



Communication on Progress

2021





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Foreword

Given the obvious and ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the past year has been significantly different to what we would ordinarily expect at African Adventures.

International travel has been virtually off limits, so unfortunately, we did not send any groups of volunteers to our partner schools in Ghana, Kenya, or Zanzibar.

Instead, we had to rethink how we could support our partner schools, and how we could engage with our volunteer groups in the UK in lieu of organising their visits.

In Africa, we focused on our four key pillars of work – food security, infrastructure, key equipment, and WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene) programmes – and there are two programmes that I am particularly proud to have delivered.

Firstly, our food security campaign, which began in 2020, was carried on through 2021, and we helped subsidise 18,000 meals every month at our partner schools.

Secondly, we began a new Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Menstrual Health Management (MHM) programme which will benefit 8,253 girls and 7,798 boys who attend our partner schools in Zanzibar.



Through a combination of educational workshops and construction of better sanitation facilities, the programme will enable students to reach their full potential by ensuring that all children feel safe and able to maintain personal hygiene, whilst minimising school absences for girls, who were previously unable to manage their menstrual health.

We completed the first phase of the programme in 2021 by delivering the project in one school. The second phase of the programme, which will see the same facilities constructed at a second school, is now underway, and we expect to complete the third by the end of 2022.

We also rolled out our School Partnerships Programme, which connected UK schools to our partner schools in Africa, and has resulted in an exciting exchange of learning and culture for all students involved.

We're delighted to share our achievements from the last 12 months, which have been the most challenging in our history for obvious reasons, in this Communication on Progress.

As the world reopens for international travel, we are excited to restart our volunteer programme in 2022 and look forward to sharing our groups' achievements next year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Mew', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan Mew, Founder, African Adventures

Our African Adventures

Family



We know that local people are the best people for the job.

There are no UK staff based in-country, simply because there is no need – our in-country teams know their communities far better than we ever could. This supports the economies of our host destinations by providing productive employment and decent work opportunities, in line with SDG 8 and Principle 6.

All of our work is organised in partnership with the schools (SDG 16); we would not presume to work in areas where our support was not actively requested. The schools provide us with a clear direction for their own development. We respond to their needs in the most effective way possible, by providing volunteers, capital and resources for sustained growth.

Throughout the past 18 months, whilst we have been unable to provide volunteer support, or regular income as a result of volunteers, we have been in regular contact with our in-country teams and provided the most effective support that we could in the circumstances; our focus has been on fundraising for feeding programmes and food parcel provision, and our local staff have delivered this service where it is most needed.

Our core staff teams in Africa have done a great job of collaborating with the relevant parties to ensure that support is provided where it is needed, and we look forward to welcoming back all those staff who work with us to deliver a great experience for our volunteers.

Our Work

The COVID-19 pandemic has been hugely challenging for African Adventures as a company and for our partner schools in Ghana, Kenya and Zanzibar.

Our volunteer programme has been suspended since March 2020, meaning that our partner schools have missed out on the support they would normally receive through our trips. As such, our work has largely focused on providing support to ensure our partner schools can continue operating, and funding vital development work to improve our partner schools' facilities and infrastructures.

Our work over the previous year would not have been possible without the generosity of our supporters, and we would like to say a huge thank you to anyone who has donated to African Adventures Foundation. We would also like to thank the grant-giving organisations that have supported our work and enabled us to roll out ambitious projects such as our Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme.





Food Security Programmes

Increasing food security for the children at our partner schools, and their families has been a key focus of our work over the previous year.

For many of the children we support, the food they receive at school might be the only meal they eat each day. Widespread disruption to the education system in our host destinations, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated economic uncertainty and increased food insecurity for many families.

To help fill the gap in funding caused by the suspension of our volunteer programme and widespread school closures, we launched our 'Zero Hunger This Summer' fundraising campaign in June 2021. This campaign aimed to raise the funds needed to enable our partner schools to continue supplying free meals and food parcels to the students who attend them. Over the course of June and July, African Adventures Foundation raised an incredible £18,744.59 for our partner schools, thanks to some extremely generous donations from our supporters.

In November 2021, we launched our annual Christmas Meal Appeal fundraising campaign, which raised further funds for the vital food security programmes at our partner schools. Through this campaign, African Adventures Foundation raised an additional £2,833, which funded nearly 4,500 meals at our partner schools.



18,000

**meals a month subsidised for the children
at our partner schools throughout 2021.**

In addition to ad hoc fundraising campaigns, the Foundation provides monthly funding to some of our partner schools which helps cover the cost of their food security programmes. An example of this is West End Destiny Academy in Kenya, which provides a free education and daily, nutritious meal to around 120 children between the ages of two and 10. African Adventures partnered with West End Destiny in 2018, and since then we have provided regular funding to enable the school to offer every student a free, daily meal.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, and funding received from African Adventures Limited, African Adventures Foundation subsidised 18,000 meals a month for the children at our partner schools throughout 2021.



Infrastructure

Improving the facilities at our partner schools by providing funding for construction projects is another key area of our work.

Our partner schools would normally receive both financial and practical support with construction projects through our volunteer programme. As volunteers have been unable to travel for over two years, construction projects have proceeded at a slower pace than usual. That said, some key infrastructure improvements have been carried out over the previous year, largely due to generous funding provided by our supporters and through African Adventures Foundation.



Kenya

Cherish School has constructed a new, permanent toilet block and two brick-built classrooms at its new site on the outskirts of Nakuru. The classroom block has also had a solar panel installed on its roof, which powers the school's water pump. This work was partly funded by a generous donation from a previous volunteer.

Ungana Academy has also constructed a new, permanent toilet block and a brick-built classroom, thanks to funding provided by a school in the UK and a previous volunteer.

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of a school in the UK and a donation from a previous volunteer, Chaddy Mission School has been able to upgrade its classroom interiors and carry out renovation work to the classroom exteriors.





Ghana

Building work has continued at Dedzidi Community School, where a new, two-storey classroom block is under construction. Dedzidi received a very generous donation from a school in the UK, which has provided additional funding for the project.

Five out of eight classrooms are now complete, as is the roof of the block, and average class sizes have already reduced from 50 students down to 40.

Aklorbordzi School has also received funding to construct a new library, thanks to the fundraising efforts of a school in the UK.





Zanzibar

Fuoni School has received funding from a school in the UK which has been used to carry out renovations and repairs to the headmistress' office.

We are very much looking forward to resuming the normal pace of construction work across our partner schools when our volunteer programme restarts later this year.





Key Equipment

In order to help our partner schools operate as effectively and safely as possible, we provide funding for key equipment such as textbooks, cooking stoves and water tanks. To help mitigate the severe economic impact of the pandemic, we have also provided funding as needed for teachers' salaries, rent and utility bills.

Recently, each of the 10 partner schools we support in Ghana has received funding from African Adventures Foundation for Veronica buckets, so that students and staff can hygienically clean their hands.

These simple handwashing stations mean that staff and students can wash their hands under running water, rather than in a shared basin of standing water, which is only clean for the first person who uses it.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

African Adventures Foundation received funding for an ambitious two-year Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) and Menstrual Health Management (MHM) programme which will benefit 8,253 girls and 7,798 boys who attend the three schools we support in Zanzibar.

Through a combination of educational workshops and construction of better sanitation facilities, the programme will enable the students to reach their full potential by ensuring that all children feel safe and able to attend school.

Before our WASH and MHM programme started, the sanitation facilities at our partner schools were extremely inadequate. At Fuoni School, there were just four latrine toilets for 3,727 children, with no toilet paper or hand washing facilities. Similarly, Kijito Upele School had just three latrines for 6,212 children, and Kinuni School had four latrines for 6,102 children. At all three schools, the water supply was dependent on rainfall. This lack of facilities, combined with poor understanding of hygiene and menstrual health, resulted in reduced attendance amongst boys and girls, with girls' attendance around 20% lower than boys'.



Our WASH and MHM programme aims to improve attendance rates by constructing new facilities and facilitating the delivery of hygiene education workshops at our partner schools. Teaching staff at our partner schools will receive training on how to deliver these workshops to students aged 10–17.

Five women at each school will receive training on how to make reusable sanitary pads for female students, and African Adventures Foundation will provide two sewing machines, start-up materials, and a sanitary pad template.

The first phase of the programme began in summer 2021, and this phase focuses on the construction of new facilities at all three of our partner schools. Gendered latrine toilets, urinals and a dedicated girls' changing room will be constructed at each of our partner schools, along with proper sewerage systems, clean piped water and handwashing facilities.

So far, we've constructed new latrines, handwashing stations and a privacy room at Fuoni School, which are now being used by students and staff. Students at Fuoni have also attended personal hygiene and menstrual health management workshops, and some of the teachers have received training on how to make reusable sanitary pads, with funding provided so that Fuoni can buy the materials to make more. Staff at the school have already reported increased attendance and positive behavioural changes amongst both boys and girls. Construction work has now begun at a second partner school – Kijito Upele – where new facilities are currently being built.



35%

of girls at our partner schools in Kenya miss some school each month because of a lack of access to sanitary pads

We're also working to eliminate period poverty for girls in Kenya through our fundraising campaign, The Good Period. Currently, 35% of girls at our partner schools in Kenya miss some school each month because of a lack of access to sanitary pads, and 65% are forced to use pieces of old clothing instead of sanitary pads.

The Good Period aims to raise the money needed to provide 90 girls at one of our partner schools with enough sanitary pads each month, so that they can attend school without worry. Thanks to a generous donation from a school in the UK, we have raised enough to supply the 90 girls in our pilot group with enough sanitary pads every month for a year.

In time, we plan to roll this out to our other partner schools, so that none of the girls we support have to miss out on school.



Volunteer Programme

Our volunteer trips act as the starting point for long-term, sustainable partnerships between groups in the UK and our partner schools in Africa. We firmly believe that, when organised correctly, volunteering overseas can lead to meaningful exchange which brings benefits to both parties.

During our trips, our volunteers help with teaching, sports coaching or building key infrastructure initiatives such as classrooms, toilets and kitchens. The pace and direction of the development work is set by our partner schools, and groups from the UK contribute to longer-term development goals during their trip, with the baton passed to the next group so that consistent progress is made towards our partner schools' objectives. Many volunteer groups return to travel with us annually or biannually, forming lasting, meaningful partnerships with the schools we support in the process.

Through our School Partnerships Programme, school groups in the UK can opt to exchange letters with their partner school before they travel, giving students in the UK the chance to learn about life in their chosen destination in a way that a conventional school trip would never allow. Teachers in the UK also have access to free educational resources to help their students learn about education in a global context, and school groups have the option to fundraise for their partner school should they wish to, further cementing the partnership.



Whilst our volunteers have been unable to travel, our School Partnerships Programme has allowed students and teachers in the UK to connect with our partner schools in Africa, resulting in a meaningful exchange of knowledge and culture despite the restrictions on travel.

As our volunteer programme resumes in April 2022, we expect this aspect of what we offer to continue playing an important role in our volunteer programme, and we are excited to see how the relationships between UK groups and our partner schools in Africa continue to develop over time.





The Environment

We are committed to reducing our environmental impact wherever possible, and we have included the steps we're taking to reduce our carbon footprint in our business plan.

We are working towards running a carbon neutral office in the UK by offsetting the carbon generated by our energy usage and staff travel through our Gyapa stove programme in Ghana.

A Gyapa stove is an energy-saving cooking stove which requires 50% less fuel than a traditional open coal pot. Each Gyapa stove helps reduce the amount of carbon generated through cooking by around half a ton every year. The stoves also require significantly less wood than conventional stoves, helping to preserve forests in Ghana, which has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world. Gyapa stoves are also cheaper to use than open coal pots, which helps low-income families reduce their fuel costs. So far, our carbon offsetting programme has seen 14 Gyapa stoves supplied to families in the Volta region of Ghana, and we plan to roll this out further next year once our volunteer programme resumes and we are in the financial position to be able to do so.

Our Goals for 2021

Continue construction of new classroom block at Dedzidi Community School

Despite the suspension of our volunteer programme, construction work has been able to continue at Dedzidi School thanks to some very generous donations from our previous volunteers and supporters. We aim to complete the new classroom block by 2023.

Continue construction of permanent classrooms at seven partner schools in Kenya

Despite the suspension of our volunteer programme, some progress has been made towards upgrading the classrooms at our partner schools in Kenya. Cherish School, for example, now has two permanent, brick-built classrooms, and Ungana Academy has constructed one new classroom. We aim to have upgraded all classrooms at our partner schools in Kenya by 2023.

Provide Veronica buckets for all 10 partner schools in Ghana to support post-Covid WASH initiatives

All 10 of our partner schools in Ghana have received Veronica buckets, funded by African Adventures Foundation.



Provide food security at partner schools in Kenya

This has been a key focus of our work while our volunteers have been unable to travel. To this end, we have run various fundraising campaigns to improve food security for the children at our partner schools, including Zero Hunger This Summer and our annual Christmas Meal Appeal. We've also provided regular, monthly funding for some of our partner schools to help cover the costs of their food security programmes.

Complete WASH programme at one school in Zanzibar

New latrines, handwashing stations and a privacy room for female students to use have been constructed at Fuoni School, and students at Fuoni have attended educational workshops on personal hygiene and menstrual health management. Construction work has now begun at Kijito Upele School, which will be followed by the delivery of educational workshops.

Continue to reduce our carbon emissions through the Gyapa stove offsetting scheme

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on our volunteer programme which has, in turn, impacted our ability to roll out our Gyapa stove scheme beyond the initial pilot programme. We plan to revisit our Gyapa stove scheme when volunteer recruitment returns to a pre-pandemic level and we have the financial resources needed to support it.



Our Goals for 2022/2023

-  Construct a new kitchen at Cherish School in Kenya
-  Finish constructing the new classroom block at Dedzidi Community School in Ghana
-  Continue upgrading the classrooms at our partner schools in Kenya
-  Continue supporting food security programmes at our partner schools in Kenya
-  Roll out our Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme to Kinuni School in Zanzibar
-  Provide sanitary pads to more girls at our partner schools in Kenya through The Good Period
-  Provide key equipment including books, desks, chairs and sports equipment to our partner schools in Ghana, Kenya and Zanzibar
-  Renovate nine classrooms at three of our partner schools in Ghana





Our Policies

In addition to the examples given in this report, African Adventures has shown commitment to the 10 Principles of the United Nations Global Compact through:

Human Rights

- Ensuring that UK staff are provided with safe, comfortable and sanitary work facilities. This includes, but is not limited to: an office water dispenser, food storage and cooking facilities, and activities that promote a healthy work-life balance
- Providing a working environment that is free from abuse or harassment, with managers very much adopting an 'open-door' policy
- Providing staff training when needs are identified
- Holding weekly all-business meetings where staff have the opportunity to voice concerns or have their say on company developments
- Rewarding staff with social events and development activities
- Our Human Rights and Modern Slavery policy, which details our commitment to protecting human rights
- Working tirelessly to provide our host communities with basic human rights that we take for granted in the UK



Labour

- Ensuring no discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- Adopting a staff-led objectives process which rewards achievements
- Recruitment-dependent and performance related bonus schemes
- Flexible working hours and TOIL
- A discretionary and flexible approach to decisions regarding staff matters, such as requests to work from home
- An open and consultative working environment
- Comprehensive employment contracts which state the terms and conditions of service, for staff in the UK and Africa
- Encouraging children away from employment and into education

Environment

- Exercising caution with our UK staff business travel – minimising this where possible, for example by holding events virtually if appropriate
- Promoting recycling within our UK office
- Switching to more environmentally friendly technologies and office supplies
- Offering a ‘Cycle to Work’ scheme
- Sourcing fairtrade products wherever possible

Anti-Corruption

- Taking a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption
- Acting with integrity at all times
- Dealing with all business matters in a professional and fair way, and promptly addressing anything which threatened this
- Signing the “Anti-corruption Call to Action”

Thank You

We hope that we have provided you with the information needed to understand our work and the commitment we have to the 10 Principles of the United Nations Global Compact and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. None of what we do as an organisation would be possible without our volunteers and supporters, so it is only right that we end this report with a well-deserved acknowledgement. Thank you to everyone who has been with us through a difficult period for the company and the Foundation; we wouldn't be where we are today without you.

