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# Sustainable Development

## Uganda Marathon

February 2016

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The marathon proved in its first year to be an even bigger success than we could have ever wished for seeing the event sky rocket to become the second biggest fundraiser in Uganda. All this money if directed properly meant we could make a real difference to the community of Masaka. How to go about this?



Well the Uganda International Marathon has achieved this working by two principles: sustainable development and ownership in hand-up not a handout policy.

Sustainable development is the new buzz word in the charity sector with everyone saying they are now investing in a future rather than patching up the present. But with a historic relationship of the West ploughing billions into developing countries, and Africa being the prime continent, hundreds of thousands of projects have been set up that completely rely on Western funding to survive. This means that countries like Uganda can never be expected to stand on their own two feet but rather remain constantly in the pockets of their rich sponsors with which they have no control or ownership of.

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This culture of giving has meant that this unsustainable practice has taken over not only the targeted fundraising methods of charities, who use crying kids with swollen bellies to get you to give up your cash without a thought as to where it really goes, but also the hearts and minds of the beneficiaries in developing countries that now expect money to be just handed out to them by any passing Westerner.

The Uganda International Marathon has set about to try to change this ingrained culture in Masaka. What this has meant in practice is a multidisciplinary approach with various techniques being used to ensure our principles are stuck to and that all the £73,000 raised is used responsibly.

The first thing the marathon created was a dedicated staff team on the ground in Uganda with the sole purpose of selecting projects for funding and monitoring the donations to each. This team importantly reflects the international status of the marathon with British and Ugandan staff members working together. Having a team on the ground that is accountable for the money allows for clarity in the work and means that the marathon can give clear accounts demonstrating to our participants exactly where their money has gone. This is unfortunately not the standard when it comes to charity donations with the normal practice of reporting to funders reflecting a general cause hiding administration costs and relying on funders not asking specific questions. We believe in transparency and lay all the information bare for everyone to see.



The selection of the chosen community projects takes place throughout the year and is completed by the team that will be monitoring their progress. The focus is to find a varied beneficiary base throughout the projects so that the marathon can truly be supporting the whole community of Masaka. We have supported projects focusing on street children, education, health, agriculture and elderly people. By providing this wide selection of fundraising options we are able to connect with our participants regardless of their backgrounds through a cause rather than a sob story. This is reinforced when participants see the projects where their money is going during our marathon week. This creates a lasting bond and encourages funders to read our reports and seek knowledge of where their money has gone. We welcome this approach.

Contracts are used between the marathon and the carefully selected projects ensuring that all parties upon signing have complete transparency and understand the practice they are entering into before a single pound is donated. This means that each project will understand the contributions and the reports they have to provide.

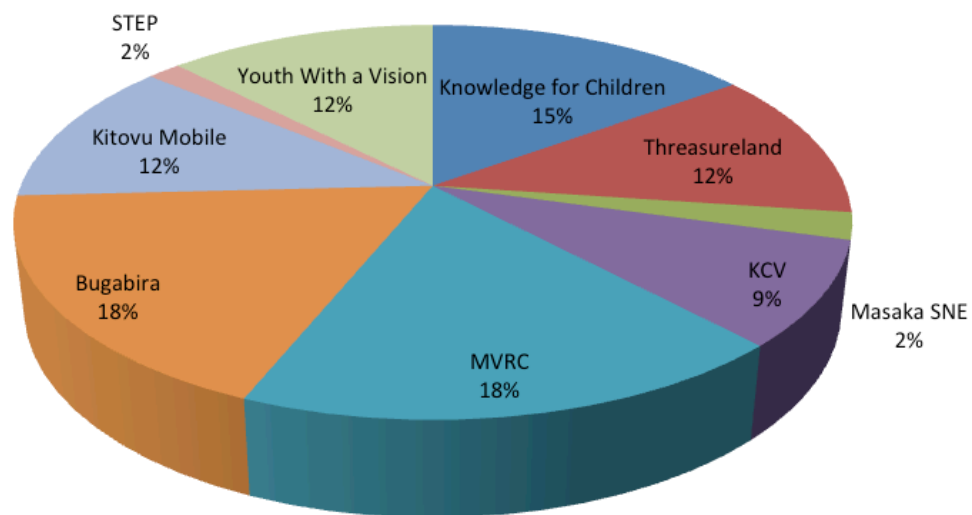
Contributions give ownership to our beneficiaries, which breaks the cycle of handouts. Ownership is vital for a project to last and this is why the marathon never aims to set up a new project, but support and develop, with the project coordinators, exciting existing programmes.

Each project the marathon has funded has created an income generating opportunity that means the project has increased its independence from external funding. This has been achieved by linking with businesses in Masaka that have shared knowledge and allowed us to use their techniques to help our projects. This can be seen in how we have linked local businesses with 11 entrepreneurs who have been funded through the UGM Youth Micro Finance Program and with how a local metalworks business has taken on 10 disabled interns from the Masaka Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (MVRC) or how a piggery project for the elderly has been advised by an existing successfully operated piggery farm.

The marathon has also created business for projects by setting up a local shop where products from any organisation can be sold for a profit. This has all been accomplished not by reinventing the wheel, but by using local markets and local business practices so as all our beneficiaries can easily adopt the practice. For more information please see <http://ugandamarathon.com/>

The marathon in this way has currently supported 9 community based organisations and is expanding to a further 5 for the 2016 event. We are really excited about showing how your money can be implemented in this manner to create a real lasting difference.

### Project Funding total distributed to date 106,463,900 UShs



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The pie chart above demonstrates how the money has been split between our 9 community based projects from the 2015 event. The money has been split in accordance with outlined plans created at time of assessment of each project with cogency money also accounted for. This does mean that funds designated for certain projects has been used to fully fund their set plans before being put into the main pot for all projects benefit. In this way we have ensured that each project is fairly funded and no project is overwhelmed with money received leading to money being wasted.

For further information about our sustainable development goals and policy, please contact:

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