

VineTrust

Connecting People to Change Lives



CONNECTIONS

Issue 40 - Summer 2022



Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

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Welcome to the Ruby Edition of Connections (40!)

I had thought of calling this a 'red letter edition' to mark various landmark events over the last 6 months, then I realised this was in fact the 40th edition of our magazine!

The 'red letter day' was to mark the occasion of all three of our medical ships working simultaneously on Lake Victoria, Tanzania and the Peruvian Amazon. The last time all three ships were out at the same time was in 2018.

In this edition, record consultation numbers in the Amazon and news from Jubilee Hope will give an overview of our 250,000 patient consultation target for 2022.

We are also pleased to introduce four new key members of staff, and share news of Kazunzu Village of Hope and the various partnerships that are making the new village a reality.

There is also progress to report on our plans towards carbon neutrality and our new partnership with www.climatestewards.org, who will be working with us to achieve certification and accreditation across all of our programmes no later than December 2025.

Other news includes an update from Mwanza, Tanzania and our work with the Tanzanian Women's Research Foundation, and how the gift of a six



berth speedboat is supporting our medical ships in the months ahead.

We are also launching our Summer 2022 "I Can See Clearly Now!" Appeal to provide spectacles to visually impaired patients on the Peruvian Amazon and Lake Victoria.

For all your interest and support we are immensely grateful and, YES, our volunteering programmes are now reopened for medics, schools and construction expeditions.

Please get in touch if you are at all interested. We would be delighted to welcome you to come and see first-hand what is being achieved with your support.

With every best wish,

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Willie McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Rev. Willie McPherson

Chief Executive

Amazon Hope Services in Great Demand

Without doubt, 2022 is the busiest period that the Amazon Hope Medical Programme has ever had – a fitting way to celebrate 20 years working in the region!

Since the beginning of the year until the end of May, both ships had been in harbour together for only 19 out of 150 days, with the rest of the time being spent serving remote communities in the Peruvian Amazon.

During the same months, the ships have made their longest-ever expedition (52 days!), reaching new communities along the Upper Ucayali river, providing 97,719 consultations.

The medical teams have shared numerous reports of the welcome they've received from all the communities and the wonderful ways they've been able to help, from free pairs of glasses (see page 17) to the incredible intervention to save the life of a young woman (see page 11).

As well as providing a wide variety of primary healthcare services, the programme continues to develop the mental health services offered to the communities. Project Coordinator, Román Rodríguez, shares with us an update on this part of the work:

"This year has been very busy and we have had many opportunities to work



with people, listen with empathy and teach them to recognize and name their emotions, an experience that in most cases they have never had before.

We work individually and with the family, providing emotional support and guidance in the face of specific difficulties. Group intervention is carried out through workshops with adolescents and adults, choosing the topics according to the results of the aforementioned studies. In this way, the specific needs of each person and each population are met. And with kids, playful workshops and games are held between them or with their parents, because in these places where survival is the most important thing every day, games are usually in the background.

One of the psychologists uses the following metaphor during a workshop with adolescents: “Just as the clouds turn black and have to release the rain to unload and the day clears, so too our mind when it is full of worries and sadness must unload”. Using natural phenomena from their own environment to explain their mental processes is a strategy that facilitates understanding and healing.

Strengthening of community health agents is also a vital aspect of the project. They are people from the same communities who have the recognition of the population, willingness and experience to attend to primary health needs. This year’s goal is to strengthen



their abilities to deal with mental health situations, applying emergency interventions (psychological first aid). This is very important due to the absence of permanent psychological services in each community and it is essential for the program to be sustainable. We, therefore, seek to develop capacities in the same communities and public service personnel to face adverse situations without depending on the presence of PMEAP psychologists.

We have many challenges in the coming months in terms of mental health: continued care for individuals and families, group activities, strengthening of community agents, research processes and measurement of results.

We are sure that with our own forces and the support of partners we will achieve these objectives. We may not be able to solve all their problems, but we can provide calm when they need it, listening when they want to talk and strength when adversity strikes.”

Staff News

Since the beginning of the year, a number of new key members of staff have joined our partnership programmes in Peru and Tanzania, as well as a new member of the team in the UK.

Patrick Mabula is the new Manager of the *Jubilee Hope Medical Programme* in Tanzania. Patrick is a Public Health Social Worker and comes to the position with lots of experience in managing projects which have been focused on working with people living with HIV and also vulnerable children.



Patrick Mabula

The new Programme Manager at *Kazunzu Village of Hope* is **Meshack Wilson**, who started working with the families in April. Meshack will also be overseeing the construction work, as well as taking forward the different income-generating projects - see page 8 for more details.



Meshack Wilson

In Peru, **Román Rodríguez** has joined the *Amazon Hope Medical Programme* as its Project Coordinator. Román is a psychologist with a long professional career in social development programmes, as well as teaching at University. Román will be involved in the general development of the Programme's work, with a particular focus this year on the Community Agents training initiative as part of the mental health project, and also the implementation of the medical records software on the two ships.



Román Rodríguez

At the Vine Trust UK office, we are delighted that **Judy Grace** has joined the team for one year. Judy, who has recently graduated with a MSc in Development Studies with distinction, has previously volunteered with Vine Trust as a school pupil and then as a Co-Leader in Moshi, Tanzania.



Judy Grace

We would also like to thank **Sheila Renton** for the past 3 years working with Vine Trust in her role as Finance Officer. We wish her well in her new job.

COVID-19 APPEAL UPDATE

In the last edition of Connections we reached out to ask for your support with the full deployment of both medical ships in Peru as they aimed to spearhead the COVID-19 and wider vaccination activities to remote riverine communities.

As part of the work required to make this happen, a new engine was to be purchased and installed on the MV Amazon Hope 2. Thanks to the generosity of so many, over £10,000 was raised, helping to make this a reality!

We are delighted to report that the new engine was successfully installed at the beginning of 2022 and the ship has been back out serving the local communities, welcoming patients old and new, including the birth of a baby on Valentine's Day!

As you can read on page 4, both ships have been incredibly busy since the beginning of the year, participating on the programme's longest-ever expeditions, visiting new communities and river systems.

Many thanks for your generous support of the work which continues to make such a difference in the lives of so many people and communities in the Peruvian Amazon.



Progress at Kazunzu Village of Hope

It's also been a busy time at Kazunzu Village of Hope since the turn of the year. As new families settle in, Programme Director, Samuel Limbe provides us with an update of all that's been taking place:

“Construction activities at the village mainly started in 2018. First to be completed at Kazunzu were two clusters of family homes, which now have 8 families resident of over 60 people, including 41 orphaned children.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down our pace, we have also been able to complete the building of the Boma (Community Hub), which has become a well-used meeting place for the families.

In April this year we also started advancing with the third cluster of buildings. This cluster will comprise of a nursery/kindergarten for the children in the village, as well contain a house for the Head Teacher and Programme Manager.

The site has now been cleared, foundations laid and good progress has been made with the walls being built, at around 80% for completion.

Next on the plans for construction is an 8 classroom primary school. Detailed plans for the building have been agreed and the final preparation work is being carried out before construction can start.

The Coordinator for AICT's Women and Children Department, Martha



The community hub, known locally as the 'Boma', provides an excellent meeting location for the families

Ndaluka, has played an important role in providing guidance to the families throughout this process. Martha and her colleagues have been working closely with the families to provide support, education and counselling since they arrived at Kazunzu.

A key element of the development of Kazunzu Village of Hope are the income generating activities which will strengthen the economic resilience of the project and support long-term sustainability.

One of these projects is the fish farm which began in 2021. Currently, there are two cages which have been stocked, with plans for another four to be added in the next few months. Some of the guardian parents are being trained by a local aquaculture expert so that they will be able to run the project successfully on their own with only minimal support.

Further income generating activities are being developed, including a poultry project and



the commencement of greater agricultural activities. The potential of goat farming is also being considered.

Now that travel restrictions have eased considerably, we look forward to welcoming back Vine Trust volunteers to meet the Kazunzu families and project team, as well supporting the ongoing development of the work.”



Remarkable Donation to Support our Medical Ships

We never failed to be amazed by the kindness and generosity of our community of supporters and this month is no different!

Recently, David and Roslyn Lindsay of Milngavie, Glasgow were in touch to offer their families much-loved motor boat, “Alexa” to support the work of the medical ships in Peru and Tanzania.

David and Roslyn, who first became aware of our work through the award-winning 2002 BBC documentary, “Ferry Up the Amazon”, had previously gifted a speedboat for Amazon Hope 2 back in 2003.



Seen here with a painting of the good ship “Alexa,” they are delighted to report that the vessel has now been sold and all the funds gifted to the work of Vine Trust.

We are immensely grateful for such a large and significant gift which will support a new generator for MV Amazon Hope 2 on the Peruvian Amazon and extend the number of expeditions MV Jubilee Hope will be undertaking in 2022 delivering much needed immunisations, and HIV support to the island communities of Lake Victoria.

“Alexa, can you get me a generator and two extra medical expeditions on Lake Victoria please!” I must try that with my smart speaker at home and see how it responds!

On behalf of the medical teams in Peru and Tanzania and the team here in the UK, we thank you so much, David and Roslyn for continuing to connect with us in order to change lives!

Big Impact of the “Little Ship”



At the Vine Trust office we often hear reports of how the medical teams have been able to provide vital medical care in challenging circumstances.

On the recent Forth Hope expedition, one of the most extreme cases required the quick intervention by the team and close coordination with other health partners in the region to save a patient's life. Dr Ronald Ramirez sent us the following report:

“On the 18th of May, whilst Maria was preparing her breakfast, she felt pain in her lower abdomen so she decided to go to bed. Three hours later, the pain was getting more and more intense, so her aunt began to seek help in the community. Someone told her that “El Barquito” (“the Little Ship” as the Forth Hope ship is known affectionately) was very close to the village, so she decided to take Maria there.

On the Forth Hope ship we received her in very poor health with hypovolemic shock, so we immediately gave her the necessary attention to stabilise her and then do the diagnosis. Through clinical examination and ultrasound we were

able to diagnose that she had a ruptured ectopic pregnancy and the patient could die if she did not undergo emergency surgery.

Coordination was immediately made with the health post and the Regional Health Directorate to send a plane to transfer Maria to the Loreto Regional Hospital which arrived 3 hours later. She was put on the plane and managed to arrive at the hospital alive at 5pm, where she was immediately treated in the intensive care and then entered surgery.

Since her evacuation by plane we have remained in contact with her family. They report that the surgery was successful and that she was discharged from hospital on the 22nd of May.



The whole team were delighted to receive the news. The ship has been on its longest ever expedition (52 days) and being able to help in this way makes it all worthwhile. We dread to think what would have happened if the Forth Hope ship had not been there that day. The only other health facility is located 8 hours away by canoe and is not manned by staff who are trained for this kind of emergency.”

Partnership Building Homes and Changing Lives

We are delighted to share an update sent to us from TAWREF about how their partnership with Vine Trust and the local community brought a much-needed home to a family:

“We at the Tanzania Women Research Foundation have always ran out of words whenever we add one more house to the homeless orphans supported by the generous volunteers through our long-term partners, Vine Trust. Early this year Vine Trust sent money to TAWREF to construct three homes for vulnerable families in Tanzania. The homes will provide healthy, loving and safe environments for the beneficiary families.

Construction of the first house started in March, which is home number 138 since 2012. The beneficiary is Mama Mwijuma (47) and her three sons named Rajabu (17), who is in secondary school, Baraka (11) in primary class 4 and Athman (7) who is physically disabled and therefore not yet in school.

Mama Mwijuma became a widow in 2017. Since then the family were made to leave the room they

were renting after failure to pay the rent. Unfortunately, no one accepted her because she has a boy with physical and mental disabilities who can neither sit on his own nor stand up. A common belief in the community is that staying with someone with disability is a curse and may bring bad luck. As a result, Mama Mwijuma started moving from street to street begging for food and clothes, sleeping in doorways.

One day she come across a lady who offered a place for her to stay, though it was not a completed house, nevertheless Mwijuma found it to be a better place to stay than what she had. The roof had lots of holes, no proper toilet or a door. The two boys shared one broken bed and their mother slept with the disabled boy on a very thin mattress.

Mwijuma would spend most of her time at home to care for the sick little boy. She could not do any casual labour outside her home. She would sometimes walk on the street begging for food and money. She even went to the District Commissioner’s office and to the Member of Parliament’s office to ask

for any support available. She also visited the TAWREF offices 2 years back before COVID-19.

With the money that Vine Trust had sent, TAWREF visited the family and promised to build her a house. She cried when she was told the news.

Construction commenced on the 14th of March and one month later the house completed and ready for handing over to the family as an Easter present for her perseverance. What a connection to hope, love, and protection by the Vine Trust!

The TAWREF Board members and staff led by the Executive Director, Dafrosa Itemba, fundraised for a latrine, and even got involved in digging the pit latrine. This was very unique as never before had people seen a Director down in the pit with a shovel!

The funds from Vine Trust also helped construct an animal shed, and the offer of two goats for the family.

This was a great experience for the family, as even the land had been provided to them for free, by a neighbor. Now the family



TAWREF Executive Director, Dafrosa Itemba handing over the new home to Mama Mwijuma

is comfortable, happier in their new house. The local leaders and neighbours offered to add electricity and furniture to the house. What a blessing! What a synergy!

We are planning to construct two more houses after the rainy season. Long live this partnership!"

TAWREF and the community came together to celebrate completion of the new family home



Next Steps Taken Towards Carbon Neutrality

As part of our aim to become carbon neutral by December 2025 through carbon offsetting and emissions reduction wherever possible, we are delighted to begin working with Carbon Stewards in carrying out a detailed baseline assessment of our current carbon emissions in preparation for launching a mitigation scheme in the year ahead.



The first stage is about measuring and working out what we are responsible for and how our volunteer programmes can be offset too. Since 2019, we have been offsetting all air travel as part of our core expedition budgets but that really is just the beginning.

The aim is to have a fully verified and accredited off-setting scheme in place which will deal with the fuel burn of our ships, all our vehicle use, travel, electricity consumption and everything that contributes to our operational carbon footprint.

We are very excited about partnering with Carbon Stewards who work closely with NGO's and international partners to achieve verifiable outcomes whilst, at the same time, setting up projects in countries to offset emissions whilst stimulating sustainable social enterprises.

For further information, visit [climatestewards.org](https://www.climatestewards.org) or download their annual report: <https://www.climatestewards.org/annual-reports/>
I am quite sure you will find it an inspiring read.

Joy as Jubilee Hope visits Goziba Island

It was a time of great celebration on board the MV Jubilee Hope in January when the Muleba District Commissioner, Hon. Toba Nguvile visited the ship to officially congratulate the team on the incredible work that has been done by the Programme over the past 5 years.

With a new 5-year agreement extension being signed at the end of 2021, there was great reason to be encouraged as the ship made its first medical expedition of the year. Since then, a further two expeditions have been completed with a further six more planned during the rest of 2022.

After the most recent expedition, Programme Manager, Patrick Mabula



The Jubilee Hope's services are always in huge demand during each expedition



reported that *“there was great excitement on the return of the ship to the island of Goziba. There was a huge crowd of patients.”*

Head of Medical Services, Dr Uzia Mohamed noted that everyone had been *“very busy. There has been great team spirit and team work, with quality services offered to patients”*.

The May expedition to Goziba also saw the first overseas medical volunteer joining the Jubilee Hope Programme since the start of the pandemic.

Volunteering opportunities are now open for the remaining expeditions in 2022, with more details available via the Vine Trust website.

Guild Partnership Update



In April 2021, with great excitement and honour, Kazunzu Village of Hope was announced as one of the Guild Partnership Projects for 2021–2024. The vision for Kazunzu is to create a sustainable village on the shores of Lake Victoria, enabling young guardian parents to care for orphaned children from the lake zone. See pages 8-9 for the most recent developments.

Over the past year, this vision and progress update has been shared by Vine Trust at over 50 Guild meetings across Scotland. As the second year of the partnerships gets underway, talks for the 2022–2023 session are being arranged. If you would like to arrange a speaker from Vine Trust to do a presentation at a Guild meeting, please contact us on 0131 555 5598 or by email at admin@vinetrust.org

CONSTRUCTION EXPEDITIONS TO TANZANIA 2023 & 2024

There have been a number of enquiries from church and business partners about **2023 construction team expeditions** to work with the families and project team at Kazunzu Village of Hope. We'd love to connect more people with this exciting community development project, so please contact us if you'd like to discuss the different options available.



We are also receiving bookings for **school expeditions in 2024**. We have space for up to 10 groups, so if you would like to book your place, please get in touch with us at the Vine Trust Office (expeditions@vinetrust.org) and we'd be delighted to help.



I Can See Clearly Now!

It's amazing the difference a pair of glasses can make!

It is reported that almost two thirds of the population in the UK wear spectacles. For most, getting access to eye testing services is little more than making a simple appointment at a local opticians, and glasses can be purchased to fit within most budgets. However, for millions of people around the world, access to much-needed spectacles is far from easy.

During 2022, the Amazon Hope Programme has come across many patients who have had their lives transformed by a free pair of glasses.



Rony, aged 13 (pictured above) visited the Forth Hope ship and reported not being able to see the classroom blackboard. Thanks to the generous donation of support from a Vine Trust volunteer, he was able to return home with a free pair of glasses.

A pair of glasses can make an amazing difference. If you'd like to help the Amazon Hope Programme provide glasses to more patients, please see details on page 18.



I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW! APPEAL

£10,000 target

As the medical programmes in Peru and Tanzania reach more patients each year, the need for eye testing and glasses has grown in demand, with the medical ships being the only option that patients in these communities have for this kind of help. Whilst the programmes can count on professionals to do the eye testing and prescribing, the biggest challenge is providing the patients with a suitable pair of glasses.

So we are reaching out to all our supporters to ask if you'd like to help provide a patient with a new pair of glasses through one of Vine Trust partnership medical programmes. An estimated 10,000 pairs of new glasses are required over the next 12 months.

For **just £1**, the programmes in both countries can purchase and distribute a pair of new glasses to a patient who comes to the ship, which will make such a huge difference in their daily life.

To help support this fundraising campaign you can either use the form on page 19, go online - bit.ly/VTAppeal2022 or use the QR code below.



Donation / Standing Order Form

Your Details	
Title:	First name(s):
Surname:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone No:	
Email:	

**I Can See Clearly
Now! Appeal**
Provide new glasses for
patients in Peru and
Tanzania

DONATION

£ _____

Standing Order	
Bank:	
Bank Address:	
Sort Code:	Account No.:
Please pay Vine Trust the sum of £ _____ on the date of _____	
And (please circle) monthly / quarterly / annually thereafter until _____	

I would like my Standing Order to support (please tick one):

General Operations

Peru Medical Programme

Tanzania Medical Programme

Kazunzu – Village of Hope

Where the Need is Greatest

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate!

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. In order to Gift Aid your donations you must tick the box(es) below:

I want to Gift Aid all of my Standing Order /Donations and/or

any donations I have made in the past 4 years

'I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.'

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you!

We couldn't operate our programmes without you.

Please send this form to The Vine Trust Barge, Prince of Wales Dock, Edinburgh, EH6 7DX. We will register the standing order in our records and then forward the form to your bank

Please notify the charity if you:

- want to cancel this declaration - change your name or home address - no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains
if you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Patron: HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL

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VineTrust



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