



**Enabling communities
to help themselves**

ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2022

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INTRODUCTION FROM SECRETARY

I believe that we come to this year's AGM in a much stronger position than last year. In 2022 we were faced with the huge challenge of budgeting for and setting up our own projects, forming a team in Nekemte and putting in place monitoring and evaluation. We needed to commit to the funding in the absence of grant opportunities.

All of this, and more, has been achieved through a huge team effort. We took the decision to commit to a 2 year project as this provides more efficient use of funds and also more stability for our project team, partners and beneficiaries.

I would like to extend sincere thanks and appreciation across the spectrum of EEL. From our members and supporters through to our board of trustees and treasurer, our project committee, our volunteers Lee and David and our Nekemte team, Murti, Temesgen, Tesema and Gobena working with our teachers, librarians and local communities. Each one of these people is what makes us a whole.

The formation of the project committee under the chairmanship of George Dexter and the level of expertise and knowledge within it has had a huge impact on our ability to manage the projects and our ability to move forward.

Following covid, Nekemte has faced the challenge of political unrest and security issues. Our partners have shown great resilience and courage, over and above our expectations. These issues also have an impact on the opening of schools which makes our tutorials and libraries even more valuable. With this in mind, we chose The Year of Reading as our focus for 2023.

Our increasing use of our library buildings and our librarians to deliver education and provide safe spaces is an inspired way to maximise our resources. The projects with the deaf students and the bike project continue. Every person involved in the UK is a volunteer and so, other than a small number of required fees, every penny is spent in Ethiopia.

During the year we took the decision to stop the Link up meetings. We have however continued with The Link newsletter thanks to David. Lee sends out regular updates on social media. We aim to keep our members as involved and informed as possible.

We have a growing number of people involved in this wonderful charity. This is our future and what will sustain us. Thank you for your continued support.

By Dawn

2022 PROJECT UPDATES:

2022, like 2021, was a hugely challenging year because of the political and security situation in and around Nekemte with regular armed conflict around and at times in Nekemte.

Nekemte was declared (and still is) an area which the FCDO advises against all travel to. As a result, some NGOs have chosen to withdraw from projects in the area.

However, EEL is continuing to work with the EECMY CS-DASSC. It puts the security of the team as a total priority but uses local knowledge to identify areas where it is safe.



Thank you from the team in Nekemte & Librarians

LIBRARIES & LITERACY

In 2022, our Libraries and Literacy Project funded by UK AID came to an end. This was evaluated and the results verified by UK AID. We were delighted to receive an A+ grade for the project from UK AID. Some of the key achievements from the 2 year project were

- **24** school libraries were supported with additional **furniture and books**
- **35 librarians were employed** (21 Females) in the context of the area where the unemployment rate is 30%. This enabled them to access a monthly income often paying for their studies
- The libraries had a total average monthly footfall of **23,000 students** and an average of **3000 books** were lent each month.



Deaf Students
Making Books

LIBRARIES & LITERACY

- **118 teachers were trained** in the teaching of early grade reading.
- We set up **girl's tutorials to support literacy**. This resulted in an additional 208 girls who otherwise were not achieving literacy in mainstream classrooms to reach a minimum word level of literacy and 136 girls to become fluent in reading.
- We supported **34 deaf students** who were attending secondary school to earn a small income in making teaching and learning aids. This prevented them from dropping out and also enabled them to complete secondary school.

Two videos which tell the story of the project can be found here

The Story of the Project:

<https://vimeo.com/745401432>

Librarian Stories:

<https://vimeo.com/745455494>



Teacher Training

LIBRARIES AND LITERACY

In September 2022, we signed a new 2 year project agreement. Under this we are planning over the 2 years

- Support 200 girls to become literate through our girls' tutorials programme
- Support an average of 15,000 students a month to access class libraries
- Employ 34 librarians each year
- Build girl's sanitary facilities to support over 1000 girls in a secondary school
- Support 20 deaf students to continue and successfully finish secondary education
- Set up 2 new disability associations or parent support groups with VSLAs
- Improve sporting opportunities for girls



Libraries



To reduce inequality and promote health, safety and wellbeing for girls living in the Nekemte area of Ethiopia.

£3,049 was raised over the year (+ £7,870 from the Big Give for Librarians)



Girls Tutorials

Funds raised were spent on:

- ✓ **Improving sanitary conditions for girls** in a secondary school, benefitting 1013 girls. (Lela Nekemte School) (See Picture)
- ✓ **21 Female Librarians were employed**, where the unemployment rate is 30%. This enabled them to access a monthly income often paying for their studies
- ✓ **Tutorials** were provided for girls to support improvements in their own literacy. As part of that in 2021/22 academic year 314 girls received tutorials in literacy (original target 100)... 88% showed improvements and 72% (226 girls) reached a minimum level of literacy which will ensure they can access the curriculum. In 2023, we are continuing our tutorials and currently 141 girls are accessing tutorials.
- ✓ In addition the employment of librarians enables a large number of **girls to access books** and a safe place to study. For example in December 2022, our 34 libraries were visited 9733 by girls (and this is in fact more than boys).
 - **16 deaf girls** were supported as part of our Libraries and Literacy Project with enabled them to earn money to support their secondary education and provided tutorials to support them to pass their exams. All passed their exams.
 - Our **bike project for girls** is continuing with 12 girls accessing regular bike lessons and in 2023 we hope to start other sporting activities for girls such as football.



Lela Nekemte Sanitary Facilities



EEL UPDATES: MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

- A big thank you to all our members for your continued support.
- Membership currently stands at **105** members.
- For a variety of reasons a few members have decided not to renew their subscription this year.
- To those I have spoken to, I know that your decision has not been taken lightly and thank you for your commitment to Exeter Ethiopia Link over the past years
- Although our numbers have dropped slightly there has been an increase in people, *Friends of EEL*, who prefer to make a donation or help with fund raising events rather than become a member.

So thank you to everyone who has supported us over the year

CURRENT MEMBERS = 105

Become a Member

As a member you will be able to:

- ✓ **ATTEND** meetings.
- ✓ **ORGANISE** and help with fundraising.
- ✓ **SPREAD** the word in Exeter with displays and talks.
- ✓ **TAKE PART** in a group visit to Ethiopia to learn about and assess needs and project.
- ✓ **SUPPORT** the work of Exeter Ethiopia Link through your subscription.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Emerald Davies has examined our accounts for January to December 2022 in line with financial legislation, and submitted her report to the Trustees.

The Link has finished 2022 with total funds of £38,204 (2021: £42,994).

This decrease is in part due to the funding cycle of our ongoing projects. We have received the last of the monies for the Schools, Libraries and Literacy Project funded by UKAID and did not receive any additional project grants. However, we have carried out our own fundraising, including the very successful Big Give campaign in which we raised £7870. Money from this is included in both fundraising and donations lines (from our match funders Ethiopia Aid and Enable Ed CIC) of our Statement of Financial Activities. Our Year of the Girl raised £2,989 which was spent to fund improved sanitary conditions for girls in a secondary school benefitting 1013 girls.

Currently the accounts for the Exeter Ethiopia Link are healthy, with totals of £15,848 in unrestricted funds and £22,356 in restricted funds (£38,204 total).

By Mark Smith EEL Treasurer.

The Link has finished 2022 with total funds of

£38,204

(2021: £42,994).

(See separate Financial Report for detail)

What's Next:

Our projects came to an end in June 2022 and given the healthy position in September 2022, trustees took the decision to sign a new two year project with EECMY CS DASSC with funding of £54,320 over the 24 months. £12,851 was sent in 2022 with the remaining in 2023/24. We recognise that to meet this we will have to raise additional funds but our financial forecast would suggest this is achievable.

GOVERNANCE, PEOPLE AND ROLES

OFFICERS:

Role	Officer during 2022:
General Secretary	Dawn Swettenham
Treasurer	Kirsten Pullen Jan 2022 - June 2022, Mark Smith June 2022 - present
Membership Secretary	Annie Bainbridge
Fundraising, social media, publicity	Lee Davies
Website Editor	David Scarbrough
Projects Coordination	Enable-Ed
Treasury Team	Kirsten Pullen & Oscarine Barukh & Hannah Swettenham
Volunteers	Sue Parks

PROJECT COMMITTEE FORMED SEPTEMBER 2022

Chairperson	Penny Pullen September 2022- November 2022 George Dexter November 2022 - present
Members	Penny Pullen Liz Horsefield Sue Parks Marc Zuiderveen Joanne Keenahan Murti Uma

GOVERNANCE, PEOPLE AND ROLES

TRUSTEES:

Trustees during 2022	Changes During Year:
Penny Pullen	
Annie Bainbridge	
Liz Horsefield	
Dawn Swettenham	
Ella Sadler	
George Dexter	Appointed @ June 2022 AGM

Ex-officios	
Dawn Swettenham (Secretary)	
Kirsten Pullen (Treasurer)	Until June 2022, remained as Trustee
Mark Smith (Treasurer)	from June 2022 as a non trustee

Trustee Changes at next AGM	Trustees Standing Down
Ella Sadler	Standing down @ 2023 AGM
Kirsten Pullen	Standing down by rotation, up for re-election @ 2023 AGM
Penny Pullen	Proposed as Honorary Trustee @ 2023 AGM

New Trustee's Up for Election at next AGM (See blurbs next slide)	
Selam Uma	
Cynthia Palmer	
Kenechukwu Leonard	

2023 AGM PROPOSED NEW TRUSTEES

Selam:

My name is Selam Uma born and bred in Nekemte where I started my career as a project manager with EECMY DASSC.

I met Penny many years ago on an EEL trip. I was project manager of the school for the deaf and Nekemte Disability Project.

Over the years when I was in Ethiopia I was responsible for running projects funded by EEL. This included support for students who were deaf, the setting up of disability associations with saving associations and facilitating surgery (eg fistula, eye care, club foot) and assistive devices for disabled students and adults.

I was also working with government schools encouraging them to enrol disabled children and the rolling out of inclusive education.

I believe I will be of value as a member of the board of trustees as I have direct experience and know the area where EEL works. I also have direct experience having worked for and been an employee of your partner EECMY DASSC. Moreover, I my current knowledge beyond disability for example in developing small businesses, job creation and the agriculture sector in Ethiopia could be a value for the team.

Cynthia:

My name is Cynthia Palmer. I am a retired Health and Safety Advisor, previously working in the education and charity sectors. I live near Exeter. Since having the opportunity to visit Ethiopia in 1999, 2011 and 2012, I have taken a keen interest in the country, and specifically charity partnerships supporting Ethiopia.

In 1994 met Bekuma, a mature student from Addis Ababa, when he was here on vocational training and visited my church. After he returned home, I set up a small fund for the congregation to enable a regular money transfer to support his family. This continued for 15 years, resulting in his four children progressing through to higher education and their careers in banking, teaching and two of them becoming IT professionals.

Following my last visit in 2012, when I was lucky to be able to travel through the country, including the Oromo region and Nekempte, I worked with George Dexter to gather school books and computer equipment. We sent this to Addis Abeba, as aid for Future Generation Hope Schools. This proved problematic, to actually get the goods intact, through customs and on to the destination. It taught us to join with and support other, larger charities. Hence the reason for my interest in joining the EEL board.

My other experience has been as Vice-chair of the Lutheran Women's Guild of Great Britain, supporting overseas missions and as Chair of the church Buildings and Maintenance committee.

I currently volunteer in Exeter with the Salvation Army, working weekly with the Employment Plus support and cooking meals once a month for the homeless in the city.

Kenechukwu:

My name is Kenechukwu Osanakpo (Known as Ken) and I am a qualified legal practitioner, recognised by the Nigerian Bar.

Following primary and secondary school education in Nigeria, I came to the UK for a foundation programme in law. I also completed an undergraduate degree in International Relations and Law at the University of Exeter. In 2014, I returned to my home country to attend the Nigerian Law School and was called to the Bar in 2015. Back in the UK, I pursued a master's in Transnational Criminal Justice.

From 2017 and 2020, I enrolled on a PhD programme in Security and Intelligence Studies – in a topic I am particularly interested in and keen to learn more about. I am due to complete the programme in December 2023.

Coming from a Nigerian background, I believe my knowledge of neighbouring countries and their cultures, as well as my awareness of the challenges faced by different communities across the continent, makes me well positioned to help provide insights and recommended solutions to challenges and issues.

I've always had a keen interest in culture, current affairs and politics. Alongside this, I have a strong desire to make a difference in the world; using my knowledge, life experiences and skillset to improve the quality of life of people in less privileged communities, sharing resources and knowledge, and helping amplify the voices of underrepresented groups. I believe that through working with EEL I'll have the opportunity to do this whilst also picking up some very valuable career skills.

2023 STRATEGY

I. FOCUS ON FUNDRAISING

To strengthen the future of the charity, we will be focusing on our income and fundraising activities.

HOW:

Firstly, by inspiring members and supporters to increase contributions and, secondly, by increasing our membership and support base. To support this aim we hope to set up a fundraising committee. We invite any member who is interested in participating to contact us through the website.

We have already taken steps to encourage regular monthly donations which gives us increased confidence in our projected budget. We will be trying to improve our marketing of this idea. The Big Give has been a brilliant source of match funding and this will be repeated in December 2023. There are various possible events, both face to face and online, which could raise funds and these will be explored.

2. SHOWCASE IMPACT & STORYTELLING

HOW:

Our website has been updated by David Scarborough and we will continue to use this and social media to showcase our results.

Our project manager Murti has received training on ethical storytelling. We are already using these stories to enhance the project reports received from Nekemte and the real life stories demonstrate the positive impact of the projects. We hope that this will inspire further donations and new members.

3. INCREASE REACH ACROSS UK

Our strategy in 2022 was to increase the reach of EEL across the country.

One key to this aim is our schools programme which we hoped to develop. Unfortunately, mainly due to time, we have been unable to progress this and so we carry over this ambition into 2023.

HOW:

We do have some schools involved and so the first step will be to form the scheme into a written process. Informing children in the UK about life in Ethiopia is incredibly valuable and we hope to achieve this in a fun and interesting way. Once we have a school engaged there will be the opportunity for new members and fundraising.

4. INVESTIGATE GRANT FUNDS

We will also continue to submit applications for grant funding.

Since covid 19, there are many fewer grants available for small international development charities as many funders prefer to support UK projects. As a result of this, the competition for overseas grants has significantly increased.

In the past we have received 3 large multiyear project grants, two from the UK government and one from Comic Relief. These streams of grant funding are no longer available.

Despite this we will continue to investigate whatever grant funding opportunities are available.

5. EXPLORE NAME CHANGE

The board has been discussing whether the name “Exeter Ethiopia Link” is a hindrance to us reaching out to areas of the UK outside of the Southwest.

HOW:

We will be asking members at the AGM for their comments and if they will give us their permission to explore the possible benefits and risks of a name change.

6. SECURE FUNDS FOR CORE PROJECTS

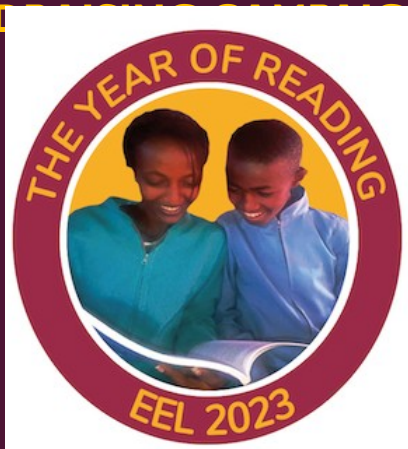
Our priority is to guarantee funding for our “core” projects and beneficiaries. For example, our librarians rely on their salaries.

Once we have this funding secured beyond the end of our two year project we hope to support additional “one off” projects.

The project committee have within their remit to seek out new opportunities for funding. Their close links to the project team means that they are ideally suited to understand the needs of the communities.

We are expecting to welcome new trustees onto the board at the AGM. These individuals will bring valuable new perspective and ideas to the charity.

2023 FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN: UPDATE



By providing books and supporting librarians, children of all ages will have the chance to become better readers.

Some will enjoy reading just for the sake of it, for many it will give them improved skills to follow written instructions, read signs and enhance their employability, but most of all, improved reading skills will underpin overall educational achievement.

Fund Raising: We have already raised nearly £1300

What we have achieved so far:

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

10 SCHOOL LIBRARIES

supported with additional furniture and books

239 Chairs 

36 Tables 

13 Shelves 

640 Books 

Focus on Libraries

for **March 2023**



School	Location	Books lent in March	Students accessing the library in March		
			Female	Male	Total
Fayinera	Nekemte Town	400	746	723	1469
Cheleleki	Nekemte Town	0	1885	1745	3630
Migna Kili	20km east of Nekemte	356	892	960	1852