



Winter Newsletter 2020

"For God so loved the world, that he sent his only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life" John 3 v 16

From The Trustees

We would like to take the opportunity to thank you all again for journeying with A2B so faithfully. Coronavirus and the ongoing rebuilding from the earthquake at the end of 2019 has made 2020 an unprecedented year. With restrictions in place A2B have redirected much effort into feeding people who can no longer work. This has more than doubled the number of people we feed weekly, and brought new opportunity to love the hurting, lifting dignity and restoring hope.

We thank you for your prayers of protection, health, wisdom and continued means to support.

Andrew, David, Nicola, Paul, Sam and Tracy (Trustees, A2B UK)

A2B and Coronavirus

Paul Heffer, A2B Trustee

At the time of writing around 500 people have died from Covid-19 in Albania, with 20000 cases. far lower than other European countries, but the economic knock on effects have been huge.

Like most countries in the world Albania went into lockdown in March. This meant that all three of the day centres closed. This left many vulnerable people without the support we provide. There was also a major increase in demand for help and the local council approached A2B for assistance. A2B appeals In the UK and Europe raised funds, and A2B staff and volunteers from the "Jesus Bought Us Together Church" distributed food parcels that have supported over 2000 families in Elbasan and the surrounding villages.



Social distancing and other measures are still in place in Elbasan. This has meant that the elderly section of the day centres remain closed. The staff continue to cook hot meals and take them to their homes. The kindergartens are working on restricted attendances, with children split across morning and afternoon sessions, they are taking food back to their families. As in the UK, organisations like ours have adapted to the new way of life and we are grateful to all the A2B staff for the way they have continued to provide much needed services.

It is likely that A2B will remain under pressure as many people have lost their jobs. There is little unemployment benefit in Albania (£20 per month). Many depend on getting work a day at a time, if this is not available, they do not get paid. In the past they were able to travel to Greece or Italy but now that door is closed. It is possible that more families will come due to the second

wave. Please pray for wisdom as the team make difficult decisions, and help those in need. As the work increases A2B will need to find additional funds and if you would like to support this project or increase your giving please contact our treasurer david.ayrton@a2balbania.org



Financial Breakdown Year to 31st March 2020

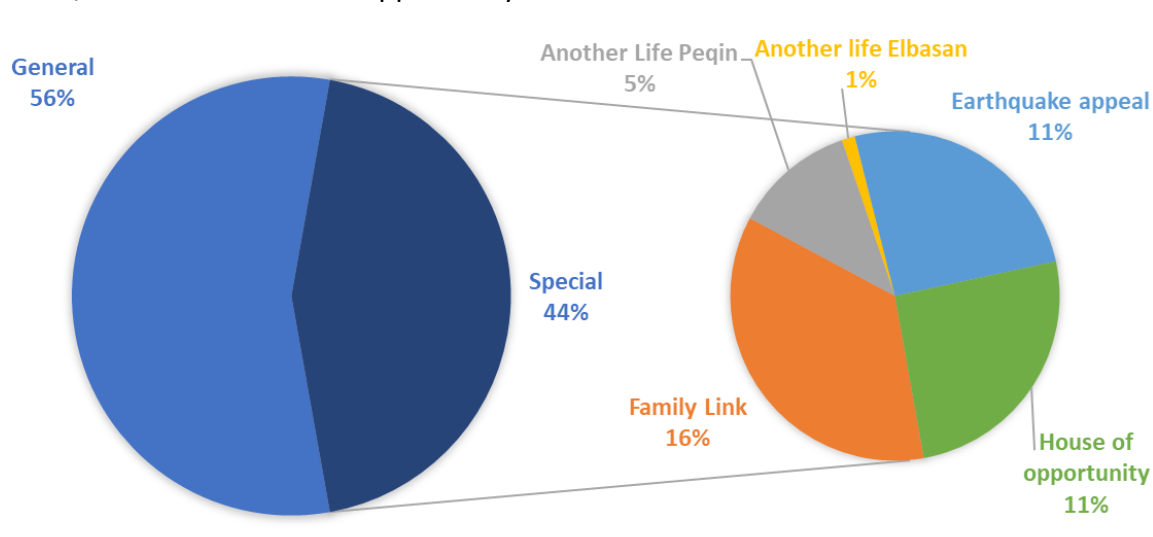
David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

How much did we receive?

- £92,165 during the year. This compared with £67,098 the previous year.
- £53,338 was for the general fund and £38,827 was designated for particular projects.
- We claimed Gift Aid where possible and that added £4,091 to the general fund and £3,238 to the special projects.
- Most of the increase was due to special appeals that we ran during the year, especially:
 - the earthquake appeal,
 - Another Life – Peqin,
 - the House of Opportunity.

How did we spend it?

- All of it went to Albania, apart from £1,043 that was spent on bank charges, travel expenses and promotional costs in the UK.
- No Trustee, or anyone else in the UK, was paid for the work they did.
- We sent £61,289 for general expenses, (this covers some salaries, office costs, vehicle running costs and other general running expenses).
- We sent £41,894 to special projects in accordance with the wishes of the donors.
- Special projects included:
 - £17,428 for Family Link
 - £5,844 for Another Life – Peqin
 - £631 for Another Life – Elbasan
 - £12,497 for the earthquake appeal
 - £12,500 for the House of Opportunity



Overall, we spent £103,183 compared with £69,330 the previous year. The higher spend compared to receipts was covered from our reserves—built of generous donations in the previous year.

The Trustees are very grateful that whenever we make an additional appeal for money, the response is always hugely generous. We thank God that he keeps supplying us with regular funds so that we can give some security to those who work for A2B in Albania, and in addition use our special appeals to support Alketa and Elona wherever they feel God is telling them to get involved.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

Hope After Earthquake and Fire

Sam Whitmarsh, A2B chair

Alketa and Elona (A2B Albania Directors) were approached by the local council to assist a family who had been dreadfully affected by the earthquake back in November last year. The shocks damaged the electricity supply to their house in November and went unnoticed until May when it caused a major fire. The family managed to escape and no one was hurt, but the house was almost completely destroyed along with all their possessions, just one smoke stained room remained habitable. 7 people across four generations are living with support from neighbours.

The family had worked hard for years to build their house and you can imagine the devastation this has brought to them. As the family are poor, they could not afford insurance and they have been left homeless and destitute with winter approaching.

A2B are helping this family to rebuild their lives – literally. Using funds raised to look after people struggling after the earthquake, we have purchased building materials, so they can rebuild the walls on the foundations of the old house. When the house has been completed, we will help to furnish the house. The family are so grateful, having lost everything, seeing there is a community who will support them through this traumatic time has renewed their hope.



Family Link Stories

Tracy Bishop, A2B family link coordinator



Whilst I was on a mission trip to A2B in 2013 I met Bashkim, Sidorela and their mum Teuta. Teuta's husband had died suddenly that year. The family were living together in one room without any income. Their living conditions were poor. Bashkim played his cello to us, he is a talented musician and it touched my heart. God continued to bring this family to my mind, and we decided to sponsor them. with a monthly food parcel.

They have rebuilt their lives: Teuta has completed a tailoring course in partnership with A2B. She is now able to support herself financially. Bashkim has won a place at the Art Academy and Family Link support will allow him to continue his studies. Sidorela has fallen in love and was recently engaged to be married! Teuta presented our staff with a traditional sweet treat to celebrate this event! Teuta says "She is thankful for the support she and her family have received from A2B over the years. Because of this help her eyes have been opened to the opportunities and possibilities for her family's future".

Please join with us in thanking our Lord for his blessing and provision for this family. We are overjoyed with the way their lives are improving. They have used A2B's help wisely, and chosen to take part and seek opportunities to improve their own situations. Your ongoing support and prayers are indeed making a big difference to this family. Thank you so much.

Keta health update Sam Whitmarsh, A2B Chair

Keta has recently been very ill, perhaps even with Covid-19 and we are very grateful that she is recovering. Whilst no hospital treatment was required, she was in bed with a drip for a number of weeks. Please pray for Keta, give thanks she is on the mend and pray for a full recovery with no lasting effects. Please also pray for Elona as she takes on more responsibility, and protection for the whole A2B team as they serve.



Born before 5th October 1954? David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

If so, you will qualify for a **Winter Fuel Payment** from the UK Government of between £100 and £300. It is normally paid during November or December.

Many people find this a great help in paying their heating bills, but if you find that the way you budget over the year makes it less essential for you, then perhaps you might think of sharing it with those who desperately need it. Winters in Albania can get very cold, and houses are not always well insulated. Some earthquake victims are still living in temporary accommodation. The lack of work caused by Covid-19 means some people have to choose between food and heating.

If you can spare any of your allowance to send to A2B, we will pass it on so that it can be used to help those in Albania who are struggling. It's a great way to make sure that they will be warm this winter.



Christmas Cards and Christian Gifts Paul Heffer, A2B Trustee

Share the Good News with
Gospel Cards, etc.

Once again, this year we shall benefit from the sale of Christmas cards and other cards and gifts available from Gospel Cards. 20% of their Christmas card sales and 5% of the sale of other items go to 22 Christian missions including A2B. Please see the enclosed catalogue for details, and please remember to mention our name if you place an order - thank you. For more details see their website www.GospelCardsEtc.com Tel. 01656 647551, or write to Gospel Cards, 15 Brackla Street Centre, Bridgend, CF31 1DD.

2 ways to support A2B by shopping! David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

If you like the idea of giving money to A2B with no cost to you, simply by carrying out your normal shop, please read on! We have 2 ways you can help lift dignity and restore hope by shopping instore and online.

1. Every time you shop online via giveasyoulive.com at 4,000+ top retailers, including eBay, John Lewis and Expedia, a FREE donation will be made to us and it won't cost you a penny extra!
2. Amazon have recently set up their own charitable support page smile.amazon.co.uk and no longer use Give As You Live. When you buy from Smile.Amazon 0.5% of what you spend goes to A2B.



A2B Lifting Dignity,
Restoring Hope

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A2B is a registered charity in the UK (1168468) and a registered Foundation in Albania