



ekisa ministries

of disability.

the story

rewriting



2020-21

2020 ANNUAL REPORT.

of disability.

the story

rewriting

ekisa ministries

EKISA
REWRITING THE STORY OF DISABILITY

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Ekisa Ministries supports children with disabilities so they can thrive in families and communities.

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LETTER FROM OUR CO-FOUNDER

If I had not been convinced before, the first few weeks of lockdown in 2020 showed me even more clearly that we have not just built an amazing team of staff at Ekisa; we have created a family who cares deeply about each other and the children we serve. Throughout lockdown, our nurses worked around the clock to ensure that we had the equipment and medication we needed to take care of our medically vulnerable children. Some staff members fostered children from the residential home to make room for other staff members to move on site to care for our most vulnerable children in a fully locked down facility. Our social workers planned and pioneered new approaches to outreach so we could still support the families in the community. Some teachers moved into the home to teach the children there, while others put together work to send to their students at home. Overnight, we all had to adjust to an entirely new way of doing things and everyone stepped up to play their part in amazing and sacrificial ways. I have never been so proud to be a part of this team as I was those first few weeks, and throughout 2020.

When my daughter Debra and I made the decision to move back to the U.K., we had no idea we would be doing so in the middle of a pandemic. Although we couldn't give proper goodbyes, I am grateful because the pandemic showed me more clearly something that I already knew to be true: we were leaving behind a strong team, one that could continue to make an impact even in the face of a global pandemic, one that would be able to weather any other storm that came their way. Leaving Uganda, and specifically leaving Ekisa, might have been one of the hardest things I will ever do, but I am so confident that it is in good hands, and I look forward to all the amazing things that they will do in the future.

Not only our team, but our supporters around the world were also amazing in 2020. When we first sat together before lockdown, we had many concerns, including the impact the pandemic might have on our support at a time when we were likely to need it most. Nevertheless, God has always brought us through tough times in the past and he provided for us again and again throughout this pandemic. At a time when it would have been totally understandable to narrow your vision and focus on those close to you, so many of you thought of us and the Ekisa children and gave more generously than ever. Never has your support in prayer been so needed and so valued by the team on the ground in Uganda. It has been a privilege to work with the Ekisa team for ten years. It is hard not to be a day-to-day part of Ekisa life now, but I will continue to be a part of this team, just like you are also a part of this team, as we all do our part from wherever we are in the world to help rewrite the story of disability for these children. I often say, "we could not have done this without you," but this year I don't think it would be dramatic to phrase it, "we would not have survived this without you." Thank you!

Sincerely,
Emily Henderson
Co-Founder of Ekisa Ministries



LETTER FROM A PARENT

Ekisa is Love, Hope, and Joy

On behalf of parents of children living with Cerebral Palsy in Iganga district Eastern Uganda, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the great supporters at Ekisa Ministries for restoring hope in our lives and those of our children.

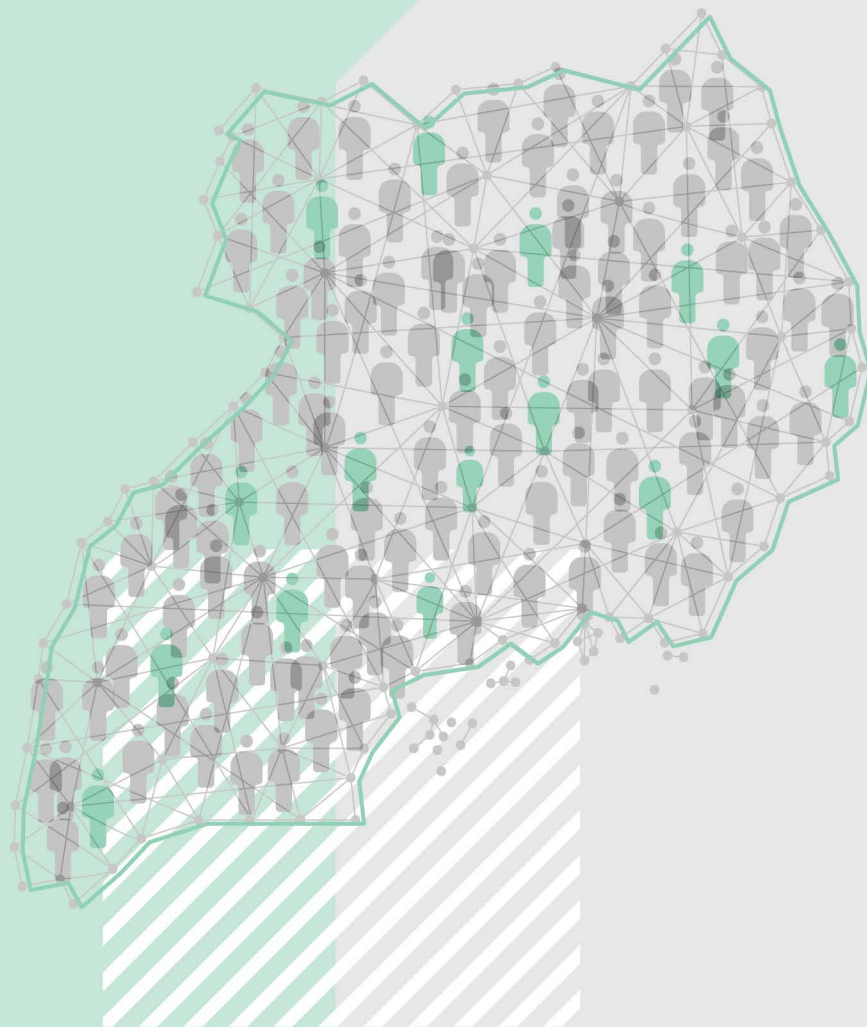
Having a child with disabilities comes with a lot of challenges such as dealing with negative attitudes from some family and community members, the high cost of medication, and ignorance about the disability and how to take care of such children.

We are glad that God has sent to us Ekisa Ministries to address the above challenges. Your support of Ekisa's great work has seen our children enjoy their human rights: the right to good health, special needs education, and living independent lives through services such as physiotherapy and speech therapy. My 8-year-old daughter Petronella, who can now walk, is a vivid example. I have been able to interact with other parents whose children are benefiting from Ekisa's programs. They describe Ekisa as Love, Hope, and Joy.

Many children still live in agony because those around them associate disabilities with witchcraft. Others think such children are a curse. May the Almighty enable Ekisa to reach out to more children in other parts of Uganda.

God bless you all.

Sincerely,
Jane



THE STORY OF DISABILITY

8% of Uganda's population live with disabilities.*

More than half of them are children.

Many of them face **stigma** and a **lack of support services**.

*UNICEF, www.unicef.org/appeals/uganda

THE PROBLEMS



THE ORPHAN MYTH

There are millions of children living in orphanages, but most of them are not orphans. For a variety of factors that include poverty, stigma, and human trafficking, many children are placed in orphanages by their families.

Both Scripture and research affirm that children have the best opportunity to thrive within a family.



INSTITUTIONAL TRAP

Children with disabilities are 17 times more likely to end up in an institution than those without. As institutions begin to close across the world and transition children back into families, children with disabilities may risk getting left behind in the process due to stigma from families and communities, and a lack support services available for children.



OUT OF SCHOOL

Only nine percent of children with disabilities attend primary school in Uganda. There are millions of children with disabilities in Uganda, and only a small proportion are attending school. Sadly, many of them sit at home with nothing to do. Among those who do attend school, high quality special education is scarce.

WE ARE WORKING TO REWRITE THIS STORY...



OUR SOLUTION #1

PROVIDE SUPPORT SERVICES



24/7 Transitional Care

Special Education

Therapy Services

Medical Assistance

Counseling

Standing in the Gap

Children with disabilities lack access to support services in Uganda. There exists a gap between what a child needs and what they can access or afford. We stand in the gap so that these children and their families have everything they need to thrive. Through the pandemic, we held fast to that commitment and found new ways to provide these services.



Medical Deliveries

After pandemic lockdown measures were put in place and our programs were forced to pause, families we serve were suddenly without access to essential medications for their children. After a successful fundraiser, Ekisa was able to provide medical relief by traveling to more than 60 homes throughout Eastern Uganda once a month to deliver medications. Along with this, we provided food packages and home-school packets so students could continue with their learning.

Home Therapy Trainings

After our therapists received permission to travel, we began visiting children to provide home therapy sessions, assistive device repairs, and training for parents. Parents were taught about the importance of continuing with their child's therapy until our normal work could resume, and were shown how to perform key exercises. What's more, parents began to bond with their children more and developed more agency in helping their child's development.



Emergency Surgeries

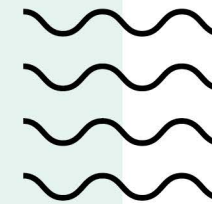
The children we serve faced a number of medical emergencies and surgery needs throughout lockdown in Uganda.

Amidst travel restrictions, we worked hard and attended to every need.

OUR SOLUTION #2 BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

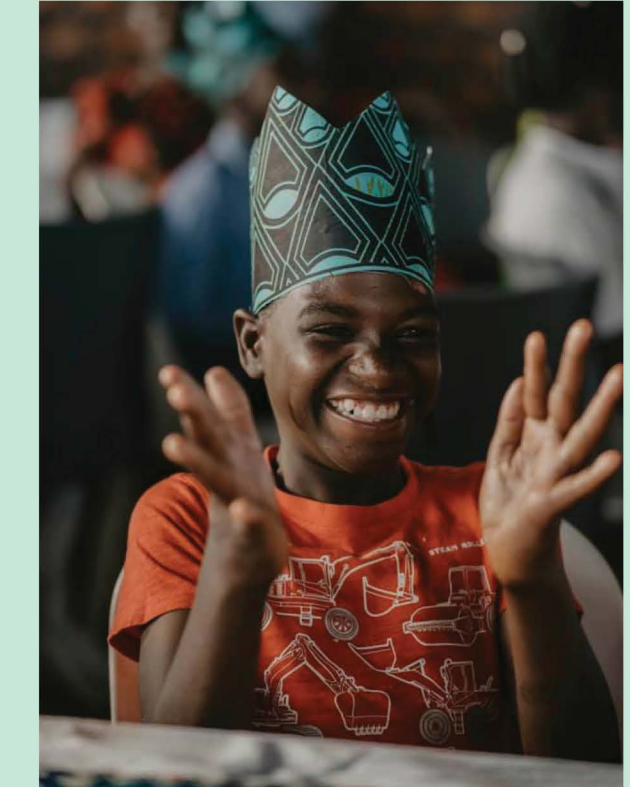
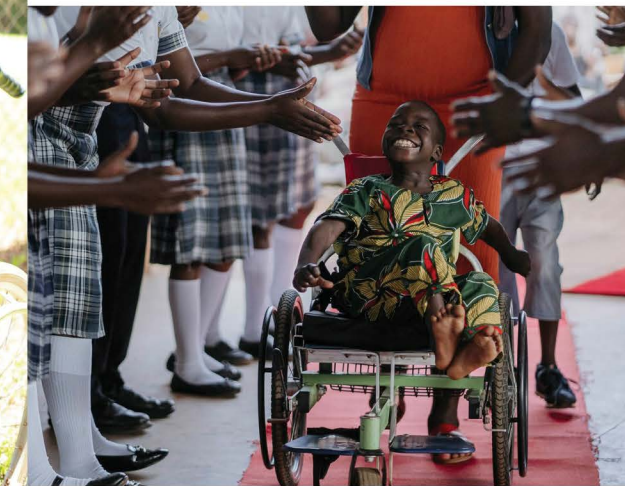
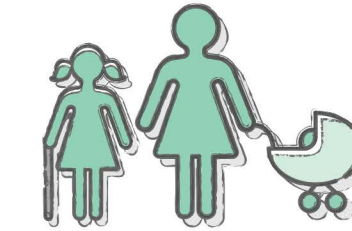
Creating Community

Children with disabilities and their families are often stuck in isolation. Because of stigma and difficulty finding people in similar situations, both parents and children suffer silently. Time and time again, we have seen the tremendous power of bringing people together. Empathy is shared, walls of stigma fall, and acceptance flourishes.



A School Bubble

Although we were able to provide home-school packets for all of our students, it was clear that they needed not only the highly trained teachers and therapy services that come with Ekisa Academy, but also the comradery with other students. Therefore, we identified 11 students that had the greatest need to be together with others, and created a bubble school program for them to attend school until we were able to bring all students back in early 2021. Students were thrilled to be learning again and laughing with their friends.



Night To Shine

Each year, Night to Shine is the marquee event for children, families, and staff. It's a prom that includes a red carpet entrance, dancing, dinner, and a crowning ceremony — all centered on celebrating children with disabilities for their inherent value and worth.

Our 2020 edition featured over 100 children and their families from the region coming together to find acceptance, celebrate lives, and receive hope. It was a beautiful night that painted a picture of the world we are working toward.



MINISTRY ACHIEVEMENTS

While the pandemic changed the way we work, we were still able to make a significant impact.

From 2020 to early 2021, we were able to pivot our work and find new ways to grow and increase our impact. We asked ourselves, "What can we do during this pandemic?" Children with disabilities' needs are always there, so we had to strengthen our commitment to the mission in the face of adversity. That being said, we saw the most growth in our capacity and reach during this timeframe.

Supporters partnered with us in generous ways, we doubled the size of our community care program, and we began having a global reach through a new department. Longtime goals of Ekisa were realized, and we saw just how crucial it was for us to not give up in the face of adversity. If we give up too soon, as Jane Addams once said, we may leave "an unexpended effort that might have saved the world."



THE NEXT CHAPTER

EKISA

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
TO REWRITE THE
STORY OF DISABILITY

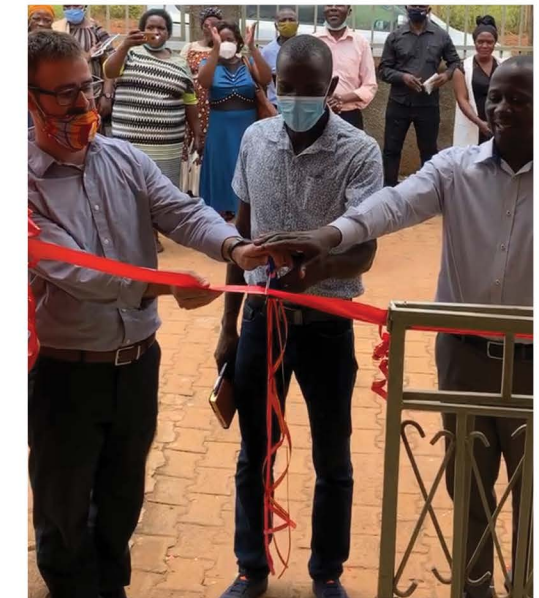
The Next Chapter

At the end of 2019, we launched The Next Chapter campaign, a mission marking our desire to expand and replicate our programs and reach across Uganda and the world. The campaign consists of four goals: create three special education classrooms, build a permanent home for Ekisa, plant two new community centers in other cities, and start a department dedicated to training and equipping other organizations. In 2020 and the start of 2021, we made significant progress toward the latter two goals.

A New Community Center

One of the goals of the Next Chapter campaign is to establish two new community centers in Uganda. At the beginning of 2021, we opened up a new center in Iganga, Uganda. 60 new families with children with disabilities in need were identified in the area and added to our programs.

EKISA + TIM TEBOW FOUNDATION
REWRITING THE STORY OF DISABILITY



1
New community
care center in a
new city



1
New Training &
Equipping
Department



65
Parents
educated on
conducting
home therapy



120
Families provided
with weekly
support services



150
Assistive
device repairs



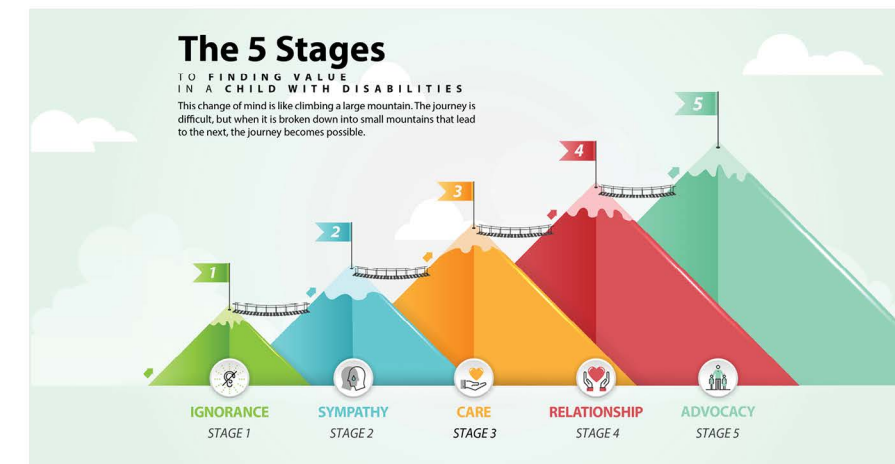
191
Home visits

In 2020, we launched a new department. It came in response to the global need we saw in organizations **not being equipped with the knowledge needed to serve children with disabilities** and the great desire we had to further our **impact for the global story of disability**.

A NEW TRAINING & EQUIPPING DEPARTMENT

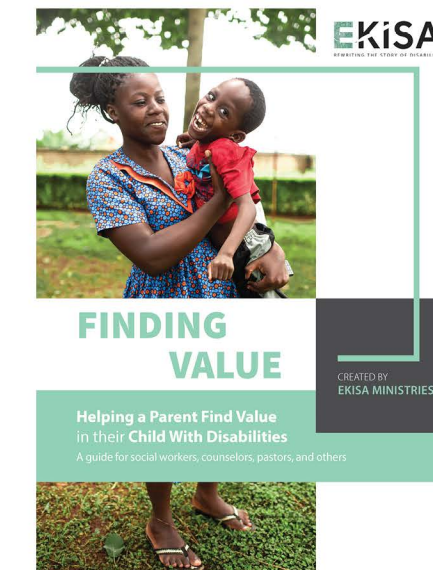


For the first time ever, we were able to start **rewriting the story of disability across the world.**



An Online Library

Part of the vision of our new Training & Equipping Department is to create an online library of resources and trainings to equip organizations with the knowledge they need to work with children with disabilities. We kicked that off with the creation of a resource called, "Finding Value," a practical guide to help parents and caretakers find value in their child with disabilities and learn to become their biggest advocate.



Trainings & Consultations

Our work in Uganda has taught us many invaluable lessons on working with children with disabilities in a developing setting. What began as a local training for other organizations provided by our social workers has now grown into international consultations, partnerships, and online courses



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

At the start of 2021, we celebrated 10 years of rewriting the story of disability in Uganda. As we reflect on the past decade of lives being transformed, we are inspired to carry on the mission and look forward to the next 100 years — in Uganda and across the world.



To our co-founders Emily and Emily who were bold and laid a foundation of family being best, to every staff member and volunteer who has worked with love and determination, to the parents we serve who have been beacons of change in their communities, and to every supporter who has joined us in this mission prayerfully and financially, thank you for getting Ekisa to where it is today!

STORIES

A story of **dedication** and **innovation**

In July 2020, the therapy team embarked on a journey to visit a young girl on our Community Care Program named Zaituna. Zaituna's mother was quick to show the therapists some of the physical exercises that she had been working on with Zaituna ever since the lockdown began. Zaituna's mother had remembered all the exercises she was taught by the therapists and did them perfectly well.

During the therapy session, the therapists noticed that Zaituna's wheelchair was in poor shape, as the seat was missing from the wheelchair frame. They had neither the time nor the materials to repair it at that moment, so it was agreed that it would be best to repair the wheelchair from Ekisa. Zaituna's mother quickly caught wind of this plan and begged that the wheelchair should not be taken. The therapists were inquisitive to know why she did not want the wheelchair to be taken for repairs. To their surprise, Zaituna's mother explained that she had intentionally taken the seat out of the wheelchair frame so that Zaituna could use the remaining frame as a walker. Given Zaituna's highly involuntary movements, the wheelchair frame and its weight supported her much more than a walker ever could!

It was impressive enough that Zaituna's mother was really hard working when it came to home therapy, but her level of innovation was inspiring for our therapists, as it was a solution they never imagined!



A mother's legacy of **great generosity** and **sacrifice**

Gloria is a 12-year-old girl that Ekisa serves. As a student at Ekisa Academy, she benefits from individualized therapy sessions to improve her mobility. During the first school term of 2020, Gloria started to show up to school less and less. Our social workers investigated, and discovered that her mother was sick and so was no longer able to prepare her for school. Gloria's mother's condition continued to worsen until she was prevented from doing any activities involving exertion. Because of her disabilities, Gloria was totally dependent on her mother, her only caretaker. Right after this discovery, the pandemic hit and lockdown shut down Uganda. Our therapists were not allowed to provide therapy at homes for a few months, but our social workers were allowed to check in and bring medicine to families like Gloria's.

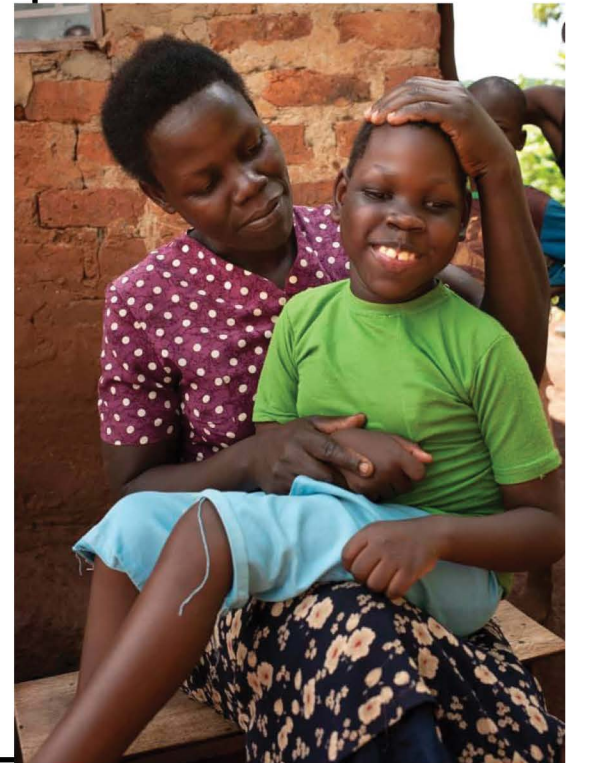
When Ekisa therapists were finally given permission to do home visits, they immediately went to see Gloria and her mother. They found Gloria's mother bed-ridden, and she could hardly sit on her own. They also found something shocking. Gloria still looked healthy, and had even attained some milestones! Gloria's vocabulary had increased to include words like "mummy," "bring," "give me," and others. Compared to before, the words were not randomly spoken, but instead used intentionally! She began picking up toys and engaging with them for the first time. She even started to move along the ground, and change to various positions, all on her own!

There is no explainable way Gloria could have obtained all this by herself and yet there was no one there to help. This means that in spite of the delicate condition Gloria's mother was in, she still went against the doctor's orders of total bed rest and looked after her child this much!

This past May, Gloria's mother passed away after a long fight with her disease. Up until her final moments, she showed love, sacrifice, and generosity -- giving everything she had for Gloria. She knew her days were numbered, but still chose to ensure her daughter had the greatest quality of life possible. She leaves a lasting legacy of love and, because of her, Gloria continues to grow and flourish.

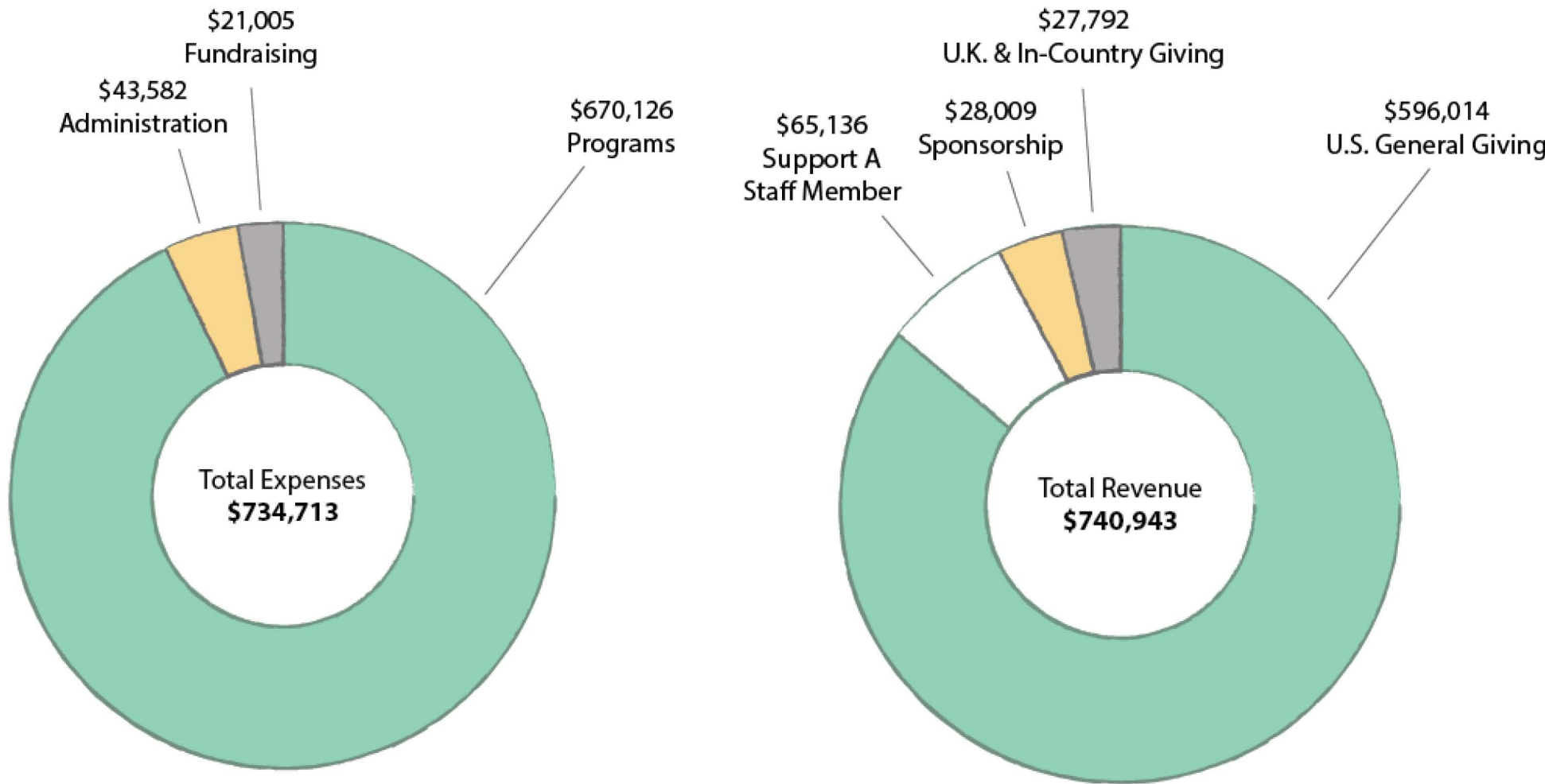
Stories like Gloria and her mother's show us what it means to be generous in the face of adversity. We invite you to reflect on Gloria's mother, and how you can show great generosity to those around you, and those across the world.

"There is no explainable way Gloria could have obtained all this by herself."



FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Our fiscal year has changed to begin in April. These numbers reflect 2020 and Q1 2021.



U.S. FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2021 Short Year (Jan-Mar)	2020	2019 Corrected
Support / Revenue			
Contributions	\$131,427	\$526,730	\$344,597
Restricted Contributions		\$60,000	
Cost of Goods Sold		\$1,104	\$3,129
Total Support / Revenue	\$131,427	\$585,626	\$341,468
Functional Expenses			
Program Services	\$152,908	\$426,493	\$362,714
Restricted Program Services			
General + Administrative	\$12,786	\$30,795	\$11,550
Fundraising	\$4,435	\$16,570	\$15,969
Total Functional Expenses	\$170,129	\$473,858	\$390,233
Other Misc. Revenue	\$7	\$114	
Change in Net Assets	-\$38,695	\$111,882	-\$48,765
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$181,512	\$69,630	\$118,395
Net Assets, End of Year	\$142,817	\$181,512	\$69,630
Programs	89.9%	90.0%	
Fundraising	2.6%	3.5%	
Administration	7.5%	6.5%	



John testing a prototype assistive device.

OUR LEADERSHIP



Jared Scheppmann
Executive Director



Lynet Kazimura
Social Work Director



Olivia Ricketts
Training & Equipping
Dept. Lead



Samuel Ssemwanga
Business Manager



Chris Negrete
Nursing Director



Brian Bwire
Therapy Services
Director



Christine Tino
Home Manager



Alyssa McIntyre
Child Development
Director



Adam Kisambira
Human Resources
Manager



Evan Dingle
Communications
Manager



Zakayo Kisozi
Assistant Social Work
Manager



Kate Tolhurst
Ekisa Academy
Director

LETTER FROM BOARD PRESIDENT

The pandemic has allowed each of us, in some way, to taste something that I have been talking about for the last decade. Isolation. I have been discussing this topic because it is so often the reality for my friends experiencing disability. The lack of support, issues of accessibility, and the social stigma — all of these result in a mixed bag of catalysts, but always the same result.

Whether we are in the United States or Uganda, the issue — isolation — is precisely the same, though the solution may take on varying forms. At the end of the day, we need each other, and this is especially true for people with disability and their families. They need to be welcomed into committed relationships and friendships within their community.

I pray that we may reflect deeply on our own fleeting isolation as we process what the unending reality must be like for those experiencing disability. When Ekisa offers community care to a family, they are offering the means out of isolation and into community. When Ekisa offers education to a child, they are offering peers, relationships and support to a way out of living alone.

We are not meant to live alone.
We are meant to live our lives with one another.
This is not a one-sided proposition whereby we have helped others; rather, we all are recipients of the gifts of one another inside of this Body that we have been called to through Christ.

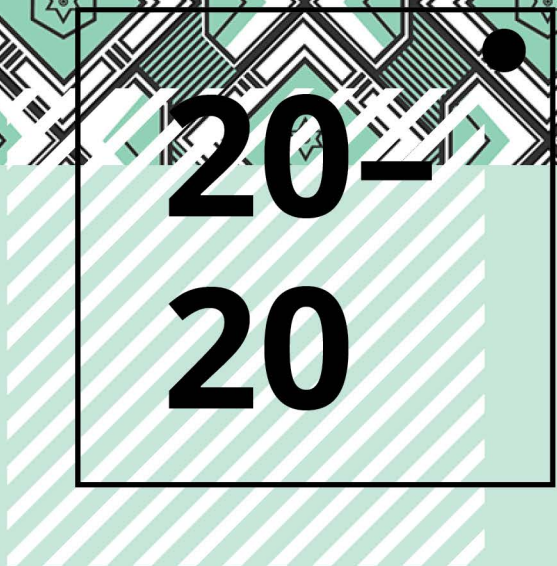
To all our supporters, thank you!

With your help, we can continue to grow our efforts to create community for families and children experiencing disability.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW L. MOONEY
President of the Board

together.



Annual Report 2020

 **EKISA.ORG**