



S · M · O · A · T
ST MARK'S OVERSEAS AID TRUST

11 December 2016

Dear *SMOAT* Supporter,

This year our Christmas Appeal is supporting two projects, one an IMPACT project in Kenya and one an InterCare project, transporting life-saving medication to six sub-Saharan countries in Africa.

IMPACT – A School Health Programme: Mwingi Primary School, Kitui, Kenya.

Kitui County in Eastern Kenya is one of the poorest parts of the country, with poverty levels at 63%, well above the national average. The population of just over one million is sparsely distributed and with only one doctor for every 50,701 people, the health of local people suffers as a result. Low rainfall and recurring droughts account for chronic water shortages and widespread food insecurity. One in four children is underweight and stunting is almost a third higher than the national average.

The cycle of poverty and disability starts early in life and so IMPACT is working hard to improve the health and well-being of children in the most impoverished schools. Many of the children they work with suffer from medical conditions which are easily preventable, or could be treated at low cost, for example, sandfleas, which infect feet, ringworm, intestinal parasites, ear infections and diet-related diseases, such as pellagra. There is a worrying trend in children not attending school because of ill-health – either theirs or a family member's.

Mwingi Primary School incorporates a special unit for children who are deaf. It is the only school in the area for children with hearing impairment and is a lifeline to disabled students who would otherwise be without an education. 146 of the 500 students at Mwingi Primary School are deaf, all of whom board at the school. IMPACT recently installed a borehole in the school grounds to provide clean drinking water for the children. Prior to this, it was very hard to make improvements to the children's health because maintaining hygiene was such a challenge. Pupils also walked long distances to collect water each day from scoop holes of water which are shared with animals and are centres of disease. This water frequently made them sick and interrupted their education.

One of IMPACT's aspirations is to build an extension to the very cramped and dingy dining area in Mwingi Primary School. Presently, it is not large enough to allow all the children to eat their meals together. With the money we raise from the Christmas Appeal we will be able to provide all the building materials and labour required to build the much needed extension to the dining room, which would enable mealtimes to be inclusive, with space for deaf and hearing children to socialise together.



InterCare – Transportation of vital medication to countries in Africa

On a daily basis, InterCare's beneficiary health units are providing free healthcare to some of the most vulnerable people in Africa. Without the medical aid InterCare sends, many would simply not receive the treatment they need.

InterCare can no longer recycle patient returned medicines and now focuses their efforts on securing medicines and medical items from a range of pharmaceutical companies and medical manufacturers. They have had considerable success in this area and now have a number of companies providing them with regular, valuable donations of medicines and medical items, all of which are desperately needed by the health units they support.

InterCare achieves a huge impact on the lives of some of the poorest people in the six sub-Saharan African countries to which they send medical aid (Ghana, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia).



Last year, InterCare sent nearly £700,000 worth of medical aid to 130 health units, providing vital medical care to some of Africa's most disadvantaged people. The health units they support include hospitals, health centres, infirmaries, schools for the blind and partially sighted, centres for the disabled and for orphaned and vulnerable children. The catchment population of the health units they support is over 11 million people.

As well as securing the medical aid from pharmaceutical companies, they have to transport it. In order to meet the medical requirements of the health units they support, InterCare provides regular consignments of medical aid, usually two per year to each unit. Their transportation budget is £68,000 for the period August 2016 to August 2017. With the money we raise at the Christmas Appeal, we will be making a contribution towards this amount.

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The projects we are supporting this year are quite different from each other. However, both projects aim to help some of the poorest and most disadvantaged people in the world, by providing them with the most basic necessities – a place to eat, providing deaf children with the opportunity to have vital social interaction with their school friends, or vital medication, which will save 11 million people from suffering or dying from preventable diseases.

I do hope you will feel able to support our 2016 Appeal.

On behalf of the SMOAT Committee, I wish you a joyous Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Barbara Perkins (Chairman)



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Christmas Appeal 2016

I wish to contribute to SMOAT's work in Africa

I enclose a gift of £

Signed:

Date:

Cheques, payable to **SMOAT** should be sent to:
 SMOAT Treasurer, 12 Evesham Road, REIGATE RH2 9DF

If you would like to receive occasional updates on SMOAT activities by e-mail, please provide your e-mail address:

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