

The Beatrice Project

‘Restoring dignity and opportunity
to
young women in Zimbabwe’

Trustees’ Annual Report
for the period
1 November 2021- 31 October 2022



Principal address: 23, Rockleigh Road, Southampton, SO16 7AQ

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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 2021 to 31 October 2022. It provides a narrative on the developments of the Beatrice Project (BP) during this period along with the associated finances.

2 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 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
Dr Karen Trewinnard (identified and appointed as Safeguarding Officer)
Roger John Snowdon
Anthony Andrew Arthur

3 General Overview of the Year

Following the lifting of most Covid restrictions imposed by the government in UK, the Beatrice Project (BP), has stepped up its fundraising efforts to support the work in Zimbabwe. During the reporting period, the Ntombi Nto (NN) team has continued to deliver with enthusiasm and dedication and we have seen some encouraging growth. A brief visit to Zimbabwe was made by Susan Hutchinson (Trustee) in August, and throughout the year email and phone communication has been regular. The NN team has been implementing the programme and making good progress.

The political and economic situation in Zimbabwe continues to bring challenges to NN, but despite these, the team is continuing to work with other agencies in Zimbabwe, and is growing both in confidence and in

the scope of its work. NN has now expanded its reach into the Gweru region and has been approached there by several schools seeking help. The sense of ownership of the project by community leaders, both men and women, in the rural settlements, is truly impressive.

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.

At the end of this reporting year, 12 schools have been enrolled and over 2000 girls have been through the BP/NN programme. Rates of absence from school due to menstruation have dropped from 95% to 5%.

4 Highlight of the Last Year – Cultural Change

The highlights of the last year are chiefly in seeing two changes of attitude towards the subject of menstruation. These developments are, in large measure, attributable to the tireless work put in by Mrs. Joy Khumalo (NN National Director) and her team, and with crucial input from Nobuhle Shumba of the Butterfly Cup Company. Further support has been provided by The Training and Resource Support Centre (TARSC), by Bonani Medina (local youth leader working under the auspices of the Solon Foundation) as well as by cultural leaders in the communities.

The two key changes are:

4.1 Boys Requesting Training

The beneficiaries of the educational workshops delivered through NN, now include boys. This has arisen at the request of the boys themselves and represents a very welcome indication that the taboo of menstruation is fading. In the past, the boys' attitudes have been part of the reason for girls dropping out of education.

This follows on from the enthusiastic endorsement of NN's programme, and assistance offered to NN, by the local cultural leaders of the communities – both men and women.

4.2 Developments in Technology

BP is moving away from the distribution of disposable sanitary pads. High quality re-usable menstrual pad kits are now being made by the girls under the supervision of qualified adults, in sewing facilities equipped and funded by BP. Each room is provided with sewing machines and all the necessary materials and fabrics to produce the pads. After each girl has made a kit for herself, she is required to make two more pads for newcomers to the project or for sale to raise funds for further materials.

By far the most exciting development has been in the acceptance by girls and their communities of the menstrual cup. Despite long established cultural reservations, the cup is now being much more readily embraced, and has begun to change radically the girls' experience of menstruation. With the potential to solve the three challenges of affordability, hygiene and disposal, it is seen by BP as the preferred means of sanitary protection.

5 Looking Forward

Plans for 2023 include a visit to Zimbabwe by a BP team. This will enable thorough reviews and discussion regarding the project to take place and will provide opportunities to meet the school and cultural heads, particularly in the Gweru region, and to gather additional data. It is also anticipated that increasing numbers of girls will have made re-usable pad kits or will have been successful in their use of the cup, and that numbers requesting disposable pads will have diminished significantly. BP will continue to support NN, particularly as it reaches more schools in this new region, to set up and establish similar projects.

6 Financial review

6.1 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 newsletters and updates on our website give information on the activities, needs and plans of the Trustees and the charity, and these often prompt further giving.

We are grateful for the ongoing input and support of Etch, a digital advisory firm specialising in helping businesses grow through the use of digital platforms and marketing.

We are grateful to St James' Place for their interest and support.

We are further indebted to the Bright Future Trust whose generosity has enabled NN to run and maintain the NN Project vehicle in Zimbabwe.

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

6.2 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 £4,500, the trustees consider that a reserve of £1,000 is appropriate at the present time.

6.3 Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 Oct 2022

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Prior year funds £
Income (note 2)				
Donations and legacies	14,601	-	14,601	13,399
Charitable activities	1,878	-	1,878	1,695
Grants received	-	5,000	5,000	-
Total	16,479	5,000	21,479	15,093
Expenditure (note 3)				
Charitable activities	13,608	4,366	17,974	18,002
Administrative costs	616	-	616	630
Total	14,224	4,366	18,590	18,632
Net income for the reporting period				
	2,255	634	2,889	-
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	2,255	634	2,889	-
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	3,952	-	3,952	7,491
Total funds carried forward	£6,207	£634	£6,841	£3,952

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets				
Debtors (note 4)	191	-	191	402
Cash at bank and in hand	6,016	7,634	13,650	3,550
Total	6,207	7,634	13,841	3,952
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Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (note 5)	-	7,000	7,000	-
Net current assets	6,207	634	6,841	3,952
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Total net assets	£6,207	£634	£6,841	£3,952
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Funds of the Charity				
Restricted funds		634	634	1,674
Unrestricted funds	6,207		6,207	2,278
Total	£6,207	£634	£6,841	£3,952

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

6.4 Notes to the Financial Statements for Year Ending 31 Oct 2022

1. 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.

2. Income

	2022	2021
Unrestricted funds		
Donations	13,692	12,102
Gift aid	909	1,297
Events	1,878	1,694
Total	£16,479	£15,093
Restricted funds		
Grant for vehicle running costs	£5,000	Nil

3. Expenditure

	2022	2021
Unrestricted funds		
Grants to Ntombi Nto Trust	12,905	14,004
Sanitary supplies	703	1,009
Administration	339	319
Bank charges	277	311
Total	£14,224	£15,643
Restricted funds		
Grants for vehicle expenses	£4,366	£2,989

4. Debtors

- Donations received but not yet credited to bank accounts: £191 (2021 – nil)
- Loan to Ntombi Nto Trust: nil (2021 - £402)

5. Creditors

Grant income received, but related services not yet provided: £7,000 (2021 – nil).

A total grant of £12,000 was received during the year to cover vehicle running costs for 12 months to 31 July 2023. At the year-end, £7,000 of this had not been spent, and is due to be spent in the following year.

Signed: S.B Hutchinson 

Signed: A.A Arthur 