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ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17



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This year marks the tenth anniversary of the link between Timbuktu and Hay-on-Wye. Circumstances have changed dramatically in Mali, making it more difficult to sustain what was primarily intended to be a people to people link. Nevertheless, it continues to be valued by our friends in Timbuktu and provides a window for the residents of Hay-on Wye on a very different way of existence. This annual report includes a brief look back at some of the milestones in the relationship as well as reporting on activities in 2016-17.

The political, security and social situation in Timbuktu has been difficult in the first half of 2017. The June 2015 peace agreement provided for extensive decentralisation as a means of meeting separatist pressures in the north of Mali. However, the installation of regional civilian administrations has taken a long time. An attempt to establish an administration in Timbuktu in March 2017 was delayed for several weeks because of armed opposition, although it is now in place. Rocket and mortar attacks on the airport and on the UN peacekeeping mission, which is still the main guarantor of relative stability, continue. The internationally known Festival in the Desert had to be cancelled in January 2017. Public sector workers in Timbuktu have been on a prolonged strike in recent months. The security situation means that it is still not advisable for visitors to go to northern Mali; but the same considerations make it difficult for people in Timbuktu to travel, with commercial flights still not operating and the road links to Bamako still being fragile and dangerous. In these circumstances it is all the more important that the people of Timbuktu feel that they are remembered.

Against this background, Hay2Timbuktu has continued to keep in telephone and e-mail contact with our friends in Timbuktu and to assure them of the continued interest of their twin town in what is happening there. The charity arranged a visit in September 2016 by Elmehdi ag Wakina, the Director of our partner organisation in Mali, the Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel (AMSS), and Mahamane Bilal, a secondary school teacher from Timbuktu. The original plan had been for one English teacher from each of the three secondary schools where our education projects are active to be included in the party, but regrettably all three were refused visas, despite the clear developmental purpose of the visit and our undertakings to support the visitors. Contacts with other UK organisations suggest that the current UK visa regime is generally unsympathetic to cultural and twinning exchanges. Our visitors

had a chance to interact with the people of Hay and to visit Hay Primary School, as well as seeing other parts of the country, and to discuss priorities for future collaboration between Hay and Timbuktu. We heard from them how valuable the motorcycle ambulance provided by the people of Hay in 2015 has been in providing health services in the Timbuktu area. The visitors also spoke at the Hay2Timbuktu Annual General Meeting.

Education

With a continuing generous grant from the Waterloo Foundation we have funded bursaries for girls at two secondary schools in Timbuktu, Mahamane Fondogoumo and Yehia Alkaya. The grant covers 34 girls in years 8 and 9, the last two years of secondary school. It provides for school materials which parents would otherwise have to buy for the girls, extra support to encourage them to stay at school and to do well in their studies, and personal and social education on issues such as sexual health. Some girls have also been trained as peer educators to take health messages to their communities. As in previous years, the girls improved their performance at end of term exams in each term, and 31 of the 34 passed their end of year exams. It is good to hear that this initiative is strongly supported by the association of mothers at each school.

2017-18 will be the final year for this grant, which will cover the cohort going through to year 9. Hay2Timbuktu is investigating other sources of finance to renew the scholarship programme in future years.

Health

This year in the health group saw the completion of our two year maternal and infant education project working with our three health clinics (CSCOMs) of Bellafarandi, Sankore and Kabara. This project has spread health messages around the areas of Timbuktu that surround the clinics about when and why people should seek health care both for women in pregnancy and after birth and for the early months and years of a child's life.

We are hoping that the response and level of patients attending the clinics will be maintained as a result of this work and will continue to monitor this.

We were able to send funds to each clinic to purchase necessary equipment to improve the service they can provide. The equipment that each CSCOM requested has been delivered safely and we have photos from each clinic with some of the staff receiving this. Much of what was needed was basic furniture, examination couch and basic medical equipment.

We are now in discussions with the CSCOMs and AMSS to support two girls through midwifery training in Timbuktu with the hope that they would be able to work when trained at a CSCOM. The training is three years and if successful we may be able to look at repeating this in the future.

Fundraising

We continue to use fundraising as a means of supporting development activities in and around Timbuktu, and of keeping up the profile of the twinning link. Thanks are due to the organisers of the Hay Literary Festival who again generously allowed bucket collections after events at the 2017 Festival. Donations were received during the year from Persimmon Homes and the Just Trust.

The Medics group year had a very successful evening in Booths café (by kind permission of the owner) with a delicious meal and after dinner talk by Ben Rawlence.

TEN YEARS OF HAY2TIMBUKTU

2007

Anne Brichto ran a determined campaign to secure the twinning of Hay and Timbuktu following an advertisement in the Independent.

Anne Brichto and Rosanna Westward travelled to Timbuktu to initiate the twinning arrangement.

Plans were developed in Hay to establish a twinning committee with project groups including a Friends, Communications, Education, Medics and Artisans group.

A delegation from Timbuktu included Ali Ould Sidi (Culture Minister), Said Ould Mahmoud (Mayor), Boubacar Adia Toure (President of Timbuktu Twinning Association), Aziza Mint Mohamed (3rd. Deputy Mayor), Idrissa Maiga (Translator) visited Hay for the official Twinning Ceremony on October 25th.

2008

A delegation from Hay representing the twinning committee, teachers, medics and artisans visited Timbuktu to explore project ideas. The delegation included three doctors and a secretary from Hay medical centre.

Mohammed Lamine ag Hamid visited Hay to speak at the Hay Festival suggesting the twinning was a beacon of light for Timbuktu.

Dr Toure and Elmehdi ag Wakina visited Hay to explore projects with the Medics4Timbuktu Group.

The artisans group became Jump4Timbuktu which supported the Tuareg Relief charity.

2009

Teachers and members of the Education group visited Timbuktu to develop projects, visit schools and take equipment to aid learning.

The Medics group started a maternal and antenatal health project with one clinic in Timbuktu, with support from the Welsh Government.

2010

Students began corresponding with students in Timbuktu.

The twinning projects received recognition through the Gold Star Communities Award Scheme.

2011

The Girls Bursary Pilot project was launched, supporting 50 girls from poor families to access education.

Hay Primary School raised funds to install electricity in a school in Timbuktu.

The Medics group made a second visit to Mali, meeting health professional and NGO staff in Bamako. It was agreed to extend the health project to the other two clinics in the Timbuktu area. The Motorbike Ambulance Project was launched.

Hay2Timbuktu made links with the EU-funded project Two Towns One World to develop greater awareness of the Timbuktu link in Hay and to spread the concept of linking throughout Wales.

2012

Funds were secured to develop a 3-year project to support 50 girls in two schools in Timbuktu.

The military coup and the capturing of the north of Mali by Tuareg and Islamist groups limited progress and communications.

Hay2Timbuktu sent food aid, communicated as much as possible and raised the Malian situation with media and press in the UK and beyond. Funds for the health project were diverted to restock ransacked clinics.

The mayor of Timbuktu expressed in the Guardian his thanks to Hay for the support following withdrawal of many of the aid agencies in Timbuktu.

Elmehdi ag Wakina visited Hay and spoke at the Festival.

2013

The 3 Year Girls Bursary Project commenced.

Mark Saade, Malian Honorary Consul joined Hay2Timbuktu to discuss the situation in Mali at the Hay Festival.

Elmehdi ag Wakina Programme Director for AMSS together with two midwives and two teachers visited Hay to strengthen relationships, share learning and raise awareness of the twinning projects.

2014

The English Speaking Union funded books for teaching English in 3 schools.

The Girls Bursary Project developed successfully with girls achieving higher than average results and a high number continuing to the next level of education provision.

2015

Equipment for 3 schools including books, computers, tape players and tapes, maths equipment, paper, pens, pencils and chalk was sent out to Timbuktu with the Caravan of Hope.

12 Laptop computers with support from Computers4Africa were sent out to 3 schools.

Wales Africa Hub funded remedial English lessons and English language materials for 3 schools.

Arts for All funded a speaker, film and materials to raise awareness in Hay of the situation in Timbuktu.

The motorbike ambulance, having fortunately not been delivered to Timbuktu before the incursions, was finally delivered and commissioned. The maternal project was extended to include child health care for early years as well as maternal health.

2016

Continuation funding to enable girls to complete their education in 2016/7/8 was secured following the success of the 3 year funded project.

Computers were sent to the schools in partnership with H2T.

Medics4Timbuktu sent computers to the 3 clinics working on maternal health projects.

Elmehdi ag Wakina and Mahamane Bilal visited Hay to consolidate education projects, visit local schools and share ideas for development. The English teachers in the partner schools in Timbuktu were denied visas despite well-documented and well-supported applications.

2017

The Girls Bursary Project is in the final year with six years funding giving opportunities for many girls to complete Second Cycle School, attend the Lycée and technical schools with many finding employment and delaying marriage. Medics4Timbuktu launched a project to fund midwife training for two girls. A project to provide toilets in three schools was initiated.

Hay2Timbuktu accounts

Financial statement for the year to 31 May 2017

	2016-17	2015-16
Opening balance	2,436.91	22,715.35
<u>Income</u>	13,200.46	11,913.49
Festival collections and ticket sales	1,383.01	809.10
Other fundraising	130.00	825.30
Africa Day	630.20	1,123.10
Other Medics fundraising	670.00	1,914.02
W4A Maternal health	0	3,000.00
Lottery grant	0	3,650.00
Waterloo foundation grant	7,360.00	0
Persimmon grant	1,000.00	0
Just Trust grant	1,000.00	0
Subscriptions, donations, Gift Aid	1,012.25	591.97
CD sales	15.00	0
<u>Expenditure</u>	12,041.74	32,191.93
Girls education transfers to AMSS	7,300.00	10,000.00
Girls education transfers to schools	0	3,300.00
Computers for schools	0	880.00
Maternal health transfers to AMSS	1,500.00	10,000.00
Other medical projects	100.00	979.89
Visit expenses	2,750.74	4,112.76
Communications/fundraising	391.00	1,824.14
Bank charges and expenses	0	764.68
Insurance	0	330.46
Closing balance	3,595.63	2,436.91
<u>Funds held</u>		
Education general		22.31
Education girls		277.39
M4T maternal		10.12
M4T general		1,825.49
General fund		1,145.48
Designated		314.84