

# **MENELIK EDUCATION LTD**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

2013 has been a slightly quieter year in terms of events, but this time has been used to review and plan projects and procedures for 2014 and beyond. A major new development is the acquisition of land in a rural area 600 km from Kinshasa as well as a house in the city to be used for the benefit of Menelik Staff in the DRC and the volunteer programme.

The Humanitarian Centre, which has been the office base of the Charity for the past seven years, has closed and relocated to a different venue in Cambridge. Menelik Education Ltd is now based at Orwell House, Cowley Road, Cambridge.

It is with deep sadness that we have to report the death of one of our students and volunteers Corneille Masiya who died in January of this year aged 20.

### **1. Achievements**

#### **New Partnerships**

Three schools in France have now become established partners with Menelik Education. Two schools in Paris and one in Rouen. The schools have proved to be enthusiastic partners providing extensive resources for the container as well as the establishment of Menelik Club (see later in report).

#### **CSN**

The CSN continues to work very well with active participation from our Congolese team – both qualified lawyers and students. Over 1,000 clients have now been seen since the start of the project in 2011. The interior of the building is now in need of some re-decoration and refurbishment and the donation of office equipment and furniture from companies in Cambridge will be used once the next container is delivered.

#### **Cafe**

The small cafe adjacent to the CSN offices is now running on a modest scale. Considerable direction from the Director has been required to keep staff on task but the cafe is now gradually becoming self-financing

#### **Menelik House**

The Charity has been given, on a medium-term basis, the use of a house in Kinshasa. Three members of the Congolese team now live there and the property is likely to be used for volunteer groups in the future.

## **Summer School**

See separate report. The Summer School continues to run very successfully with funding from the UK. The Congolese team have now been able to take over most of the day-to-day activities with support and resources from the UK.

## **Women's Group**

The Women's Co-operative partnership continues to run successfully with items selling well in the UK at fairs throughout the year. Depending on stock levels it is possible that the charity will also look into selling on-line – this would include other items, not solely from the women's groups.

## **New Orphanage**

Partnership with the new Orphanage, named after Julienne Tshituala, is running well with strong and committed support from the leader of the Orphanage, Mama Aimee who has also worked for Menelik in the UK. Aimee is also a talented seamstress and tailor who will be making items for sale in the UK, the funds of which will help support her orphanage. Over 70 children ranging in age from 3 months to 25 years are cared for and schooled in the Orphanage currently sited in Gamba district of Kinshasa but it is hoped to move to Bengi village in 2014 (see further in report).

## **Club Menelik and Menelik Sport**

Menelik Sport continues to run well under the direction of Papa Shafiko. The new partnership schools in France have helped to establish Menelik Club whereby pupils from France are able to engage with Congolese pupils via Skype to develop new friendships.

## **New Land**

The Charity has been offered over 200 acres of land 600 km West of Kinshasa. The Director spent time both during the Spring and Summer visiting and planning how best to use this new resource. It is planned to move both Orphanages to this rural area in 2014 which will be safer and more healthy for the children. It is also hoped to develop a small school and clinic within the next couple of years – funding permitting. Having a base in the country as well as the city will also enable volunteers to experience more than one aspect to the country.

## **2. Update on other Projects**

### **Supporting Students**

Fifty (50) students are currently being supported forty at school and ten at University. Attention is required to ensure that the finance for school fees is directed to the correct destination. There have been some issues with trust within the last year.

## **Orphanage Clinic**

The clinic set up in the first of our partnership orphanages has not progressed as we had wished. Lack of commitment from the local doctors resulted in a lack of continuity and it has proved difficult to secure more efficient and effective staff. There is currently an issue with safety in Mama Ester's orphanage. The kitchen and cooking areas which were altered during a visit in early 2012 have reverted to open fires close to the young children's play area. Cooking equipment introduced by Trustee John Holder have not been maintained and two children were seriously injured within the past year, resulting in one death. It is hoped that by moving both this and the second orphanage to the rural area, some of this difficulties will be resolved. Further support needs to be given on a site visit in 2014.

## **UNAF/PROVIC**

The partnership with PROVIC has now come to a natural end but the CSN is now working with individuals who have reached us through PROVIC. The partnership with UNAF is ongoing.

## **Schools Liaison**

We continue to enjoy a very positive and productive partnership with Kings School in Cambridge who provide large amounts of items for the container, promote the work of Menelik within the school and beyond and give the charity the opportunity to sell items from the Women's Co-operative at their Summer and Winter Fairs. The Director has given two talks to the school in the past year. In addition the Director lectured and ran a workshop at Impington Village College. With one exception, staff from IVC who have visited the DRC with students have all retired and it has taken a while to engage with new staff although we have been encouraged by the interest displayed by the students and replacement staff within the past year. Talks were also given to St Paul's School Cambridge, although a partnership has not been developed as yet, owing to the school's other commitments. Staffing changes at St Luke's School and Manor Community College have made it difficult to re-establish links but further schools will be identified and approached within the coming year.

## **Fundraising Parties**

Two further parties were held this year and new venues are being researched. One, as part of Africa Week earlier in the year took place at the Catholic Church Hall and was reasonably attended, although the location of the venue was not sufficiently prominent. A party in conjunction with Ramesh – 'Bolly Congo' at the Labour Club in Mill Road was well attended and it is possible further parties will be held with them in the future.

### **3. New Developments**

#### **Real Life Trust**

The Charity has been aware that its presence in the UK has declined slightly while developing projects in the DRC. This has a knock-on effect when applying for funding. Since the Summer of 2013 we are delighted to have been able to forge a relationship with Real Life Trust, a local charity with specific aims to help disabled young people into independent life and volunteering. Both charities will be joining together in fundraising events, music parties etc and have already worked together at Strawberry Fair this summer. Young disabled people from the Trust have been working with Menelik in a volunteer capacity and this work will be expanded in 2014. This partnership extends an already established link that the Director has maintained with young people with special needs at The Friday Club in Sawston. Both Charities remain independent of each other and will remain so.

Since the closure of the Humanitarian Centre, the Charity now works alongside Real Life Trust at Orwell House, Cowley Road, Cambridge. Although this location is on the outskirts of town it is more cost effective and convenient in terms of transport links and parking. New rental in the town centre was prohibitively expensive.

#### **Menelik Ambassador**

The Director has appointed an Ambassador to the Charity Lisette Mibo, a Congolese model approached the charity to assist in promotional activities and will be running a fashion show at the February party.

### **4. Funding and Fundraising**

Funding the charity, particularly in a recession continues to be challenging. Running costs include office rental, insurance, Skype costs, accountant's fees, membership fees, telephone and local travel costs. It is not possible to obtain funding for running costs so these expenses continue to be funded by the personal means of the Fundraiser and Director. This is proving to be more difficult as costs increase. Neither the Director nor Fundraiser are salaried in their work for the Charity. By securing greater links within the local community, applications for funding for UK work, including fundraising events, should prove to be easier. With the acquisition of land in the DRC and plans to move the orphanages and develop local industries, International applications should have a more secure footing, although nothing is guaranteed. Finances and records are maintained in the UK as it has proved very difficult to devise a scheme for the Congolese team that they maintain on a regular basis. Our records are fully maintained in the UK and accounts prepared each year by a Chartered Accountant, a similar system will be sought for the DRC.

The Fundraiser has had less time in the past year to work effectively on the fundraising aspect of the charity so this side of the charity's work is down on last year and is currently being reviewed.

## **Charitable Collections**

Most supermarkets no longer run 'Flag Days' preferring to run community coin schemes. The exception is Tesco but applications for the past year were unsuccessful. Now that Menelik is increasing its work in the Cambridge community, it will now be possible to apply for Community Matters schemes with Waitrose and Asda. Greater volunteer support is required for these activities to enable them to run effectively.

## **Parties**

Two parties in 2013, with one planned for November were successful. The monthly parties will start again this November at a new venue, St Phillips Community Centre in Mill Road which is central and in a residential area that should attract local interest.

## **Events**

The Director and Fundraiser, with help from the Trustees participated in Strawberry Fair; The Big Weekend; Chesterton Festival; Two sales at Kings School and Haslingfield Charity Fair. On each occasion food was sold as well as items from the Women's Co-operative. The Director also ran dance workshops at each event. These events were very well attended and promoted the work of the charity as well as raised funds.

## **Talks**

Both the Director and Fundraiser give talks on the work of the charity for a small fee paid direct to Menelik. Three talks were given in 2013 with a further programme of 16 talks planned for 2014.

## **CUSAFE**

A successful application was made to CUSAFE (Cambridge University South Africa Fund for Education) and a grant of £1,500 was given to finance the Summer School.

## **University Colleges**

All Bursars have been contacted for the first time in three years for donations.

## **5. Staffing**

Staffing in the UK remains the same. The Board of Trustees also remains the same. Staff in the DRC have altered slightly with the dismissal of one of the CSN Lawyers and the re-instatement of one of the Student volunteers. Staff in the DRC still require considerable direction and guidance and have not always taken advantage of working opportunities that have been created for them to continue and develop further to establish self financing projects. The Director spends over 70% of his time

on a daily basis ensuring that work is carried out. It has been disappointing to see that if this level of direction is reduced then project work set up by the UK team does not flourish. It is not possible for the charity to pay salaries and the aim has always been to develop projects for the DRC teams to take on and make their own. Results are beginning to appear in the Cafe and IT training but it is apparent that the UK team still need to give continuous direction for any of the projects work as intended. There is one reliable and effective member of the team who is gaining in confidence and better able to give direction herself, although other members of the team can be inconsistent in their commitment.

## **6. Volunteering Programme**

The UK Volunteer Programme was put on hold for 2013 although a small team of volunteers from France visited in the Spring. Both the Fundraiser and Director are reviewing how to run the programme and have held meetings with other organisations from The Humanitarian Centre as well as previous volunteers. They are confident that their system is good but will be making certain changes to include:

- i. Fewer volunteers but in one complete block of three weeks
- ii. Amending the volunteer handbook
- iii. A more formal style of interview and briefing
- iv. Volunteers taking more responsibility for their catering and spending when in the DRC
- v. A slight change in the charging structure

## **7. Container**

A container will be sent in Spring 2014. The Charity now rents four storage garages at a greatly reduced rent and has been receiving donations from across the UK and France, including extensive, good quality office furniture, computers, books, clothing, furniture and medical equipment. The costs of sending a 40 foot container are high. Proposed funding from a source in the DRC appears to have fallen through so it is now a priority to raise over £5,000 to cover all costs. This amount had previously been paid by the Director and Fundraiser although it is no longer possible for them to contribute such large amounts of money from their own means. It is essential that members of the DRC and UK team are present for the unloading and distribution of goods to ensure they reach their intended destinations. This will be the third container sent and goods will be directed to the partnership schools, orphanages, clinics, CSN and rural community.

## **8. Plans for the Future**

The main focus in the coming year in the DRC is the acquisition of land and the moving of the children from both orphanages to the area plus building and industry development. Funding applications will be centred on this project. In the UK work

with Real Life Trust will continue and the profile of the Charity within the UK will be further developed. It is hoped to be able to secure sound funding in order for project work to be carried out to a standard that we would wish. 2014 will see the arrival of the container, a new volunteer programme and a continuation of the fundraising events in the UK.

**Sally Nott**  
**Trustee**  
**November 2013**