

Blossom Africa

Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements
for Year End 31st March 2024



Registered charity name and number: Blossom Africa – 1161993

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

Blossom Africa Trustees (as of 31st March 2024)

Aimee Parker (Chair)
Yvonne Forsey (Treasurer)
Holly Welsh
Clare Sage

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 four trustees as of 31st March 2023. 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 2023.

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 thoroughly monitor and evaluate Blossom Africa's 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 2023/2024

The community in Bunambutye continue to engage with the various Blossom Africa Programmes and work hard to ensure they continue and succeed. This is in the face of extreme weather which has made life challenging for the community. This year they have faced severe drought and flooding which has had a big impact on livelihoods and access to food.



Image - Crop failure due to drought in June 2023



3 images – aftermath of flooding in April 2024

Despite this, they have continued to save money and take loans. This year they saved over 17 million Ugandan shillings (approx. £3500) across the 10 groups and loaned out 46 million (nearly £10,000) (the revolving funds enable the loans to exceed the savings). A total of 191 loans were taken over the course of the year to pay for school and medical fees as well as the development of small businesses.



Image – ‘sharing out’ ceremony in January 2024



Image – VSAL group meeting in March 2024



Image – Group member with their small business in June 2023

This year we continued to develop our programme of vocational training in the community. The group of women who were trained in tailoring have continued to develop and sustain the project themselves. They have trained up more women in the community and fund the purchasing of materials and room rental through the sale of tailored goods. We provided some additional funding for the women to purchase the fabric to make school uniforms for the local children at the beginning of the school year. This is a new market for the women and has potential to provide them with a good income.



Image – newly trained tailors in the Tailoring room in January 2024



2 images – women with the garments they produced in May 2023

During this financial year we also commenced carpentry training in the community. The Field Officers in Bunambutye rented a room, secured a trainer and purchased wood and tools for the project to commence. 20 young men were selected from within the community to take part with a focus on disengaged young men who had not completed their education. The group are

working hard to produce beds, chairs, drawers etc. and have been selling some items within the community.



Image – the carpentry trainees in May 2023



Image – trainees making a bed frame in January 2024



2 images – trainees with products they have made in May 2023

A trustee visit to Bunambutye took place this year which gave Aimee (Chair of Trustees) the chance to visit the projects and to spend time with Winnie and Ezra (Blossom Field Officers). It was a productive and enjoyable visit (full report on the trip available on request).



Image – photo from the trustee visit in January 2024

During this visit the team discussed priorities for the community and agreed that providing seeds and a revolving fund for the 4 newest groups (which includes the two groups in the resettled community) was a priority, so we agreed to this and provided the funds. Other identified priorities were training in motorbike mechanics and additional tools for the carpentry project.



Image – group in the resettled community receiving their seeds in January 2024

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 120,000 trees are distributed annually in the community. These trees provide food, fodder, shade and firewood for the community



Image – Bunambutye tree nursery in July 2023



Image – community members with trees from the tree nursery in July 2023

The goat project is still continuing with the first born kid of each goat given to another group member. This project therefore benefits the wider community and creates sustainability within the project. This project started with 30 goats which has now led to 65 in total distributed within the community.



Image – community member who received a goat from the project, December 2023

This year, with the support of a dedicated trustee, we have strengthened our social media presence through regular posting with a mixture of content including case studies.

This year we also organised our first fundraising challenge event where a team of 12 took part in the South Wales Three peaks challenge. The team climbed three mountains in one day and raised £2957 (£2495 + £462 gift aid). This money was raised to support the development of vocational training within the community.



Image – Three Peaks challenge in March 2024

In this financial year we tightened up some of our governance with the introduction of an asset register and risk register and have safeguarding and anti-racism as standing agenda points at our trustee meetings.

We continued to receive monthly donations of over £200 from our regular supporters, which broadly covers our core project costs. 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.

Plans for 2024/2025

We will continue to explore the most appropriate ways to support the community in the face of climate change. 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.

With our focus on building resilience in the face of climate change we are keen to explore how we can best support the community in times of crisis. The recent floods and droughts had a major impact on the community, and we are keen to explore disaster management training which may help the community to mitigate and adapt to some of these extremes of weather and reduce the impact they have.

Vocational training has the potential to reduce reliance on subsistence farming and to build resilience. The community are keen to run a motorbike mechanics training programme and we will support them to do this with the money raised through the three peaks challenge event.

Blossom Africa has been operational for 12 years now and been a registered charity in the UK for nearly 10. We are keen to capture our impact and will therefore be investing time this year in capturing and celebrating our key successes over this time.

We are also keen to take on another challenge event in the UK as the first one was such a success.

Financial Statement – Year End 31st March 2024

Start of year balance	£ 2496.79
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INCOME

Regular donations	£2970
Fundraising activities	£2552
Gift Aid	£928.40
WCVA Grant	£2864
Trustee contribution to trip.	£500
Total	£9814.40

EXPENDITURE

Website hosting	£110.24
Trustee trip to Uganda.	£1526.17
Project work in Uganda	£5137.69
Trustee trip to Uganda	
Total	£6774.10

End of year balance	£5537.09
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Reserves Policy

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