



PROJECT SHELTER WAKADOGO

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Making an Impact

Annual Review 2008/2009

Welcome To Our Review For the Year

This has been a challenging but successful year for Project Shelter Wakadogo. In June 2009, we opened our Early Childhood Development Centre doors to eighty young children and we are proud of the impact the Charity is having on the children of Acoyo village in northern Uganda.

Fundraising Success

Despite the recession our fundraising income grew from \$15,494 CAD in 2007/8 to \$80,740 CAD in 2008/9. This is thanks to the many donors and volunteers who have continued to believe in our mission in these tough times. A breakdown of how this money was spent is available on page 3 of this review.

Opening the School

Project Shelter Wakadogo means “*for the little ones*” in Swahili. Our mission is to create a safe, stimulating environment for the intellectual, creative and physical development of the young children of Acholiland, northern Uganda. Since our opening, 80 children between the ages of 3 and 6 have enrolled in Project Shelter Wakadogo’s first school – “Edmonton Mayfield Rotary School.”¹

These children feel part of something for the first time. They brush their teeth for the first time. They wear a school uniform for the first time. The village leaders tell us that it is the best thing that has happened to their community. It is the first and only school in Acoyo – a village of 5,000 people.



Plans for Growth

We always want to do more if we have the resources. We have been able to budget for the expansion of the school from two classrooms to three classrooms. This is very exciting news because we will be able to accommodate 120 children at the school, instead of just 80. Extreme poverty amongst many sometimes prevents parents from sending their children to school. We are therefore working closely with each individual family to ensure that each child is given as many opportunities to attend school without compromising our ethos that a parent should contribute a small amount towards their child’s education to ensure their buy-in and commitment. There are indeed special instances (for example if a child is an orphan, has disabled parents, or if there is only a single parent who is not able to work) where we try to find a donor who can help with all of the child’s sponsorship.

Strategy for the Future

Sustainability is central in our project design and strategy for the future. Our Programme Manager, Patrick Okwera, was hired because of his entrepreneurial skills and due to the fact the he had seven years of experience working with the Norwegian Refugee Council. His main responsibility is to manage the school effectively and efficiently, to minimize running costs and to research and implement income-generating activities to help sustain our project.

Patrick is currently evaluating the feasibility of a small agricultural project. This low cost investment could offer our school project a source of revenue stream through using new land to farm products that can be sold

¹ The Edmonton Mayfield Rotary Club is our biggest donor to date having donated \$15,000 in 2008. We have given the club naming rights of the school for 1 year, ending in June 2010.

in local markets and to the World Food Program, who source food that they distribute regionally. If we are able to raise additional funds to begin this project, this could represent a significant proportion of funds needed to sustain the school.

We are also working together with an architecture firm in the USA; a collective of architects, thinkers, and state-of-the-art designers of which two of the principals teach at Harvard University and Yale University, to design and build a community centre on the school land. Members of the community will be able to gather here to meet, watch sports, movies and celebrate festivals for a small entrance fee. We could also offer local food and beverages. If we are able to raise the funding needed to start this community centre project, it will undoubtedly make a huge contribution to solving the challenge of sustainability.

Our commitment to buying locally has helped to reduce our costs and most importantly, we have contributed to the local economy. As much as possible, we purchase our goods and services from community members who live near our school. Since our inception, over 150 people from the local community have worked on the project, either through one-off construction jobs or as long-term employees of the school.

Twenty-three years of brutal civil war, mass displacement and crumbling infrastructure has made achieving project sustainability our greatest challenge. However we believe that with time, economic advancement and some simple, well-thought-out projects and funding, this can be achieved in no time. In the meantime, we will continue to work with the community to help to create a sense of project ownership.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors and volunteers. Thank you. Together, we will continue to make a big difference to the lives of the children of Acoyo.

Farah Williamson

Chairman, Project Shelter Wakadogo
4th January 2010

“Only the educated are free.”

Epictetus (55 AD - 135 AD), *Discourses*

Who We Are

Project Shelter Wakadogo was founded in 2005 as a small university club at McGill University, Canada and the University of Warwick, England. Farah Williamson, Nilmin Williamson and Andrea Charbonneau founded the project with the hopes of making a direct impact on the children of northern Uganda. We work voluntarily and 98% of the money you donate goes directly to the project on the ground. Since 2006, it has grown and evolved into an internationally recognised charitable organisation registered in Canada, Uganda and soon the United Kingdom.

Teaching Methods

In our research prior to starting our project we found that an Early Childhood Development Centre was one of the most effective ways to provide for the basic needs of this community, especially in this time of post-conflict reconstruction.

The school provides the children with a strong foundation for personal development and growth. The school also provides the parents and guardians of the children with much needed quality childcare as they work towards securing a basic economic livelihood for their families.



We have consulted and involved the local community in our project design and execution. Our development strategy has been encouraged and recommended by the Directorate of Education and Sports Gulu, local government leadership as well as the surrounding community in Acoyo.

We have a 2:40 teacher/student ratio to provide a nurturing environment that is conducive to early childhood development. Our school also offers our children a daily nutritious late morning meal.

We ensure that every child that comes to school has a positive, creative, educative and fun day. The walls are covered with the ABC's and there are toys and books in every corner. Local education specialists have trained the teacher's to the highest level in Uganda's new early childhood development curriculum. They teach in Luo, the language of northern Uganda, as well as in English. We want to prepare them for a time when they will need to speak both fluently.

The children have been learning how to read and write, do arts and crafts, play music with instruments, paint, sing, brush their teeth and wash their hands with clean drinking water. As part of our dedication to well-rounded childhood development, we promote physical wellness through daily play. Our play area offers our students a safe place where they can swing on the swing sets; learn to cross the monkey bars; jump ropes; or play football and basketball with their classmates.

Young children are at the most impressionable stage of their life. The school focuses on learning through play in order to inspire creativity and invoke curiosity while building confidence. These skills are crucial for future generations to possess in order to change their destinies, make a difference in their country and promote peace and understanding.

Our Finances

Project Shelter Wakadogo is a registered Canadian and Ugandan charity (Canadian charitable number **82637 3474 RR0001**). We are a grassroots project: a small, front-line group that will make tremendously effective use of comparatively small amounts of money by cutting out the often-hidden bureaucratic and administrative costs of a charity. Through the dedicated and endless hard work of our volunteers, we feel confident that we can ensure our donors that every dollar received will reach its intended place.

98% of our income goes directly to the project – only 2% is used in administration costs.

Our project is only possible because of the ongoing financial support from our donors. We have since our inception in 2006 raised over \$104,000 CAD, which has been spent on buying the land, the building works and running costs for one school year.

Our financial statements reflect our income and expenditure between the 1st September 2008 and the 31st August 2009. During this period our fundraising income was \$80,740 and our expenditure was \$52,305. These funds were spent on the following:

- Teaching and school personnel salaries (Programme Manager, teachers, assistant teachers, cooks, security guard and grounds-man)
- Classroom and teaching supplies
- Classroom furniture
- Site preparation for construction (leveling and necessary labor)
- Clean drinking water source (solar powered well, pump, panels and water storage tank structure)
- Flush toilet facilities
- Kitchen and cooking facilities
- Feeding shade for students
- Playground and landscaping (including swing sets, monkey bars, soccer field, basketball nets, equipment, grass)
- School fencing and gate
- Professional fees (legal fees, dues, memberships)
- Bank charges and insurance
- Project vehicle and travel



Thank You

We owe our deepest gratitude to a number of donors and volunteers who have believed in our mission and vision and supported us in the 2008/2009 financial year. Thank you also to those who have already pledged to support us in 2010. We would particularly like to thank donors who have given \$100 or more:

Foundations

- Edmonton Mayfield Rotary Club
- Global Education Fund
- Grant McEwan College
- Wild Rose Foundation (An Alberta Government Lottery Funded Foundation)

Companies

- 1267575 Alberta Ltd.
- Atek Ltd.
- Best Plumbing & Lighting
- Blue Star Mechanical
- Burnstall Winger L.L.P.
- Caruana Interiors
- Casco Plumbing and Gasfitting
- City Pawnbrokers, Kitchener, Ontario
- Czarnikow Group
- Dollarwise Plumbing & Heating (2004) Inc.
- Hope Cottage Inc.
- James H Brown & Associates
- Ontario Dental Association
- Points West Marketing Inc.
- SDV Transami (U) Ltd.



Individuals

- Anonymous donors
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- Naheema Walji

