

Future in Our Hands

Education and Development Fund

Newsletter - Issue 1 - Summer 2015



The FIOH Fund helps combat the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone

During the past year the FIOH Fund made grants amounting to £7,138 to its partner FIOH Sierra Leone to help identify ebola victims and educate communities about measures required to stop the spread of the virus. The picture above shows some of the staff and volunteers involved in the project with the coordinator, Edward Kargbo, in the foreground. The project was also supported by Bread for the World.



Network Seminar in Cameroon



School in Sierra Leone



Ebola programme in Sierra Leone



Treatment of disabled children in Cameroon



Home for orphaned children in India

Editorial

Welcome to the first Newsletter of the FIOH Fund, which contains brief descriptions of some of the projects the charity has supported during the past year and since its foundation in 1995.

During the past year the FIOH Fund made a grant of £5,040 to FIOH Sierra Leone for educating children in 5 village communities in the Tonkolili District of Sierra Leone and £7,138 for an ebola identification and prevention programme in the Pujehun, Tonkolili, Bombali and Port Loko Districts. See table on the next page. The charity acknowledges the considerable help of Georg Hansen, friends and family and Nini Haeggernes from Norway for the ebola programme and school building in Sierra Leone.

Both Georg and Nini had visited FIOH Sierra Leone in 2012/13.

In May 2014, trustee Mike Thomas undertook a monitoring trip to the Cameroon to assess the work of FIOH partners, Strategic Humanitarian Services (SHUMAS), Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) and Global Rehabilitation Services (GLORES). During this visit a grant of £1,262 was made to establish two tree nurseries at Oku in the NW Region and £437 for a circular saw.

On 11th May 2014 SHUMAS organised a successful meeting of people from different sectors of society with the objective to establish a formal FIOH network to share best development practice. The Meeting was held at the SHUMAS headquarters in Bamenda and was attended by representatives of traditional authorities, local government, NGOs and womens' groups. A grant of £1,330 was made to SHUMAS for a health centre in Douala treating people with mental illness.

He also assessed three possible sites for a new treatment and rehabilitation centre with GLORES director, Dr Alfred Wingo.

A grant of £10,000 was made by the FIOH Fund to GLORES to purchase land for a new treatment and rehabilitation centre. Land previously purchased was not easily accessible and was deemed unsuitable. This land was sold and the money put towards the construction of the building on the new site. FIOH provided a further grant of £1,000 to GLORES to support its ongoing treatment and rehabilitation work.

A grant of £400 was made to the Dalith Rural Development Society to establish a poultry project for tribal women in Tamil Nadu, India.

Mike Thomas
Trustee and treasurer

SIERRA LEONE, AFRICA

School building and child education in the Tonkolili District

With the generous support of Georg Hansen from Norway the FIOH Fund provided grants to build a new school for children from poor rural families.



Pupils outside their new school

Ebola identification and prevention programme

FIOH Sierra Leone carried out this programme in 2015.



Staff and volunteers



Ebola identification



Awareness programme



Safe burial

District	Volunteers	Households	Infected	Referred	Ebola cases	Other diseases	Deaths	Discharged
Tonkolili	250	10,000	244	244	16	214	14	230
Bombali	125	5,000	407	402	40	367	15	397
Port Loko	125	5,000	17	17	13	4	3	14
Totals	500	20,000	668	663	69	585	32	641

CAMEROON, AFRICA

Treatment and rehabilitation centre for disabled children

Work started on the foundations of this new centre located in Bafoussam, West Region of Cameroon.



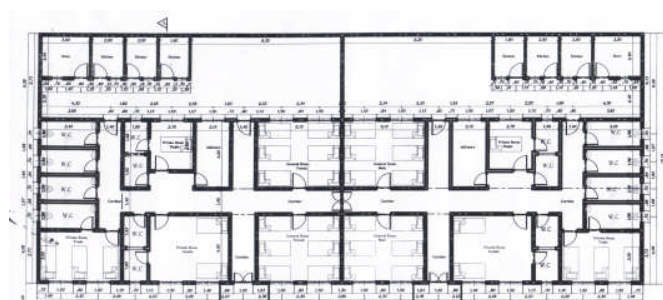
Construction of foundations 2014

1. Prevention of disabilities through health education and encouragement of parents to vaccinate their children against diseases causing disabilities. Part of the education focuses on prenatal/postnatal care, nutrition, hygiene, genetic information and environmental pollution.

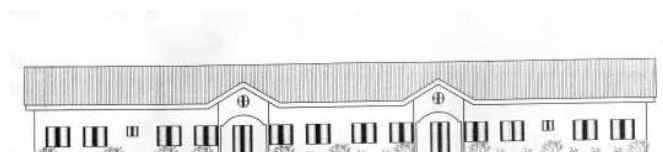
2. Physical therapy that includes therapeutic exercises, mobility training, functional re-education, occupational therapy and activity training for coping with everyday life.

3. Vocational training in 3 trades. The disabled person makes the choice of trade and is then able to undergo training in that trade for one year in a sheltered workshop environment. Younger children who cannot work are sent to local schools for their education. While the child is in school parents will take an active part in its education and prepare to take over responsibility for the child's welfare later on. After successful completion of the training disabled persons are settled in their individual group ventures or employment and there will be follow-up by GLORES for a few months after treatment and training has finished.

Once a disabled person goes through the GLORES project he or she becomes a member of the GLORES family. GLORES monitors all the outcomes of its work in order to evaluate its effectiveness and introduce improvements where necessary.



Plan



Elevation

GLORES organises its work in three major sections:



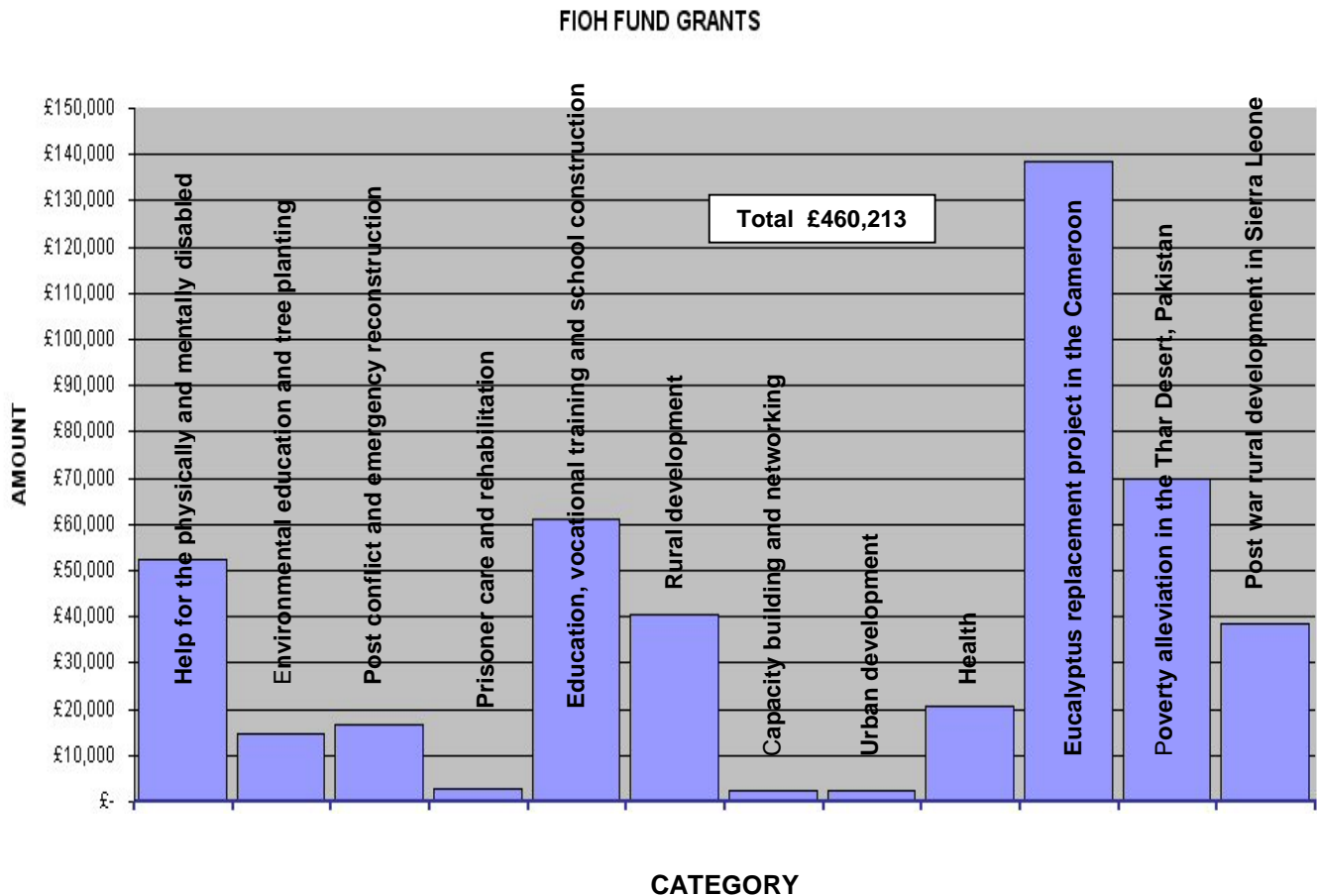
Children undergoing treatment



Mike Thomas with some of the children

A SUMMARY OF PRE 2015 PROJECTS

Since its registration in July 1995, the charity has supported projects in Cameroon, Pakistan, India, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Philippines, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Ghana, Tanzania, Gambia and Sri Lanka, with a focus on helping the world's poorest and most marginalized communities. Many of the projects in India have helped tribal communities. Most projects have involved an element of women's empowerment, education and vocational training. The chart below shows the apportionment of grants into broad categories.



The three largest projects managed by the FIOH Fund were:

1. Post war Rural Development Project in Sierra Leone
2. Eucalyptus Replacement Project in northwest Cameroon
3. Poverty Alleviation Project in the Thar Desert, Pakistan

SIERRA LEONE, AFRICA

Post war Rural Development

This project was intended to help people living in the rural areas of the Tonkolili District recover from a 10 year civil conflict. The project was officially launched in November 1998 and comprised agriculture and small-scale income-generating activities. Maize, pepper, cassava, cow pea and egg plant were grown successfully.

Gara dyeing, tailoring, soap making, bread making, including the required training, were established in conjunction with savings and credit schemes. All of these activities proved to be sustainable in the long term despite being interrupted by a resumption of hostilities between February and December 1999.

The project was re-launched on 26th February 2000.

Mike Thomas made a monitoring visit on 5th May 2000, but had to leave the country two days later because of renewed rebel activities. Shortly after about 45,000 people fled into the project area due to fighting between rebel and government forces. In addition to the intended beneficiaries, emergency food and water was provided to many of these internally displaced people.



Mike Thomas and project co-ordinator, Edward Kargbo



Internally displaced people queuing for food



People fleeing from the rebels

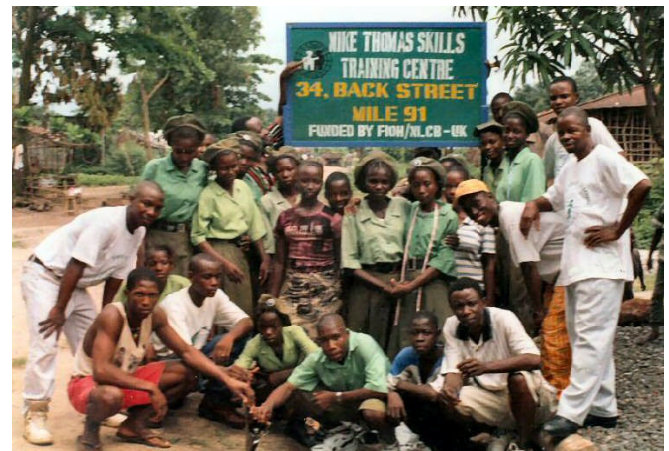
Rebels first attacked the project area in December 1994 destroying two villages and most public buildings and shops. Many of project beneficiaries shown in the following photographs had been traumatised by rebel attacks and seen members of their families killed and maimed. Many spent months surviving in the bush. Many will have spent time in Freetown slums or displaced camps where they have had to develop new skills to survive. The project co-ordinator, himself a farmer, had to adapt to these very different environments and at one stage spent nine months surviving in the bush with his large family. Several of his staff were killed and others brutally maimed.



Rebel attack on a convoy



One of the most successful activities of the project during periods of conflict was the seed multiplication programme. This involved sowing crop seeds in areas not affected by rebel activities and using some of the seeds derived from those crops in other areas when vacated by rebels.



Trainees outside the project skills training centre



Carpentry workshop

When peace was eventually restored after the intervention of British troops and United Nations troops from India and Pakistan, Mike Thomas carried out the final monitoring visit between the 18th November and 7th December 2002.

All agricultural activities had been re-established and the training centre had been rebuilt after it was destroyed by rebels. Most of the tools and equipment had been hidden during rebel attacks and were re-claimed. The partner non-government organisation, Future in Our Hands Sierra Leone is now well known and respected for its development work in the region.

CAMEROON, AFRICA

Eucalyptus Replacement Project

Eucalyptus trees were introduced into the once grassland area of northwest Cameroon by German missionaries to provide fuelwood. This was initially seen as a positive development, but it became increasingly apparent that during the dry season the indiscriminate spread of the tree was drastically reducing water supplies and crop yields on adjoining lands. This was having a particularly adverse impact on women farmers who had to walk long distances to fetch water and walk up to 15 miles to find suitable farming areas. There they would stay for two to three weeks before returning home with whatever they could carry. Many women had to take young children and babies with them on these long journeys.



Eucalyptus tree roots



Eucalyptus trees

The project, which was carried out in two phases (July 2000 to Aug 2002 and April 2006 to October 2008), involved the following main activities:

1. Felling 1,017,200 eucalyptus trees.
2. Raising 2,624,000 indigenous trees (60 species) in nurseries and out-planting for agroforestry and water catchment protection.



One of the main nurseries



Women beneficiaries clearing land previously occupied by eucalyptus trees prior to planting crops



An area of agroforestry established by the project

Mike Thomas carried out a feasibility study and helped launch a pilot project in 1999 and carried out two monitoring visits (One with his wife, Glenys). Trustee, Alan Stewart carried out a monitoring visit with his wife, Teresa, in 2008.



Alan and Teresa Stewart

About 463 hectares of land were cleared of eucalyptus trees resulting in the recovery of 105 springs and 140 taps during the dry season. Over 9,000 women who had previously walked long distances to farm and collect water were able to farm close to their homes.

Statistics in six rural health centres and one hospital recorded an average 27% reduction in water born diseases during the life of the project. It was estimated that an additional 5,153 children were able to go to school because of the increase in family incomes resulting from the project.

The local authority and many individual farmers copied the example of the project and hence the figures shown above are an underestimate of the project's impact. As in the case of Sierra Leone, the local NGO (in this case Strategic Humanitarian Services) managing the project is now a well respected organisation in the area and has, with the help of AidCamps International and Building Schools for Africa, been carrying out an extensive programme of school building in many parts of Cameroon. It has also established a large network of womens savings and credit schemes and a training programme in organic methods of farming.



Women in a savings and credit group at the organic farming training centre

CAMEROON, AFRICA

Schools Environmental Education Programme

Many children in the northwest Cameroon have little knowledge of local tree species and animals and the impact and cost of using too much artificial fertilizer and pesticides in farming.

School farms and tree nurseries were established in 10 schools and children were taught organic methods of farming, the importance of biodiversity and the uses of indigenous tree species.

Crops were grown on each farm and the proceeds of their sale helped pay for teachers salaries and school equipment. Children were also taught about the damaging effects of eucalyptus trees.

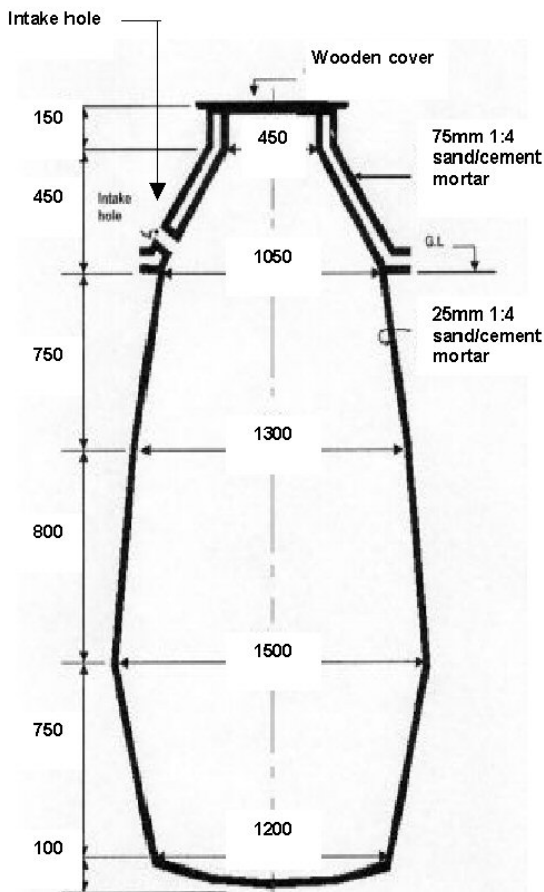


Poverty Alleviation in the Thar Desert

For the people living in the Thar Desert region of Sindh, drought is a frequent threat and one of the major causes of poverty and deprivation.

This project (June 2004 - Nov 2008) involving the following activities helped 1,100 families (6,600 people) in 20 villages cope with this situation and build up resilience for the future:

1. Village Development Organisations were established in 10 villages.
2. Provision of 800 water harvesting tanks and 800 fuel efficient stoves.
3. Provision of materials and training of women in embroidery and their civil and political rights.



Training was also provided for the families and the community as a whole in HIV/AIDS awareness, controlled grazing practices and management techniques.



Display of women's handicrafts

- An urn-shaped hole is hand excavated to a depth of 2.4 m.
- The faces of the hole are plastered with cement and water and then lined with a 25 mm thickness of 1:4 cement/sand mortar.
- After 12 hours the hole is filled with sand to enable slow curing. The sand is then built up above the surface to form a turret.
- The turret is plastered with a 75 mm thickness of mortar.
- A 75 mm thick slab is formed around the tank to collect monsoon rainwater. (A small hole is made in the turret to channel water into the finished cistern).
- The fill material is kept moist for 5 days and then removed after 7 days

The tank holds approximately 3,000 litres and costs only £25 to construct.



The photograph shows the independent monitor for the FIOH Fund, Edward Thomas, inspecting the tanks in April 2005.



Women undergoing training in their civil and political rights

Community centre and water supplies in Kroobay, Freetown

In 1992 the FIOH Fund supported the installation of three water supplies to a slum community of 5,000 people situated by the sea in the capital of Sierra Leone.

The health situation was extremely bad. Homes were very basic and three the sewage outfalls from the city flowed through the area which was also prone to severe flooding during heavy storms.



HIV/AIDS awareness programme



The second and final monitoring visit was carried out by Joanna Heaven in July 2008

The outcomes of the project included:

1. A 12% increase in the numbers of girls being enrolled in primary education.
2. A drop of 10% in the incidences of cholera and infant mortality..
3. A 27% decrease in eye problems and chest infections of women beneficiaries.
4. Better access to water by all the beneficiaries during periods of drought.
5. Communities gaining more confidence to campaign for their statutory rights and the women becoming more involved in village decision making.

The project managing partner, Participatory Village Development Programme (PVDP), was well established before this project started. The PVDP poverty reduction model which involved establishing Village Development Organisations and an Integrated Management Committee, was used in the Eucalyptus Replacement Project and proved to be a very effective method of involving all the stakeholders.



Kroobay 1989



One of the water supplies being installed

In 1993 the FIOH Fund provided funds to start work on a community centre at Kroobay.



Making concrete blocks for the walls



Child playing in polluted water



Laying stone for the foundation



Foundations nearing completion

The walls were completed in 1999 but work then stopped during fighting between Nigerian soldiers and rebels who occupied the city. The building was completed in 2002 with support from the World Health Organisation.



The completed building

The building is now being used as both a health centre and social community centre. Health conditions have improved but the population of the slum has increased.

ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

Care of orphans and street children

The charity has for many years supported the work of the non-government organisation, HEARTS, based in Guntur. When HEARTS started its work 12 years ago it operated a simple rescue centre near the station where children were found begging on the platforms. Many of these children were orphans or those who had run away from their homes for a variety of reasons including ill-treatment.

The organisation now runs a home where children can stay or visit and receive an education and medical care from a doctor who visits regularly. HEARTS seeks to reconnect children with their families whenever this is possible.



Children going to school



HEARTS assisted 300 families and 100 children following a severe cyclone in 2010.

DONATION FORM

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**FUTURE IN OUR HANDS
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND**
48 CHURCHWARD AVENUE
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£10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ Other amount (please specify) **each month**

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If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

**FUTURE IN OUR HANDS E&D FUND
48 CHURCHWARD AVENUE
SWINDON
WILTSHIRE SN2 1NH
UK**