REPORT TO THE CHARITIES COMMISSION FOR YEAR JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

ENABLING INDEPENDENCE FOR RUGANDO PARENTS SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

This year has had its challenges, its high lights and its sadness. Life is nothing if not a challenge and our little charity certainly keeps the Trustees on their toes.

Although we have managed to attract donations, it has been much more of a struggle this year, largely because of competing demands from war-torn regions of the world, for charitable giving.

The main project this year was to finally complete the Teacher Dormitory. This is a permanent structure that enhances the facilities and thereby infrastructure & value of the school. The building was erected over the previous 18 months, but the shell remained incomplete while we focused on other more pressing issues. It consists of two bedrooms and two ablution/toilet rooms. It is fully fitted as follows:

An electric light supply was taken from the Solar Power Inverter

A clean water supply was plumbed in

Two EcoSan toilets & two bucket showers were installed

Doors and window frames were fitted and the windows glazed

All walls were plastered and painted inside and out

We funded two mattresses and blankets

The plan for the dormitories is to house a male and a female teacher overnight, to provide pastoral care for the Primary 7 children who board at the school. Having the dormitory on-site will save on renting rooms in the village.

The teachers are delighted with the completed project, and all the staff are now using the two EcoSan toilets and the showers.

In due course we would like to build a dormitory for 20 girls to board, followed by a Boy's dormitory.

We continued to subsidise both Salaries and Food supplies, because of the poverty of most of the pupils at the school. A third of the children are orphans being raised by a grandparent or an older sibling, neither of whom have any meaningful income. The result is that income from school fees is predictably 30% less than the roll would suggest. Every effort is being made to encourage families to pay fees, even in several small payments; There is also a plan to ask each family to donate some dried beans and maize flour: this will be up to the Director and his staff to agree, but in the meanwhile, we would not like to see any child excluded from the twice daily meals provided, so we continue to subsidise the shortfall.

The staff often receive half pay because of the shortfall in fees to pay them; historically, they are only paid for 10 months out of 12, so the tendency to walk away to find more secure employment is recognised: For this reason we are working with the Bursar and Director to move to 12 monthly payments, where each payment is slightly reduced but at least there is not the two month hiatus that causes staff to leave. This is a big cultural adjustment, but we feel this will help to stabilise the staffing.

On a positive note, we ran the two final weeks of 5, of Adult Literacy: These are classes in basic literacy, numeracy, budgeting, family planning, handcraft skills etc., that are free for the Rugando Village Community. The classes are very popular and can attract between 30 and 80 people a time. There are 3 sets of 3 hours a week, with some refreshment included. We aim to run these classes during the school holidays, when the children are not in school.

Sadly, one of our pupils died of Sickle Cell Disease: a genetic condition that is prevalent in Uganda, as the 5th highest globally, occurring at around 0.7 to 0.8% in the population. She is the second sibling in her family to succumb. We paid for her funeral and donated to the family to tide them over their immediate grieving. We would like to organise a screening programme for the pupils, so that early awareness and intervention might protect them from a condition which should not be fatal.

Sundry other activities included:

Funding the surgical excision of a Keloid Scar in a pupil who had been burned by a piece of wood exploding from a fire.

Replacing two broken tubes in the Solar Hot Water frame and building a mesh cage around the frame: Ultimately this should have been installed on a roof and not at ground level, and in due course we will arrange to have the frame moved up onto a roof.

Repair of the school cooker: A rock-and-brick structure that is both an oven and a hob, using fire for cooking: the repeated heat and contraction causes the structure to crack, so that bricks and rocks need to be replaced periodically.

We funded a selection of textbooks requested by the staff & paid National Exam registration fees.

Our income comes from

*Many small donations in response to general and specific Appeals made on Face Book;

*a small but useful number of standing order donations from friends of the Charity

*Having monthly stalls at farmers markets and school & community fairs

*Selling homemade jams & chutneys was a new venture and this brought in a significant part of the year's income.

Balance bought forward: £ 582.00

Total Receipts: £8,273.32

Total Expenditure: £7,463.00

Balance carried forward: £1,392.32