



Building
Assets to Better Lives

wmionline.org

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Message from the President

2016 was a year of huge strides in WMI's continuing evolution of credit and savings services for rural African women who have been marginalized from access to conventional financial institutions. By concentrating on developing the human capacity of our village-level staff in East Africa, we have evolved efficient local operations that allow rural women to access loans easily and conveniently right in the communities where they live.

With its patient approach to development, WMI is proving that it is feasible for a village-run loan program to become entrenched in a community and provide consistent and reliable financial services to local businesswomen over an extended time period, and in a manner that is 100% self-sustaining. This is not only a fresh approach to poverty alleviation, but raises intriguing questions about the nature and role of non-profits in international development. Along with our local partners, WMI is building a grassroots tradition of community service that makes economic sense.

Our staff has built a legacy of trust and respect for the WMI loan program that has resulted in extraordinarily low loan loss rates and very high demand for more loans in larger amounts. They have also become experts in peer-to-peer skills training and knowledge transfer. This means borrowers receive the training they need to start a business and stay in business. The results are evident throughout WMI loan hub regions - everywhere you look a WMI-funded business is busily serving customers!

Over the years, WMI's grassroots approach to providing business skills training and loans has become increasingly important because jobs in the formal economy in East Africa are few and far between. Women and their families are more dependent than ever on creating small enterprises to generate income to meet household needs.

In Uganda, colleges and universities routinely graduate 400,000 young adults annually into an economy generating fewer than 100,000 new jobs each year. In Kenya, estimates are that it takes 5 years for a university graduate to obtain a job. In Tanzania, the graduates who do obtain formal employment rarely do so before the age of 30. The end result is that the vast majority of people still remain employed in the informal sector, with the primary focus on agricultural production.

Traditionally, educated young adults have been reluctant to return to the rural, subsistence farming life-style of their parents. Fortunately, that's one area where WMI is making a critical difference. With a loan and training, women are able to launch and expand businesses that transcend subsistence farming and move on to value-added products, providing essential goods/services to larger businesses, and delivering large volume commodities to help fulfill government contracts or corporate demands. These businesses can become family enterprises with different family members providing input to help the business grow and prosper, impacting the long-term economic structure of the area.

WMI does not work alone. All of these accomplishments are a team effort. We would like to express our profound gratitude to everyone who helps make the WMI loan program a success. This includes all the rural women who provide local leadership and staff the loan hubs, our colleagues at our banking partner, Postbank Uganda (PBU), our U.S. and Africa-based college interns, the WMI board and volunteers, and all the WMI donors who share our vision to combat poverty through empowering women and giving them the skills they need to support their families. Thank you so much for your loyal and ongoing support!

Robyn Nietert
President

Program Highlights

Safe Drinking Water

Pure, clean water that you can drink from the tap! One of our 2016 highlights is the completely renovated and expanded Buyobo water system. It is providing clean water to over 5,000 residents, as well as customers at the new shops, students at Buyobo Primary School, and visitors to WMI's headquarters building. The project was jointly funded by the Buyobo Women's Association, WMI and Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, MD. The region's Chief Water Engineer, Alex Gidudu, has certified that it is one of the few water systems in all of Sironko District where the community can feel confident drinking the water directly from the taps without treatment.



Clean Streets

Much of sub-Saharan Africa is awash in plastic bags and uncollected litter of every imaginable stripe. Waste is routinely discarded by the side of the road. WMI's new anti-littering program is having a huge impact: With the introduction of 3 trash containers, 2 full-time trash handlers, rakes, wheelbarrows and gloves, the main crossroads of Buyobo are now literally spotless. The community has wholeheartedly embraced the clean-up campaign, especially the business leaders, many of whom are WMI borrowers. Recently, we extended the campaign to Sinoli Trading Center, 2 km down the road, also a stronghold for WMI borrowers.



New Meeting Space

Continuing our goal of supporting the hubs through proper infrastructure, in 2016 we constructed a meeting pavilion/office in our Buputo hub. The building is housing all loan program activities and also provides a venue for village level meetings. Final design work has been completed for two additional sub-station pavilions in Sironko District to accommodate program growth.



Our ladies have mastered the fine art of contracting for and monitoring building construction, and we are pleased with the care with which these structures have been maintained.



Boda Ambulance Project

The Buyobo summer interns spearheaded the effort to purchase a motorcycle-powered ambulance to serve Buyobo and all of Sironko District. UNICEF reports that for every 100,000 live births in Uganda, 343 women are expected to die. This number is 150% higher than the world average, and 2,450% higher than it is in the United States.

A major factor contributing to the discrepancy is the inaccessibility of urgent medical treatment: the most critical factor in patient survival after severe trauma is time until medical care is received. To reach life-saving medical care, rural villagers and mothers in labor must walk or travel on the back of a motorcycle over long, bumpy roads, which extends the time until treatment, or forces many to just wait it out in their homes. Almost all rural villages lack any on-call emergency transportation.

The new ambulance is huge success for the interns and for the women and families WMI serves. The boda ambulance service is managed by the Village Health Teams and WMI's local partner, the Buyobo Women's Association, which provides dispatch services. This is a high impact project that is sustainable - ongoing operating overhead will be covered by loan program income.

Solar Powered Lamps

Solar capacity was extended to thousands of households in our Lewa, Kenya and Buyobo, Uganda loan hubs through WMI's partnership with the non-profit Sun24. Through a generous donation to WMI, we were able to deliver 1,000 solar lamps to rural households in each village area. These rural homes received solar lights to provide power after dark so they would not be dependent on traditional carbon-based lighting options, which cause air pollution, health issues, and increased risk of fire.

The recipients are participating in an on-going survey to analyze the overall impact of switching to solar lighting sources. Survey results will contribute to the overall body of knowledge on how to accomplish reductions in the use of fossil fuels in rural areas.



2016 Program Accomplishments

Loan Hub Activity

- In 2016, WMI provided 7,600 loans totaling \$821,000, bringing the total value of loans issued since 2008 to \$4,117,000. This year WMI added 2,900 new borrowers, a 20% increase over 2015. This brings our total number of borrowers since 2008 to 11,000. Each loan positively impacts at least 10 people, including nuclear and extended family members. WMI has been able to reach over 100,000 impoverished individuals and improve their lives.
- The revolving loan fund stands at \$1,000,000, providing quarterly loans to our borrowers for a period of two years, at which time the borrower graduates and the funds are available to a new borrower.
- WMI assisted over 1,000 women in their transition to independent banking in Uganda, providing them support and working with PBU to ensure a smooth graduation to the formal economy. The WMI loan program has graduated 3,700 borrowers to date.



Training

- WMI continues to work with hub staff on a host of management skills, including bookkeeping, budgeting and accounting.
- The “Girls Group” for P-7 students continues to hold programs designed to empower and educate young teenage girls on healthy behaviors and responsible life skills, as well as entrepreneurship skills. With an overarching goal of readying these young ladies for a healthy and successful future, the immediate aim is to provide a safe and relaxed environment to tackle important topics. This year the girls developed a piggery, which is already earning income for the group. A similar group is getting off the ground in Tanzania.

Special Projects

- Advanced Banking. As the loan program continues to grow, so does the need to make sure it is operating at maximum efficiency and within host country guidelines. Our banking consultant, John Mark Muwangala, a seven year veteran of the Ugandan banking industry, has been instrumental in improving the loan hubs' link to the financial services industry and in helping develop a transition for WMI graduates into the established banking system. WMI also supported the addition of a new full-time staff member, Milly Wolimbwa, to streamline loan operations, facilitate communication with our partner bank, and upgrade WMI's accounting/reporting processes. Milly is a recent graduate of Makerere University Business School with a BS in Finance.
- Victims' Support Fund and On-going Counsellor Training. Our summer intern Natalie Andrasko from the University of Michigan, spearheaded an emergency fund for women who have been sexually assaulted so that they can get free transportation and treatment in Mbale, the nearest city, where emergency medication is available to prevent them from contracting HIV and where treatment is also available for other health needs that may arise after their assault. In a village where many live on a dollar a day, it can be overwhelming to arrange and pay for the \$2 round-trip transport and medical treatment in the traumatic aftermath of an assault.

Through a GoFundMe project, Natalie raised over \$1,500 to create an emergency fund to cover the costs for a sexual assault victim to get transport and initial follow-up services from professionals in Mbale. In addition, a team of 20 trained counsellors are available for physical, psychological and logistical support in the event of an assault.

- Annual Impact Survey. Our Bethesda college interns managed a massive data analysis to document the loan program's impact. They reviewed over 4,000 records to develop a nuanced picture of the wide-ranging outcomes. For the ninth year in a row, WMI survey results show that the loan program continues to have a significant impact in reducing poverty and improving household living standards for rural families. Monthly incomes double, triple and even quadruple after women launch their businesses. Before taking a loan and starting a business less than 10% of women earned more than \$60/month. After launching their businesses, 90% of women earned more than \$60/month.

The impact on savings is even more dramatic. Saving is virtually impossible for households with no regular income. After launching a business women are able to save on a regular basis and savings increases in Uganda were over 800%!

Resource Fellow

- Our 2015-16 Resource Fellow Ashley Van Waes was much beloved by the BWA staff and community. Under her guidance the Buyobo team became experts at utilizing computer-based programs to manage all loan program operations. Through her efforts the Ruby-cup menstrual management program was introduced in Buyobo, expanding the women's access to feminine hygiene products. She worked with WMI's banking partners to improve loan program services and financial access for the community at large. We are grateful for her commitment, clear-sighted decision-making and unfailing good humor in helping improve loan program operations.

- Our 2016-2017 Resource Fellow Kirsten Miner ably took over the reins in late summer and is already making a significant impact. A Washington State native, Kirsten holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington in Public Health and Women Studies. She served for two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia's Muchinga Province, where she focused on implementing malnutrition intervention and malaria reduction programs, as well as conducting health education campaigns. Kirsten joined WMI from Seattle's Center for Infectious Disease Research.



- In 2016, WMI added a new Fellow position to assist our Tanzania loan programs. Jess Littman, a former high-school intern with WMI in Buyobo and college intern in Bethesda, joined WMI once again for a one-year Fellowship term. Our Tanzania programs have 20 loan groups scattered throughout villages surrounding Karatu and WMI wanted to provide more on-site support to help them develop efficient and effective systems operations and administrative practices.



- WMI sponsored 8 volunteers in the US and Uganda, this year. Four interns worked in the WMI loan program offices in Buyobo, Uganda. In addition to general office work, computer training, and budget development, the interns focused on addressing health issues, such as the Boda Ambulance project, health screening, and mental health counseling.
- A very talented group of four college interns worked in Bethesda compiling and analyzing our annual survey data. They developed Loan Impact Fact Books that consolidate information into country-wide reports, analyzing regional trends.

Major Funding Support

WMI raised more than \$170 thousand dollars for village women of East Africa through many generous grants and donations in 2016. Special recognition goes to the following:

Foundations and Corporations

Toward Sustainability Foundation
International Monetary Fund Civic Program
Reso Foundation
Light My Fire Foundation

Program Partners

Hannah Kahl and Local Women/ Global Mission (Atiak, Uganda)
Childcare Development Organization (Gulu, Uganda)
John and Joyce Wanda and Arlington Academy of Hope (Bududa and Buputo, Uganda)
Barbara Wybar and the Bududa Vocational Centre (Konokoya, Uganda)
Mpambara-Cox Foundation (Kabale, Uganda)
Nick Smith and Buseesa Community Development Centre (Buseesa, Kibaale, Uganda)
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (Lewa, Kenya)
Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church (Shikokho, Kenya)
Judy Lane and the Alailelai Massai Sustainability Organization (Alailelai, Bugar, Tloma, Tanzania)
Rachel Blackmore and Weston-Turville Wells for Tanzania (Arusha, Tanzania)

Individuals through Combined Giving

Combined Federal Campaign (under the auspices of Aid for Africa)
Global Giving
IMF Helping Hands Program
Network for Good
World Bank Community Connections Fund

We are extremely grateful for all donations, and especially thankful to those who have provided on-going support to WMI. As long-time supporters know, WMI is managed by a volunteer group of professional women. Donors can rest assured that their financial contributions are not supporting large salaries for US staff or office overhead!

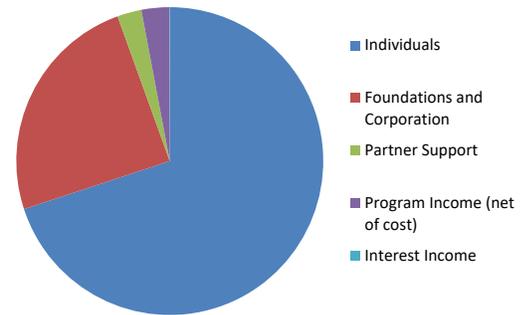
WAYS TO SUPPORT

Make a tax-deductible donation online at www.wmionline.com or send us your check payable to Women's Microfinance Initiative to PO Box 485, Cabin John, MD 20818.

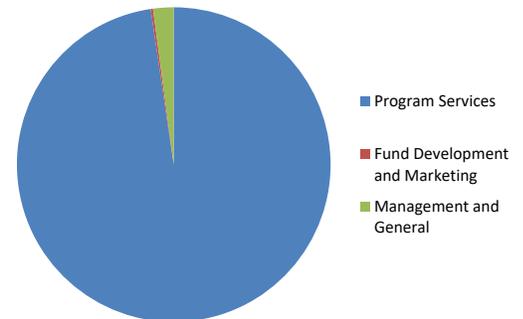


Financial Report

	2016	2015
REVENUES		
Individuals	\$ 123,442	\$ 126,964
Foundations and Corporation	\$ 43,285	\$ 127,375
Partner Support	\$ 4,500	\$ 17,383
Program Income (net of cost)	\$ 5,150	\$ 2,800
Interest Income	\$ 101	\$ 127
TOTAL	\$ 176,479	\$ 274,648
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$ 261,246	\$ 206,831
Fund Development and Marketing	\$ 631	\$ 516
Management and General	\$ 5,665	\$ 7,270
TOTAL	\$ 267,542	\$ 214,617
NET INCOME/LOSS	\$ (91,063)	\$ 60,031
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 178,276	\$ 269,591
Prepaid Expense	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 180,276	\$ 271,591
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 142	\$ 394
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 142	\$ 394
NET ASSETS, UNRESTRICTED	\$ 180,134	\$ 271,197
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 180,276	\$ 271,591



Program Income



Program Expense

Treasurer's Report

WMI continues to raise funds successfully for its operations and has significant sustained grant support. This year we were honored to receive the following grants: \$25,000 from Toward Sustainability Foundation, \$10,000 from the International Monetary Fund Civic Program, \$5,000 from the Reso Foundation, and \$2,500 from Light My Fire. Our newer programs in Uganda and Tanzania are supported on a significant cost sharing basis with our NGO partners. Individual contributions provide 72% of revenues, foundation and corporate support 25%, and partner support 3%. Our retained assets were reduced substantially in 2016 as we paid out prior commitments to support loan operations. The various program loan funds now stand at our \$1 million goal.

Program Services include loan fund grants, infrastructure grants, training support, and some minor operational support. Of the \$261,246 granted, \$157,783 was allocated to hub loan funds, \$56,739 to meeting shelters and community buildings, and \$21,811 to Local Operations (training, program oversight, and special projects like the Boda Ambulance and Health Screenings).

The IRS Administrative and Fundraising Rate is 2.17%. Copies of the 2016 audit are available upon request.

Deborah Smith
Treasurer

WMI Program Leadership

US Leadership Team – Operations Committee

Robyn Nietert, President
Deborah Smith, Treasurer
June Kyakobye, Board Member
Katherine Staudaher, Office Manager

Country Specific Operations Support for US Leadership Team

Sally Kelly – Western Kenya
Judy Lane – Tanzania
Anita Mpambara-Cox – Southwest Uganda
Nick Smith - Southwest Uganda
Hope Okeny – Northern Uganda
Hannah Kahl – Northern Uganda
John and Joyce Wanda – Eastern Uganda
Barbara Wybar - Eastern Uganda

WMI Buyobo Leadership – East Africa Operations Management

Olive Wolimbwa, Local Program Director
Jackline Nagudi Namonye, Assistant Local Director and Head Trainer
Phoebe Irene Wetaka, Deputy Assistant Local Director
Grace Mangala, Systems Operations Financial Manager
Millie Wolimbwa, Financial Manager

Program Leadership Uganda

Evelyn Achieng - Karin Women's Group (Gulu)
Sylvia Akello - Blessed Women's Association (Atiak)
Betty Bigala - Bududa Women's Development Group (Konokoya village, Bududa)
Hope Kazahura - E. Lushaya Women's Group (Kabale)
Jennifer Khawoya - Matuwa Micro Finance Women Group (Buputo)
Winnie Kyakuha - Buseesa Community Development Centre (Buseesa village, Kibaale)
Jemilah Mashipwe – Weswa Women Development Center (Bududa)
Olive Wolimbwa - Buyobo Women's Association (Buyobo)

Program Leadership Kenya

John Kinoti and Purity Mwende – Lewa Wildlife Conservancy Microfinance Program
Felistus Amgun - Jelnarmah Self Help Group (Keveye)
Jennifer Musanga Miheso - Shikokho Chanuka Women's C.B.O (Shikokho)

Program Leadership Tanzania

Maria Johane Oloulu - Alailleli Maasai Sustainability Organization (Alailleli)
Josephine Emanuel Sillo - Tloma Community Organization, (Karatu)

WMI Fellows

Uganda: Ashley VanWaes (2015-16) and Kirsten Miner (2016-17). Tanzania: Jess Littman (2016-17)

Interns

Uganda: Noah Martin, Michael Chang, Natalie Andrasko, and Javier Eguiara.
Bethesda, MD: Devoe Arnold, Sarah Barakso Martin, Marlee Grant, and Madeleine Scania.

Board of Directors and Officers

Robyn G. Nietert – President. For over 25 years, she was a member of the Washington, D.C. law firm of Brown, Nietert and Kaufman, which specialized in telecommunications law, with a focus on innovative wireless technologies.

Jane E. Erickson – First Vice President. She is an executive with a Washington, D.C. area global health care consulting firm.

Elizabeth Gordon – Vice President. She has been involved in the real estate finance/development business (predominantly multifamily, seniors, low and moderate income housing) since 1985 and currently works for Fannie Mae in Washington, D.C.

Deborah W. Smith – Treasurer. She spent her career in corporate and personal finance, and was a Certified Financial Planner and registered securities representative.

Teresa Ciccotelli – Assistant Secretary. She is a retired corporate attorney with over 20 years' experience in Fortune 100 companies, most recently with Saint-Gobain's US offices in PA.

Beatrix Van der Vossen – Secretary. A native of the Netherlands, she recently retired from the Netherlands Constituency to the IMF.

June Kyakobye – Special Advisor for Buyobo Project. She has been at the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) in Washington, D.C since 2001.

Advisory Board

Lillian Hagen, attorney, SEC, Bethesda, MD

Brenda Hansen, general counsel, Microvest Capital Management, Bethesda, MD

Bonnie Holcomb, anthropologist, Bethesda, MD

Robert Israelite, credit specialist, CUNA Mutual Group, Chicago, IL

Denise Kalule, business manager, Kampala Uganda

Jessica Littman, former WMI Fellow, Tanzania

Sally Kelly, architect, Chevy Chase, MD

Valerie McDonald, association fundraiser, Herndon, VA

Archie Mears, microfinance expert, West Linton, Scottish Borders, UK

Ainsley Morris, investment analyst, Washington, DC

Olive Namutebi, managing internal auditor, PostBank, Kampala, Uganda

Juliet Nyambisa, banker, K-Rep, Nairobi, Kenya

Harris Recht, attorney, Ridgewood, NJ

Thomas Richardson, IMF Representative, New Delhi, India

Katherine Staudaer, occupational therapist, Bethesda, MD

Montana Stevenson, international consultant, Bethesda, MD

Al Tetrault, retired professor, University of Maryland, Vienna, VA

Beth Tomasello, attorney, The Women's Heart Health Foundation, Bethesda, MD

Christine Uzzell, information technology specialist, Tucson, AZ

Thierry van Bastelaer, economist, Abt Associates, Bethesda, MD

Carol Van Oudenaren, librarian, Bethesda, MD

Jackie Vouthouris, financial modeler, New York, NY

William Wilhelm, finance professor, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Mona Yacoubian, foreign affairs consultant, Bethesda, MD

For further information about Women's Microfinance Initiative contact us at:

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