria Medication are supplied to the hospital free of cost.



• Our thanks to Dr Chuda, Dr Tiwari & Madhu for hosting us on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019 Chelmsford Rotary club presentation and fundraising event to a fund raising and awareness afternoon and evening with the Rotary Club of Chelmsford. Our thanks to Anne Moriarty, President of the Rotary Club. We were received very enthusiastically and look forward to working with all the wonderful people.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAM AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

We are extremely proud to announce that 68% of our students who have qualified in various fields have returned to Yonibana Sai Hospital and started volunteering. The hospital is now open 3 days a week and Outreach clinics are carried out rest of the week are carried out in villages in the Yoni Chiefdom. Continuous Professional Development Training (CPD) continues via our International Volunteers to further enhance the qualifications of all the local medical and non-medical professionals.





We continue to support and look forward to the remaining students returning at the end of 2020 and 2021.

## **AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM**

Our Agricultural Social Enterprise continues to empower our volunteers and the local community. It has seen an increase in variety of crops in both fruits and vegetables such as Bell Peppers, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Corn, Cassava, Yam, Green Beans, Mango, Pineapple, Banana and PawPaw.

Our Agriculture Team cleared and prepared about 15 acres of land to plant rice. This is expected to be harvested in October 2019.



Sustainability is the key to a successful Agricultural Project.