



Educating young
Zambians for a
better future

Annual Review for 2020

Sustainability
Resilience
Adaptation

cecilysfund.org





Mimbula Fitula Community School, Chingola

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About Cecily's Fund

Cecily's Fund has invested over £6million in life changing interventions that have helped the most vulnerable children in Zambia to improve their life chances through access to education, economic empowerment and psycho-social support. As our programmes have evolved we have adopted a cross-cutting approach to programme development such that our interventions now address a broad range of interlinked issues such as gender equity, livelihood development, poverty reduction, diversity and inclusion. Underpinning these activities is our belief that access to education in all its forms, can be a route out of poverty and lead to better and more secure futures for the most disadvantaged children and young people.

We work to four strategic objectives which reflect our mission.

1. Enable orphans and vulnerable children to go to school by investing in youth
2. Support children to succeed at school and adopt a youth-led approach to help them reach their potential
3. Prepare children for life beyond school through vocational training, citizenship, and personal development
4. Strengthen community support for vulnerable children's education by developing sustainable interventions that reach parent-guardians which empower, educate, improve livelihoods and build social capital.

Cecily's Fund was formed in memory of Cecily Eastwood who died in Zambia during her gap year in 1997. Our smiley logo is how she signed her letters home. Since its formation Cecily's Fund has helped over 20,000 disadvantaged children to have a brighter future.

Transforming Communities Changing Lives

Statement from the Chair

The past year has been challenging for Cecily's Fund as we rely on fundraising to support our work in Zambia. The economic challenges presented by the Coronavirus Pandemic affected grants, fundraising activities, and events that were scheduled to go ahead, but were forced to be cancelled. In Zambia, it widened the gap of inequality and its impact will be felt in the months and years ahead. Against this background, Cecily's Fund's local partners continued to work diligently with our UK staff team in very difficult circumstances, and as a result, we were able to respond quickly to the very real and evolving challenges that our beneficiaries were facing. It is this ability to remain relevant and target support where it is needed most that we are most proud of. This meant that we were able to directly identify and support an additional 56 child headed households, who were struggling more than others as a result of the national lock down in Zambia, and to put in place longer term measures to protect their security.

Looking ahead, we are laying the foundations to build capacity in selected schools who will work in partnership with us to improve the outcomes for orphans and vulnerable children under their care. This refocus of our work will help to raise standards and enable us to work more closely with the Ministry of Education to set minimum standards across the areas of school governance, pupil care and support, parent engagement, and linkages and support from government ministries.

Whilst the Coronavirus Pandemic presented many challenges, we were also able to celebrate the achievement and success of our talented Alumni who, in spite of various restrictions, continued to support us through volunteering in their local communities. Our first-ever Q&A event included three Cecily's Fund alumni who became the voice of the thousands of young people we have supported over the years. Hearing them speak about their challenges and how these have been overcome was inspirational and helps us to know that our holistic approach is working.

Steph Harland

Chair



Emergency pack distribution team, Kitwe



Introduction

A year on since writing the Cecily's Fund Annual Review for 2019, we are emerging from a national lockdown and an easing of restrictions that have dominated life in the UK for more than 12 months. Cecily's Fund continued to work diligently throughout 2020, a year of national and global significance when good health was a priority, and the basic needs of shelter, food, and safety for ourselves and our families, were appreciated and not taken for granted. During this time, the gap between the rich and the poor widened in Zambia, and it was the poorest and most disadvantaged families, who struggled to have their basic needs met.

Inevitably, the global Coronavirus pandemic impacted the work of Cecily's Fund and our programmes, such that necessary adaptations had to be made with local partners to keep staff and beneficiaries safe. We responded quickly with an emergency Covid19 Appeal to our long standing and loyal supporters to help us provide food and health parcels to the most vulnerable families when the pandemic was at its highest level. Through the generosity of our supporters, we were able to distribute food packs, soap, and vital health information on how to avoid Covid19. Whilst some activities were halted because of a lockdown in Zambia, we continued to work hard in the planning and preparation for the steps needed to address the immediate challenges of working in a Covid19 environment, building resilience in project teams, and, adapting working practices to adapt in the context of the 'new reality'.

2020 was a year where Cecily's Fund managed to navigate its way through the precarious uncertainty of the Coronavirus pandemic. We continued to work hard to support those in greatest need and most vulnerable to Covid19. We also spent a great deal of time planning the implementation of the UKAID funded programme that was to train deaf and hard of hearing youth to be Peer Educators using sign language. The announcement by the UK Government to cut its international aid budget is something that many people may believe only relates to emergency aid and humanitarian relief. However, the impact is much closer to home, as Cecily's Fund was informed that the 3-year grant secured from UKAID for our pioneering *'Empowering Deaf Youth through Peer Health Education'* disability programme has been withdrawn just at the point of implementation. This means that nearly 5000 disadvantaged children, many of whom have a disability, will not be able to benefit from gaining essential life skills and information on how to stay safe from HIV and Covid19.

We are now experiencing the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic in different ways, and funding cuts to the International Aid budget is just one example of the many hurdles we will need to face as life begins to return to a form of normality. Fortunately, Cecily's Fund is resilient and optimistic that we will be able to continue supporting the most disadvantaged and marginalised children and families in Zambia.

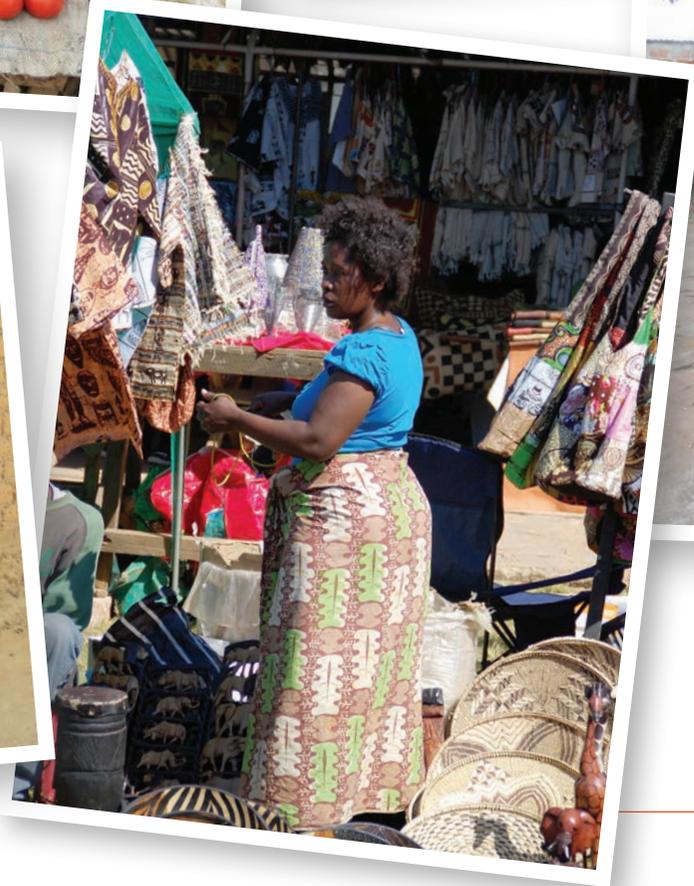
A sincere thank you to each and every one of our supporters who have stayed with us this past year. We are indebted to your generosity and trust in us to continue to deliver high quality, impactful programmes.

Cheryl Hooper

Director

2020 A Year of Change





Programmes Update: Education Support

“I can proudly say; through the help of Cecily’s Fund, all my siblings have completed grade twelve. Our first born (Engineer now working with First Quantum Minerals in Solwezi), my immediate younger brother (Machine operator working with National Breweries) and I, have gone to college, and putting resources together to help our last born in the family (Esther) who just went to college to study Nursing. Only our 4th born brother is yet to go to college and I thank God for helping my family stand on its feet.”

2020 marked the beginning of Cecily’s Fund’s new approach to working more closely with schools in order to achieve better educational and social outcomes for highly disadvantaged children. A programme of capacity building support was developed with eight selected schools which we hope to become flagship schools of best practice over the next three years. The programme focuses on setting standards in 4 key areas of Governance, Pupil care and Support, Parent Engagement/Community Strengthening, and Linkages with local Government. This exciting new approach to education reform will help improve standards in the teaching and care of disadvantaged pupils, and will establish minimum standards across partner schools, building on Cecily’s Fund’s holistic youth-led approach to development.

- A Schools’ profile and mapping exercise was carried out as part of the initial planning for the new education support programme
- Sixteen schools were invited to apply to be a Cecily’s Fund partner, of which eight were selected after a thorough assessment of applications
- Following selection, individual school capacity assessments took place to understand gaps and where improvements were required. Assessments were based on Cecily’s Fund’s 4 benchmarks of Governance, Pupil care and Support, Parent Engagement, and Linkages with local government
- A steering group comprising Cecily’s Fund’s Director, Senior Programmes Manager, Executive Director of CHEP, and the DEBS (District Education Board Secretaries) Kitwe and Chingola Districts, was formed, and are working closely together
- Cecily’s Fund is now working closely with selected schools to set standards in their governance as well as safeguarding, disability inclusion and financial management. We are also developing savings groups for parents, introducing peer education and extra curricular activities through Sunshine Clubs



We also...

- Contributed to school fees for 433 highly disadvantaged children in Kitwe district
- Paid for 253 examination fees for Grade 12 students in Kitwe
- Distributed educational materials across 20 schools in need
- Delivered text books covering the subjects of RE, Computer studies, Geography, History, Science and Civic Education to 200 disadvantaged girls in Grade 11
- Enabled CHEP to facilitate a combined weekend for 3 Secondary Schools in Chamboli community, Kitwe. The event was held at Twashuka Secondary School with 46 out of a target of 50 pupils attending. Children were taught about self-awareness, values and beliefs. They were encouraged to recognise their strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and limitations, and to accept the present reality before they relate with others this included: physical self; emotional self; spiritual self; sexual self; intellectual self

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- 100 BISO School students transferred from its community school to government schools
- All eight grade 7 children at Sunrise Community School passed their exams and transitioned to Grade 8
- There are now 220 orphans and vulnerable children at Sunrise Community School which started through the support of a local GROW savings group set up through Cecily's Fund. Sunrise Community School is one of the 8 newly selected Cecily's Fund partner schools
- Covid19 guidelines were shared with schools through local partners and peer educators, so that measures were put in place for safe working practice
- Due to the prolonged School Holiday caused by Covid-19, school administrators in Kitwe district engaged the Ministry of Health to screen girls for pregnancies after the re-opening of schools was announced. This resulted in 2 girls who were found to be pregnant, and who were able to use the re-entry policy and return to school to continue with their education

The Impact of Covid19

“It was a worrisome moment for me and my family. I couldn’t do any piece work because we were restricted to staying home. I was not sure if we could survive, because we then had two threats (Covid19 and hunger) to our lives. After I received the first emergency food pack, it was a great relief for us. Honestly this helped me focus on my studies and I also received a bigger torch that I now use for my studies. During the lockdown I concentrated on my revision and studies in preparation for my grade 12 exams. The second emergency food pack helped me even more to focus on my studies and in readiness for the exam because I did not worry about what my family and I would eat.” Gift



Emergency food distribution, Kitwe district

As the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic took hold across the world, programme adaptations took place and we developed agile responses to meet those in greatest need. The Cecily's Fund's staff team reverted to home working and continued to manage programmes remotely. We learned from local partners that food security and accurate health information was a pressing and urgent challenge as local people were not fully aware of the dangers of Covid19. A national lockdown in Zambia, resulted in the poorest families unable to work and provide food for their families. Highly vulnerable children who would usually receive a meal through a feeding programme supported by Cecily's Fund, were not able to access food and good nutrition. Schools and universities closed, and children remained at home without any educational support.

We responded by:

- Implementing a national emergency response appeal to supporters
- Distributing over 700 emergency food parcels comprising Mealie meal, dried beans, kapenta (dried fish), sugar, soya pieces, cooking oil, soap, charcoal and rice. Parcels contained essential health information and families receiving parcels were also advised at the point of distribution, about how to stay safe and avoid Covid19
- Carrying out an exercise with local partners to assess the Impact of Covid19 to confirm the number of pupils still registered in school
- Implementing the continuation of emergency measures to combat the economic impact of Covid through backyard and container gardening tuition as a long-term measure for food security
- Establishing links with the Ministry of Agriculture who provided free of charge a trained employee and Head of its Agronomy Service, to train 56 highly vulnerable child headed households in container gardening to improve their nutrition. This training complemented the Ministry of Agriculture's USAID funded programme 'Skilling up Nutritional Technical Assistance'
- Implementing a 'Training of Trainers' for CHEP staff to sustain the intervention and deliver refresher training to beneficiaries
- Supporting our local partner BISO to follow up on highly vulnerable children at home as a result of school closures, to ensure they remained safe and not subjected to abuse

“My son reports severe stomach pain if he took his ART without food: In a week he misses one or two times when I do not have any food to eat. What happens sometimes I force him to take the medicine, but other times I cannot force him to take the medicine, so I just leave him.”

- For children living with HIV, the impact of food insecurity is a challenge as it often contributes to non-adherence of medicines, especially those on ART (anti-retro viral treatment)
- Emergency Food Packs prioritized children on ART, children living with grandmothers, and children living with a disability in Lusaka, and child headed households in Kitwe
- 638 Pupils from the community and 73 Pupils from the government schools benefitted from the food pack distribution in Lusaka
- The focus was on those who were most at risk of facing food shortage
- Most households in Kitwe faced water shortages, making container gardening more challenging



BISO feeding programme

Sustainability at the heart of programming

“I do not raise enough money, as a result I am the only one in school. My sisters are not yet in school because I cannot afford to pay for them. I rent my house at K200 per month; sometimes I skip school to allow me to raise money for food and rent. Recommending my name for school support has given me hope and lessened the burden. I don’t think I would have managed to put myself in school if not for the support I am on.”

Whilst we implemented an emergency response to the impact of Covid19, it was important to be able to sustain interventions so that beneficiaries would be able to continue to thrive without the continuing dependency on Cecily’s Fund. Teaching young people how to grow their own crops helped them gain essential life-skills and knowledge of how to grow their own food. By working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture we were able to establish long-term measures to help reduce vulnerability to unforeseen health and economic challenges as a result of the Coronavirus and other diseases.

The training included various aspects of gardening ranging from land preparation and nursery establishment, to pest and disease management and the use of containers to grow nutritious vegetables, where land wasn’t available. Other important aspects were also covered such as soil sterilization, fertilizer application, and agronomic

practices for selected vegetables such as tomatoes, cabbages, onions and carrots and other field crops of their choice. Outcomes of the training resulted in young people understanding the importance of choosing the right site for growing produce, land preparation, fertilizer application, weed control, and pest and disease management. Farming and vegetable production was an integral aspect of the training as part of Cecily’s Fund’s wider aim of protecting the environment through increased knowledge and understanding of climate change in the communities in which our work takes place.

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY CECILY’S FUND INCLUDED

- Watering cans
- Steel rakes
- Garden fork
- Fertilizer (D-Compound and Ammonium Nitrate)
- Hoes
- Sprayers
- Seeds (5 types of vegetables)

Planning and Logistics

Behind every intervention regardless of its size or complexity lies detailed logistical planning, preparation, and, the development of monitoring and evaluation data to be collected. Fifty-six highly vulnerable, struggling households headed by the eldest sibling were identified by local partner CHEP as requiring support with food and health information, after a home visit and liaison with school guidance teachers. Following the initial emergency food parcel delivery, the young families continued to receive training and support in developing food gardens for long term food security.

CHEP staff were mobilized in pairs and given training in communicating and distributing vital health information and collecting biodata on beneficiaries’ living conditions, housing tenure, and family income. This four-day assignment required detailed planning and logistics ahead of distribution because of the transient nature of some families and the remote locations in which they lived.

- The backyard and container garden training took place in the local communities of Chimemwe, Kamfina, Chamboli and the CHEP offices
- The training took place before the rainy season and so beneficiaries were able to grow ground nuts and use their crops to sell in local markets

Peer Education

“During this time of COVID 19 I spend a lot of my free time at Bwafwano Library reading as I have set my personal goals. Life is too short to mess up myself at the expense of friends and empty relationships. With the knowledge and skills I got from the training, I have become a strong person who is able to decide what is good for me. One of the things that is least among my priorities is to get involved with boys or men. My eyes are set on the future and not having to cope with disease and babies. I am looking forward for 2021 so that I can share with peers my knowledge and skill in sexual reproductive health.”

Ruth



PHE training



Peer Education takes many forms and is particularly effective when adopting a youth-led approach to behaviour change in young people. Each year, Cecily's Fund works with local partner CHEP to identify and train talented and willing, young students who have been supported through school by Cecily's Fund to become Peer Educators. At the beginning of 2020, before the national Zambia lockdown, we expanded the PHE programme into Lusaka, taking the learning and experience gained over twenty years, to share with our Lusaka-based partner, BISO. The scale-up of this intervention was possible through the generosity of several grant-making trusts and foundations who believe like us, in the power of young people to facilitate positive change.

CHEP worked with BISO to implement the programme and conducted the five-day training workshop, based on its successful Peer Education programme in Kitwe.

The main purpose of the training was to instil positive behaviour change and to provide confidence and the essential life-skills and knowledge that would equip participants to be effective Peer Educators. After graduating from the training, 19 newly trained youth Peer Educators were to be mobilized into selected schools in Lusaka in order to facilitate interactive sessions with pupils on the subjects of sexual reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, Covid-19, basic rights and gender equality.

Cecily's Fund is working hard to adapt and expand the Peer Education programme so that young people are made aware of their responsibilities to protect the environment and reduce the effects of climate change. We are now working with Cecily's Fund alumni to introduce additional elements to the Peer Education training programme which will explore the links between lifestyle and climate, and to look at the human impact in Zambia. This will enable young people to understand their personal impact on the environment and what they can do to minimize this through their day-to-day actions.

- 16 vulnerable youth in Kitwe district were selected to be trained to be Peer Educators in Kitwe district
- 19 vulnerable youth in Lusaka were selected and trained to be Peer Educators in Lusaka
- Because of Covid19, peer education sessions were not able to take place in schools because of school closures
- Lusaka trained Peer Educators supported BISO with the distribution to emergency food and health parcels and communication around how to stay safe and avoid Covid19
- CHEP provides on-going mentorship and support to newly trained and established youth Peer Educators
- The life skills gained through the Peer Education Training are transferable, and experienced Peer Educators continue to support Cecily's Fund in other aspects of its programmes
- The new climate change module will be introduced in 2021

THE 2020 PEER EDUCATION TRAINING INCLUDED:

- Pre-training Assessment
- Basic facts about HIV and AIDS
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Sex and Gender Roles
- Adolescence
- Substance Abuse and HIV
- Love and Relationships
- Human Rights, including Sexual & reproductive health Rights
- Sexual Offenses and how to deal with them
- Values, Cultural & Religious Practices
- Psychosocial life skills
- Basic Counselling skills
- Peer Education Approach (methodologies)
- Basic Facilitation skills (Managing Cecily's Fund Sunshine Clubs)
- Post-Training Assessment



PHE delivering session in school



Tailoring business, Kitwe

DURING 2020

- Two GROW savings groups were established in the communities of Soweto and Chiwempala in Chingola
- A total number of 60 women were trained and formed two groups of 30 members
- The groups chose the names of 'Favour Devine' and 'Twikatane'
- Soweto Group 'Divine Favour' had 23 active members who meet and save regularly. The group had savings of K2,162 after six weeks of formation
- Chiwempala Group 'Twikatane' have 27 members who actively meet and had savings of K3,182 after six weeks of being set up
- Loans enabled women to engage in income generating activities at household level and help them to meet family needs; they also helped to provide access to equipment, stock, and seeds for their businesses as well as the payment of school fees for their children
- Women were taught how to develop a robust constitution and terms of reference for the groups, as well as how to record monies and keep accurate records
- The groups also provided friendship, moral support, and a social space for women to come together in a safe environment

Social Business Development for Stronger Communities

“Poverty is not an excuse! I was born and raised in a poor household with a single mother. Life was really hard, our mother would struggle to put on the table, she could not afford to get us fancy things, but I chose to be happy with the little things I had. It’s all about the decisions we make that matter the most; marriage is a lifetime decision that will change someone’s life forever. Throughout my life I chose to make decisions that are good for me and my family.”



Small business development

For many adolescent girls the onset of menstruation results in infrequent attendance at school and not completing education. During 2020 when Zambia experienced national lockdowns and school closures, teenage girls in particular were more vulnerable to exploitation and teenage pregnancy. The reopening of schools resulted in new challenges of motivating girls to not only attend school, but also to remain in education and not drop out early. For those girls who fell pregnant, they were encouraged to return to school as part of the Zambian Government's re-entry policy. Changing attitudes towards girls and women, and, the contribution they make to Zambia's economy and society generally, is a key strategy of Cecily's Fund to empower women and girls through access to education and training.

Girls with a disability face all the barriers to schooling which other orphans and vulnerable children encounter, but in addition, they face stigma and discrimination and are most often left behind or hidden away by parents or guardians. Reducing discrimination and creating more inclusive communities is tackled by bringing together mothers of deaf and other vulnerable children to learn and develop social businesses that make and sell low-cost, reusable menstrual hygiene towels to enable girls to remain in school at the onset of menstruation.

Cecily's Fund's 'RESPECT' (Reach. Empower. Sustain. Promote. Educate. Challenge. Train) initiative addresses challenges of gender inequality and women's disempowerment, menstruation and the affordability of menstrual hygiene towels to enable girls to go to school; the issue of family poverty and the need for stronger communities.

For girls and women with a disability, all of these challenges are exacerbated and accessing accurate information and support around sexual reproductive health is even harder and almost impossible. By bringing together parents of disabled children and those without a disability we were able to dispel myths about disability and engage parents on finding solutions to how communities can be more inclusive and help support those people living with a disability.

We responded by:

- Developing a programme that would bring together mothers of deaf and hearing children together to learn about disability and have greater understanding and awareness in order to reduce discrimination and create more inclusive communities
- We provided training in disability awareness
- We provided training in sexual reproductive health and basic rights of women and girls
- Beginning the formation of two GROW Savings Groups comprising mothers and guardians from Jennifer Memorial Special School and Sunrise Community School
- We began preparation for safeguarding training for beneficiaries
- We procured suitable sewing machines and fabric for the menstrual hygiene products
- We made project adaptations to include the making of face masks as well as reusable menstrual hygiene towels
- Beginning the preparation for financial literacy training and business development

We addressed poverty and financial hardship by introducing an entrepreneurship component which would not only provide much needed income to families, but also provide a product and service that would help support girls to go to school. The project trains mothers in the making, selling and distribution of low-cost reusable menstrual hygiene packs which would be sold in local markets. At the point of sale, women are also trained to provide accurate information and support in sexual reproductive health matters and basic rights. This, combined with greater understanding of disability issues, is leading to stronger, more inclusive communities. The businesses when formed, will also give back to their communities by providing products free to girls in severe hardship.





Financial literacy training session

Programme Management

Whilst the global health pandemic that began in 2020 affected Cecily's Fund's programming and our ability to deliver interventions at the speed and volume that was originally planned, we used the time to reflect, learn, and put in place measures to strengthen programmes when they resume. Our ability to adapt programming and respond to immediate challenges was visibly demonstrated by the Emergency Humanitarian Response to Covid19 and the logistical challenge of distributing food and health information parcels to our most vulnerable beneficiaries. UK and local programme staff worked closely on procurement of suitable food items, and the development of appropriate health information guidance. We also explored options for beneficiary self-reporting, to ensure data collection was covid-safe, including written feedback from beneficiaries to enable us to develop interventions with beneficiary input.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Government Stakeholders

We took the learning from previous programmes and forged closer strategic alliances with the Ministry of Education and in particular the DEBS (District Education Board Secretaries) in Kitwe and Chingola. This resulted in the formation of a Steering Group that contributes to the development of Cecily's Fund new Education Support Programme

We forged links with the Ministry of Agriculture who delegated a qualified Agriculturalist to teach Cecily's Fund beneficiaries how to grow their own food. We continue to engage local government and demonstrate how interventions align with regional and national frameworks and development plans.

Vulnerable Adults and Children

We took a deliberate stance on disability to create more inclusive communities. Wide discrimination and stigma associated with disability creating lack of opportunity and inequality, was addressed by raising awareness & community sensitization and Peer Education sessions to be delivered in schools. We worked closely with Jennifer Memorial Special School for deaf children to help deliver training and sensitize parents. Disability issues are now integrated across Cecily's Fund programming to ensure that no-one is left behind.

Child headed households

We specifically identified child-headed households and the very real challenges they face in their daily lives. These include living a transient existence and informal employment so that they can care for younger siblings. Some are supported by neighbours and other members of the community but the basics of food, security, safety and shelter remain a priority. We will continue to support child headed households identified during the global health pandemic and will take into account their very specific needs and challenges in future programme development.

Poverty Reduction

Economic empowerment for the poorest and most marginalised families lies at the heart of Cecily's Fund's programme development. Training in financial self-sufficiency reduces dependency and enables communities to be self-supporting, a key strategy for sustainability.

We addressed the need for economic empowerment for parents of deaf & hearing children, helping them to learn, & work together collaboratively, to sell low-cost reusable menstrual hygiene towels to create an income whilst providing essential information & support on SRH matters & basic rights.

We continued with the development of GROW Savings Groups to help women become financially independent and avoid exploitation and coercion.

Stronger Communities

Empowering communities through shared knowledge of basic rights, training in financial literacy, and, access to education and training, supports individual and collective development. Zambia's youth populace are its future leaders and role models, who younger children can emulate. Our community strengthening interventions continued with our youth-led approach to development and the creation of stronger, more resilient and empowered communities. Through Cecily's Fund alumni, many who are former trained Peer Educators, we continued to work closely with current and former Peer Educators to deliver peer education in communities and Sunshine Clubs.



Bwafwano Integrated Services Organisation (BISO), Lusaka



Capacity Building and Grant Management

Grant management during 2020 was compromised severely on account of the global Coronavirus Pandemic. As programme adaptations were forced to take place, we kept donors informed and continued to implement activities when allowed. We managed 4 key programmes that reflect our holistic approach to the care and support of orphans and vulnerable children, following our mission to enable orphans and vulnerable children to go to school; help them to succeed at school; prepare them for life beyond school and strengthen local communities.

Programmes comprised the Cecily's Fund Education Support Programme; Peer Health Education; RESPECT (Reach, Empower, Sustain, Promote, Educate, Challenge, Train) and Empowering Deaf Youth through Peer Education. As a result of International Aid Cuts, the grant that was secured from UKAID was revoked without warning. The sudden loss in funding has resulted in Cecily's Fund not being able to proceed with this programme in spite of all logistical planning and due diligence being completed.

We continued to build capacity and support local partners in their own professional and organisational development.

HIGHLIGHTS

- We commissioned two Cecily's Fund alumni to undertake a story telling project to capture beneficiary stories and the impact of the support received as a result of Cecily's Fund's interventions
- We commissioned and held safeguarding training for local partner CHEP and Cecily's Fund staff
- We facilitated a 'Train the Trainer' training on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults for key CHEP staff so that they can train Peer Educators and other field workers
- We developed a robust application form and terms of reference document for schools wishing to be considered to be a Cecily's Fund partner school
- We developed a detailed school capacity assessment framework to identify gaps and areas for improvement in governance, pupil care, parent engagement and links with the Ministry of Education as part of the new education support programme
- We developed work plans and Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks with local partners to keep track of programme outcomes and impact
- We successfully completed the due diligence process for UKAID ensuring that policies in safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, equal opportunities, and disability were up to date and implemented both in the UK and Zambia
- We carried out regular financial monitoring of Zambian expenditure relating to Cecily's Fund programmes
- We reviewed the Cecily's Fund risk register and added risks and mitigations on Covid19
- We ensured that programmes in Zambia were Covid19 safe and compliant with WHO guidelines
- We produced programme updates and reports for all grant makers
- We facilitated and led a programme workshop for local partners on new programme development
- We developed a robust TOR (Terms of Reference) for a new programme steering group with the DEBS Kitwe and Chingola, and began to work more strategically with the Ministry of Education to ensure the new Education Support Programme adds value to the Government of Zambia's Strategic Development Plan
- We held a Q&A Event in collaboration with local partners for Cecily's Fund supporters to enable them to speak directly to Cecily's Fund partners, alumni and key programme staff

The Alumni Story Telling Project

Cecily's Fund enjoys maintaining long-standing links with the young people who have been supported through school, and especially those who continued to benefit after school by becoming Peer Educators. The confidence gained through their training continues to support their personal development and ability to progress in life in whichever way they choose. 2020 marked the fifth anniversary of the official formation of the Cecily's Fund Alumni body 'Twibukushi Alumi' headed by its President and former Peer Educator Evans Chineka. The Alumni body continues to grow with the support of Cecily's Fund, and during 2020 we commissioned Evans and fellow Alumnus Jackson to follow up on the progress of students to see how their lives have changed.

Evans was supported into school by Cecily's Fund and is now employed as a project officer for Cecily's Fund's local partner CHEP. He graduated from the University of the Copperbelt with Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management, and has also developed the new Climate Change teaching module that will be an addition to our Peer Educator training sessions.

Jackson Tembo was also supported into school by Cecily's Fund and trained through our Fresh Start Entrepreneurship Programme. He graduated with a Diploma in Creative Digital Media and now works as a graphic designer and journalist. He has recently been on Zambia National Television being interviewed about his work and the work of Cecily's Fund.

The purpose of the project was to capture real life stories from young people so that we can better understand the realities they face in their daily lives, and what has been important to them with regard to our approach to programming and the interventions we develop. The stories also helped us to learn, demonstrating, that for many young people, the path they follow is not always straight and it is the obstacles they have to overcome that can inform future programme development.



Evans Chineka

Where they are now...

Looking through the eyes of Cecily's Fund Supported Youth

Sophie's Story

“I can testify that I am never the same, my life has changed because of you. I did not know anything about business and sexual health, all these I learnt through Cecily's Fund which continues to impact many lives.”

Sophie now 25, is one of 12 children who grew up in a poor household with parents who had little or no income to support their family and pay school fees so that all the children could go to school and gain an education.

She struggled to complete school but with hard work and perseverance, she completed her Grade 12 exams and had high hopes of going to college and finding employment in the formal sector. With two parents struggling to put food on the table and feed the family, Sophie chose to look for work to help her parents financially and pay her own way through college, but high unemployment and mine closures across the Copperbelt meant that she remained at home and continued with her old way of life. As none of her 11 siblings had completed school because of the financial burden of school fees, she had no-one to aspire to, or motivate her to succeed.

Sophie was introduced to Cecily's Fund through one of the volunteer elders in her community in Buntungwa Ward where she lived. Hearing about the Connecting Communities Learning for Life Programme, and what it offered young people, she was inspired to register and attended a number of training sessions. Through the programme she learned about entrepreneurship, and gained financial literacy skills,





including learning how to save and grow wealth, even if from a humble background. Cecily's Fund later empowered her with a small capital sum to establish her 'Salaula' business (selling second-hand clothes). *"My business was thriving well and grew exponentially. In the quest to grow my business, I unfortunately started selling clothes both on cash and credit. Hence, most customers that got credit did not pay me and this resulted to my business going down such that I could not even manage to make orders because my capital reduced, and I eventually used the money meant for business capital to support my family's needs. There are several lessons I learned from my previous business and among them is to avoid doing business on credit."*

Sophie later trained as a Peer Educator so that she was able to support her peers in guidance and information on HIV/AIDS, STIs, teenage pregnancy and other adolescent health related matters. The life skills acquired through the training helped to build her self-esteem and improve Sophie's motivation and resilience. This led her to being employed by CHEP as a DREAMS USAID funded mentor for other girls.

"After all the training I underwent, I avoid involving myself in unnecessary sexual relationships because I look at life so differently. I look at marriage as important but only at the right time with the right partner hence someone should wait to be mature enough to make a decision to marry or get married. For example, complete your studies, develop survival skills, have discipline in saving or establish a business, and be successful, before getting into marriage."

Whilst Sophie is now on the way to achieving her goals, her resilience, self-belief, and motivation to succeed has continued to guide her. She applied the financial literacy skills she learned, to save money so that she can train to be a nurse. She is currently able to save some of her salary to help reach her goal and is more than 50% towards her target to raise enough money to support herself through college.

Connecting Communities Learning for Life was a 3-year programme funded by Comic Relief. Sunshine Clubs which were set up as part of this intervention continue to support young people in the community and we are currently taking the model and introducing Sunshine Clubs in the 8 partner schools we are working with.

"It's all about the decisions we make that matter the most. Throughout my life I chose to make decisions that are good for me and my family"

Eneless's story

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH SPORT.

“Poverty does not make someone less human hence it should not be an excuse, we all have the ability to prosper and inspire people.”

Eneless

Growing up in a community that considers marriage as a big success is an ongoing challenge for girls who often fail to reach their potential because of pressure to marry as soon as they reach puberty. Eneless has two sisters and a brother. Both sisters married at a young age but their prospects are severely limited, and according to Eneless, they are experiencing the consequences of their actions as neither completed school having dropped out when they were young children. The decision to not follow tradition was frowned upon when Eneless continued to study and avoid falling into the norm of teenage pregnancy and marriage. There was local gossip initially when her younger sister married before her, with the assumption that she was jealous. Today, the community's views on marriage and girls place in society have changed as they have witnessed for themselves how a young girl living in hardship has managed to lift herself out of poverty and elevate her position in the community.

Eneless Mambwe 23, was supported by Cecily's Fund from an early age and is now a teacher at Bwafwano Community School where she started her early education. She plays hockey at national level and trains at The Olympic Youth Development Centre. Sport has given her the opportunity to travel and represent her country, visiting 7 different nations across the globe (China, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya), and is determined to change the lives of people, especially the most vulnerable, through sport.

Sport has over the years been used for different purposes, for some it's a source of income, for some a way of keeping fit, but for Eneless sport is a tool she wants to use to change the lives of people, and especially a girl child as they are most vulnerable in society. *“I believe that sports has the power to transform and change lives for the*

better, my life has changed because of sports.”

Her travels in Africa and Asia have given her the opportunity to share with peers some of the lessons learned, which could change somebody's approach to life if they are able to break old habits and thought processes around poverty and hardship. *“I believe it's my responsibility to share what I have learnt with others, It could be a turning point for them just as it was for me.”*

Eneless believes that the only reason that most girls end up in early marriages and unplanned pregnancies is because they lack information. *“If young people had adequate information they would not engage in such such destructive acts; knowledge is power. Knowledge is freedom.”*

At 23 she is confident and self motivated, and doesn't even think about marriage. *“I have so much that needs to be done, marriage for now is not an option.”* Her view on marriage is quite different from many of her peers, she believes that marriage is better done at the right time with the right motive.

“Marriage is good when it comes at the right time with the right partner. Starting a family comes with preparation, one has to be stable, financially, emotionally, mentally, and physically.”

Eneless has not been spared by the challenges that life offers, growing up with a single mother was not easy, she was deprived of the basic needs, like education, shelter, and food. After her mother died, she was cared for by her elderly grandmother. The financial hardship faced by the family forced Eneless to obtain support from Bwafwano Integrated Services Organization (BISO), Cecily's Fund local partner based in Lusaka. Coming from a home that had no food, Eneless was motivated to go to BISO Community School because of the food that the school was offering under its feeding program. *“I had no reason to stay home, at home there was no food but our school had food.”*

The feeding programme at BISO Community School motivated Eneless to attend school regularly and learn because she was provided with the right nutrition needed for concentration.

Eneless remembers the suffering she went through, as she recalled how her grandmother struggled to feed her and her siblings. *“Grandmother could not afford to give me all that I needed, but I felt happy and secure being around her. She knew what was good for me, she taught me to think critically and make the right decisions, her confidence and hope for the future kept me going.”*

“Poverty is not an excuse! I was born and raised in a poor house hold with a single mother. Life was really hard. Our mother would struggle to put food on the table,



Chizanga Compound, Lusaka

she could not afford to get us fancy things, but I chose to be happy with the little things I had. Its all about the decisions we make that matter the most, marriage is a lifetime decision that will change someones life forever. Throughout my life I chose to make decisions that are good for me and my family"

In Zambia certain tribes do not believe in educating a girl child; for some, a girl child is looked upon as a form of wealth and a dowry, but Eneless's grandmother was different, the most important thing for her is education.

"Nalefwaya fye abeshikulu bandi kuti basembilile, iyi eyalifye inshila iyakupwisha ubuchushi twalepitamo (I wanted my grand children to get an education, this was the only way to save them from further poverty)" When she looks at her confident and visionary granddaughter she feels happy; she has seen the power of education and how it can transform lives. *"nale umfwa fye, nomba lelo nimbona"* (I only used to hear about it but now I have seen it myself).

"Cecily's Fund has given me more than just an Education, They have given me a life, Cecily's Fund is the backbone of everything I am today. I can not imagine my life without the support I got, without it, I would have been a mother of four or worse. It's the trainings and support that I got through BISO that saved me.

While at Bwafwano Community as a pupil I was introduced to several trainings funded by Cecily's Fund. We were trained in sexual reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, STIs, Menstrual health and on the effects and dangers of early marriages & teen pregnancies. One of the cardinal things was to keep ourselves busy in order to avoid engaging in unproductive things. After learning these things I knew that I had to find something that I love doing to keep myself busy in order to avoid certain unproductive things". This led Eneless to join a school drama club where she became a popular member of the group, reciting poems on the importance of education, avoiding HIV and the impact of early marriage. She touched the lives of many young people who began to look up to her.

"Many of them looked upto me, they could come to me when they had problems, I earned their trust and I was so proud of that, it was a dream come true."

This encouraged Eneless to want to do more and so she began to seek bigger challenges. She started going to OYDC in a quest to teach others and keep herself busy, and was identified as being very influential, with an additional talent for hockey and teaching. While still in school in grade 11 she made her first trip to China, and played hockey at international level.

Today Eneless has a Diploma in teaching from Kitwe College of Education, and is currently teaching at the community school where she was once a pupil.



LICK MORE

V.B.A.K.

GENDER



Sydney's Story

All Sydney wanted was to get an education, but he has been given so much more than what he expected. Among them is a family he never had, opportunities, hope and a future.

Born in the mining town of Chingola in the Copperbelt, Sydney Nyambe now 26, had his fair share of challenges and hardships but has persevered and is now a qualified social worker with a degree from the University of Zambia.

Life on the Copperbelt was hard ever since the Government closed down most of the mines, affecting millions of people, including Sydney's Father who depended on the mining industry for work. When the mines closed down due to privatization, his father lost the only job he had and this marked the beginning Sydney's story.

"We hardly had two meals in a day; my father could not support us, I watched him get out of bed as early as 4am to go and look for work in order to make ends meet. It wasn't easy for him, it was equally hard for us, every day was the same, and things kept changing from bad to worse."

Sydney's passion for school kept growing despite the challenges he was going through. He believed that things would get better one day, but the question was, when, and for how long could he hold on.

When he was in grade 6 Sydney lost his father to depression; the situation became unbearable for him and his siblings. *"I lost the little hope I had. I gave up on everything. My father's death broke me into pieces. Mum had no means to support us and was unemployed without any source of income."*

In 2008 Sydney sat his grade 7 exams at Kalela Basic School in Kitwe on the Copperbelt Province and passed with good results, but moving to Secondary school meant paying school fees which his mother could not afford.

"It was like I betrayed mum by passing my exams. She used to cry every day, she really wanted to take me to school but she had no means to make that happen."

His mother knew the importance of education. She had witnessed how education transformed other people's lives and she was sure that education would surely change her children's lives too, but she had no idea how she would manage to educate them.

"I wanted the best for my children, I wanted to give them a better life as any mother would, but the situation at the time could not allow that."

In Zambia, primary education is free but many people cannot afford to buy school uniforms and other basic needs for their children to access primary school. Despite the premise of free primary education, many Zambian children fail to access early education and some are not able to progress beyond primary level.

Sydney started to engage in illicit activities and his mother began to receive reports about him fighting and stealing, and that he was associating with people who influenced him to do bad things. His mother decided to send Sydney to her brother based in Lusaka to give him a fresh start and seek new opportunities.

After getting into trouble several times, he began to realize that he was being a bad example to his siblings. *"I wasn't helping them, I was making the situation worse for them, I am the first born, I have to be a better example."*

In Lusaka life was not easy, his uncle was unemployed and did not have a stable source of income, but he really wanted the very best for Sydney. After struggling for months, things began to change when he enrolled in an education program funded by Cecily's Fund at BISO (Bwafwano Integrated Services Organization). This brought joy to Sydney and his family. His mother in Chingola was very excited and encouraged him to work hard and not to disappoint the confidence and trust vested in him by the funders and his family.

Sydney's life path changed when he started at Chipata Basic School in Lusaka and then went on to Highland Secondary School to complete his education. He started thinking about how he could raise money for college and struggled for months looking for odd jobs but he didn't find any. Eventually, he started volunteering at a local police station as a neighbourhood watch. *"I had nothing else to do, I was waiting for the [exam]results but couldn't find a job, it was time to be creative and think differently from the old me. Education is everything, it changes the way we think."*

During his time with the police, he discovered that there was more that could be done to improve service delivery to the general public, especially the most vulnerable in society. The law affects those that are ignorant and vulnerable. Sydney wanted to do something about it but he had no means or qualifications to back him up. *"Some people commit crimes unknowingly, if we could educate them maybe certain petty crimes could be avoided."*

Sydney believes that a life without a sense of purpose is useless. *"You have to find purpose in order to live a healthy and productive life, many young people of today have gone astray because they don't have purpose, as a Social Worker I took it upon myself to help my fellow youths and young people by giving them hope and a sense of purpose."*





While in his third year at The University of Zambia, he started helping young people who needed counselling and guidance. He started talking to street kids under the fly-over bridge along Church Road in Lusaka. *"Some have stories or backgrounds similar to mine, I try as much as I can to give them hope and recommend them to rehabilitation centres."*

"I grew up separately from my siblings, but I was happy, Cecily's Fund gave me a family that encouraged, motivated, and pushed me to do my very best."

Eleven years on Sydney is a changed person, smart and confident. The past seems a world away from Sydney's present. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from the University of Zambia and is currently working with the Zambia Police Service in the CCPU (Community Crime Prevention Unit). He has dedicated his life to help juveniles in conflict with the law.

"I Help people that have lost hope, I provide counselling services to those that abuse drugs, those that have given up on life, I am the best example I can ever give them."

"I never thought I would be where I am today; I am surely the change that I wanted. Without the support from Cecily's fund, I would have ended up on the streets. I advise people to never give up, and if I have kids, I will tell them that the most important thing in life is to never give up."

"I am taking good care of my siblings, (some are in school in Chingola, some are currently living with Sydney in Lusaka). I give them things I never had and support them in every way possible. My mum is so proud of me; I have managed to wipe away her tears."

When people see Sydney it's hard to believe that he has managed to achieve so much despite his humble background, he is helping other young people to live a better and productive life. He believes that it's possible for people to change if only we are willing to hear their story, believing that change begins with us. *"I listen to their problems and offer them possible solutions; my goal is to provide equal justice for all, poor, or rich."*

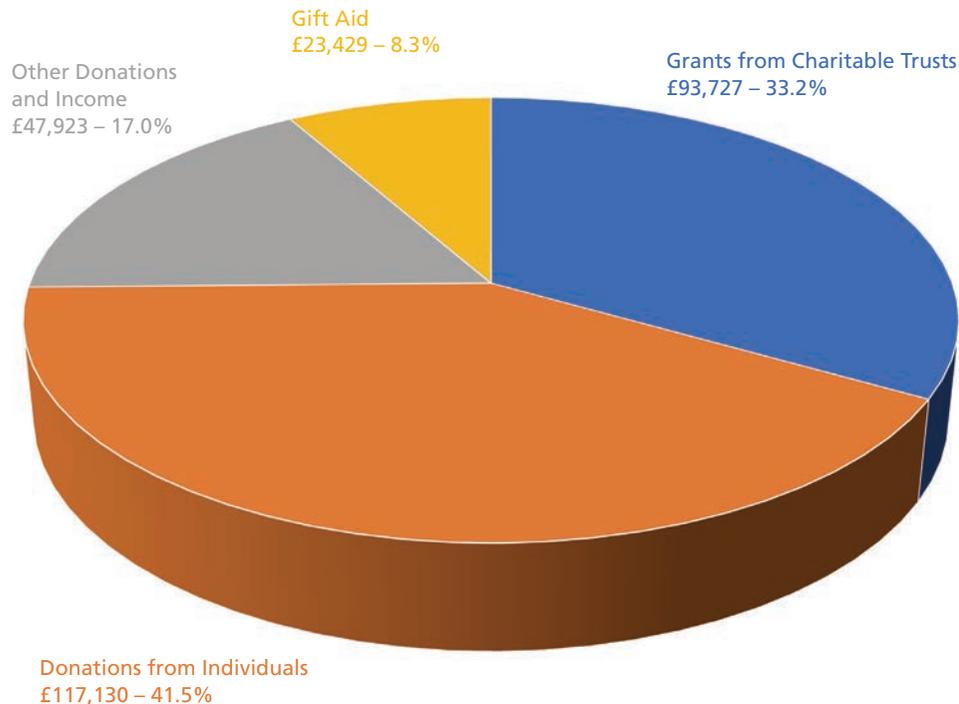
Sydney is an inspiration to other young people who have learned that it is not about where you come from. *"It is about where you are going. It is not about your past it's about what you are willing to do about it."*

We are continuing to capture the lives and views of young people supported by Cecily's Fund, through the Alumni Story Telling Project to help us learn and adapt programmes so that they remain relevant and responsive to the realities faced by young people in Zambia.

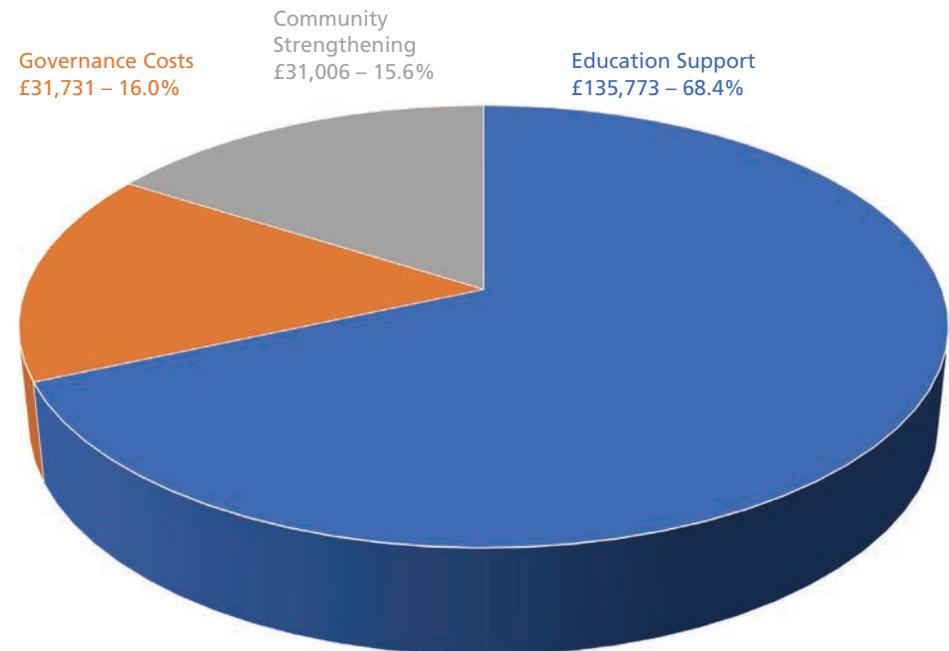
Financial Summary

In 2020, despite the challenges imposed by the Covid19 pandemic, we have continued to provide our most vulnerable households with basic necessities of food and sanitation assisted by the successful implementation of an emergency appeal made to our loyal donors and grant partners during the year. As a result, we were able to spend £198,505 on charitable activities in the year thus bringing total remittances made to our Zambian beneficiaries since our constitution in 1997 to £6,364,768. We continue to benefit from having a diverse range of donors who continue to contribute to the stable financial situation of the charity.

Income 2020 £282,209



Expenditure on Charitable Activities 2020 £198,505



Thanks and Acknowledgements

We would not be able to carry out our work without the generosity and support from grant making trusts, and loyal individual donors, churches, and schools, who continued to support us throughout 2020. We thank you for your understanding, trust, and flexibility regarding the delivery of our programmes during the global health pandemic.

Private Grant-making Trusts and Foundations

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Pat Newman Memorial Trust
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St James's Place Foundation
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Schools

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The Dragon School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls

Churches

St Pauls Church, Nottingham
Portishead CoE
Briercliffe Road Church, Burnley

Community Groups

Witney Inter-Church Singers

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CHEP (Copperbelt Helath Education Project)
BISO (Bwafwano Integrated Services Organisation)
Jenifer Memorial Special Community School (Kitwe)
Ministry of Education, Kitwe and Chingola
Ministry of Agriculture, Kitwe



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6 Church Green, Witney OX28 4AW

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