

ANNUAL REPORT TO CHARITY COMMISSION 2024

Our Charity Registration came through in February 2023: an exciting moment of consolidation after being an informal group of friends raising ad hoc funds in the UK, for this Primary School and its community, in impoverished rural western Uganda. The Director would prioritise a project. He would obtain quotes on labour and materials, discuss these with me and agree the project. In the UK, we would raise the money and send it to the Director. As soon as the money was received, the work began: I would receive a flow of screen shots of receipts, materials arriving, workers get stuck into the task, and within 24 hours, the job was done, within budget.

Once we received our Charity Registration, we applied for a Charity Bank Account. We were told it would take about 5 months. After 17 months of time-wasting with one bank, we applied to a second bank, and our Charity Account was opened within a few weeks (in 2024). Hopefully, we, the Trustees, will now be able to go from strength to strength in establishing best practice.

The Rugando villagers survive on subsistence farming. There is high unemployment due to a lack of industrial or commercial activity locally. There are only rough roads and tracks in this mountainous' area: transport to the nearest town is by hired rides on stretched motorbikes (Boda Boda) and adds to the cost of essential visits to town. The school has a roll of around 200-220 pupils, a third of whom cannot afford their school fees of about £150 a year or £12.50 per month. They walk several kilometres to school and back each day.

Our aim is three-fold:

1. to finance infra-structure improvements to the school
2. to set up and pump-prime projects intended to become income streams, working towards financial stability and independence from charitable giving
3. to fund appropriate applications from people in the Rugando community, for projects that might provide local services or employment.

Projects we have run during this year, February-December 2023.

1. EGGS BY EASTER

This project was commenced in February 2022 and is ongoing. We had commissioned a coop for 200 laying hens. The hens reached maturity and started laying, eventually providing enough eggs to start to supplement the children's lunch, along with some income from sales of eggs and cockerels. We were able to reduce the amount we were paying out for feed but continued to fund a chicken keeper. During 2023, we had some issues with infection and the need for veterinary interventions. Sadly, after many months, we discovered that both eggs & chicken feed were being pilfered by the chicken keeper and he was removed from post. We tried running a daily chart of egg laying, and a sampling of weight gain of the next generation of chickens. Record-keeping was problematic as the next chicken keeper could not read or write, but with the help of the Director, we continued charting and realised that the chickens were not gaining weight at the expected rate: the chicken keeper had put the chickens on half-rations, to make the feed last longer. We went back to paying for more food and the chickens soon started laying. We continue to explore the best way of managing this project. The flock is much smaller currently and we are not paying for feed, but the output is not adding significantly to the children's diet.

We feel sure the project can be made viable. We have invested in it and feel it is worth continuing to invest in.

Chicken feed, coffee husks, enhancer	£1170	
2 <sup>nd</sup> coop for new chicks /quarantine / veterinarian/ medicine	£ 400	
New chicks, cockerels	£ 300	<b>£1870</b>

## 2. CLASSROOM DESKS

There was a shortage of desks for children to sit at, and several children were being taught, sitting on the floor. We negotiated a deal of batches of 5 two-seater desks for £150 (as opposed £50 a piece, ordered singly) and over a period of 3 months, were able to provide 25 desks, seating 50 children. £150 was spent on Nursery Furniture, a table and 6 chairs; a further £300 was raised for another two sets.

25 Two-seater desks	£750	
3 Table& 6 chairs	£450	<b>£1200</b>

## 3. SOLAR POWERED HOT WATER SUPPLY

The school was spending a lot of money buying wood to burn, for hot water for washing and for cooking. It made sense to install a Solar Hot Water system, which would provide endless FREE hot water. The project was priced, commissioned and the system installed. The water temperature is controlled at 90 degrees C.

The Solar Heating tubes were more vulnerable than expected, situated at ground level and an early, stray football cracked two tubes: materials were bought to build a wired clad frame around the installation, and this has given adequate protection since then.

The spend on firewood has reduced by 2/3 since the installation.

Installation of the Solar Vacuum tubes	£350	
Replacement Tubes & protective cage.	£175	<b>£ 525</b>

## 4. BREAK PRESSURE CLEAN WATER GRAVITY TANK

This 2000litre tank provides two functions: it necessarily reduces the water pressure through the Solar Hot Water tubes; it also provides a sustained supply, for times when the local authority supply of clean water might be switched off. It required a steel tower to be welded, so that the flow is gravity driven.

Water tank, materials for steel tower, Labour		<b>£ 400</b>
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## 5. VEGETABLE GARDEN

An initiative to improve the quality of the meals provided for the children, this has been generously funded by donations from our local branch of Unite community. Collards, peppers, and aubergines have been grown; the work has mostly been done voluntarily, by teaching staff & the top class, as part of their curriculum. Ultimately, this project has the potential to double its volume, to provide vegetables for sale on the market, but currently, we do not have the organisational ability to expand.

The sweepings from the Chicken Coops are dug in as a free source of fertilizer.

Clearing and preparing the land, buying seeds & some implements	<b>£450</b>
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## 6. ADULT LITERACY & SKILLS TRAINING

The Director suggested that a Community Outreach project could be run, during the school holidays, while the school was not being used. He suggested that Adult Literacy & Skills Training could be offered to the mainly illiterate villagers, for free. He engaged two Adult Education teachers, a man & a woman, as is required in Uganda: they worked out a programme of basic literacy, numeracy and skills (including Family Planning, household budgeting, weaving, crop-growing etc). ; the course would be offered as 2 x3 hour sessions a week for 4 weeks, over the Easter & Summer holidays. The attendees would receive a bun and a bottle of pop, and we would also fund any resources required. This totalled £150 a week and we have run training for a total of 8 weeks (16 sessions), attended by 30-80 adults.

**£240**

## 7. TEACHER DORMITORY

The Director advised that having a two roomed dormitory for a male and a female teacher to be available on site, over each 24 hour period, would be cheaper than the current practice of placing them in local boarding rooms: this provision is so that every child can be met if they arrive early at school for any reason, or if they are unable to walk home at the end of a school day, eg in poor weather.

One of our local UK primary schools held a Skip 2B Fit challenge and raised £1750 that they donated toward the cost of this project. They had previously helped with raising funds for the installation of Solar Power Electricity for the school.

The money was used to erect the shell of a two roomed block, with two ablution rooms. We also raised a further £400 to put a roof on the structure. There has not been the opportunity to develop this project, because of the delay in obtaining a Charity Bank Account that would allow us to seek commercial donations.

Donation from The Priory School	£1750	
Funding for the roof	£ 400	<b>£2150</b>

#### 8. BRIDGING THE GAP (ongoing appeal)

Because between 20-35% of children default on payment of their school fees each term, there is a regular shortfall in money available to pay staff salaries. We appeal for funds to bridge the shortfall, and spread all money received for this project, in £12.50 blocs across each month of the remaining year. This has been an essential fund, as staff have regularly had to suffice on half pay or deferred pay, and therefore have little loyalty to the school. The Trustees see ensuring the staff is paid regularly at the end of each month, as a priority.

**£2500**

9. A monthly donation of £65 covers the pay of the watchman

**£ 780**

10. We raised funds for sending 4 staff on Continuing Professional Development training. This included the cost of fares, subsistence, and enrolment

**£ 400**

#### 11. SUNDRY EXPENSES

include Taxis to and from the local village, SOS hospital visits and treatment

Truck hire to transport children to football tournament, PO Box rental,

Exam Registration etc

**£605**

<b>Balance brought forward:</b>	<b>£ 973.00</b>
<b>Funds raised</b>	<b>£12,938.00</b>
<b>Funds Spent (February-December 2023</b>	<b>£13,280.00</b>
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>£ 631.00</b>