

# Possibilities Chairman's Report 2013

Annual General Meeting - 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Period covered 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012 - 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013

## Introductory Statement

The very nature of Possibilities means that we share our resources as fairly as possible and meet the need where we see appropriate. As custodians of other people's hard earned cash we recognise our duty to get value for money and to ensure that those we help will benefit either immediately as an emergency measure, or more importantly, as we make an investment in their young lives. We see our role in Uganda as being a catalyst for change. We want to make a lasting difference by affecting individuals on a permanent basis. We don't see our role as scattering anonymous emergency funds, but more importantly placing money and resources strategically where they are needed and can have the most impact; where they will be long lasting, and as an investment in the future generation.

**Website** – The Possibilities website was totally rewritten during the year. The website needs to reflect what we are doing as a charity and should be maintained regularly to ensure that information contained on it is relevant, appropriate, and up to date. IT-Techie was employed to rewrite and maintain the website. The recent developments within the Ugandan Child Care system means that the website needs a further development as we respond to the guidelines and provision that is now acceptable to the Ugandan government.

## Visits

We visited Uganda three times in the past year. Firstly a business type trip in February 2012 where we were involved in meeting with many people and dealing with relational issues as well as checking on the children's education, health etc. We also visited some of SPAU's projects, which was a very helpful experience as we gained a deeper understanding of the country, the people and the great need in Uganda. It also helped to inform us further on the quality of SPAU's work. I travelled with Peter Gunter who later became a trustee of the charity and who is now serving as Treasurer. We visited the plot of land that we had just acquired. It was impressive and its potential considerable. I feel certain that it will be a great asset and will help us carry out our work in Uganda. Peter visited again in September of 2012 and travelled with Marilyn.

They also visited Kiwoi and Bula Children's homes and were used in giving advice on various projects as well as carrying out the usual welfare checks.

In March/April 2013 we took a team of 15 with us that was made up of travellers from UK and from Australia. It was a great trip. We were involved with unexpected advocacy and developed several meetings that will help with the implementation of the 'Alternative Care Plan' – The government initiative to transition the childcare provision of the country.

## Groups that sponsor Possibilities

**Suffolk New College** SNC Music department have held several concerts/gigs in aid of Possibilities. Rob went and presented in the spring 2012 to the staff and students.

**Combs Middle School** have been holding several fundraising activities in aid of Possibilities.

**Christchurch, Needham Market** have adopted us for the next 2 year period. We will be supported from their fundraising 2013-2015. This is a very useful connection. It raises further awareness in Needham Market and will give a small boost to our annual income.

## Links and Partners

**Bula INC.** Melissa Fricke / Andi Procopio continue to pay for the education of the children at BULA. This continues to be a very useful and mutual relationship.

**ICO** Heather Hanrahan pays for many of the extras needed at BULA and also has paid for their rent for this 6-month period

**SPAU** We continue to work closely with Paul Lwanga and Sarah at Spau

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### Fundraising

#### Specific Events

2012

12 May **May Dinner** at Brockford Barn

14 July **Band Night**

1st December **Vintage Tea Party**

#### Other NEWS and Information

**Olympic Torch** Rob ran with the Olympic torch on July 5<sup>th</sup> in Ipswich – A great honour.

**Fetes / School Sports Days / Brownies and Rainbows** we sold photos with the torch and gained newspaper coverage.

**SkyLarks Childrens Choir** Christmas concert

**Summer Party** organised by Alison Gawne

NMMS proceeds from the school Spring Fair.

**Craft** We have been selling small cloth animals as well as African sling bags and other items. With the extra beads and the drinking straw bags that we now have, we have many items for sale. We want to shift all items quickly and keep a smaller stock of items. Opportunities to sell these craft items would be welcomed.

**N.M. Raft Race** We entered a raft at the raft race on 10th June 2012 . It was a huge success and great fun. We had our name engraved on the trophy as we were the fastest raft around the course.

Rob presented the prizes to the winners. The Raft Race Committee made a donation to Possibilities in March of this year.

**Inner Wheel** This group at Woodbridge held a coffee morning to raise awareness and money for us. They also collected small gifts and bagged them up for the children.

**Woodbridge Brownies** made possibilities their focussed charity and raised some money.

**Grindisburgh Church Youth Group** Rob did a talk to inform the youth at Grundisburgh and then they held a vintage Tea Party to fundraise

**David Hall** David has organised several fundraising sporting events.

**Anna and Andrew Rodgers** held a 'bangers and mash' event and a vintage tea party.

**Various local groups** had us to speak and present the charity's work for a donation and an opportunity to sell craft items.

**JC Commissioning** made a donation towards the building fund to enable us to lay the foundations and get the building under way.

**Combs Middle School** David Barry a teacher at the school visited Uganda in the spring with us and has the school fundraising to enable us to install a large water tank at Malangata.

**Jess Smith – Tasmania** Jess fundraised with cake sales and garden/boot sales etc and raised a considerable amount before travelling with us at Easter.

**Time to Breathe** This evening class venture has made a sizeable donation to the cause. All proceeds from their first 2 courses went to Possibilities.

**SPAU** Spau are managing the farm build / Malangata project for us. Paul Lwanga has been project manager at Malangata.

**The Jephcott Trust** made a huge grant available for the building project. It enabled us to make a start

#### Possibilities for Children

We currently pay for 13 Children's education. We had to reduce our commitment to educating some children this year. Benedicta's heart for children had extended us beyond where we wanted and are able to go and so we have redefined what and whom we can pay for. She has collected many children over the years. We've been involved with many but she has also gathered other needy children that we have ended up paying for. We have paid for children even though we have no relationship with them and sometimes have only met the once. That

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has meant that we have been restricted in helping those that we do have relationship with.

We are currently paying for the 8 children that live with Benedicta. We pay for their schooling as well as for breakfast and lunch at the school. We are also paying for Juliet and Lydia's education. We have paid for their education from the beginning. Lydia had never been to school until we began to pay for her. Juliet and Lydia are the first of many children that will be relocated. They left Benedicta's care in January 2013. We are able to keep check on their welfare and progress, so have continued to fund their education.

We also are continuing to pay for the 3 children that live in the goat village. This is on going and we will continue to support these children until they are of an age when they can attend University/vocational School. Our responsibility will cease for the children at age 18 or at the end of their mainstream education. As the children grow older their education increases in cost, university will stretch our resources too far. We currently have several individual sponsors (always more needed) the rest is made up from general funds.

### **Farming with Possibilities**

The 3-acre plot, 26 Miles north of Kampala at Malangata in the Sub-district of Namayumba is taking shape. The current farmer is a young man named Julius. When we were at Malangata in April there was good evidence of the farming and we were pleased with the farm and how it was beginning to develop. Some of the team were involved with clearing, digging and preparation for planting, planting and also in sorting niblets of maize before it was sent for grinding to make maize flour. The Goat enclosure was also prepared for the arrival of the goats. We also had the privilege of collecting water like an African. The builders have done an immense job. When you consider the quality of their work and the size of the project its quite extraordinary how they have progressed with a lack of tools and more impressively having to collect whatever water they have needed from the muddy pool at the bottom of the hill in Jerry cans.

The Wakiso district council have or rather are still in the process of computerisation and this has delayed all paperwork issues by 8 months.

The farm is there to produce food for emergency rations for the needy. It will also be used to train youths and the next generation in agriculture and various related topics.

### **Volunteering with Possibilities**

This past year we have sent one volunteer to Uganda. This is nowhere near enough and we would love to have supplied more - an area that we can improve on. Volunteers bring free labour, western influence and know-how and the extra pair of hands that are often needed. They also bring money into the projects to help them with their work.

In January 2013 Charles went to Uganda for a month and the reports from Uganda were really very encouraging. He was loved by all. Charlie was a great asset to the Ugandans and also for us. It was really useful to have a UK volunteer there - a great benefit to the charity. Charlie is talking about taking a 6-month sabbatical to enable him to spend a longer time there.

### **Possibilities with Goats**

The goat project didn't really improve and was therefore only a limited success. The villagers were not able to maintain the standard of care needed and so with regret we closed the project in April 2013. We split the herd into 2 and gave 2 goats to the families that had been involved with their care. We left 4 at Benedicta's house believing that the children that stay with her will benefit in some way from them. We removed 6 and relocated them to Malangata where a place had already been prepared for them. We are still committed to this project but it has been started afresh and we hope that it will develop and become what we had originally hoped for it.

### **Travel with Possibilities**

We ran our second organised trip to Uganda during the Easter holidays 2013. It was a mix of volunteering, cultural awareness and luxury safarining. This second trip was highly successful like the first and we will be running a similar type trip again during the Easter of 2014 and again in the Summer of 2014 if there are enough

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travellers. These trips are really useful for informing and fundraising as well as providing employment for Ugandans and for bringing money into what is a very poor country.

### **Possibilities with Beads**

We still have a huge stock of beads that we need to sell. It is no good having money tied up in a huge stock so we have just reduced all stock to see it shifted before we replenish.

### **Malangata**

In October 2012 the government of Uganda started to relocate many children from the orphanages. There has been an alarming rise in orphanages since 1996 when childcare was de-centralised. This change has fuelled the business of International adoption (I.A.). It has resulted in a supply chain being developed for those in the west who have the money to adopt a Ugandan child. A 'legitimate' child trafficking business has materialised. Children are being sold to rich westerners and the children from poor families are being sold to some orphanages to meet the demand. The Ugandan government have acted to stem the flow and they have decided that to close all orphanages and heavily restrict I.A. is the best course of action to stop this abuse. Many Children's homes have begun in the last 15 years or so just to feed the demand. There are no checks in place on these homes and children are being trafficked under the government's nose. Children are now being declared orphans if they can make money for some wealthy businessman-type homeowners. The developed world is being fleeced as many children are sold for sponsorship money several times over and the children are often used and abused when there is no reason for them to leave their home in the first place. There are good homes with genuine cases (ours would be numbered among those) but the government has no cost effective way of managing those and not enough ground-workers to oversee an orphanage centred child-care system. Therefore, the government has decided that all children's homes are abusive situations and therefore children have to be relocated to extended families where possible as soon as they can be. The rest have to be legally adopted or fostered within a 3 month period. This means that the complex at Malangata cannot become a home for the children at BULA and we must develop it to become a useful tool in the new government framework.

Our current plans need developing into a working model and functioning centre for the benefit of the children and youth. With this in mind Rob will be spending August 2013 in Uganda doing demographic studies and holding meetings with local officials to ascertain the best use for the building. We anticipate it serving the youth and children of Malangata as a Children's Centre/Apprenticeship Base/Halfway house type of Centre. This will be more clearly defined over the summer after meetings with other NGO's and the trip in August.

A great year and very productive. The next year will be a time of fundraising and making plans for the land at Malangata.

Rob Pattison  
18 May 2013