



Wakadogo Annual Report

1 September 2021 – 31 August 2022

Dear friends of Wakadogo,

We have some exciting updates to share with you:

- Wakadogo re-opened its doors after 2 years of being closed, and we now have 477 students enrolled.
- We conducted over 36,000 face to face lessons during COVID-19!
- We are now offering extra lessons and have opened on Saturdays to help children catch up on lost learning.
- We have been shortlisted in the Top 3 of the World's Best School Prize which was an incredible honour and has given us the opportunity to share our story with a global audience.

Uganda enforced the longest period of school closures worldwide – 22 months – during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is estimated that [15 million pupils](#) did not attend school in Uganda for almost two years. [Statistical models](#) predict a learning deficit of 2.8 years in Uganda. Other effects [include a](#) 22.5% increase of pregnancies among Ugandan school-going girls and young women aged 10-24 between March 2020 and June 2021. There [was also](#) an increase of child labour from 21% to 36%, affecting girls in particular.

Thanks to your generous support, we were able to continue to teach and maintain connections with our students through our home-schooling program. We conducted over 36,000 lessons from September 2020 – December 2021 and were able to reach both Wakadogo students and children within the community who otherwise couldn't access learning. Thanks to your support, we were able to keep our staff hired during the lockdown and we provided scholastic materials and food rations to support our



students during that difficult time. We did not charge school fees during lockdown because there were already so many additional barriers to accessing education and we wanted to help as many children as we

could. During this period, we reached over 1,089 students, half of which were from the community and many of whom walked up to 10 kilometers to reach our homeschooling centers. When the school reopened in January 2022, we started providing remedial lessons on Saturdays for all our students to help them catch up on missed school. We now also provide school meals for all our students on Saturdays as well as during the week. We also hired additional teachers to help teach larger classes and cover the workload to teach our students adequately. We couldn't have done any of this without your enormous support.

Overview of Wakadogo

Project Shelter Wakadogo in Gulu, Uganda, has flourished from a school with only two classrooms founded in the wake of war to now educating over 477 girls and boys with one of the highest student retention rates in the country. Its commitment to providing free school meals, healthcare and a quality education for the surrounding community has seen the school become a second home for many. Project Shelter Wakadogo is a pre-primary and primary not-for-profit school located in Gulu District in Uganda, and is a registered charity in the UK, Canada and Uganda.

The name 'Wakadogo' translates to 'for the little ones' in Swahili. The charity was founded in 2005 when northern Uganda was emerging from 23 years of civil war. During the war, 40,000 children were abducted to serve as child soldiers or, in the case of girls, "wives" to other soldiers. 1.7 million people were displaced and over 100,000 people abducted or mutilated by the Lord's Resistance Army. Wakadogo School, the first school in Acoyo village, opened its doors in 2009 to educate some of the most marginalised children. Wakadogo's vision is to educate a new generation of children in northern Uganda by providing a quality education that enables them to shape a prosperous future for themselves. They believe that education is the most powerful and effective way to change lives.



Take a look at this [3-minute video](#) which provides a great overview about Wakadogo.

Wakadogo's approach

Due to the prevalence of poverty in the community, the school provides a **daily free nutritious meal** during school hours, **administers basic medical care** for common illnesses such as malaria, and initiates **sports and music programs** that encourage students to remain in school and prevent dropouts.

The student leadership, represented by the school's head boy and head girl, regularly involve learners in the day-to-day running of the school. They organize girls' and boys' meetings every month with support from senior teachers to stem the rate of school dropouts. The student leadership also helps support students who have learning difficulties, promotes a violence-free home for students, and encourages peer-to-peer learning to help improve academic performance. Most recently, we have been working with Wakadogo's girls' club to introduce reusable sanitary pads and menstrual health and hygiene education because this has been identified as a major obstacle for girls staying in school. Not only will the girls receive reusable sanitary pads, but they will conduct outreach in neighbouring schools to engage in peer-based learning as well as distribute reusable pads to the girls.

Constant engagement with the local community has proved pivotal. The school staff and stakeholders realised that getting students involved in outreach to other children out of school boosted enrolment. When Wakadogo first opened, students walked through villages, trading centers and other community hubs outside the school to persuade those in the wider community to enrol their children to the school. Students speak to parents and caregivers and appeal to them directly. Students are also critical in identifying areas within the community where out of school children can be found, like areas where child labour is commonplace.

The World's Best School Prize, and what would we do with \$50,000?

There has been so much excitement and an enormous sense of pride within the community relating to the news that Wakadogo has been shortlisted in the Top 3 for the World's Best School Prize. Our school is in a rural village and is now being recognised across Gulu and Uganda and around the world. In many ways, this celebration and recognition feels like we have already won. We are so proud that the community, our teachers, and students can be recognised for all of their hard work in overcoming adversity and have the opportunity to share our story to hopefully inspire others.

If Wakadogo wins the World's Best School for Overcoming Adversity, we will use the \$50,000 prize to significantly expand our computer literacy initiative that is currently in pilot stage. We are the first school in Gulu and surrounding region to be introducing computer literacy from pre-primary level and incorporating it into our teaching curriculum. We will use tablet-based learning for nursery and lower primary and laptop based learning for middle and upper primary learners.



It is my pride and joy to see Wakadogo, a Ugandan school in Gulu, recognized and shortlisted in the Top 3 of the World's Best School Prize!



Wakadogo and 2 others

10:21 AM · Sep 28, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

Figure 1 First Lady and Minister of Education of Uganda tweets about Wakadogo, Sept 2022

If we win, we will establish a Computer Lab at Wakadogo School within the existing school library:

- **50 laptops and 50 tablets will be purchased**, as well as the solar panels required to operate these.
- **Families and members of the community will be invited** to access the Computer Lab after school, on weekends and during school holidays. Wakadogo will create a course timetable for community members to sign up to.
- We will also invite **neighbouring schools** to come to Wakadogo's Computer Lab during school holidays and weekends.
- We will **hire an ICT Teacher** to provide training and support. In the case of another school shut down or pandemic, students will be put in groups of 3 per tablet and they will be able to access the learning content in this way. Teachers will pivot again to provide face to face teaching and support to complement the tablets.
- Wakadogo will establish a **community-based Steering Committee** for the Computer Lab to brainstorm ideas and actions for its sustainability, for example by approaching technology

companies and NGOs in Uganda who are working towards increasing access to information technology. They could be given opportunities to sponsor the Computer Lab.

- We will invest in appropriate learning content and expand on creative teaching and learning methods that are made possible with technology, such as Lego robotics.

We expect that through this approach, 3,000 students, teachers and community members will be able to access the Computer Lab in one year. We have until 2 Oct, 2022, to vote for the winning school [here](#) – every vote counts!

Wakadogo School Dispensary

We have an onsite school dispensary to ensure that students do not miss school because of common diseases like malaria, flu and diarrhea. Our dispensary is being run by a nurse. Since the school reopening in January 2022, we have treated 2,027 student cases. The following services are offered to students:

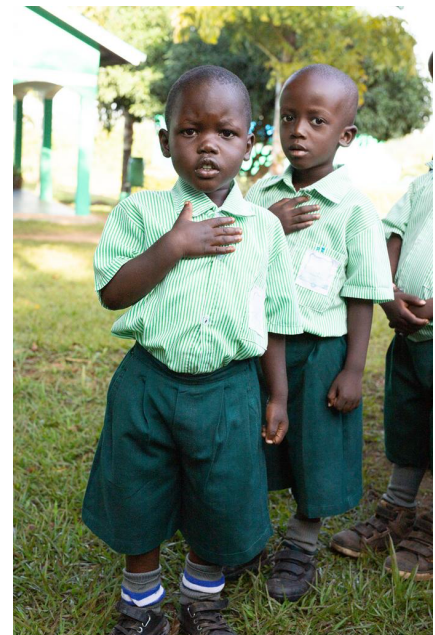
- General medical check ups
- Health and hygiene education
- Guidance and counseling
- Malaria screening tests and treatment
- Minor surgeries
- Diagnosis and treatment for common diseases such as coughs, flu, diarrhea, skin infections and other conditions.

Global Financial Accounts 2020/21

We received our global **2020/21 financial accounts (Year Ended Aug 31, 2021)**. Our income for the year was CAD \$146,611. This includes CAD\$11,306 contribution from parents and caregivers of students at Wakadogo School – which significantly reduced due to school closures from March 2020. Our expenditure was CAD \$152,400, mainly for teacher and other staff salaries, take-home food rations and teaching and learning materials.

Thank you so much for your support

We couldn't do this without you and thanks to you, we were able to reach 1,089 students (455 Wakadogo students and 634 students from the community) with home-schooling and now 477 of those children have re-enrolled in school, despite the devastating pandemic and school closures. **Thank you to each one of you for your amazing support and for ensuring that children in northern Uganda can continue to access education to reach their full potential.**



With our very best wishes,
The Wakadogo family

We want to say a special thank you to our most generous supporters

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anonymous donors (9) ● Peter & Christine Baltussen ● Community Initiatives Program, Alberta Culture & Tourism ● Sam Dennis ● The Mohamed S. Farsi Foundation ● Katie George and Mark Cann ● Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Kampala, Uganda ● GPW Ltd ● Colin Hamilton ● Zemina Hasham ● Harvard Business School, Class of 2018, Section E ● Estelle Imbert ● Madatali & Dolatkhanu Keshwani & Family ● Nina Hirji Kheraj & Naguib Kheraj ● Kings' Dubai School ● Hafiz & Neeta Lalani ● In memory of Robert Louis ● Fahreen & Josh Maguire ● Al & Dee McIntosh ● Stephen Mallaghan ● Catherine Matson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ashley Messick ● The Musgrave Family ● Catherine Nadeau ● Anwar Nusseibeh ● Tasneem & Naveed Osman ● Zakyr Osman ● Herta Park ● Ptarmigan Charitable Foundation ● Kris & Munira Ramji & Family ● John Cumming Ross Limited ● Rotary Club of Edmonton South ● Toiny de Ruijter ● Rossana Sabino ● Timothy & Tanya Spangler ● The Still Family ● The Tsampalieros Family ● Nino & Shirley Virga ● Naznin Virani & Family ● Nazneen & Omar Mawani ● The Wade Family ● The Walmley Foundation ● Yvonne Moynihan & Ed Walsh ● Bernard Walsh ● The Wheeler Family Foundation
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