
NURTURING *those in need*

DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIP ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF A UNIQUE CHARITY
CALLED THE BUTTERFLY TREE, WHICH HAS SAVED NUMEROUS LIVES IN
ONE OF THE WORLD’S MOST IMPOVERISHED COUNTRIES

Despite its outstanding natural beauty and the warmth of its citizens, Zambia is home to many stories of suffering and tragedy. Almost three quarters of a million children have been orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in this landlocked sub-Saharan country of just 12 million inhabitants, while one in six adults carries the HIV virus. Life expectancy is a mere 35 years – and with two thirds of the population living on less than one dollar a day, few have the means to acquire expensive medical supplies in a country that is already desperately short of drugs and life-saving equipment and relies heavily on international aid.

SAVING LIVES: Having been confronted with these heart-rending problems during a visit to Zambia in 2006, Jane Kaye-Bailey vowed to establish a charity back in Britain to tackle the issues head-on. The Butterfly Tree was born soon afterwards, and through tireless volunteer work, this respected charity has made a real difference on the ground. The Butterfly Tree’s activities have transformed the lives of numerous children, as Jane explains: ‘Three quarters of all deaths caused by malaria occur in children under the age of five in sub-Saharan Africa. By providing mosquito nets and malaria testing kits, many lives can be saved.’

Staffed entirely by volunteers in both the UK and Zambia, The Butterfly Tree relies upon grant aid and donations from individuals and companies, as well as fund-raising. A remarkable 95 per cent of the funds raised is being spent on grassroots projects.

From feeding programmes and treating sick children to orphan sponsorship (costing as little as £10 a month per child), donations are channelled directly to rural communities such as Mukuni Village in Zambia’s Southern Province, not far from the world heritage site of Victoria Falls. Here, the charity has founded the district’s first high school, a maternity clinic and a special education class.



For the past five years, Jane has also promoted travel philanthropy, inviting tourists to visit The Butterfly Tree projects with a view of making a donation or forming a long-term partnership. She has also involved tour operators, hoteliers and lodges, encouraging them to ‘give something back’ to local communities, and advises anyone who is visiting a developing country to become a philanthropic traveller.

VULNERABLE CHILDREN: One of The Butterfly Tree’s guiding principles is to work alongside the indigenous population, asking what they need and responding accordingly. The charity also focuses on sustainability and income generation, helping people to support themselves and breaking the cycle of dependency that can result from simply providing aid. Even a modest donation can have a remarkably large impact on the lives of people in Zambia, helping fund such projects as the provision of boreholes for fresh water. As Jane points out: ‘I have seen children drinking from crocodile-infested rivers, so being able to provide safe, clean drinking water is vital.’ Alongside the provision of basic facilities like water, food and health, The Butterfly Tree also invests heavily in educating Zambia’s children. In impoverished rural villages, schooling is often an unaffordable luxury for youngsters, especially orphans. ‘Education is the key to developing these rural communities,’ says Jane. ‘Building classrooms, providing safe, clean water, basic healthcare and feeding programmes can help to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable children on the planet. Children don’t ask to be born, and when you are born into a Zambian family, the chances of losing both parents at an early age are very high.’

Having worked extensively in the Southern Province in recent years, The Butterfly Tree’s long-term goal is to direct its focus towards other struggling regions of Zambia. However, the support of sponsors and donors from wealthier countries will be crucial in allowing this unique charity and its volunteers to continue their life-saving work.

Contact: www.thebutterflytree.org.uk

“A REMARKABLE
95 PER CENT OF
THE FUNDS RAISED IS
SPENT ON GRASSROOTS
PROJECTS”

