



## Where there's a **will** there's a way

**WHEN YOU WRITE OR UPDATE YOUR WILL**, please consider leaving a gift to **Feed the Minds** or recommending us as a preferred charity for any donations in your memory. This will enable us to help others through the power of education – a lasting and far-reaching legacy. Your donation could be used to help break the poverty cycle by providing people with the knowledge and skills to earn a decent living. Or your bequest could help the next generation of church leaders to reduce ignorance, prejudice and conflict in their communities.

There is no obligation, and we welcome donations of any size. If you would like to find out more, please contact **Adam Sach** at [asach@feedtheminds.org](mailto:asach@feedtheminds.org) or 0845 1 21 21 02. Thank you.

## TRANSFORM LIVES THROUGH LITERATURE



We know that through providing information and materials to individuals we unlock their God-given potential to take control of their lives. **Feed the Minds** has been delivering on this commitment through our **Overseas Book Service** for over 45 years, making it one of the longest running programmes of its kind in the UK. But this service can only continue with your support. Stocks are running low at our distribution centre in Bradford and demand for good quality second hand theological books from our partners in developing countries continues to grow. If you or anyone you know has any second hand theological books that you would gladly donate to help the development of the church and its community overseas then please get in touch with **James Cole** on 020 7582 3535 or [jcole@feedtheminds.org](mailto:jcole@feedtheminds.org)

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Front cover image:  
Rebecca Marshall.

# CONNECT

THE NEWSLETTER FROM FEED THE MINDS



## EDUCATION MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE



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## WELCOME TO CONNECT ISSUE 13.

For people living in the Global South, literacy and numeracy can make the difference between:

- getting a job or relying on handouts from others
- earning enough money to support their family, or going without necessities, including food
- making a profit when selling produce, or failing to cover their costs
- having high self-esteem, or being embarrassed and ashamed.

And most importantly, the children of literate and numerate parents are more likely to attend school and develop these life-long skills themselves.

Literacy and numeracy are valuable skills, but in this issue of **Connect** we outline how they can be truly life-changing when combined with vocational training. In the words of Kaday Bangura, a literacy and weaving student at Craftshare Vocational Training Centre, our partner in southern Sierra Leone:

*"I'm grateful to God that I can now weave cloth, make different patterns and designs. I can also read short sentences and write my name. Ignorance cannot kill, but it helps to prolong one's suffering."*

**Josephine Carlsson,**  
Director

# Building **skills** for life



Photo: Rebecca Marshall.

## our **work** and **approach**

At **Feed the Minds**, we believe that education means more than the ability to read and write, or make simple calculations. Literacy and numeracy are important skills, but to transform people's lives this knowledge needs to be applied practically, and combined with work skills.

**B**eing able to make simple calculations can be a great step for many people, but they will gain much more from knowing how to manage their household budget. More importantly, earning their own living increases people's quality of life, their self-respect, and their chances of escaping poverty permanently.

That is why our education projects integrate vocational training and literacy classes.

We aim to help marginalised people to support themselves and their families, now and in the future. Across the Global South, people with disabilities, members of minority ethnic groups and women are commonly excluded from education. This means that many struggle to understand their rights, seek appropriate healthcare or earn money. This

can have devastating consequences in countries with few safety nets.

**Feed the Minds** and our local partner organisations across the Global South are tackling these problems in a number of ways, depending on local circumstances. Our partners identify specific needs in their local community, and we help them to refine and implement appropriate, sustainable solutions.

In recent years, we have helped to provide vocational skills for women in countries such as Ghana. In Togo we have combined education and training workshops for blind women, to increase their self-confidence as well as their ability to support themselves. And in four regions of The Gambia we have helped to train subsistence farmers in beekeeping, so they can produce honey to eat and sell. ■



**TWO VERY DIFFERENT PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY FEED THE MINDS SHOW COMBINING LITERACY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WORKS IN PRACTICE.**

# Our work in action

## Vocational skills for vulnerable youth

*“I can now write my name and assist my children with reading and counting. The literacy skills training has given me joy and happiness. Thanks for helping me break out of the cycle of poverty and embarrassment.”*  
**Mary Charlie, a Craftshare student**

Feed the Minds' partnership with Craftshare Vocational Training Centre in Sierra Leone dates back to 2002. Craftshare is a great example of the positive outcomes of combining literacy and vocational training.

The organisation specifically targets young people who are particularly in need of employment skills because they are orphans, have disabilities or missed out on school because of the war in Sierra Leone. Over two years, Craftshare is training 350 young people in practical work skills including masonry, tailoring, carpentry and catering. At the same time, students learn functional literacy skills, enabling them to measure materials, make estimates, keep records and read instructions to help them in employment – and in life.

Craftshare also helps students to find employment after finishing their course. The centre has a shop to sell products made by students. This helps to fund the centre, as well as some grants to help trainees set up their own businesses. By linking Craftshare up with the organisation Tools for Self Reliance, Feed the Minds has also helped to provide tools to the centre and to some of its graduates.

This initiative will improve incomes – and outcomes – for around 3,000 people in Bo, Southern Sierra Leone. The local community and economy are both benefiting from the goods and services provided by former Craftshare students. And the increased self-respect and awareness of human rights among Craftshare students could help to build tolerance and peace.

*“I love weaving. I am doing something which people say I am good at and I can earn my living like other people when I leave here.”*  
**Saiyari, a blind student at Craftshare**

## Feeding bodies and minds

*“Now we eat better and more. We have food all of the year and can always come to pick from here. We never go to the market to buy vegetables any more, we go to sell them”.*  
**Nshing Samuel, Baingo Farmers' Group, Cameroon**

In north west Cameroon, **Feed the Minds** is supporting a three-year initiative that has made excellent progress in its first six months. Run by the Twahntoh Mixed Farming Common Initiative Group (MIFACIG), this project is firmly rooted in the needs of local farmers. MIFACIG is increasing food security, local incomes and environmental sustainability by training 24 farmers' groups in organic gardening, farm management and beekeeping. Trainees then share their knowledge with neighbours.

The project aims to improve the health and livelihoods of people in the remote Boyo Division by increasing their crop diversity and yields, and training them in the cultivation and use of medicinal plants. The training provided by MIFACIG also has a positive environmental impact, as it promotes the use of livestock manure, water conservation and cultivation without pesticides. Based on

knowledge of the local soil and climate, the project employs low-technology techniques that are accessible to small-scale farmers.

So far, 5,225 trees have been planted to improve soil fertility, soil retention and to provide a habitat for wildlife. And 35 bee hives have been established by seven farming groups. The group in Kitchu has already produced 300 litres of honey, and other groups expect to increase their honey production by up to 50 percent. Profits from vegetable sales are being used to buy seeds, which are then distributed throughout the local community.

MIFACIG is teaching farmers how to market their products, manage their finances and keep records – effectively combining literacy and vocational skills. The farmers also recognise the value of education. Nsom Isaiah from Baingo told us, “When I go back to my community I will arrange for an adult literacy workshop day”. Veronica from Djichami observed, “Training of trainers really improves learning for our community.” And Clementina Ngong from Gamti plans to “use money from crops to pay for school fees”. ■



# Lunches for Life

This summer, we are inviting all our supporters to take part in our new **Lunches for Life** campaign by holding food-based events around the time of International Literacy Day on 8 September. The campaign has two aims – to highlight the importance of education and raise funds for our education projects.

**T**he idea is simple. By hosting a **Lunch for Life**, you can feed your friends and relatives, provide food for thought and also raise valuable funds for our education work around the world. A light lunch, boisterous barbecue or sociable supper could help us to support life-changing education projects where they are needed most.

For example, £40 could provide a basic education for a woman in Eastern India who was denied schooling as a child because of poverty or prejudice. £500 could provide literacy and vocational training to eight people in Sierra Leone, helping them to support themselves.

Your event can be as modest or ambitious as you like, and can take place on any date and at any time of day or night – it's up to you. Tempted? Please get in touch to receive your free **Lunches for Life** pack, full of practical suggestions and useful materials including invitations, posters and recipe ideas. You can visit [www.lunchesforlife.org](http://www.lunchesforlife.org) email [lunch@feedtheminds.org](mailto:lunch@feedtheminds.org) or call **Matthew Hamilton** on 08451 21 21 02 to get your copy. ■



**In India, we work with the Social Agriculture, Children's Education and Women's Development Trust to provide training and employment opportunities for socially excluded women, to combat poverty and help them secure their rights. The local recipe on this page is often enjoyed in this region.**

## Spicy nuts – an appetising snack

### Ingredients:

- 200g unsalted cashew nuts
- 200g blanched almonds
- 2 tbsp oil (rapeseed, groundnut or similar)
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1-2 tsp garam masala
- 1-2 pinches of chilli pepper
- 1-2 tsp sea salt

1. Heat the oil in a wok or frying pan and add all the spices except the salt.
2. Turn frequently to avoid burning the spices. Add the nuts.
3. Fry on a high heat, turning all the time for about 4 minutes, until roasted.
4. Take from the heat, add salt and put into a serving bowl. Serve cold.

Bon appetit!



**Emma Flynn is a new Feed the Minds supporter, who recently held a Lunch for Life. Aged 23, Emma lives in Birmingham and works for a UK youth education charity.**

## 60 Seconds



### WHAT DREW YOU TO FEED THE MINDS?

I have an MSc in International Development. I am interested in international development and I think education is extremely important. I think what **Feed the Minds** is doing in helping the most vulnerable people is impressive.

### HOW CAN EDUCATION TRANSFORM PEOPLE'S LIVES?

The opportunities that education brings are incredible. I worked as a volunteer teacher in Malawi and I saw people facing real barriers to education, things like class sizes of 200. I've kept in touch with some of the children I taught – some have managed to go to secondary school, which is great. One of the boys got into the top school in Malawi. He's from a very rural, extremely poor area where most people are subsistence farmers. Now he's considering studying law at university. I also know how hard it can be for women and girls to access education, even though it's vitally important.

### HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT LUNCHES FOR LIFE?

Through a friend. I think it's a really easy thing to do, and a fun thing to do, and it raises awareness of a really important issue. It's a great way to make a difference.

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR LUNCH FOR LIFE

I had lunch at home one Saturday with 10 friends and colleagues. It was great. I charged people £5 a head to come, but some gave more when they realised the impact of the work and the huge challenges people face. We raised more than £80.

I cooked some of the recommended recipes, which turned out really well. And I'm a big fan of baking so I rustled up some treats for everyone!

I gave a short talk about the importance of education, using materials from **Lunches for Life** microsite. And we did the quiz, which was really interesting although there were some shocking statistics in it. Some people were slightly aware of the issues, but they all found out more at the lunch!

[www.lunchesforlife.org](http://www.lunchesforlife.org)

