



Diocese of Rochester
called together

POVERTY AND HOPE

Appeal 2023

Friends and partners sharing God's gifts



God's kingdom... on earth

I am delighted to endorse this year's Poverty and Hope Appeal for the Diocese of Rochester and would like to encourage you to support this initiative generously.

The organisations backed by the Poverty and Hope Appeal represent bold and creative projects to address poverty and to bring hope to the lives of many people often in desperate need. They are part of the practical outworking of our Christian faith and our obedience to Jesus' command to love our neighbour as ourselves.

I hope and pray that we will both give generously to this year's appeal and, equally important, that we will take time to engage with and understand better the work that our partner organisations are doing. That in turn can then shape our own prayers and discipleship.

May we in this way share in both praying and answering the opening words of the Lord's Prayer – "Our Father in heaven, your kingdom come... on earth as in heaven".

Thank you for your support,

+Jonathan
Bishop of Rochester

PILOT PROJECTS AND NEW PARTNERS

While our 45-year-old relationships with Christian Aid, USPG and CMS continue to be the mainstays of Poverty and Hope's global reach, it has been heartening in recent months to see small, pilot development projects in Rochester's companion dioceses in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, rapidly beginning to bear fruit. It is also exciting to report that from 2023 we are linking up through Amos Trust with four local organisations in the Bethlehem area, working for reconciliation, justice and hope in the Holy Land.

Fruit, veg and honey from Africa

Small grants of £2,000 each were made in October last year to Rochester's three companion dioceses in Africa: Mpwapwa and Kondoa in Tanzania and Harare in Zimbabwe. Along with other parts of East Africa, parishes and communities had been badly affected by drought.

The grants made were focussed on well-planned irrigation and agricultural diversification projects. In Mpwapwa the installation of an array of solar panels to pump water around the clock from a refurbished bore hole was begun immediately, managed by the Rev Canon Agripa at St Philip's College. This was the first phase of a much bigger project to bring micro-irrigation to the neighbouring community and allow the production of a diverse range of fruit and veg.

January saw the launch of a bee-rearing project in four rural parishes spread over a wide area around Harare. Initially, 10 hives were provided per parish and training sessions were provided for parish delegates, plus representatives from two local schools also planning bee-rearing. First honey production was scheduled for May.

It is planned to expand the project to 10 parishes, which could then be served by a central processing and marketing operation.

Amos Trust and its partners in Bethlehem

Amos Trust is a London-based Christian charity which has worked in Palestine/Israel for over 30 years. Among its Palestinian partners is Alrowwad Cultural and Arts Society, based in Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem.

Alrowwad provides dynamic community arts projects, promoting the cultivation of creativity as an alternative to violence. They call it 'beautiful, non-violent resistance' to empower children, young people, and women. As well as offering a child-centred, safe and inclusive space, they use theatre, dance, music, photography and film as a platform through which individuals can build confidence, express themselves, and tell their stories.

Another long-term partner, Holy Land Trust, works tirelessly to strengthen communities and runs a home rebuilding programme, taking international supporters out to work alongside the community rebuilding demolished homes.

Two other partners, Tent of Nations and Wi'am Conflict Reconciliation Centre, both run educational and women's empowerment programmes.

More information on Amos Trust and its work is available through its website www.amostrust.org



UPDATES ON FOUNDING PARTNERS' PROJECTS

Christian Aid – Empowering Minority Communities, Bangladesh

The project, focussing on improved representation and vocational training for lower caste and other disadvantaged minority groups, is nationwide and overlaps with other Christian Aid work in the country. It is mainly funded by the European Union and has been running since 2021.

The project attracts 5:1 matched funding from the EU, subject to a minimum commitment of £5,000. Recent activities included a major photo exhibition and related events at the Bangladesh National Museum in Dhaka.

These events served to raise awareness on the livelihoods, occupational discrimination, and other challenges faced by the minority communities.

There has also been cooperation with government social services in providing vocational training in tailoring and beauty treatments.

USPG - Myanmar Rural Education Programme

The programme is spread over remote rural areas, with many of the children coming from minority ethnic groups. The main uses of funds have been for teacher training, provision of teaching materials, and payment of tuition and accommodation fees for children of poorer families.

There are 1,200 children involved, in 13 primary and 9 secondary schools. Alongside regular education, children have also been taught about healthcare and hygiene, which has been important while Covid 19 is still prevalent.

Lockdown restrictions have been one of the challenges faced in running the programme, along with political unrest, both of which have made it difficult for teachers to travel to schools. Two boarding schools have been temporarily closed as a result.

Other challenges to be addressed include language difficulties faced by ethnic minority pupils and lack of access to higher education for those graduating from secondary school. This could possibly be eased by the provision of a scholarship scheme.

CMS – Florianopolis, Brazil

Andy and Kati Walsh have been in post for a little over a year and had focussed initially on relationship building with community leaders in order to gain access to the Siri favela, particular to women and children.

They have participated in family days and in the distribution of food parcels. Andy is now working as a chaplain in two men's prisons – a low-security remand one and a high security one for convicted criminals.

In Brazil, men can be held for several years on remand and eventually released without being tried, resulting in additional stress for them and their families. Kati is awaiting clearance to be able to work in a women's prison.

The third aspect of their work is at a drug rehabilitation centre, which has a Christian ethic but is not overtly evangelistic.





From the Appeal Coordinator

Think of Poverty and Hope as a small-scale investment fund dedicated to sharing God's blessings around the world. We partner with leading Christian charities working in poor countries around the world and, since 2022, Rochester's three companion dioceses in Africa. Administration and communications are handled by volunteers and diocesan staff, so every penny donated (plus Gift Aid!) will go towards the projects described in this booklet.

Over £23,000 was raised in the 2022 Appeal, and we are distributing £25,000 to our six partners by drawing down funds carried forward from the previous year. Over 50 parishes made donations and in many cases these were part of a regular yearly pattern of generous giving.

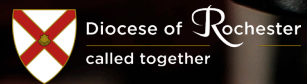
The recent highlight of our activity has been the successful launch of pilot irrigation and bee-rearing schemes in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, in which tremendous enthusiasm and skills on the ground has been matched with funding by Poverty and Hope and additional donors inspired by the first stage work.

The other exciting addition to the Appeal's activity, starting this year, is a new partnership with Amos Trust, which has been working for over 30 years with grass-roots organisations in the Bethlehem area, who use arts, education and dialogue to provide hope and promote reconciliation.

In Africa, Bangladesh, Brazil, Myanmar and Palestine we remember the words of Psalm 8: that all human beings were made a little lower than the angels, to be crowned with glory and honour. All God's children deserve security and dignity.

If you would like more information about Poverty and Hope, please contact me. I would be happy to visit parishes and speak at services, meetings, or fund-raising events.

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www.rochester.anglican.org



www.caaid.org.uk



www.churchmissionsociety.org



www.uspg.org.uk

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