



MWEBAZA FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2020



SILVER LININGS

Between September 2019 and February 2020, the Mwebaza Foundation grew from a staff of one to four. We approached 2020 as the year when ambitious plans would come to fruition. We solidified a framework built with our Ugandan partners identifying what a school needs to successfully educate its students. We had plans for curriculum development in our Colorado partner schools. We had bold and exciting goals in the U.S. and Uganda for what needed to be accomplished.

Then March roared in and sent the world's children home from school. Like everyone, we pivoted.

Coronavirus and its impacts paused our work in some areas but gave us the room and permission we needed as a growing organization to do some important internal work. We needed to define ourselves and our role in a society promoting education, as a means towards justice. We could not shirk conversations about race as America's racial reckoning began, so we sat down and we started listening.

In this new year, we will continue to listen, applying what we've learned to help foster balanced, equitable partnerships between our Coloradan and Ugandan schools. We will encourage all students towards a broadened, tolerant world view through cross-cultural outreach and education. We will strive to promote financial self-sufficiency at each Ugandan school so that they may have an equal opportunity to build the future they desire.

Sincerely,

The Mwebaza Foundation Staff

FIERCE CONVERSATIONS

Like many Americans, the BLM protests this summer brought us to our collective knees. How could we continue to work in education in both Colorado and Uganda without confronting our own organizational and individual biases? We believe that we have a responsibility to all of the students we serve to fight for the justice and equity they all deserve. The Board of Directors and the staff began working with Particular and Powerful based in Niwot, Colorado. We participated in multiple workshops and learned how to have Fierce Conversations about race and justice- with each other, our partners, donors, students and the rest of our community.

These workshops equipped us with the skills needed to examine our communications, ensuring that everything we share reflects the dignity and equity of every member of our community. We turned a critical eye towards our programming to make sure we were developing it in a way that also reflects antiracist values. We looked at assumptions we make in our fundraising and how they can leave out people of color. We looked at how and what we teach in our school clubs, circling back to our roots - a story of an authentic and equitable friendship that started it all. We have learned a great deal but recognize that this is just the beginning of a lifelong journey. We will persevere, undaunted by the road ahead.



OUR STATEMENT ON RACIAL JUSTICE

written in September 2020

As a Foundation committed to cross-cultural exchange, our work is directly related to racial inequity throughout the world. However, we understand that a just world requires us to first combat racism at home. The Mwebaza Foundation recognizes the system in America is unjust - equity and inclusion have not yet been achieved in our Colorado communities; so we stand with those fighting for change and we say, Black lives matter, in Africa, the U.S., and all over the world.

We acknowledge that our understanding and response to racial inequity will continue to evolve, but we will not wane in our commitment. We pledge to confront our own biases and to create an equitable culture that dismantles systemic barriers within our organization. We choose to see color and are trying our best to minimize the harmful effects of our blind spots. We hope to work with increasing humility, authentic curiosity, and courage. We will constantly seek out new information that sharpens our equity consciousness lens.

We echo the sentiments of the superintendents of our Coloradan partner schools' districts and want to underscore the importance of engaging children on issues related to race, inequity, and social justice at home and in the classroom. Our mission remains to enhance the relationships among our Coloradan and Ugandan partner schools through cross-cultural exchange and service learning. We focus our educational opportunities on topics that teach children, in Uganda and Colorado, to be critical thinkers around issues related to equity, human rights, and sustainability through interactive leadership projects.

Our work puts us in a position where we can help empower communities from the inside-out, by recognizing that those we serve are the experts on the challenges that they face. We want our organization to focus on human values. To that end, we listen from a place of love and acknowledge that we are not the experts.

*"We honor the stories, experiences, and emotions of the people who share their lives with us. We will continue to collaborate on solutions **with** our friends rather than **for** our friends."*

Our staff and board of directors are participating in a training that focuses on uprooting our own biases and discussing racial inequality in our American landscape and how we work in Uganda. We acknowledge that this learning is complex and at times can be messy and ambiguous. We embrace that complexity and the discomfort it can engender with patience and empathy so that we can develop innovative solutions that produce increasingly equitable outcomes. There is not a single solution but rather a direction in which we choose to move. This training is the first step in our commitment to better serving our communities.

We welcome your participation in our process to more deeply address issues related to race, inequity, and social justice, as we learn to listen more closely to the needs of our stakeholders and reflect authentically on what they share in an effort to make a better world for all. You will hear from us again soon.

VISION & VALUES



Our organization's journey of self-discovery couldn't go very far without first identifying who we are. Our values and vision are the compasses we use when building curriculum, programs, and relationships. Going through the process of figuring out what our organization most values led us to outline a vision that builds on the work we have done and illuminates where we want to go.

Our Vision

"We desire a world in which all students are equipped with the education and skills to be global citizens who are inspired to build a sustainable and just future."

Our Values

partnership – empathy – equity – honesty – curiosity – integrity – justice – connection – self-sufficiency – sustainability – education – leadership – friendship – civic-engagement

GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY

In 2019, the Mwebaza Foundation was the recipient of an anonymous donation that established an endowment, ensuring our mission's longevity.

As we looked towards growing our endowment, we knew that we needed to first establish guidelines on what types of gifts Mwebaza Foundation could accept.

Creating a gift acceptance policy directly related to our work in becoming an antiracist organization. Our gift acceptance policy protects us from accepting donations that could harm our communities directly or indirectly. It ensures that we think critically about our fundraising and how it should interact with our programming as a reflection of our values.

The Gift Acceptance Policy is not just for endowment gifts but guides our acceptance of any donation. It also communicates to our broader community that we are an organization with integrity and that this is reflected in every aspect of our work.

Read our complete gift acceptance policy, [here](#).
www.mwebaza.org/our-endowment

COLORADO SCHOOL CURRICULUM

As 2020 unfolded and we watched school districts across the nation transition to remote learning, we pivoted our student engagement strategy. We capitalized on the remote learning schedule and partnered with school art teachers, which allowed us to engage with every single student at our Colorado partner schools, no matter where class was held. The curriculum is ongoing and will continue to evolve alongside school restrictions.

Our School Development Director, Hillari Hansen, implemented her 30+ years of teaching experience to develop an array of curriculum topics suitable for each grade level that reflected the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The dynamic curriculum includes lessons on diversity, equity, and inclusion. These themes are presented to students through a place-based learning approach that promotes a critical look at their individual experiences within their own communities. Then, students take what they learned and expand it to a global scale.



This fall, students who focused on climate activism learned about young leaders taking action to make global changes in the fight against climate change. We highlighted the work of a local Ugandan climate justice activist, Vanessa Nakate, and the work of Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg.

Students learned about how climate change is affecting their local community here in Colorado and their pen pals in Uganda, sharing ways in which they could reduce their environmental footprint. For a final project, each student produced an educational poster representing what they learned.

As part of our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion curriculum, we aim to contribute to an accurate history of racial justice in Colorado, the United States, and across the globe. At different grade levels we focus on varying themes that highlight activists throughout history who faced unjust bias while accomplishing their goals.

So far, we have studied the success of Black individuals through an historical lens. We celebrated the resilience of Black Americans during the Reconstruction Era, Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement, Black Lives Matter, and beyond. We've focused on artists, actors, and athletes including Muhammad Ali and Amanda Gorman as well as inventors and scientists including Garrett Morgan and George Washington Carver.

We explored the history of Colorado resistance efforts that led to the creation and destruction of Deerfield, the Sand Creek Massacre, and Colorado Japanese internment camps.

At a global level, we underscored voices from former activists - including Harriet Tubman, Nelson Mandela, and Bayard Rustin - who crusaded for a just world and faced incalculable odds along the way. Students completed art projects to display the learning objectives of this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion curriculum.

This curriculum will be adapted for students at our Ugandan partner schools. When travel resumes, Ms. Hansen will work with teachers and students there to create a cross cultural learning opportunity between the schools.

As an educational organization, we embrace our responsibility to contribute to a future of young leaders that have a global understanding of current issues. We understand this work is ongoing and ever-changing. We understand that part of this job is to adjust as we learn and we will continue to listen, and act.

COMPLETED PROJECTS



CHICKEN COOP AT MWEBAZA ANNEX

The chicken program is self-sufficient. Some eggs are sold to meet maintenance costs of feeding and caring for the birds. A majority of the eggs are part of a sustainable and balanced lunch program for the students.

SCHOOL RENOVATIONS AT PARENTS' JUNIOR

Since school has been closed, our partners in Gulu renovated the original mud-brick schoolhouse and wooden addition. Now, the school is safe and weatherproof so students may have an improved learning experience. The structure is also more secure so it may safely house school and office supplies.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

In mid-March, coronavirus brought strict lockdown measures to Uganda that exacerbated food and financial insecurities. As restrictions ease, our friends are working to find stable income but recovery is slow and the crisis continues.

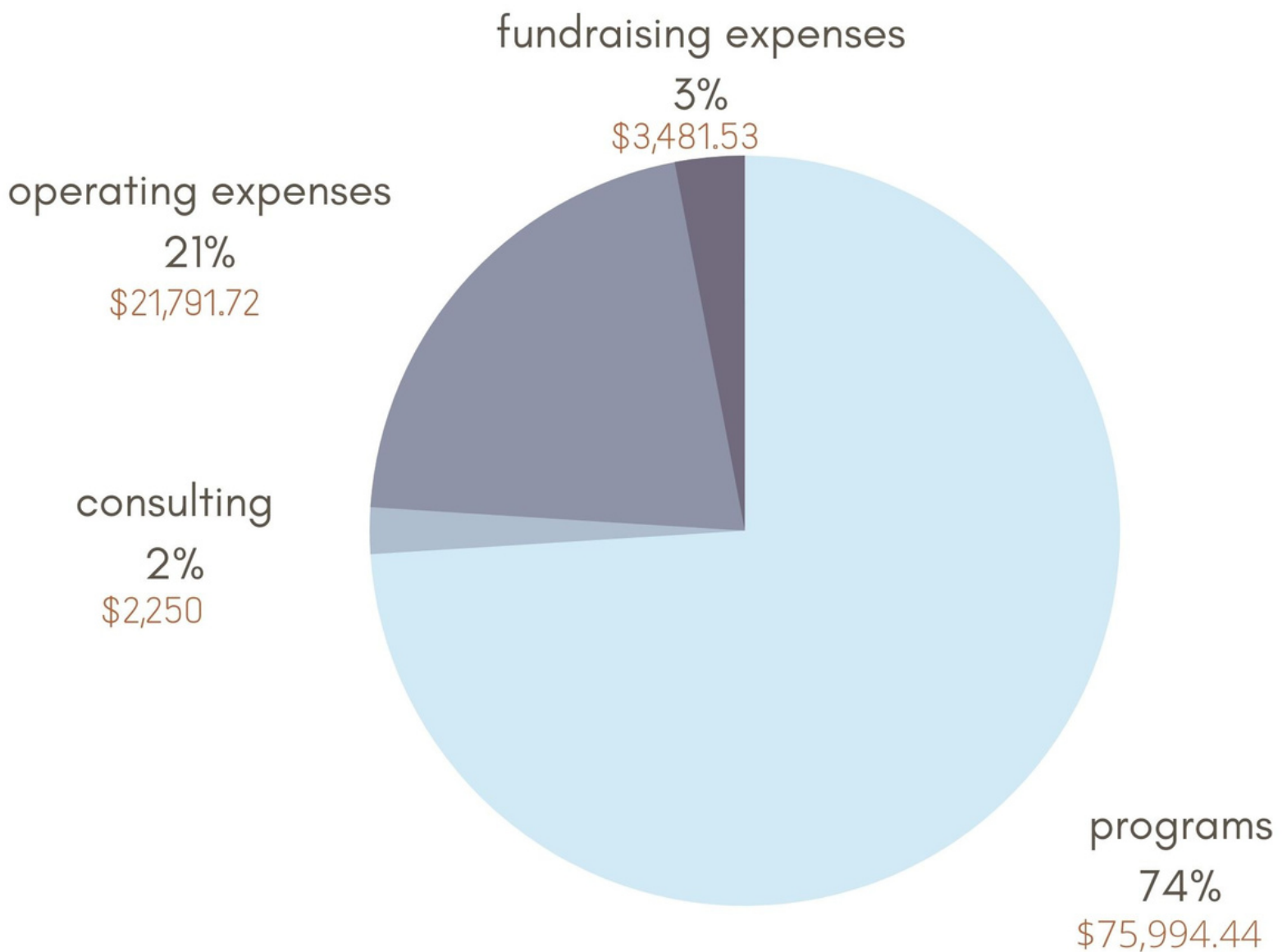
\$65,950 RAISED

- nine months of teachers' salaries at all four partner schools
- four months of food aid provided to 126 families at our three southern partner schools
- four months of food aid provided to 97 families at our one northern partner school
- fund the purchase of school-reopening supplies (mandated by the government) for all four partner schools



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Out of \$103,517.69 raised, \$75,994.44 went directly to our Ugandan programs.



*Employees of the Mwebaza Foundation are paid through private grants.

FUNDRAISING EVENT TOTALS

\$28,195

Kona Ice	\$808
Tea Time	\$280
Canvas Community Patchwork	\$821
Miles for Meals	\$12,589
Pizza Party	\$3,755
Merchandise Sales	\$474
Giving Tuesday Raffle	\$455
CO Gives	\$777
Gift Giving	\$2,461
Coyote Ridge Art Sale	\$1,425
Niwot Book Sale	\$2,546
Eagle Crest Theme Day	\$364
Coronado Hills Theme Day	\$185
Give Me 5 Campaign	\$555
Niwot High School Chipotle Night	\$700



OXEN & PLOWS MICRO INDUSTRY

Our northern partner school in Gulu, Parents' Junior School, is very motivated to develop and implement a micro industry. This region's tumultuous past encouraged locals to cultivate a cooperative mindset, working together to pursue collective goals.

For nearly two decades, the Lord's Resistance army, led by Joseph Kony, terrorized Northern Uganda, kidnapping an estimated 60,000 children and forcing them into military service or marriage to militia leaders. During this violent time, parents in Gulu would gather their children under an open-air structure and stand guard while they slept. When the war ended, **this community recognized the need for education and banded together to incorporate a school, aptly naming it Parents' Junior School.**

They started by holding classes under the former nighttime shelter while they constructed a brick school house. Rebuilding after this civil war required a strong sense of community, collaboration, and a renewed commitment to educating Gulu's children.

At Parent's Junior, these values shape and guide the way community members work with and care for each other. PJS is the most recent addition to Mwebaza's partner schools, joining our Foundation in 2014. Their Colorado sister school, Coronado Hills, has raised money for a variety of structural improvements, including **renovations to the existing brick building and wooden classroom addition, installation of Enviro Loo composting toilets, and a well for fresh, safe drinking water.**

As the school works to meet its students' basic needs, it's time that we, collectively, look to a financially self-sufficient future. COVID-19 decimated Uganda's economy and the communities in Gulu are not exempt. Recognizing the need for financial independence and food security now more than ever, **the community members and Board of Directors at Parents' Junior School created a business plan for an Enhanced Agriculture micro industry.**



The villages around Gulu are remote and rural. The majority of residents are subsistence farmers who till their land by hand. The work is inefficient and difficult, leading to lower crop yields. Additionally, women must walk miles to the nearest grain mill, using precious time and energy.

Oxen and plows are the first step to enhancing the crop yields because they assist farmers in tilling the land quicker and more efficiently. **Parents' Junior's business plan includes the purchase of oxen and plows to make farming more profitable and efficient.**

Many of the community members have additional arable land that they are unable to use because of the time and effort involved. They have volunteered to donate one to two acres to Parents' Junior School, allowing them to plant and harvest crops which they will sell to various markets. In return, Parents' Junior School will lend its oxen and plows to the land owners, allowing them to efficiently farm their additional acreage.

In addition to the purchase of oxen and plows, PJS will also construct a grain mill on its campus and open it up to local residents. **Currently, women within the community are walking seven to 10 kilometers to mill their grain.** With this addition, they no longer have to travel such long distances and can efficiently process and sell grain. The school will also mill its own grain to sell to various markets, including other schools for lunch programs.

THROUGH THIS AGRICULTURE-BASED BUSINESS, THE SCHOOL PLANS TO BECOME COMPLETELY FINANCIALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT WITHIN JUST ONE GROWING SEASON.



LOOKING FORWARD



UGANDA VISIT 2021

We aim to visit our partner schools in Uganda each year to check in with teachers, administrators, and students. We use these visits to lay the groundwork for future infrastructure projects and build on the partnerships that currently exist. We are planning to visit Uganda in summer 2021, pending it is safe and ethical to travel.

TEACHERS' HOMES

St. Paul's remote location makes it a difficult commute for teachers living outside of the village. Teacher homes would provide safe, comfortable housing and increase teacher retention rates. Higher retention rates foster a more stable education environment.

SUSTAINABLE LUNCH PROGRAM

As part of an on-going effort to diversify the lunch programs at each of our partner schools, egg-layer chickens, gardens, and orchards are developed and maintained to complement the current lunch program. These additions also help the school reduce the need to purchase food from the market.

MULTIPLE, EXCHANGABLE MICRO INDUSTRIES

To eliminate school tuition, the Mwebaza partner schools need to develop multiple, diverse micro industries, such as a rabbit-rearing business that will generate income for the school so that they may be financially self-sufficient and offer free tuition for students.

SECURITY WALL

A brick wall at Mwebaza Infant Primary School will help secure the school campus, keeping students, faculty, and educational materials safe.

ENVIRO LOO COMPOSTING TOILETS

Currently, Mwebaza Infant Primary School uses pit latrines. Pit latrines are unsanitary, take up precious space, and can potentially contaminate the water supply. Enviro Loo toilets turn waste into useable compost.



The background of the page features several stylized, light brown silhouettes of trees of varying heights and shapes, positioned on the left side and extending towards the center. The trees have dense, rounded canopies and thin trunks.

BOREHOLE WELL

Mwebaza Annex needs access to fresh, clean drinking water to ensure the community's health and safety. The bore hole well will provide consistent access to water, reducing the risk of water-borne illnesses.

VERTICAL GARDENS

In collaboration with Annex staff, we formed a plan to create vertical gardens on the perimeter security wall. These water-efficient gardens would conserve limited land space at the one-acre school compound and provide healthy, fresh produce for school lunches.

SOLAR PANELS

Parents' Junior School needs electricity. Solar-panels will give them consistent, clean, and affordable energy. With reliable electricity, the school can power a computer lab and provide light at night for evening classes.

COMPUTER LAB

A computer lab at Parents' Junior School will provide a more well-rounded curriculum for PJS students and allow adults within the community to attend computer-literacy, night classes.

THANK YOU

Stay up to date with the
Mwebaza Foundation!

Learn more about our current projects,
participate in an upcoming fundraiser,
or donate to a project at any of our
partner school communities.



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Thank you for your interest in the
Mwebaza Foundation. We are proud to be
part of Coloradan and Ugandan
communities who strive towards achieving
equitable education and a just existence
for all.

