



ACT USA/UGANDA 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

MUKO, UGANDA • MICHIGAN, USA
An ecumenical program for community transformation



Many thanks to all supporters of Agape Community Transformation (ACT)



ACT MISSION

ACT is an ecumenical Christian partnership of two organizations, one based in Uganda and the other in the USA, that are open to working with all people to enhance the spiritual, physical, economic and societal conditions in Uganda, as well as increase faith-in-action in our communities, thereby witnessing to the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

ACT VISION

As sustainable partner organizations, ACT Uganda and ACT USA, with God’s help, are positively transforming the lives of people in Uganda and the USA through economic, educational, spiritual and cultural opportunities.

HISTORY OF ACT UGANDA

ACT, formed in 2003, strives to improve the lives of the impoverished rural people in Muko, southwestern Uganda. Care of orphans, accessing medical services, training in handcraft production and marketing these products in the USA, and developing an ecumenical partnership were the initial focus of efforts. ACT has grown from a small community-based organization in Uganda, with no initial funding, to an international partnership supported by individual donations, handcraft sales, and contributions by an interdenominational group of churches. ACT is organized as two separate registered non-governmental organizations (one in Uganda and one in Michigan), but operates with collaboration between the Boards of Directors in each nation, ten paid staff in Uganda, and more than two hundred and fifty volunteers in Uganda and the USA.

HOW DO WE EXIST?

ACT is a non-profit organization which exists primarily on proceeds from handcraft sales, donations from caring individuals and grants from our supporting churches and other organizations. If you are interested in helping us make a difference by making a monetary donation, please know that your entire tax-deductible gift will be used to create a bright and self-sustaining future for many lives. Visit our website (actuganda.org) to see how to donate and to learn more about ACT’s mission and how you can become involved.



2017 Financial Report

The chart below shows the expenses incurred supporting the operation of the many programs in Muko Sub-County, Uganda. Total 2017 expenses were \$120,073.

ACT U.S. is a registered nonprofit in the U.S. Visit our website to view additional publicly available financial forms regarding our operations.

Additionally, our rating on Guidestar, a well-known rating site for viability and excellence of nonprofits in the United States, is GOLD!

PROGRAM EXPENSES	AMOUNT (\$)
Support in Uganda — MukoHOPE (58.5%)	70,228
Support in Uganda — MEP (10.4%)	12,503
Support in Uganda — HEAL (8.2%)	9,892
Support in Uganda — General Operations (6%)	7,295
Uniquely Uganda Storefront (in Midland) (5%)	5,938
Support in Uganda — Facilities (4.9%)	5,825
Support in Uganda — HANDS (4%)	4,789
Supplies/Misc. (1.3%)	1,670
Support in Uganda — Music (1.3%)	1,510
Fund Raising (0.4%)	423
TOTAL	120,073

We had three Mission Teams in 2017 ...

ROTARY VOCATIONAL TRAINING TEAM

January 10–January 23

This team was comprised of Rotary and non-Rotary folks, all experts in their fields. The team provided training for the ACT Muko staff and other community leaders in topics such as Leadership, Board Development/Advocacy, Early Child Development and Education, Child Abuse & Neglect, Computer Skills, Agriculture, Marketing, Public/Community Health, Project Management, Partnerships, and more!

MISSION TEAM

July 24–August 8

The main focus for this trip was to gather more data about the possible management of Muko High School. ACT was offered the opportunity to manage the school. There was also much accomplished by Karen Viele and Joe Oprea of MUSIC as they worked with the ACT String Orchestra.

MISSION TEAM TO FINALIZE NEW MUKO HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

November 26–December 5

By this time, it had been approved to take on management of Muko High School. So Karen and Dave Viele headed to Uganda to work with the Diocese of Kigezi and the new Board of Governors of Muko High School, hire the Head Teacher (Principal), the Bursar (Treasurer), the Deputy Head Teacher (Assistant Principal) and the DOS (Director of Studies).

Muko High School ...

TEACH, a new ACT team, was formed to begin the administration of Muko High School. TEACH (Targeting Educational Advancement for Children) is made up of educators, a pastor, a lawyer, and musicians, all people with great experience in working with people and schools. This committee worked through the process of determining whether this project would be viable for ACT. After accepting this call, the group went to work by hiring a Headmaster, a Deputy Headmaster, a Director of Studies, and a Bursar (Treasurer) of the school. The ACT staff was reorganized to provide supervision and assistance with managing incoming grants and gifts.

A grant from the Midland Noon Rotary Club was secured which promises \$20,000–\$25,000. Initial contacts with Aqua Clara, a Kenyan non-profit, will provide assistance with clean drinking water. Plans were made to submit grant applications to African Solar Fund to help with the purchase of solar equipment to light our classrooms.

A flurry of renovation took place in December including refinishing classroom floors, painting the interior of classrooms, repairing roof leaks, purchasing bunk beds and desks, installing wire mesh on windows to keep birds out of classrooms.



Students outside Muko High School

MukoHOPE: Helping Orphans Prosper and Endure

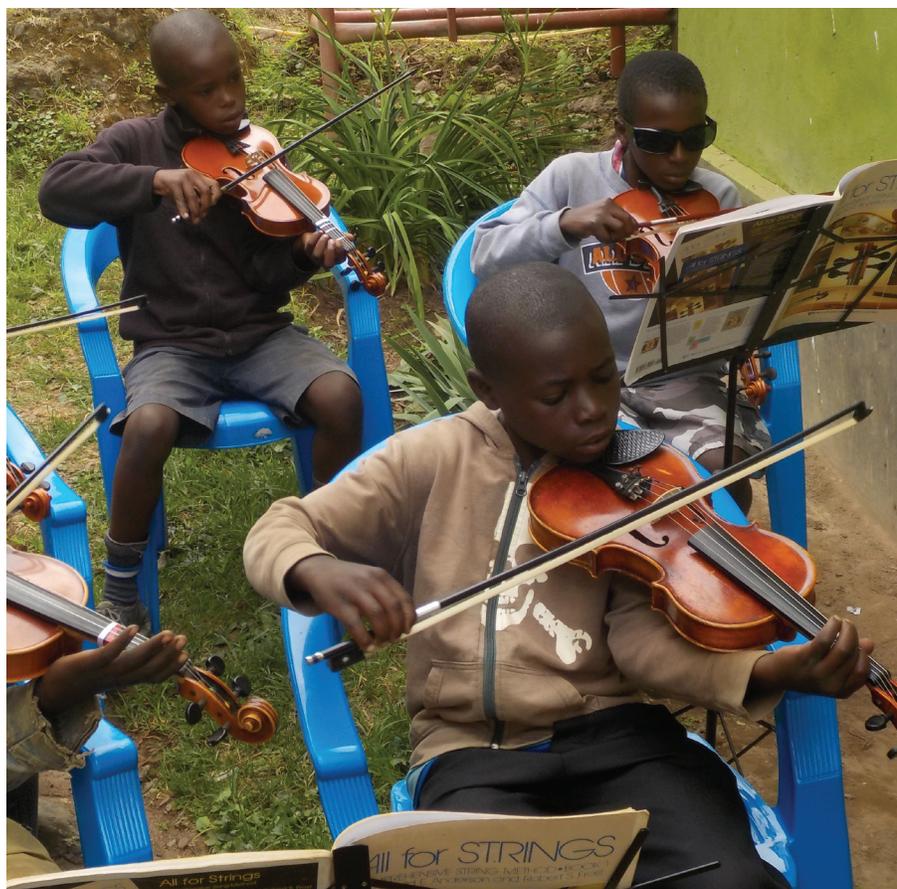
During 2017, we averaged about 135 orphans in MukoHOPE. These children are given a new life of security and consistent education. Nine of our children finished Senior 4 and, at the end of 2017, were deciding whether to take two more years of High School classes or move on into Vocational schools. Our first orphan, Francis Girukwayo, graduated from Kabale University with a three year degree in Public Administration.

Several children received medical help for malaria, rheumatoid arthritis, birth defect, and other more minor illnesses. We have one orphan who has tested positive for HIV/AIDS and he is receiving special nutrition and medicine. Students at each of our three schools are now offered an opportunity to learn to play violin.

We continue to accept seven new orphans from each of seven parishes as we find American sponsors for them. Our children tell



us this gives them “the best day of their life.” Thank you to all of our wonderful dedicated sponsors- your support and love for the children is making a HUGE difference in the lives of these children. To sponsor an orphan or learn more, contact Karen Viele on ksmov3@gmail.com.



MUSIC: Muko Uganda String Instruments for Children

Our MUSIC program has flourished! Howard Biryomuriwe directed approximately 40–50 musicians from Muko High School and from our Act Empowerment Centre. He also initiated classes at our two Primary schools, Murole and Uganda Martyrs. Teams have brought 37 violins, four violas, two cellos, a guitar, an electric piano, and an accordion—all of these instruments are in constant use. The students meet in classes of like instruments and also have begun to play simple orchestral works. Donations are always welcome for instruments, repairs, and to provide funding for MUSIC camps. Howard conducts these MUSIC camps during school breaks. It is at this time that the children make the greatest progress. To learn more, contact Karen Viele on ksmov3@gmail.com.

Circle of Blessings

The Circle of Blessings completed its third year. The Circle members have been generous beyond expectations. In 2017 the library, funded in 2016, was completed. In 2017, the members funded new water tanks for the ACT Empowerment Center in Muko to capture rain water. This will help ACT be more prepared for the devastating droughts that Muko Sub County is now experiencing. The Circle also provided much needed funds to help run the important programs of HEAL.

THANK YOU CIRCLE MEMBERS!

We are always open to new members. If you are interested in joining this exciting opportunity, contact Nancy Mason at nancy.mason@me.com.

New library



HANDS: Helping Agricultural New Development and Sustainability

The HANDS team in Uganda has continued to grow oyster mushrooms at the ACT Center. Profitability for ACT in this endeavor continues to be a challenge, but progress towards sustainability of this program is slowly moving forward. Other mushroom growers trained through ACT efforts continue their enterprises as well.

Based on the detailed soil analyses for micronutrients from the University of Maine, the HANDS team in the U.S. obtained boron for the supplementation of the cabbage crops on leased land and zinc soil supplementation for the 50 Dorset Golden apple trees planted in the Demonstration Garden.

The HANDS team in Uganda recommended that we initiate a potato seed storage endeavor as a higher price for sprouted seed can be obtained after a few months of storage. This effort yielded a small profit for ACT and will be continued. Research on how to reduce loss in storage was undertaken but no easily implemented solutions were found.

Discussions have been started to advance coffee production in the region. Conversations with a U.S. non-profit in Traverse City, Michigan (On the Ground) that promotes specialty coffee production in the DRC and elsewhere provided insight into what is required to successfully enter this market. This is likely an initiative that will require a decade of effort, however funds might be available from USAID (United States African Development Foundation).

Plans for use of the land at Muko High School for HANDS were developed, including possible food production for the school.



MEP: Muko Empowerment Program

This program is designed to provide opportunities for income and employment to the women and men of Muko through handcraft training. These skilled artisans produce beautiful baskets and jewelry, as well as sewn and carved items. We also have a group of volunteers in Michigan who contribute amazing sewn items made with African fabrics to our supply of handcrafts.

Every time a group travels to Muko, Uganda, they bring back sewn items, jewelry, carvings, and baskets, made by the men and women of the MEP program. This gives them a great opportunity to make a 'fair trade' income to support their families.



Left to right: MEP Weavers hard at work; Lovinah, basket quality manager; Jovia, beaded jewelry quality manager; Phoebe, sewing quality manager



SEWING

There are approximately 14 sewers in Muko Sub County in Uganda. This past year, the Ugandan artisans have learned to sew large and small elephants, zebras, hippos and giraffes. They also began sewing basket liners at the end of 2017. It is so exciting to see this group blossom and learn to sew new items.

The volunteers in Michigan from Midland and Holt have also been very busy making placemats, table runners, basket liners, aprons, coasters, hot pads, tote bags, shoulder bags, bottle totes, card/tea wallets, coin purses, tissue holders, eyeglass cases, check book covers, cozies and headbands. ACT furnishes the fabric, patterns, and a list of items to sew that are most needed. Anyone wishing to join a sewing group, please contact Diana Stubig through email to dmstubig@gmail.com.

SALES

The sale of these handcrafts provide one of the main sources of support for all of the programs of ACT. ACT is involved in several art fairs in Michigan each year. We also sell our products through Art Reach of MidMichigan (111 E Broadway St, Mt Pleasant, MI) and our store in Midland, Michigan - Uniquely Uganda. Check our website for location and store hours for Uniquely Uganda (www.actuganda.org/difference-purchase/)

Resource Development

Our Resource Development Team separated from the Communications Team in order to focus on the resources needed by the ACT programming being planned for 2018. Our Resource Development Team consists of experienced grant writers, fundraisers and fund development professionals. If anyone is interested in joining our Team, please contact Suzanne Greenberg, sgreenberg3720@gmail.com, as all are welcome.

HEAL: Health is Elemental to All Life

HEAL is based on a highly successful health promotion program conducted for over 30 years in Santiago, Chile (Educacion Popular En Salud — EPES). The overall outcome of this program is to teach villages to come together and address their village health issues; the plan is to reach out to all 72 villages. The villagers of Muko Sub County participate in dialogues to identify the greatest health issues in their village and then implement agreed-upon actions for a healthier life for themselves, their families, and their village.

FRIENDS OF HEAL

The costs of the HEAL program (currently ~\$7,000/year) include the ACT HEAL Manager’s salary, stipends for meals and transportation given to the Health Promotion Workers who volunteer their time, and supplies for the program. For \$1000/year an organization can help support this program by becoming A Friend of HEAL sponsor. Sponsors will develop a one-on-one relationship with one specific village, giving them the opportunity to develop a personal connection with individuals who are being helped through the HEAL program. Contact Sue Waechter at waechtersue@gmail.com to become a sponsor or learn more.

Facilities

There were 2 key building activities at the ACT Empowerment Center (AEC) in 2017. The first was the addition of a Community Library (see photo on Page 4). This library was installed at the AEC, and involved building a wall, installing a ceiling, building a bookshelf for books and magazines, and installing an upright file cabinet and a table which supports two desktop computers for use by library members. The funds for this project were sourced from the Circle of Blessings meeting of October 2016.

The second was the purchase and installation of a Security Fence to protect all of the various assets of ACT which are located at the AEC. The funds for this project were sourced from St. John’s Episcopal Church in Midland, MI.

Some minor flood damage occurred at the AEC due to some heavy rain storms in Muko. The building had water ingress twice

WHAT DOES A VILLAGE DIALOGUE LOOK LIKE?

Villagers convene on benches or the ground while four Health Promotion Workers use flipcharts to:

- introduce them to ACT and all its programs
- divide the group into three groups: men, women, and children to brainstorm the greatest health issues
- as a whole group again, prioritize those health issues, taking care to listen and draw out all villagers
- get agreement on an Action Plan that describe what will happen to address the prioritized issues, who will do it, and by when



A HEALTH PROMOTION WORKER is villager who is an ACT-trained volunteer facilitator. They:

- arrange to meet with a village and its leaders
- conduct a dialogue of villagers (men, women and children) to identify their greatest health issues
- empower and encourage the villagers to work together to improve their health by agreeing on an Action Plan
- follow up with the village to support the implementation of the village Action Plan



in the summer of 2017. Temporary measures were implemented to prevent further flooding, with additional flood prevention measures added during the Security Fence installation.

2017 Beneficiaries of ACT Programs and Activities

MUKO HOPE

- Number of fully sponsored orphans **135**
- Orphans who received medical care **46**
- New Muko HOPE orphans **9**
- Orphans who benefited from the gift purchase program **135**

COUNSELING SERVICES

- Group counseling for Muko HOPE Orphans **177**
- Individual Counseling for Muko HOPE Orphans **65**
- Family counseling **20**
- Community members who received group counseling **47**

MEP

The following are categories of MEP artisans who participated in 2017. They were supplied with all required materials and received monthly wages for their good quality crafts.

- Weavers **30**
- Beaders **16**
- Sewers **15**
- Wood carvers **7**

MAVERICK LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

A total of three Maverick Scholarship students (pictured below) are benefitting from their training at University and Nursing school.



HANDS

- Youth and adults who received mushroom training **150**
- Community members who received HOPE seeds **650**
- Community members who provided manual labor to the project **67**
- Community members who were served with seedling **575**
- Community members who were served with East African seeds **20**

HEAL

- Community members who attended dialogues **1,846**
- Health Promotion Workers who are learning new skills as they conduct village dialogues **15**



Health Promotion Workers

MUSIC

- Students who attended string classes **54**
- Community members who attended string classes **87**

PILLOW CASE DISTRIBUTION

A total of 230 young boys and girls received pillow case dresses and T-Shirts

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Midland, Michigan
 Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Midland, Michigan
 First Presbyterian Church, Crosswell, Michigan
 First and Second Presbyterian Churches, Marlette, Michigan
 First Presbyterian Church, Holt, Michigan
 Ikamiro Church of Uganda (Anglican), Uganda
 Kiwassee Kiwanis, Midland, Michigan
 Lake Huron Presbytery, PCUSA
 Memorial Presbyterian Church, Midland, Michigan
 Muko Assemblies of God (Pentecostal Church), Uganda
 Muko Church of Uganda (Anglican), Uganda
 Our Lady of Grace Parish, St. Agnes Site, Sanford, Michigan
 Presbyterian Church of Traverse City, Michigan
 Rotary Club, Bay City, Michigan
 Rotary Clubs (both morning and noon), Midland, Michigan
 St. Francis Catholic Church, Traverse City, Michigan
 St. John's Episcopal Church, Midland, Michigan
 Trinity Lutheran Church, Midland, Michigan
 Ugandan Martyrs Church, Muko Parish (Catholic), Uganda
 United Church of Christ, Midland, Michigan

ACT USA BOARD MEMBERS

Dale Anderson — Board Member
 Katie Brinklow — Resource Development Team Leader
 Bill Busch — Facilities Team Leader
 Diane Busch — Communications Team Leader
 Lisa Corso — HEAL Team Leader
 Suzanne Greenberg — Resource Development Team Leader
 Lynn Pottenger — Board Chair
 Nancy Silvey — Spiritual Development Leader
 Ellie Schroeder — Board Member
 Diana Stubig — Sewing Coordinator
 Dave Viele — Treasurer, TEACH Team Leader
 Karen Viele — MukoHOPE Team Leader, MUSIC Team Leader
 John Waechter — HANDS Team Leader

With heavy hearts we said goodbye to our friend, Lisa Corso, in 2017. Lisa passed away in February. She was an integral part of ACT for several years, including her Board Member activities, HEAL Team Leadership, and two visits to Muko. She is dearly missed.



ACT UGANDA STAFF *left to right: Tito Tugume, Moses Tukamushaba, Alexander Gumoshabe, Howard Biryomuriwe, Maurice Amutuhairu, Josiah Nankunda, Prudence Kengyeoyo, Herbert Muhereza, Generous Turinawe, Benson Ariimpa*

ACT UGANDA BOARD MEMBERS

Rev. Esau Habomugisha, Board Chairman
 Moses Matsiko
 Geoffrey Tumwineyo
 Habert Byaruhanga
 Lydia Mugabe
 Rev. David Hitimana
 Philip Agaba
 Friday Rwamahe
 Annet Asiimwe
 Jellan Tugeineyo
 Rev. Justus Twinomujuni
 Father John Byaruhanga

ACT UGANDA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dr. James Magezi – Chairperson
 Rehema Kajungu – Secretary
 Japhlet Rwankwenda
 Kedreth Tindimwebwa
 Silverio Mwesigwa

DIRECTORS

Generous Turinawe, ACT Uganda
 Sue Waechter, ACT USA



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UGANDA CONTACT

Generous Turinawe

P. O. Box 10384
Kampala, Uganda
256-772-121-384

generous@actuganda.org

U.S. CONTACT

Sue Waechter

P. O. Box 2565
Midland, Michigan 48641
989-859-1700

info@actuganda.org