



Rwandan Youth Information Community Organisation

Trustees' Annual Report 2010



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CHARITY OVERVIEW

This is the Annual Report for the period 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2010.

Charity name

Rwandan Youth Information Community Organisation (rYico)

Registered charity number

1104274

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Trustees

Nyawa Bottomley (Chair)	Whole Year
Laura Craggs (Secretary)	Part Year
Anna Chippendale (Treasurer)	Whole Year
Neil Ansell	Whole Year
Mike Holdgate	Whole Year
Leila Zadeh	Part Year
Vivenie Niragira	Whole Year
Sue Ghimire	Part Year

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

rYico is pleased to present its 2010 annual report. Economic transformation is occurring in Rwanda, albeit slowly, with income levels increasing and grass roots and community projects like rYico working hard to support people to rise above the poverty line. However, despite these achievements, the challenges associated with poverty still remain. As one street child becomes housed by rYico through Centre Marembo, another 100 children are born to vulnerable women, who might be HIV positive or too poor to provide for their children.

rYico is working hard to provide services and support to vulnerable children and young people. Through our projects at Centre Marembo we are taking innovative approaches that are able to tackle the root causes of poverty. In this report we hope we are able to show the positive contribution our supporters have made to rYico staff and to children in Rwanda, as well as our work raising awareness about Rwanda in the UK.



Our events in the UK and quarterly newsletter have helped to attract new supporters and volunteers. We cannot thank rYico's donors, volunteers and friends enough for their continued support. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. rYico survives on time given freely by trustees and volunteers, and the last few years has seen a recruitment drive of both. Since mid-2010 rYico has benefited from having a part-time paid Volunteer Co-ordinator in the UK. This has allowed us to take on a number of new volunteers in the UK which has had a really positive impact on our ability to meet our aims. rYico's has a reputation as an interesting and exciting organisation in the Brighton community sector. We have generated enthusiasm for projects amongst the public, proven by the offers of individuals to undertake fundraising or sponsored sporting events, and by the success of fundraising music concerts.

We have also achieved considerable fundraising success due to a focus on smaller trusts and a drive to increase donations from individuals. Despite the current economic climate, we have managed to attract three new donors since 2009 and have established a good relationship with them, receiving repeated offers of support. This points to the fact that rYico has a good external profile, and is able to demonstrate and communicate the difference that its projects make to vulnerable young people in Rwanda. We have also benefited greatly from another year's funding from the Aall Foundation, which has contributed greatly to the continuation of our work in Rwanda. We ensure our administration costs are kept to a minimum so that every penny donated is spent wisely to support our projects.

rYico was founded on the principle of equality, and the sharing of information and experience between people in the UK and Rwanda. The relationship that we have with Centre Marembo has evolved organically since the project was established by rYico trustees in 2004. rYico has worked to support the development of Centre Marembo and the development of the local staff and trustees, and Centre Marembo has now achieved the status of an independent organisation in Rwanda, with significant links to relevant

government bodies. rYico is proud to be able to support Centre Marembo to become more sustainable and to gain more paid staff. Following a difficult period in 2009, the Centre is now able to maintain the core activities of drop-in, youth clubs, health advice and vocational training.

2. CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

rYico's charitable objectives are as follows:

To raise awareness of Rwandan culture, primarily in the Sussex community, and advance education among young people in Rwanda through a resource centre providing advice on, but not by way of limitation, welfare rights and benefits, health matters, and training to provide skills to improve life and employment opportunities.

Vision

That young people in Rwanda are informed and empowered to make choices about their lives; and that people in the UK understand Rwanda's history and present.

Mission

To improve the lives of vulnerable young people in Rwanda through supporting access to education, training and information; and to increase understanding of Rwanda's history and present outside the country.

3. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

rYico is governed by a Model Constitution for a Charitable Unincorporated Association. New trustees are appointed by the Management Committee.

As required by Rwandan law, Centre Marembo is registered in Rwanda as a national Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) which has its own Board of Trustees comprising of three local trustees who act as advisors for the charity's Rwanda operations.

rYico employs 12 paid staff in Rwanda and one part time Volunteer Coordinator in the UK. UK operations are coordinated by a team of volunteers and governed by a board of trustees.

4. ACTIVITIES IN 2010

4.1 Activities in Rwanda

Based on field research completed in 2004, rYico summarised the challenges to young people under the following headings.

- Lack of access to information and support both for youth and for youth organisations
- Lack of provision for Sexual & Reproductive Health Information and other relevant issues
- Lack of employable skills

Despite the overwhelming number of young people in Rwanda, there is a scarcity of youth-friendly services available that encourage and support their attendance and

involvement. Through Centre Marembo, rYico endeavours to raise young peoples' awareness of, and access to, the services and benefits available to them.



rYico's activities will benefit the youth of Rwanda in the long term by developing their capacity to actively change their environment and, in turn, improving their quality of life.

Definitions of rYico's target population

"Youth"

- 13-25 years, (flexible: depends largely on the social maturity of the individual rather than chronological age).

"Vulnerable youth"

- Those who cannot achieve their full potential as a result of current livelihood conditions.
- Young people who live hand-to-mouth.
- Young people who are living in poor conditions because they have little knowledge about their rights and welfare entitlements.
- Young people at risk of falling into prostitution, drugs or crime, which may lead to exploitation, poor health, and HIV/AIDS.

Activities and services provided:

Below is an overview of the activities carried out and services provided to the young people:

1. Counseling service

Every Tuesday, a 'drop in' service is available to the youth, providing advice and support on a range of issues that concern them.

2. Vocational skills training

Various training courses are offered to the youth throughout the year, providing them with employable skills. Courses include mechanical theory, driving theory and craft training (beading, weaving, sewing and card-making).

3. Youth clubs (life skills)

A forum for informal education and personal sharing. There are seven clubs in total, covering: HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights, environmental awareness, anti-genocide, sport and family planning.

4. Youth journal

A Journal which is written, edited and produced by the young people that attend the clubs is distributed to youth around Kigali three times a year.

5. Umugongo House

A residential programme for forty former street children. The street children are identified through their attendance at other services at the centre. The programme is currently only provided for boys. All boys now attend local schools.

6. Fostering project:

A fostering project has begun, starting with twelve girls who have been placed with families in Kigali.

7. Sewing project:

Centre Marembo's sewing project has expanded to become the key vocational training project to attract young women, and the number of sewing machines available has risen from two to twelve.



8. Sexual and reproductive health project

In collaboration with AKTION REGEN, Centre Marembo has been very busy developing and creating the birth control necklaces. The necklace is a simple family planning tool allowing women to keep track of their fertile and infertile days. It has become very

popular among young people who are interested in learning about contraception, and stands out as an example of community led activity in Kigali.

9. Forum with other organisations and outreach services

This initiative was started in 2003 and includes eight youth centres. It is an opportunity for youth organisations to meet, share information and to give and get advice. They meet once a month and also to plan special events. The forum forms part of the 'working together project' where they work together to run various community events and workshops for the youth. For example, they are currently planning a Christmas party together for the street children in Kigali.

2010 partnerships and donors

Centre Marembo is able to undertake these activities and achieve its results with the help of many partnerships and supporters.

Current partnerships include:

- FORUM: eight youth centres for street children in Kigali.
- APPEAL: A school in Cyangungu.
- Gasabo District: The district monitors the centre's activities.
- Remera Sectors: supporting the Centre. For example, they assist by specifying clinics and hospitals that the Centre can use when they have sick children.
- The British Embassy: support the Centre's Christmas bazaar by funding the use of one table to sell products.
- Rugando School: the boys from the Umugongo House boys attend this school.

Grant donors include:

- The Aall Foundation
- Bottletop (UK)
- The Lo Foundation
- Charlotte Wilson Memorial Fund
- AKTION REGAN
- Global Youth Fund

Project strengths

- Every service provided to the youth at the Centre is free. This is unique among the youth centres in Kigali.
- Centre Marembo is the only centre in Kigali that is not connected to a church which allows it to welcome and support people from a broad range of religions and backgrounds.
- The Centre helps to empower youth in their lives and the lives of the people around them.
- Funding from the Global Community Grant toward school fees for Umugongo House boys has enabled more boys to attend boarding school and continue their education.

Project challenges

- The biggest challenge faced by Centre Marembo is funding shortages, which results in a lack of important resources. These shortages include a lack of learning materials, up to date computers and manpower for training in areas such as business skills.
- The Rwandan Government requires that from 2012 accommodation projects no longer be run from rented premises. Therefore we are required to purchase a piece of land and build a new centre on it, which is a huge undertaking and will need additional funding. If we are able to access land owned by the project, it will increase the feeling of security and ownership of our young people.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Centre Marembo Project Coordinator oversees the project execution which includes ensuring that the Instructors are qualified to teach and the project is on-track to reach its objectives. This is achieved through the use of a consistent and thorough monitoring and evaluation system.

4.2 Activities In The UK

Thanks to funding from Awards for All this year we have been able to secure funding for a year's salary for a Volunteer Co-ordinator. The appointment of this staff member has enabled rYico to attract a small team of dedicated and hard-working volunteers, whose focus has largely been on fundraising activities.

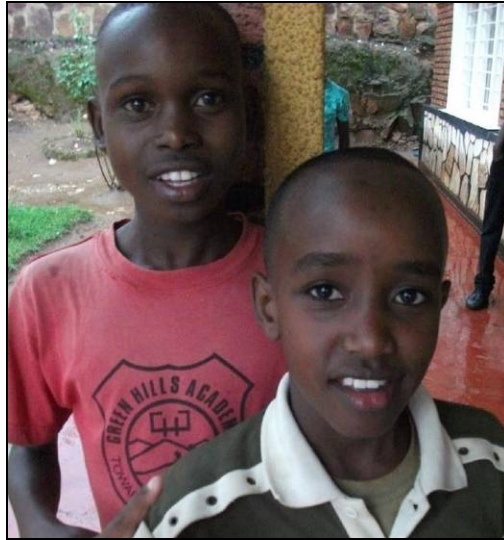
rYico's operations in the UK are primarily based around fundraising, preparing volunteers that plan to work at Centre Marembo, and providing support to the team in Rwanda. The small team in the UK are made up of part time volunteers. An objective for the coming year is to develop the capacity of the organisation in the UK to enable more volunteers and possibly paid staff to carry out fundraising, awareness raising and development education activities. For example, on World AIDS Day we hosted a tea party fundraising event, which was very successful, and also raised awareness of HIV/AIDS stigma.

rYico also maintains its profile in the UK by giving talks to church groups, schools and other community groups. It also sells crafts made at Centre Marembo through the Shop4Rwanda website, and at craft fairs including fair-trade events. We are working on developing a new website, to be launched in 2011, and hope this will lead to increased online sales. The crafts both raise the profile of the organisation and contribute to income generation. All the profits from Shop4Rwanda are fed back into the project.

5. LOOKING FORWARD

Over the next strategic period, rYico is keen to work with Centre Marembo to support the development of services for vulnerable girls and young women. rYico's own research has shown that there is a significant lack of appropriate support for this group, and this is backed up by the growing demand for these services at Centre Marembo. As girls do not have a strong "street presence", both they and their problems are at risk of going undetected. rYico has identified a target group of girls, often orphans, often migrants from rural areas, who either live with extended family or work as domestic helps and nannies. Many suffer from physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse, some are affected by HIV/AIDS, and some are working as sex workers.

As the situation changes in Rwanda and the country experiences greater economic wealth, there may be less need for accommodation projects in the future. rYico is keen to further develop the work that Centre Marembo is already carrying out to re-integrate boys that stay at the Umugongo House back into the community. We will also support Centre Marembo to work to build its own premises as the centre currently suffers from instability caused by renting. Moreover, the new regulations being brought in by the Rwandan government will prohibit accommodation projects from being run from rented premises.



rYico is a grassroots organisation, and since its inception it has worked hard to foster a spirit of partnership between the team in the UK and the project staff in Rwanda. In the forthcoming period, we would like to develop this further and will support trustees and volunteers from the UK who are able to visit Rwanda. We will also look at creative and innovative ways in which we can foster information sharing and learning between the two countries, for rYico and our partners in Rwanda, and also in the wider communities in which we are based. We will also be looking to develop a strategic plan to oversee the continued growth and development of the organisation over the coming years.

In the UK, rYico is keen to develop its work to raise awareness of Rwanda's history and the genocide against the Tutsis. We aim to commemorate the start of the genocide each year. We are also keen to raise awareness of Rwanda today and of Rwandan culture. We have good connections with the Rwandese community and will work to further develop these links. rYico plays an important part in representing both the Rwandese community and issues relevant to international development work in general within the Brighton community sector, and we hope to network further to create links with similar organisations.

6. FINANCE

We were fortunate enough in 2010 to receive a significant grant from the Aall Foundation for the second year running which has helped to maintain our projects during the year and allow us to maintain our reserves. Other income was generated primarily through public donations, small grant funding and craft sales.

One-off and regular donations in 2010 declined slightly on the previous year but grant funding and income from craft sales increased.

The production of crafts at Centre Marembo continues to grow and more products are being sent to the UK to sell through Shop4Rwanda.com. A new website is being developed and will be launched in June 2011.

Administrative expenditure in the UK was kept to a minimum during 2010. Grants to Rwanda fell slightly on the 2009 figures, largely due to Centre Marembo attracting funding in country.

6.1 Reserves policy

rYico's reserves policy states that the charity will endeavour to build reserves of at least four months operating expenditure. As of 31 December 2010 reserves equated to approximately four month's operating expenditure. We will aim to maintain this target.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

rYico would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their support during 2010 and, as well as the following people and organisations that have made special efforts to support rYico's work:

- All volunteers supporting rYico's work in the UK
- All individual donors and regular supporters
- The Aall Foundation
- Bottletop
- The Lo Foundation
- Charlotte Wilson Memorial Fund
- Awards for All
- All international volunteers and visitors to the centre who have donated their time and energy
- St Sampson's Church, Wiltshire
- Wootton Bassett Methodist Church, Wiltshire
- Alan Chippendale for financial auditing

8. SIGNATURES

This report was approved by the trustees of rYico

On (date) 10/10/2011

Name LAURA CRAGGS

Signature L. Craggs

Name VIVENIE NIRAGIRA

Signature Niragira