



The Catherine Bullen Foundation

Making a difference in rural Namibia

NEWSLETTER

No: 18

Late Summer 2013

Foundation reaches its target to fund the building of a third dormitory at Eiseb Primary School Hostel

The Foundation's current project to build a third dormitory to alleviate chronic overcrowding at Eiseb Primary School Hostel in the Omaheke region of Namibia has received a major boost with a donation of £10,000 from the Hazel's Footprints Trust. With this donation, Phase 1 is now fully funded and construction can now take place. Phase 2 will be the provision of a kitchen and covered seating area. Roger Bullen, trustees chairperson commented, 'we are extremely grateful for the Trust's donation and we are looking forward to working with them to improve the children's living conditions at Eiseb'.

There is a common bond which runs between the two organisations. Hazel's Footprints Trust was set up in memory of Hazel Scott Aiton who was killed in a car accident near her home in the Scottish Borders on 23 August 2004, aged 21 (two years later to the day on which Catherine died). She had spent a year at the Otjikondo Village School in Namibia in 2002. Working in that remote location, she saw first hand what an enormous difference a committed, dedicated and compassionate person could make to the lives of others. The Trust has raised over £70,000 for the school and also supported young students embarking on their gap year to remote locations to work in schools known as 'Footprinters' to the tune of £60,000. For further information go to www.hazelfootprints.org.

Most severe drought in 30 years continues to take its toll.

The following is a report by Her Excellency, Marianne Young, British High Commissioner in Namibia

Visiting drought stricken areas in northern Namibia

August 27, 2013

Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba declared a national emergency on 17 May in response to the country's failed rains and worsening drought situation. An estimated 330,000 people have now been classified as food insecure – 14 % of Namibia's total population of 2.3m, with an additional 447,577 classified as moderately food insecure.

The drought hit especially hard in Namibia's north west Kunene Region, which had suffered two years of lack of rain. Some areas have already seen increased admissions for cases of paediatric malnutrition and a total of 46 malnutrition-related deaths had been recorded by July this year.

Kunene was one of the few regions that I had not managed to travel to in my two years here in Namibia so this month I travelled north to join UNICEF and Red Cross colleagues to visit some affected areas and see what assistance British aid money was helping to provide through our sizeable contributions to such international organisations.



Ms Tonata, Opuwo Health Extension Worker in Omugeti village (Epupa Constituency), speaking to the local population.

Leaving the region's capital Opuwo, the effect of the drought was immediately apparent in the wider Opuwo District. The rural land was completely parched – thick red sand dotted with thorn bushes and scrub – livestock and herd boys alike seeking shelter under occasional trees and no surface water in evidence anywhere, as is typical here.

Our first stop was at Omugeti village (Epupa Constituency) where we called in on Ms Tonata, a health extension worker, who was providing basic medical support for the Himba villagers. The Himba live almost entirely in their traditional areas in the remote Kaokoland of Kunene, wearing animal skins (skirts, loin cloths and head dresses) and often elaborate jewellery made from copper wire.

Cattle are central to their way of life, with the size of herds indicating wealth and prestige, necessitating a nomadic existence searching for pasture, particularly in times of drought. Ms Tonata reported that the villagers were being forced to migrate to find grazing land but no cattle had yet died. Malnutrition did not appear to be an issue amongst the active children we found at the site, who lived largely on a basic diet of maize meal and goats' milk.

The villagers' traditional nomadic coping mechanisms were in evidence as many had moved on in search of food for their livestock and reduced the amount they ate. The site also boasted a working borehole pump that was being used to provide water for goats.



H.E. Marianne Young teaching children in Kunene region how to skip with a jumping rope.

Further on at the Okangwati Health Centre, we got a better taste of the general health issues in the area and impact of the drought. Okangwati lies 100 km north of Opuwo, some 30 km from the border with Angola. A mix of 15 Himba, Herero and Timba women were sitting waiting for the services of the sole nursing Sister running the clinic when we arrived at 3pm.

The Sister told us she saw between 50-80 people each day. Most suffered from a mix of respiratory diseases (including pneumonia), diarrhoea and skin disorders exacerbated by the dry, dusty conditions. Really serious cases had to be referred to the hospital in Opuwo.



ovaHimba patients waiting outside the local clinic.

The Sister complained that a lack of hygiene remained a continual challenge in the local communities. Given the arid conditions and traditional practices, Himba women never bathe

and use herbs to cleanse themselves. They rub a scented ochre and animal fat mixture into their skin and hair to maintain their distinctive rich red brown natural covering.

She reported that the extreme drought was also exposing problems of malnutrition and worried that the situation would get a lot worse if the rains failed to arrive this December.

My UNICEF colleague, Dr Myo-Zin Nyunt, Chief Maternal, Child Survival and Development officer, updated me that Namibia's 52% rate of open defecation exacerbated health problems. There were no toilets working at the health centre we visited, forcing waiting patients to use the bush, as is so common in Namibian rural areas.

Luckily the area was not registering any cholera cases, which also pose a risk when the rains finally arrive, and the Sister reported that there weren't high incidents of malaria.



Arid landscape in Kunene region.

The UNICEF team had not yet seen large numbers of malnutrition cases in the area but everything hinged on whether the rains materialised. Dr Myo-Zin noted that Namibia already had a 29% stunting rate for children nationwide due to high malnutrition rates in rural communities in normal conditions.

Many children benefit from government supported school feeding programmes that supply pupils with at least one meal of maize porridge at school each day but this all depends on supplies reaching schools in emergency conditions. If they do not then school attendance can be expected to drop as children are dispatched to scout for good pasture, which is another challenge.

Many children survive with their grandparents, who support large numbers of young relatives on small pension grants, due to the high teenage pregnancy and HIV Aids infection rates. Even if they go to school, only 78% of schools have some type of sanitation facilities and 41% of schools remain without access to a water supply. Health and education challenges continue to abound in the Land of the Brave 23 years on from Independence.

What I saw in the north was extremely sobering and we will continue to keep a close watch on developments. The UN is actively monitoring acute malnutrition amongst children under 5 and pregnant women. UNICEF is partnering with the Namibian Red Cross to provide funding and technical support for the training of volunteers in some of the most affected regions, including Kunene.

The Namibian government has also initiated a range of response activities, including the provision of food rations through regional councils and drilling of new boreholes for water. It is developing a comprehensive response plan with donor help, including the placement of an expert provided by the European Union in the lead ministry handling disaster response.

The EU, UN and other partners that the UK provides its assistance via will continue to work in support of the government's efforts. In the meantime, unlike in the British Isles, we all continue to hope for rain here.

Links to the British High Commission in Namibia: www.gov.uk/world/namibia and UKinNamibia [Facebook](#) page.

Chicken update

Donations from the Foundation's Facebook friends and a virginmoneygiving site set up to collect the pledges by Chris Bonner at www.virginmoneygiving.com/christopherbonner have resulted in a grand total of £921.55 being raised including gift aid. Arrangements are now in hand at Omuhaturua Primary School Hostel to construct the chicken runs and huts. It is hoped they will be ready by October so that Roger and Linda can purchase the chickens during their visit. Thanks to everybody who participated in this.

Goats and Seeds

It is with some reluctance that we have decided to suspend for the time being from the end of this month, our 'Gift a Goat' programme. The reasons being:

1. The drought situation in the country.
2. The San bushmen show no signs of abandoning their nomadic lifestyle which is making it increasingly difficult to monitor the goat's welfare and numbers.
3. Komeho, our ngo partner in Namibia, no longer has sufficient resources to support the programme by teaching goat husbandry to the San and carrying out vaccination procedures.
4. Theft

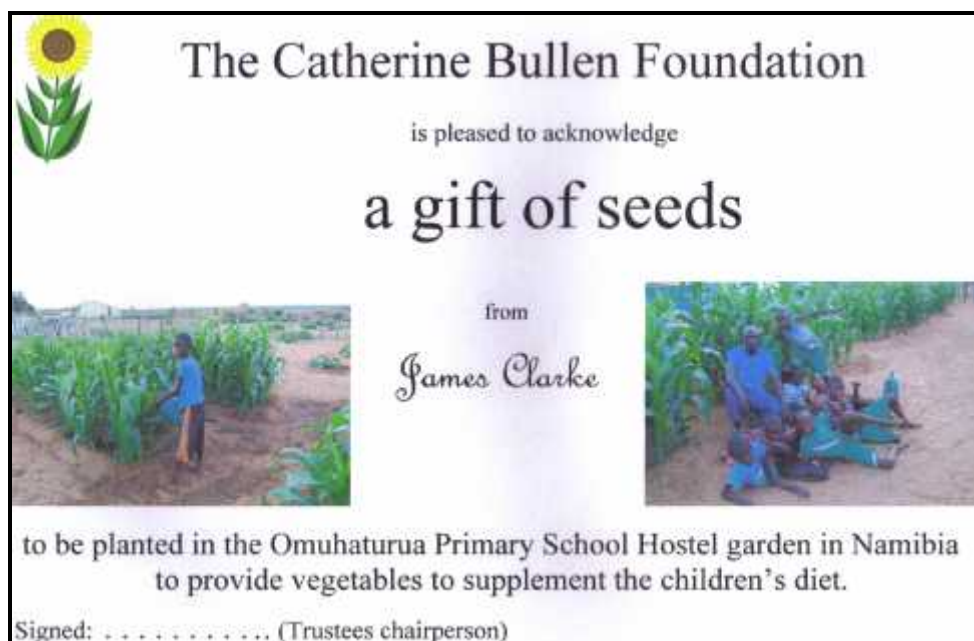
We will keep the situation under review and hopefully at sometime in the future we can re-start the programme.

However, we have introduced a 'Sow a Seed' programme to provide seeds initially for the garden at Omuhaturua Primary School Hostel and then hopefully for other hostel gardens in the Omaheke. During their last visit, Roger and Linda were impressed with the efforts of the hostel gardening club who were growing vegetables etc to supplement the hostel meals. So far supporters have donated £200 to the programme and Linda and Roger will purchase the seeds for the next growing season after consultation with the headmaster and the gardening club.

It operates under the same principles as 'Gift a Goat', in that if you do not know what to buy someone for a present, you purchase some seeds in their name and we will give you a certificate based on donations of £5 and upwards.



Maize being cultivated in the hostel garden. In the background in the nurse's accommodation at the clinic.



Our 'Gift certificate' to acknowledge a donation for seeds.

Student to accompany Roger and Linda on their forthcoming visit

The Foundation is pleased to advise that local Colchester student, Joe Morgan will be accompanying Roger and Linda on their next visit to Namibia at the end of the month. Joe has completed his university studies and is currently working at Tesco's. He will be teaching English, basic German and helping with IT at Omuhaturua Primary School before moving on to the 'Light for the Children Foundation' which works with vulnerable children in the Omaheke regional capital Gobabis. Joe who since leaving university has grown a large beard is wondering whether to shave it off after striking terror into a small child while saying hello

in Tescos! We look forward to an account of Joe's experiences in one of our future newsletters.

Fund raising

Car Boot Sales

As reported in a previous newsletter, we have been able to return to the West Mersea site at Waldegraves Leisure Park and have continued to do so throughout the summer. On Sunday 1 September, we manned the gate and raised £244 from car parking charges as well as having a stall there. This was our last car boot for 2013, having raised £530 since our last newsletter. We are now looking to restock for next year and are always on the lookout for paperbacks, DVDs, clothes, handbags, shoes and toys. We no longer require china, glassware etc. and cannot accommodate large items and furniture.

China smashing stalls

This is where we do need your old china. This is the stall we now take to fete's and shows. Our last show was the West Mersea Lions Summer show on 17 August where we raised £212. Our next outing is on Sunday 8 September at Colchester Lower Castle Park attending the Colchester Lions Car Show followed by another Car Show at Clacton on Sunday 22 September.



Our china smashing stall at the West Mersea Lions Summer Show

Oxford University Church of St Mary the Virgin

As previously reported the Foundation has benefited by £600 from this churches charity committee. On Sunday 28 July, Roger and Linda were pleased to attend a garden party in Oxford in one of the committee members gardens where a magnificent sum of £515 was raised for the Foundation. A big thank you to Margaret Lipscomb and her fellow committee members and supporters.

Shop Collections

Throughout the summer we have been carrying out shop collections at various Co-op supermarkets in north Essex and since our last newsletter we have collected £1,013 thanks to the generosity of their customers.



Linda and Helga outside Frinton Co-op.

Grand Christmas Draw

This is a new venture for us and we are hoping for your support for this. Tickets are £1 each and the first prize is a week's self catering holiday in Croatia (flights not included), second prize is £100 in cash followed by numerous other prizes. It will be drawn on Sunday 15 December at the Coast Inn, West Mersea. Unlike some other charities we do not send out unsolicited mailings containing Draw tickets to sell. If you can sell some tickets for us, please email us with your address and how many you estimate you can sell and we will send them to you.

00501	<p>The Catherine Bullen Foundation Registered Charity No. 1110516</p> <p><i>Grand Christmas Draw</i></p>	00501
<p>The Catherine Bullen Foundation <i>Grand Christmas Draw</i></p> <p>Name.....</p> <p>Address.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Tel.....</p> <p>Cash, counterfoils and unsold tickets to be returned to the Promoter by Saturday 14 December 2013</p>	<p style="font-size: 0.8em;">No. Johnny Press 01473 750055 www.cbf.co.uk</p> <p>Grand Christmas Draw</p> <hr/> <p>1st Prize: One weeks holiday in Croatia (flights not included)</p> <p>2nd Prize: £100 cash</p> <p>Numerous other prizes</p> <hr/> <p>To be drawn on Sunday 15 December 2013 at The Coast Inn, West Mersea, Essex Promoter: Mr Roger Bullen, 15 Colchester Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8RS Registered with Colchester Borough Council, Registration Number: 080581</p> <p>Tickets £1 each</p>	

Marathons and Sponsored Events

London Marathon 2014

This takes place on Sunday 13 April, Andrea Pisani who has run for us before will be running for us again next year. Details of how to sponsor her will follow in the next newsletter and we wish her the best of luck with her training.

Schools

A number of schools in the area continue to support the Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the support we are receiving from the following schools.

St Mary's Junior School, Colchester
Mersea Island School
Colchester County High School for Girls
TC Education Services

In Namibia:

International School of Windhoek

Presentations

The Foundation is pleased to give presentations to groups and clubs on its work. Now Roger and Linda are retired, they are not restricted to just evenings. So if you are looking for a speaker please contact us. Presentations have been given recently to Woods Senior Citizens Club, Manningtree Stour Rotary Club and Frinton Rotary Club. We are pleased to acknowledge a donation of £300 from the Frinton Rotary Club International Committee.

Friends of Namibia

For those who receive this newsletter and are members of the Friends of Namibia, this is the first notification of their AGM. This will be held in London on Saturday 23 November probably at the Namibian High Commission but this is yet to be confirmed. Further information will follow nearer the time.

Donations

We have continued to receive individual donations, both large and small, for which we are extremely grateful. Each donation receives an acknowledgement of thanks from the Foundation and through this newsletter we would like to thank you again for your continued support.

Forthcoming Events

At the date of going to press, we have the following events planned

Saturday 8 September 2013

China smashing stall at the Colchester Lions Classic Car Show. Lower Castle Park, Colchester
All donations of unwanted china gratefully received.

Saturday 14 September 2013

Shop Collection –Co-op Supermarket, Halstead.

Sunday 22 September 2013

China smashing stall at the Clacton Lions Classic Car Show. Clacton
All donations of unwanted china gratefully received.

Saturday 30 November 2013

Seafood Supper, Company Shed, West Mersea – **SOLD OUT**

Wednesday 4 December 2013

Stall at Earsham Hall Xmas market, Earsham, Bungay, Suffolk

Saturday 7 December 2013

Shop Collection –Co-op Supermarket, Halstead.

Sunday 8 December 2013

Namibian Noel, Coast Inn, West Mersea

Friday 13 December 2013

Coffee morning, Barclays Bank, West Mersea branch

Sunday 15 December 2013

Grand Christmas Draw , Coast Inn, West Mersea

If you would like to help at any of the above or organise an event in support of the Foundation, please let us know. We will add events to our list on the website and in the next newsletter.

Make a difference!

The Catherine Bullen Foundation is working with local communities to help build and nurture a new life for the people in rural Namibia. Because we are a small charity, our overheads are small and are personally covered by the trustees, so that every single penny donated to us goes to the intended project, with spending strictly monitored by the UK trustees and their ngo partner in Namibia. All visits to Namibia are self-financed and no charitable funds are used for this purpose. Please help us make a difference by making a donation, either on line at www.namibia-aid.org.uk or sending it to the address below.

How to contact us

By Email: info@namibia-aid.org.uk

By Post: The Catherine Bullen Foundation

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By phone: 01206 383368 (inside UK) or 0044 1206 383368 (from outside UK)

Mobile: 07771 630928
07733 140748

Donation/Gift Aid Declaration

(The Catherine Bullen Foundation – Registered Charity No. 1110516)

Details of donor

Title..... Forename(s).....Surname.....

Address.....
.....
.....

Post Code.....

I want the charity to treat

*the enclosed donation of £..... as a Gift Aid donation

*the donation(s) of £..... which I made on .../.../..... as (a) Gift Aid donation(s)

**delete as appropriate*

You must pay an amount of Income and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year. (currently 25p for each £1 you give).