Natalya's Fund News

September 2023

Steps of faith

Making *Room to Learn* at Bughungu Primary School, Uganda

21 August 2023

When Teddy applied to Natalya's Fund for a grant to build three additional classrooms and an office, the total needed would be around £20,000, larger than anything we had ever undertaken before. It was daunting. Could we raise that much? What would happen if we agreed to help but only raised part of the required sum? Teddy's response was that every little helped and she would build in stages.

Blessing of the donors and the second classroom

So, in the summer of 2022, we launched an appeal to raise £4,400 by the end of September 2022, to enable them to build the first classroom in time for their new school year. To raise even that amount in such a short time was a step of faith for us. But God was good and through the generosity of our supporters, just over £5,000 was raised, which enabled them not only to complete the first classroom but also, in faith, to lay the foundations for the second one.

Earlier this year we launched the next appeal – to raise £4,630 by Easter for the second phase. Again it was a short time for raising such a sum but, in early April, we were able to send them a second grant (£4,500) and the second classroom was built earlier this summer.

Now we face the third and final phase – to raise about £9,000 by mid-September so that they can complete the project in readiness for the new school year in early 2024. That is an even larger sum in a very short time, and another test of our faith. We trust God that He will again provide. Could you be part of His provision?

Step by step, we grow in faith.

At home and away

Providing sports kit, equipment, and coaches' uniforms

News from Rozanne Gordon, Director at Helderberg Academy, South Africa

15 August 2023

A timely gift

It has certainly been a winter season this year, plenty of rain and very cold temperatures. Thankfully our uniforms came at the perfect time – now we are warm and snug on the field. Thank you once again, to your supporters and you, for the generosity you have shown us at the Academy. We are truly so thankful.

We are running at full steam and are trusting God for continued provision for the coming months into the new year.

New kit

Academy logo on coach's uniform

Hike up Table Mountain

Each term we have a prize-giving which identifies the leaders among the kids. The winners from each community join together to go on the incentive day out. For the February trip this year they voted for a hike, for some their first ever. So we went on an epic hike up Table Mountain via the India Venster trail, and they did incredibly well.

It was quite a gruelling trail, especially for the first-timers, but they all made it to the top. We were meant to go back down in the cable-car, but unfortunately that was not possible because of strong winds. So they hiked down a different trail, the Platteklip Gorge. Altogether it was a total of about 5 hours up and down. Although they were a little sore the next day, they can certainly look back on this massive achievement as a highlight in their young lives.

Hikers

Home visits

During the school holidays we walk around the community, going from home to home, visiting the kids and their families – those that are available. We get an idea of what the families' needs are, offer to pray with them, and get a better understanding of what the children's home-life is like and where their developmental needs are.

Home visit

Chosen

During the winter holidays (July) we hosted our Holiday Club, at which we were able to accommodate 60 of the Academy kids. The theme this year was 'Chosen' (Ephesians 1:4,5) and we aimed at having the kids understand that they were chosen by God to be a part of his family. After loads of fun and games, and a hearty meal, they took some time out to look into their mirrors and see themselves through the eyes of the Lord. They then hand-crafted frames out of clay to hold their mirrors. They took their craftwork home, forever a reminder that they are chosen by God. We trust and hope that seeds were sown with growing effect.

Holiday Club

Difficult journey to Reach the Sky

Soap manufacturing by Lilongwe Youth Organisation, Malawi

22 August 2023

Following our February grant to mechanize soap production and boost output, a number of factors have been delaying implementation. These include Cyclone Freddy, the importing of components for machinery, sickness, and power cuts. In addition, business registration in Malawi is required for export. Registration, which also covers safety (both to users and to producers), carries an additional cost in the form of fees and extra PPE (personal protective equipment). We are currently discussing whether we can help out with this extra expense, which comes to around £500.

Packaging the soap

The group considered 'Kayso' (which stands for 'Kauma Youth Soap') a great name for distribution throughout Kauma, the suburb of Lilongwe where they are based. However, they sought a new name for distribution further afield. Hence they came up with 'Sky Reach Soap'.

Whilst locally the soap is sold without packaging, soap for distribution further afield needs to be packaged and branded. Another company has donated its used packaging to the group, but it bears the other company's branding. The cartons then need to be identified as Sky Reach Soap. The group wants to buy plain cartons which could be more easily identified for a much more satisfactory result.

Soap drying before it is packaged into the used cartons

Freddy was an exceptionally long-lived, powerful, and deadly storm that traversed the southern Indian Ocean for more than five weeks in February and March. It was the longest-lasting and most intense tropical cyclone ever recorded worldwide. Malawi was hardest hit. Many group members are still sleeping on a church floor.

A welcome gift for a new school year

Gateway – helping increase school attendance in Malawi by supplying girls with sanitary pads which are locally-made, reusable, and last two years

23 August 2023

We continue to collect funds to provide girls at Kaputu School with sanitary kits. To supply a complete year's cohort costs about £300, and any excess we receive will go towards other schoolgirls in Malawi under the Gateway scheme. We plan to give a grant for their new school year in September. The grant will go to Starfish Malawi, who administer the programme.

From the archives – 30 years ago

January 1993 – a pulse oximeter was ordered from ECHO (Equipment to Charity Hospitals Overseas).

March 1993 – collected the pulse oximeter from ECHO and delivered it to the British Lithuanian Relief Fund for Children in Lithuania, who would transport it to Vilnius in Lithuania for us. (In fact it went as hand luggage with a business man who 'happened' to be going there a few days later.) We received a letter of thanks from Dr Satas, Head of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Vilnius University Children's Hospital a few days later.

There was enough money left in Natalya's Fund to buy a desperately-needed pulse oximeter for Siauliau Hospital in Lithuania.

Autumn 1993 - Tutshill Primary School, Gloucestershire, began raising money for a reconditioned incubator for Siauliau Hospital.

November 1993 - toys, collected by the school, were taken to London, to the British Lithuanian Relief Fund for Children in Lithuania, so that they could take them out to children's homes in Lithuania in time for Christmas. Also collected and sent out were bedding, clothing and cutlery, which the homes also needed.

Welcome to our new trustee

Peter de Leyser

Peter was brought up in Tanzania, East Africa. After school he studied for a degree in Building – Civil Engineering with Management. He spent over 40 years working in the construction industry mainly for major contractors in the London area, with a spell working in Nigeria during the early part of his career, and another spell in the USA in 1989 and 1990 just after getting married to Jane. They have two children – a boy and a girl (twins). Peter and Jane are members of, and involved in the life of, a large evangelical church in North Surrey near where they live. Peter retired from full-time employment last year, and is now doing some voluntary work. He joined our board of trustees in July, and is already helping to evaluate funding requests.

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Contact Us

Natalya's Fund, Redwick House, Green Street, Redwick, NEWPORT. NP26 3DY

Phone: 01633 889028 / 07746 122790

Website: www.natalyasfund.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/natalyasfund/

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