

Information/ Induction for New Trustees and Team Members

Uzima in our Hands is an Isle of Wight based Christian Charity. We support very vulnerable children in rural Western Kenya mainly with scholarships to attend school.

Our Mission Statement:

- To support very vulnerable children in rural Western Kenya
- To provide education, food and basic health care for children who live in extreme poverty and need.

A Personal Word

All of us trustees are conscious to a greater or lesser extent that when we started out we really didn't know what we were letting ourselves in for. As a result, we've set out to produce a 'New Trustees Induction Pack.' In doing so, we hope this won't give you a false, rather formal impression of what is basically a small, but dedicated team of volunteers doing what we can, which is the sum of 'Uzima in Our Hands'.

Thanks so much for your interest - Joy, Viv, Jeanette, Louise

Introduction

The charity Uzima in Our Hands was set up in 2013 to channel funds from the UK to Uzima Orphan and Day Care Centre, (This is often shortened to Uzima) which was based in Nanderema, in the Samia District of Busia County in Western Kenya. In 2023 Uzima In Our Hands changed its scope and the accompanying object in the Trust Deed, to no longer provide education to that specific Orphan Centre, Uzima, but to enable the advancement of Education more generally, specifically through the distribution of scholarships to vulnerable and needy children within the wider Nanderema region.

A Brief History –

In the early 2000's in rural Western Kenya Uzima Orphan Centre was founded by a Sunday School Teacher called Evans Bwire Barasa when he heard that a young girl in his class had died of malnutrition and pneumonia. After investigating the magnitude of the problem, which was not restricted to just one family, Evans arranged for many needy children to be fed and taught in his local church building. He later consulted with his father, who donated a piece of land of approximately 2 acres. Using volunteers and those within the community, a temporary building was erected as a place the children could attend during the day.

Joy Mowle first visited 'Uzima Children Orphan Centre' in 2010, and after several further visits became involved 2 years later. In 2013, 'Uzima in Our Hands' was registered as a Charity in the UK (1153181) to help support Uzima Orphan and Day Care Centre. Uzima is Swahili for 'Life and Hope'. Each year, Joy and a team of volunteers visited Uzima to provide support and extra resources, as well as monitor that all was well.

However, in 2020, the year of Covid Lockdown in Kenya, no visit was able to take place and the Trustees began to become very concerned that monies were not now being spent appropriately. After much investigation, failed communication and heart searching the sad decision was reached in 2022

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that Uzima in Our Hands could no longer go on financially supporting Uzima Orphan Centre, which had by then introduced very high fees for a place at the school..

This almost led to a decision to end the charity Uzima in Our Hands, but another door became open for us and, tentatively at first, and then with increasing certainty, we explored a partnership with the Kenyan charity Rise to Shine Education Foundation. RTSEF is a charity which provides scholarships for bright, vulnerable, needy children in Kenya, normally at Secondary level only... but through negotiations with the founder, Emily Bakhitah, it was able to extend its scope to supporting the most vulnerable of the primary school children no longer able to attend Uzima Orphan Centre, and additionally the secondary school children and also the special needs children we also supported.

As a result we entered into a partnership with this charity (RTSEF) with a very tight Memorandum of Understanding between us - whereby the money given by our sponsors and donors was used principally to fund scholarships for these vulnerable children. After Joy's visit in early 2024 a few problems were encountered with RTSEF management style, and it was finally agreed that RTSEF hand back the Primary and S/N projects and finish the Nanderema Secondary Project. UIOH retained the Primary and S/N Project into the future and Emmy Ronoh was employed to be the new Project Team leader – we had got to know her through the Five Talents project outlined below.

Meanwhile, we have also been supporting another venture since 2021, called Five Talents (FT). This is a project which encourages savings groups to be formed, so that families can eventually take out small loans from their group and start to establish their own businesses. The result is that they begin to work their way out of poverty, no longer having the mindset of needing handouts from overseas charities in order to survive. UIOH has funded the initial training of leaders who are able to disseminate the philosophy and practice of FT. The scheme has taken off with 22 savings groups with a membership of 569 established currently (Feb 2024) in the former 'Uzima' area. This initial involvement is due to end in November 2024, when the Kenyans will be responsible for continuing independently, with the aid where needed of local government bodies.

UZIMA IN OUR HANDS Trust Deed (Charity No. 1153181): Our Charitable Objects (amended 19 Jul 2023)

1. THE RELIEF OF SICKNESS AND PRESERVATION OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING
2. THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION
3. THE RELIEF OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

UIOH Team

Uzima in Our Hands has no paid employees. All the work of the charity is done by volunteers from their own homes, and for the most part it is done by the trustees. The team also includes an Administrator, a Web Editor, and a Donations Secretary, none of whom are trustees. The Trustees are all living on the Isle of Wight at present. We currently meet 4 times a year in each others homes. We also have a Patron, a local known member of the community, who has been very supportive of UIOH.

The Role our Christian faith plays

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'Charity Trustees are the people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run' (Charity Commission).

Uzima in Our Hands is a **Christian charity**, both for historical reasons, having grown out of Christian concern, initially supporting Uzima Orphan Centre, a Christian School and because it continues to spring from the vision and mission of local Christians on the Isle of Wight: it is therefore vital that anyone considering the role of Trustee shares in this same faith vision so that we can all pull in the same direction.

This means in practice that we expect our Trustees to share the same **spiritual beliefs and principles** from which our charity has emerged. **Our belief** that a personal relationship with God is made uniquely possible for each one of us through faith in God's only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, is fundamental to our claim to be a Christian charity. **Our principles** spring from this belief, as we aim to consciously depend on God, and demonstrate this dependence as we pray and seek direction from Him.

We would say here that this does not in any way exclude those of a different faith, or none, from supporting us, and we welcome support from anyone who is moved to give or join us as a **volunteer**.

Our values and ethos arise from our Christian faith and include **firstly valuing people, secondly, partnership and lastly, integrity**:

Firstly, as each person is created and loved by God, and is uniquely and without exception made in God's image, and of equal value in His sight, we celebrate the diverse gifts, experience and contribution made by each individual with whom we have contact. **Secondly**, through the valued partnerships we form both at home and in Kenya, we are enabled to share together in the joy and privilege of helping children and families in Kenya. **Lastly**, we believe that personal integrity and honesty within the charity are essential. The resources at our disposal are not our own. They are in trust from God through donors on behalf of the families we seek to serve.

Basic roles and activities within the Charity

- Communicating with our supporters
- Communicating and liaising with Project Leader in Kenya
- Raising awareness of the charity
- Developing simple workable financial procedures
- Following guidance and legal requirements from the Charity Commission e.g. annual reports, keeping accounts, fulfilling the requirements of our Trust deed.

The specific roles of a Trustee

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There are a lot of jobs within Uzima in Our Hands which it is possible to do without being a Trustee, so what are the *specific* roles of a Trustee? –

1. **Legal** – Trustees have legal obligations to do with their role as a Trustee, for example attending a minimum of 4 meetings a year. In practise however there are often at least double that number of meetings in a year...
2. **Financial** – Trustees have to make decisions about how the charity uses the money entrusted to it, and therefore how much to send to Kenya on an annual basis. We maintain strict scrutiny of our own accounts which are audited externally each year, before being presented to the Charity Commission for approval.
3. **Monitoring** - Trustees monitor how resources are used or spent through scrutinising annual budget requests, audited accounts, reports from Kenya, bi-annual visits to Kenya
4. **Strategic** – Trustees are responsible for making decisions about the direction in which the charity is moving.

Information available from the Charity Commission for new trustees –

- The Essential trustee, What you need to know (CC3)
- 5 minute guide: The Charity Trustee: what's involved (CC3a)
- Guidance on Charities and Public Benefit

Documents you should receive as a new trustee:

- The Trust deed,
- The last set of Annual Reports and accounts.
- Minutes of recent trustee meetings.

The various roles within the Trust look like this

(NB Flexibility within these roles or potential roles is possible + support)

TRUSTEE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum 4 meetings a year• Decide on grant• Direct charity• Signatories on bank account• Communicate with Project Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing workable financial procedures• Monitoring bank accounts and donations	TREASURER <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check financial reports/accounts• Liaise with Financial Administrator to obtain financial information required by Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The IT side of the website• Posting up-dates and blogs
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charity Commission Annual report & Annual Return• Gift Aid claims	CHAIR OF TRUSTEES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise and chair meetings• Direct Debits• Banking/bank transfers	DONATIONS SECRETARY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep database up-to-date• Thank you letters	COMMUNICATIONS LEAD (still to be filled) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Head up local support team• Responsibility for compiling and sending out newsletter (mailchimp)• Ensuring mailchimp database is
	SECRETARY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take minutes at trustee meets• Policies	WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR	

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kept up to date	COMMUNICATIONS LEAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Keep supporters up-to-date with news (mailchimp)
ROLES SOON TO BECOME VACANT OR ESTABLISHED	LOCAL SUPPORT TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS - Potentially headed up by Trustee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Arrange local fundraising events on behalf of Project
TRUSTEES – ideally 1 or 2 more needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meet up to pray for Nanderema Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individual letters to sponsors following visit to Kenya (bi-annual)

Further Information for Prospective Trustees

The Appointment Process

Any Trustee can suggest a new Trustee to current Trustees. If agreement is reached, the potential Trustee is informally interviewed by one of the Trustees; if further consensus is reached, the person is then invited to a Trustees meeting where an informed discussion and exchange of views takes place between all parties.

At a separate meeting (possibly on the same day if appropriate), a decision is reached whether to invite the person to join the Trust. By this stage it is normally apparent whether the person is / is not suitable and would accept the role of Trustee if offered. If the person has accepted the role, they are then formally invited to a Special Meeting of Trustees which would immediately precede the next Trustees meeting at which they would be formally welcomed to the Charity and the statutory record of Trustees would be amended accordingly.

Prior to appointment, Trustees will be sent links to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on Trustees' roles and responsibilities.

Thank you for reading!