



Uganda Society for
Disabled Children UK



Annual Review 2004



Registered Charity No. 326859
A company limited by guarantee no. 1861434

About USDC UK

The Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC) is a Registered Charity founded in 1985. Its aim is to help children with disabilities in Uganda to achieve their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. In 2000 the Uganda Office of USDC became an independent local NGO in Uganda with its own Management Committee. USDC UK now runs a small office in the UK which supports the work of USDC Uganda. We endeavour to keep our UK costs to a minimum and transfer the maximum possible resources to Uganda each year.

UK News

In May 2004 Stuart Craig, who had been the UK Representative for four years, moved to another charity and was replaced by Mary Ann Coates. We also have a new office, local call phone numbers, a new e-mail and a new web-site!

New Office Address

USDC UK

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E-Mail: maryann@usdcuk.org Web-Site: www.usdc.or.ug

We would like to thank...

Comic Relief, The Health Foundation, Jersey Overseas Aid Committee, States of Guernsey Overseas Aid Committee, Ajahma Trust, and all of our friends and supporters in particular 24 brave volunteers who ran the marathon for USDC in April 2004! Together they raised over £30,000. A special thanks as well to everyone who supported the Indian evening held in September 2004 which raised over £7,000 and to the Pearl of Africa Lodge who have recently donated over £10,000 to the work of USDC.

Trustees of USDC UK

Keith Nethercot (Chair)

Leana Arain

Dr Hugh WL Oliver

Robert JT Vass

Sally Turnbull

Ting Plaskett

Aloysius Bakidde

Beatrice Manano (ex-officio)



Partnership Approach

Approximately one Million children in Uganda are living with disability. Since 1985 over 30,000 childrens' lives have been affected by our work but the challenge is still great. For this reason USDC now takes a partnership approach to all of its work. This means that everywhere we work we try to work together with the Uganda government and other agencies to ensure that our work has the most impact possible upon the lives of children with disabilities. Increasingly this approach has seen USDC working closely with both local and national government because we believe that they carry the ultimate responsibility to ensure that children with disabilities can lead fulfilling lives. We are working with the Ministry of Health to provide examples of how better and more accessible care can be provided to children with disabilities of all kinds. We work

with the Ministry of Education to provide examples of how children with disabilities can attend schools and further education institutions. Through this work we aim to persuade government, at all levels, that they must provide for the needs of children with disabilities as a matter of course.

Poverty and Children with Disabilities

There are distinct links between Poverty and Disability. Children who are poor are more likely to be born with disability and are much less likely to be able to access rehabilitation of any kind. The majority of the one million children in Uganda living with disability today are also





living with poverty. When a family is poor, the birth of a disabled child creates an extra economic burden. It is often seen as a curse by the community and in some cases also by the family itself. This is why we work hard to try to persuade the government to provide the things which children with disabilities so desperately need. And why we work with them to educate communities about disability so that the stigmatisation is reduced. It is also why we work with communities to develop means through which children with disabilities and their families can gain a much needed income. With the help of small amounts of capital from USDC we can provide loans or grants of equipment and livestock which can allow families to access a steady income. In this way we seek to alleviate the burden of poverty so that children with disabilities and their families can carry on fighting to survive.

HIV/Aids and Children with Disabilities

Uganda is well known for the high incidence of HIV which was found there in the 1990s. In recent years the rates of people contracting HIV in Uganda have stabilised but the burden of HIV/Aids still affects children with disabilities. In a number of cases we work with children with disabilities who have become orphans because their parents have died of Aids. Already disadvantaged because of their disability children in this situation experience grief and the challenge of finding a way to support themselves. Still more alarming is the number of incidents we have encountered where young women with disability have been sexual abused. In the past messages did not reach those who could not hear or see. We are now working on developing disability friendly sexual health materials which will ensure that messages about safe sex and avoiding infection are communicated to young people with disabilities.

Mental health problems are disabling children too

For the past two years we have been piloting a Mental Health project which has been running as part of our existing programme in Masaka and Sembabule in Southern Uganda. Now, with the continued support of the Health Foundation, that project is being expanded to cover nine districts. One of the most common mental health problems in children is the neurological condition, epilepsy. Because children suffering from epilepsy suffer from fits they are often feared and as a result have been stigmatised and marginalised just as much as those who suffer from physical disabilities. Simple but regular treatment can help a child with epilepsy live a normal life,

study alongside other children and take their deserved place in the community.

Mainstreaming the education of Children with Disabilities

The government of Uganda has a policy of Inclusive Education. This means that all children are given free primary school education no matter what their gender,

origin or disability. The policy is to be welcomed in principle but unfortunately many children with disabilities have found it difficult to cope with mainstream education because the resources to support them are not yet in place. With the help of Comic Relief USDC has been working to develop positive examples of how children with disabilities can be supported within the regular school environment. This is achieved through the training of teachers in sign language, Braille and special needs education techniques and by supporting the development of school-based resource centres where equipment and materials are available for all the schools in a particular area.



Financial summary for USDC UK 2003/4

Statement of financial activities for the year ended March 2004

Income

Donations and legacies	80,497
Grants received for specific activities	439,462
Investment income	10,358

Total Income 530,317

Expenditure

Project support in Uganda	471,802
Fundraising and publicity	31,027
Management and administration	26,194

Total Expenditure 529,023

Balance Sheet as at March 2004

Fixed assets	1,074
Current assets	
Debtors	23,375
Cash at bank and in hand	263,484
Less Creditors	(4,381)

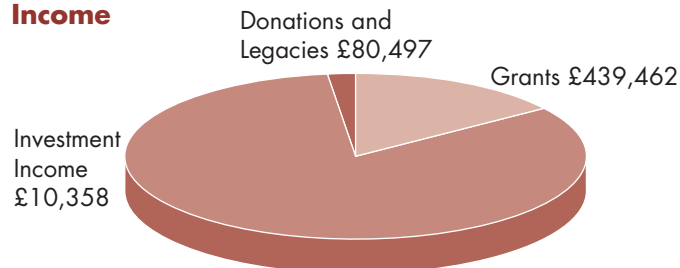
Total assets less current liabilities 283,387

Represented by

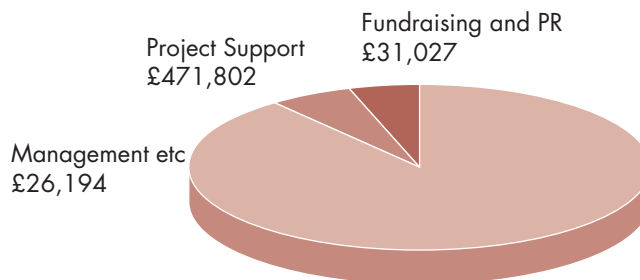
Restricted funds	214,590
Designated funds	25,000
Unrestricted funds	43,797

283,387

Income



Expenditure



The Financial Year 2003/4 in Review

On the expenditure side, fundraising and public relations costs increased by £5,000 due to a groundbreaking, one-off initiative called Face to Face. This project, conceived and co-ordinated by professional photographer Ruth Robinson, sought to bring photography into the hands of children with disabilities in Uganda for the first time. Thirty six children from two different areas were given cameras and film, and invited to record their surroundings and families - indeed anything of importance to them. The resulting images provided an insight into their lives that no outsider would ever be able to achieve, and the charity decided to hold an exhibition of the best pictures at a gallery in London.

The exhibition was opened by USDC's patron Lord Snowdon, and about 150 people enjoyed a captivating evening. This was an important profile-raiser for a small charity like USDC, and generated a substantial amount of goodwill and many new donors, including a donation of £2,000 from a grant-making Trust. In the end income for the financial year was up £5,700 on the previous year.

The first instalment of £150,000 the five year Investment grant from Comic Relief was received in May 2003. We are most grateful to Comic Relief for pledging its support of USDC over five years under its Investment Grant programme. The purpose of this grant is to help the organisation build up its systems and support for children with disabilities so that by the end of the 5-year period; there will be a greater degree of self-sufficiency and organisational capacity. This grant, by virtue of its lifespan, gives USDC some stability and a number of direct benefits have already accrued in Kampala: for example, with this funding it has been possible to upgrade ancient computers, purchase badly-needed vehicles, employ a fundraiser, and embark on staff training which would not have been affordable otherwise. More recently we have begun to develop a new monitoring and evaluation system and a computerised information system for the whole organisation. A new Web-site is now being developed in Uganda.

The final year of a grant from Comic Relief to assist with the inclusion of more children with disabilities in mainstream schools in Uganda was received this year and Comic Relief has agreed to fund some of the work for an extra year. Comic Relief are also funding a two-year hearing impairment project under which Ministry of Health staff across five districts are being trained to detect hearing impairments in young children before they lead to permanent hearing loss.

The Health Foundations three-year long support to USDC's work in Hoima District (which ended this year) has enabled us to develop a new integrated Centre offering physiotherapy, orthopaedic services and rehabilitation accommodation to disabled children. USDC is now hoping to replicate the success of this Centre in other districts. In addition, the Foundation supported a pilot mental health project in two districts - Masaka and Sembabule - and has also extended the project to five more districts from September 2004. During the pilot project, thousands of

children with mental health problems were accessed by newly trained health workers who had been given an understanding of mental health care and were able to refer and treat children accordingly.

Other grants and donations received during the financial year meant, among other things, that an 'outreach' programme taking orthopaedic surgeons to several outlying areas to perform corrective surgery on children with mobility problems could be continued for a second successive year. Operations were carried out on 338 children during the year. At the Ocoko Vocational Training Centre in Arua District final renovations were also undertaken. We would particularly like to thank the Community Fund for their support of this latter project, which now offers a fully renovated, peaceful setting for rehabilitation and training for up to 70 disabled young people. The States of Jersey have augmented the facilities by providing funding for an income-generating Conference Centre on site, which is under construction.

The charity was pleased to be able to provide additional funding to USDC Uganda from its unrestricted funds (generated largely by appeals to individuals and the efforts of runners in the London Marathon each year) amounting to over £34,000, for various purposes.





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There are a number of ways in which you can support the work of USDC. Donations can be accepted by cheque or credit card via post, telephone or our web-site www.usdc.or.ug.