



# Annual Report 2024 - 2025



Netball Development Trust

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## Introduction

The *Netball Development Trust* (NDT) is a UK-registered charity, created in 2012 (previously registered charity under number 1145858, now CIO registered number 1210225) with a mission that is both simple and ambitious: to use the power of netball to transform the lives of girls through play, leadership, and health education.

For the last 13 years, we have been delivering grassroots netball and health programmes in underserved communities across Uganda, Kenya, and Ghana. We design every project with the communities we serve, using their local knowledge, culture, and data to guide our work.

What sets us apart is that our work extends beyond sport; we integrate locally relevant health education into every session creating a holistic approach to development.

Through our programmes girls not only learn netball skills such as passing and shooting but also develop leadership communication and confidence skills as well as learning how to stay healthy. They learn about menstruation, consent, gender equality, and other topics that are often steeped in stigma or silence.

We currently have active community teams working in Uganda (Jinja area), Kenya (Bungoma county) and Ghana (Accra).

In September 2024, NDT transitioned its status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This report is our first annual report as a CIO and covers the period from September 2024 to May 2025.

## **Strategy**

Our Strategy (2021-2025) still stands, and we continue to work towards the following:

### **Our vision**

Using netball to educate, create opportunities and improve the health of the communities we serve.

### **Our mission**

There are four pillars to our work and together they underpin how we will achieve our vision.

#### **Pillar 1: Netball**

Teaching and playing the game of netball to coaches and young people.

#### **Pillar 2: Education**

Delivering mental, physical, and sexual health education to empower young people to make better decisions.

#### **Pillar 3: Equality**

Promoting gender equality across all aspects of our work.

#### **Pillar 4: Development**

Development for everyone linked to NDT by offering life skills and positive pathways

Our strapline is '***Making a difference through netball***' and everything we do revolves around this.

## **Structural changes**

In April 2024, following legal advice, we decided that transitioning to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was the most appropriate structure for the future of the charity, replacing the Charitable Trust model under which NDT had operated for the previous 12 years. This legal status change provides greater flexibility for Trustees, limits personal liability, and enables the charity to employ staff - a key strategic aspiration for NDT.

Working closely with the Charity Commission, the new CIO was established in September 2024 (registration number 1210225).

During the year, we also strengthened the experience and diversity of our Board of Trustees. Melanie Davies and Simone Shephard were appointed in April 2024, followed by Navjeet Sira Kaur and Amy Schnee in October 2024. They joined existing Trustees Monica Thandi and Shantonu Chundur, bringing the Board to a total of six members.

Wendy Shepherd and Julie Smith stepped down as Trustees during 2024.

Liz Broomhead also stepped down as a Trustee. In recognition of her significant contribution, the Board offered her a position as a lifelong 'Ambassador' in November 2024, enabling the charity to continue to benefit from her experience and insight.

As of June 2025, the charity will have a newly appointed Director following a successful and competitive recruitment process. Julie Smith, a former Trustee, will take up this role and lead NDT in delivering its new strategy, strengthening fundraising, and developing new partnerships.

We look forward to seeing the growth and impact we can achieve with this new status change and exciting team in place.

## ***In-country growth and workforce***

To date, NDT has reached over 25,600 children across 60 regularly engaged schools in three core countries, with additional programmes delivered in three other countries over the years. We have also trained more than 400 in-country volunteers (including 115 who are regularly active), equipping them with the skills and confidence to act as effective coaches and role models.

During the period from 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025, we engaged 2,019 children in our programmes and trained approximately 80 in-country volunteers, further strengthening local delivery capacity.

Feedback and case studies we receive from our projects indicate meaningful and sustained impact. We know we are keeping girls in school, we are reducing bullying around menstruation and gender-based violence, and we are increasing girls' school attendance due to having sanitary pads, better menstrual health hygiene and better understanding of teenage pregnancy. Engaging boys in our sessions has also played an important role in fostering understanding, reducing stigma, and encouraging positive support for their female peers.

Numbers alone simply do not show this progress. Please see our [impact report](#) and social media updates to read the qualitative and sustainable benefits.

## ***Programme updates***

For our in-country updates we refer you to our [Impact report](#) covering the last couple of years. This document is full of stories showing the outcomes of the work our teams are doing, mostly voluntarily.

## ***Challenges***

**Funding** has been and will be a key priority in the coming financial year. Taking on the risk of an employee, which we know to be the right approach to grow the charity, adds to the importance of securing funding and diversifying our income.

A longer-term ambition is to establish funded roles within each country of operation, enabling greater independence and local ownership of programmes.

Our in-country teams bring critical expertise and contextual understanding, and we are committed to progressively devolving decision-making to them. **Upskilling** the teams will be a priority for the next few years, as well as finding funding opportunities in-country.

**Monitoring and evaluation** techniques and understanding is an area we want to improve on. Our teams are volunteers and are passionate deliverers with limited technology; we must find a smarter way of collecting insight that adds to the overall process but doesn't add excessive workload, or unrealistic expectations.

## ***Financial summary***

Our 2024-25 accounts are available on the Charity Commission website. Overall, this has been a financially stronger year for the charity, despite much of our focus being on organisational transition. We were pleased to secure funding from a considerable donor who has committed to a 3-year deal incorporating a match funding promise. Once we have our first employee in place, their priority will be to secure additional funding to maximise this opportunity.

An area for improvement for us in 2025-2026 will be our fundraising strategy, particularly the need to diversify income streams. As in previous years, income this year has been generated through volunteers travelling to NDT programmes and through ad-hoc fundraising from generous individual supporters.

While we remain grateful for this support, we recognise that this model is not sufficient to sustain the charity. With the introduction of a paid employee from June 2025 and our plans for growth, it is essential that we adopt a more structured and strategic approach to fundraising. This will include exploring corporate partnerships, increasing applications to grant-making bodies, and developing broader, more sustainable income generation methods.

## ***Our partners and supporters***

We would like to thank all our partners, supporters and donors who provide logistical support, technical expertise, equipment, donations and inspiring advice.

Thank you to: Big Yellow Self Storage, Paypal Giving Fund, Tag Rugby Trust, Freedom 4 Girls, X-SUBA, Mwino, Akwaaba Volunteers and to all the individual donors and netball clubs who have donated kit and fundraised for us.





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