

# The Koinonia Trust Autumn 2020 Newsletter

Welcome to The Koinonia Trust Newsletter Autumn 2020 from Frances Swaray.

## Reflections from Momo

*Psalm 26: 7 (KJV) that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving and tell of that wondrous works.*

In a time such as this we often think of the problems before us and forget to count our blessings one by one and see what God has done for us. As an organization there many things we need to reflect on and be grateful to our Creator and give Him thanks. Let us look at the shoreline and not focus on the storm we find ourselves in. Let us set our eyes on Jesus who gives us that peace that surpasses all understanding. When I reflect over the last three years ago and see where we have come from and where we are as an organization, God has been with our every step alongside you as prayer intercessors, funders and encouragers and I can only praise the Lord hallelujah. It has not been an easy journey but has been an awesome experience. We started as a team of two persons Frances and myself, now by the grace of God we have seven volunteers, volunteering with their individual skills, talents and time. As Frances continues to mentor and coach the team in Liberia, I can see the transformation in our leadership reflected in our own emotional and mental stability as she encourages us to spiritual maturity. We are praying to continue to fulfil the vision of The Koinonia Trust as we seek to bring healing, hope and beauty from the ashes of people's lives.

## Reflections from Frances

What a different world we are living in with new challenges and new 'norms'. However we have an anchor that keeps us standing firm in an environment that is like shifting sand and full of uncertainties. One of the old hymns I memorized in Sunday School as a child comes flooding back...

*Will your anchor hold in the storms of life, when the cloud unfolds their clouds of strife, when the strong tides lift and the cables strain, will your anchor drift or firm remain?*

I thank God that He is our anchor, He is steadfast and sure, what comfort and assurance in such times as these that we are living through.

## Updates from Liberia

We are very thankful to Momo and the team who continue to serve with faithfulness and integrity and who continue to do extremely well in France's absence. A testimony to the importance of building the capacity and resilience of a team.

### Mandala Trust Supported

We are very thankful to The Mandala Trust who gave us a grant and enabled us to kit out our football team and provided training material for them. We have 30 young men coming for coaching three times a week. Some of these young men have been displaced from their families who live in rural parts of Liberia. Often they are sent up to the city to make their own way in life without any family support or resources. Each time they come they have a time of thanksgiving and prayer beforehand. We are encouraging them to lean on God and one another as they grow into adulthood. As the club develops we will be facilitating workshops on health (spiritual, emotional, mental, physical and social) leadership's skills and trauma healing groups for them.



The Koinonia Trust Football Team

Again a big thank you to The Mandala Trust for providing musical instruments and keyboard lessons for our newly formed choir. We have some wonderful volunteers to help lead them.



The Koinonia Trust Choir

The Mandala Trust also provided more curriculum books for the homework club and materials for extra classrooms.



## **Irish Embassy (Irish Aid) supported**

Our sewing classes finally commenced in September with the funding that was given in 2020 by The Irish Embassy (Irish Aid). We have six participants and already they have learned to sew an outfit. Our hope is that these classes will eventually become self-sustainable as they develop their skills. These classes are giving an opportunity for participants to learn skills that can help them provide for their families in the future.



Sewing Class

## **Liberian Mercy Partners support**

We are very thankful to The Liberian Mercy Partners for providing the funding for a community well with a hand pump in our community. This work is just starting and will be very important to not just help prevent the spread of Covid-19 but in helping the prevention of common gastric type infections and typhoid.



Well covets arriving

## **Growing Community Involvement**

Due to Momo's ongoing support throughout the early lockdown in Liberia and his engagement and commitment to the community, we have had a positive outcome with the community dwellers. They were able to elect leaders for the first time in years for our community block. This is a big step forward as the community unites for better resources and living conditions where we are living and working. It is such a blessing that we can also provide them with a proper functioning community well. Momo continues to support them through training and consultation.

## **Funding Crisis**

With the Covid 19 Coronavirus pandemic affecting our fundraising efforts we need your help even more to help us going into 2021. Unfortunately funding we had hoped to get in the second half of this year internally in Liberia was diverted to support the limited health services. Anna, Caroline and Sharon did an amazing fundraiser in June and that has helped sustain us through to the end of the year. However we are now in crisis going into 2021. We have had amazing engagement with the community this year and our projects are full to capacity. We have up to 200 young people engaging with us in different ways as well as the sewing class and adults who come in for support. It would be with great difficulty that in March when our rental is due we would have to shut the doors. We are appealing at this critical time to anyone who would like to sponsor, donate or arrange a fundraiser to please contact us.

# Prayer Points

1. Pray that God will protect us from Covid 19 and that it will come to an end
2. Pray for our board of directors that God will give them wisdom and good health as they continue to work alongside us
3. Pray that God will give Momo wisdom and good health as he continues to lead
4. Pray for the team in Liberia that God will continue to protect and provide for them
5. Pray for all the young people who come to the homework club, the choir, the sewing class, the football club and the community. Pray for their healing; pray that they grow in their relationship with God and through us that they experience love and acceptance.
6. Pray for the participants of the Trauma Healing Group, our own team, the adult participants and the community leaders. This will commence in November.
7. Pray for all those working on digging the community well for their safety and health.
8. Pray that God will open the doors financially for us as an organization as fundraising becomes increasingly difficult. Pray for core funders and individual committed sponsors.
9. Pray for Frances as she continues to volunteer from Ireland, as she trains and mentors and as she continues to develop workshops for us. Pray that she will be able to soon return.