



# The Laura Case Trust



## The Laura Case Trust Newsletter - No. 4

Welcome to the fourth newsletter from **The Laura Case Trust**. You are receiving this because you've donated to, fund raised for, or sponsored someone fundraising for the Trust. Whichever it is - a huge thank you.

We'd like to start by introducing our new additions. We have four new trustees: Nick Ramscar, a doctor at Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, Kate Sturgeon, a nurse at the Royal Free (and former Medicins Sans Frontiers worker in Zimbabwe), and Marz Gyles and Vicki Eyre-Brook, friends of Laura's from Cambridge. We are very grateful to them for giving up their time and energy, and look forward to working with them in the future. Another new addition who can't go unmentioned is Jacob Laurie Edge, the Chair's baby. So far his contributions to the Trust have mainly been in gurgles and smiles, but he will no doubt have much to say for himself soon. Apologies for the inclusion of the picture - I couldn't resist!



While the Chair has been otherwise engaged, the rest of the Trustees have been busy. We've sponsored several new projects and are working with partners on some really exciting new and potentially longer term ideas. Two of our trustees - Dom Moor and Nick Ramscar - have also recently been out to Uganda to kickstart one of the new projects we are funding. A description of their trip will shortly be on our website so do take a look; it is always inspiring to hear first hand about where your donations are going.

On November 7, we are holding our second supporters event in Shoreditch. It promises to be a great evening so do come along - more details at the end of this newsletter.

## Projects

### **Azur Clinic, Hoima, Uganda**

In Uganda, it is not clear if anyone is even counting the deaths of new mothers and their infants, but the most widely-quoted figure for neonatal

mortality is 25% by the end of the first week. It is evident in the shrugging acceptance of mothers handed their lifeless newborns at the local hospital. It is equally evident in the scores of orphans whose mothers die for want of simple medicines and equipment.

In Hoima, northern Uganda, a clinic has been set up in a desperate rearguard action against maternal and child mortality, and to help lighten some of the unbearable pressure on local medical services. The **Azur Clinic** is a beacon project to try and prevent some of this unnecessary suffering. But until this Summer, although it had a sparkling new donated operating theatre, it had no surgical team to run it. Azur could only therefore perform straightforward deliveries. Anything requiring surgery had to be referred to the local general hospital, where delays and lack of supplies means many others and infants often do not survive.

We are therefore very pleased to have been able to team up with Help Hoima, the charity behind Azur, to fund a surgeon and an anaesthetist for the clinic for the next three years (£7500 over the period).



Even better, in July two of our trustees, Dr Moor and Dr Ramscar, were able to go out with Help Hoima and a team from Basingstoke Hospital to set up the operating theatre and train a new surgical team in

operating management and nursing. The aim of their trip was not to save a few lives and fly home, but to set up a clinic that would have a lasting impact and to mentor local staff to continue using it after their departure. It has been a great success: the new surgery team have hit the ground running.



The surgeon, a twenty-five year old Ugandan not yet at the end of his first year post-graduation, is quick and skilful, but humble and unfailingly kind to his patients. Between cases he likes to take off his extra-large surgical gumboots and discuss the work of

Rowan Atkinson. The first Caesarian section was successfully carried out by the new team ten days after they stepped into their new roles, and is continuing to carry out successful surgeries.

### **Equipment to East Africa**

We have also funded several pieces of sorely needed equipment to hospitals in Uganda and Kenya. We bought an oxygen concentrator (£680) for the **Azur Clinic**, which makes oxygen from the air which can then be provided to mother and baby, made a significant contribution towards a generator for **Kamuli Mission Hospital** in Uganda (£3000), and a plaster saw for a charity called **MEAK**, which runs medical missions in Kenya (£713).

### **Open Arms, Malawi**

Operating in Malawi, **Open Arms** is a charity which runs childrens homes, with the aim of returning children to their communities. It has an Outreach programme which runs Feeding Stations/ Nursery Schools to ensure that children discharged from their homes continue to receive good nutrition, healthcare and a start to their education. We are helping by funding two teachers and their assistants from the feeding station on the southern lakeshore of Lake Malawi to go on a Nursery Education course (£564).

### **Paediatric Emergency Training, Uganda**

We are currently working with The Hillman Foundation (a Canadian Charity that operates mainly in Kenya) and The Kenya Medical Research Institute to roll out in Uganda 'ETAT +' a paediatric emergency training for doctors following a very successful set of training in Kenya. We want to use the training which we know works, and train up healthcare professionals in Uganda to spread this training wider, with the potential to save and improve many children's lives. We have provided preliminary funding to send a Ugandan doctor to the Child Health Evidence conference in Kenya to learn more (£620), and are currently in discussions about a forthcoming training programme, using the ETAT+ model, for 32 paediatricians in Kampala.

### **Safe Hands for Mothers, Africa**

We have mentioned before that we often find projects through The Funding Network, a fabulous organisation that matches small charities to a network of givers. Safe Hands is just such a charity. Their vision is to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity from pregnancy related causes and to protect and promote the health of newborns in developing countries. It has very similar goals to the Azur Clinic, above - albeit through different means. We have given a small grant of £100 to Safe Hands.

### **Elevate**

We also found Elevate through The Funding Network. Elevate uses outdoor activities and creative arts to address issues facing young women living on estates in Hackney, including territorial conflict and negative self image. We gave Elevate a small grant of £100.

### **An update on projects from our previous newsletters**

#### **Action for Children in Conflict, Kenya**

In our last newsletter, we told you about the work we were sponsoring in Thika, Kenya through a charity called **Action for Children in Conflict**. Our funding provided first aid education for vulnerable young people who have been living on the streets. The funding reached over 150 children and has helped ensure they are better protected on the streets. Here is what Paul Mungai, a 16 year old former street child, had to say about it: *"The training was very good. I learnt about things that I did not know about and I also learnt that things that I thought were right to do sometimes are actually wrong, like throwing cold water over someone who has fainted... I feel that I can save someone's life now if I have to"*.



We were so impressed by the way that AfCiC used our funding that we have provided a further grant of £1876 to build on the training initially offered and resolve some issues that the initial set of training exposed. This next stage of work will expand the training to focus on teachers as well as children, as AfCiC has found teachers in government primary schools are wholly ill-equipped to provide basic medical care to their students.

For example, one child who had experienced an epileptic fit was beaten awake by a teacher and parent before intervention by an AfCiC staff member. Further training from AfCiC should help prevent this sort of treatment in the future.

#### **Amon Bwambale, Uganda**

We are sponsoring **Amon** through medical school so that he can go back to work in his remote home region of Bundibugyo (increasing the number of

doctors there by 100%), continues to do well. We hear from him regularly and Dr Moore caught up with him when he was out in Uganda in the Summer. Amon hopes that given his previous experience (he worked as a medical orderly prior to starting training), he may be able to finish his course six months early and get back to Bundibugyo sooner.

### **Schools and scholarships in Uganda**

We are pleased to continue our association with **PEAS** (Promoting Equality in African Schools) an innovative charity that sets up low fee/ high quality secondary schools in impoverished rural areas in Uganda. We have recently given another £3000 to put five of the students that have graduated from their schools through the second year of university, on the understanding that they will return to PEAS schools for 3 years to act as finance managers and science teachers. We have also given them £1000 towards a new school in Northern Uganda, and sponsored their presentation at Funding Network even, where they raised over £7,783 in donations from Funding Network members towards the same new school.

### **Fundraising**

The fourth Laura Case Trust **Cambridge to Norfolk Bike Ride** (65 miles) took place again this September, with 11 hardy riders. They raised over £3000, for which many thanks to Ben Connah and friends. Pictures of the riders below, including their youngest cheerleader. If you want to read the story of the ride, including exactly where they got lost this year and the Macedonian pop star they almost saw, go to: <http://troisv.blogspot.com/2010/09/by-purple-of-purple-for-purple.html>



A big thank you to the **Fosters**, who held their annual fundraising lunch, and **James and Beth Smith**, who donated the collection from their wedding in the Summer to the Trust. Many congratulations to them both. Thanks too to **Will Grut**, who asked that friends and family make donations to the Trust in lieu of presents for his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We also owe a belated thank you to **Harris Lipman**, who have audited our accounts on a pro bono basis every year.

On **November 7**, we are holding our **second Supporters Event**, following the fantastic night we held last March in Bethnal Green. It will be another night of comedy and music and drinking, so do come along. It is being held at **The Last Days of Decadence on Shoreditch High Street, E1, from 5.30pm - 8.30pm**. Tickets will be £10 on the door. It would be great to see as many of our supporters as possible, so do come along.

## **Many thanks from the Trustees**

Once again, thank you for all your support - whether through fundraising, sponsorship or individual donations - it means so much to us. We will update you again early next year, but in the meantime do visit the website: [www.thelauracasetrust.org](http://www.thelauracasetrust.org), where you can find out more about the projects, updates and fundraising.

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