

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

**For the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

**Together We Learn**  
**1165953**

## **Objectives and Activities**

### **Objectives**

The purposes of the charity as set out in our governing document are the advancement of education and the relief of poverty in Ethiopia and the promotion of equality between people in the United Kingdom and Ethiopia, in particular but not exclusively by:

- A. Supporting children, families, individuals, schools, communities, organisations, and charities in Ethiopia;
- B. Raising public awareness in the U.K. of Ethiopia's history and culture, educational and poverty issues, including through lessons and a range of visits.

The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future objectives.

### **Activities undertaken to meet our objectives**

Together We Learn is formed by the merger of Link Ethiopia (registered charity number 1112390) and The Kindu Trust (registered charity number 1069574). The merge was announced in September 2020 and the transfer of financial assets and activities will commence from the start of the next financial year.

This report covers an account of finances received by Together We Learn in the financial year 2020-21 and covers activities jointly completed by the three charities over the reporting period. A full report of combined finances and activities can be found on our website (<https://twlethiopia.org/impact/#aranchor>).

## **Access to Education**

### **School Construction**

We build facilities at schools to increase access to learning for children in rural areas and improve the quality of educational facilities. This year, five new classrooms were built; four classrooms were restored; one library was built; and two water stations were built.

### **Gendit School Project**

Our project at Gendit School, in partnership with Building Futures Ethiopia, aims to transform Gendit School into a model of rural education. In September 2020, we refurbished four old classrooms, making structural repairs and replacing the furniture to make the classrooms functional again. We installed a new water station near the toilet block, providing hand washing facilities and clean drinking water for students. We also completed construction of a fence around the school compound which will safeguard school buildings and enable the

school to run farming activities on the grounds to generate income for school expenses. We also worked closely with the teachers and the director at the school from the start of the academic year, providing training on teaching English using the phonics method, on lesson planning, and creating teaching aids.

### **Hibret Library Project**

We collaborated with US organisation Open Hearts Big Dreams to bring a new library to Gondar town. Construction began in early 2020. It was disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic but resumed later in the year and by February 2021 the library was furnished with areas to read, stocked with books, and open for pupils to enjoy.

### **Silingo School Project**

This year also saw the completion of new concrete block classrooms at Silingo School in Asella, Oromia. The classrooms were funded by Headington School, Oxford, who supported the construction of a four-classroom concrete block at the school, which was in use in time for the new school year, when students were able to return to school in smaller class sizes with safety measures in place.

### **Kumbursa Kindergarten Project**

A new kindergarten classroom was completed at Kumbursa Elementary in rural Oromia this year. The classroom was completed in time for the new year in 2020.

### **Water Station Projects**

This year we built two new water stations, at Gendit School and at Atse Bekaffa School where 1,300 pupils are able to benefit.

### **Student Sponsorship**

Our sponsorship programme enables children from low income families to go to school. The coronavirus pandemic this year led to a swift and decisive move from the Ethiopian government, announcing a state of emergency from April to August 2020. These measures meant that our students were not able to access education for the second semester of the academic year. We took a number of steps to continue supporting students and their families throughout this time; we provided an advance on monthly sponsorship funds to enable families to bulk buy before prices increased. We bought soap, masks and other sanitation materials and our team ran a handwashing campaign for families in Gondar. Our Gondar office was open to students twice a week to access laptops, the internet and a printer so they could download and print lessons, worksheets and resources sent by teachers to continue their learning. In August, the rainy season further reduced income opportunities already affected by the lockdown, so we ran a fundraising campaign to buy food parcels for families in urgent need and were able to provide supplies of oil, teff grain and flour to 587 families. Schools were reopened in October and our team acted quickly to distribute educational materials to students so they could resume their studies as soon as possible. Throughout the state of emergency our sponsorship coordinators remained in contact with families via phone to ensure their continued wellbeing.

### **Girls' Education - Lijinete Women's Network**

This year the Lijinete Women's Network project trained 13 women who had experienced child marriage and motherhood to support girls in their community who are at risk of child marriage, assault or dropping out of school. Following leadership and confidence building sessions, all the women received business training and start-up loans to enable them to be financially independent. The women met up every month to provide peer support to each other, discuss cases in their community and share experience from their businesses.

## **Girls' Education - Menstrual Hygiene Management**

As part of our work to support girls' education, we provide reusable period packs and training about menstruation for female students. Days for Girls UK make the kits which provide a comfortable and reliable solution for girls to manage their period. This year we were very happy to work with the Disability Coordinator at Azezo Primary school to provide 40 reusable period packs to girls affected by autism and blindness, as well as distributing a further 110 packs to disadvantaged pupils.

## **Playgroup**

The playgroup is a space for pre-school sponsored children to socialise and play. Children visit with their guardians where they develop both by interacting with each other and with toys they often don't have at home. Primary school starts at age seven in Ethiopia and few schools have kindergartens attached for earlier learning. The first years of a child's life are vital to lay the foundations for learning in the future and the Playgroup exists to provide this, as well as support and resources for parents. 46 children a week attended the Playgroup when it was running this year.

## **Quality of Education**

### **Teacher Training**

Together We Learn has been partnering with Jolly Phonics to train Ethiopian teachers to use the phonics method of teaching English. 2020 marked our seventh year training Ethiopian teachers to use a phonics approach. For the first time in our Amhara project, we trained teachers outside of Gondar with schools in the cities of Dessie, Debre Markos and Debre Tabor invited to training sessions. The director and two early grade teachers from ten schools in each city were invited to participate and each group was supported by a local fieldworker throughout the year. Our work with Colleges of Teacher Education also expanded – with eight lecturers and 20 students from Begemdir College in Debre Tabor receiving training in how to use phonics when they qualify as teachers. Our first semester training sessions took place as planned but unfortunately, before we could hold our second semester training sessions, Ethiopian schools were shut to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In October 2020, thanks to the support of our donor, The Waterloo Foundation, we were able to rerun all our planned activities, working with the same schools and the same students now in grade two as well as trainee teachers in Debre Tabor.

### **School Linking**

Our school linking programme invites schools to join us in changing lives through education by engaging young people to learn more about the world around them. We facilitated 31 school links in 2020. When the coronavirus pandemic led to a shutdown of schools in the UK and Ethiopia, we made all of our school resources publicly available to support remote learning, and developed a number of new resources focused on issues related to coronavirus, to encourage students to consider how the pandemic was impacting people across the globe. One resource concerned global health, the World Health Organisation, and Dr Tedros Gebreyesus, its Ethiopian Director-General. Another resource looked at water access and consumption in the UK and Ethiopia, and how this affects the ability to manage sanitation in relation to health and issues such as the pandemic.

### **Donkey Library**

Our donkey libraries are equipped with safe harnesses to transport reference books and story books to isolated schools. A trained donkey librarian travels with the donkey to schools in rural areas where they lend books to children to support their learning and to teachers to enhance their lessons. They also help children to select books and hold reading sessions

while at the school. School visits were not possible when schools closed in March 2020, but the donkey librarians supported other children locally by lending books for them to read at home. The donkey library supported 17 schools this year, benefitting 7,000 pupils.

### **The Kindu Klub**

The Kindu Klub is an educational club based in Gondar that provides homework support, access to learning spaces and organised play. This year we received an average of 97 pupils per week at the club where the dedicated youth worker arranged lessons to support their learning, provided homework support and led games, including weekly football sessions on Fridays. The club also provides access to computers so that children can learn IT skills, and a library where they can borrow fiction and study books. We ran a number of activities to support students during the pandemic. In May, older pupils who attended the club supported our youth worker and sponsorship team to set up handwashing stations around our compound, to distribute soap to families in the area and to deliver training on good handwashing practice. In June, our library facility was opened so students could borrow books and study from home, and pupils were invited to download and print worksheets sent by their teachers at the club. In August, we redirected funds that would normally be used to provide meals at the Kindu Klub to deliver emergency food parcels for families particularly in need. In December, when activities were able to resume, we adapted the club space for socially distant learning, running sessions in smaller groups and with regular handwashing. We also took advantage of the extra space provided by an office move to build an outdoor canteen area so that students could enjoy their meals more safely under the shelter outside.

## **Children's Wellbeing**

### **Football Teams**

Together We Learn runs football projects for girls and boys in both Gondar and Bishoftu. Our teams hold regular training sessions and participate in friendly matches and tournaments. Training sessions and matches were paused in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic but our coach in Bishoftu was able to continue to stay connected with the team by holding fitness training sessions over the phone. We were able to restart in-person sessions with new teams in January 2021.

### **Home Improvements**

As part of our mission to enable children to succeed in education, we work with families and communities to improve the living environments of children. Adequate housing means security for the child, a safe place to live and a place to study and do homework. Many of our sponsored families live in very basic accommodation with few, if any, basic conveniences. We facilitate the construction of new homes, improve existing homes, install taps and electricity and provide bedding and other furniture. These improvements can reduce living costs and make homes healthier, safer and happier places to live. We built six new homes, installed six taps, installed four electric metres and supported six families to improve their homes in other ways.

## **Achievements and Performance**

As a result of our work this year, the following has been achieved:

### **Access to Education**

- 2,700 pupils benefitted from new school facilities.
- 5 new classrooms have been built.
- 1 library has been built.
- 4 classrooms have been restored.

- 2 water stations have been built.
- 489 students were sponsored through education.
- 41 students moved from primary to secondary education.
- 30 students achieved their certificate of secondary education.
- 55 students attended university or higher education training.
- 5 students graduated from university or training courses.
- 219 families received medical support.
- 185 girls and women at risk of gender based violence and child marriage received advice or support.
- 150 girls received reusable period packs.
- 97 children received educational support at the Kindu Klub.
- 36 children had access to books at the Kindu Klub library.
- 17 rural schools had access to books through the donkey library.
- 7,000 rural pupils had access to borrow books through the donkey library.

### **Quality of Education**

- 141 teachers received training to improve the quality of lessons.
- 135 teaching staff received training on improving English teaching using the phonics method.
- 3,750 students benefited from learning with the phonics method this year.
- 31 global school links were facilitated.

### **Children's Wellbeing**

- 955 families received special help through the coronavirus pandemic.
- 687 food parcels were distributed.
- 300 families received soap and handwashing training.
- 94 children were part of 5 football teams.
- 46 children had access to food, toys and early learning at Playgroup each week.
- 6 families had new homes built.
- 6 families had running water installed by their homes.
- 4 families had electricity installed in their homes.
- 6 families received funding to help improve their homes.

### **Financial Review**

During the financial year 2020-21, Together We Learn only received funds at the end of the financial year. Assets from the merger will be transferred in the next financial year and the trustees are confident in the charity's ability to continue achieving its objectives with those funds.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. They have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be between three and six months of the expenditure.

Budgeted expenditure for 2021/22 is £300,000 and therefore the target range is £75,000 to £150,000 in general funds. The reserves are needed to meet the requirements of the charity

and the Trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding. Currently the charity holds £10,293 in reserves. Once assets are received from the merging charities (Link Ethiopia and The Kindu Trust) we expect to meet the lower end of our target range for reserves.

### **Sources of Funds**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The charity's principal sources of funds this financial year were grants (96%) and individual donations (4%).

### **Principal Risks**

The coronavirus pandemic has created a low risk for the charity, impacting the income of a number of individual supporters and causing some grant makers to redirect funds to national, rather than international, causes.

At the time of writing, the conflict in Northern Ethiopia poses a risk to our ability to deliver our activities, to ensure the safety of our staff and beneficiaries, and our ability to run income generating activities in-country.

The Trustees are aware of the risks, have contingency and risk limitation plans in place and review these at quarterly meetings, or exceptional meetings should these be required.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

Our governing document is the Constitution last amended on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The charity is constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO).

Together We Learn is formed from the merger of two registered charities: Link Ethiopia (registered charity number 1112390) and The Kindu Trust (registered charity number 1069574). The merge was announced in September 2020 and the transfer of financial assets and activities will commence from the start of the next financial year.

Apart from the first charity Trustees, every Trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, the charity Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

The charity Trustees will make available to each new charity Trustee, on or before his or her first appointment:

- a) A copy of the current version of the constitution; and
- b) A copy of the CIO's latest Trustees' Annual Report and statement of accounts.

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Together We Learn

Registered charity number: 1165953

Principal address: 225-229 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 2DA

### Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Nadine Carle-Edgar		From October 2020	
2	Ashley England	Chair		
3	Maria Gabriella Otty			
4	Elsabeth Gezahegn King			
5	Holly McKenzie			
6	Jack Sharville	Treasurer		
7	Matthew Stockdale			

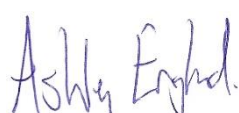

### Name of chief executive

Caroline Walker, Chief Executive

## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

<b>Signature(s)</b>		
<b>Full name(s)</b>	Ashley England	Jack Sharville
<b>Position(s)</b>	Chair	Treasurer
<b>Date</b>	24/12/2021	24/12/2021

Together We Learn			1165953
Annual accounts for the period			
Period start date	01.04.20	To	31.03.21

## Section A Statement of financial activities

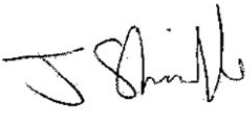

Categories by activity	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total funds £	Prior year funds £
<b>Incoming resources</b>	2 & 3				
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>					
Donations and legacies		10,293	-	10,293	-
Charitable activities		-	179	179	-
<b>Total</b>		10,293	179	10,472	-
<b>Resources expended</b>					
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds		-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		-	-	-	-
Separate material item of expense		-	-	-	-
Other		-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)</b>		10,293	179	10,472	-
Net gains/(losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		10,293	179	10,472	-
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		-	-	-	-
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		10,293	179	10,472	-



# Section B

# Balance sheet

		Notes	Total this year £	Total last year £
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors			-	-
Cash at bank and in hand			10,472	-
	<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>10,472</b>	<b>-</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			-	-
	<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<b>10,472</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>10,472</b>	<b>-</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			-	-
	<b>Total net assets or liabilities</b>		<b>10,472</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>				
Restricted income funds (Note 27)			179	-
Unrestricted funds			10,293	-
	<b>Total funds</b>		<b>10,472</b>	<b>-</b>

Trustee Signature	Print Name	Date of approval dd/mm/yyyy
	Jack Sharville	24.12.2021
	Ashley England	24.12.2021

Note 1 **Basis of accounting**

The financial statements of the charitable trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', and Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of investments. There were no related party transactions for the period.

Note 2 **Incoming Resources**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Note 3 **Analysis of income**

<b>Analysis</b>		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
<b>Donations and legacies:</b>	Donations and gifts	293	-	293	-
	Gift Aid	-	-	-	-
	Legacies	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	10,000	-	10,000	-
	<b>Total</b>	10,293	-	10,293	-
<b>Charitable activities:</b>	Sponsorship	-	179	179	-
	<b>Total</b>	-	179	179	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		10,293	179	10,472	-

Note 4 **Tangible fixed assets**

Purchases of under £1,000 in value are written off in the year of purchase.

Note 5 **Trustee Remuneration**

Trustees received no remuneration nor expenses.