



Building
Assets to Better Lives

wmionline.org

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Message from the President

As WMI moves into its second decade, the Board has given a lot of thought to the organization we want to be. We do look at other NGO websites with flashing photos, undulating graphics and catchy memes - and then revert to our desire to focus on our substantive impact made possible through the dollars raised (\$2 million!) and loans issued (46,000!). Yes, those are important numbers, and we proudly display them on our website. But what energizes us most are the results that don't necessarily translate into a dollar figure or number. It's the changes in community attitude; gender relations; leadership roles; pride in one's surroundings; educational opportunities; and, basic family happiness and well-being that truly reflects the depth of the loan program's impact.

Three key outcomes bring home the powerful impact WMI has had on reducing poverty and improving household living conditions for rural women and their families. The first is **Women's Empowerment** – a term frequently used, difficult to define, and harder yet to quantify. From no longer being dependent upon a husband for money to launching a business that serves thousands of customers, we read over and over again in our surveys that the sense of control and empowerment women now feel is one of the most profound impacts of the loan program.

Second, we see vast **Changes in Social Institutions**. Change only happens when people have the ability to make choices and historically women in rural areas have had few choices available to them. The loan program is altering that dynamic. Emboldened by the income from their businesses, women are taking the initiative to implement changes in local social institutions to secure a better life for themselves and their families. Over and over, we hear that family planning and children's education are priorities for our women. Women are well aware that the education of girl children still lags behind that of boys and they are determined to change that paradigm - but overall they want to educate all of their children. Further, they are very aware that the career opportunities for their children are severely limited unless they obtain a post-secondary education so having the funds to send them on to technical training or university is also part of their planning.

Third, we see a vast improvement in **Physical Facilities**. Walk along the dirt road that takes you through Buyobo, Uganda and you will see the impact of more than ten years of coordinated, sustained development work. The impact on the local economy of the villages where WMI businesses are concentrated is immediately noticeable - more shops, new businesses and vastly improved residential housing. There is an abundance of physical evidence affirming how the women's businesses have improved the overall local economy. The village is bustling, the street cleaners are busy picking up the garbage, and permanent housing and stores abound.

WMI operations continue to expand in geographically contiguous areas so that we can utilize our embedded infrastructure efficiently and maximize our impact. Women are continuing to innovate with value-added businesses to improve profit margins. Borrowers in all villages we visit remind us to let WMI supporters know how grateful they are for the loan program. Women were keen to tell us how the business training has opened their eyes and how their business income had changed their lives.

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 partners, most especially, Postbank Uganda (PBU), our U.S. and Africa-based college interns and fellows, the WMI board and volunteers, and all the WMI donors who share our vision to combat poverty through empowering rural 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

New Loan Hub

WMI is partnering with Arua Women United for Poverty Eradication (AWUFPE) in a new loan hub in Arua, Uganda. Over 25% of the more than 1 million South Sudanese refugees in Uganda live in Arua: 85% are women and children. The challenges of feeding, housing, educating and providing medical care to this ever-growing population are enormous. Initially subsisting on provisions provided by world food organizations inside refugee camps, families struggle to integrate into their new environment outside of the camps. This, in turn, stresses local resources. Constructive and creative inputs are sorely needed to help ease the misery many local villagers and refugees experience as a result of conflict displacement.

Jumbo Loan Program

This year we expanded the Jumbo Loan Program to keep up with the growing demand for larger loans. Jumbo loans are granted to a select group of highly-qualified borrowers in amounts up to \$1,000 in order to support the capital needs of larger businesses. The women must be graduates of our two-year loan and training program, have timely repayment histories, and demonstrate how their businesses will use the capital. The Jumbo Loan fund is currently capitalized at \$100,000.

New Meeting Space and Latrines

Continuing our goal of supporting the hubs through proper infrastructure, in 2018 we constructed our fourth sub-hub meeting pavilion/office, including latrines (a very big plus for village-level infrastructure). The women of Budeda purchased the land and WMI built an office/meeting pavilion and three-stance latrine. The buildings are used for loan collection and training activities, and also provide a venue for village level meetings. Pavilions in Gombe and Mutufu are slated for construction in 2019. Each new pavilion will follow the same blueprint (originally designed by WMI Advisory Board Member Sally Kelly) and feature a four stance latrine like the one pictured at right.



Nyongeza

Often we find ourselves or our borrowers proposing small projects that, while not directly falling into our lending and training focus, provide the spark or catalyst necessary to fulfill our larger mission. We call these special projects **Nyongeza**, a Swahili word for a booster or something that is complementary. These are some of the Nyongeza projects we engaged in during 2018:

Empowering Samburu Women

WMI is partnering with Reteti, in the remote Namanyuk Conservancy, to give rural Samburu women training and job opportunities in this isolated corner of northern Kenya. The program promotes community conservation, benefiting both endangered wildlife as well as local indigenous populations who share the land and natural resources. WMI is supporting skills training in wildlife conservation for rural women – a new avenue for women who want careers outside traditional outside traditional tribal roles. In 2018, we sponsored the first female care-giver, who is responsible for feeding and caring for the orphaned baby elephants.

Mushroom Growing Project

WMI is partnering with the non-profit Rukundo International to assist women entrepreneurs in Southwest Uganda in launching a mushroom growing enterprise. The inaugural program being introduced in the community is a women's co-op mushroom growing project, not an individual business. Rukundo secured a piece of land for growing the mushrooms and built the growing house. The Mushroom Training Center will provide training for the women, monitoring for the project, and a secure market for the mushrooms.

Mental Health Project

In partnership with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, we offered counseling services for rural women who felt stressed by their myriad responsibilities. The women told us the counseling sessions were enormously helpful. Some were having issues with priorities set by their husbands. Counseling helped them learn how to have a fruitful discussion instead of simply arguing. Others were overwrought by the educational and career choices their children wanted to make and the sessions helped them learn how to listen and respond constructively to their children's concerns.



2018 Program Accomplishments

Loan Program

- WMI is excited to report that since inception we have raised over \$2 million in support of our programs. Of this, 72% has funded our revolving loan fund and training, 27% has been directed to building infrastructure such as meeting facilities, offices, and 1% has gone to training and special projects.
- In 2018, WMI provided 7,800 loans totaling almost \$1,000,000, bringing the total value of loans issued since 2008 to over \$6.2 million. This year WMI added 3,500 new borrowers, bringing our total number of borrowers since 2008 to over 17,000. Each loan positively impacts at least 20 people, including nuclear and extended family members, thus WMI has been able to reach over 340,000 individuals and improve their lives. We are now ramped up to deliver 10,000 loans annually.
- The WMI loan program has graduated 6,000 borrowers to date.
- WMI President, Robyn Nietert (below) made her 12th annual field visit to the loan hubs in East Africa.



Community Engagement

- **Boys and Girls Group** is a program for youth ages 11-14 in Buyobo led by our facilitators, Sam and Teacher Susan. Girls and Boys groups hold weekly sessions discussing topics such as sexual health and hygiene, as well as creative expression and business skills. Boys and girls groups also hold contests in entrepreneurship and design. Through these contests, some of the youth in our program have gone on to create successful businesses and sell their designs to fund their education. To date, more than 400 youth have benefited from the program.
- **School Lunch Program.** In Ugandan primary schools, students are not provided with meals during the long school day, causing many children to go hungry and become distracted from learning. Noticing this phenomenon at Buyobo Primary School, WMI pledged to invest \$1,500 per year into a program in partnership with the school district to provide lunch to the P6 and P7 students

during the day, so that they are better able to perform on their critical exams for secondary school placement. With the school lunch program in place, students no longer have to worry about a meal, and are now more able to focus on their schoolwork and achieve academic success.

- **Keep Buyobo Clean** is a sanitation initiative which situates large trash receptacles throughout the village in order to promote and manage proper disposal of waste. The Keep Buyobo Clean program has also been implemented in other surrounding villages, including Buweli and Budadiri, and has seen much success in curbing littering and unsanitary conditions in these villages. The bin collection and placement is entirely managed by local residents, making the program easily sustainable and manageable in the villages.
- **The Village Health Team (VHT)** is an organization supported by WMI that aims to improve the health and sanitation conditions in rural communities around Buyobo. The VHT conducts monthly home visits to families around the community to promote hygiene, sanitation and to provide screenings and preventive care to keep the community healthy. Today the Village Health Team is comprised of 84 local volunteers who serve in 71 different villages.
- **The Orphan Outreach Program** is a new initiative which was launched this June by Lilia Smyth and Cerina Corrigan, WMI's 2018 summer interns. The Orphan Outreach Program's mission is to provide resources to orphaned children in Buyobo and the surrounding communities. In Uganda, children who have lost at least one parent are considered orphans. Most of these children live with relatives or other adults in the community; however, they often face issues of mistreatment, neglect, and hunger. WMI launched the Orphan Outreach Program which provides a safe, afterschool haven, with access to adult counselors, academic assistance, and school supplies. Today, 32 children come to Buyobo each week to participate in the program.



2018 Resource Fellow and Interns

- We were thrilled when our 2017-18 Buyobo Fellow, **Caitlin Seandel** approached us about staying on a second year, through August 2019. Not having to ramp-up a new Fellow meant we were able to keep up our rapid pace of development. And, Caitlin is an enormous asset to our team.



WMI Fellow Caitlin Seandel



Marissa Linden



Lilia Smyth and Cerina Corrigan



Akosua Peprah

- WMI sponsored 4 volunteer interns in the US and Uganda, this year. **Marissa Linden**, a Deloitte strategy and operations consultant with experience in developing financial training materials, travelled to WMI headquarters in Buyobo to conduct personal finance workshops for our loan program leadership team. Two college summer interns, **Lilia Smyth** (US) and **Cerina Corrigan** (New Zealand), worked in the WMI loan program offices in Buyobo, Uganda, compiling and analyzing our annual survey data. They developed Loan Impact Fact Books that consolidate information into country-wide reports, analyzing regional trends and documented the loan program in written stories and video. Our fall intern, **Akosua Peprah** (Ghana) prepared videos and other social media. She independently developed a GOFUNDME project to provide shoes for Buyobo students.

2018 Program Results

- **Annual Impact Survey.** Our college interns managed a massive data analysis to document the loan program's impact. They reviewed over 1,300 surveys to develop a nuanced picture of the wide-ranging outcomes. For the tenth 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 \$46/month. After launching their businesses, 86% of women earned more than \$112/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 139%.

After 11 years of providing loans to rural women throughout East Africa, WMI has invested more than \$6,000,000, served over 17,000 women, and reached 340,000 ancillary beneficiaries, making a significant financial and social impact in rural Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Through the work of this program, rural women have been empowered to step into their potential as business owners, heads of households, and community leaders. This has opened up opportunities for a better future for our borrowers, their families, and their communities. It is an initiative we look forward to supporting for years to come.

Major Funding Support

WMI raised over \$150,000 for village women in East Africa through many generous grants and donations in 2018. Special recognition goes to the following:

Foundations and Corporations

Toward Sustainability Foundation
The International Foundation
Reso Foundation

Program Partners

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)
Nancy Peed and Arua Women United for Poverty Eradication (Arua, Uganda)
Andrea Sedlock and Rukundo International (Kabale, Uganda)

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!

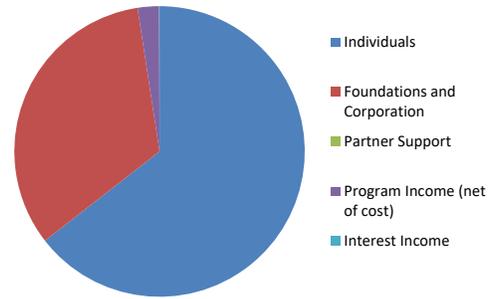
WAYS TO SUPPORT

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.

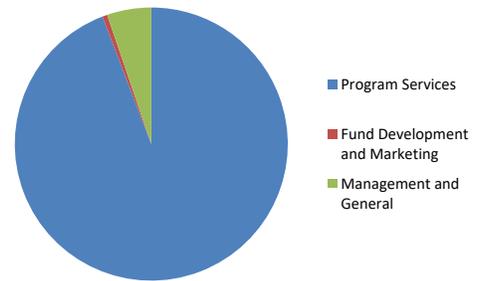


Financial Report

	2018	2017
REVENUES		
Individuals	\$ 101,646	\$ 96,010
Foundations and Corporation	\$ 52,182	\$ 51,647
Partner Support	\$ -	\$ 7,500
Program Income (net of cost)	\$ 3,750	\$ 4,200
Interest Income	\$ 77	\$ 77
TOTAL	\$ 157,655	\$ 159,434
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$ 154,566	\$ 152,624
Fund Development and Marketing	\$ 957	\$ 844
Management and General	\$ 8,616	\$ 7,595
TOTAL	\$ 164,139	\$ 161,063
NET INCOME/LOSS	\$ (6,484)	\$ (1,629)
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 170,186	\$ 176,669
Prepaid Expense	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 172,186	\$ 178,669
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts Payable	\$ 164	\$ 164
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 164	\$ 164
NET ASSETS, UNRESTRICTED	\$ 172,022	\$ 178,505
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 172,186	\$ 178,669



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, \$22,000 from the International Foundation and \$5,000 from the Reso Foundation. Our newer programs in Uganda and Tanzania are supported on a significant cost sharing basis with our NGO partners. Individual contributions provided 67% of revenues while foundation and corporate support provided 34%.

Program Services include loan fund grants, infrastructure grants, training support, and some minor operational support. Of the \$142,918 granted to our member programs, \$69,672 was allocated to loan funds, \$52,352 to meeting shelters and community buildings, and \$20,894 to Local Operations (training, program oversight, and special projects).

The IRS Administrative and Fundraising Rate is 5.57%. The increase over prior years is due to an accounting change by Combined Federal Giving (CFC), whereby their costs are directly charged to us, rather than netted against donations. Copies of the 2018 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

Country Specific Operations Support for US Leadership Team

Judy Lane and Rachel Blackmore – Tanzania
Anita Mpambara-Cox – Southwest Uganda
Nick Smith - Western Uganda
Barbara Wybar - Eastern Uganda
Nancy Peed – Northwest Uganda
Purity Mwende – Northern Uganda
Jennifer Miheso – Western 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 Walimbwa, Financial Manager

Program Leadership Uganda

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
Jennifer Musanga Miheso - Shikokho Chanuka Women's C.B.O (Shikokho)

Program Leadership Tanzania

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

WMI Fellows

Uganda: Caitlin Seandel (2017-19)

Interns

Uganda: Marissa Linden, Lilia Smyth, Cerina Corrigan, Akosua Peprah.
Bethesda: Hannah Kahl (grant research)

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 Lab Corp., a 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 is 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, affordable housing attorney, Bethesda, MD

Bonnie Holcomb, anthropologist, Bethesda, MD

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

Hannah Kahl, former WMI Fellow, San Francisco, CA

Jessica Littman, former WMI Fellow, Tanzania

Sally Kelly, architect, Chevy Chase, MD

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

Ainsley Morris, investment analyst, Washington, DC

Olive Namutebi, Chairperson, Albinism Umbrella, Kampala, Uganda

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

Harris Recht, attorney, Ridgewood, NJ

Thomas Richardson, IMF Representative, Vienna, Austria

Montana Stevenson, procurement manager, Danone N.A., Denver, CO

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

Beth Tomasello, attorney, SIECUS, Bethesda, MD

Christine Uzzell, information technology specialist, Tucson, AZ

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

Carol Van Oudenaren, MBA, retired 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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