

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 30th June 2021**

This Annual Report covers a transformational eighteen month period for R4SR. The three new Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in Rwanda re-opened successfully at the beginning of 2021. They have continued to operate very effectively since then, with high stakeholder engagement from central Government through to local communities. Nearly two thousand Rwandan children are now being supported by R4SR trustee initiated projects.

There was no change in the charity's purpose, objectives or scale in 2021. As in previous years, the Trustees therefore believe there is no need for the charity to have a policy on reserves or the induction or training of Trustees. The Trustees believe the charity is not exposed to any major risks and therefore no systems or procedures are required to manage such risks. Specifically no external fundraising activities were undertaken during the year or are anticipated in the near term.

This Annual Report for 2021 reviews the outcomes achieved as a result of the new twelve month partnership agreement which R4SR signed with Help a Child (HAC) in November 2020, as referenced in the previous Annual Report. This new agreement was required and designed to help mitigate the impact of COVID on the project. The latter had resulted in the ECD centres being closed and community support activities being significantly curtailed from March 2020, shortly after the centres first opened. Discussions in the second half of 2021 with HAC also included agreeing and finalising the scope of a pilot monitoring and evaluation (M&E) study, which was successfully launched in October (see below).

The finalisation of this Report has been timed to coincide with a monitoring visit which finally took place during the week of April 18th 2022, due to COVID travel and quarantine restrictions in Rwanda which have only now started to lift. The Report therefore also includes the key conclusions arising from this most recent visit. Clearly a gap of three years since the last country visit has not been ideal. But despite this, overall progress against R4SR's main objectives has been very positive, albeit delayed by the impact of COVID in Rwanda. Clearly limits or outright prohibitions on people gathering had the potential to hinder the development of the local social capital which community based projects such as R4SR's require to achieve sustainability. Local financial resources at both the District and community level could also have become increasingly stretched or redirected to more urgent or immediate needs. Given these risk factors the project has proven to be very resilient, with Government, District and HAC local support being critical mitigants. These potential risks have therefore proven to be much less problematic than R4SR had initially anticipated. How the ECD centres and home based ECD centres perform once R4SR and HAC fully exit the project will still require careful planning over the next twelve months. But the robustness of the project despite COVID augurs well for future sustainability, albeit the home based ECD model requires further refinement.

HAC provided four quarterly progress reports during the calendar year 2021, as required under the partnership agreement. Such reports included a detailed budget reconciliation and were followed up by the Trustees with calls with the HAC team in Kigali. The following is a brief summary of the outcome of those reports and calls.

### **Q1 Report**

All three ECD centres re-opened on 18th January 2021 and were immediately at full capacity, with just under four hundred children in total in attendance and a similar number enrolled at the thirty home based ECD centres. A further seven hundred children below the age of three were visited monthly by twenty three volunteers. Importantly, the District agreed to pay for nine caregivers across the three centres, seven at Nyamata and one each (out of two) at the other two. Local management committees were resilient, albeit focussed on COVID prevention measures but meetings continued to be very limited in size. IGAs (Income Generating Activities) were less successful (pigs and chickens suffering from disease and poor economics respectively). Water supply to Gashora was finally funded by UNICEF and completed pending connection to the village by the District. Minor storm damage to the ECD centre at Gashora was also remedied by the local management committee.

## **Q2 Report**

The ECD centres reopened on April 19th for the second term with similar enrolment numbers to the beginning of the year. HAC focussed on further training this quarter. The District funded caregivers at Nyamata dropped to four but this was supplemented by community contributions on an interim basis. Relationships between the ECD centres, their management committees and the local primary schools' headmasters continued to strengthen. The District also initiated a milk support programme to the three ECD centres.

## **Q3 Report**

HAC conducted further training for the three management committees during this quarter, scoring all three above 3 out of 4. Term started on August 2nd and attendance levels remained in line with those achieved at the beginning of the year across all three models. Nyamata continued to experience a shortage of two District caregivers but early indications of new Government based remuneration support was a significant development this quarter.

## **Q4 Report**

The M&E study was successfully launched in October. This required introducing the study to the District, identifying approx 160 boys and girls across two groups (one control and one ECD), training P1 (year one) primary school teachers and head teachers on data collection and securing parents' consent. The Ministry of Education also took a total of nine caregivers across the three centres onto the Rwandan Government's payroll this month as part of a major increase in central funding support for ECD. This significantly reduced the financial pressure on the District and centres' management committees. This was a highly significant development for the sustainability of R4SR' project. R4SR had taken a position that such funding would be forthcoming at some stage in the project's life cycle. This switch in employment contracts caused some short term disruption which proved to be manageable. Finally, enrolment levels at the three centres started to tick up, offset by a temporary reduction at the home based ECDs.

## **Monitoring Visit**

Two trustees from R4SR were in Kigali during the week of April 18th 2022. All three ECD centres and their management committees were visited. HAC's team

in Rwanda and senior staff from Holland also joined the visits. A total of three home based ECD centres were also included. A meeting was also held in Kigali with the Deputy Director General (DDG) of Rwanda's newly formed National Child Development Agency (NCDA), which is now responsible for ECD under the supervision of MIGEPROF.

The following is a brief summary of the key findings from the monitoring meetings:

All three ECD centres were very well attended and the children appeared enthusiastic and motivated. Attendance at the low cost ECD centres is now starting to exceed capacity. This will need to be addressed if the quality of childcare is not to be compromised.

The quality of the construction and finish of the centres is high. The model centre in particular has attracted a lot of praise and received both senior local and international diplomatic attention as a 'best in class' ECD centre. It may feature in the forthcoming Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting in June 2022.

All three management committees appear well organised, highly motivated, and are actively supported by the local primary school head. IGAs are still at an early stage but despite this, the management committees are able to cover running costs-in part due to the Government's new funding of caregivers referenced above. They all exhibited a strong sense of ownership of the centres-critical to sustainability.

Bugesera District continues to be highly supportive of the project. District ECD representatives attended all three centre visits. The District has established a new primary school in Nyamata next to the model ECD centre. Kigarama primary school, next to the Nyarugenge ECD centre, received World Bank funding for five new classrooms in 2020, taking its total to eighteen. This will significantly reduce classroom sizes and improve teaching quality. The District is also providing nutritional support to the centres. Bugesera has also been the recipient of significant Government investment recently, as evidenced by the new airport and a major road construction programme, including a new main road running close to Nyarugenge which will significantly improve access to what was originally a remote rural location.

The home based ECD centres are addressing important needs, albeit they are only viewed as an interim solution by the NCDA, pending universal access to ECD centres. Child protection as well as social, educational and nutritional benefits are relevant in this context. Class sizes are limited by physical constraints but volunteer parent caregivers require ongoing training from HAC. This raises issues regarding the quality of caregiving and its sustainability. This will be a follow-up with HAC from the monitoring visit.

R4SR continues to be impressed by the quality of its local partner in Rwanda, HAC. The local team is conscientious, highly motivated and well regarded by the NCDA, District and ECD management committees. The initial roll-out of the M&E study has also gone well, for example. There is also increasing evidence of a

strong strategic alignment with HAC at a more senior level on ECD. The prospects of a longer term and deeper partnership for R4SR with HAC, using the current ECD models in Bugesera, to scale up and crowd in further funding, is also a follow up to the visit.

The NCDA meeting confirmed ECD continues to be a major strategic priority for the Rwandan Government. The R4SR project was known to the DDG and fits well with NCDA's objectives. The NCDA's focus will be on rapidly improving access, using a variety of different ECD 'settings' in each village. Mayors have now been set ECD targets in their performance contracts. The Government placed 500 ECD caregivers on its payroll for the first time in 2021. Based on its track record, R4SR expects this number to increase in the next financial year and for the Government's access targets to be pursued aggressively across Rwanda over the medium term. The NCDA has already mapped areas in need of future ECD investment. The interim importance of home based ECD centres alongside their limitations was acknowledged, with the NCDA considering whether Government funded ECD centre caregivers should be assigned training responsibility at a local level for parent volunteers.

### **Summary**

Notwithstanding the impact of COVID over the last two years, the project has now made very significant progress. The three ECD centres have all been built on time and budget. Attendance levels are currently exceeding expectations. Government, District and community support have also all exceeded expectations. A strong relationship is developing with HAC locally, which augurs well for a successful project exit over the next year and a longer term strategic partnership with HAC is to be explored. M&E has already commenced. This will help underpin the emerging results of the current pilot project. The objective to crowd in a future multiple of R4SR's initial capital for further ECD centres, consistent with the Government of Rwanda's strategic vision for ECD over the next five years, remains R4SR's key priority.

The focus of R4SR over the following twelve months will be (1) to follow up on the findings of the monitoring visit to secure a short term exit from the current project (2) continue to refine the current project with key learnings for the next phase (3) work with HAC to agree a strategic funding plan for the medium term to scale up the initial pilot.

Chris Coles, Chairman April 26th 2022.



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Ready4SchoolRwanda

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## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

01/07/2020

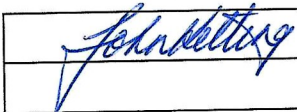
To

30/06/2021

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Interest	-	-	-	28	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	-	-	-	28	12,225
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	-	-	-	Cross Add Error	12,225
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
HAC (Rwanda NGO)	-	-	-	9,654	-
Bank charges	-	-	-	43	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	9,697	-
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	-	-	-	9,697	-
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	-	-	-	9,669	12,225
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	-	-	-	3,034	12,225

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Barclays £ Account	489	-	-
	Barclays \$ Account	2,545	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>3,034</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			JOHN KEATING	27-4-21