

6. Methodist Relief and Development Fund (All We Can)

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Subject and aims	This report summarises the activities and achievements of the Methodist Relief and Development Fund (now known as All We Can) in the financial year 2012/13.
Resolution	The Conference receives the Report.
Main points	<p>Some of MRDF's key activities and achievements in 2012/13 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting long-term development projects with 38 partner organisations in 16 of the world's poorest countries. • Through its partners, helping over 4,100 families to increase their income through boosting crop production, providing training and access to affordable loans. • Providing more than 3,800 people with access to safe drinking water, and over 550 schoolchildren and teachers with effective sanitation facilities. • Enabling over 22,000 vulnerable and elderly people to be part of social and community support groups. • Providing funding and support in response to four separate emergency situations in four countries, including the refugee crisis caused by the conflict in Syria, and completing its relief programme following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. • Holding a major conference in Uganda bringing together partners from across Africa and Asia, providing opportunities for training, learning and exchange. • Winning several awards for its multimedia course for small groups on Christianity and global development issues, Iota.
Background context and relevant documents	Full version of <i>Methodist Relief and Development Fund Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2013</i> – available from the All We Can office or website.

Methodist Relief and Development Fund (now known as All We Can) Summary Annual Report and Accounts 2012/13

Introduction

MRDF grew out of the desire to enable Methodist people to respond effectively, in the context of global poverty and injustice, to the commandments of Jesus to love God and love our neighbour. Believing in the dignity of every human being before God, MRDF aims to make small miracles possible for people living in the world's poorest communities.

MRDF's vision is a world where people living in marginalised communities have the resources, opportunities and skills to take control of their own development, and to challenge unjust structures. MRDF's mission is to bring about significant and long-term change in these communities, and to empower people to change structures that are oppressive and unjust.

During the year, MRDF sought to fulfil this mission by resourcing and supporting community based interventions that contributed to the sustainable alleviation of poverty primarily among under-served and marginalised people living in some of the poorest countries. It collaborated with individuals and groups, provided finance, organisation development assistance and leadership support, and tackled some of the root causes of poverty and injustice through education and advocacy, both in the UK and overseas.

We are very grateful to supporters, donors, churches, partners and volunteers for their generosity and hard work, which made this possible.

2012/13 represented the third and final year of operating within MRDF's three-year Strategic Framework, which set three core priorities for the organisation, as follows:

Core priority 1: Contributing to the eradication of poverty, through transformative long-term development, and disaster relief

Long-term development

MRDF is not simply a grant making agency. Nor does it simply provide 'aid'. At the heart of MRDF's approach to development is a belief in the long term effectiveness of partnership based development work. We seek to enable transformative change in poor communities by supporting the work of local partner organisations, which we believe are best placed to understand and address the needs of local populations.

During the year, MRDF:

- Managed partnerships with 38 organisations in 16 countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda. (Support to Latin American countries and Bangladesh was discontinued during the year.)
- Continued to target doubly disadvantaged communities ie those living in extreme poverty but also marginalised due to gender, age, disability, caste or religion, ethnicity, or geographical location and under-served by state or other services.
- Allocated 87% of all grant expenditure, totalling £893,458, for distribution to partners implementing long-term development projects.

Some of the more quantifiable outcomes for 2012/13 that our implementing partners have achieved by working in collaboration with MRDF are as follows:

- More than 3,800 people now have safe drinking water less than 1.5km from their home
- More than 2,800 people and more than 550 schoolchildren and teachers are now using effective sanitation facilities (toilets) near their homes

- 1,950 people started using hygiene facilities, such as hand washing and dish racks in their homes
- 2,150 families increased their crop production
- 1,450 people have better nutrition through feeding projects
- 1,300 people accessed loans from group savings
- 4,150 families increased their income
- More than 2,000 women's lives improved by gaining financial independence
- 2,050 people's health improved by better access to facilities
- 12,150 elderly people's lives improved by community support groups
- 998 people improved their literacy
- 203 community organisations were set up
- 8900 people are now members of social support groups.

The long-term impact of MRDF's collaborative approach to development is illustrated by the example of our partnership with SUNARMA (Sustainable Natural Resources Management Association) in Ethiopia, which we began supporting in 2004. At that time, they were a small organisation working to improve soil and water conservation and increase horticultural crops and livestock in one village. Nine years later, SUNARMA has had a huge impact, expanding its work to 52 villages in which people's livelihoods have been transformed. A key part of SUNARMA's work has been its success in protecting the Wof Washa forest, one of the few remaining natural forested areas in Ethiopia, on which the livelihoods of the surrounding villages depend. As an organisation, SUNARMA has benefitted from a range of organisational development support that MRDF provided over the last nine years. Recognising that our partnership will eventually end, MRDF recently introduced SUNARMA to complementary funders who are supporting the next phase of its development.

'Before SUNARMA started the irrigation project, there was no water near my farm. The irrigation has improved my crop production, and I have also started to grow fruit and vegetables after receiving seeds from SUNARMA. I grow onion, garlic, pepper and apples, and have stored the seeds so that I can replant next year without assistance from SUNARMA. My income has doubled. I have been able to buy furniture for my house and am planning to build a grinding mill. MRDF and SUNARMA have supported me like a mother and father. I appreciate that they have supported this small community.' *Gebrekiros Mogese, Ethiopia*

Disaster relief

Long-term development work is the most effective way of bringing about sustainable change in marginalised communities, but it is also vital to provide support when disaster strikes. During the year, MRDF allocated 9% of grant expenditure to humanitarian aid, distributing grants totalling £95,989. The most significant of these were in response to four separate emergency situations in four countries.

The most high-profile example was our response to the refugee crisis caused by the conflict in Syria. At the time of writing this report, more than two million people had been forced to leave the country, half of them children, and there is a real shortage of funds for humanitarian relief. MRDF responded through local church-based agencies that provided support both in the refugee camps, especially in Jordan, and with communities which are hosting displaced people.

In humanitarian emergencies, MRDF not only provides support for immediate life-saving food, sanitation and shelter, but supports work to rebuild services, housing and incomes, allowing people to reconstruct their lives and mitigate future risk. Our ongoing response to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti is a good example of this. Following the construction of 37 houses in the previous year, our partner completed the construction of a further 60 earthquake-resistant houses at the beginning of this year, giving families still in tents a decent long-term shelter. In conjunction with UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), we also supported the Methodist Church in Haiti to build its long term work in the strengthening of health services, and we extended support to an agricultural project to enable families to become more self-sufficient.

Core priority 2: Increasing the effectiveness of local partners

One of the distinctive things about the way MRDF works is the priority it gives to building the capacity and skills of its partner organisations, and to identifying potential partners who would benefit most from this support. This is provided through our own staff visits, external trainings and reviews, external audits, partner exchanges, partner conferences, MRDF's publications and regular communication by phone and e-mail.

A major focus for MRDF and its partners during the year was the 'Strength to Strength' conference which took place in Uganda in September 2012, and brought together partners from across Africa and Asia for a valuable time of training, learning and exchange.

'The conference helped us to get a good understanding about specific topics such as advocacy, budget monitoring and funding.' *J&D, Mali*

During the year MRDF also helped 40% of its regular partners to develop structured capacity building plans, covering issues such as financial and HR systems, technical and fundraising skills, and strengthening governance. We helped to strengthen all partners' financial management, and supported partners in identifying other funding sources. While MRDF is often the first external funder of a new partner organisation, more than 70% of MRDF partners now have at least one other funder contributing to core costs, and over 50% are mobilising local resources to cover some of these costs.

Staff continued to visit each partner every 12-18 months, to observe the project and carry out monitoring and training, as well as providing ongoing support remotely between visits.

'MRDF is different; when you visit you come to meet with people, with us and with the beneficiaries of the project. Others just want a good report and just correspond by email'. *ADHENO, Ethiopia*

Core priority 3: Challenging the causes of poverty and injustice through education and advocacy

To fulfil MRDF's mission of bringing about significant and long-term change in marginalised communities, it is essential to challenge the structures and systems which make and keep people poor. To overcome these injustices, government policies at all levels – local to international – need to uphold the rights of the poor. Working both through its partners overseas and UK partners, MRDF therefore aims to increase understanding of the causes of poverty, and build people's confidence and effectiveness in bringing about change.

An example of an MRDF partner that has benefited from our education and advocacy support is Kopila Nepal, which has worked for the rights of marginalised women and children for the last ten years. Kopila is slowly succeeding in changing deep rooted attitudes that subject women to physical and emotional violence and deny girls the opportunity to get an education and develop their potential.

'Due to strong advocacy, forced marriages of girl children have almost come to an end in our working area. The groups of women are very active to prevent forced girl child marriage. School enrolment for girl children has increased and girl students are performing well in school. Corporal punishment, which used to be very common, has stopped in schools. The cases of domestic violence have been reduced and women have started reporting the cases.' *Bina Silwal, co-founder and Executive Director of Kopila Nepal*

In the UK, MRDF supported and promoted strategic campaigns which aimed to highlight global poverty and hunger and tackle some of its underlying causes including climate change, debt and unfair trade. We joined over 100 other charities and faith groups in the 'Enough Food for Everyone IF' campaign, which called on the UK government to use the UK's G8 presidency in 2013 to take action on the root causes of the hunger crisis. Grants were made to three campaign partners, the Jubilee Debt Campaign ('Making finance work for people'), the World Development Movement (food commodity speculation), and War on Want (trade

justice in supply chains). We worked in partnership with the Environmental Justice Foundation on a campaign to give legal protection to refugees from climate change and other environmental disasters.

MRDF also sought to educate people about key development issues and provided resources and opportunities for action, focusing our efforts on Methodist congregations and schools. Our multimedia educational resource, Iota, designed to help Christians explore how to respond to global injustice, won two prestigious awards in the autumn of 2012.

Financial review

We are very grateful to our many supporters, partners, volunteers, funders, staff, advisers and trustees who have made this year's achievements possible. We record particular thanks to those who supported the organisation financially. Total income increased by 36% to £2,722k, with much of the increase attributable to an extremely generous legacy received late in the year. Total expenditure decreased by 16% to £2,003k.

MRDF's consolidated statement of financial activities to 31 August 2013 is set out below. Copies of its full accounts can be downloaded from www.allwecan.org.uk or obtained by writing to All We Can, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Future plans

MRDF has helped thousands of people in some of the world's poorest communities to become all that they can, by investing in partnerships which improve quality of life and create positive, long-term change for individuals, families and nations.

And it is because we want to continue to make the biggest difference we can by all the means that we can – to paraphrase John Wesley – that during 2013 MRDF undertook a strategic review of its work in order to develop its plans for the future. We consulted with partners, supporters and other stakeholders to identify the areas where we want to continue to be effective and efficient as a Methodist partner in relief and development. We considered our current strengths in supporting pioneering local partners, the values and emphases of our Methodist roots which lead us to give priority to the poorest and the most excluded, and the extensive grassroots reach provided by our access to church networks and other partnerships.

In the future, we want to increase the scale and impact of our activities, not for growth's sake, but so that more people can benefit. We fundamentally believe in the unique value and abilities of every individual and their potential to overcome the barriers they face, and want to play our part in seeing every person's potential fulfilled. We also want to be a louder voice for those we work with in the UK and internationally.

In April 2014, MRDF relaunched as *All We Can – the Methodist relief and development partner*. We believe that our new identity better reflects our future focus and will inspire new support. We invite supporters – past, present and future – to join us in making a renewed commitment to doing all we can to make a difference for some of the world's poorest people.

Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2013

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Total 2013</u> £	<u>Total 2012</u> £
Incoming resources from generated funds				
<i>Voluntary Income:</i>				
Donations & grants	1,022,181	549,275	1,571,456	1,612,707
Legacies	1,083,755	-	1,083,755	331,765
Investment income & interest	65,923	1,036	66,959	58,431
<i>Activities for generating funds:</i>				
Sales & other income	-	-	-	<u>140</u>
Total incoming resources	<u>2,171,859</u>	<u>550,311</u>	<u>2,722,170</u>	<u>2,003,043</u>
Resources expended				
<i>Costs of generating funds:</i>				
Fundraising & publicity	297,186	-	297,186	256,926
Investment Management	14,488	-	14,488	16,830
<i>Charitable activities:</i>				
Development	767,668	529,327	1,296,995	1,509,429
Humanitarian	10,785	106,983	117,768	327,063
Advocacy & Education	189,287	-	189,287	212,666
<i>Governance costs</i>	<u>86,986</u>	-	<u>86,986</u>	<u>66,553</u>
Total resources expended	<u>1,366,400</u>	<u>636,310</u>	<u>2,002,710</u>	<u>2,389,467</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised losses	805,459	(85,999)	719,460	(386,424)
Other recognised losses	<u>(47,526)</u>	-	<u>(47,526)</u>	<u>(54,123)</u>
Net movement in funds	757,933	(85,999)	671,934	(440,547)
Total funds brought forward at 1 September	<u>1,095,735</u>	<u>102,970</u>	<u>1,198,705</u>	<u>1,639,252</u>
Total funds at 31 August	<u>1,853,668</u>	<u>16,971</u>	<u>1,870,639</u>	<u>1,198,705</u>

***RESOLUTION

6/1. The Conference received the Report.