



Review of our year, 2011

What do you think the purpose of the Shyira Trust is? Many people may think it is all about helping development in Rwanda, but over the past year we have been able to do much more—we have helped develop the existing friendships between the peoples of Formby and Shyira.

Bringing people from Rwanda to Formby has always been a problem to us. People here enjoy meeting with friends from Shyira, but the people of Shyira have told us that they don't want us to spend money bringing them here when there is so much poverty in Shyira. When we received an invitation from Global Community Links¹ to apply for funding to tell people here about why aid to developing countries is important the trustees of the trust submitted an application.

The proposal put to and accepted by Global Community Links had three parts:

1. Four people, two staff and two students, from Groupe Scolaire to come to Formby for two weeks, spending most of their time in Range High.
2. Three People to come for the International Day of the Midwife to be held at Edge Hill University.
3. Those same three people to take part in a Shyira Trust open day on the Mayday Bank Holiday.

2011 has seen three visits to Rwanda organised by trustees or trust members. There was a close integration between two of those visits and people coming to Formby as described on the following pages. In addition we had a very brief visit from Dr. Caleb King and two of his daughters.



14 visitors to Shyira, February 2011.

Poverty is rampant, Emmanuel once told us. In November 2011 that is still true. CEFOPS Technical School wanted to send banana leaf cards to the USA—we had made the contact and 2000 cards were to go. The school could only send 1200 because they did not have sufficient money to pay the postage on 2000

¹ Global Community Links was funded by UKaid from the Department for International Development

Visiting Rwanda, and visitors from Rwanda

Plans for visits had been developing over a long period. Our preferred routes to Rwanda are Liverpool to Amsterdam to Kigali using KLM, or Manchester to Brussels to Kigali on SN Brussels. Our usual approach is to take the route that currently has the cheapest fare.

Pete and Jane Morgan visited Rwanda in January. Pete assisted with visa applications for Pastor Antony who is also headmaster of Groupe Scolaire, Deputy Headmaster Gervais, and students David and Fanissa while Jane worked in the Maternity hospital with midwife Robinah and student midwife Fidel.

Alan Powell and Allan Hobson, both trustees, led a group totalling 14 people for a visit from 10th to 24th February. The group included seven members of St. Luke's church, including Harvie and Sally Nicol and their son Andrew. Andrew was studying sport at Southport college and was to undertake a work placement in a Shyira school. There was also two members of an Essex church that gives some support to Shyira hospital using container aid. Two sixth form students from Range who were to spend a week in Groupe Scolaire and the deputy head of Formby High also joined the group as did a teacher from St. Luke's school, along with her husband.

The first day in Rwanda was spent changing money and visiting the National Genocide memorial—an upsetting experience for everyone. We then travelled to Musanze. The following day some of us visited a primary school, while six people went to see mountain gorillas before travelling to Shyira. The week in Shyira was busy with both high and low points. The worst times were experiencing the poverty of children's homes, and the best were fellowship within the group and with Shyira people. Andrew refereed a football match and managed to produce a draw and two happy schools. The last two nights were at the aptly named Paradise Hotel on the shores of Lake Kivu.

Throughout the stay the group was concerned about visas for the four people from Groupe Scolaire. It was hoped that they would travel to the UK on the same night as the trust's group were to return home. Attempts to contact the people who issue visas had failed, and then at 08.25 on the morning of 24 February, the expected day of departure, a text message was received from the school group who had gone to the British High Commission in Kigali. "OK WITH VISA " it read. Celebrations all round.

Pastor Anthony, Gervais, Fanissa and David, all from Groupe Scolaire, came to the UK on 24th February and were here for two weeks. They were here with funding from Global Community Links to tell of their lives in poverty in Rwanda, and how important the Millennium Development Goals are. They led three year group assemblies at Range High of about 200 students each time with Fanissa telling of her life in Rwanda. Fanissa is from a very poor family and one of our sponsored children.

The group were able to visit other schools and took part in activities organised by St.



Luke's church. The picture shows Harvie making a presentation to Anthony. At the end of the visit an agreement was signed promising closer cooperation between Range High and Groupe Scolaire.

Jeanette and Mike Smith, travelled to Musanze (formerly Ruhengeri) staying for 6 weeks at the home of a local family during April and May. Jeanette taught the teachers English at Group Scholaire, Shyira; did a Journalism Careers Seminar at Sunrise School, Musanze, where she taught in 2007 for 4 weeks, and also taught a lesson at the Agricultural Department of the National University of Rwanda, near Musanze, teaching 'animal families' in English. Jeanette and Mike found time to travel around the country and Mike managed a gorilla trek – in the rain! They celebrated the Royal Wedding as guests of the British High Commissioner in Kigali.

Bishop Augustin and Emmanuel came for the International Day of the Midwife at Edge Hill and an open day at St. Luke's. We were told about community nursing across the 13 health centres that Emmanuel works in as a district nurse, and were very impressed by the progress made through Shyira Hospital and its maternity services. The message they gave related to the Millennium Development Goals and their importance to people in Rwanda.

Robinah was our final Rwandan visitor. She should have come with Augustin and Emmanuel but because of problems with her visa was delayed. Robinah was able to spend time in Edge Hill university working with students and reinforcing the message about poverty and the Millennium Goals that Augustin and Emmanuel had given to students and others. Robinah impressed everyone she met with her stories of life in Rwanda and it was interesting to hear her comments on our lifestyle. "How many more people live in this house?" for example. She then told us that her mother had nine people in a much smaller house.

Fundraising.

Most of the trust's income comes from free will giving, but some fund raising is carried out. Students at Edge Hill gave money raised for midwifery services to the trust when the International day of the Midwife was held. Jane Wilson, the parent of a child at St. Luke's school, took part in the Liverpool Marathon with sponsorship for the trust. This resulted from the visit of Robinah to St Luke's. Thank you Jane.

A barn dance raising funds for the Coffee growing project was held in November.

Pete Morgan has assembled a team of at least 12 people taking part in the Liverpool Santa Dash. Go to www.bmycharity.com/santa2011 to support Pete and the team.

Projects

One reason for trustees to visit Shyira is to review projects funded through the trust. Additionally Pastor Anthony keeps us well informed of developments. The visit of 14 people in February was interesting because it enabled developments in Shyira to be seen through the eyes of people not previously associated with either the trust or St. Luke's. It was amazing to hear the recognition given to us by so many people in Shyira—they very much appreciate what has been done for them.

Coffee growing. For the first time we saw coffee plants producing beans. They were in the ground around the sports field and numbered about 1000. This is just the start, the plans are to have 60,000 plants because that is sufficient to lift the community out of poverty. A nearby hillside—see the picture—has 4,000 growing plants. some adjacent ground—over to the right of the picture—is to be purchased when money is



available and will hold a further 4,000 plants. So far this year we have sent money sufficient to purchase $\frac{1}{3}$ of the land. It is hoped that the Barn dance held in November, will raise money to complete the land purchase—a further £2,200 is required.

Child-headed families. Visiting the home of a child headed family is quite distressing, and when we saw the difficulty the children have in maintaining their homes we felt the need to restore them. In February we saw examples of eleven restored homes. Since then a further two homes have been rebuilt and some restoration work on others has been completed.

Children's centre. In February we saw the shell of the building. The children met for Sunday School under trees on our first Sunday in Shyira, and couldn't meet because of rain on our second Sunday. Now the building has a roof and plastered walls, and the children can use it. Doors and windows remain to be fitted but Anthony has the money to complete the work. The centre will be used by children throughout the week for after school activities and by their mothers in the day time for literacy and other educational activities.

Child sponsorship. The number of children sponsored in Shyira secondary schools now exceeds 150. The majority, some 149 children, are or have been supported for their studies at Groupe Scolaire. We were told in February of students who have gone on to university and are now qualified as doctors, nurses or other professionals.

Maternity services. This is a major success story. Following the opening of the new maternity building a scholarship was organised by Jane Morgan to send Robinah, who was a nurse in the maternity hospital, to train as a midwife at Kigali Health Institute.

Robinah qualified three years ago, and a second nurse was then sponsored. Fidel qualified last month and now works for Shyira hospital. Since Robinah qualified and returned to Shyira there have been no maternal deaths, whereas before there was at least two a year. Also there has been a reduction in morbidity and improved child health. A problem has been created because the success of the maternity hospital has made it popular in the community and it is now overcrowded. The solution is to extend the building, possibly by adding a second floor. The hospital is now preparing plans and costings. The picture shows Jane with Fidel and Robinah outside Shyira Maternity.



Support for ministry. Clergy are paid very little. They get a proportion of the parish collections and so have to take other work or farm in order to feed their family. St. Luke's church has seen support for ministry as part of its outreach and Trust members have also felt committed to this work. The result has been a freeing of clergy to take a leadership role, organising people into self-help groups, for example.

Future Projects

What future projects would you like us to consider? We asked the question of Bishop Augustin and of Pastor Anthony. Two trustees were also able to talk to people in and around Shyira and to consider future needs when they visited Shyira in February.

Shyira is central to many things. For example Shyira hospital has 13 health centres distributed across the surrounding hill country. Support that was originally for Shyira is now spreading across the region as the effects of our support spread.

Moses was a catechist, a form of lay minister, in Shyira parish. He has been moved to a parish high on the slopes of Volcano Karisimbi and close to the Congo border where he runs the church. Moses is paid from parish collections, and gets the equivalent of about £6 a month to feed a family of 6. His church needs a roof costing about £1,500. It would be good to be able to help Moses as he works in God's service.

Identified priorities in and around Shyira are the completion of the children's centre, the purchase of land for coffee growing, the re-housing of child headed families and an extension to the maternity building. There are still many needs. Long-term development ideas involve micro finance and other support schemes.

Coffee growing will involve many community groups with child-headed families, MU, HIV group and others taking part in tending the coffee and harvesting beans. Each group would get part of the income from "their" beans with the parish getting some to fund further development. Coffee, above all else, can lift a community out of poverty.

Money transfers

Money sent by bank transfer in 2011 totals an amazing £25,870. In addition money has been carried by people visiting Shyira and has been given to previously agreed causes. The money sent has come from many sources and we thank everyone who has contributed in any way. Included in the total is the gifts that came through St. Luke's Lent project and St. Luke's support for ministry in Shyira. All money donated for use in Shyira is sent to Shyira—we do not make deductions for administration.

The total money sent to Shyira now totals £184,285 and it has made a significant difference to life in Shyira. Visitors are frequently told that something they can see was provided by us.

The Rotary club of Formby recently sent something over US\$19,000 to Shyira to be used to purchase equipment for the Hospice, also called Living Hope Ministry.

Their total support for Shyira is now more than £56,000 and has provided equipment for the maternity hospital and three schools as well as the hospice. We thank Rotary members for their contribution to poverty reduction in Rwanda.

Support for ministry	£1450
Projects	£300
Hospice	£140
Children's centre	£4,135
Child sponsorship	£11,545
Banana Leaf Cards	£860
Emmanuel	£70
Alternative Gifts	£1,965
Child Headed Families	£1,485
Children's work	£200
Maternity Services	£1,520
Sundry gifts	£935
Coffee project	£1,315
Total	£25,920

Caleb, Louise and family

It was good to welcome Caleb and daughters Sara and Hannah to Formby on 26/27th August, even though their stay was short. Sara and Hannah enjoyed their visit to the sea.

Caleb explained his departure from Shyira to manage the hydro-power project that should provide electricity for Shyira hospital. He is now living in Musanze. He manages the hydro project from there while Louise spends some time working in the hospital. Caleb will also be offering his services to the hospital as time allows.

Caleb junior is now at school in Nairobi, along with his two older sisters. Lydia is attending school in Musanze.

The picture shows Caleb talking to Alf Farrington at a working breakfast in the Lifeboat Tea Room. Sara and Hannah stand close by.



Gervais Niyonambaza

Gervais came to Formby last March in his role of deputy head teacher at Groupe Scolaire. If he is to progress to head of any school he must obtain a further qualification and this will cost in the region of £2000 over two years. See www.ines.ac.rw for details of his proposed university. Gervais asks if anyone is willing to help him pay the fees. Anyone wanting to help should donate to the trust with the instruction "Gervais".

Visas

When we go to Rwanda we don't need a visa for a visit of up to three months providing we are not taking paid employment. The situation for people coming here is very different. Experience tells us that if people are married with a family then visas are generally issued, but for people who are single there will be problems.

There are special arrangements for inter-school exchanges that seem to ensure visas are issued although school students are not married with families. If arrangements are approved by Britain's Voluntary Service Overseas, VSO, offices in the overseas country then visas are not a problem.

Our seven visitors included just one person who was neither a school student nor married. That person was Robinah, the midwife invited to take part in the International Day of the Midwife at Edge Hill University. Robinah was given reasons for the refusal of her visa, reasons that were clearly contrived and contained errors, if not lies. For example, we know she submitted evidence of her income with her application but it was said that she didn't. When Mr Bill Esterson, our MP, made representations to the Border Agency for us it was acknowledged that some documents had not been considered and Robinah was asked to take her passport back to the Kigali High Commission so that a visa could be issued. The high commission then lost her passport!

Eventually the visa was issued, and Robinah was able to come to the UK, but not for the originally planned event. We submitted a detailed complaint to the Border Agency listing a whole catalogue of problems—delays in returning passports, failure to meet the promises they make on response times, not responding to emails when they publish the address, giving visa applicants phone numbers that turn out to be a fax machine and more. The reply effectively informed us that the Border Agency make, enforce and police the rules, and failed to address the issues we raised.

Our application for a visa for Robinah was ultimately successful only because we had help from Mr. Esterson. Part of our reason for lodging a complaint with the Border Agency was to draw their attention to shortcomings as we perceived them to try and improve the overall functioning of their "service" for other people. We clearly failed to influence this arrogant organisation.

Support for the Trust

There are a variety of ways that people may support the work of the Trust.

Through Direct Giving. We are always happy to receive donations by cash or cheque. Donors can specify how they would like their gift to be used. We have envelopes that will help simplify giving gifts.

Standing Order. An easy way of supporting the work of the trust is to donate a small amount each month by standing order.

On your tax return. Expecting a tax refund? Why not donate all or part of it to the trust by entering NA U3 1U in the appropriate box on your tax return

Gift Aid. If you are a UK tax payer then with your approval the trust can claim a tax refund equivalent to 25% of any gift you give, this at no cost to you.

Through your will. Why not include the trust in your will?

Internet search. Internet search engines earn money from advertising and sponsorship. Why let Google benefit when the money can go to the Shyira Trust? Simply use www.everyclick.com/shyiratrust as your search engine for the trust to benefit. You could even save that address as a tab on your browser or as one of your favourites.

On-line shopping. Some companies will make a donation to charity each time you shop on-line with them. Go to www.thegivingmachine.co.uk and register by clicking on “Givers Join” and complete your details, including the Shyira Trust as your charity. Each time you shop on-line go via the Giving Machine website and the trust will get a proportion of the money you spend. There is no cost to you.

Text. A donation of £1, £2, £3, £4, £5 or £10 may be made to the trust by text. An options exist for gift aiding text donations. We are presently setting up a facility for text donation. More information will appear on our website.

Credit/Debit card donation. Please visit www.bmycharity.com/shyiratrust

Alternative gifts. Stuck for gift ideas for Christmas or birthdays? Take a look at our alternative gift catalogue—it could solve your problem while helping people in Shyira.

Mobile Phones/Printer cartridges. These items (except Epson cartridges) can be recycled, and the trust can raise money from the recycling. There is a box to receive them in St. Luke’s church, or drop them off at one of the addresses below.

For more information on any of the above items please contact one of your trustees or you can email the trust at the address below. The website also contains some information and provides an additional method of contacting us.