

Annual Report 2020/21

United
Purpose 
Beyond aid





Image caption: Agriculture livelihoods programme participant, The Gambia. (Photo credit: Jason Florio)

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The trustees who served during the financial year up to the date of signing The Trustees Report were as follows:

- Mary Robinson (appointed as Chair on 22 November 2021)
- Peter Ayres (resigned as Trustee and Chair on 4 August 2021)
- Catherine Cottrell
- Hadi Husani
- Sir Martin Davidson (resigned on 4 August 2021)
- Peter Atfield (resigned on 4 August 2021)
- David Bull (resigned on 4 August 2021)
- Catherine Fitzgibbon (appointed on 13 August 2021)
- Carmel Fox (appointed on 13 August 2021)
- Michael Gormley (appointed on 13 August 2021)

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Chief Executive Officer:

- Kathryn Llewellyn (resigned on 31 December 2020)
- Linda Edwards (appointed on interim basis on 1 January 2021; resigned on 6 August 2021)
- Ray Jordan (appointed on 6 August 2021)

Finance Director:

- Paul Seymour (resigned on 18 June 2021)
- Peter McDevitt (appointed on 6 August 2021)

Cluster Lead (Asia and Southern Africa):

Helena Skember

Cluster Lead (West Africa and Brazil):

Tim Kellow

United Purpose is a registered charity in England and Wales (registration number 272465) and is constituted as a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales (registration number 1278887).

Foreword from the Chair and CEO

United Purpose has a mission to move people beyond aid – and over the past 45 years that is exactly what we have done. We have reached over 35 million people since our organisation was founded in 1976. Over the past four decades, we have helped marginalised communities take greater control over their own lives by providing lasting solutions, whether that's been from helping them to earn more from their work, increasing access to safe water or improving social accountability.

An unprecedented year

The past year has been unprecedented in our organisation's history. The entire world has been rocked by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic – lives have been changed forever, impacting us all. The people we serve, many of whom live in extreme poverty, are especially vulnerable to the long-term health and economic shocks caused by the pandemic. This has brought a renewed urgency to our work, and we are immensely proud of how our teams have pivoted their efforts to fight COVID and overturn its devastating effects.

Our global response to prevent the spread of COVID-19 has saved lives and safeguarded livelihoods. We quickly adapted our projects so that vital information and equipment could be shared with those who need it most, distributing hygiene kits, food parcels and providing essential infection prevention guidance. We directly reached over 775,000 people through our rapid COVID response. We worked with our community partners to produce and distribute almost 218,000 cloth facemasks and installed an estimated 8,000 new handwashing stations.

Global challenges

The pandemic struck at a time when our world was already changing rapidly. In many of the countries where we work, a combination of climate change and rapid population growth threatens the economic gains that have been made over the past three decades – and how these complex challenges are addressed may well set the agenda for global peace and stability this century.

Yet while there has never been a greater demand for the work we do, we are being challenged to transform the way we do business. Traditional funding streams are dwindling. Social enterprise models will be an increasingly important part of our future, as will mobilising trading income.

A new chapter

The challenges that lie ahead are significant and we will have to adapt quickly if we are to overcome them. For these reasons, United Purpose's Board of Trustees and senior leadership team have come to a unanimous decision that now is the time to make some radical and exciting changes.

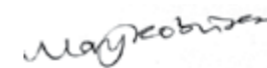
To survive and to continue delivering on our mission to move people beyond aid, we will be joining forces with Self Help Africa and other members of the Gorta group. This merger will amplify our current operations, and strengthen our capacity and scale to deliver greater impact.

Together, we will seek lasting change for those living in some of the world's most challenging places.

Thank you

We'd like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all of those who have been on the journey with us so far. Thank you to United Purpose's dedicated and passionate Board of Trustees, to leadership teams past and present, to our staff, partners, supporters and communities. None of our amazing achievements would have been possible without you.

We hope that you will continue on this journey with us, and support us as we continue striving to eradicate global poverty and inequality. We are excited about what the future holds for our organisation, and we sincerely hope that you will want to be part of it too.



Mary Robinson,
Chair of the Trustees



Ray Jordan,
CEO



Who we are

OUR VISION

A WORLD WHERE
**JUSTICE, DIGNITY
AND RESPECT**
PREVAIL FOR ALL.

OUR MISSION

WE ARE UNITED
IN OUR PURPOSE
TO MOVE PEOPLE
BEYOND AID.

What we do

United Purpose strives to end extreme poverty and inequality across the globe.

We are a leader in community-led development and grassroots innovation. For more than 40 years, we have worked with frontline activists, community organisations and individuals to help people gain agency over their own lives – so they can move beyond aid.

We do this as we believe a person's ability to feed themselves, stay healthy or have an education should never be dependent on charity or benevolence, but always within their control. We want people everywhere to live independent lives where they are able to exercise agency over their own future.

How we do it

The heart of our approach is a grassroots, community-led model. We sincerely believe in working in partnership, and the voices of those we work with are at the forefront of all that we do.

We use innovation and creativity, and we are not afraid to explore new methods to achieve better results.

Our specialism is mobilising communities to change social norms and behaviours that infringe rights and hold back development. We pride ourselves on building deep relationships with communities, local partners and governments, where we implement community-led, sustainable solutions to the challenges people face. These solutions often involve improving access to markets, establishing business opportunities to enhance livelihoods and increasing access to basic public services.

All of this enables the people we support to take control of their own lives and move beyond aid.

Specifically, we use three tactics to bring about lasting change:

- We tackle the big issues that affect people's lives
- We test and scale innovations
- We mobilise our resources to influence global change

Our tactics for lasting change

- We tackle the big issues that affect people's lives
- We test and scale innovations
- We mobilise our resources to influence global change

The three levers

Money



We support people to gain more sustainable and resilient access to income.

Information

We enable individuals to access knowledge and information that allows them to determine their own futures and protect and extend their rights.



Systems

We enable communities to access and influence local and global systems, including market, health, financial and government ones.



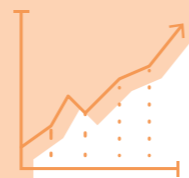
The big issues

Health

We improve health and wellbeing through increasing access to basic services and addressing people's physical, social and psychological needs.



Livelihoods



We empower people to have more sustainable and resilient livelihoods, and ensure that economic growth is equitable.

Environment

We improve environmental resilience through reducing carbon emissions, making renewable energy more accessible to all and supporting communities to adapt to the changing climate in their region.



Exploitation

We combat violence, exploitation and conflict by tackling the root causes, supporting victims and building peaceful futures.



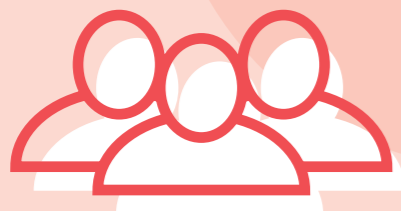
OUR WORLD

In 2020/21...

We directly reached

2,186,814

people



...and indirectly reached an additional **10,775,439** people

IN NUMBERS



Livelihoods

We provided **31,852** people with microfinance loans

We trained **109,307** farmers to improve their practices

TOTAL DIRECT REACH: **274,052**

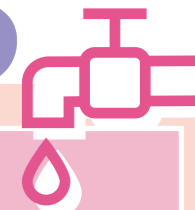


Climate

We planted **711,589** trees

We supported **685,291** people to use cleaner, fuel-efficient stoves

TOTAL DIRECT REACH: **112,734**



Health

We provided **336,627** people with access to safe water

We supported **101,276** pregnant women.

TOTAL DIRECT REACH: **885,745**

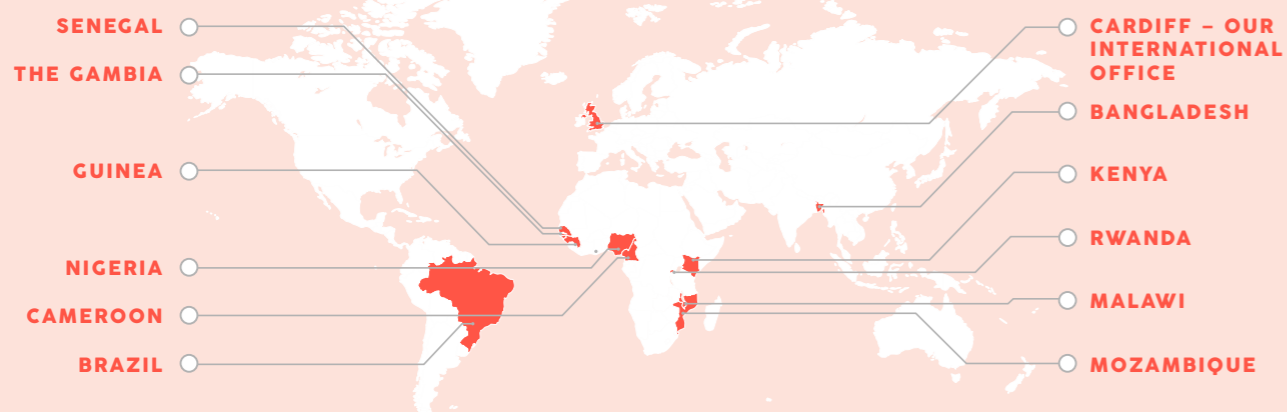


Exploitation

We delivered **88** workshops between communities and local government

We indirectly reached over **2 million** people through rights awareness campaigns

TOTAL DIRECT REACH: **138,455**



MAP OF OPERATIONS

COVID

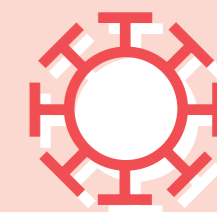
When the pandemic hit, we quickly adapted our projects in order to share vital information and equipment with those who need it most.

We produced and distributed **217,928** cloth facemasks

We distributed over **59,000** hygiene kits to people affected by the virus

We indirectly reached nearly **8 million** people with COVID-19 prevention messages

TOTAL DIRECT REACH: **112,734**



Stories from our work...

Over the following pages we present some highlights from our work in 2020-21 under our four change objectives: livelihoods, health, environment and violence/exploitation. We also feature key achievements from our humanitarian and sport for good work.



LIVELIHOODS

Over the past 40 years, we have built up a wealth of knowledge and expertise in improving livelihoods, particularly in poor rural communities. We promote livelihoods that can adapt to the demands of a changing climate, and we especially focus on economically empowering women. In 2020-21, for example, we supported over 95,000 women to increase their incomes and provided over 21,000 women with micro-finance loans.

MOZAMBIQUE

Boosting women's businesses

Just as we launched our female economic empowerment project in Niassa province, Mozambique, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. It quickly became apparent that this health crisis would also have a devastating socioeconomic impact, exacerbating many problems that women and girls in Niassa were already facing.

Girls are particularly vulnerable to being left behind in education, while women endure the most disproportionate care burdens, disruptions in income, poor access to health and are at greater risk of domestic violence.

Elfrida is one of the 134 women our project supported. A single mother of one son, Elfrida lives with a physical disability that means she has to use a wheelchair. She used to work in a hairdressing salon, which equipped her with the skills, experience and desire to open her own salon – but she wasn't sure how to put her dream into reality.

Thanks to our project, Elfrida was able to invest in building her own salon (attached to her home) and build her business knowledge through the training sessions.



Right: Elfrida, a participant in our 'Mais Mulheres' project.

"There is no other salon nearby, which is a good opportunity for my business," says Elfrida. "I believe it will be very successful. Especially now during COVID-19, women don't want to go far away from their homes. This opportunity has the potential to make me self-sufficient."

CONTEXT: Funded by the Edmond Rothschild Foundation, the 'Mais Mulheres' (More Women) project reached 134 women in Niassa province, Mozambique. Business training and capacity building took place throughout April and May 2020. A women's business centre was also established in UP's compound, where a core group of female entrepreneurs provide peer support to other women. All the women who participated in the project reported increased knowledge and business management skills, and 60% of participants reported increased profits and a greater sense of teamwork in their relationships with their husbands.



Left: Participants in a COVID-safe business training session, as part of our 'Mais Mulheres' project.

Far left: Participants in our netball project in Malawi.

HEALTH

Improving health in the communities where we work is a key focus of ours. Whether it is installing water pumps and training locals how to maintain them, or promoting good nutrition practices, we support people with the tools and resources to make informed choices and lead healthier lives. For example, in 2020-21, we provided 336,627 people with access to safe water and supported 101,276 pregnant women.



MALAWI

Healthy food, happy babies

Our nutrition project in Malawi promotes good nutrition practices, using locally available food. We train households on the importance of balanced meals that contain six key food groups and how to prepare them. We also support participants with vegetable seeds, fruit tree seedlings and livestock, to diversify their diets.

Meet Julieta. She is one of the nutrition promoters for the programme, and also has two children of her own – her eldest aged three, and youngest three months.

Julieta actively supports different nutrition activities in her home village, including care groups, training and awareness raising. Her passion for nutrition began after she attended our training sessions in maternal and neonatal health, and received five chickens as part of the project. Julieta became pregnant with her second child in March 2020. During her pregnancy, she prepared nutritious meals for her family.

Julieta says, “I was eating the six food groups because I wanted to give birth to a healthy baby. I also wanted to prove that the information in the maternal and neonatal health counselling module is true and to encourage other mothers to do the same after they see my healthy baby”.

Her son rarely falls sick unlike his elder brother when he was the same age. The family used to spend a lot of money on medication for their first-born son, who was born severely underweight. “My life has changed and that of my family too. We are a happy and healthy family now,” said Julieta.

Julieta has become a role model for other nutrition volunteers and other households. She encourages others to follow the nutrition guidance, helping many other families in the community.

CONTEXT: The GIZ-BMZ funded project *Food and Nutrition Security Programme (FNSP)* (2020-2022) aims to improve the nutritional status and resilience to food crises of people in Dedza district who are vulnerable to nutrition insecurity, specifically 18,277 children under-two and 11,770 pregnant and lactating women. With significant impacts on nutritional education and household diets, this project is contributing to long-term health outcomes through positive maternal and neonatal health.

Left: Julieta and her three-month-old baby

Above: Julieta is passionate about helping her young family to have a healthy diet

ENVIRONMENT

Statistics predict that the world's poorest countries will pay the highest price for climate change. We help communities cope with the changing climate in their region, by adapting how they live and work, and by providing facilities to help them become more resilient to these changes. In 2020-21, we planted 711,589 trees and supported 685,291 people to use fuel-efficient stoves and/or cleaner fuels.



SENEGAL

Flourishing forests, thriving communities

Abdou, a herbalist who depends on thriving forests to earn a living, is just one of the thousands of people whose livelihoods have been improved as a result of our forest conservation work in Senegal.

As a nursery gardener, Abdou's job is to understand the different produce that the community relies on for their livelihoods. He plants a variety of trees in the nurseries – for example, cashew, gmelina arborea, ditakh and baobab – and then sells them. In the first year of the programme he sold 700 plants and in the second year this number increased to 1,200 plants.

“The more people that come to rely on fruit trees for their livelihoods, the more we will see a reduction in forest fires because everyone will be more committed to protecting their area of the forest – forests that the community has developed together with UP,” says Abdou.

Above: Abdou gathers plants in the nursery

Left: We are working with communities in Senegal to protect their local forests

Image credits: Jason Florio

CONTEXT: The EU-funded 'Gouvernance Environnementale Communautaire' (or 'Community based Environmental Governance'), began in 2018 and has been instrumental in reducing illegal logging and bush fires in the Casamance area of Senegal. With significant impacts on the environment, value chain addition and people's livelihoods, this project has contributed to the increased commitment of the community to protect their natural resources and created 'green jobs' through providing local businesses and organisations with sub-grants.

EXPLOITATION AND CONFLICT

Many of the communities we work with are fractured and fragile, and experience increasing levels of inequality. We work against violence and exploitation, especially those directed at women and children. We support survivors and place a big emphasis on empowering communities to understand and uphold their rights. We also work to build peace between conflicting groups to promote mutual understanding, trust and resilient social ties. Over the last 20 years, we have successfully implemented over 20 peacebuilding programmes across Africa and South America.



BRAZIL

Fighting violence against women

Like in many other countries, domestic violence against women increased during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil. Social isolation exacerbated family conflicts and forced women to be in closer proximity to their aggressors for longer periods. Shockingly, during March and April 2020, the number of femicides grew by over 22% (when compared to the same period in 2019).

Despite the increase in the number of cases, the data show a reduction in the number of complaints, either because of the woman's fear of reporting because of the proximity of the aggressor, or because of fear of not complying with social isolation measures. Despite that, there were over 105,000 reports to the national support line during 2020.

To encourage reporting and to inform the population how to go about it, we supported our partner, *Cunhã Coletivo Feminista*, and the Paraíba branch of the Association of Brazilian Women to disseminate a jingle in 16 districts of five towns and cities where over 300,000 people live.

Using cars with loudspeakers, the one-minute jingle was repeated several times in each area as the cars went up and down the central streets of each district during the busiest times of the day. It was heard by people in their houses or going about their business in local markets or whilst working. Many of the women with whom we work in these districts were delighted to tell us that they heard the jingle or that their neighbours commented on it. They said that the jingle made it easy to remember both the national and Paraíba state support line phone numbers.

Left: As part of our long-standing work in Cameroon, we work with communities to ensure everyone has fair access to water and can access mediation when conflict arises over natural resources. In response to the pandemic, our partners have trained communities on COVID-19 prevention.

CONTEXT: This activity took place as part of our women's economic empowerment project, funded by the Penny Appeal. The project, which finished in February, was designed to increase the economic autonomy of 140 women, with a view to improving their lives and addressing gender inequalities. In view of the high rate of violence against women in Paraíba, space was also provided to reflect on gender inequality and gender-based violence. The jingle and its dissemination were paid for by the national Association of Brazilian Women (of which our partner *Cunhã Coletivo Feminista* is a member) and the Penny Appeal.



Above: One of the cars with loudspeakers, used to spread vital information

HUMANITARIAN

Our approach to humanitarian work is based on responding to situations where we can make the biggest difference. We focus on areas where we already have strong relationships with communities and local authorities, which enables us to respond more quickly and effectively. Unsurprisingly, in 2020-21, our emergency response work focused on COVID.

COVID is thought to have pushed between 88 and 115 million people into extreme poverty during 2020, according to the World Bank. This is an unprecedented rise – the first rise in over 20 years – and it is a trend that will not reverse any time soon. There are already huge challenges facing the countries where we work, due to a combination of weak healthcare systems, poor hygiene and sanitation facilities, densely

populated communities and an absence of welfare support systems.

Taking the lessons we learnt from our rapid Ebola response in Guinea in 2015, we immediately pivoted our activities to respond to the pandemic across our country programmes.



Highlights

- Across our country programmes, we produced and distributed 217,928 cloth face masks.
- We collaborated with Nigerian musician Sunny Neji to produce a new song, 'Together We Will Beat It', to reach young people and remote communities in Nigeria with vital messages about preventing the spread of COVID-19. The song had over 370,000 views on social media.
- In The Gambia, we rehabilitated and treated broken wells in 80 communities across the country – an activity that has made clean water available to the communities and enabled regular handwashing and improved hygiene (image credit: Jason Florio).
- We distributed 59,009 hygiene kits to people affected by COVID-19 across our country programmes.
- In Malawi, we reached nearly 5 million people with vital messages about COVID prevention (e.g. through radio, SMS and megaphones).



Left: Our humanitarian response project for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh operates health posts in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar

SPORT FOR GOOD

We use sport as a tool to engage, educate and inspire. In 2020–21, we empowered over 30,000 young people through sport, a number we are committed to growing. Sport is a fantastic way to engage children and adults with important issues as diverse as gender equality, nutrition and good hygiene. Inherently fun and playful, sport has the power to bring people together and encourage positive behaviour change.



BANGLADESH

In full swing – moving beyond trauma

Since August 2017, nearly 900,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangladesh to escape systematic discrimination and targeted violence in Myanmar – over half of whom are children. The refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar are incredibly difficult for children. Access to education and other essential services is limited, and children are at risk of violence, exploitation and abuse. Since the crisis began, United Purpose has been on the ground in the camps, working hard to provide families with safe water, access to basic hygiene and sanitation facilities, and health and psychosocial support.

This year, we installed a playground and football equipment in the refugee camp. These facilities are taken for granted by many children across the world, but have proved a lifeline for many Rohingya families.

Safe, accessible and enjoyable, the playground and football equipment are playing an important role in improving psychosocial and physical development, as well as social skills. Eight-year-old Noor is one of the children who regularly plays in the playground.

“The playground is very important for children, youth and even us adults,” says Noor’s mother. “In the camp we didn’t have this kind of facility before. Before, she always stayed at home. But now she is very happy and plays with enjoyment and enthusiasm. We are very happy watching this. I think many children like our daughter will benefit from this playground.”

CONTEXT: Named Equipping Children & Adult Playground in the Rohingya Camp (ECAP), this project is funded by Penny Appeal. The playground has been set up in one of the 34 Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar, and it aims to alleviate post-migration stress – a condition to which children are most vulnerable.



Left/above: Children and youth in the Rohingya camps enjoy the playground and football facilities that we have built

Strategic report: Structure, governance and management

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. This trustees' annual report includes a directors' report as required by company law.

United Purpose is a charitable company limited by guarantee, with registration number 1278887 and charity number 272464, renamed from Concern Universal in November 2016. It was incorporated on 27 September 1976 and established under a memorandum and articles of association (subsequently updated by special resolution in November 2003 and October 2019), which set out the objects and powers of the charitable company.

As of 5 August 2021, United Purpose merged with Gorta, a like-minded organisation head-quartered in Ireland, that trades as Self Help Africa. The leadership of United Purpose transferred to Ray Jordan, as Group CEO, and Carmel Fox as Chair of Gorta. Gorta is registered in Ireland; its company registration number is 28228 and its charity number is 20008895. Three of United Purpose's directors remain on the UP Board to ensure continuity, and they are joined by three directors from Gorta and one independent director. In accordance with the merger agreement, United Purpose remains a separate legal entity as a wholly owned subsidiary of Gorta.

Structure and Governance

United Purpose is a movement of people and organisations. In the UK, these organisations include Village Aid, a Derbyshire-based fundraising charity, and International Inspiration, the London Olympics initiative that uses sport as a tool to promote development and peace. There is also United Purpose Trading, a vehicle for our carbon initiative where we sell carbon credits generated through our development projects. Our movement also includes CUMO, a Malawi-based microfinance organisation that was set up in 2000 with a grant from UK Aid.

United Purpose's central office in Cardiff plays a support role to our eight country offices and leads on: global strategy development and delivery; governance; organisational funding, communications and public affairs efforts, as well as financial management and planning.

We have a devolved structure, with our eight country offices taking the lead on country strategy development (under the umbrella of our Global

Strategy), programme delivery and management, grant fundraising and managing relationships with partners and donors. Our country offices are currently located in Bangladesh, Brazil, Guinea, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia. We deliver projects directly, through our partners and/or through an advisory role with partners. We also operate across borders in near neighbours of our country programmes – for example, in Cameroon.

We work in partnership with many organisations because we believe sustainable change will only happen when we harness the collective knowledge, skills and resources of a wide range of actors – starting with community-level partnerships. We carefully consider the experience, reach and governance of potential partners, as well as the value they will add to our work. We closely monitor how grants are spent. We also manage projects through local partners in countries where we do not have an UP office, including Kenya and Rwanda.

The charity's trustees are appointed as directors of the company and are also its members. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity. The trustees of United Purpose govern the charity's activities and are legally responsible for the overall control of the charity and for ensuring it is properly managed. They sit on the charity's sub-committees, including the Finance & Risk Committee, the Safeguarding and People Committee and the Impact Committee.

The trustees delegate responsibility for the day-to-day running of the charity to the CEO, who reports directly to the Board and manages the execution of the strategy as directed by the Board. The CEO is assisted by a Senior Leadership Team comprising of those who have responsibility for programmes, external affairs, finance and operations. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The trustees who served during the year are listed on page 2.

The trustee report has been written for the financial year ended 31 March 2021. Certain practices outlined in this report may have changed since the merger with Gorta.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

United Purpose recognises that an effective Board of trustees is essential if the charity is to achieve its objectives. Individual trustees must have sufficient knowledge, both of trusteeship in general and of the charity's activities, to enable them to carry out the role and to represent the charity at meetings and other events.

The existing trustees are responsible for recruiting new trustees although specific administrative tasks may be delegated by the Board to the CEO and Senior

Leadership Team. The minimum number of trustees is set at no less than three and the maximum number at no more than eleven.

Efforts to recruit new trustees take into account any recent skills audits and gaps in skills/experience that have been identified, and specific roles or duties that need to be undertaken. Once the ideal profile of skills and experience has been identified, a recruitment plan is formulated. United Purpose seeks to ensure diversity in its Board of trustees as well as in its staff base, and consideration will be given to ways in which groups that are underrepresented on the Board might be reached and encouraged to apply.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an orientation to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, and Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and safeguarding. The training also informs them of the content of the memorandum and articles of association, the decision-making processes, the strategic plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction, they meet employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events that will help them in their role.

Related parties and relationships with other organisations

All trustees and key management personnel are required to disclose any related parties and conflicts of interest. There were no transactions with any other related parties during the year and none of the charity's trustees receives remuneration or other benefits from their work as a trustee.

United Purpose has two wholly owned subsidiaries – United Purpose Trading which sells carbon credits and Village Aid, a fundraising charity supporting projects in West Africa.

Public benefit

Trustees of United Purpose have a duty to report in the Trustees' Annual Report on the charity's public benefit. Each year, the trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity. In this report, they demonstrate:

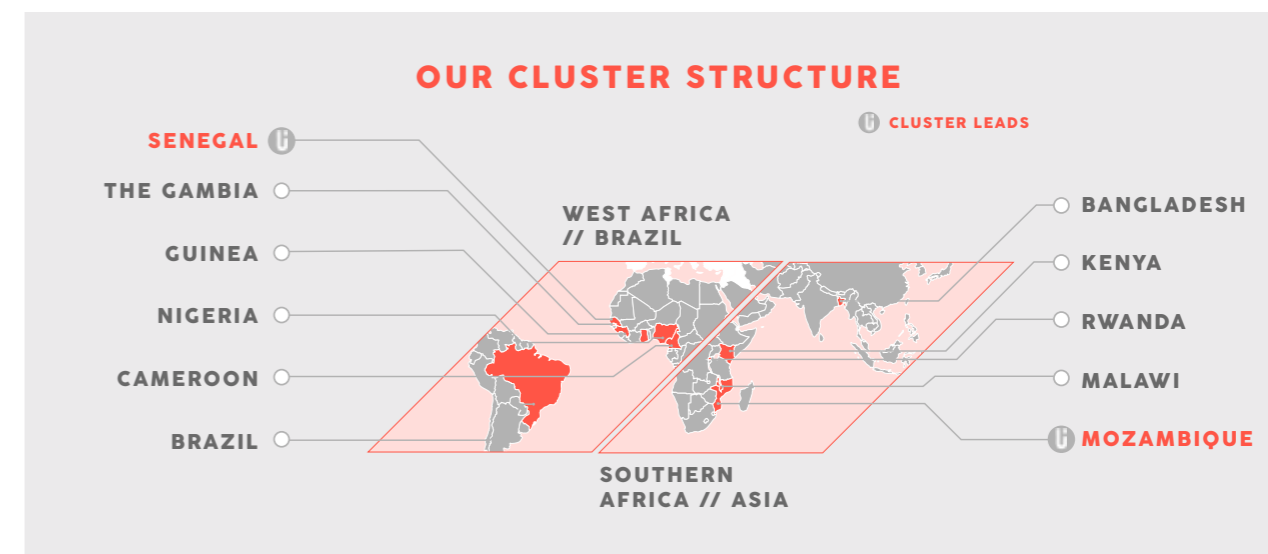
- The benefits generated by the activities of the charity. This report explains how United Purpose's activities meet the goals of its Global Strategy, and highlights the types of programmes that are funded and reports on the number of people it reaches.
- The benefits are closely aligned with the charity's objectives. Each area of United Purpose's work – health, livelihoods, climate and conflict – works towards the charity's broad vision, which is 'A world where justice, dignity and respect prevail for all'.
- The people targeted by United Purpose's interventions receive the support they need. We work closely with local communities on the design and implementation of our programmes. This ensures that our programmes take into account people's assessment of their own needs, and bring positive and measurable changes to people's lives.
- The trustees are confident that United Purpose meets the public benefit requirements, and they confirm that they have taken into account the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Management

During 2020-21 our Global Programmes team operated in a 'Cluster' model (see map on page 27). For the UK team, this meant streamlining our operations to focus on fundraising, communication, operations and finance.

The role of the clusters included:

- Providing support between Country Directors
- Sharing learning and enhancing quality between country programmes
- Identifying critical priorities and support needs
- Identifying and forging relationships with regionally based donors, private sector contractors and advocacy networks to maximise funding and influence opportunities aligned with the Global Strategy
- Strengthening global representation at Senior Leadership level



Strategic report

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The key leadership of the charity include the trustees and the CEO, who manages the charity on a day-to-day basis.

All trustees give their time freely and receive no fees or remuneration for serving as a trustee of UP. The charity reimburses reasonable expenses incurred in the course of acting as a trustee. This includes travel and accommodation expenses required to attend meetings, training and orientation. Every effort is made to ensure costs are modest. Details of trustees' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in the accounts.

In deciding appropriate pay levels, UP aims to strike a balance between paying enough to recruit and keep skilled people, and meeting the public's and our donors' expectations that the money they entrust with us is used wisely. In setting the CEO's salary, the Board takes into account the skills and experience required for the role. They have taken independent advice to inform those judgements, as well as taking into account affordability for the charity. The CEO's salary is normally reviewed annually.

Overview

United Purpose demonstrated strong performance in 2020/21 in terms of the level of activity (£18.7m (2019/20: £18.6m) and the number of people directly reached (2.1m (indirectly 10.8m)). However, there was a decrease in unrestricted reserves at £400k (2019/20: £728k). This was largely due to a number of adverse donor reports resulting in clawbacks.

This year, through our programmes, we directly reached over 2 million people and indirectly reached over 10 million people. Due to our community-led focus and strong relationships with local partners, we were able to flex and adapt swiftly, and we channelled our resources into mass campaigns on COVID-19 information and prevention (e.g. via TV, radio, SMS, etc.). These mass campaigns, which formed part of our rapid COVID-19 response, enabled a much greater indirect reach than in previous years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had short- and long-term impacts on United Purpose and the NGO sector as a whole. Most significantly, it has disproportionately impacted people living in poverty in low-income countries – people that UP exists to serve, and who will be dealing with the ripple effects of COVID-19 for years to come. The trustees followed a risk-based approach to analyse the evolving situation around COVID-19,

and to enable us to transition through the immediate and critical challenges that COVID-19 presented.

At the outset of the pandemic, we rapidly mobilised new resources and negotiated with current donors to divert funds on existing programmes to support national COVID-19 responses. The trustees and senior leadership team also put in place measures to alleviate any adverse effects as far as possible, such as putting 13 UK staff on furlough or flexible furlough at various points between March 2020 and July 2021. We conducted risk assessments for each project, promoted health and wellbeing sessions for staff, implemented contact tracing and acquired personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate. We also integrated COVID prevention measures in our operations guides, implemented flexible and COVID-safe office work arrangements and invested in ICT solutions (e.g. ensuring remote meetings could take place where possible).

In addition, we installed 7,888 new handwashing stations across our programmes, provided 4,414 food kits to mitigate any immediate impact on the most vulnerable, and we supported women's groups to produce almost 218,000 face masks, both as a COVID prevention and income generation activity.

The health and safety of our staff, partner staff and communities we work with around the world remains a paramount focus. We are continuing to flex and adapt our programmes to support national efforts to reduce the effects of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations in our programme countries.

Financial review

Our goal is to effectively manage our finances to ensure that we are best placed to deliver quality and impactful programmes.

In 2020/21, the income of United Purpose increased by 6% from £18.6 million to £19.8 million, following an increase of 34% in 2019/20. Expenditure in 2020/21 broadly remained the same as a result of reducing the unrestricted cost base.

Overall, this led to a positive movement in funds in 2020/21 of £1.1m compared to a negative movement of £28k in 2019/20. The negative movement in unrestricted funds was not in line with previous expectations and full strategic and operational review is underway as a result of the merger with Gorta. A full breakdown of reserves is provided in the accounts.

Reserves policy

The purpose of the Reserves Policy for United Purpose is to ensure the stability of the mission, programmes, employment and on-going operations of the organisation. Our reserves are intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, onetime unbudgeted expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses. The reserves may also be used for one-time, non-recurring expenses that will build long-term capacity, such as staff development, innovation, or investment in operations efficiencies. The reserves are not intended to replace a permanent loss of funds or eliminate an on-going budget gap. It is the intention of United Purpose for the reserves to be used and replenished within a reasonably short period of time. The Reserves Policy is implemented alongside other governance and financial policies of United Purpose and it is intended to support the goals and strategies contained in these related policies and in strategic and operational plans.

Following the merger with Gorta, work is ongoing in developing an overarching strategy for the group. Whilst in previous years the target amount of unrestricted reserves was £1 million, the development of the strategy will lay the foundations for the development of a revised and more up-to-date reserves policy for UP and Gorta.

Number of people reached per issue per country

COUNTRY	ISSUE Livelihoods	Health	Environment	Exploitation	COVID-19	TOTAL
Bangladesh	64,435	104,252	-	18,825	246,179	433,691
Brazil	240	-	-	4890	10,415	15,545
Mozambique	13,600	115,000	16,000	105,400	-	250,000
Nigeria	-	162,002	15,500	-	460,608	638,110
Senegal	2,123	641	5,666	311	759	9,500
Cameroon	-	859	-	670	859	2,388
The Gambia	4,131	-	-	520	9,072	13,723
Guinea	4,131	-	-	520	9,072	13,723
Malawi	131,083	502,991	174,680	7,279	-	716,033
GRAND TOTAL	274,052	885,745	112,734	138,455	775,828	2,186,814

As an integral part of our Reserves Policy, we recognise the value of carbon units to the organisation, both in terms of their cash value and their innovative contribution to achieving our mission. The organisation holds Gold Standard carbon units, generated through our water and livelihoods programmes in Malawi. Carbon credits can be sold to cover the cost of their generation including related obligations to the source communities. Any surplus may then be treated as unrestricted income.

Carbon unit stocks

Date	Units	Value (GBP)
31 March 2018	68,819	£92,905 - £280,093
31 March 2019	328,361	£443,287 - £1,336,429
31 March 2020	334,637	£765,378
31 March 2021	8,774	£21,727

The GBP value range is derived from actual and proposed sales. The March 2021 units have now all been sold.

By combining unrestricted reserves in the balance sheet of £400k with the post year end cash receipts from the sale carbon units totalling £22k, the effective level of unrestricted reserves is £422k, compared to our stated unrestricted reserves target of £1 million.

Looking ahead, it is expected that the impact of COVID-19 will require unrestricted reserves to be utilised for at least the next financial year.

Going concern

The trustees fully recognise their responsibility to assess the going concern basis of the charity and have a reasonable expectation that United Purpose will be able to operate within the level of its resources for a period of at least 12 months. This assessment is based on a thorough assessment of the impact of COVID-19, group income and cash forecasts and projections, taking into account assumptions about

possible changes in performance.

The Board of Gorta has confirmed in writing to the UP Board that it is prepared to support United Purpose, and will make funds available for a period of not less than 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements to enable it to meet debts as they fall due. Therefore, trustees continue to adopt the ongoing concern basis in preparing the annual financial statements and believe there is no material uncertainty about UP's ability to continue as a going concern.

Fundraising statement

This year was the third year of our three-year fundraising strategy. The aim of this plan continues to be the generation of more net income for the charity, especially unrestricted income, ensuring the long-term sustainability of our vital work to empower communities to be independent and move beyond aid.

We focused on the following priorities:

- Diversify our income streams
- Increase our income
- Rebalance the ratio between restricted and non-restricted income
- Be more effective at managing the income we currently generate

We prioritised a number of income streams over this year, this including:

- Individual giving
- Major gifts and events
- Corporate Partnerships
- Trusts and foundations

This activity is undertaken by our fundraising team based in our Cardiff office. The majority of our work consists of direct marketing, engagement with our regular givers, and community and corporate events. All activity has been undertaken in line with the Fundraising Code of Practice set by Fundraising Regulator, of whom we are registered with. Our fundraising team is trained in the provisions of the code and any updates to the code are communicated to the team. We do not pay for the services of third-party commercial organisations to raise funds in United Purpose's name, nor do

we engage in cold-calling, door-to-door or street fundraising. During 2020/21, we did not have a relationship with any commercial participators. No complaints were received by the charity regarding any fundraising activities.

Managing risk and uncertainty

United Purpose operates in an ever-changing context, both in the UK charity sector and fragile geographies with local communities. Working within this unstable environment and simultaneously protecting the vulnerable people we often engage with, as well as the charity's assets, presents many challenges.

Managing risks effectively is central to the achievement of our strategic goals and was overseen by the Finance & Risk Committee. The Board has established a formal risk management process and internal control framework to ensure the proactive and consistent management of risks, both to reduce negative impact of risk and maximise strategic opportunities. This process involves a risk strategy to share an agreed attitude and organisational capacity for risk, a risk governance structure to oversee the risk management process and a risk implementation approach to analyse and manage risk.

The risk management framework at United Purpose is designed to address uncertainty as part of decision making, as well as ensuring that any new or subsequent risks can be taken into account. The framework helps to identify, assess and control risk across the organisation, summarised in a risk register.

The trustees periodically review the key strategic risks to ensure that they are the right ones and that they are being managed appropriately. The trustees have agreed a risk appetite statement that both sets the tone and addresses the challenge of the gap between exposure to risk and the organisation's ability to accept the risk.

United Purpose faces some inherent risks resulting from the locations we work in and the way projects are delivered. Security risks are mitigated by undertaking safety and security reviews in each country, by maintaining insurance cover and by ensuring staff and volunteers receive training in safety and security relevant to the programmes where they are being inducted.

The key risk areas and responses have emerged from this risk management process. Our risks evolve over time and as we progress our strategy, new risks emerge and we update our risk areas and adjust our mitigation activities accordingly (refer to table on page 31).

Risk area	Impact	Mitigation
Programme funding	Downward pressure on income due to changes in priorities within the global aid programme and a more challenging environment for public donations	Review systems currently in place (in countries and globally) for monitoring new opportunities. Support Country Directors to seek funding opportunities. New Trusts and Foundations Manager to coordinate with in-country funding staff.
Internal financial controls	Insufficient controls could expose the organisation to financial mismanagement and donor compliance breaches.	Robust financial control framework, training and guidance process in place for each Country Programme. Budget in a format allowing quarterly/monthly updates to track progress against actuals and forecasting. Monthly reporting to be established in all country programmes, detailing core and project results on a spreadsheet system.
Cash flow	Insufficient cash to cover business plan expenditure	Cash flows from Country Programmes reviewed on a regular basis, with any significant changes flagged immediately. Local cash flows reviewed weekly to plan and authorise payments, and monitor expected income.
Fraud and bribery	A major fraud or bribery resulting in significant financial or reputational damage	Zero-tolerance approach to fraud and bribery, rolled out through robust policies and procedures. Internal audit roles are recruited in larger country programmes.
Safeguarding	Staff and partner staff not adequately protected Only a small number of concerns raised	Regular training on UP's safeguarding policy. Support to wellbeing and safeguarding committees at different levels of the organisation.
COVID-19	Staff and partner staff not adequately protected for project implementation. Project implementation discontinued. Additional costs required not covered by donors. Loss of income and overhead recovery.	Provide virus spread prevention and mental health support interventions to ensure all staff have the right information about COVID-19 and how to access medical treatment. Identify possibility of adaptation of project activities from face to face to remote. Where not possible to deliver current contracts, agree new approach and timeline with donors. Review project information regularly, with a special emphasis of project cash flows.

Safeguarding

We do not tolerate sexual exploitation or any form of abuse, including bullying and harassment. They are extremely serious issues and our commitment to protect the people we work with from harm applies without exception across our programmes, people and partners.

Two years ago, United Purpose underwent a period of reflection and self-assessment, which resulted in an updated set of policies and procedures to strengthen our safeguards against abuse and to enable reporting if it happens. Last year, we continued to drive improvements through: (i) improving systems; (ii) strengthening our culture; (iii) putting learning at the heart of our approach; (iv) working with partners to reciprocally strengthen our commitment to safeguarding.

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, our focus over the course of this year was keeping our staff, partners and the communities we work with safe. There have been many challenges related to the pandemic and many preventive measures have been required. We conducted robust risk assessments on all of our projects and put mitigation measures in place to reduce risk, such as providing staff with COVID-specific health and safety guidelines to protect themselves, their colleagues and the communities where we work.

We recognise that safeguarding is so much more than a set of policies and procedures. It is implicit in everything we do, from how we speak to community members and individuals, to how much staff exert their power over vulnerable communities who need our support. It involves understanding power dynamics, recognising how our presence in communities changes such dynamics, and knowing what we must do to ensure this power is never abused.

If you have any concerns about the health, wellbeing, survival or dignity of a person in our care, please share with our confidential safeguarding committee at concerns-uk@united-purpose.org

Plans for the future

As mentioned, as of 5 August 2021, United Purpose merged with Gorta (trading as Self Help Africa) and the leadership of United Purpose transferred to Ray Jordan, as Group CEO, and Carmel Fox as Chair of Gorta. The reasons for this merger are outlined below, and also provide a framework for our future plans.

Both United Purpose and Gorta have a proud history of assisting those in greatest need. For decades, we have helped marginalised communities to take greater control over their own lives, by providing lasting solutions, be that helping them to earn more from their work, sustainable WASH or social accountability interventions. On an annual basis, our combined programme activities reach over 6 million people. But our world is changing rapidly. The challenges that lie ahead are very significant and we will have to adapt quickly if we are to overcome them.

Across Lower Income Countries, a combination of population growth and climate change threatens the economic gains that have been made over the last three decades. Africa has the world's fastest growing population in the 21st Century, predicted to reach 2.5 billion by 2050. A majority of that population will remain rural until the 2040s, notwithstanding increased urbanization, and it will look – desperately – for work. This year, about 26 million Africans will enter the labour force, rising to 33 million a year by 2030.

How this complex development challenge is addressed may well set the agenda for global peace and stability in this century. The challenge is no less complex in lower middle-income countries such as Bangladesh, which faces enormous pressure from population growth and climate change. Even in a middle-income economy such as Brazil, there are compelling reasons to work in communities at the margins of society. However, while there has never been a greater demand for the work that we do, we are also being challenged to transform the way we do business. The traditional funding streams, based on a strong foundation of individual charitable giving, are no longer able to cope. Public fundraising will continue to play an important role in our revenue mix but real growth is only likely to be achieved by increasing both institutional donor support and service income.

Institutional donors demand higher standards of compliance, of accountability and of transparency. Future success will be defined by how well our systems can track every pound or euro, right through to its intended outcome, to show we have delivered what we contracted to do. Social enterprise models will be an increasingly important part of our future. Mobilizing service and trading income – whether from the sale of carbon credits or the provision of ethical audits – is a part of our unrestricted funding mix. We must continue to invest in this area to set stronger foundations for our future.

To continue delivering on our missions in support of the poorest communities in Lower Income Countries, United Purpose, Self Help Africa, and the other members of the Gorta Group need to evolve. Our combined resources – of funding, of personnel, of experiences – will be blended to create an entity that is greater than the sum of our parts.

Statement of responsibility of trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of United Purpose in company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and group. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORPs
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention

and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information
- The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP acted as the charitable company's auditor during the year. The trustees' annual report, which includes the strategic report, has been approved by the trustees on 14 January 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Additional Information

Bankers, solicitors and auditors

Standard Chartered Bank
1 Aldermanbury Square
London EC2V 7SB
020 7280 7500

The Royal Bank of Scotland
Maidstone Branch,
94 High Street,
Maidstone,
Kent ME14 1SA
016 2269 1333 or 01432 357264

Geldards LLP
Dumfries House
Dumfries Place
Cardiff CF10 3ZF

Sayer Vincent
Invicta House
108-114 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0TL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The trustees who served during the financial year up to the date of signing The Trustees Report were as follows:

Mary Robinson (appointed as Chair on 22 November 2021)
Peter Ayres (resigned as Trustee and Chair on 4 August 2021)
Catherine Cottrell
Hadi Husani
Sir Martin Davidson (resigned on 4 August 2021)
Peter Atfield (resigned on 4 August 2021)
David Bull (resigned on 4 August 2021)
Catherine Fitzgibbon (appointed on 13 August 2021)
Carmel Fox (appointed on 13 August 2021)
Michael Gormley (appointed on 13 August 2021)

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Chief Executive Officer:

Kathryn Llewellyn (resigned on 31 December 2020)
Linda Edwards (appointed on interim basis on 1 January 2021;
resigned on 6 August 2021)
Ray Jordan (appointed on 6 August 2021)

Finance Director:

Paul Seymour (resigned on 18 June 2021)
Peter McDevitt (appointed on 6 August 2021)

Cluster Lead (Asia and Southern Africa):

Helena Skember

Cluster Lead (West Africa and Brazil):

Tim Kellow

