

The Beatrice Project

‘Restoring dignity and opportunity
to
young women in Zimbabwe’

Trustees’ Annual Report
for the period
1 November 2023- 31 October 2024





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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report has been produced to satisfy the requirements of the Charities Commission and to provide information to the supporters of the Beatrice Project.

1.2 Scope

This report covers the period 01 November 2023 to 31 October 2024. It provides a narrative on the developments of the Beatrice Project (BP) during this period along with the associated finances.

1.3 The Beatrice Project

The Beatrice Project (BP) is a small UK based charity supporting the work of Ntombi Nto (NN), a Zimbabwean registered trust. Ntombi Nto means 'a wholesome, confident young woman'. The BP began life when it was formally launched by Mrs Joy Khumalo in Zimbabwe in 2015 in partnership with Susan Hutchinson in the UK. This was in response to the concerns of local community and church leaders in the rural areas south of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, about girls dropping out of school because of a lack of affordable sanitary protection.

The objectives of the BP are:

To advance in life, and relieve the needs of, girls and young women by providing help, advice and resources as a means of:

- a) developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
- b) enabling them to continue in their education;
- c) providing education on reproductive health and psychosocial issues;
- d) supporting locally led child protection measures.

Trustees: Susan Beatrice Hutchinson
Roger John Snowdon (identified and appointed as Safeguarding Officer)
Anthony Andrew Arthur

Treasurer: Richard Mills

2 General Overview of the Year

Throughout the reporting year, The Beatrice Project (BP), has once more needed to increase its efforts in fundraising to support the work in Zimbabwe. The Ntombi Nto (NN) team has continued to apply enthusiasm and dedication to what they do and we have seen some encouraging growth. Email and phone communication, has continued throughout the year, but the most significant event of the year was the visit to UK of Mrs Joy Khumalo.

The political situation in Zimbabwe continues to bring challenges to NN, and this was particularly so during the months surrounding the introduction of the Zig (Zimbabwe Gold) in April. This was to become the official currency, re-placing the Zimbabwe dollar, but its introduction brought increased instability and confusion, and prices once more rose exponentially. Despite the problems this created, NN is implementing the programme and making good progress, pursuing links with other agencies in the country and growing in stature.

Progress in the Gweru region has been maintained and two more secondary schools have been added, with many more seeking support from NN. The sense of ownership of the project by community leaders, both men and women, in the rural settlements continues to be hugely helpful to the growth of the work.

The shared ambition of BP and NN remains to enable underprivileged girls from these rural communities to maximise their potential through completing their education, finding work and contributing to their communities.

3 Highlights of the Last Year

3.1 Visit to UK of NN National director

In April, and largely through the fundraising efforts of the Beatrice Project, Mrs. Joy Khumalo was able to visit UK for three weeks. This was a very significant time during which donors, supporters and potential supporters were able to meet and speak with Mrs. Khumalo. She was able to give presentations about her work in Zimbabwe in 10 different venues around the south of England and funds raised for the project were impressive. This has facilitated the continuation of the work in all the participating schools and growth in a number of areas. Increasing numbers of girls are receiving menstrual cups while some have been learning to make re-usable pads in the sewing rooms set up by NN. The teaching and support programme, involving boys as well as girls, is continuing and we are very grateful for the generous donations of sweets and biscuits from the main baker and confectionery firm in Zimbabwe, Lobels. Although these had to be suspended for a time because of economic pressures faced by the company, they were resumed as soon as possible, showing the local endorsement and support for NN.

3.2 Employment of NN team members

In May of the reporting year the team of three supporting Mrs. Khumalo in the work has been consolidated by BP being able to employ them three days a week. They are growing in confidence and their skills and commitment add to the strength of the team. NN has also received support from The Training and Resource Support Centre (TARSC) – who generate the Aunty Stella kits – by Bonani Medina (local youth leader working under the auspices of the Solon Foundation) and by volunteers and professionals from the rural communities.

3.3 Replacement Vehicle

During the year, the first project vehicle, funded by the Bright Future Trust, has been used extensively on very rough terrain and has, consequently, begun to need replacing. In February, we were very grateful to receive the funding, again from BFT, for the purchase of a replacement (second hand) vehicle, a Toyota Hilux. This will prove a little less expensive to repair or service and will facilitate the continuing work in Zimbabwe.

3.4 Growing engagement by community leaders

The good reputation of Ntombi Nto and the Beatrice Project is spreading throughout the area around Gweru and the sense of support and engagement from the local community leaders continues to be most encouraging. There is now an increased level of ownership of the work not only from the school teachers but from a wide variety of cultural leaders including the kraal (village) heads and the area chiefs as well as councillors, who are the political leaders of the larger communities. Encouragingly, these highly respected leaders are not always men and their support and endorsement of NN's work is key to the progress of the project.

4 Looking Forward

Plans for 2025 include a visit to Zimbabwe for three of the BP trustees. These plans are contingent on two developments.

- a. Progress towards meeting new regulations issued by the Zimbabwe government, requiring that trusts and charities funded from overseas be registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO). This means we have to work with a new partner organisation (TBD) that has the necessary registration, which may take several weeks or months.
- b. In May 2025 we became aware that some grant money sent to Zimbabwe had been misappropriated. This has resulted in changes to the leadership of our current partner organisation (NN).

These two events will delay our programme of activities for 2025.

Our objectives for the visit are, first and foremost, to give opportunity for the BP trustees to meet members of the NN team, to further bolster relationships and provide a more personal forum for reviews and discussion between NN and BP regarding the future growth and development of the project. If possible, the trustees would also visit schools to see firsthand the impact of the work.

We hope to see the work consolidated and the group identity of the NN team established as the work into the Gweru schools, in particular, grows.

5 Statement of Financial Activities for FYE 31 Oct 2023

5.1 Income and Fund Raising

As a charity, we are very fortunate to be supported by a growing number of regular donors, on whose committed giving we rely for a known amount each month. Regular updates to supporters give information on the activities, needs and plans of the Trustees and the charity, and these often prompt further giving.

We are grateful to St James' Place for their interest and support, and to ETCH from whom we receive assistance in terms of advice and finance.

We are further indebted to the Bright Future Trust whose continued commitment to our work has enabled NN to purchase a replacement NN Project vehicle.



All money received or raised by BP is used to support the work of NN.

5.2 Risk Mitigation Reserves

As principal funders of the work undertaken by NN in Zimbabwe, BP recognises the need to be able to provide the quarterly support grants on a regular and timely basis.

Whilst the trustees wish to see all funds raised by BP transferred to Zimbabwe within as short a time scale as possible, they recognise the need to hold some funds in reserve to ensure continuity of support.

With quarterly support grants currently around £7,000, the trustees consider that a reserve of £10,000 is appropriate at the present time.

5.3 Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 Oct 2023

5.3.1 Independent examiner's report on the accounts

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity (The Beatrice Project) for the year ended 31 /10 / 2024

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

The charity's gross income exceeded £25,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Simon Wield

Member - Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

21/08/2025

5.3.2 Income and Expenditure

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
	£	£	£	£
Income (note 2)				
Donations and legacies	62,236	5,000	67,236	34,004
Charitable activities	643	-	643	1,886
Grants received	1,250	37,375	38,625	15,600
Total	64,129	42,375	106,504	51,490
Expenditure (note 3)				
Charitable activities	28,352	31,757	60,109	40,816
Administrative costs	2,024	-	2,024	4,766
Total	30,376	31,757	62,133	45,582
Net income for the reporting period	33,753	10,618	44,371	5,908
Interest income	547	-	547	103
Net movement in funds	34,300	10,618	44,918	6,011
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	12,451	401	12,852	6,841
Total funds carried forward	£46,751	£11,019	£57,770	£12,852

5.3.3 Balance Sheet

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets				
Cash at bank and in hand	46,751	19,996	66,747	19,852
Total	46,751	19,996	66,747	19,852
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Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (note 4)	-	8,977	8,977	7,000
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Net current assets	46,751	11,019	57,770	12,852
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Total net assets	£46,751	£11,019	£57,770	£12,852
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Funds of the Charity				
Restricted funds		11,019	11,019	401
Unrestricted funds	46,751		46,751	12,451
Total	£46,751	£11,019	£57,770	£12,852

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

Signed on behalf of all the trustees:



Name

Susan Hutchinson

Date of approval

27.08.25

5.4 Accounting Policies

- a. **Basis of preparation.** The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

- b. **Funds structure.** Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or trust deed. There is a single restricted fund, the vehicle fund, restricted to funding the costs of a motor vehicle essential to carrying out the work of the charity. Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have created a fund for a specific purpose.
- c. **Income recognition.** All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, and it is received. In the case of performance related grants, income is only recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).
- d. **Tax reclaims on donations and gifts.** Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.
- e. **Expenditure recognition.** Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

5.5 Income

	2024	2023
Unrestricted funds		
Donations	57,803	30,143
Gift aid	4,433	3,861
Events	643	1,886
Grants	1,250	3,600
Total	£64,129	£39,490
Restricted funds		
Grant for vehicle purchase and running costs	£37,375	£12,000
Donation for sewing rooms and cups	£5,000	-
Total	£42,375	£12,000

5.6 Expenditure

	2024	2023
Unrestricted funds		
Grants to Ntombi Nto Trust	15,674	21,668
Employment costs in Zimbabwe	12,627	4,747
Sanitary supplies	50	2,122
Administration	1,982	4,737
Bank charges	43	75
Total	£30,376	£14,224
Restricted funds		
Grants for vehicle purchase and expenses	£31,757	£4,366

5.7 Debtors

N/A

5.8 Creditors

Grant income received, but related services not yet provided: £8,925 (2023 – £7,000).

A total grant of £15,300 was received during the year to cover vehicle running costs for 12 months to 31 July 2025. At the year-end, £6,375 of this had not been spent, and is due to be spent in the following year.

5.9 Trustee and Related Party Transactions

One Trustee had direct expenses reimbursed during the year totalling £1,290. These expenses related to travel and event expenses reimbursed at cost. (2023 – \$5,858).

5.10 Post Balance Sheet Event

In May 2025 we became aware that some grant money sent to Zimbabwe had been misappropriated. This has resulted in changes to the leadership of our partner organisation. In addition, the Zimbabwe government introduced new rules requiring that trusts and charities funded from overseas need to register as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO). This means we have to work with a partner organisation that has the necessary registration, which may take several weeks or months. These two events will delay our programme of activity for 2025.

