



## Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

# Kanungu Humanist Primary School Report and Financial Plan, May 2021



### A New Beginning for Kanungu

After a successful first inspection, the new Kanungu Humanist Primary School has been approved by the Ministry of Education to open as a school and by Uganda National Examination Board to operate as a centre for the conduct of Primary Leaving Certificate Examinations. UHST supporters provided funds to rebuild the school on a new and safer site. An earlier school, built on a low budget on an exposed hillside, blew down in one of the particularly heavy storms that occur with increasing frequency in Uganda.

Robert Magara, the school's Director, has put a lot of thought into the design of the school buildings and their layout, and the quality of workmanship by his small team of builders is good. The site looks attractive with well-managed lawns, hedges and young trees, planted to create a green and eco-friendly environment.

It is hard to believe that, as recently as the year 2000, almost 800 men, women and children were brutally murdered close to the school site by a fanatical religious cult. Robert was a young boy at the time. His loss of family members had a profound effect on him. As an adult this early experience motivated him to build an inclusive school, based on secular values, to help rebuild his broken community. Robert wanted his community to have a school that welcomed children from all backgrounds. Questions of religion and ethnicity are left at the school gate and, within the school, every child is treated as a human being with his or her own capabilities and aspirations. In common with the other Humanist Schools supported by UHST, Kanungu has charitable aims and is registered as a not-for-profit company, with a Board comprising the Director, representatives from school staff, the community and one from UHST.

Starting a new school is difficult at the best of times. Money must be found for infrastructure and, in the early years, pupil numbers and fee income tend to be too low to cover staff salaries and other essential costs. Kanungu had the additional challenge of opening during the Covid-19 pandemic. All educational institutions in Uganda were closed from April to October 2020, and the phased return of pupils will not be completed until June 2021, when primary 1, 2 and 3 classes will be allowed to return. This severely limited school income. Fortunately, the new partnership between the school and Uganda Humanist Schools Trust (UHST) has come at the right time. The Trust has provided funds to complete the building of the school on a better site and we are managing, for the moment, to cover the shortfall in funds required to run the school.

Here is a summary of key facts about the school, as of May 2021.

## **Buildings**

The school infrastructure is mainly newly built, although there were a few partially completed rooms that have been finished to an adequate standard. The school comprises:

- 3 Nursery classrooms
- 7 Primary classrooms for Primary 1 to Primary 7 (P1 to P7) classes
- Toilet blocks for boys and girls, and male and female staff.
- A smart kitchen with efficient wood-burning stoves
- A headteacher's house
- Main office and staffrooms
- Rainwater is collected from the roofs and there is a small solar panel and battery which provides some limited lighting and sockets for charging mobile phones.
- The grounds are green with lawns, shrubs and trees, including many fruit trees, mangoes and oranges, to improve the diet of children and staff.

## Children and their Parents



Children in class and at school lunch & first parents' meeting

Due to Covid, at the time of writing, only two classes were running at Kanungu.

- Primary 4 with 15 children
- Primary 5 with 12 children

In common with most new schools in Uganda, Kanungu is a private school. Termly tuition fees are 95,000 Ug Sh (£20) and, in addition, families must find money for school uniforms, pens, pencils, exercise books and examination fees.

School fees cover tuition, porridge for breakfast and lunch with a starchy food with beans and green vegetables. When P2 and P3 classes return in June, the school's monthly food costs are expected to rise from 750,000 (£155) in May to 1,250,000 (£258) in June.

The rise in numbers should raise the school income from an expected 2,165,000 (£446) in May to an estimated 4,750,000 (£980) in June, but only if families succeed in paying the required fees.

Most of the people living around Kanungu are subsistence farmers who gain income from the intermittent sale of surplus food and cash crops like coffee beans. However,

for the past year, markets have been closed due to Covid and families have reverted to subsistence, thus finding it difficult to obtain cash for school fees and other needs. Nationally in Uganda, there has been a huge drop in school enrolment. Although the economy is beginning to open again, household savings are at rock bottom and children are still being withdrawn from school by families unable to keep up with fee instalments.

## Staffing

The school employs 4 teachers, each on a monthly salary of 250,000 UgSh, Uganda shillings (£52); a headteacher earning 400,000 UgSh (£83); a cook earning 150,000 UgSh (£31) and an askari (guard and groundsman) earning 100,000 UgSh (£21). The monthly salary bill is 3,100,000 UgSh. (£639). In addition, the school provides accommodation for the teachers, which it rents for a total cost of 170,000 UgSh (£35) per month. Monthly rent for a single room is 20,000 UgSh (£4). A unit of accommodation with a bedroom and a small front room costs 45,000 UgSh (£9.30).

## Cash Flow

In common with many start-up schools, Kanungu's expenditure exceeds its income. Figures in the following table are estimated. (£1=4,850 Ush)

	May	June	July
<b>Fee Income</b>	<b>2,165,000</b>	<b>4,750,000</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Staff wages	3,100,000	3,100,000	3,100,000
School meals	750,000	1,250,000	1,250,000
Teacher's rents	170,000	170,000	170,000
Other	830,000	1,830,000	530,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,850,000</b>	<b>6,350,000</b>	<b>5,050,000</b>
<b>Deficit U.Sh</b>	<b>-2,685,000</b>	<b>-1,600,000</b>	<b>-5,050,000</b>
<b>Deficit £s</b>	<b>-£554</b>	<b>-£330</b>	<b>-£1,041</b>

## Support Proposal

As Kanungu opened to children towards the end of the school year initial recruitment was low. Local people are, however, impressed by the quality of buildings in the new school, the attractiveness of the site and the fact that children will receive breakfast and lunch within the tuition fee. Robert Magara, the school's Director, is confident that many families are already saving for school fees, with the intention of enrolling their children for the start of the new school year in August. He is appealing to larger families, by offering those parents already paying a full fee for one child a discount of 50% for siblings.

To help the new school to get established and to make a positive impression on the community during its first months of operation, UHST has agreed with Robert the following package of short-term assistance:

**May**

Cover the projected deficit on salaries & rents £ 600

Provide welcome payments to new staff:

Teachers (6x50,000Ush)

Non-teachers (2 x 20,000)

Director's expenses (250,000)

Total (590,000) £ 120

Give uniforms and bags to new children £ 680

School promotion budget (local radio, leaflets) £ 200

**May total = £1,600**

**June**

Cover the projected deficit on salaries & rents £ 350

**July** (School holidays with no fee income and staff to pay)

Cover the projected deficit on salaries & rents £ 1,200

**TOTAL short-term assistance = £ 3,150**

This supplementary finance will enable the school to cover its costs to the end of the school year in July. We will also need to provide money in August to pay the teachers through the school holiday and for the first month of the new school year, when parents are given a month's relief from fees, to enable them to buy uniforms and equip their children for school.

Robert believes that giving uniforms to the first intake of students will have a big impact on recruitment. All being well, with improved recruitment, the finances will improve. In the meantime, the school also needs funds for books, play and learning materials and it would be nice if we could afford to pay for some robust playground equipment, such as building blocks, tyres, swings and climbing frames.

We may also need to help children from particularly needy homes with their fees.

If you think you would like to help us to give Kanungu Humanist Primary School a good start and enable the school to play a part in lifting the spirits of the entire community then please contact [stevehurd@uhst.org](mailto:stevehurd@uhst.org) (01782 750338).

Donation forms can be found at: <https://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org/donate/>