**Thirteenth Chairman’s Report** – Feb 16 to Jan 17

**1 Peter 4:10-11** *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

**Year of Challenge**

As a memory prompt, I glanced through our prayer letters of the past year. How much I had forgotten and how soon.

At the beginning of the year Feb 16 I was in Kenya in the middle of a six-week visit. We had just taken delivery of our third baby in as many months. Plans later fulfilled for a dedicated nursery for new babies were being discussed. In the meantime, three of our young women had stepped into the breech and were enjoying their new role as substitute mothers. A few months later just in time for the opening of the nursery a fourth baby arrived. In 12 months, the four consumed a lot of formula milk. Raising them through this first year is expensive in terms of food and manpower but we are thankful that now they are more than toddlers as they mix with the other children helping to complete that feeling of family which binds the Kindfund family together.

Throughout the year several older children were welcomed into the Kindfund families at Ngaremara, Wamba and Ndikir. Each came with their individual set of circumstances and sad experiences challenging us with God’s help to rebuild their shattered lives. I think Pamela in our April prayer letter caught the spirit of the challenge

 “It is a privilege to be able to love and care for these children. They bless us so much. Yes, there are challenges but the blessings outweigh them.”

**Education**

Early in 2016 we were challenged on the primary education front when we realised our children at the local schools were in classes of 80+ children and in some cases over 100. Our Board responded by agreeing to start our own Kindfund Hope Primary School. Twelve months later we have made progress but much remains to be done to build on the foundation laid in 2016. There is a great need for expertise and resources if we are to enable our children to achieve their potential. We were pleased to welcome Alastair Beacom to our Board last year to help us rise to this challenge. He is in touch with Shalline our Principle in Kenya supporting her in this endeavour. We are now educating our primary children at all three home locations and this remains a major challenge as we evaluate the way forward.

We have also been much encouraged by the maturity brought out in our teenagers who have gone on to Polytech. Suddenly a way forward into adult life has become real for them

as they have learnt and practised new skills preparing them for work. In total, we have seven teenagers at Poly and seven at secondary schools pursuing a more academic education.

**Homes**

Last year I mentioned that we had plans to develop our third small home at Ndikir, Laisamis and in June of 2016 I found myself back out in Kenya supporting this development which had been made possible by the fundraising activities of the Kindfund Lisburn team under John Steen. We now have a major new facility at Ndikir capable of immediately increasing from 10 to 25 children and readily expandable to 60. This is a unique home in a remote area of Marsabit, the poorest County in Kenya and has been warmly welcomed by the Child Officer for the area. We have applied to this Office for the registration of the home as a CCI (Charitable Children’s Institution). This will bring it into line with our other homes at Ngaremara and Wamba. In both cases we await final responses to the renewal of our registrations submitted during the year.

**Government Compliance in Kenya**

We have been working diligently throughout the year to achieve compliance in all respects of running children’s homes in Kenya. This has required investment of time, expertise and resources as we seek to meet all our obligations to the children and staff and ensure the security of our property.

At our April board meeting we discussed the question of adoption and authorised the executive to take this forward with caution. This will bring new compliance issues as we seek to build a safe framework for adoption.

**Visitors**

Ken, Pamela and Gillian have invested significant time in Kenya this year. I have had two visits and others have also given freely of their time to support the work namely Ruth and Matt, Darren, Katie, Anne leading the bible camp team, Robert, Eliza, Andrew and Helen. You all brought your individual gifts and skills to support the children.

**Correspondence with Stephen Scott**

Stephen has been unable to attend the last few board meetings and sends his apologies again tonight. He has been in contact with Ken and I and I will read out his latest email and my reply on our behalf:

*Hi Jonathan*

*Hope you are all keeping well. Apologies for the delay on this. As you are aware, I had emailed your dad regarding stepping back from the Kindfund Committee and as Chairman I am informing yourself of this reluctant decision but feel that it is unfair to the Committee and Kindfund if I remain and cannot commit as would be expected. Apologies also for my*

*absence at the AGM (Pre arranged Elders meeting). As I have already stated my, interest and prayerful support for Kindfund will continue.*

*As we serve Him*

*Stephen*

**My response**

*Stephen,*

*Thank you both for your service to Kindfund and thank you also for your continued interest and prayer support. We watch with interest as FCF continues from strength to strength and we wish you both every blessing as you continue to follow His lead in this important work. Look forward to seeing you both soon.*

*Blessings,*

*Jonathan and all at Kindfund.*

We give thanks for the involvement of Stephen and Catherine over some 10 years of their involvement with Kindfund. As many of you know Stephen has visited the projects twice, once with his son Colin and a second time with Catherine his wife. Stephen’s area of work within Kindfund has been supporting and praying for the Bible Education Services (BES) work. This BES work has grown beyond expectation and is now being used within all the Kindfund projects as well as many surrounding churches and schools. We are also thankful for Catherine’s support to the Kindfund Office in Kesh with bank reconciliation work and the submission of many gift aid claims. They have both been great ambassadors for this work and for all this we are very thankful.

**Home Front**

There is much work that goes on here at home and abroad throughout the year and the Home Front is key to our survival and growth. These are wide ranging tasks carried out throughout the Province and further afield - from visiting the bank manager in Donegal to raising funds in the Netherlands; talks at the local Women’s Institute or church to contacting schools and Girls Brigade to raise interest and find opportunities to speak about our work; hours at the computer entering data to running the marathon to raise money.

I am thankful to all who continue to support this work in faithful ways including these examples above and many other. I am also thankful for all on the committee who give freely of their time and resources.

**Thanks**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported Kindfund in prayer, financially and by their time over the last 12 months.

We continue to build on what has gone before and we remain thankful for those who have had a part in where we are today.

Most of all we thank our Heavenly Father for his mercy and grace towards us, blessing us with the privilege of being co-workers with Him in Kindfund.

**Jonathan Dobbin**

**Chairman**