



BLUE SKIES FOUNDATION

2020 REVIEW

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND



LOOKING BACK ON AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR



2020 was an extraordinary year. The sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic hit all our businesses, severely impacting sales and logistics. This led to operations needing to be scaled back or moved, thereby impacting jobs, raw material supplies, and ultimately, livelihoods. However, while our businesses struggled, the pandemic taught us the vital importance of continuing to support our staff, farmers and their communities through the toughest challenges and uncertainties that our supply chain has ever had to face. We of course implemented measures and protocols to ensure peoples safety, but most important has been the determination to never give up. With shops, borders and schools closing down, there was a moment when we wondered whether the Foundation might also need to scale back its activities, however with mounting stress, anxiety and hardship among communities, it became clear that investing in projects to improve sanitation, education and access to healthcare, and providing hope for the future, was now more crucial than ever before.

In the end, the Blue Skies Foundation was able to complete nearly all its projects as planned, including its first project in Brazil. The only exception was the Mame Saye Diop Maternity Unit in Senegal, which will be completed over the next few months. Blue Skies was also able to adapt its business to be able to continue supplying prepared fruit to our Foundation partners, ensuring that together we could go on supporting livelihoods by providing support where it is needed most, and importantly, protecting jobs.

Simon Derrick, Foundation Coordinator

OUR UNIQUE COOPERATION

The Blue Skies Foundation is a cooperation between the fresh fruit company Blue Skies, and two retailers, Waitrose & Partners in the UK and Albert Heijn in the Netherlands. Through this unique and progressive cooperation, the Foundation seeks to support the communities which participate in the production of fresh-cut fruit products that are made by Blue Skies.

The Foundation is structured in a way that enables projects to be chosen by the people living within the communities where Blue Skies operates in Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt and Brazil. Our Councils, which are made up of representatives of the communities where we work, and our Board of Directors, ensure we follow a democratic process in how projects are prioritised, and take collective responsibility for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of all our initiatives. Funding is provided annually in equal contributions by our founding partners, Waitrose & Partners, Albert Heijn and Blue Skies.

OUR FOUNDATION PARTNERS



ADVISORS



RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in 2020, Blue Skies acted swiftly to implement measures to ensure its factories were safe. New protocols were put in place, hand hygiene stations installed, and production lines moved to allow for social distancing. We also provided additional PPE, such as in Ghana where our teams sewed over 3,000 facemasks for staff. More recently we have introduced rapid testing at our factories in some of the worst affected countries and we have provided virtual well-being programmes to help support the mental health needs of staff.

The pandemic has also created challenges for people living in some of our local communities. In Ghana, for instance, lack of awareness of health advice and limited access to hygiene supplies created the potential for heightened risk of transmission in some rural areas. To address these challenges, Blue Skies was supported by the Waitrose & Partners Foundation to provide hygiene kits for local communities and create communications materials and media to raise awareness of local government health advice.



CASE STUDY: TIMIABU NURSES ACCOMMODATION

In 2020, the Blue Skies Foundation funded an accommodation block for nursing staff at a rural clinic which provides healthcare for a mango farming area in the Bono East Region in Ghana. The area is home to over 2,000 people, including around 10 mango farms which supply Waitrose. Without the clinic, the nearest health care facility is over 60 kilometres away. Due to its remote location, nursing staff had previously struggled to travel to the clinic, which restricted the hours it could be open for. This meant that there were occasions when local people were unable to attend to emergencies in time. Providing an accommodation block has enabled nursing staff to relocate to the community so that the clinic can be open for longer and offer an out of hours emergency service. Since it was opened in 2020, there have already been several occasions where staff have been available to prevent loss of life by providing emergency support.

OUR 2020 FOUNDATION PROJECTS



Nsawam DVSU
The renovation of the Domestic Violence Support Unit (DVSU) at Nsawam Police Station in Ghana to improve support for victims of domestic abuse.



Notto Maternity Unit
The reconstruction of a maternity unit at Mame Saye Diop clinic in the community of Notto Gouye Diama in Senegal. This project is due to be completed in 2021.



Abbey Quarshie Toilet
The construction of a 12 unit toilet block to improve sanitation and reduce water-borne diseases in the community of Abbey Quarshie in Ghana.



Vusumuzi Textbooks
The provision of over 400 textbooks to improve education standards at Vusumuzi Primary School in Siyathemba in South Africa.



Senchi Polytank and concrete platform
The provision of a 20,000 litre water storage tank to improve access to potable water at Senchi Methodist School in Ghana.



Good Hope Educentre
The construction of a security fence to increase safety and prevent vandalism at a school in the community of Siyathemba in South Africa.



Asikuma Polytank
The provision of a 30,000 litre water storage tank to improve access to potable water for the mango growing community of Asikuma in Ghana.



Al Rashad Mammography
The provision of Mammogram Machine to improve awareness, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer for a hospital in Tenth Rammadan City in Egypt.



Nurses accommodation
The construction of a two bedroom accommodation block to improve staffing levels and extend opening hours at a clinic in Nkoranza Timiabu in Ghana.



ABRAC
The provision of furniture, play equipment and learning materials for a centre for abandoned children in Mogi das Cruzes in Brazil.



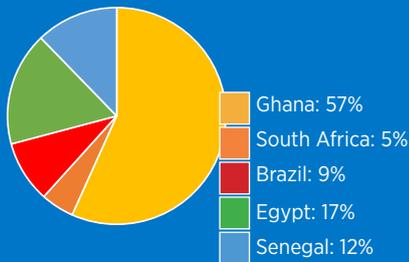
2020 School Farm of the Year Competition

2020 marked the fifth year of this initiative, which aims to encourage more young into farming by enabling schools to compete against each other to grow and manage their own school farms. The theme of 2020's competition was "growing the future amidst the Covid -19 pandemic" and 60 schools from across the country took part, enabling educational activities to safely continue while many schools were closed. The final awards ceremony was streamed online to enable as many participants as possible.

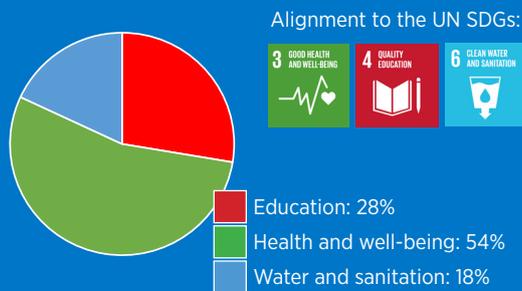
HOW OUR FUNDS WERE SPENT

In 2020, the Blue Skies Foundation collectively raised over GH¢ 1.17m. This was made up of contributions from the funding parties of Waitrose & Partners and Albert Heijn. In-kind support was provided by Blue Skies. The charts below show how these funds were spent by country and project category. Funding is proportioned based on a number of factors, including sales turnover from each country, fruit origin, local needs and macro social and economic indicators.

Funding split by country



Funding split by project category



OUR IMPACT

Each year the Foundation carries out a comprehensive evaluation of its projects in order to understand how they are performing and how far they are meeting their intended objectives. This is an important task as it helps us to understand what is working well and where there is a need for improvement. We can then apply these learnings to our selection process to maximise impact and strengthen the sustainability of future projects.

Some highlights from our most recent evaluation:

80%

The increase in contact hours at Ada School in Ghana since the Foundation supported in the provision of water.

300%

The increase in enrollment at Anoff Kindergarten since the Foundation provided a new classroom block and kitchen.

100%

The examination pass rate at Nsumia Junior High School since the Foundation provided a new classroom block

31k

The number of people living in communities benefiting from our 2020 projects

LOOKING AHEAD....

Eleven more projects have been approved for 2021. They include a new 'Bio' toilet block for a school in Ghana, a borehole and effluent treatment station for a children's educational charity in Brazil, IT equipment for an adult learning initiative in South Africa, a fully equipped computer classroom in Senegal and a gym for staff at Blue Skies Egypt.

Finally, in 2021 we say farewell to our Waitrose Board Director, Nyika Brain, who is moving on to a new role at Waitrose & Partners. We wish Nyika all the best in her new role and thank her for the great contribution she has made to the Foundation over the past few years. Thank you Nyika, we will miss you!

FOUNDATION TEAM

The people who make it work



Abena Antwi
Advisory Director
Independent



Robert Arhinful
Finance
Blue Skies



Victoria Asamoah
Foundation Assistant, Ghan



Gloria Asare
Foundation Rep Senegal



Mohamed Bahgat
Foundation Rep Egypt



Nyika Brain
Director
Waitrose & Partners



Simon Derrick
Coordinator
Blue Skies Foundation



Alistair Djimatey
Foundation Manager, Ghana



Flavia Mometti
Foundation Rep Brazil



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Anthony Pile
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