

Blossom Africa

Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial
Statements for Year End 31st March 2022



Registered charity name and number: Blossom Africa –
1161993

Principal address: 1 Station Approach, Caerleon, Newport, NP18
1NJ

Blossom Africa Trustees (as of 31st March 2022)

Aimee Parker (Chair)
Yvonne Forsey (Treasurer)
Linnea Renton
Holly Welsh
Hannah Fisher
Luke Armitage

Structure, governance and management

Blossom Africa is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), governed by a CIO constitution adopted on 10th January 2015 and registered at the charity commission on 3rd June 2015.

The charity is managed directly by its Board of Trustees, who make all decisions relating to the charity. The Board consists of six trustees as of 31st March 2022. The constitution states a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of 12 trustees.

Trustees are appointed following a formal recruitment process, including completion of an application form and undertaking an interview. The Board of Trustees agrees all new appointments and new trustees are formally appointed at the next Board meeting. All trustees are given a copy of the Constitution, the Trustee Handbook and Business Plan when they commence their role.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees of Blossom Africa confirm that they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have regard for the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the charity in the period up to and including 31st March 2022.

Objectives and activities

- To support communities in Uganda to adapt to climate change

- To understand the specific needs of communities in Uganda through community engagement and consultation
- To source and deliver training programmes specific to the needs of the community
- To support the communities to initiate and own a range of sustainable projects, which have wider community benefit and have been developed and implemented by the community themselves
- To develop a network of individuals and groups who share learning and support each other in their development
- To grow Blossom Africa and to thoroughly monitor and evaluate its work and use the knowledge gained to influence the process of developing future projects and a sustainable funding base in the UK.

Overview of activities in 2021/2022

As we entered April 2021 there were still strict government restrictions in place in Uganda due to COVID-19. This meant that group activities were limited and gathering of large groups prohibited. However, with the support of the Field Officers the village savings and loans groups in Bunambutye continued to save throughout the pandemic.

As soon as restrictions allowed (early December 2021) we took the opportunity to train two groups (60 people) in the resettled community and two groups (60 people) in Bunambutye in the principles and practices of village savings and loans (VSAL).

We used the funding provided by the Austin Bailey Foundation to work with Jenga Uganda to provide high quality training for the newly resettled community who have been relocated from the landslide prone region of Bududa. Our Field Officers had been visiting the resettled community often (restrictions permitting) and had been actively building relationships and planning for the implementation of the training throughout 2021.

These 4 newly established groups have commenced saving and alongside the other 6 Blossom Africa VSAL groups will receive support for a period of at least three years. Over this time period we anticipate supporting the groups with access to training in adaptive farming methods, high quality seeds and tree seedlings, access to revolving funds and larger loans as required, training in business skills and vocational training and ongoing support and mentoring from our Field Officers.

We have collected baseline data from each of the 120 beneficiaries of these training sessions including demographic information and information relating to income, income generating activities and aspirations for future training. We will use this data to monitor the impact of this project and to plan our future work.



Photographs taken at the training sessions in December 2021

All groups continue to have access to the Bunambutye tree nursery which was developed in partnership with the Mbale Tree Planting Project. Through this project 60,000 trees are distributed annually in the community. These trees provide food, fodder, shade and firewood for the community.



Bunambutye tree nursery

The goats which we distributed in the previous financial year have started to produce offspring. The first born kid of each goat is given to another group member which therefore benefits the wider community and creates sustainability within the project.



Goat distribution

We occasionally offer emergency support to groups in times of emergency such as widespread crop failure. Such was the case this year and we made the decision to provide maize and beans seeds and flour for all group members (approximately 300 people) during a period of food crisis. Although our aim is to support the development of sustainable long term projects we acknowledge that there are often immediate needs, particularly those caused by the changing climate and environment.



Blossom Africa Field Officers distributing seeds to VSAL group members

We have recently been awarded a grant of £14,320.00 from the WCVA as part of the Wales and Africa Programme. This grant is to run Business Skills training and vocational skills training (in carpentry and tailoring) in the community. This loan will enable the community to purchase carpentry and tailoring equipment and to use the skills gained to generate an income. With this funding we will also be able to provide our 6 well established Village Savings and loans groups with a significant revolving fund which they can use to provide small loans for the development of businesses. The hope is that these opportunities will enable community members to develop sustainable livelihoods and reduce their reliance on subsistence farming.

In this financial year we continued to receive monthly donations of over £180. We have a loyal supporter base, many of whom

have supported Blossom Africa for many years. We are very grateful to these individuals who enable us to always pay our team in Uganda and support the community as needed.

We have also launched our new website www.blossomafrica.org which we will use as a tool to engage with our supporters.

Thank you to Lucy Hopkins for creating this fantastic resource for Blossom Africa. We continue to use social media and regular newsletters to engage and inform our supporters.

Plans for 2022/2023

The focus for this year will be on delivering a range of successful training programmes and building vocational skills in the community. We will train up carpenters and tailors and will provide them with equipment to start operating. We will build a small shelter for the equipment and will encourage the trained members to share their knowledge and skills with the wider community.

The climate crisis is deepening and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the community to grow their own food and make a living. We will continue to explore the most appropriate ways to support the community in the face of climate change. This may be through climate smart interventions such as rainwater harvesting, irrigation or harnessing solar energy. As an organisation we have an appetite to learn and develop and will seek out like-minded organisations to enable us to progress this aim.

Financial Statement - Year End 31st March 2022

Start of year balance	£ 7,215.59
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INCOME

Regular donations	£ 2110.00
Single donations	£ 25
Fundraising activities	£ 50
Gift Aid	£ 465.34
WCVA Grant	£ 11456.00
Austin Bailey	£ 500
Total	£ 14,606.34

EXPENDITURE

Austin Bailey Expenditure	£500
Website hosting	£264.56
Project work in Uganda	<u>£5515.19</u>
Total	£6332.21

End of year balance	£15,489.72
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Reserves Policy

Blossom Africa will endeavour to maintain reserves of at least six months' running costs.