

Annual Report 2017



Waiting in line for a clinic

Over two million women and families in Kenya continue to lack access to the basic health services which we take for granted in developed countries, so the mobile clinic services that we offer through our local partner organisations play a very important role in poor communities and are hugely appreciated.

The story around women in marginalised communities in East Africa getting access to family planning is subtle and complex. Women are prevented from using contraceptives because many simply can't afford to buy what they need, are too far from clinics that can serve them, and are affected by a culture permeated with negative myths about family planning. So the services we provide are free, and are brought to the communities for easy access. A very important part of our work is to inform women, men and young people about family size, and the benefits of being able to choose the timing, spacing and number of children a woman, or couple, want, and can afford. Rebuffing myths about family planning is also very important.



Government poster encouraging smaller families

The partners we work with provide this information very sensitively. They identify local people from the communities where the mobile clinics will go, who they train to communicate the messages about family planning and healthcare clearly and in a relevant way.

CHASE Africa (Community Health And Sustainable Environment)

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Charity 1082958

Our partners do this very well and generally, over a thousand people come to each mobile day-clinic that is organised. In 2017 our partners provided 41,367 family planning treatments, and basic healthcare for 185,132 people.

We are encouraging all our partners to bring together the family planning, healthcare and environmental work that they do, so that poor communities can benefit from reduced pressures on the environment that they depend on for their livelihoods.

Family planning is important because more African Governments are acknowledging the problems that a rapidly growing population can cause. When a population grows too fast the government can't afford to build the necessary infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and housing, and not enough jobs are created leaving large numbers of the population trapped in poverty. Kenya recognises the benefits of using effective family planning methods to lower fertility rates, the first step in harnessing the demographic dividend. Consequently, the country has set very ambitious targets for voluntary contraceptive use.

According to the most recent Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, Kenya's contraceptive use rate was 58%, but this figure hides enormous variation, from 76% of women using a modern method of family planning in Kirinyaga County, to just two percent in Marsabit, Wajir and Garrisa. CHASE is concentrating its efforts where there is a low use of family planning.

A worrying trend that appeared in 2017 was the unreliable nature of contraceptive supplies. Before 2017 our partners were all obtaining free supplies of family planning commodities. In the past the provision of family planning commodities was handled by central Government but it has now been devolved to county level. Some counties are setting a realistic budget but others are not and there has been an increasing dependency on donors to meet the shortfall.

Our school tree planting project continues to flourish. We planted a further 41 schools in 2017 with just over 20,000 trees. Many schools that planted trees 10 to 15 years ago are now harvesting timber and earning vital funds for the schools.

2017 also saw CHASE start to work in Uganda – a part of our vision to work across East Africa coming to fruition.

News from our partners



Samburu boy bringing milk from Loikumkum

Communities Health Africa Trust (CHAT)

CHAT continue their work in 11 Kenyan counties covering a broad swathe of central northern Kenya. Their work covers poorly served and marginalised communities throughout these counties. Approximately 80% of the inhabitants receiving CHAT's services live in under-served rural areas and are below the poverty line, subsisting on less than US \$2 a day.

CHASE Ambassador, Professor Steve Bown, recently spent time with a CHAT clinic visiting the Samburu tribe in northern Kenya. He travelled with a team visiting the village of Loikumkum where a mobile clinic was in action. The clinic was held on the river bank. It consisted of a table and chairs for consultations and treatment, a small tent for privacy when required for examination, and another table for the 'pharmacy' with a selection of common drugs. There was one nurse



The campsite near Loikumkum



Manyattas (homesteads) in Loikumkum



The CHAT clinic



Checking blood pressure



Pauline meeting children near the clinic



Pauline by the CHAT Land Rover

assisted by several mobilisers. They act as the link between CHAT and the local communities and have some basic health and environmental awareness training. They inform their own communities when the CHAT team is coming and what services will be available, particularly providing information on family planning options. Most women decide to use long acting, reversible contraceptives which can last for three or five years, or an injection which lasts for three months.

One woman brought a very sick baby only a few months old suffering from a chest infection. As soon as the baby had had the first antibiotic injection, she handed him to Michael, the most experienced of the local mobilisers, and sat down to have a long acting contraceptive implanted under the skin in her upper arm, a simple, five minute procedure with a little local anaesthetic. She was so anxious about the baby that she sat for four hours so the next dose of antibiotics could be given by injection rather than just taking the medicine to give to the child by mouth back at her home.

Another part of the trip involved meeting with men from the tribe to talk about family planning. For many Samburu men, having lots of children gives them high social status. Recently, a researcher from University College London carried out a survey on the attitudes of Samburu men in rural areas in the communities where CHAT works, with a particular focus on the relationship between environmental problems and family size. This revealed support for family planning promotion to help maintain a robust environment. These men highlighted their dependence on natural resources and the challenges they faced in providing for large families and keeping their livestock alive during droughts. They realised that large families and big herds of cattle can lead to natural resource exhaustion, environmental degradation and wildlife dispersal, undermining the key economic benefits of environmental and wildlife conservation. The researcher concluded that relating family size to the environment is a compelling strategy to improve support for family planning among Samburu men.

Friends of the Mau Watershed (FOMAWA)

Planting trees at schools is a model that works on many levels. Environmental education can be really enhanced when the children can get practically involved by having their own tree to look after and to understand that their actions can make a difference. Schools benefit in the long-term by having timber to sell, giving them a valuable income as well as taking some of the pressure off any remaining indigenous forest. FOMAWA have stuck with something that really produces results and we have now funded the planting of trees at 105 schools.

FOMAWA have been trying a new method of encouraging the children in each school to engage with the tree planting – “Plant a Bottle – Grow a Tree”. Discarded plastic bottles are commonplace and children are asked to bring a used bottle to school. The bottle is filled with water and “planted” upside down with a pierced lid, next to a young sapling. The half-buried bottle is an effective way to give the young trees a regular and fairly constant supply of water. It also gives the children a chance to keep an eye on their tree as they refill the bottle and take care of the sapling.



The start of a woodlot



Henry on the same woodlot in 2017



One of FOMAWA's woodlots



"Plant a bottle – Grow a tree"

Mount Kenya Trust (MKT)

Mount Kenya Trust was set up to help protect and restore the integrity of the forests and wildlife of Mount Kenya. Some areas of the forest have been very badly degraded.

MKT have embarked on an ambitious project to replant 600 hectares within the National Park using trees grown by women's groups. CHASE are committed to supporting this project and have so far raised funds to support 50 hectares.

Many people living around the mountain live a long way from a medical facility and lack access to primary healthcare and family planning. CHASE Africa established the community health service project with MKT in May 2014. The aim is to empower local community members living around the mountain by educating them about family planning and sexual health. MKT utilised the network of women's groups with whom the Trust already works on tree planting projects. Crucial to the success of the project is the work carried out by the Community Health Workers in making women aware of all the methods of family planning that are now available so when the mobile clinic arrives they can make an informed choice.

It is encouraging to see that when women have experienced the benefits family planning can offer they can see the value in paying the fee that government clinics charge. Women accessing family planning directly from Government clinics has to be the long-term sustainable solution.

In 2016 CHASE funded the planting of trees at three schools in the Mount Kenya area in conjunction with One Tree per Child, an organisation set up by Olivia Newton-John and Jon Dee. We know from our own work with FOMAWA how successful planting trees at schools can be and our funding allowed MKT to extend this project to a further 25 schools.



Pondering Colobus Monkey



Once these trees are well established rarer species will be introduced



Illegally cleared land within the forest reserve



Patients waiting to be seen at an MKT clinic

Community Health Volunteers (CHV)



Gabriel Musundi and colleague in the CHV clinic near Kakamega

Community Health Volunteers works with the communities around the Kakamega forest and was established by a forest guide to create awareness about HIV/AIDS, as well as issues of sexual and reproductive health. Their director Gabriel Musundi is also involved in teaching the community about the conservation of the Kakamega Rainforest and its fragile ecosystem, helping to preserve it for future generations. The forest reserve is about 90 square miles but nearly half has been illegally cleared.

In 2016 CHV ran 7 mobile clinics which they increased to 33 clinics in 2017.

Dandelion Africa

Dandelion was set up by Wendo Aszed in 2010. She believes real development and progress will only be possible if women are empowered and gain true equality, opportunity and influence at all levels of society. Gender equality means equal rights and opportunities in the family, in the community and in the country. CHASE funding enabled Dandelion to run 54 one-day clinics in 2017.



Two "clowns" who entertain the children during the clinic. These guys are funny, and much appreciated.



Kefa was diagnosed HIV+ 14 years ago and nearly died. Now on anti-retrovirals he uses his story to encourage others who are newly diagnosed HIV+.



The pharmacy at a mobile clinic



The Dandelion team meets before the clinic starts

In 2017 Dandelion, working in conjunction with the Big Life Foundation, took their mobile clinic on four occasions to work down near the Amboseli Game Park and put on 10 one-day clinics. With a round trip of around 600 miles it's a long, tiring journey. The plan for 2018 is for Big Life to start running the community health project themselves with help and advice from CHASE Africa and Dandelion.

Uganda – A new Dawn for Murchison Falls.

Uganda has a much lower contraceptive use rate than Kenya, with only 30% of women using family planning. As the cultural barriers are overcome through appropriate community-based mobilisers and communication, the demand for family planning services becomes very high. The country has one of the highest population growth rates in the world as so many women lack access to family planning. CHASE will use its experience from Kenya to run mobile clinics in the area offering free primary healthcare and family planning services.

We identified a suitable partner in Uganda when we were introduced to RICE-WN (Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment – West Nile) who are based in Arua, just north of the Murchison Falls national park. We organised for two employees to travel to Kenya to spend time with our existing partner Dandelion, and to see a clinic in action. Henry Pomeroy (CHASE's Director) then visited RICE in November and helped to come up with a programme to run a trial series of clinics. With the experience gained we hope to expand the area covered in 2018 around Murchison Falls.

The Murchison Falls Conservation Area in north western Uganda was once famous for hosting the largest concentrations of elephant, rhino, buffalo and hippopotamus in Africa, and being the most visited National Park on the continent. The area went through decades of turmoil due to unrest and violence resulting in the Northern White Rhino being poached to extinction and the elephant population being reduced by 90%. Communities became very poor and lacked services. Now that peace has returned, development projects have a better chance of success and we plan to work with our new partner and the Ministry of Health to bring basic healthcare and family planning services.

The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation has brought together a number of organisations, the Ugandan Wildlife Foundation, Tusk Trust, Send a Cow and CHASE Africa in an endeavour to create a sustainable future for the people living around the park and to restore the park to its former glory.



Henry with the RICE-WN team at their office in Arua, north-west Uganda

Our financial year

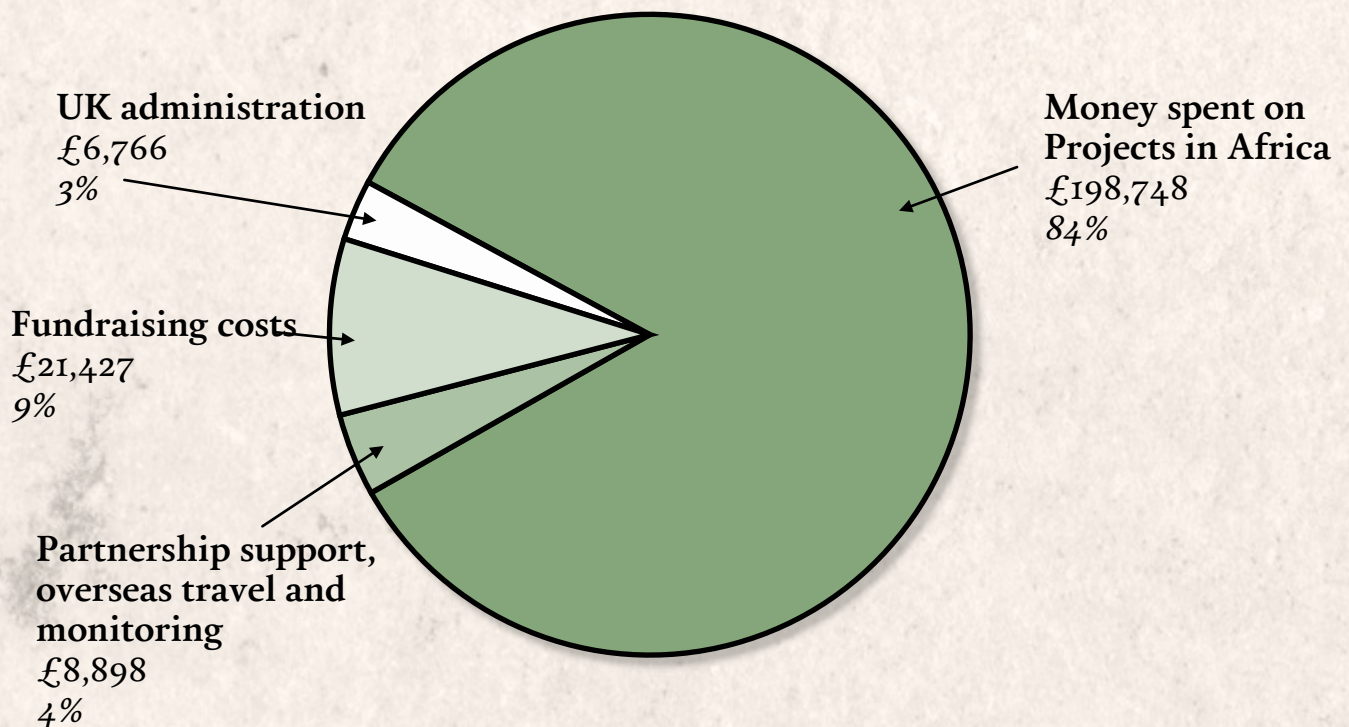
Income = £250,146





Donation and fundraising activities


Grants from trusts and institutions


Expenditure = £235,839





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