

Hope for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Empowering Children to Reach Their Full Potential

2016 Annual Report

The Goals of HOVC

HOVC is a Bafumbira dream, initiated and implemented by Bafumbira men and women. Their dream is to see the empowering and enabling of the next generation within their community, through access to education, improved living conditions as well as a growing knowledge of God's love and provision and a deepening dependence on and relationship with Him. HOVC Australia was established to provide the financial support and resources to help realise this dream and to build a meaningful connection between those in our community and those in the Kisoro community.

With the amazing development of HOVC since its inception in 2010, we have seen a substantial growth in the scope of projects, financial support and our generous support base. This has enabled the expanding vision of Innocent and the Ugandan Board to now become a more concrete 3 year plan.

Accordingly over this past year, HOVC Aust has worked to extend the areas of responsibility of the Ugandan Board, while developing a more rigorous definition of our various roles and responsibilities, founded on the trust and relationship built up over the past 7 years.

Activities and Achievements

1. Rwaramba Secondary School

A generous donation allowed for the construction of a Senior student classroom block and Examination Hall as well as the refurbishment and resourcing of the Computer room at Rwaramba Secondary School. The new buildings were commissioned in November 2015.

These additions and improvements qualified the school for Government registration and A level status, which now entitles the school to receive Ugandan Government financial support for wages and further expansion. This will have a hugely positive impact on the local community.

Rwaramba Primary School

Gifting of funds also allowed for the replacement of a very holey and rusted corrugated iron roof on one of the Primary classroom blocks. Rotted tree poles were replaced, the roof was raised and larger doors and windows were included. The dry dusty floor will also be replaced by a concrete floor. This will now provide a much lighter, cleaner and drier environment for these students and their teachers.

2. Children's education

At the end of 2015, 6 children passed their Primary leaving exams with higher average pass marks than previous years, and moved into Secondary school. This gave a total in 2016 of 12 students in Secondary school and 2 in Vocational Institute. This year another 19 students sat their Primary leaving Exams and their results will be published early 2017.

The Ugandan Board has developed stricter benchmarks for those students who wish to study at a boarding school. Those students who receive poorer results will study at their local day school where parents can be involved in the supervision and discipline of their child.

As many of our parents have not enjoyed the gift of remaining in school, the HOVC Staff have recognized the need to mentor them about the significance and future benefits of their child's education so that they will provide encouragement and prioritise schoolwork. Parents will be encouraged not to value HOVC simply for the material assistance given.

1 student has now completed her tailoring and knitting course. We wish her well in finding employment.

3. Development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding

Work is being carried out to develop an MoU between the two boards clearly identifying the responsibilities of the respective boards so as to enhance our mutual collaboration as committed partners. At this stage a draft MoU has been formulated covering the Boards' responsibilities in the area of Communication and Engagement, Finance and Governance and Operational Activity.

4. Communication

Communicating across the world is not always easy, but this year incorporating a skype call into our monthly Australian Board meetings has enabled a much clearer and more rapid exchange of information as we talk face to face with Ndagijimana Innocent (Executive Director) and Charles Kamuhanda Bigira (Chairman of Ugandan Board). Our collaborative decision making process has been enhanced considerably as these conversations build mutual understanding of various issues under discussion.

More frequent communication has also been encouraged between Alan Morrison and Charles Kamuhanda Bigira as Chairmen of the Australian and Ugandan Boards. This has proved to be most fruitful.

Communication continues between HOVC and its sponsors and donors through bi-monthly Newsletters, letters from the children, emails to sponsors outlining specific concerns about their child and a prayer chain.

5. Provision of Crisis Relief

58 HOVC families were affected by an unseasonal and severe hail storm in April 2016. Crops and buildings were destroyed, affecting livelihoods as well as creating a widespread shortage of food. HOVC Aust immediately launched an Emergency Appeal and within weeks, \$11,300 was raised. This funded the purchase of 6,800 cups of beans for food and planting, bags of maize and potato seeds which were distributed among our HOVC community according to need.

HOVC staff also requested assistance from the Red Cross who held a Disaster Management and Preparedness Workshop for our parents/caregivers to inform them of how their farming practices, swamp reclamation and de-forestation can contribute to such a crisis.

6. Health and medical assistance

Providing for the ongoing treatment of medical and general health needs of our children as well as their parents/caregivers, is vital for their overall improved wellbeing. This year the HOVC Health Fund covered the cost of treatment for children who suffered a broken leg, acute fungal infections, typhoid, epilepsy and asthma. 2 new cases of HIV were also discovered amongst the parents and provision of free antiretroviral medication from the hospital was arranged. There were also a few parents requiring hospital treatment.

The volunteer organization Days for Girls provided kits for our older girls so that their schooling is not interrupted or health compromised. Another 50 kits will be taken over by the team visiting in 2017.

An on-going supply of supplementary food is still being given to parents/caregivers who are HIV+ as well as support and encouragement for them to discover ways of earning an income so as to become more financially independent and able to enjoy a varied diet.

7. Team visit

In January 2016 a team of 8 travelled to Kisoro to spend 2 weeks with the HOVC community. Three Australian Board members were on the team and discussions held with the Ugandan Board as well as the HOVC staff, enabled a clear understanding of the next major initiatives to be

undertaken. These trips are an important part of developing and maintaining a personal relationship between our two communities.

8. Improvements at the Project Office

HOVC was in the enviable and blessed position of being able to purchase our second plot of land adjoining our original property. This extra space will be invaluable when it is time to expand our facilities and scope of operations by building a Resource Centre.

Power blackouts are frequent and can last for days and this causes much inconvenience in the daily operation of our Centre. Extensive research was done to decide on the most efficient and cost effective source of alternative power. Charles suggested that the best way was to install solar panels on the roof of the Project office and this has now been done.

Following a number of local deaths due to lightning strikes, we felt that as a safety measure, two lightning rods should be erected in the grounds of our Centre to protect the children. This has been done.

9. Parent Loan Scheme

The Parent Loan Scheme was established in 2012 with a small group of parents each contributing a modest sum of money. It now has 92 members from the HOVC community and is parent run with oversight by one of the HOVC staff members. Having access to a small loan is empowering parents to purchase plots of land, begin a small business or open a shop thus improving their income earning capacity and ability to become self-sufficient.

10. Fund raising

HOVC has been blessed to have continued corporate support from Henning Harders Aust and Bewshers which has funded the school building projects and the purchase of adjacent plots of land.

The Parramatta Baptist Church Reverse Christmas Tree in 2015 raised \$4127 for Secondary School Education.

Some of our donors have come up with creative fund raising ideas such as:

- \$2798 being given in lieu of wedding gifts for water tanks
- A PBC's Women2gether function raised \$1090 to purchase a solar/winder torch for each child
- Funds raised by supporters by selling cards and Entertainment books.

As a Board we wish to express our appreciation for the generosity of many who are willing to support the work of HOVC in Kisoro and to each sponsor who gladly pays every month for the ongoing support and education of their child.

Looking forward

Alongside the continued sponsorship of our 135 children, which covers primary school fees, school and project uniforms, school writing materials, household assistance, weekly Project Days plus the costs of operating such a Project, there are a number of other major Projects that we are working towards over the next 3 years.

1. Latrines

Delivering sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is one of the strategic Millennium Development Goals. All our families have been provided with a water tank giving them fresh, clean rain water and saving the time and effort it takes to fetch water from nearby swamps and streams. Now we are turning our attention to making sure each HOVC family has basic, hygienic sanitation.

Of our 133 families, most latrines are in an alarming condition and 8 families have no latrine at all. Costing is being carried out so that we can plan to raise sufficient funds to provide a new latrine for each HOVC family. It is being planned that the construction of the latrine will include the participation of able family members so as to engender a sense of ownership.

2. Finalising MOU

We intend further discussion between the two boards to shape a final Memorandum of Understanding.

3. Building a Resource Centre

A major vision which will take much thought and planning is the construction of a Resource Centre on the extra land adjacent to the Project Office building. It is hoped that this Centre will provide the space and facilities necessary for a library and a computer room, where the sewing machines can be used once again and for a carpentry workshop. Dreaming big, it would be wonderful if HOVC could not only offer these kinds of vocational courses, but also provide a place for work experience and employment, generating an income for ex-students as well as HOVC.

4. Education

While monthly sponsorship covers the costs of attending a primary school, it does not cover the much higher costs of fees, uniforms and books associated with attending secondary school, especially boarding schools in the township of Kisoro. With the increasing number of students graduating into secondary school, it is necessary that we prioritise fund raising for the Education Fund to cover these higher costs.

A request has come from the Ugandan Board that we approve excursions for Primary 7 students to visit other districts and major cities to gain a better understanding of their subjects. Both students and teachers have led very isolated lives and their experience of life apart from subsistence farming, is very limited. We agree that broadening the students' horizons would be very beneficial.

HOVC (Aust) Inc. Board

HOVC is governed by a voluntary Board. As an incorporated Association, we also have a Constitution, which defines the purpose, objectives and powers of the organisation. Over the past year, the following Members have seen that the organisation is conducted in accordance with its principles and commitments as stated in the Constitution:

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|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Alan Morrison | - Chairman | Marion Pendlebury | - Director |
| Elizabeth Gay | - Secretary | Steve Moore | - Treasurer (Acting) |
| Lisa Roberts | - Marketing | Megan Howard | |
| Margaret Fyfe | - Prayer Co-ordinator | | |

The Board would like to thank those people in our community who have given their time and skills over the past 12 months to helping HOVC Australia, including James Proctor who has spent a lot of time setting up a new database and Cloud platform.

And finally, HOVC would like to sincerely thank each of you who have supported HOVC either through child sponsorship, towards other financial projects or with prayer. Your partnership is greatly appreciated as without it HOVC would not be able to help these beautiful children and their families in Kisoro escape the cycle of poverty and most importantly, know the love and comfort of Jesus through our actions; and in return, our brothers and sisters in Kisoro are praying for you too.

Thank you for your support in 2016, we look forward to seeing what God has in store for HOVC in the next 12 months.



Marion Pendlebury
HOVC (Aust.) Director