fields of life
CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING HOPE

Let your light shine

Annual Report 2020/2021

In the same way,
let your light shine
before others,
that they may see
your good deeds
and glorify your
Father in heaven.

Matthew 5 v 16

Table of Contents

1. CEO Report ---- 04
2. You empowered families ---- 06
3. You provided opportunity ---- 08
4. You kept girls safe ---- 10
5. You gave hope ---- 12
6. You changed the status quo ---- 14
7. You gave life ---- 16
8. Financial Report ---- 18
9. You promoted equality ---- 20
10. You helped children thrive ---- 22
11. You equipped leaders ---- 24
12. You brought light to the darkness ---- 26
13. You transformed communities ---- 28
14. You left a lasting legacy ---- 30
15. President's Report ---- 32

CEO Report

In many ways, 2021 was a year of darkness.

When we welcomed in 2021 there was such hope that this could be a year when we would see life return to normal, but nothing could be further from the truth. As lockdowns resurfaced across Europe and the UK, Africa was also closing for business, and tighter restrictions swept throughout the continent. Movement to and across Uganda and Rwanda was difficult, and schools remained closed. Few would have imagined that schools in Uganda would not reopen again for the rest of the year, bringing about the world's longest school closures, with children missing 2 years of education.

It is hard to articulate just how damaging and destructive these school closures were for children and families in rural parts of East Africa. School was the one place children could get a meal, clean water and safety from the dangers of sexual exploitation, child labour and other threats. There is also the knock-on effect of children missing 2 years of education and falling behind in their studies. Many children will have had to work instead of finishing their studies and many girls have fallen pregnant or been married. It is estimated that as a result of the pandemic, 11 million girls globally will not make it back to school.

Yet it is in the darkest times that light is most visible.

Your faithful and unwavering support, and the steadfast commitment of Fields of Life staff, have been a light in these dark valleys.

When children were unable to attend school, you provided home learning materials and solar lights to help them study. When families were struggling, you provided emergency food and medical supplies. When girls were at risk of early pregnancy and marriage, you educated communities on the importance of child protection. You provided clean water to vulnerable communities and infrastructure for schools and colleges when they returned. In everything you did, you continued the Fields of Life mission to give a hand up and not a handout, empowering local communities to take ownership of their destinies.

You have been a light that has shone brightly in the darkness. Thank you, and continue to let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Tony Gaston
CEO

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CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING HOPE

You empowered families

The COVID-19 lockdown in Uganda robbed many families of their livelihoods and left them struggling to meet basic needs. Families like Ezra's, a Primary Six pupil at Kkalwe Elim Primary School. His father is a taxi driver and the sole bread winner. When transport restrictions were brought into place, he had no work and was unable to support his family. Ezra had learnt how to make reusable sanitary pads as part of the I AM GIRL project in his school and decided to put these skills to use to help his family make some income. He asked his parents for support to buy a few materials to start with, and he taught his siblings and his mother how to make the reusable sanitary pads.

At first, Ezra's family had no idea how successful the business might be. Amazingly, when they started to sell the finished products, they found they were able to sell at least 5 pads every day at 1,000 shillings each. This income was crucial in enabling Ezra and his family to buy some food and survive the most difficult days of the lockdown.

Ezra is an example of many pupils whose lives and families have been changed and transformed because of your support during this pandemic.

You provided opportunity

In Northern Uganda, an entire generation of young people who missed out on their education face high levels of youth unemployment and limited opportunity. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns in Uganda, in 2021 the construction of the Vocational Training Institute in Gulu, Northern Uganda was completed, and the institute opened its doors to the first intake of students.

Fields of Life's Vocational Training Institute will skill young people in Building and Construction, Carpentry, Tailoring, Fashion and Design, Cosmetology, Hair and Beauty, and Hotel Management and Catering. The institute will also train students in ICT and business skills to build their businesses.

Education and income generation is a powerful way for young people to become independent and provide for themselves and their families. The Vocational Training Institute will transform the lives of students like Faith.

Faith, a 19-year-old orphan, lives with her grandmother in Gulu. Faith was working in a restaurant to provide for her grandmother but could not afford to pay for her own secondary school education. Receiving a scholarship to study tailoring at the Vocational Training Institute has changed Faith's outlook on her future.

"Tailoring is going to make me to be self-reliant, and self-employed. I hope to be teacher who can inspire other youth and also I hope to be someone who is independent and who can help other orphans. I feel happy, grateful and so hopeful and I think this school has changed my life."

You kept girls safe

The I AM GIRL programme aims to ensure girls are empowered to complete their education and grow into healthy young women. This is achieved by improving the attendance of adolescent girls in school. The programme educates boys, girls, teachers, parents and community members on issues such as gender equality, menstrual hygiene management, gender-based violence and child protection.

One way this community education is carried out is through the creation of Male Action Groups (MAGs). These MAGs have played a key part in increasing community awareness especially during school closures. MAGs have helped protect children from abuse, child marriage and have increased the likelihood of children returning to school.

The leader of the MAG in Kkalwe village told us ***"There have been a lot of child abuse issues in our community. For instance, one of the girls in the community was almost married off by the parents because schools are closed. But since we had been doing awareness in the community, we were alerted. The parents were contacted, talked to and eventually they were convinced not to marry off the girl. We have been monitoring this girl so that the parents don't marry her off. We are sure that she will be one of the girls that will be reporting back to school whenever the schools are reopened."***

You gave hope

"God answers prayer!" exclaimed Margaret, Head Teacher, when she saw the Treasure Hunt Bibles that Fields of Life brought to gift St Stephen's Primary School. She was amazed by God's timely provision.

Every Thursday, the pupils attend chapel hour where they learn Bible stories and memory verses. Margaret explained how challenging it had been to do this without Bibles for the children to follow.

The pupils' faces lit up as they received 100 new Bibles and learnt how to use them. 7 of their teachers were also trained in delivering child-friendly, interactive discipleship lessons.

"We are going to keep these Bibles in the school library to be used by pupils whenever they need and during chapel hour", said Margaret. "Our Primary Seven Final Examination candidates have a dedication service tomorrow at church. They will be very smart with their Bibles."

The I am Loved Project set out to invest in the holistic development of young people, equipping them to emerge as inspirational, Christian leaders shaped by Kingdom values such as integrity, compassion and generosity.

To date, Fields of Life has rolled out the project in 30 partner schools and churches in the Eastern and Western Regions of Uganda, impacting 4,988 children and young people.

Project highlights so far include:

- ***2,154 Treasure Hunt Bibles distributed***
- ***4,988 young people given access to educational resources***
- ***100 teachers and church leaders trained on how to use new teaching resources***

IT'S NICE TO MEET
ANOTHER

You changed the status quo

The Male Action Groups (MAGs) have become important change agents in the communities, holding community meetings to raise awareness of child protection issues and to ensure that the barriers to adolescent boys' and girls' education are reduced. MAGs can tackle specific issues unique to their own communities. Promoting the importance of education to parents and children ultimately increases school retention and helps children to complete their education.

Sejjuka Shaban, one of the MAG members told us, *"When we started moving out to communities, some parents did not take us seriously and we got some resistance from them. As I speak now, almost all parents are appreciating our work because most of them needed our guidance. Our village is near a lake, and since schools closed many children have gotten jobs fishing. Sometimes they end up working dangerous jobs or forget the value of education. I am so glad for being part of this group that can encourage children back to school, and change the status quo in our community."*

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Irish Aid

You gave life

Many rural communities in East Africa do not have access to a safe water source. Women and girls travel long distances to collect water from ponds and swamps of dirty water used by animals. The gift of clean water transforms communities, improving health and giving girls more opportunity to focus on education.

One woman whose life has been changed by a borehole is Kayinja:

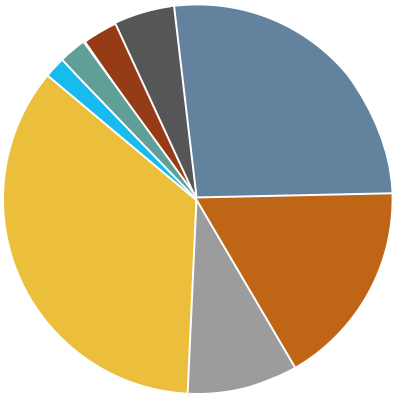
"My name is Kayinja Alisat. I am 32 years old, and I am a widow with 7 children. We have been walking for about 1.5 kilometres to fetch water each day. That pump is shared by three villages, which leads to many problems. Overcrowding of the borehole led to rapid breakdown of both the well and the community relations. Sometimes, this meant we had to go to the swamp to get our water. I am so proud today for the team of Fields of Life coming to our community. They have stopped the suffering we went through due to lack of safe clean water in our community. Through Fields of Life, God came in at the right time for the rescue. Glory be to God forever for He always answers the prayer of the widow."

TOP STAR

Financial Report

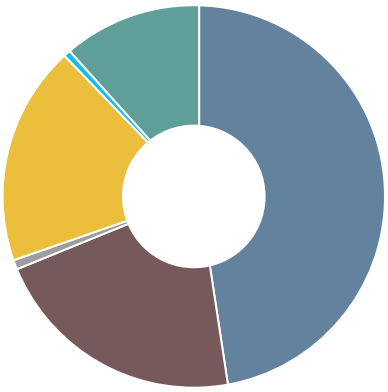
The financial accounts for Fields of Life in Northern Ireland (NI), Great Britain (GB) and Republic of Ireland (ROI) have been audited by PKF-FPM Accountants Ltd. We also received a small amount of income through Fields of Life USA. The signed audits for the year ending 30th June 2021 are available at www.fieldsoflife.org. We are delighted to report that despite the effects of COVID-19, no fundraising events, and no teams trips, overall consolidated income was only down circa 10% on the previous year. We are very thankful for the generosity of our supporters through a very difficult fundraising environment. Fields of Life strives to keep operating costs and overheads as low as possible while ensuring good governance and appropriate administrative capability. Investment in fundraising activities is essential as we seek to grow our income and transform more lives in East Africa. We are delighted that 89% of our expenditure was on charitable activity. The figures below show the totals for FOL in NI, ROI, GB and USA combined together, expressed in the 3 different currencies.

David Hall, Director Operations & Programmes
Maurice Donaldson, Honorary Treasurer



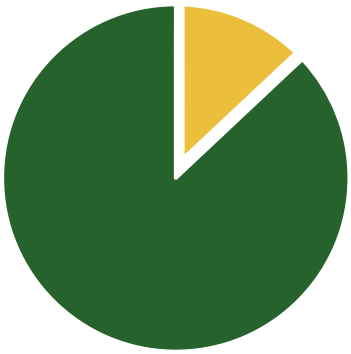
Voluntary Income

By Category:	2020/2021 £	2020/2021 €	2020/2021 $
Child Sponsorship:	738,933	849,773	990,170
Trusts and Foundations:	402,185	462,513	538,928
Institutional (Irish Aid):	226,000	250,000	302,840
Individual Giving:	907,349	1,043,451	1,215,848
Community and Events:	13,133	15,103	17,598
Churches and Teams:	38,424	44,188	51,488
Shop profit:	-6,190	-7,119	-8,295
Legacies:	50,455	58,023	67,610
Other	173,361	199,365	232,304
TOTAL	£2,543,650	€2,915,297	$3,408,491



How we spent your donations

By focus area:	2020/2021 £	2020/2021 €	2020/2021 $
Education	1,524,544	1,753,226	2,042,889
Water	608,840	700,166	815,846
COVID-19 Emergency	15,439	17,755	20,688
Vocational Training	663,635	763,180	889,271
Other	26,734	30,744	35,824
Fundraising	349,269	401,659	468,020
TOTAL	£3,188,461	€3,666,730	$4,272,538



For every £1 / €1 / $1 we spent:

- 11% was spent on fundraising
- 89% was spent on transforming lives and building hope

Thank you to everyone who supported Fields of Life. Your donations are changing lives.

2020/2021 Highlights

90 Teachers and pupils trained in sustainable farming and agribusiness

30 Boreholes drilled providing clean water to communities in Butaleja and Namutumba

30 Water User Committees trained in community based management of water sources

40 Male Action Groups trained in child rights and gender-based violence

280 I AM GIRL Champions trained on menstrual hygiene management

23,434 Children provided with home study materials during school closures

140 Vulnerable households provided with food and essentials like maize flour, dry beans, rice, cooking oil, salt and washing soap

468 Teachers supported with salary incentives during school closures

2,653 Children supported through sponsorship

13 Communities trained in Village Savings and Loans Associations

2,154 Bibles distributed to partner schools and local communities

You promoted equality

Community interventions by Male Action Groups are not only helping children get back to school. They are also helping change attitudes in homes across rural villages.

"Before the I AM GIRL Project came to our school I would become very tired during the day because I did all the housework, since I am the only girl at home. This made me very sad because I missed playing with my friends.

However, the Male Action Group members trained by the I AM GIRL Project educated our parents about providing equal opportunities for both boys and girls to do housework.

Our parents were told that both boys and girls can do all kinds of work without discrimination. I am now very glad that now my brothers help me with cooking, mopping and washing utensils plus other duties which before they expected only girls to do.

Thank you I AM GIRL Project!"

Gloria
Kabukunga RC Primary School

You helped children thrive

Throughout the school closures Fields of Life have sought to provide much needed support to children in the Fields of Life child sponsorship programme.

Children and their families were provided with emergency funds to purchase food and medical supplies. Teenage girls were provided with a little extra money, to purchase menstrual hygiene supplies that they would usually receive in school.

1,200 children and families have been provided with emergency cash.

"I'm really very grateful for the emergency money I have received. I am a student in Kampala and when the president announced the lockdown, I was stuck and couldn't go home. I had nothing to eat, and nothing to pay for rent but today I have gained hope. I will use this money carefully to buy some food and pay my rent. I am very happy. May God bless you."
Ronald

23,434 children were also regularly provided with up-to-date home-learning materials. Parents were empowered to help their children as they were learning at home in their villages. As restrictions in Uganda eased, teachers were able to host small study groups within villages. This encouraged children, parents and teachers, and was vital in keeping everyone connected!

Lockdown in East Africa caused a drastic loss of household income. Sponsorship funds were used to distribute livestock and training to sponsored children and their families. A goat or pig can provide a small, steady income for families. Nearly 2,000 piglets and goats were given to families across Uganda!

You equipped leaders

When Fields of Life drills a well in a community, members of that community are trained to become hand pump mechanics, able to maintain and repair the borehole. The local community are responsible for maintaining the borehole and for funding any maintenance costs, and the hand pump mechanic is responsible for monitoring the pumps and resolving any issues.

During recent hand pump mechanics refresher training, the mechanics were given practical sessions to learn hands on skills. A borehole with a broken hand pump was identified as one of the boreholes on which practical sessions should be conducted. The hand pump mechanics identified the issue, replaced the broken components and by the end of the training, the borehole was working and water was flowing. The community was extremely happy and had their hope for safe water revived.

Hand pump mechanics from the Butaleja District were delighted to be equipped with bicycles and toolkits that will equip them to travel to neighbouring areas to support communities to maintain their vital water source.

Loyce Mugaba, 62 years old, is a local hand pump mechanic for her subcounty in Butaleja District. She is married and a mother of 10 children. Prior to becoming a hand pump mechanic in 2000, she was a local council committee member, supervising boreholes in her community. Through this work, she has become well known in her community and her role as a treasurer of their association has enabled her to learn the banking system. As a mechanic, she sometimes struggled to transport equipment needed to service hand pumps. This has been solved because of the bicycle she received from Fields of Life.

LOCAL HAND PUMP
MECHANIC

You brought light to the darkness

1,400 children have been provided with solar lamps, so that they can continue their studies in the evenings. In homes without electricity, solar lamps are safer, more energy efficient and more cost effective than the alternative kerosene lamps or candles.

A lamp can transform the daily life of a family like Patience's. Patience is the youngest of 9 children. Her mum struggled to pay for electricity, or even a kerosene lamp at home, and on dark nights the whole family shared a single candle.

Their lives changed when Patience was given a solar lamp! Nights are different now that the family have a lamp that charges during the day and lights up the room at night! Patience and her siblings can now safely help their mum prepare dinner and do their homework in the evenings.

WATCH
ME FLY

You transformed communities

During lockdown the I AM GIRL project sought to reduce barriers that would prevent girls from returning to schools when they reopen. One community that has been transformed by the I AM GIRL project is the rural community of Komoret in Northern Uganda. Despite the school being closed, the Fields of Life team have been able to work with the community, helping to change attitudes towards education, improve sanitation and personal hygiene, and support girls to get back to school when they reopen.

Influential women in the community were identified and trained as I AM GIRL champions. These champions were taught about the need for good hygiene and sanitary practices, including adequate menstrual hygiene management. They were trained in how to make reusable menstrual pads (RUMPs) and liquid soap.

In turn, the I AM GIRL champions taught and trained both girls and boys what they had learned. In total, almost 40 young women, adolescent girls and boys were trained to make RUMPs and liquid soap. A number of the participants have been influencing other community members on their attitudes towards menstrual hygiene.

Maama Theresa, an elder in the community who took part in the training stated:

"I am very excited for being part of this training and becoming an I AM GIRL champion. I know am past that age, but I have very many young girls that I can help teach how to manage menstruation including my children, grandchildren and others from the community. Most of my girls use rags during their periods because we cannot afford buying pads every month for all of them. But with these skills menstruation can be a little more decent and safer for the young girls since we now know the local materials that we can use and how to put them together to make a pad."

You left a lasting legacy

In June 2021 a well was drilled in a village called Kangalaba in Eastern Uganda. This borehole was funded in memory of two young children who tragically lost their lives in a car crash. During a heart-breaking situation the donor chose to honour the memory of their two great-neices, Oksana and Quinn by providing the life changing gift of clean water to a rural community in East Africa. Today 322 households in the Kangalaba community have access to safe, clean water and no longer travel long distances to collect dirty water.

"My name is Kalimo Yolamu, and I am 86 years old. I am a father of 7 children, and I live in this village called Kangalaba. We have been getting water from a borehole which is located 1 km way and a water source in a swamp. We have faced many challenges because of this, including water-borne diseases, snake-bites, and the risk of violence, especially to girls and women. Overcrowding at the borehole led to disagreements and delays, and meant many in the community collected dirty water from the swamp. But God has listened to our prayers and has answered them, and we have received a new borehole which will help solve these problems in Kangalaba community. Thank you!"

THIS WELL IS OWNED BY
KANGALABA COMMUNITY
WE PROMISE TO MANAGE AND MAINTAIN IT, AND TO
PAY FOR ANY REPAIRS WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR.
WE ARE GRATEFUL TO
FIELDS OF LIFE AND THE DONATION IN MEMORY
OF OKSANA AND QUINN DUTCHYSHEN 6 Yrs & 4 Yrs
FOR THE GIFT OF CLEAN WATER.
"GOD WILL SATISFY YOU LIKE A WELL WHOSE
WATERS NEVER FAIL." ISAIAH 58:11

President's Report

When Jesus said, **"You are the light of the world"**, He gives the Christian both a great compliment and a great responsibility. We are not only light receivers, but also light givers. We must have a greater concern than only ourselves, and we cannot live only to ourselves; we must have someone to shine to and do so lovingly. The purpose of light is to illuminate and expose what is there. Therefore, light must be exposed before it is of any use – if it is hidden under a basket, it is no longer useful.

You don't need me to remind you that we have lived through the darkest time I can remember during the COVID pandemic. When it seems that we can now live with the virus all around us and get on with our lives in some sort of fashion we hear of the terrible ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Now more than ever our light needs to shine in a world that is getting darker and darker.

I have seen many lights shining over these last couple of years, none more so than through a wonderful group of people. Who are these people you may ask? Well, they are the most dedicated team both here on these shores and in East Africa. When the Fields of Life staff here at home were not on furlough, they were working very hard at home, raising awareness as to the plight of so many children that we care for in East Africa. They were letting you know what was happening on the ground and you too rose to the challenge despite all the difficulties in helping our brothers and sisters in East Africa. You indeed did let your light shine. The East African team lights were shining brightly as they were on the front line. They were so busy helping where they could with educational supplies, COVID awareness and medical supplies, handing them out to the most needy communities in very rural settings. They went the extra mile.

A very big thank you to our CEO, Tony, our Executive Director East Africa, Esther, to all the staff *(who are family)* and to you the supporters *(who are also family)* for letting your light shine during this time. May the Light of Christ continue to shine brightly through each one of us.

Every Blessing,

Trevor Stevenson
Honorary President

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