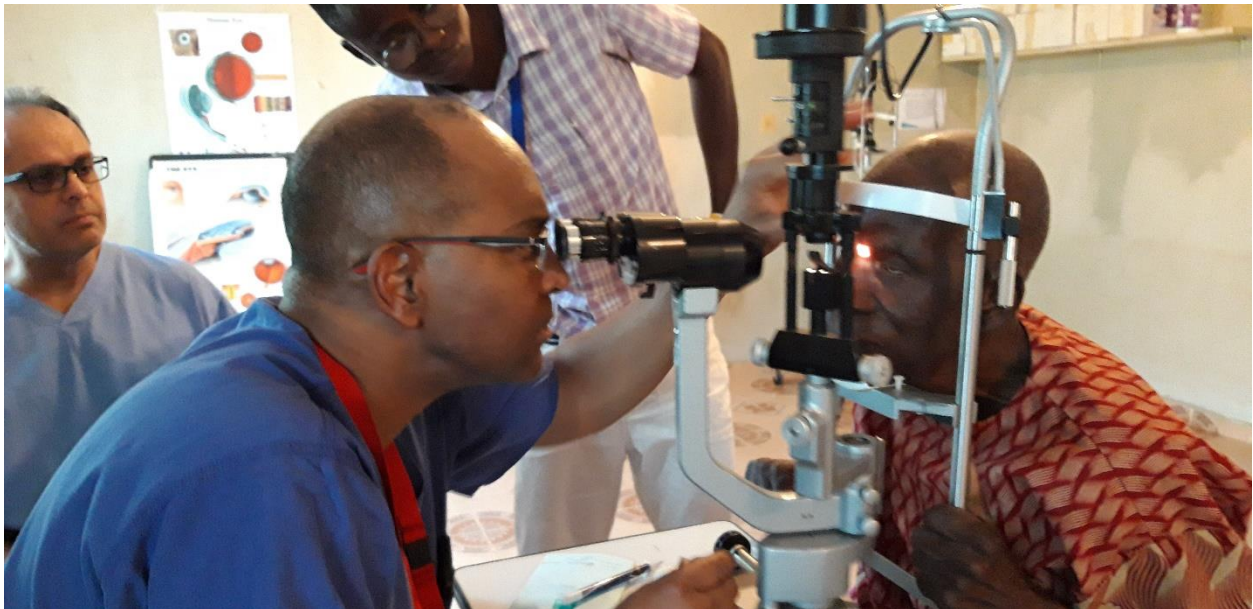




# BETTER LIVES FOUNDATION

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021



The Trustees Annual Report for the period ended 31st March 2021 continues from the previous years' Annual Report of the period ending 31st March 2020.

## HISTORY, AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE CHARITY

Better Lives Foundation (BLF) was established in 2006 and was registered on the 14th January 2008. Our work continues in Sierra Leone and India, with likeminded volunteers. We have been working to improve health and education conditions and our aim is:

- ❖ To provide quality medical care and education to the needy leading to long term healthcare independence
- ❖ To improve the condition of people's health
- ❖ To promote good health through education
- ❖ To work in partnership with charities, especially local organisations
- ❖ To raise standards of sanitation and hygiene
- ❖ To improve access to clean water
- ❖ To make all projects, self-sufficient, independent and self-supportive

## MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Since the establishment of BLF, we have achieved a number of milestones. Despite the onset of the World-Wide Pandemic and the spread of the SARS Covid-19 Virus, we have continued with our journey that has enabled us to continue developing sound trusting relationships with local communities, NGOs and government departments. We continue to attract committed volunteers and now have a large pool of human resources to manage Yonibana Sai Hospital (YSH) and outreach work. Our intentions have always focused on developing sustainable projects, which support communities around Yonibana.

Our journey is a true testament of the commitment, dedication and hard work rendered by our many volunteers. Our work has enabled us to reach several milestones which are described in the report below. We have in place four main activities; medicare, sociocare, educare and agricare with long-term sustainable projects.

**Medicare:** BLF and Yonibana Sai Hospital (YSH) has achieved recognition from Ministry of Health & Sanitation as a referral hospital in the Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation have also appointed Yonibana Sai Hospital as a SARS Covid-19 Isolation Centre. Our staff received full Infection, Prevention & Control (IPC), protocols training. Fortunately, Sierra Leone has not been widely affected by the spread

of the Covid-19 Virus, especially in and around Yonibana. This has allowed us to continue rendering free medical services to all patients by our professional qualified staff.

For the second consecutive year Better Lives Foundation has won three Yoni Excellence Awards - in the Northern part of Sierra Leone, the Tonkolili district. The awards were for:

1. Special recognition award for the Yonibana Hospital
2. Young Professional of the Year 2020 (Dr Foday Salam Fofanah)
3. Male Medical Officer of the Year 2020 (Dr Foday Salam Fofanah)



We are so proud of the entire BLF team, especially to Dr Foday Fofanah, who's hard work and dedication is an inspiration to us all. BLF continues to strive to set the highest standards in healthcare, sociocare and educare in order to maintain the highest level of service to our community.

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**Educare:** As part of our outreach work, we have adopted schools in Yoni chiefdom to provide educational sponsorship to students from secondary to graduate level. Health and Prevention talks are conducted in the secondary school.

75 students have benefitted from our complete sponsorship programme which include fees, books, stationery and medical equipment, exam fees, various uniforms, feeding costs, accommodation and transportation. Our international volunteers continue to support continuous professional development, ranging from doctors, nurses, health workers, social workers, electricians, carpenters, plumbers, accountants, teachers and agriculturalists. 60% of the sponsored personnel are now back at Yonibana Sai Hospital working in their capacity as qualified staff.



**Sociocare:** Our social work outreach teams conducted IPC talks and training to support the community in the villages in the Yoni Chiefdom. To support this BLF donated IPC equipment, hand wash stations in the villages. The Ward Councilor, Section Chief, town head men, youth leader and women's wing were among the invitees during the handover of the Hand wash stations. In excess of 741 villagers including children and elderly people attended the Covid-19 Awareness briefings. All benefitted by having the hand wash sanitiser stations across the chiefdom.

Following the Covid-19 awareness programme, 108 Food parcels were also distributed to isolated families and elderly people in the villages. Hot meals also provided at YSH to the patients. Outreach teams visit the villages in rotation and refer anyone who is unwell back to YSH. Supporting communities has become a vital part of ensuring villagers are receiving holistic support and care.

**Agricare:** BLF Agricultural Social Enterprise Programme has empowered local community towards self-sustainability and future expansion. More than 40% of the population lives below the poverty line surviving on income of less than £1 per day. Good health begins with good nutrition – fruits and vegetables are grown to feed patients and staff around the hospital grounds. A dedicated agricultural team is in place, working on introducing different varieties of crops plus adding to the agricultural biodiversity of the region. The second rice harvest took place in 2020 - BLF Agricare boosted a harvest of over 50 bags of rice.



## MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Our approach with our volunteers' base is to provide support totally free of charge for medical, social and educational needs. The SARS Covid-19 Pandemic has made travel for UK volunteers to be very risky. As a result, most of the work undertaken by the staff at YSH with regular Zoom and What's App trainings and meetings to guide them through the day to day running of the hospital. Our international teams in each department grows from strength to strength and have a vast heritage and wealth of experience and happily meet their own costs. Administrative costs are minimal, and donations received are used for our projects.

Our Trustee, Mr. Kiran Patel resigned from the charity due to personal reasons. He continues to support the Foundation as a volunteer. Mrs Anne Barry was appointed as a Trustee who brings her own specialist skills and experience in nursing to the Foundation.

Meetings by the Trustees continue regularly online to discuss existing projects and consider new plans for expanding the hospital to provide services and training in the various medical departments and constructing new units. An overall Eco Friendly Concept Plan is being drawn up which would include a Neo-natal Maternal Department, A Dental Department, An Eye Department, Pharmacy, Radiology Centre, full Laboratory Services and a Library.

Committees for each Department have been formed of volunteers to plan their department and teaching/training curriculum. They meet regularly and report to the Trustees.

The overall aim of the expansion program is to increase the service to the community and increase human resources within Sierra Leone. Demand continues to grow from patients arriving from further afield.

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE CHARITY**

With the commitment of our volunteers in the UK and our team in Yonibana, our work in Sierra Leone and UK continues to grow as we develop the infrastructure to manage the growing needs in Yoni Chiefdom and tackle the Covid-19 crisis.

**April/ May 2020:**

- ❖ Phase 2 of rice farming started in April with the preparation of the fields - with ploughing in progress yielding over 50 x 50kg bags of Rice.
- ❖ 2.6 Cookies Challenge taken up in London to show our appreciation to the NHS and Frontline workers. Over 3,200 cookies were baked and distributed to St Georges Hospital, Croydon University Hospital, St Christopher's Hospice, Croydon Social Services and Croydon Family Justice Centre.



- ❖ Draft Plans were drawn up by the Architect who visited Yonibana from the UK in May 2019.
- ❖ COVID 19: 2-days training took place at Yonibana Sai Hospital. The sessions were facilitated by Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF). Our appreciations to Mr Mohammed Suma and Mr Serge, who delivered the training.



- ❖ Tragic news early May that The Sierra Leone Deputy High Commissioner, Agnes Dugba Macauley, who was the powerhouse in the UK, Sierra Leone Embassy had passed away. We lost another strong, determined and dedicated woman. She will truly be missed. Agnes was always at the end of the phone, ready to help us to progress the work of BLF. Our prayers and deepest condolences at this time of grief. May her soul rest in peace.



- ❖ A Ziffit Declutter & Donate Campaign was started as many families continued to declutter their homes during the pandemic. This was a win-win situation for everyone as we received funds from volunteers decluttering their homes.

### **June/July 2020:**

- ❖ Our Volunteers continued with their fundraising efforts despite the lock down. Cynthia Kombe-Kauje, one of our BLF volunteers and front-line worker, took up the challenge to run 5K in under an hour and a half. Raising funds for Yonibana Sai Hospital.
- ❖ Better Lives Foundation concluded the official handing over of IPC Equipment to Yonibana communities. The Ward Councilor, Section Chief, town head men, youth leader and women's wing were among the invitees. The distribution of the donated equipment was carried out together with the Ward Councilor. Yonibana Sai Hospital Team reaching out to various villages and provided valuable support and guidance around Covid-19; following donations of the Veronica hand wash buckets and soap to 13 villages around the hospital.
- ❖ Social work teams continue to undertake outreach work, providing valuable support and guidance around Covid-19.

- ❖ Visit to Mile 88 Village ▪ Makrgbo Village ▪ Matopi Village ▪ Mabom Village ▪ Yonibana Town ▪ Mashagba Village ▪ Kulkos Village ▪ Romancha Village ▪ Market Place ▪ 3 police check points between the villages. Villagers appreciated the health talks and 85% of them had gained awareness around Covid-19.
- ❖ A further push to promote our Smile Amazon Campaign continued with funds being raised on a regular basis.



**August to December:**

- ❖ Yonibana Sai Hospital was given a fresh new look; cleaning and maintenance work was carried out around the compound.





- ❖ Our Engineer and the technical team were currently busy decorating and installing solar lights equipment. The compound is looking bright and secure at night, thanks to the UK team.
- ❖ BLF got more ECO Friendly. Solar panels installed to providing energy for the hospital and guest house.
- ❖ Staff and patients happy with bright lights day and night.



- ❖ LF will now be sending reports via DHIS2 (District Health Information Software) to District Medical Office, from Yonibana Sai Hospital. This marks the beginning of BLF being recognised as working with the Sierra Leone Government System.
- ❖ Sierra Leone Government has registered Yonibana Sai Hospital in the National Emergency Medical Service (NEMS). Ambulances are now bringing patients for us to admit and enabling us to transfer them to the district referral hospital.



- ❖ Over a 100 plus food parcels prepared and distributed to the most vulnerable in the surrounding villages and hot meal provided at Yonibana Sai Hospital today.



- ❖ BLF Launched the Holding Hands Project in the UK. With COVID-19 affecting all communities across the UK, we recognised the detrimental impact it has had on families, in particular children. We set up this project, which aims to:
  - Support local schools in our community
  - Provide food bank services to vulnerable children and their families
  - Heighten awareness of the need to support those without access to basic resources and necessities

**January to March 2021:**

- ❖ We partnered with British Association of Social Workers (BASW) and Human Values in Action Foundation (HViAF) in the UK for a webinar. We had an illustrious team of panel members and were joined by over 500 participants. The webinar focused on different types of harmful practices; the emotional impact on individuals; the impact on health and social care; where to direct individuals for support to development of good practice.



- ❖ Our brilliant Dental Team has been working hard to plan and build the first Dental Teaching Hospital in Sierra Leone.

- ❖ BLF Pharmacy team meeting planning their building and developing a curriculum for a Pharmacy Technicians course



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Funds received by the charity are mainly from donations and volunteer fund raising. Some medical equipment was received as donations from various friends and supporters of BLF.

Donations are used for the purchase of medical equipment, medicines, stipends, utilities and other expenses related to the hospital. This includes food and transport for all the volunteers and patients treated and charges made by referral hospitals. Equipment (Solar Panels and Installations Costs) and Medicines make up the majority of the costs incurred by the charity in this accounting period. Solar Energy has created a savings from the generator & fuel costs compared to last year.

We continue to support two other charities in India – Rama Krishna Mission and Amba Trust.

Bank charges include all the processing fees for credit and debit cards, Virgin Money Giving, Western Union and Paypal charges. Competitors of Western Union were used to reduce the bank charges considerably lower and with better exchange rates.

## STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees are keeping proper records of its income and expenditure which disclose the actual financial position of the charity which comply with The Charities Act 1993.

**ACCOUNTANT**

The financial statements have been prepared by an independent accountant of the charity.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees  
**BETTER LIVES FOUNDATION**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Devi Patel', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Mrs. Devi Patel  
20<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**BETTER LIVES FOUNDATION**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED**

**31st MARCH,2021**

**INCOMING RESOURCES**

Voluntary Donations	50802	
Event Costs	0	
LOANS	0	
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	9289	
Bank Deposit Interest	<u>1</u>	

**60092**

**TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD**

**3399**

**63491**

**RESOURCES EXPENDED**

Hospital Building Costs 908

**Charitable Activities**

Medical Camps-	Equipment & Accessories	15818	
	Medicenes & Drugs	13032	
	Air Freight	640	
	Travel & Subsistence	6302	
	Generator & Fuel Costs	303	
	Volunteer Wages Local	<u>9978</u>	

**46073**

Other Charities Donations 5187

School Fees and Sponsored Education Costs 3648

Liability Insurance 102

Telephone 1333

Printing & Stationery 1359

Repairs & Maintenance 541

Sundry Expenses 416

HMRC-Payments 0

Subscriptins 202

Bank Charges 180

**59949**

**TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD**

**3542**

**REPRESENTED BY:-**

**HSBC & METRO BANK ACCOUNT**

Deposit Account	9	
Current Account	515	
Cash In Hand	<u>3018</u>	

**3542**

The above Financial Statement have been prepared from the records and explanations and information furnished by the Trustees and are certified to be in accordance therewith.

Suryakant R.Patel  
Accountant & Auditor  
Jetta House, Suite J003  
15-16 Westfield Lane  
Harrow, Middlesex  
HA3 9ED



1st December,2021

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