



April 2025 Newsletter

Power of Sponsorship | Infrastructure development | Joshua Primary School | Fundraising





Over 30 years of Australians supporting children at Bushikori in Uganda

About us

The Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) is located in a rural village near Mbale, Uganda, East Africa. The centre is not an orphanage but a registered non-government organisation.

Bushikori is a child sponsorship program, empowering children in poverty to be educated, growing up to become an agent of change in their own community. Care is taken that the sponsored children live with suitable guardians.

Bushikori's Director is Mary Wanendeya, the daughter of the late Pastor Sam and Mrs Anne Wandendeya, the founders of BCC. The main source of financial help comes from generous sponsors and supporters in Australia, facilitated by the Australian Support Committee, a Christian group of volunteers based in Geelong, Victoria.

Committee members are volunteers of all ages and denominations. We facilitate donations for child sponsorship, the Bushikori Health Centre, Joshua Primary School, the centre fund supporting the day to day running costs and special projects in Uganda. One hundred percent of specified donations are transferred to Bushikori Uganda.

Bushikori Christian Centre Orphan Support (Aust.) is registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.

Editors: Esther Cohen & Pamela Ferrar
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Find us

Please advise our committee if you prefer to receive this newsletter by email or download from www.bushikori.org.au

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Facebook: Bushikori Christian Centre

We would like to thank Stephen Davey at Pagination for hosting our website and Christian College Highton for printing services.

Spreading the News

We would be delighted to provide information and a speaker for any churches, small groups and schools who are interested in receiving updates or would like to find out more about our mission and child sponsorship in Uganda.

Contact: president@bushikori.org.au

Let us pray

Guided by Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20, Psalm 27: 1,16.

God's Presence with us:
'The Lord is my light and my salvation.'

God our Father, we thank you that your Presence is always with us
We praise you for your word that tells us, 'I will never leave or forsake you.'
We remember your promise, 'I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

God our Father, through Bushikori your presence is so tangible and evident to us
Through the faith and work in Christ of all who work at BCC, Uganda
Through the faith and work in Christ of all members of the Australian Support Committee
Through the love, encouragement and ongoing commitment of all the sponsors and supporters who
tirelessly give from their hearts

God our Father in gratitude we hold onto the Hope that you give us in our troubled world and pray, 'O
wait for the Lord, stand firm and he will strengthen your heart: and wait, I say, for the Lord.'

Amen



The power of sponsorship



Sponsorship through Bushikori still vital for the children in the catchment area

Pamela Ferrar: Sponsorship Co-ordinator

Poverty is still an issue in Uganda. The country has enjoyed stable government for over three decades, the population is now approximately 47 million in a land the size of Victoria. This means that land for subsistence farming is reduced, and many families struggle to survive on casual labour with no food security. The population is likely to increase with the ongoing wars and political upheaval in neighbouring countries. Uganda has been generous with accepting displaced people.

Since the last financial year ending June 2024, 20 students have graduated from vocational or tertiary education. Sponsorship through Bushikori is unique as all students are encouraged to continue with their education after completing high school.

We rejoice in the success of these

young adults as we know that they are now well equipped for secure employment. Many now have their own families and in some cases are sponsoring their own younger siblings. Education lifts people out of poverty and need, past students are no longer needy but are self-supporting and it is this that brings about change and improvement in society generally. This is the outworking of the vision from God that he gave to (the late) Pastor Sam Wandendeya and his wife Anne.

Primary students sponsored through BCC attend various schools, Joshua Primary School (JPS) situated at BCC, as well as primary schools that serve rural communities a distance from Mbale. Students from rural primary schools come to board at JPS when they reach P5 (grade 5), this means that they receive high quality education and broaden their

***Two meals a day?
School? Maybe the
parents and guardians
cannot afford the fees?***

*If this is touching your heart,
please pray and ask the
Lord if he is calling you to
sponsor a child through
Bushikori.*

*Here is a testimony from a
sponsor whose sponsored
student recently graduated.*

*'It is so gratifying to see
Michael conclude his studies
and be equipped to start his
career. Also, to receive his
letter giving thanks to God
and to us, and hear his
reflection on the journey
from poverty to a position of
achievement and hope.'*

life experience for the last three years of primary school. A very useful preparation for their high school years and beyond. At JPS the new Girls' and Boys' hostels that have been built with generous donations from Australia provide excellent accommodation for the children. Secondary students attend various schools in the district. They are all boarders, the Child Care Department (CCD) monitor them closely and encourage them in their studies.

The area of Eastern Uganda where Bushikori is situated is densely populated, has poor soils and less rainfall than other areas of Uganda. There are many who live in abject poverty, poor housing with little food and struggling to meet their everyday needs. Children from this cohort are on the list for sponsorship through Bushikori. The families that request help are carefully reviewed to ensure that only the most needy are offered sponsorship. Many of these are either single parent families or a family with an elderly grandparent caring for many grandchildren. Sponsorship changes the circumstances of the families, providing not just support for



“what a great blessing and privilege this is...”

schooling, but also health care at the Bushikori Medical Centre with access to health education and mental health support.

Some of the Ugandan student families have very ill or elderly and frail guardians so the staff at BCC are taking on an increasing parental role by providing support and guidance for the student and offering care for the

family members when possible. We all, staff in Uganda, the volunteer Australian Support Committee members, the Friends of Bushikori, sponsors and supporters are all working together with our Lord to bring about change in the lives of the poor and needy, what a great blessing and privilege this is, may we always be grateful for the opportunity to serve God in this way.

Impact of sponsorship in 2024

We look forward to continuing to provide opportunities for these students, empowering them to achieve their dreams and contribute to their communities. Thank you again to everyone who has supported this life-changing initiative.

We were proud to sponsor 242 students across various levels of education, including nursery, primary, secondary, universities, colleges, and vocational training programs throughout the country. Each year, we celebrate the success of many of our students as they graduate from college, marking a significant milestone in their lives.

In 2024, we were excited to share that 17 students successfully graduated with degrees and certificates from various institutions. Among them, nine students received certificates, and eight students earned bachelor's degrees in various fields of study.

Graduates:

Sylvia, Brenda, Rebecca and Shilea: Certificate in Fashion and Design
Ibrahim: Certificate in Plumbing
Alex: Certificate Motor Vehicle Mechanics
Eric: Skills in Motor Vehicle Mechanics
Damali: Skills in Catering
Phylis: Certificate in Cosmetology
Luke and Jonah: Bachelor of Business Administration
Daniel, Lynn and Rita: Bachelor of Arts with Education
Deborah: Bachelor of Science Education
Trevor: Bachelor of Science in Accounting
Shedrack: Bachelor of Social Science



Enhancing service delivery through infrastructure development

Kerry Peacock

President of the Australian Support Committee

The Anne Leah Surgical Centre is a big deal. In a practical sense its a big deal - but to me - in a God sense its a big deal because I know it wasn't me. God heard the prayers and God did the heart touching.



Current statistics in Uganda reveal maternal mortality at 6000 deaths a year, this equates to 16 women a day.



As of the end of 2023 Bushikori recorded zero maternal deaths, and managed two twin deliveries by caesarean section.



To date Bushikori have managed 35 caesarean sections, five laparotomies, 15 hernia procedures and 18 minor surgical treatments.



If you had asked me more than 30 years ago would I be in Uganda giving a speech at an opening ceremony for a surgical operating theatre at Bushikori, I would have said "no". I probably would have said, "Where is Mbale?". Then if you'd asked me in 2020, after 20 years on committee, if we were going to have a surgical operating theatre at Bushikori, I would have said, "unlikely".

"This surgical theatre saves lives."

In June 2021 Anne's son, Dr David, sends me a document called 'Theatre Proposal'. It is to help in maternal health emergencies. In Australian dollars the whole project including equipment, has a price tag of \$225,000. In November 2021 at our AGM, David rings one of the committee and we put him on speaker to chat to everyone. That was lovely. Phone call ends. I had prepared some notes on the Surgical proposal but was unsure how in depth I would go. So now I am prompted I discuss it.

Then at this same meeting, in general business Dr Barry Edwards suggests, "If it's ok with you I would like to have a crack at getting funds for the surgical centre". Very casually we said, "Ok,

that would be lovely.” I believe Dr Barry and his wife had never attended a Bushikori AGM before. Dr David has never spoken at our AGM via phone from Uganda before. Dr Barry takes the proposal booklet and gets started. Now its 2024 and \$100,000 has been raised for the project, which has provided a functioning surgical theatre and building.

This surgical theatre saves lives. Current statistics in Uganda reveal maternal mortality at 6000 deaths a year; this equates to 16 women a day. A journey from the Bushikori area to Mbale General Hospital is at least 20 minutes by car; this is in a country where there is practically no ambulance system and most people walk or ride motorbikes. As of the end of 2023 Bushikori recorded zero maternal deaths, and managed two twin deliveries by caesarean section. To date they have managed 35 caesarean sections, five laparotomies, 15 hernia procedures and 18 minor surgical treatments.

The Anne Leah Surgical Centre is a big deal. In a practical sense its a big deal - but to me - in a God sense its a big deal because I know it wasn't me. God heard the prayers and God did the heart touching. Now that there is the surgical centre, Bushikori are hoping to network to have Ugandan and Western doctors /health professionals to run “medical” days in specialist areas.

Our visit in August 2024 was a blessed time of further relationship building and understanding. It was the first opportunity for the community to witness the Australian Support of Mary Wanendeya as the Director of Bushikori since the death of her mother Anne. It was an opportunity to meet staff who had previously been only known as a name on a list. By being there we could observe the challenges that those at Bushikori face daily. There was a freedom to discuss issues in depth and, to understand and to question. Whilst it is possible via Zoom or Whatsapp, the optimum is still being able to meet in person.

I have returned home with a list of challenges for the future.

Regarding the infrastructure of Bushikori the priority from Bushikori staff is the moving of the kitchen. The initial quote is \$23,000 from an outside company. However BCC hopes to find cost saving measures. This is to move the kitchen from being in the centre position to being tucked away near the Geelong Hall. It will be a safer location, also labour saving as the food will be

closer to where it is served, a new cooking facility will be created that is more efficient and producing less smoke pollution.

Other projects are; the re-roofing of the Margery block, the renovation of one of the Joshua Primary School buildings, water tanks for harvesting rainwater, solar power as in many small units standing alone on key areas rather than one large one, CCTV and solar security lights and purchasing another van. Regarding the tanks, they hope for three tanks of 10,000 litre capacity each. (A 10,000 litre tank costs approx \$1000 Australia). The current vehicle they use is an 2004 model. BCC hope to purchase another second hand van using a payment plan. Eventually the older van will need replacing as it is costly to repair and two vehicles are needed.

We also identified the need for an increase in funds for administration as the staff team grows and to pay for holiday and sick leave. These wages are currently funded through the Centre Fund should you like to support the growing staff team at Bushikori.

Bushikori emphasised their reliance on the Gift/Welfare fund and the vitally important role it plays in allowing them to have further impact in the community. Due to further information on how this fund is used we have decided to remake it the 'Impact Fund.' We look forward to sharing stories of the 'impact' that these donations make.

The trip provided us with a great deal to take in and process. Little will be solved overnight, however we ask God to help us with His wisdom to discern the right decisions and paths to take. Thank you for your prayers for our trip and the work of Bushikori.



Joshua Primary School

FROM BCC UGANDA 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Joshua Primary School (JPS) is a Christian-founded institution dedicated to nurturing God-fearing students. This year, we have seen God's guiding hand in everything we do at the school. Our commitment has always been to create an environment where young minds can thrive, fostering individual thinking and the holistic development of each child's personality. We set high standards and goals for ourselves, and we strive to achieve them in areas such as academics, sports, discipline, leadership, and beyond.

Academics

The year 2024 began on a high note with the release of our Primary 7 results. We are thrilled to share the impressive academic achievements of our students, which reflect our dedication to excellence. Academic success is the hallmark of any great institution, and we take immense pride in our students' outstanding performances.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the unwavering commitment and care of our teachers. We are also deeply grateful for the continuous encouragement from parents and well-wishers who have placed their trust in us and provided their full support. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable guidance and contributions of our management team, whose collaboration has truly made a difference. While we celebrate these results, we remain determined to aim even higher, and we are striving for the very best.

Sports

Sports competitions teach students the value of positive challenges and sportsmanship, preparing them for life beyond the classroom. Physical fitness, games, and sports hold an important place in our curriculum. This year, our JPS students participated in various sports competitions, bringing home multiple trophies. We have four houses: Margery, Richard Stone, Duffield, and Wanendeya. Students competed in activities such as football, foot racing, food peeling, balloon bursting, tyre racing, sack racing, and more. We are proud to announce that the Wanendeya House secured first place, winning the gold medal!

Fundraising

November 2024 fundraising was very blessed. Pause for a Cause ran with Belmont Uniting Church (BUC) taking part concluding on 16th November with a wonderful result of raising \$1264 towards the Bushikori Centre Fund. The Friends of Bushikori held a Mega Garage Sale and Sausage Sizzle on 16th November. Despite the early summer heat on the day, the funds raised were \$2108 (with additional donations made after the event). It couldn't have happened without Helen McLean's ideas and leadership, and the hard work of the Friends of Bushikori together with their friends and family. Many people started early at 8am and went to the end - moving many items and walking many steps! A big thank you to St Johns Anglican Church Highton for providing the venue. Another thank you goes to IGA Highton for donating the bread, and generous individuals who paid for paper advertisements, snags, frozen zooper doopers and of course all those who donated items to sell. To have no - or few- expenses before starting to fundraise makes a huge difference to morale, and to the overall success. It was one big tiring day for many and we sincerely hope everyone knows how much their efforts are appreciated. Thank you.



More ASC News

December 2024

The Committee entered the St. Paul's (Latrobe Terrace) Christmas Tree Festival for the second year running, a chance to share our Bushikori vision and mission with the public.

Kalkee Murray Aged Care Christmas Trading Table (facilitated by Lucy Stone and her daughter Fiona Alchin) raised funds for Bushikori. Thank you for all your fundraising ideas and support.

10 cents cans for Bushikori library

One of our committee has been quietly working away at bottle recycling. She passes on the cash return/refund as a donation towards the Library at Bushikori. Bushikori Uganda is able to purchase new and appropriate books with these funds that we send. A great idea to see our recycling of bottles produce books to read!



The origin of Pause for a Cause, although that was not its title at the time, started during COVID at Belmont Uniting Church. Because we could not hold a function to raise monies for Bushikori, after discussions and thanks to the late Jean Murray, Belmont Uniting Church Council decided to ask its members during the month of October to take a moment to think of the wonderful work Bushikori is doing in the Mbale district in Uganda and place a donation into a container in their homes every day during the month as they enjoy their morning coffee or tea. Then on the first Saturday in November members were asked to drive through the Church's drop off area and place their donations into Jean's famous 'red' buckets. After COVID Belmont Uniting has continued to have this fundraiser during October and members now bring their donations to a special Saturday morning tea held in the Belmont Church hall.

We thank our BUC members sincerely for their wonderful support of the Bushikori community over many years. Thank you to Bill and Sue Jennings (Friends of Bushikori) for this report.



SPONSORSHIP

Meet Our Students



Jonathan Musafu

Jonathan is eight years old. His family have no secure source of income and they depend on subsistence farming on a small plot of land.



Nelson Mukhwana

Nelson is seven years old. His family rely on casual labour for income to support the family. Nelson's twin brother is Nickson (below).



Paul Masaba

Paul is eleven years old. The family have many dependants and no secure income. They live in a mud home with an iron roof, and only manage two meals a day.



Nickson Wamono

Nickson is seven years old. His twin brother is Nelson Mukhwana. His family rely on casual labour for income to support the family.

If you would like to sponsor, email:
sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

The construction of a home indicates the level of poverty of a family. A mud and wattle home is constructed using local soil and branches, with an iron roof that hopefully does not leak. A brick home is a more secure construction. All of these children do not have food security and education is an absolute necessity to change the circumstances of the family and their future. We thank God that with sponsorship lives are transformed, as testified by all the students who have completed their studies and are living well, with secure homes and food security assured. This is the hope we have for these children.

Monthly Sponsorship Rates

Options for three instalments yearly or once off annual payments

Primary Student **\$30**

Secondary Student **\$53**

Tertiary Student **TBA**

OUR WORK

Bushikori is a Child Sponsorship Program, empowering children in poverty to be educated, growing up to become an agent of change in their own country. Care is taken to ensure sponsored children live with suitable guardians. The committed Ugandan staff at Bushikori provide a much-needed service to the impoverished farming community; particularly the vulnerable children (regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, tribe). From nursery to tertiary/vocational, sponsorship covers school fees, uniform, scholastic materials, medical care and welfare. All of the sponsorship fees go directly to Uganda.

Bushikori is Joshua Primary School, providing quality education to students from Nursery to Primary Seven. Classes are taught in English. Every Student at Joshua Primary receives two meals a day, which for some is the only food that they eat each day.

Bushikori is a Community Library, established through a support group from the United States of America providing much needed textbooks, recreational reading books and a space for training.

Bushikori is a Health Centre, providing a 24 hour service to a population of 23,000. The healthcare service includes maternal health, HIV/AIDS clinic, adolescent health, immunisations, diagnostic services and the training of traditional birth attendants.



Donate to a fund



Bushikori Centre Fund: Each month the Australian Support Committee must send funds to keep the Ugandan Centre running (i.e. power, fuel, Ugandan staff wages).



Health Centre Fund: Support to employ staff at the medical centre which serves the surrounding population of approximately 23,000 people.



AnneLeah Fund: Support the Surgical Services Operating Theatre project.

Richard Stone Memorial Fund: Helps to support the payment of tertiary/vocational education of sponsored children. Funds are distributed at the Australian Support Committee's discretion.



Welfare Pool: Used at the discretion of Ugandan staff for children who have a special need (i.e. roofs, goats, bedding, seeds, food).



Christmas Fund: Helps to support the annual Christmas gathering and gifts of rice, cooking oil, flour, sugar for the sponsored children and families.

Joshua Primary School: Support for infrastructure and to employ teachers.

If you would like to support Bushikori Christian Centre please:

Email your interest to:

sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

Or, call Sponsorship Coordinator, Pamela:

0407 576 441

Or, write to us: **Bushikori Christian Centre, PO Box 42, Geelong, 3220**

For direct deposit:

BSB 063858.

Account No. 10077253.

Cheques made payable to Bushikori Christian Centre



If undeliverable, please return to:
Bushikori Christian Centre
Newsletter PO Box 42,
Geelong, Victoria, 3220
