
Vimba's Annual Report 2011

2011 was a fantastic year for Vimba. We raised £36,433.70, a considerable amount more than in 2010. This allowed us to expand to four feeding centres in Zimbabwe, as well as launch phase one of our newest project, helping rebuild the derelict Dewe school. Vimba's committee grew with additional members joining the charity and we held a number of successful fundraising events which once again saw public awareness and support for our grass roots charity expand.

Achievements in 2011

In April 2011, Vimba won the award for community champion of the year at the Zimbabwe Achievers Awards (ZAA). These have been set up to recognise Zimbabwean talent across the world. We were nominated for the award and voted as winners by the public.

Events in 2011

Last year saw an array of fundraising events, the first of which was in March when the band SWARM dedicated their last ever gig to supporting Vimba. Then, in August, Vimba hosted the Summer Garden Party in the beautiful grounds of the Le Gothique, in Wandsworth. Our guest speakers Betty Makoni, a renowned child rights activist, and Phil Davis, a sportsman who ran six marathons in seven days across the Sahara desert to raise money for Vimba, regaled us with some inspiring stories. The auction was well supported by the audience and the the Garden Party raised around £5,000.

Vimba held its third annual Golf Day at Addington Court Golf Course with 40 golfers taking part. This event benefitted from the tremendous support of the Hedgefund 36 South, who matched the money raised on the day, resulting in over £3,000 being raised.

One of the founding members of Vimba, Kelly Harrison, our Asian rep, enhanced our global growth by hosting a Vimba evening in Hong Kong in November and managed to raise £2,000.

Our Vimbassadors programme is something which really developed and grew in 2011. A number of keen sportsmen participated in various competitions and in doing so raised money for Vimba. We were privileged to have Vimbassadors take part in the Cape Epic, the Marathon des Sables, the Berlin marathon as well as the Casablanca marathon. These events amounted to over £8,000 being raised.

Additionally, in 2011 we were fortunate to have a number of Vimba champions. Ashleigh Macpherson for having her company, Sloane Robinson donate £2,700; Mike Tasker for his continuing support at 36 South, who donated £1,000 to us instead of sending out Christmas cards in 2010; Nick Hocart for donating £10,000 through his company and to Dave Hobbs and Kim Westcott of BSG who have campaigned for Vimba at their office to be selected as one of the company's charities for 2012.

IN ZIMBABWE

On the ground, Vimba continues to support the three feeding centres as well as ongoing support for the Banket and Karoi Orphanage. The three centres cost approximately £14,500 a year to run so approximately half the funds raised this year will go to sustaining those projects.

Dewe school is the newest Vimba project, it is a derelict, neglected school which can no longer function due to crumbling buildings, lack of teachers and no fresh water. Vimba intends to support the rebuilding of the school, helping it become self sustainable. Using the money raised from our golf day, we intend to construct a borehole to provide fresh water and will then look at repairing the buildings and installing solar panels. The project is going to cost approximately £21,000.

Due to an increasing number of children needing our assistance; 2011 saw us focusing on improving the children's access to primary healthcare. In addition, we assisted in paying for certain medical expenses for needy children in the areas, such as scans and medication to control epilepsy.

To do this, we sent the Vimba's Nurse Aide Judy on a couple of courses, so that her visits to the Vimba Feeding Centres would be more helpful. She has successfully completed courses on:

- Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV in pregnant mothers
- Counselling for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

Vimba is also currently paying the school fees for two girls – twins who have been separated for the last year because their mother is dead and their father is blind. Vimba has been responsible for reuniting the twins and is paying the school fees for both to attend high school.

Plans for 2012

Education, food and sustainability

Our focus for 2012 is to continue to support and develop the existing feeding centres, further developing the education of the children as well as the facilities of each centre. Encouraging sustainability in the communities we support will always be at the heart of what we do. Reading books, music equipment as well as playground equipment are a few assets we hope to acquire for our projects.

Phase two on Dewe School will begin as soon as funding permits and the aim is to provide water tanks to house any excess water, finish repairs to the classrooms and buildings and look to provide a basic drip irrigation system so crops can be planted.

Water is always an issue in the rural areas and we are looking to provide a hand pump to one of the centres. With sufficient water, the school would like to start a 'young farmers club' for the children attending the feeding centre as well as the children attending the local primary school. This 'young farmers club' aims to teach the children how to grow food and become sustainable. Land has already been marked out for the vegetable garden.

Healthcare

Judy, the Vimba Nurse Aide has been performing basic healthcare checks such as nutrition, weight, checking for signs of abuse and common healthcare issues, mainly due to hygiene. Judy has applied to spend the first two months of next year with Childline, for her practical part of the courses we paid for, thus giving her the opportunity to work with experienced child counselors in a number of challenging circumstances.

Next term we will be sending the teachers from the feeding centres on a Pediatric First Aid Course. We also pay for a doctor who conducts an annual check on the Vimba children and we would like to offer this service to all of the children and particularly sick individuals in the surrounding community.

Vimba also endeavors to continue to expand our committees both in London and in Zimbabwe in order to keep up with the wonderful support we receive.

With such a resounding success in 2011 the future looks bright for 2012 and we are excited for what this New Year brings.