

**BUILDING
HOPE**



I am



2024 TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

Registered Charity No. 1187525

Trustees' annual report



For the period: 06-04-2023 to: 05-04-2024

Charity name: I AM **Charity No:** 1187525

Address: 14 Gardeners Green, Rusper, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4QY

Trustees: Mr Christian Denson (Chairperson)
Mr Paul Keith Baker (Secretary)
Mrs Emma Loiose Denson (Treasurer)

Objectives

We believe that quality of life begins at home. I AM was founded to assist and partner with families and individuals in desperate housing need, with the following objectives:

1. The relief of poverty in Uganda through the provision or facilitation of accommodation for the benefit of people in desperate housing need.
2. The preservation and protection of health in Uganda through the provision or facilitation of clean drinking water and sanitation and hygiene infrastructure to people in desperate housing need.

Activities

This report covers the financial year 2023 - 2024. Our most significant activity in the period of this report was the completion of two new home build projects and the completion of our second collaborative project with the U.K. based fundraising organisation, *You Can Africa* (www.youcanafrica.org)

Building Projects

April saw plans finalised for the second home build project in collaboration with *You Can Africa*. Based in Kabale, south-west Uganda, *You Can Africa*'s second build project will serve as a local hub for their small business ventures and vocational training projects.

In May the first building materials were delivered to site for the *You Can Africa* hub build, with the budget very precisely managed through a phased building schedule.

In Kadunda village, in central Uganda, we were more closely considering the circumstances of prospective new *I AM* home build partner families. By mid-May our in-country team had submitted their assessment to the UK trustee team for consideration in this regard.

By the end of July, in Kabale, the *You Can Africa* hub project was progressing very well, now on phase 4 of its construction, with the roof structure underway, the interior floors poured, and undercoat going on the exterior walls.

By August, after much consideration and consultation between the UK and Ugandan boards, a third home build partner family (headed by Harriet) was identified (see *Build Partner Assessments* for more details).

Building Projects continued . . .

As a result of the availability of a well sited land-plot, we were able to get things in motion very swiftly with Harriet's build and secured a ¼ acre plot.

September started with an assessment of the build plot for Harriet's home, and some survey work was undertaken to best site the buildings. Ground was broken later in the month, with the foundation trenches being dug. Towards the end of the month the bricks were delivered to site and the foundation walls were set and backfilled. Harriet was on site daily to help with whatever tasks she could lend a hand with. By the very end of September, the build had made amazing progress, with the main house walls underway and the sanitary block pit dug almost to its final depth!

October started with the continuation of the walls proper at Harriet's home.

Then in the first week of October we met Faith Nalugona, who at that time was living under a tarpaulin at the edge of farmland. Although we had not anticipated the possibility of another home build project alongside our current (third) build, Faith's circumstance was beyond crisis point and the joint boards decided we had to step in to at least provide some emergency support while a decision was reached over the next possible steps. As such we were able to provide Faith with a small room and some essential household items; she would at least have a temporary safe place to stay.

By the middle of October, the walls of the main accommodation at Harriet's family home were complete up to the wall plate level, which is very impressive progress from the team. With a mind to the near future, we had also negotiated the procurement of a new development plot, close to Harriet's, which allowed us to more seriously consider whether we were in the position to take on two home build projects simultaneously. Finally in October, we had an opportunity to make some improvements to our two previous home build projects, starting with replacement windows. Opting for a superior glazed metal casement window, which has a much longer service life than the shuttered wooden framed ones previously installed.

November was the busiest month seen since our registration as a charity in early 2020.

The roof structure at Harriet's home got underway in early November and quickly started to take shape. Much like the rest of the world, timber prices in Ugandan have recently gone up significantly and sourcing affordable quality timber is a task in itself. Around this time the small kitchen building at Harriet's was roofed and able to be used as an on-site store for the build team.

Separate to Harriet's build, our board of trustees in the UK had met and consulted (in mid-october) with our in-country team to reach a decision concerning a build partnership with Faith. Whilst we had not previously taken on two home build projects at one time, by early November we had secured the required funding (through some very generous donours) and due to Faith's circumstance, we concluded that the earlier we could commence the build the better. As such Faith was informed and she visited the prospective build site in early November. Both Faith and we were somewhat amazed at the whirlwind of events that had unfolded in such a short time.

Meanwhile the iron sheets were going on at Harriet's home and despite torrential rain the roof sheets were completed by mid-November. Also in mid-November, as if things were not already busy, the foundation trenches were dug for Faith's new home and by the end of the month the foundation walls were complete!

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Building Projects continued . . .

Back at Harriet's home, with the interiors now weathered and the rain still falling, the build team turned their attention up the ceiling works and quickly framed, meshed, and rough-rendered the interior ceilings.

Not satisfied with two ongoing home builds, towards the end of November, we were able to upgrade the solar power installations at our two previous home build sites. While our goal is always to establish families in a position to support themselves into the future, we had consulted on these improvements, in consideration of the new facilities we would be installing at our current build projects. We felt it was prudent to bring the two previous homes' facilities in line with what we had now established as our minimum build standard for all projects moving forwards.

December started with more rain and slowed progress a little. At Faith's home the walls were making steady progress during dry spells, reaching about mid height after the first week or so. The weather finally took a turn and some dry bright days allowed us to commence the exterior rendering at Harriet's home. The team took advantage of the dry window and made short work of the full exterior rendering, then moving on to pour the interior floors.

The dry weather had also allowed work to move on more quickly at Faith's site and the walls were up to plate level by 18th December!

Before the Christmas break, Harriet's home (including the main accommodation, kitchen, and sanitary block) was fully rendered inside and out, giving it plenty of time to dry ahead of painting in the new year!

We started the new year as we had ended the last, with a small army of workers across two build sites. The weather was dry and Harriet's home got its first splash of paint, with an undercoat applied to seal the render, ahead of any colour. At Faith's home, with the walls finished in December, the roof structure was able to be commenced and by mid-January the roof sheets had been fixed in place.

With the main build portions of Harriet's home coming to a close, focus shifted to the home's facilities, and the base was constructed for the 5,000 litre rainwater storage tank. The home also had three coats of glorious flamingo pink paint, to compliment the sky-blue roof sheets. Being honest, it was just a happy accident that the colours looked so great together. As is often the case in Uganda, the paint colour choice is limited to whatever is available in the required quantities. The interior painting was also underway by mid-month and the rooms were looking very bright.

With the base complete the rainwater harvesting facility was installed at Harriet's, which is comprised of guttering, a first flush system, and a large storage tank; all of which feed to a separate stand tap from where the water is drawn to jerry cans and finally run through a filter for drinking.

Closing out the month, the smokeless oven was installed in the kitchen at Harriet's home, while the interior rendering got underway at Faith's.

Building Projects continued . . .

In early February the exterior rendering got underway at Faith's home, while the first home furnishings were delivered at Harriet's home, bringing moving day tantalisingly close! The team did their usual excellent job with the rendering at Faith's and it was just a matter of waiting a week or so for it to fully dry, before it could start to be painted. Having had sufficient time to dry, the exterior painting was started at the end of February, marking the home straight for Faith's home build!

Also at the end of February we were introduced to Teopista, a 62 year old grandmother, caring for two of her young granddaughters. To find out more about Teopista's story, see our Build Partner Assessments section later in this report.

In early March all the buildings on site at Faith's were given three coats of the same eye-popping flamingo pink paint as Harriet's home! Also as with Harriet's home earlier, once the painting and main accommodation was completed, attention switched to the vital facilities. The rainwater harvesting system was installed in mid-March and the smokeless oven was installed following this. Finally in respect of facilities at Faith's home, the solar power installation was fitted at the end of March, meaning that other than furnishings, the build and its facilities were complete!

With two home builds completed in the space of six months, we had established some great new working practises regarding the practical building process, set some minimal build quality standards for our projects, and established some terrific local contacts in and around the construction industry.

Making the most of our newly streamlined build process, no sooner had Faith's home been completed, than the trustee board had agreed to partner with Teopista to help her build a home for herself and her granddaughters. In the middle of March, following a site assessment, the foundations were dug for and the foundation walls set at Teopista's new home. By the end of March the walls were already nearing wall plate level, which would be reached by early April, just within the scope of this report.

This new home would be a break from our previous home design plans, and would cater for the smaller family of Teopista, while also making significant savings on materials due to the lower pitched roof and different configuration of rooms. It would still provide the same critical facilities but allowed us to expand our options in respect of building plot use and make more of our limited resources.

To close out what has been a very, very, busy year in respect of building projects; in late 2018 we met Justine, who was living with her two young sons in incredibly difficult and unsafe circumstances. Her two teenage daughters were staying elsewhere in the country, with their grandmother, as Justine simply did not have the space or resources to have them at home.

We worked with Justine in 2019 to help build a small, secure, family home, which enabled her to reunite her family. Since then Justine has flourished; she keeps livestock, grows crops, and does some clothing repairs. Having her two older children home has given Justine opportunity to plan for and work towards a different future for all her family. Something that could not even have been a consideration before.

Building Projects continued . . .

Since moving into their new home, in October 2019, her daughters have spent their nights in the main reception room of the house, packing up their bedroom each day and setting up again at night. Recently we consulted with Justine about the possibility of building a bedroom annexe to give her now young adult daughters a private space of their own, which one day could potentially become a rental option for Justine, when her daughters are no longer at home.

Justine has been able to make significant contribution to the project, which began in March. As a small build it moved along at a good pace and at the end of March the exterior rendering was well underway, and was infact completed on the 5th April, marking the last day of this report. We've been so encouraged to see how Justine has embraced her new circumstance over the last few years and is working so hard to support her family. We're all about supporting families who are doing everything in their power to help themselves.

We anticipate the same great entrepreneurial spirit and drive from all our home build partners and are excited to see what the future holds for them and their families.

Business Grants

In July we were able to provide a small business grant to the oldest son of our second home build family, to allow him to purchase a bicycle that would free up time in his day for greater productivity in his brick making venture.

Emergency Support

As touched upon in the *Building Projects* section of this report, in October we met Faith Nalugona, whose circumstance required immediate and urgent attention. Faith was living in a very dangerous situation - susceptible to sexual or other physical assault - and so while we assessed if we were in a position to provide longer term assistance, we were able to provide some short term safe accomodation to remove her from immediate risk of harm. This amounted to a small rented room in a safe accomodation, and provision of some essential household items.

Build partner assessments

Our assessments are undertaken with a great deal of sensitivity and cultural awareness, in order to gather necessary information, while managing expectations. As a member of the community for forty years our Operations Manager is keenly aware of the circumstances of potential benefactors and following his low-key assessments the trustee board consult with the team in Uganda to reach the best decision with all the available information.

In August the UK trustee board, in consultation with our Ugandan team, assessed Harriet Nabusu and her family to be our next (third) home build partners. Harriet was imminently to be made homeless, along with her two daughters, due to a complex family inheritance issue, arising from the ill health of Harriet's mother for who she was full-time carer.

Her mother's home (where the family lived) was soon to pass back to another family member and Harriet and her family had been instructed to vacate the home. No provision was made for Harriet's family in the estate and under law she had no standing to stay in the home. She would be homeless within weeks. Having anticipated this scenario some time prior, Harriet had been saving the little money she could to secure a building plot for a future home. She did not hesitate to invest all her savings into the purchase of the plot where I AM would help to build a home.

In October we met Faith. In spite of her heart-breaking circumstances she (like so many other women) was doing all she could to get her life back on track & improve her situation.

Faith moved to the area where I AM operates in around 2017, with her then husband and three children. Her husband was in the military and had been relocated to the large barracks nearby, from around 250 miles away. A little over a year ago Faith's husband decided he wanted to marry someone else and divorced Faith, leaving her and their children homeless. He has since moved out of the area, again with his job, and his new wife!

Unable to provide shelter for her children Faith came to the difficult decision that she would have to send her two teenage daughters back to live with their grandmother, 250 miles away, while her 9 year old son lived nearby with a family from the church she attended. Faith had also been staying with different church families for short periods over the last year, but this was not sustainable for her.

To make a living she worked on several different farms, sending money back to her mum to support her daughters and also making some allowance for her son. She had personally gone without food for days to be sure she can provide for her children. When we met she was living under a tarpaulin, located on the edge of one of the farm fields she worked on.

Having committed to help give Faith a hand-up, we initially wanted to get her into a safe rented room locally, which we were able to do thanks to some very caring support. We later met with Faith to discuss the possibility of working with her to build a home.

Amazingly one of our phenomenal supporters pledged to fund the home build in its entirety! Which is mind blowing! So we found ourselves in a bit of a British bus situation, imminently to be managing two home build projects at one time. Quite the privilege in some ways.

Build partner assessments continued . . .

In February we met Teopista, a 62 year old grandmother who is raising two of her young granddaughters (Deborah & Stellah). Teopista had ten children; tragically five have died, one of whom was the mother of Deborah & Stellah. Teopista's husband also passed away some time ago, leaving her alone with her granddaughters. Her remaining five children do not live at all locally to her and as such she has not seen them for many years.

Teopista's circumstance is sadly not uncommon, and despite being a little older than some of our other home build partners, she is no less hardworking. She works on other people's farms and scrapes together enough to live hand to mouth, while managing to send her granddaughters to school. She very frequently goes without food herself, to give Deborah & Stellah the best opportunities she can.

The family live on a small plot which Teopista owns and their accommodation is reminiscent of the poorest families in the area. The house is effectively a mud and stick walled shelter, with a mud floor and a sheet iron roof. Non the less, Teopista maintains the house as well as possible, a house which she built(!), and again does the best she can for her family.

We met Tepista during a trustees audit visit and through the amazing generosity of our supporters, we were able to let her know within a few weeks that we would be able to work with her to build a new family home! land.

It seems too little to say thank you to those who have made it possible to change the futures of so many families, considering the drastic life transforming changes it will bring. We are overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of our supporters.

Financial Review

Our total receipts on unrestricted funds were £67,406.08 of which £0 was investment income. For the full report period we were engaged in fundraising activities for our home build projects. The net result for the year was a surplus on receipts over payments of £13,692.53 on unrestricted funds. Our balance carried forward at 5th April 2024 on unrestricted funds totalled £16,640.00, with £0 on restricted funds.

Reserves policy

As a small organisation our overheads in the UK are minimal, with 100% voluntary staffing of our UK operation. Presently, our primary activity of home building is undertaken one project at a time, only commencing once the full funds have been raised to complete an entire build project. As such we do not specify any reserve amount of restricted funds for this purpose as we would not consider those funds being raised for a specific identified build project to be 'in reserve'. We do however aim to hold £1,000 of unrestricted funds in reserve primarily for our secondary objective of the preservation and protection of health.

It is the view of the trustee board that this reserve policy will enable us to adequately meet our charitable objectives for the foreseeable future and realistically represents several months of operational expenditure, excluding specific home build project expenditure.

The trustees will review the reserve amounts required to fulfil the charity's continuing obligations on a quarterly basis.

Fundraising

Separate to the fundraising ventures undertaken by *You Can Africa*, in support of the home builds in South-west Uganda, we have continued to raise awareness of our charitable activities through social media. Our home build projects completed during the period of this report were funded entirely through donations from individuals.

Structure, Governance, and Management

I AM operates under the Charity Commission's Foundation model constitution for charitable incorporated organisations which was adopted on the 17-01-2020. Our Trustee recruitment and induction policy, adopted 01-02-2020, was developed with reference to Charity Commission report RS1 for guidance.

Future plans

With our focus on home build projects we continue to investigate the most cost effective methods of construction, to maximise our available funds. We also continue to develop relationships with local partners that stimulate the rural economy during the periods of our active build projects.

Improving household income, whether that be via vocational training, establishment of small businesses, or co-operative farming ventures, has been key to our partner families thriving. Our hope for the future is to establish short-term accommodation facilities, where families can live rent free for 2 – 3 years. During the agreed residence term we will work with families, in much the same way as we already do, to provide access to training and set a path towards regular stable household income.

Ultimately the goal will be to give families opportunity to work towards supporting themselves, with some of the pressure of daily life (i.e. rent) relieved for a time to allow greater focus on the task at hand.

While this idea is in development we will continue to work with the local families, to impact change for current and future generations.

Financial Statement

for period: 06/04/2023 - 05/04/2024



Income	2024
Donations	£49,489.30
Fundraising	£10,075.15
Gift Aid Payments	£7,841.63
Total Income	£67,406.08

Expenditure	2024
Build Project Costs	£44,931.06
Training & Education	£435.00
Emergency Support	£1,041.00
Repairs & Maintenance	£3,001.37
Business Start-up	£515.00
Uganda Office & Admin	£261.54
Media & Promo	£672.50
Oversight	£498.26
UK Office & Admin	£643.78
Fundraising	£537.00
Bank Charges	£1,035.10
Total Expenditure	£53,713.55

Balance	2024
Surplus/Deficit	£13,692.53
Year Opening Balance	£2,947.47
Year Closing Balance	£16,640.00

Outstanding Guarantee & Debt

The Trustees declare that the charity has given no guarantee where potential liability is outstanding at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

The Trustees declare that the charity has no outstanding debts which are secured by an express charge on any of the assets of the charity at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

I AM

**On accounts for the year
ended**

5th April 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1187525

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **05/04/2024**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

B. Baker

Date:

15/12/2024

Name:

Barbara Baker

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body**

NHS Practice Manager

Address:

23 Nymans Court, Forestfield, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6PP

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.