

# BFSS

**BRITISH & FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY**  
Educational Opportunity for All



## **THE IMPACT OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY GRANTS**

Sixth report and analysis based on data received in 2020



**2020 PROJECTS**

BFSS Occasional Publication

---

# **THE IMPACT OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY GRANTS**

---

**Sixth report and analysis based on data received in 2020**

---

## 2020 IMPACT DATA

**30** completed projects

**15** countries in Africa, Asia, South America and the UK

**£488,869** in grant funding for their final year

**20** projects focused on inclusion or improving the quality of life of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people

**9** projects focused on employability and work skills

**5** projects focused on support for Looked after Children and Young Carers in the UK

**113,202** beneficiaries

**42,926** young people's lives and education directly impacted

**2,317** teachers, head teachers and teaching assistants' quality of work impacted

**67,959** indirect beneficiaries such as parents, siblings, and community member

---

ANALYSIS OF GRANTS REPORTED ON 2019 CAN BE FOUND AT:  
[HTTPS://BFSS.ORG.UK/PUBLICATIONS/](https://bfss.org.uk/publications/)

# THE IMPACT OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY GRANTS

## Sixth report and analysis based on data received in 2020

---

### FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce the sixth BFSS annual impact report, in which Professor Joy Palmer Cooper has analysed the monitoring reports of all the projects that came to an end during the calendar year 2020.

This year 30 final reports were received and sharing this analysis demonstrates the BFSS's continuing commitment to transparency and to demonstrating the Society's public benefit. This report also supports our goal of building capacity among grant applicants by sharing best practice and the outcomes of our work as a grant-giving charity.

The past year has been unique as the Covid-19 pandemic had a serious impact on roll out of projects, causing disruption and delays. Despite that charities have adapted to ensure their work continues to transform the lives of disadvantaged children in the UK and around the world. It makes the final completion of many projects all the more impressive as it often involved rapid innovation, including switching to community-based or online teaching after schools were forced to close around the world.

Benefits reported this year are spread across 15 countries to more than 42,000 young people, 2,300 teachers and 67,000 indirect beneficiaries in families and communities whose lives have been improved as a result of grants from the BFSS. In years to come these projects will continue to bring benefit to the lives of countless more people.

More than two-thirds of the projects reported this year focused on inclusion or improving the quality of life of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, which is an area we are increasingly encouraging grantees to prioritise. Employability and work skills were a key area. In the UK five completed projects supported looked after children and young carers. Among the many projects covering school construction or refurbishment and the provision of books and resources, are some that continue to focus on the very basics of health and well-being that contribute so much to improved school attendance and educational progress, including sanitation and good hygiene.

The Society's thanks are due to the BFSS Vice Chair and Chair of Grants Committee, Professor Joy Palmer Cooper, for the months of time spent reviewing the reports and compiling the publication. They are also due to members of our Grants Committee for their diligence as lead trustees on grant applications we receive and to the ongoing relationships with the charities we support.

Finally, our thanks go to the charities themselves whose dedication as professionals or volunteers improves the lives of young people and the communities in which they live.



**Rt Hon David Lammy**  
President, BFSS  
April 2021

## INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

It is now six years since I was first invited to analyse and compile an overview of the reporting of our projects over a period of twelve months. As the years have gone by, the emerging data have been both enlightening and informative, revealing many consistent trends as well as developing themes. The past year however has most certainly been a 'year with a difference' – the year that the Covid-19 pandemic spread around our world at terrifying pace, causing chaos and havoc as it impacted on individuals and societies. The majority of the Final Reports I have

read over the past year have detailed the serious impact of the pandemic upon roll out of projects and this is a subject to which we will return in this report.

So, here we are, still in the grip of the global pandemic, reflecting on the Society's impact over the past year in the sixth in the series of BFSS Occasional Publications that focusses on an overview of reported impact of grants finalised over a period of twelve months. The publication derives from an analysis of the Final Reports submitted to us by grant holders which were received in the twelve months concluding on 31st December 2020. Thirty Final



Refurbished Building (Classrooms in the Clouds)

Reports were received, which compares with 25 in 2019, 33 in 2018, 36 in 2017, 27 in 2016 and 30 in 2015.

The 30 reports have once again provided a wealth of data, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. This publication, as with previous ones in the series, can only provide a glimpse into the varied and significant contributions that have been made by the charities the BFSS has supported. Despite the enormous challenges provided by Covid-19 in many locations, the fundamental message conveyed by the reports is that our grants have enabled charities to conduct projects which have

made a huge impact on the lives of individual young people, teachers, parents, and whole communities here in the UK and around the world.

Final reports are essentially about the presentation of evidence which shows that the project's intended outcomes and outputs have been achieved. Such evidence is crucial in establishing the success and integrity of any individual project. The evidence presented in written and visual forms also enables our understanding of ways in which BFSS funded projects may impact on achievement, on quality of learning environments, on overcoming barriers to education, and on improving the quality of life within a community. Such understanding is transferable, and it is hoped that the evidence presented here may inform and inspire projects of the future.

Each final report contains quantitative data as required by the Society's Grants Committee, and as in previous publications in this series this has enabled statistical summaries to be provided of such measures as number of direct and indirect beneficiaries, number of tangible contributions of buildings and items of equipment, measurable impact on attainment and so on. Quantifiable impact upon educational provision and achievement is a vital measure and one which we expect all grant recipients to report on. Alongside such statistical data, the Final Reports illuminate a wealth of qualitative impacts and achievements which only words and images can portray. This publication attempts to explore and convey an overview of such unquantifiable changes that have been made on the lives of individuals and of whole communities as a result of our supported projects.

The 30 Final Reports that were submitted in 2020 were in receipt of a total of £488,869 in grant funding from the BFSS over the period of twelve months being reviewed. This compares with the figures of £454,635, £516,216, £495,475, £451,153, and £424,747 in the five previous years, demonstrating general consistency in overall funding levels. For clarification, the grants and beneficiaries here discussed relate to one year (the final year) of funding received by the projects whose reports were submitted between 1st January 2020 and 31st December 2020. Hence the figures do not represent the full grant support given to multi-year projects which ended during this period. For such projects, data relevant to the final year have been extracted in order that valid comparability of data and impact over the period may be achieved.



---

## STATISTICS OF IMPACT ON BENEFICIARIES

Looking first at the quantitative data supplied by the Reports, we note that in total the 30 projects made a direct impact on the education and lives of 42,926 young people; on the quality of work and commitment of 2,317 teachers, head teachers and teaching assistants; and on some 67,959 indirect beneficiaries, for example, parents, siblings, and community members. The grand total of these beneficiaries is 113,202. This already significant figure must be regarded as a substantiated baseline, but in reality it is considerably greater given that several of the reports do not quantify indirect beneficiaries but simply say such things as ‘the whole community’ will benefit or ‘wider families’ or ‘many thousands’ and so on. Where no precise figures have been provided, these generalisations are not included in the statistical summary. Overall, the figures are very much in line with those of the previous few years and it can be concluded that without doubt, factoring in the undisclosed figures, grants over a twelve months’ period contributed to the improvement of educational provision and quality, opportunity and overall quality of life for around a quarter of a million individuals around the globe.

The beneficiaries of the 30 grants are located in 15 countries of the world (compared to 18 in 2019) namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Lebanon, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Peru, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, United Kingdom and Zambia. Four of these countries were the location of more than one project and we note a significant increase in reporting from UK based projects (11 compared to 2 in 2019) The overall distribution of project locations is provided in Appendix 1.

---

## SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF PROJECTS

The general approach to reporting used in this publication is the same as that used in previous years and commences with an overview of the major areas of support which BFSS funding contributed to. Projects which have focused on construction of classrooms, refurbishments of unfit-for-purpose accommodation and the provision of tangible items of equipment have featured significantly this year,

as has the provision of teacher training courses and teacher support. These may be regarded as ‘basics’ which Grants Committee generally supports each year. Alongside such regular aspects of provision, in 2020 we also see major emphases on inclusion, redressing inequalities, removing barriers to education, changing attitudes and values within communities towards the education of girls and children with disabilities, and improving the overall quality of life for disadvantaged and ‘at risk’ young people. Such themes featured very strongly in our last report and they most certainly continue to be at the forefront of endeavours. Examples discussed in the forthcoming pages bring into focus the hugely impressive achievements made in these various categories of engagement.

**Construction Projects**, including significant refurbishments, lay at the heart of 8 Reports. Such projects included the construction of a school building for displaced infant and primary age children on the border of South Sudan and Uganda; the building of 6 classrooms, a school office and a block of 5 toilets in the Democratic Republic of Congo; the construction of 3 classrooms in Tanzania and 4 in Rwanda; refurbishment of classrooms and provision of 6 new ones built to earthquake resistant standards with substantial retaining walls in Nepal; a significant library refurbishment project in Tanzania and a new room extension at a centre in Lebanon which supports refugee children from Syria and Lebanon.

Much needed gender-segregated toilets and washing facilities were supplied in various locations including 12 drainable latrines in Uganda, 5 toilets in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and gender-friendly toilets in Nepal. All such additions to sites had significant influence on health, hygiene and attendance of pupils and teachers. Construction and site-enhancement projects often included building and grounds-related items including rainwater harvesting systems, drainage, water tanks, solar power facilities and electric generators. An outdoor play area was constructed in association with building work in Nepal and new classrooms were prepared for the arrival of electricity in Tanzania. School security and provision of housing for teachers significantly influenced both pupil and teacher attendance and retention when provided.

**Classroom-related equipment and basic educational resources** were once again provided in abundance. Several reports do not quantify such provision, but we know that we supported the acquisition of over 500 desks, benches and chairs for pupils



and teachers; over 8,000 exercise books and basic stationery items; over 4,000 educational toys and games, creative resources and items of sports and play equipment; numerous whiteboards, blackboards and flip charts; bookshelves, cupboards, 'clever touch' screens, storage shelves and laminators; plus thousands of other items of classroom consumables

of gaining employment. In Tanzania, a project aimed to integrate ICT into the curriculum with the aim of enhancing learning. Our grant provided several computers which were put to maximum and effective use, and it was soon realised by the teachers that ICT is a good and effective catalyst to promote reading and on-line learning.



New equipped library (READ International)

such as paper, pencils and pens. School uniforms, shoes and bags which are essential for school attendance were provided for children living in urban poverty in Nepal in order to encourage out of school and 'at risk' children into education, and in another location in Nepal, provision of sets of school uniforms and bags was fundamental to the aim of increasing the number of girls attending school. Carpets and cushions enhanced libraries and safe learning spaces for children with complex needs in Lebanon and another interesting acquisition was a minibus for transporting children with hearing loss, about which more will be said later.

**Science, Information Technology and Digital Learning** featured in several projects. For example, in Peru, our grant provided 14 computers, a printer, computer desks and numerous technology-related resources. As a result of gaining ICT skills, together with maths, literacy and vocational support, young people from indigenous communities in the Andes now have significantly enhanced chances

**Libraries and books** always feature in many final reports as being the basis for educational development. The 2020 reports confirm that over 30,000 text and reading books were purchased with grant support, with numerous other publications that were not quantified. Such printed books were in addition to audio books, bookshelves, library desks, floor mats and book boxes. Various examples could be provided of the immense power of reading and appreciation of the written word in enabling confidence and capability, not only in literacy but across the curriculum.

A significant library refurbishment project carried out in Tanzania combined the use of ICT to enhance learning with the use of the library and appropriate professional development of teachers. Results included improved attitudes towards reading and the importance of learning, maximum use of on-line resources and an appreciation of the pleasure of self-reading. A reading club was established within the school and the number of library attendees increased

by 60% monthly after the library refurbishment. Over half of the students improved reading comprehension and showed a much greater desire to read books and engage with on-line learning.

In Uganda, a project which aimed to improve educational attainment in the primary grades supplied large numbers of textbooks, teachers' guides and mobile libraries for storage to 59 schools. Accompanied by appropriate teacher training this provision resulted in sustained increase in reading abilities of children throughout the lower grades in school.

**The training of teachers** underpinned the success of a good number of projects. Indeed, half of the reports analysed convey the significance of training programmes, some of which were of a general nature, staged with the aim of improving the quality of education and assessment of progress, whilst others were subject or 'theme' specific. An example in the former category lies in Bangladesh where the project was concerned with 'doorstep learning', namely providing support for the development of literacy, numeracy and life-skills for children working in domestic settings. Children engaged in child labour in homes were supported in the domestic setting and were encouraged to enrol in school. Teachers received intensive training on children's behaviour management, classroom management, teaching methodology, active learning, and counselling. In Myanmar, where a programme focused on students from rural villages who had previously failed exams, an 'education for all' project incorporated teacher training in modern teaching methodologies. In Rwanda, lead teachers were trained in promoting a competence-based curriculum. In Tanzania, teachers, head teachers and directors of studies were trained in ICT methodologies and pedagogical skills; also, in conducting assessments and evaluation, whilst in Uganda, training focused on general methods of improving learning and educational attainment in the primary years.

A final example of general teacher training comes from Cambodia where a 'quality teaching' programme aims to improve the quality of teaching in rural primary schools. Here, teachers have completed classroom management workshops plus various subject specific workshops and training on mentoring.

Other initiatives for training of teachers and adults involved in education and care of young people had a specific focus. For example, in Zambia teachers

were trained in sign language in association with a project aiming to improve inclusion and quality of education for children with hearing loss, and in Nepal teachers were trained to be better equipped for working with out of school, at risk and working children. In 7 Local Authorities in the UK, 'Education Champions' were trained to support their task of improving the education of fostered, children whilst in Malawi formal training was given for care-givers who worked with children in community-based child-care centres. Teachers in Uganda attended training on menstrual health, hygiene, and sanitation management. In London, teaching staff aiming to improve educational outcomes and prevent criminality in 'at risk' participants were supported through training workshops on emotional resilience, whilst in Nottingham, Ealing and Newcastle, volunteers working with young children from marginalised and vulnerable families were trained, deployed, and supported.

Such is the variety and scope of training programmes that have taken place around the globe; all with the basic aim of improving access to good quality education and many with the intention of addressing inclusion; working with children with disabilities and other forms of disadvantage. Such courses often aimed to redress inequalities in communities, change attitudes to disadvantage and disability and overcome barriers to education. Reports have provided numerous examples of how such training has brought about fundamental changes in educational quality, values and attitudes, many of which will be elaborated on in sections of this report which follow.



Enjoyment in the Classroom (Hitchin British Schools Trust)

**Courses and specific programmes** featured in around half of the 2020 Reports and, as with previous years' programmes, show a very discernible emphasis on supporting those living with disadvantage, disability, and lack of equal opportunity for education. Of those planned to support such themes, a splendid example lies here in the UK (London and the south east) where a support programme assists secondary age pupils typically from disadvantaged backgrounds including Looked After Children and Young Carers. The programme's personal development work improves young people's confidence, resilience, and access to successful futures. It challenges young people to move beyond their comfort zones and realise their potential. Coaches support students to take responsibility for their own development, explore career options, develop key life skills, and engage in community action projects which help to develop citizenship. Of the students who participated in the year being reported on, 85% said that they feel more prepared for their future and have a better idea about future opportunities available to them. Along similar lines, in Bradford UK a support package aims to assist young Looked After Children who are moving from Primary to Secondary schools. The package aims to avoid the 'dip' within the children's wellbeing and progress regularly seen in vulnerable young people throughout Year 7 in school. All of the young people supported showed enhancement of wellbeing and increased attendance in school.

Returning to London, groups of 'at risk' participants benefitted from a programme designed to improve educational outcomes and prevent criminality through the delivery of emotional resilience workshops. Many participants had criminal convictions (35% had 10 or more) and 56% had left mainstream education before the age of 16. After support offered by the programme, three quarters of attendees felt more positive about their futures. They had a reduced risk of engaging in violence and were less likely to carry knives.

In other locations in the UK (Nottingham, Ealing, and Newcastle), a parent/child programme works with marginalised and vulnerable families who have children aged two to four years. Volunteers visit the homes of such families and provide developmentally appropriate books and educational toys with the aim of permanently transforming the home learning environment. Results are significantly improved parent-child interactions and increased motivation and ability of parents to engage with their young children's learning.

Further afield in Peru, young people from indigenous communities in the Andes attended vocational training courses, received individual tutor sessions offering academic and personal support, and they engaged in numerous cultural activities and workshops. The students completed life plans and were prepared to move forwards on their chosen and appropriate pathways into employment. In Colombia, a splendid project aims to improve Afro-Colombian children's access to quality ethno-education. Intergenerational activities bring together parents, community elders, teachers and children in a shared space which allows children to learn about their Afro-Colombian heritage, cultural values and rights, with a strong emphasis on the environment. Children engaging with this programme now deliver messages of bringing peace rather than conflict to their homes and communities.

The above are just some examples of programmes we have supported in the UK and further afield which lie outside the remit of formal schooling but nevertheless have significant impact on educational opportunity and achievement, and indeed for the quality of life of participants. Examples of impact of these programmes and of other aspects of the scope of BFSS support are explored in greater detail in the ensuing discussion.

---

## ANALYSING IMPACT

The analysis of overall impact of the 30 projects reported on in 2020 now follows the same framework as that which has been employed in the previous Impact Reports, allowing for comparisons to be made as the years go by and the cumulative evidence of impact to be established. This analysis focuses on four general areas of impact, namely impact on educational standards and pupils' levels of attainment, impact on the general quality of the learning environment, impact on the wider community of the project's location, and impact on the overall quality of life of the individuals concerned. These areas of course overlap and are inter-related. They encompass elements which are clearly observable, measurable and quantifiable; but also, complex qualitative elements that are in so many instances highly influential, indeed powerful, yet difficult to define. As has been said before, reading the various final reports leaves one with a sense of the ineffability of so much that is being achieved and it is hoped that this sense is conveyed in



Helping to Walk (Edinburgh Direct Aid)

the ensuing discussion which provides examples of the interlinked strands of impact.

### **Impact on educational standards and pupils' levels of attainment.**

*75% of young people who have been supported increased school attendance in Year 7 and 78% made better than expected progress*

All charities providing reports are required to address the question of attainment and how our grant has impacted on progress and standards. Responses range from general indications of improvements, through to assessment and evaluation as 'works in progress'. Some give statistical evidence of impact. Examples from the 2020 reports include the following:

- 'Significantly better attainment because of better attendance by girls' (Uganda after construction of genders segregated latrines and teacher training on hygiene management.)
- '75% of young people who have been supported increased school attendance in Year 7 and 78% made better than expected progress' (UK Bradford after support package for vulnerable young people moving from Primary to Secondary schools.)
- 'Statistically significant increase in independence, social co-operation, task orientation, cognitive ability and emotional stability' (UK Nottingham, Ealing and Newcastle after delivering of a programme to support marginalised and vulnerable families.)
- 'Improved attainment in maths, reading and English

- over existing baseline assessments' (Uganda after new school building was constructed.)
- '90% of participating children doubled expected progress in accuracy and comprehension. 100% reduced the gap between reading and chronological ages' (UK Hull and East Riding after support for Children in Care.)
- 'Pass rate of students from the project was three times higher than that achieved by the local government school and matched those of schools in major urban areas' (Myanmar after programme focussing on students who had previously failed exams in Rural villages.)
- '80% of children show improvement in early childhood development outcomes including literacy and numeracy' (Malawi after improvement of education in child-care centres.)
- '97% of students passed their final examinations at the end of last academic year' (Nepal after programme of interventions for children living in urban poverty and working children.)
- 'Student attainment is significantly up against baseline results and a lower number of students are failing tests' (Cambodia after programme to improve quality of teaching in rural primary schools.)

Many more 'snapshots' could be provided but suffice to say that the reports as a whole convey a tremendous story of positive improvements, some backed up by detailed statistics, of the impact of support and interventions on attainment and school progress.

### **Impact on the quality of the learning environment**

As the first section of this report indicates, the scope of interventions designed to improve the quality of the learning environment supported by our grants includes new and refurbished buildings, teacher training, books, computers, classroom equipment and improved general facilities. Such enhancements are clearly linked to improvement in educational standards, improved levels of attainment, recruitment into mainstream schools of individuals who might otherwise not have access to education, and retention of both students and staff. Improvement in quality of the learning environment has had far reaching effect in many locations.

In Colombia, in a project designed to improve Afro-Colombian children's access to quality ethno-education, teachers worked hard to create environments that are more conducive to

learning than in the past. They gained skills both individually and as a team to support children in increasingly peaceful co-existence within schools. The teachers gained pedagogical skills relating to children's rights, ethno-education, and youth leadership and aside from the huge gains in students' commitment because of improved learning environments, they themselves found their work more rewarding and are retained. In Lebanon, improved facilities and specialised equipment were provided for refugee young people from Syria and Lebanon with complex needs. The new room extension to the support centre with its carpets, cushions, appropriate furniture and equipment gave a much-needed change of scene for the youngsters from living in crowded family tents.

In Bradford, UK, an innovative and successful project uses the motor vehicle industry to engage young people and inspire learning. A new fully functioning classroom was set up complete with smartboards, interactive displays, and laptops. Learners come from a background of being disengaged with education and this new learning environment has enabled accelerated learning embracing vocational and functional skills, science, art, physical education, personal and social development, and ICT. It uses the motor vehicle industry setting to inspire and engage individual progression.

Where new classrooms were constructed in Tanzania, the students are feeling far more comfortable and the environment is more conducive to learning. Classrooms are less hot, and the students are no longer squashed close together in distressing fashion. There are enough desks for all; blackboards are clean and can be seen and the classrooms are prepared for the arrival of electricity when the village is connected to supply. Very importantly, the school is now able to source and retain high quality teachers.

Similarly, in Rwanda, the provision of new classrooms has transformed the learning environment to one generating motivation and enthusiasm to learn and to teach. The classrooms have attractive and effective teaching aids and better seating arrangements. The trained teachers now employ much better classroom management, better lesson planning and effective use of group work now that space permits. We hear of the new enthusiasm and determination of teachers and their desire to develop further professional skills.

Numerous other examples could be provided of how the provision of basic resources including desks, text and exercise books, libraries and



Task in Hand (Yes Futures)

sanitation have transformed attitudes towards being in school and towards learning. Something as simple as the provision of lighting may extend teaching hours, leading to enhanced attainment.

Improvements in numerous locations have led to teachers feeling more professional and confident. The Cambodia based project which aimed to improve the quality of teaching in rural primary schools reports the use of a range of strategies to create a stimulating learning environment. Mentors observe, support, and improve teaching delivery; an effective strategy for improving confidence and skills. Teachers are now more able to plan and deliver effective programmes and have greatly increased conceptual and technical knowledge in mathematics and general pedagogy. We see several examples of situations in which teachers are creating support networks, sharing good practices, and articulating changes to their thinking and approach to the job. In many locations, the provision of resources for learning alongside teacher training, has led to significant improvement in classroom management, improved morale, child-centred learning, and the elimination of corporal punishment. As was the case last year, it is evident that better equipped and trained

teachers are realising the concept of their own life-long learning and development. In various reports we read of trained teachers volunteering to network and cascade their knowledge to others.

Acquiring some desks, or a toilet, or a bookshelf, may seem so basic, yet we are aware of so many situations wherein teachers' attitudes, morale and life-long commitment have been transformed for the better by the provision of space, the fundamental necessities of the job, and training. The transformation of learning environments is one of the most impressive yet immeasurable aspects of what has been achieved.

### Impact on the wider community

Every year this publication conveys an exceedingly powerful message to readers, which is that individual projects have had greatly beneficial impacts on the wider community in which they are based. In some instances, this is by design, while in others, an unintended yet significant added value lies in community benefit. Like so much of this reported analysis, community benefits are generally unquantifiable, yet may be incredibly important in the long term.

Mirroring the analysis that has been used previously, we can identify three clusters or categories of impact on the community, namely the concept of a school as a 'hub' for community use; specific benefits impacting on community members as a result of the project; and a shift in community attitudes and values deriving from the project. Let us look at each of these categories with powerful examples of each.

A project in Uganda, where a school building was constructed for displaced infant and primary age children on the border of South Sudan and Uganda serves as a good example of a **school as a community hub**. From the outset there has been full community participation in the project. The new building will be used for community activities after school hours including a sewing workshop for local people with disabilities and the making of school uniforms. Furthermore, the school borehole serves as a source of fresh water for the whole community.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, our grant supported the construction of 6 classrooms, a school office, and a toilet block. This entire project emanated from the local population who said their school needed to be rebuilt and mobilised community leaders as well as providing local building materials. Messages from the local people include

*“Life in our village is improving.... our area is changing....development is coming to us.....this will give hope to the community that things are getting better,”*

conveying such positive spirit. The project has had a major impact on the general quality of life in the village and neighbouring villages; the school is a hub at the heart of the community and will be used for a diverse range of activities including immunisations, nutrition campaigns, elections, and community celebrations.

A project in Nepal focused on increasing the number of girls attending school by embracing a 'whole community' approach. Household surveys were undertaken with follow up visits and unlimited communication with parents and care givers. When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, radio broadcasts went out to the whole community giving information on physical and mental well-being and advertising the fact that school hand-washing facilities are fully open for community use. The whole community 'hub' has successfully served an important educational facility for all and achieved its aim of bringing more girls into mainstream schooling, assisted by the provision of school uniforms, bags, textbooks, notebooks, and pencils.

The vital importance of developing the closest possible links with the community may also be seen in a project carried out in Cornwall, UK which aimed to improve community cohesion and increase the effectiveness of targeted learning interventions for Gypsy and Traveller pupils and children learning English as an additional language. Parents are included in school trips and activities and encouraged in every way possible to develop an understanding of why school is so important. As an integral part of this inclusive project, books were provided to help support the cultural awareness of Gypsy, Traveller and EAL families and indeed of the community in its entirety. Similarly, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, a community-driven project aims to support the children of Somali refugee and migrant families who are struggling in mainstream schools, through Saturday classes. Children now engage with learning and are more confident. They have gained respect for peers and adults as well as planning skills and life skills. Wider community benefits are significant. Poverty and lack of opportunity in disadvantaged families are major issues and such parents are supported whilst



Engagement with Learning (Kidasha)

older residents come to the school to hear stories and learn about history and culture. Young people are given employment advice and the project is also linked to the local crime panel through which talks are given to young people with their families which discourage participation in criminal activity. As a whole the support offered serves as an effective driver of community cohesion and the project networks closely with local refugee community organisations and the local council.

Aside from uniting community members with a common purpose as the above examples illustrate, there are numerous **specific community benefits** which derive from projects. For example, in the school construction project in Tanzania, supplies were derived from local business owners. Local people were employed at all stages in the work, including manual labourers, bricklayers, plasterers, window-makers, painters, and the construction manager. The desks for the school were made by local carpenters. The project developed a tremendous sense of pride and ownership, and of course, positive feelings towards the competency of the school.

In the Bangladesh-based project focusing on the development of literacy, numeracy and life skills for children working in domestic settings, whole families

benefitted from skill development opportunities. For example, free small loans were given to families to start small businesses such as poultry rearing, establishing a tea stall, selling fish and goat rearing. Benefits also accompanied the acquisition of skills. One family was supported in obtaining a Senior Citizen's Allowance whilst another was helped to gain a Disability Allowance for a sibling of a child working in another home. Birth certificates were processed for children and siblings and much advice was given on sustaining family well-being.

In the project based in Cornwall, parents received various specific benefits including housing advice, school transport, food vouchers and general 'life advice' and emotional support. Similarly, in Nottingham, Ealing and Newcastle, benefits extended beyond the young children of marginalised and vulnerable families. The impact extended on siblings and the wider family groups and parents were helped in their learning of English when this was a second language.

Other specific community benefits lie in the areas of health and wellbeing and these will be addressed within the discussion on impacts on the overall quality of life derived from educational interventions which follows.



A Very Happy Class (Health and Hope)

**A shift in community attitudes and values towards education** is the third of the clusters of impact on whole communities. This area of impact is vitally important as it carries such long-term implications. Whilst inextricably entwined with impacts on the general quality of life of individuals, it is interesting first to provide but a few of the many powerful examples reported on in 2020 of how whole community attitudes and values have changed following project interventions.

It is not an exaggeration to say that due to a shift in community attitudes towards education as result of a BFSS funded project, thousands of children are now encouraged to attend school where before the project unfolded, they would otherwise not have done so. This applies to the education of girls and to the inclusion of disabled and otherwise vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in school.

Something as basic as engaging the local community in the construction of new and well-equipped classrooms in Tanzania resulted in significantly changed attitudes towards the competency of the school and the desire to send children there for education.

In Zambia, the project which aimed to improve inclusion and quality of education for children

with hearing loss resulted in a huge improvement in attitudes of parents and community members towards children with such challenges. Parents have become motivated to help with after-school clubs, to volunteer in other ways and to improve their own sign language skills. Meanwhile in Uganda, where latrines were constructed in a school and training delivered on menstrual health, hygiene, and sanitation management, we see significantly higher rates of attainment because girls are now attending school. A major attitude shift has occurred so parents no longer believe that they must keep their daughters at home for several days each month and they have come to appreciate the value of full-time attendance.

Attitudes towards the attendance of girls also changed dramatically in Nepal after households were surveyed and visited and girls were provided with uniforms, bags, textbooks, and stationery. These visits were in conjunction with a clear focus on whole community support which included provision of hand-washing facilities and radio broadcasts of benefit to all. The value of girls' education is now appreciated, and it is recognised that educated girls as well as boys may bring increased prosperity to the community in the longer term. It has brought about improved life chances for the girls themselves and their own future families.



The Myanmar project focusing on students who had previously failed exams in rural villages resulted in exam pass rates which matched those of schools in major urban areas and led to a large shift in parental attitudes towards education. Furthermore, the students were committed to their studies and had heightened desires to return to their communities to help the local people.

The Cornwall based project to support Gypsy, Traveller and EAL children resulted in a similar significant shift in attitudes. Some parents who had removed children from school reintegrated them and there was a discernible change in levels of confidence within the community and social integration of all children. In part this was brought about by an inclusive approach to extra-curricular activities such as clubs, sports, football teams and school outings.

In Nepal, a school saw complete refurbishment of two classrooms plus the addition of six new ones, all complete with desks, classroom furniture and resources, an outdoor play area, gender friendly toilets and clean drinking water. Furthermore, the classrooms were constructed to earthquake resistant standards in this area so prone to natural disasters. These improvements also created a separate child-friendly learning space for early years children. The impact on community attitudes was significant. Parents could see and feel the improvements in their children's education, and this led to an enhanced sense of trust in the school and teaching staff.

Attitudinal change also lies at the heart of the UK project which delivers parent/child programmes for young people aged between two and four years in marginalised and vulnerable families. As previously mentioned, volunteers have visited homes and provided books, educational toys, and a wealth of support for improving parent-child interactions. Home environments have been transformed into ones that have positive attitudes towards learning. It is reported that in the children we see statistically significant increases in social co-operation, cognitive ability, emotional stability, and independence. In parents we see motivation and ability to engage with teaching their children which were previously lacking. With such change of attitude towards learning at home it is highly likely that home environments will be permanently transformed into spaces where education is understood and appreciated.

All the above examples show instances where interventions have resulted in attitudinal changes which have impacted on school attendance



Mechanic at Work (J.A.M.E.S.)

and willingness to engage with education. Aside from such change in parents' thinking it should also be highlighted that we see various instances where young people themselves have developed changed attitudes towards, for example, girls in school and changed perception of individuals with developmental disabilities or other forms of vulnerability.

Other reported changes in attitude lie in matters relating to parenting and community held traditions and taboos that have been challenged. Attitudes towards parenting techniques have changed as a result of interventions in deprived villages in the Andes where there has been a discernible reduction in teenage pregnancy rates. Similarly, in Bangladesh, an awareness campaign against child-marriage has met with some success when combined with a substantial programme focusing on the needs of children working in domestic settings. In Uganda, the latrine project previously mentioned involved community dialogues to discuss drop-out causes such as early marriage, also myths and taboos about menstruation. Such meetings met with success, and a community committee was established to encourage attendance of girls and discourage belief in menstrual myths and taboos.

In Nepal, project staff focussed on equality of education for those living in urban poverty; also, out-of-school children, working children and



Tanya at her employment (UK Bangladesh Education Trust)

adolescents at risk of drop-out. Parent support groups and home visits were initiated, and parents were exposed to local service providers with the aim of improving parenting. Door to door campaigns were conducted to raise awareness of the dangers of child labour and discourage engagement with such practice. Such campaigns reached both employers and community members, and constant efforts are made to improve home environments, discourage drop-out, and encourage support for education.

Many projects have led to enhanced community understanding that all children have a right to education and that families may receive appropriate support and guidance rather than fall back on exclusion or child labour. So, in summary, the reports demonstrate ample evidence of the transformation of beliefs and practices towards the education of girls, the disadvantaged, those 'at risk' and the vulnerable. Such change of attitudes and practices is closely linked to the final area of impact to be explored, that of general wellbeing and quality of life.

### Impact on the overall quality of life

We can be left in no doubt about the degree of transformation in wellbeing that has been brought about as a result of educational interventions.

Powerful evidence of impact on the overall quality of life sourced from the final reports is unquantifiable yet based on reliable portrayal of reality. Interventions such as the construction of new classrooms, home visits or even a bus (story of the bus to be told below) can have far-reaching consequences, and whole communities may be mobilised into life-changing behaviours. Four clusters of impact on overall life quality have been identified, which will be explored with examples of each.

The first cluster of impact is on **disadvantaged, disabled, abused, vulnerable and otherwise 'at risk'** young people, and is linked closely to the evidence provided above about changing attitudes towards such individuals. Major shifts in attitudes and cultural norms have impacted significantly on the life quality of countless individuals and project interventions have transformed the well-being of so many.

The provision of a bus in The Gambia has certainly effected such transformation. In the community concerned, deaf children either stayed away from school or engaged in hazardous hitch-hiking in order to get there. So, our grant provided a much-needed minibus to transport deaf children from their homes to school. Parents are now fully engaged with the project and are contributing to

the costs of this vehicle known as the Janga Bus. Earlier in this report I referred to projects that had brought communities together as a 'hub' and one can sense such community cohesion here. The entire community turned out to welcome the arrival of Janga Bus and there is now a fully accepted awareness that deaf children should attend school and need to be cared for. Those who hitch-hiked now travel safely and those who remained at home are now enrolled in school.

Another project significantly improving the quality of life of children with hearing loss is located in Zambia where after school clubs improve inclusion and interaction between children with or without hearing loss. Sports equipment, arts and crafts materials and board games are all used so deaf children and those hearing can take part in activities together. Teachers have learnt sign language. Students are co-operating and are less aggressive towards their teachers and other learners. The report talks of greatly improved social development and it is clear that the children with hearing loss challenges are much happier with their experiences in education.

The quality of life for many children in Bangladesh has been transformed for the better by the 'doorstep learning' project which has addressed literacy, numeracy and life skills for children working in domestic settings. Participating children received parcels of essential hygiene items plus differentiated learning programmes to support their progress at the most appropriate level. Overall, the project had a significant impact on working children, their families and awareness raising. Some children enrolled in school whilst doing domestic work. Others left domestic work and returned to the family home. Serious matters associated with child labour including drug use, malnutrition and even torture were addressed. Children were often found to be tired, worried and depressed in poor working conditions; afflictions which the project was able to address in a good number of instances.

A similarly powerful set of interventions that transformed the lives of vulnerable young people is reported in Nepal where the project aimed to provide quality education for children living in urban poverty, for out of school and 'at risk' children, for working children, and for adolescents at risk of dropping out of school. Various strategies were employed including interventions to improve home and workplace environments, the running of drop-in centres, delivery of non-formal education, workplace and home visits, parent support groups, parents'

exposure to local service providers and delivery of life skills education. Negotiations also took place with employers to reduce working hours so children could attend school and drop-in centres. Significant results included enhanced school attendance, improved confidence, acquisition of aspirations for the future and personal control over decision-making. Many of these young people attained control of their own lives and destiny for the first time.

A programme with similar success in the UK is that conducted in London intending to improve educational outcomes and prevent criminality in young 'at risk' people. It was mentioned earlier that many of the participants had previous criminal convictions and had left school before the age of sixteen. 45% of participants had depression or other anxiety issues and 48% were rough sleeping or in temporary accommodation. 23% had been in care. As a result of the programme, participants demonstrated increased confidence and emotional resilience and were better able to cope with setbacks. Most importantly they felt very much more positive about their futures and ability to cope with life. Five young men from disadvantaged backgrounds trained to be key mentors and completed AQA qualification in Leadership and Mentoring.

Elsewhere in the UK the delivery of the parent/child programme for young children from marginalised and vulnerable families as mentioned above, made a significant difference to the quality of life and future opportunities for the pre-school aged young people. As a result of interventions, they became more socially and emotionally ready for mainstream primary schools; they were better able to learn, to express themselves, to follow rules, to take turns, co-operate with others, listen, and respond. With cognitive readiness, curiosity for learning, and possession of expressive vocabulary and basic skills of numeracy and literacy, these young people were equipped for positive futures.

The second cluster of impact on the **overall quality of life** is that of **health-related benefits**. In Lebanon, Tanzania, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nepal, where adequate segregated toilets, hygienic washing facilities and/or fresh water were provided, school attendance improved and there was a reduction in absenteeism due to disease. Such provision has had a particularly impressive impact on the education of girls.

Some projects had a distinct focus on such matters as washing facilities, sanitation and

menstrual hygiene. For example, in Uganda, a sanitation and hygiene project impacted on over a thousand people. Gender segregated latrines, handwashing facilities and facilities for students with disabilities were established. Teachers were trained on menstrual health, hygiene and sanitation management and community engagement meetings were held to discuss such matters. Pupils gained knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and the overall results of this project included use of toilet paper, reduction of occurrences of defecation in the school grounds, awareness of the dangers associated with poor washing and sanitation practices, decrease in diarrheal diseases and stomach disorders and reduced staff and pupil absences.

The Bangladesh project previously mentioned had a significant impact on the health of child domestic workers. They were provided with food, soap, toothbrushes and paste, hair oil, nail cutters and deodorant. Medical treatment for some of the children was supported, and in some instances direct support was provided for malnutrition and drug use. In the Nepal project which supported 'at risk' young people, regular primary health care was provided in the drop-in centres and protection visits took place to help establish safer and healthier working environments.

Many of the supported refugee children from Syria and Lebanon who attended the centre we helped to extend and refurbish had very severe physical challenges. For example, some attending the centre have no sight, are amputees as a result of war wounds, have difficulty walking, or have autism. Help is provided at the centre for overcoming significant life hurdles such as amputation, blindness, and severe mental impairment. Assistance is provided for all medical needs within the capabilities of the staff and life skills such as dressing, eating, communicating and generally 'enjoying life' are improved.

The significance of nutrition also features in several locations linked to the impact this has on child health and educational achievement. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, school-based nutrition campaigns were rolled out as were immunisations, knowing that both impact on attendance and ultimately attainment. In Malawi, a programme focusing on improving pre-school education incorporated the provision of a daily meal of fortified porridge. Aside from the health benefits this served as a major incentive for parents to send children to the community based child-care centres.

A third cluster of impacts on the general quality of life may be identified as **psycho-social skills and attributes**. All of the projects cited above under the heading of impact on the quality of life of abused, vulnerable, disabled and 'at risk' young people, brought immense psychological and psycho-social benefits for the individuals concerned. So, let us take some examples from elsewhere.

In Peru, the young people from indigenous communities in the Andes growing up in extreme poverty engaged in personal development workshops and discussed such matters as sexuality and gender equality. They received psychological support sessions, completed personal life plans, and shared talks about their personal journeys. In the Hull and East Riding areas of the UK, Children in Care not only received academic support but also benefitted significantly from group social activities and out-of-school activities through which they were enabled to build social skills, confidence, and motivation for working as a team. Another project working in the UK with children from disadvantaged backgrounds including Looked After Children and Young Carers staged extra-curricular personal development programmes which improved confidence, resilience, self-awareness, and access to successful futures. The programme focusing on fostered children in seven authorities of the UK achieved not only success in promoting confidence in academic achievement but also enabled the children to achieve personal targets and widen their horizons relating to their future potential.

In Cornwall, the project which aims to improve community cohesion at a school which educates Gypsy and Traveller children achieved its intention. Children from such backgrounds gained in confidence and became far more socially integrated through participation in extra curricular activities including clubs, sports, and school trips. In several projects we see young people taking ownership of and responsibility towards their personal pathways out of disadvantage into employment and positive futures with immense psycho-social development. Such success is linked to our fourth and final cluster of life-changing impacts.

This final cluster is that of specific **wider life skills** that may be embedded in the project's objectives or may simply be a significant 'added value' to the intended outcomes.

The Afro-Colombian children in Colombia, helped to access quality ethno-education, live in conflict-



Happy Pupils (United World Schools)

affected communities and have grown up seeing that violence is a normal response to conflict. Here, intergenerational activities bring together parents, community elders, teachers, and the children. Such communication between generations helps both children and elders to understand and respect one another's role in protecting the land and the environment, and in promoting peace. The children planted around 1,200 different local fruit trees and chose the locations for planting which included a place previously used for mining activity and another a reclaimed landfill site. They named the trees as a way of keeping a close personal relationship with them. They have come to understand the cause and effect of mining pollution of the river which provides them with water and fish for food. The children have acquired vital life skills required for caring for themselves and for the natural environment and have begun to put these skills to use in their daily lives.

As mentioned previously, a project in Bradford uses the medium of the motor vehicle industry to engage young people and inspire learning. This endeavour joins up 'classroom and garage' through engagement with acquiring a range of life and trade skills. Learners come from a background of being disengaged with education and many of them develop completely changed attitudes to learning. Progression pathways are opened up into further education or employment. Some go on to study mechanical engineering or

motor mechanics and others gain apprenticeships in the motor industry. Aside from skills specific to motor vehicle qualifications, students learn a range of important life skills through sessions on first aid, refugee awareness, cyber safety, knife crime and gangs, and train and rail safety.

In Hertfordshire, UK, young volunteers are recruited and trained to deliver informal learning activities for young children aged four to eleven years in a museum learning environment. In so doing, the volunteer youngsters practice interpersonal skills as they devise and deliver informal projects for the children and gain important experience which prepares them for the world of employment. Another of the UK projects, that in London supporting Year 7 students from disadvantaged backgrounds, enabled participants to improve confidence and resilience and access to successful futures. They developed citizenship and communication skills through community action projects, opening new doors for career options. Through the years of analysing reports, we have noticed that a common feature of all mentoring and 'volunteering' schemes is that those who provide support for others also gain skills and experience themselves. Where young people are trained in disability rights, inclusive education techniques, tutoring, child protection and so on, they are helping both themselves and the young people they mentor to acquire skills that will lead to employment and economic advantage.



Early years students (Classrooms in the Clouds)

The final words in this section on impact on the overall quality of life should come from the young people themselves; first a young man who lives in Myanmar:

*“Since I failed Year 10 exams so many times, I had lost hope and started taking drugs. It was hard to make the decision to come to the Education for All project as I was shy and embarrassed to be a student of some of my friends. But I enrolled in the school and my life was changed. The teachers helped me so much.....it really touched my heart and changed my life. In March I took the Grade10 exams for the 9th time and by the grace of God I passed. Now I have hope for my future – I really want to work for my people. I am already helping students in my village. Finally, now I can look for a job and I would like to take a distance learning course for university.”*  
*.....and a young man in London who found himself to be a very young father trying to provide for his family while also trying to build a career: “Key4Life has helped me change my life in more ways than I can imagine. Honestly, I didn’t expect this level of commitment and help from everyone.....I couldn’t ask for a better mentor... ....I’m truly blessed and my future is bright.”*

## CONTEXT AND THEMES

This analysis of 30 different projects has employed the four-fold over-arching framework of impact that has been used in all previous years and has provided examples of how the four strands of this framework, namely standards of attainment, quality of the learning environment, the wider community and overall quality of life, are overlapping and mutually beneficial. The analysis has also identified certain recurring themes which characterise many of the projects’ endeavours. These are invariably a reflection of some of the priority themes which the BFSS has incorporated within its strategy for grant-giving which have been ongoing for several years.

We remain committed to construction work and this analysis has demonstrated how simple constructions of classrooms, ‘safe spaces’, latrines and washing facilities can bring wide-ranging impacts for whole communities.

We also remain committed to supporting projects which are responses to some of the world’s natural and human-induced disasters. This year’s analysis includes reports on grants which supported educational developments in Nepal where

communities are recovering from earthquake devastation and impact of severe landslides; in Lebanon where refugee children from Syria and Lebanon have highly complex physical and emotional needs often derived from warfare; and in Uganda where displaced children are dwelling on the border with South Sudan. Such examples appear on an annual basis, yet the greatest 'new' disaster impacting on projects this year is of course the Covid-19 pandemic, about which more will follow.

Another prominent, recurring theme has been the provision of support for integration and inclusion both in mainstream education and in society of young people with developmental and mental health disabilities, other special educational needs and forms of being disadvantaged, 'at risk' or vulnerable. Numerous examples have been provided of the ground-breaking and hugely valuable work being done in this field. Some 20 out of the 30 projects focused on inclusion in its broadest sense or improving the quality of life of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people. A related theme of prominence this year is access to the workplace. Nine of the reports had a specific focus on the importance of providing young people with knowledge, skills, capabilities, and personal commitment that will lead them into the world of employment or further education. A final and hugely important theme reflecting priorities of the BFSS grant-giving strategy is support for Looked after Children and Young Carers. Five charities have delivered superb support packages for such children in the United Kingdom.

---

## CHALLENGES AND COVID-19 IMPACT

Each year, we report that alongside the vast array of positive outcomes achieved by our funded projects, there were numerous challenges faced by grant-holders and 'lessons to be learned' which Trustees of the BFSS take very seriously, reflect on, and act upon where possible. Each year, the list of challenges remains reasonably constant, though of course this year we must add the drastic impact of the global pandemic.

Some regularly occurring situations might well have been anticipated with increased attention to project planning whilst others were beyond the control of the organisation.

Budgeting matters feature every year in the analysis of challenges, and sadly the number of these seems to rise each year. Around 65% had to cope with the problems brought about by fluctuating exchange rates, rising local costs and inflation. Fluctuating exchange rates and rising costs are huge issues in many places, notably in post-disaster environments and Covid-19 affected economies, and project managers can only be encouraged to look closely at the likelihood of rising costs between the time of grant application and execution of the project. Similarly, language barriers such as project workers not being able to communicate with construction staff, and training sessions given in English and not fully understood by all, are predictable difficulties, yet delayed projects in some places.

Adverse weather, environmental conditions and local routines are always significant factors which delay completions and the reports of 2020 detailed numerous such issues. Adverse weather conditions, be they monsoons, flooding or extended droughts, delayed projects in several places. Again, project managers are encouraged to consider the likelihood of such natural occurrences when detailing project timescales.

Several reports report a multitude of unexpected challenges that had to be bravely faced. Aside from flooding in Colombia which was so severe that resources had to be redirected to assist flood victims, workers had to contend with an ongoing presence of illegal armed groups and terrorist threats. In an area of Nepal, landslides were so severe that the hydro power station was washed away so extra expenses were incurred on fuel and a generator. This combined with a general lack of local building resources and a 'patriarchal mindset' that made insurmountable challenges for excellent female teachers to gain leadership positions created a hugely challenging environment in which to roll out the project. After training was provided for young children in Malawi, trained care givers were lost to other establishments because training had increased their earning potential. In the London based programme with a focus on reducing criminality in young people, two participants were victims of knife attacks and were out of action for several weeks. They survived but needed much additional support. In Myanmar, seven students suffered long-term health complications with similar support needs.

Another area of challenge is best described as 'deeply ingrained cultural norms and systems' such as treating girls very differently from boys, expecting



Girls with books (United World Schools)

children to leave home to work in other domestic settings, 'hiding' children with disabilities, alienating children from minority backgrounds, and behaviour control by corporal punishment. One can only have tremendous admiration for the sense of resilience and patience brought to such situations and the faith in interventions which have started the long road to overcoming many examples of resistance to change.

All of the above are examples of challenges which have impacted on timescales of project delivery or even threatened the successful completion of projects. Yet none compare with the devastating impacts of Covid-19 and the incredible resilience of charities to cope and adapt in almost impossible circumstances. One could write a whole publication on the impact of the pandemic and coping strategies, but this document would not be complete without highlighting some of the numerous examples of how Covid-19 impacts have been embraced. In Cambodia, the Congo, the Gambia, Malawi, Nepal, Uganda, and throughout the UK, the closure of schools led to significant delays in projected work.

In several locations, sessions were delivered by Zoom, webinar, and other on-line platforms. Teachers worked longer hours to prepare and deliver education on-line and new skills were rapidly embraced by staff and students alike. Where computers were not available, doorstep

visits and phone calls were employed to keep in touch with students and their families.

In Nepal, schools closed for many months and project staff developed community-based learning which covered 90% of the intended children. Learning materials to support this endeavour were distributed to the community together with masks, sanitizers, and soaps. In parts of the UK, parks and community spaces were utilised for delivery of programmes and other places used 'blended models' of delivery.

In the Gambia, some funds were reassigned to provide emergency food parcels for starving families. The designated driver of the Janga Bus migrated to the city because of the disease but one of the local teachers stepped into the driving seat to ensure that deaf children were not overlooked. Meanwhile in Nepal where Covid-19 had enormous impact, 'new style learning' radio education programmes were introduced, on air four hours a day on ten different local radio stations. This wonderful initiative was low cost and covered a huge geographical area. Aside from educational matters, the programmes gave daily up-to-date information on the pandemic, and provided advice on physical and mental wellbeing. The health and safety of all community members were paramount, and the initiative did a great deal towards helping to bring the community together into a mutually supportive hub.



The ingenuity and dedication of charities to the monumental task of overcoming the challenges of the pandemic cannot be praised highly enough, nor can the positivity with which it was acknowledged in some places that Covid-19 had opened new avenues and potential for networking and outreach.

Addressing the challenge of long-term sustainability is always an essential component of any project we fund, and never has this been more difficult than during a global health crisis. The reports of 2020 outline some robust approaches to sustainability which, as in past years, usually encompass networking and the involvement of local education officers, Ministries, private stakeholders, and other local partnerships. The need for inclusive services and for collaborative working and thinking cannot be overemphasised as a major component of success.

We also note that robust evaluations of some projects have enabled leverage of further funding from other providers and attracted Ministries to engage in pilot projects with a view to implementation on a broad scale, though inevitably we accept that the evaluation process has been radically delayed in many instances as a result of the pandemic.

---

## CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION ON SIX YEARS OF ANALYSIS OF IMPACT

In the six years of undertaking these impact overview reports, I have had the privilege of reading and analysing 181 Final Reports. Readers may well be interested in the global distribution of our support and this is shown in Appendix 3. The 181 reports have been on projects which in total received £2,831,095 which is an average grant of £15,641 for one year of funding. Generally, our grants are not large, yet a vast number of individuals and community members benefit from them. Over the 6 years, it is reported that direct beneficiaries alone total 410,126; teacher beneficiaries total 13,990 and indirect yet known beneficiaries total 572,985. Given the significant number of unquantifiable indirect beneficiaries and knowing that there will be long term benefit for many over the years to come, we may conclude that our grants have impacted on the lives and education of several million people.

The Trustees and staff of the BFSS aim to award grants which are likely to bring about long-term improvements in educational opportunity and quality around the world. The reporting process is taken extremely seriously, as is the sharing both of positive impacts and challenges experienced by our grant holders. This is achieved by publications such as the present one, by our Grants Workshops, by our Members section of the website, and by regular reviews of reporting methods conducted by Grants Committee and Council. We hope that this publication, like its five predecessors, is valued as a vehicle for the sharing of good practice and demonstrating the vast scope and extent of what has been achieved through our grant funding. Whilst the BFSS has facilitated such support, it is our grant holders who have enabled life-enhancing changes to many thousands of individuals and in the commitment of whole communities to inclusive education. This is never a small achievement, but on behalf of Grants Committee and Council may I extend most sincere appreciation for all that has been accomplished whilst working in the face of adversity brought about by a global health crisis.



**Joy A. Palmer Cooper**  
Vice Chairman, BFSS  
April 2021

## APPENDIX 1: PROJECT LOCATIONS 2020

Bangladesh	The Gambia	Nepal (3)	Uganda (3)
Cambodia	Lebanon	Peru	United
Colombia	Malawi	Rwanda	Kingdom (11)
Democratic Republic of Congo	Myanmar	Tanzania (2)	Zambia

## APPENDIX 2: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements are due to the organisations whose Final Reports have been the subject of analysis for this publication. These are:

African Revival	Hull Children's University
Amantani UK	Joint Activities and Motor Education Service (J.A.M.E.S)
Aspire Academy Trust (Bugle School)	Joshua Orphan and Community Care
Banooda Aid Foundation	KADECT (Kashmiri and African Deaf Children's Trust)
Build Africa	Key4Life
Children Change Colombia	Kidasha
Classrooms in the Clouds	Made with Hope
Edinburgh Direct Aid	READ International
E:merge	Rwanda Aid
Entraide (Mutual Aid)	SeeBeyondBorders
Family Lives	Sound Seekers (The Commonwealth
The Fostering Network	Society for the Deaf)
Health and Hope UK	UK Bangladesh Education Trust (UKBET)
Hitchin British Schools Trust (2 projects)	United World Schools
Hope Health Action	Yes Futures

## APPENDIX 3: PROJECT LOCATIONS 2015-2019

Afghanistan	Honduras	Romania
Bangladesh (2)	India (6)	Rwanda (3)
Burundi	Iraq (2)	Senegal
Brazil	Israel	Siberia (2)
Cambodia (3)	Kenya (14)	Sierra Leone (4)
Colombia (2)	Lebanon (2)	Sri Lanka
Democratic Republic of Congo (4)	Malawi (3)	South Africa
Ecuador	Mozambique	South Sudan (2)
Ethiopia (8)	Myanmar	Tanzania (11)
The Gambia (2)	Nepal (24)	Thailand
Ghana (9)	Pakistan	Uganda (20)
Guatemala (2)	Peru	United Kingdom (32)
Guinea	Philippines (2)	Zambia (6)

### We acknowledge and thank the following charities for contributing photographs for this publication:

- Health and Hope UK for the photo of 'education for all' (cover image)
- Classrooms in the Clouds for the photo of their 'refurbished building'
- READ International for the photo of their 'new equipped library'
- Hitchin British Schools Trust for the photo of 'enjoyment in the classroom'
- Edinburgh Direct Aid for the photo of 'helping to walk'
- Yes Futures for the photo of 'task in hand'
- Kidasha for the photo of 'engagement with learning'
- Health and Hope for the photo of a very 'happy class'
- J.A.M.E.S. for the photo of 'mechanic at work'
- UK Bangladesh Education Trust for the photo of 'Tanya at her employment'
- United World Schools for the photo of two 'happy pupils'
- Classrooms in the Clouds for the photo of 'early years students'
- United World Schools for the photo of 'girls with books'

---

Our vision is educational opportunity for all. We believe in education as a driver for personal development and social improvement. Building on our heritage, we value effective teaching, commitment to learning and sharing of good practice. We are committed to inclusivity, integrity, tolerance and respect for others in everything we do.

We seek to achieve our vision by providing funding and support for educational projects in the UK and throughout the world.

---

**British & Foreign School Society**

7-14 Great Dover Street

London

SE1 4YR

Web: [www.bfss.org.uk](http://www.bfss.org.uk)

Tel: 020 7922 7814

Email: [grants@bfss.org.uk](mailto:grants@bfss.org.uk)

Twitter: @BFSSCharity

March 2021

Registered Charity no. 314286