



Thank you for all the support you have given to our students and teachers during the pandemic and helping them get back to school.

From Carol Groves , Chair of the Friends of the Mombasa Children

Keeping our friends and supporters informed of our activities during the past year has been of great concern. We have increased the number of newsletters to almost monthly, our Facebook page and website have been updated regularly with information. The pandemic has produced many challenges for our charity and it seemed appropriate that, as chairperson, I write a report on our last financial year. We no longer hold an annual general meeting since 'A Charitable Incorporated Organisation' is not required to hold such a meeting. Not that we could have met anyway under the Covid restrictions. Our published annual accounts always include a full trustees report.

A Report on the year February 2020 to January 2021

Many of you will have read in our newsletters that our fundraising events were all postponed for 2020, except for one in February (our curry night), which was thankfully able to go ahead before the first lockdown in March. During 2020 we were able to organise different types of raising money, such as a sponsored bike ride, African hamper raffle, birthday donations, online selling and a garden table sale to name but a few. Our monthly newsletters, many of them appealing for support for Unity School proved successful and we were very fortunate in financial help from Littlehampton Rotary and many individual supporters. This enabled us to provide Unity School with additional food and continue the medical care. We are very thankful to the International School in Eindhoven, Holland for their annual fundraising event that covers the majority of our medical costs.

We were disappointed that Norbert Were the Manager at Unity School was not able to come to the UK last June, particularly as he had already secured his Visa to travel to the UK. Norbert was due to talk at various schools and churches that support us. However, we are planning for him to come in the summer of 2022. Two trustees visits to Unity School were also sadly postponed last year.

Although Unity School was closed during much of 2020, (except for two classes from October onwards), we were able to support them financially so that they could photocopy paper packs of work each week for the pupils. Parents do not have the luxury of the internet or computers in the same way the majority of our children do. Without school fees coming in, life was very tough for Unity School. They kept on a very small team (all on half pay), but sadly the rest of the staff were on unpaid leave. On the plus side, as we as a charity own the land the school is on, so they do not have rent to pay.

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The Kenyan Government allowed schools to fully open in January 2021, and at the present time numbers of Covid cases around Unity School are fairly low, but of course this could change. Unfortunately, it is not possible for them to have any tests, as it is too expensive and there are no free Covid tests in Kenya.

As the state schools in Kenya are very overcrowded (sometimes up to 100 pupils in a class), private schools like Unity School are sought after by parents, but they rely on parents being able to pay school fees. Unity School has 440 pupils at the present time and not all parents are able to pay the full school fees. Approximately one third of parents pay half and we currently support one sixth of the pupils who's parents pay no fees. No child should be denied a good education for lack of money.

Last year we changed our Trustee meetings to Zoom and Norbert who is also one of our Trustees is able to connect to our meetings via Zoom from Mombasa. We are fortunate to be able to communicate with Unity School via Zoom and WhatsApp.

Our additional donations and rather different ways of fundraising have resulted in a reasonably healthy year end accounts without having to use any of our reserves. Last March, we made the decision that if we have to use our reserves to support Unity School we would do so. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, our reserve funds are almost back in line with the Charity Commission's guidelines of three months operating costs.

The trustees are aware that 2021 will also be a difficult year and there is still a lot of uncertainty around fundraising. We will of course do our best to support Unity School, its teachers and students as much as we possibly can.

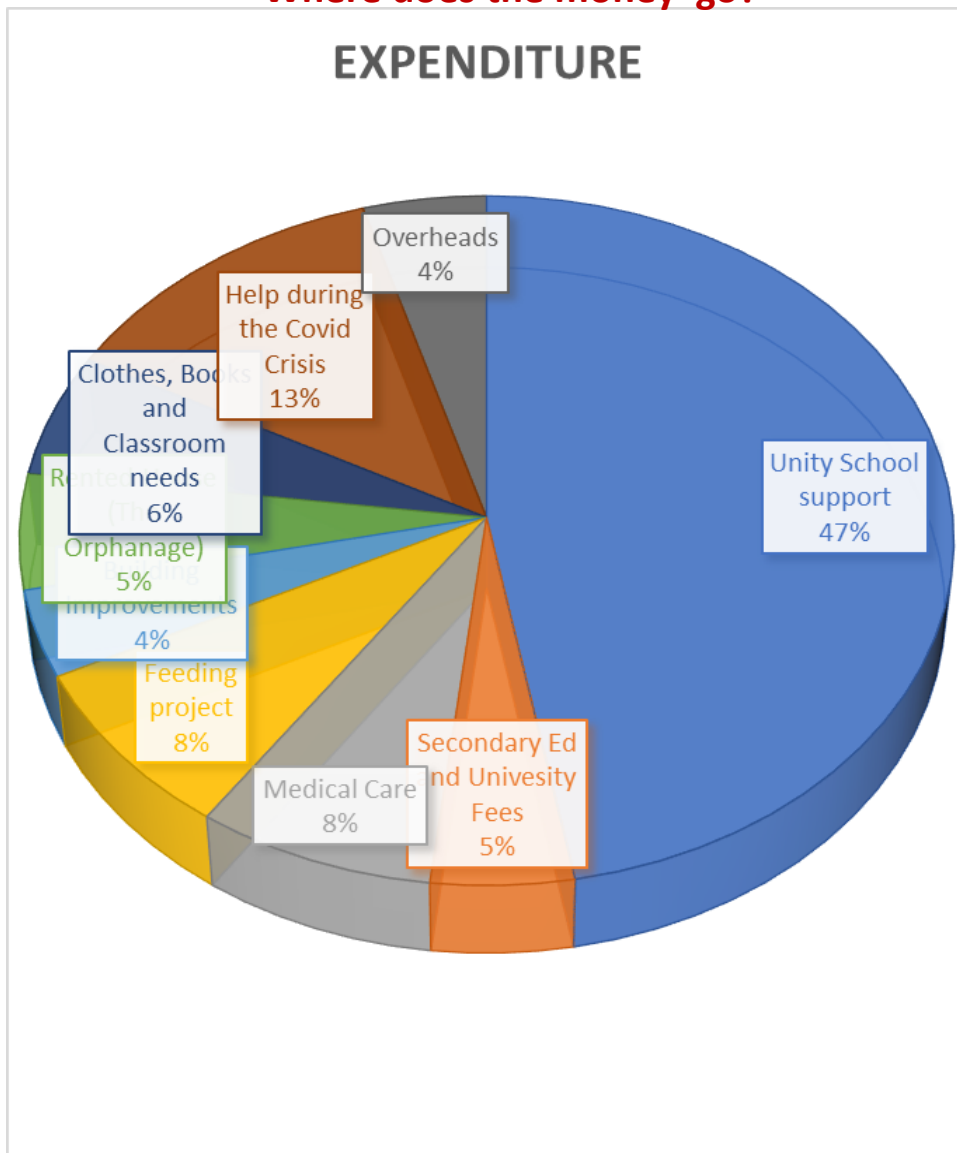
The pie chart on page 3 shows a breakdown of our expenditure for our financial year 1 February 2020 to 31 January 2021. You will note that our administrative costs are extremely low and all income goes to where the need is.

Take care and keep safe everyone and let's hope and pray for a positive 2021.

Carol



Where does the money go?



In 2020 we spent £53,496 Our income was £62,777

The largest slice of the pie went to Unity School (as it always does) but this year the second largest slice was the emergency support to help our poorest families and some of our teachers during the crisis,

You may have noticed that one of the smaller segments is “Overheads” Just 4% of our total expenditure is spent on administrative costs. Far less than most of the better known National charities who spend 65– 85% of their income on their good work. To be fair, though, larger charities require paid staff to handle their work whereas we, like many smaller charities, have no paid workers. According to the Charity Commission, charities with an income below £100,000 spend, on average up to 32% on overheads.

In the UK all charities are monitored by the Charities Commission and their annual accounts (including our own) can be inspected via the Charity Commission website.

Coming up in 2021

Following the Prime Minister's publication of a road map out of Lock-down we hope that there will be some fundraising events later in the year. We're looking for a date in early Autumn for **The Great Sale of Everything**.

Maddy and Chris are having to re-book their accommodation again for their **Sponsored walk up Mount Snowdon**. This could now happen in late May—assuming we are allowed to drive to Wales by then. Carol and Steph are thinking of extending their **Cycle Ride** this summer. And, who knows, perhaps we'll all be able to celebrate with another **Curry Night**. Watch this space.

The After Christmas Scavenger Hunt

Ingenuity and imagination were well exercised after Christmas when, for five days, individuals and families attempted to find prescribed items on an after Christmas theme. First price went to the Rycroft family for their video recording of Silent Night, not to mention their Lego turkey. Well done to everyone who had a go.



Don't forget the £5 a month challenge - Could you help?

With the prospect of being allowed out to meet friends for coffee and cakes, could you donate the cost of a cuppa and a cake towards the work of The Friends of the Mombasa Children? Your £5 a month would enable our feeding programme to provide a healthy meal for children who would otherwise eat nothing at mid-day.



You can download a Standing Order form from our Website, and if you are a UK tax payer a 'Gift Aid' form can also be downloaded. Please click on 'Support us' on and 'donate to help'

www.mombasachildren.org.uk

Or email our Chairperson - Carol Groves - see below.

*You can donate to Friends of the Mombasa Children via
<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/mombasachildren>*

*Or by on-line banking: our Treasurer Khatija Volk or Carol Groves can give you more advice.
K.volk@mombasachildren.org.uk, c.groves@mombasachildren.org.uk*

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