

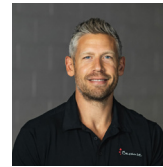


ANNUAL REPORT 2020

 Because



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ANDREW KROES



▶ Last year I started this message saying “2019 has been a year like no other.” I clearly had no idea what 2020 would have in store for all of us!

As 2020 began, we started working on some ambitious goals surrounding shoe distributions, the development and production of our footwear in Kenya, and the expansion of the work we do through our Pursuit Incubator—assisting global entrepreneurs with their own products and socially focused businesses.

While a couple of us were visiting our factory partner in Kenya in late February, COVID-19 was increasingly making headlines around the world. Like many, we didn’t have any clue as to how the course of the year would be dramatically altered.

As you may know, the majority of the 300,000+ pairs of The Shoe That Grows that have been distributed to 100+ countries have been transported to the feet of kids by people like you. The onset of COVID disrupted this model and threatened to halt all distributions. Fortunately, with production of The Shoe transitioned completely to Mombasa, Kenya (*pictured to the left*) and our incredible East Africa distribution partner Japheth Opondo, we were able to continue to produce and distribute shoes in Kenya and surrounding countries. These distributions were facilitated

by faithful donors who covered the cost of the shoes and through partnerships with organizations on the ground working with these children. Distributions still slowed considerably compared to years prior, but this also gave us an opportunity to solidify production and logistics and build a solid foundation as distributions increase again in the years to come.

The rapid growth of our Pursuit Incubator stands out as a key highlight from the past year. Building a program that was completely virtual from the start meant few disruptions and led to us working with more entrepreneurs than ever before—providing training, networking, coaching and funding opportunities necessary to take the next step with their products and businesses.

Like many other individuals and organizations, 2020 forced us to look inward and examine what we needed to do to survive during uncertain times. But it also allowed us to see other opportunities to deliver on our mission and serve others during a time when they needed it most.

Thank you for continuing to be a part of this team and providing your support at a time when it’s difficult to look past our own personal anxieties and uncertainties. The best years for all of us are yet to come. 🙌



AT BECAUSE INTERNATIONAL, OUR MISSION IS TO USE PRODUCTS AS SOLUTIONS TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY.

The products as solutions framework means that we not only focus on the immediate needs that are met by the final product, but that we also focus on the opportunities for empowerment that are created throughout the entire development and manufacturing process—positively impacting individuals and communities.

WHILE OUR MISSION DRIVES WHAT WE DO AND WHY WE DO IT, OUR FOUR CORE VALUES REMIND US WHO WE STRIVE TO BE.

WE PRIORITIZE DIGNITY

We prioritize dignity is rooted in our belief that every individual has inherent value and deserves equality of opportunity.

WE CHALLENGE OURSELVES.

We challenge ourselves is all about the way we work, how we work and why we work.

WE EMBRACE CHANGE.

We embrace change is tied to our innovative and entrepreneurial story.

WE CARE DEEPLY.

We care deeply is what inspires, drives and unites us.



Ten entrepreneurs joined the Pursuit Incubator spring cohort with innovative products ranging from pineapple shoes to hand soap for kids.

SEE A FULL LIST OF ENTREPRENEURS ON PAGE 11.



LuminAID and Because International partnered during the summer for World Refugee Day to send light and shoes to refugees. Together, we sent 366 pairs of The Shoe and 366 solar lanterns.

THE SOLE

We launched our new giving club, The Sole, where members fund pairs of The Shoe That Grows each month.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SOLE ON PAGE 13.



In November, 8,600 pairs of The Shoe That Grows were sent to kids around the world through Christmas shoeboxes.

1

2

In April our Wear-A-Pair campaign raised enough money to send 1,338 pairs of The Shoe That Grows to refugees through Lifting Hands International, a partner organization.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH LIFTING HANDS ON PAGE 8.



3

4

Our East Africa distribution partner worked with organizations throughout Kenya to conduct socially distanced distributions of The Shoe That Grows.

SEE THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE SHOE WAS DISTRIBUTED ON PAGE 8.



5

6

The fall cohort of the Pursuit Incubator had nine entrepreneurs enrolled with innovative solutions that included banana fiber products and water soluble grocery bags.

SEE A FULL LIST OF ENTREPRENEURS ON PAGE 11.



7

8

At the end of the year, entrepreneurs from the spring and fall cohorts pitched their products to members of the Pursuit Advisor Network at our virtual, biannual Pursuit Pitch Event and two winners were selected— Faith Aweko of Reform Africa and Catherine Nakayemba of Safe Girl Reusable Pads.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FAITH AWEKO AND REFORM AFRICA ON PAGE 10.



THE SHOE THAT GROWS IS A SHOE THAT EXPANDS FIVE SIZES AND LASTS FOR YEARS, DEVELOPED FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES IMPACTED BY POVERTY.


THE SHOE THAT GROWS AND LIFTING HANDS INTERNATIONAL

This year, travel restrictions required us to find creative solutions to safely distribute The Shoe That Grows. To get thousands of pairs to kids and families around the globe, we partnered with organizations such as Lifting Hands International.

Lifting Hands International (LHI) is a Utah-based nonprofit providing humanitarian aid to refugees and asylum seekers worldwide. The amazing volunteers at LHI fill shipping containers with much-needed supplies (specific to each area) and send the containers to their various refugee aid centers.

At many refugee camps, shoes are a constant need. Carlissa Larsen, LHI Director of Utah Operations, shares, "When refugees are faced with purchasing shoes, or purchasing food, they just go without shoes. To make matters worse, many of the refugees are not living in conditions that would be kind to bare feet."

This spring, our Wear-A-Pair campaign raised funds to provide The Shoe That Grows for the LHI shipping containers. Shoes were requested in Jordan, Tanzania and Bangladesh. With the help of kids, families and organizations taking part in Wear-A-Pair, 1,338 pairs of The Shoe went to refugee families. In the fall, LHI sent another container to Jordan. This time, our incredible monthly giving club, The Sole, provided funds to send 591 pairs of The Shoe!

Through Wear-A-Pair, The Sole, and other partnerships throughout the year, 2,487 pairs of The Shoe went to refugee families. The partnership with LHI not only offers an opportunity for donors to directly fund The Shoe for kids, but it also prioritizes meeting specific needs in specific communities. We love our partner organizations and look forward to the ways we can continue to work together to meet immediate needs! 

2020 QUICK FACTS

30

OVER 30,000 PAIRS OF THE SHOE THAT GROWS WERE DISTRIBUTED IN 2020

43

THOSE 30,000 PAIRS WERE DISTRIBUTED IN 43 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD

12

GIRL SCOUTS TROOPS DONATED 2,316 PAIRS THROUGH COOKIE REWARDS

5

OF THOSE 43 COUNTRIES, 5 WERE COUNTRIES WHERE THE SHOE HADN'T BEEN DISTRIBUTED PREVIOUSLY



THE PURSUIT INCUBATOR HELPS ENTREPRENEURS WORLDWIDE TAKE THEIR INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS TO THE NEXT LEVEL THROUGH TRAINING, NETWORKING, COACHING AND FUNDING.



FAITH AWEKO: REFORM AFRICA



▶ Faith Aweko is a *wastepreneur*. Her Uganda-based social enterprise, Reform Africa,

turns waste into wealth by recycling plastics to make unique and fashionable bags (1 and 2 above).

Reform Africa's founders share that plastic pollution in the slums surrounding the city of Kampala can build up to create blockages which cause flooding and health hazards. Upcycling plastics in Kampala mitigates waste, creates jobs, and combines the founders' passions of art and the environment.

Reflecting on her time in the spring cohort of the Pursuit Incubator, Faith says that she was most profoundly impacted by hearing stories from Because International mentors about the process of designing The Shoe That Grows.

"I found it interesting because we faced a lot of challenges designing our bags and prototyping when we were still starting the company," she recounts. "I learned patience and perseverance."

Faith was one of ten entrepreneurs in the spring 2020 cohort of the Pursuit Incubator. 🌱

SEE SIDEBAR FOR COMPLETE LIST OF ENTREPRENEURS IN 2020.

MUHAMMED DIMMA MAWEJJE: MAWEJJE CREATIONS



▶ Muhammed Dimma Mawejje is the founder and leader of Mawejje Creations, a

social enterprise that creates jobs

for young people in Uganda by making products out of banana fibers (3-5 above).

Mawejje Creations works to solve two problems—high unemployment rates in Uganda, and high rates

of harmful waste from banana agriculture. The enterprise teaches useful skills to young people and banana farmers in Uganda.

Mawejje Creations develops affordable banana fiber products—rugs, clocks, curtains and more—to sell to households, restaurants, tourists, craft shops and hotels.

Dimma joined Because International's Pursuit Incubator in the fall of 2020. "I wanted to understand my problem and product I am offering," he shares.

"Pursuit Incubator came in place where I needed it," Dimma reflects. Not only was he able to meet his learning goals, but Dimma was also surprised to be mentored by an entrepreneur who has inspired him for a long time.

In the upcoming years, Dimma hopes to change the fashion and textile industry with banana fiber, as well as divert agricultural waste and continue to expand sustainable employment opportunities for women and young people in Uganda.

Dimma was one of nine entrepreneurs in the Pursuit Incubator's fall 2020 cohort. 🌱

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PURSUIT INCUBATOR OR APPLY TO JOIN OUR PURSUIT ADVISOR NETWORK AT [BECAUSEINTERNATIONAL.ORG/PURSUIT](https://becauseinternational.org/pursuit).



2020 ENTREPRENEURS

SHUBHAM ISSAR
SOAPEN INC. (USA/INDIA)

MARYAM MUTHI'AH KARIMAH
CREASION (INDONESIA)

FARAH BRUNACHE
LAGATOS (CANADA/AFRICA/CARIBBEAN)

FAITH AWEKO
REFORM AFRICA (UGANDA)

ABDULLATEEF LAWAL
DIXCOAT PAINTS (NIGERIA)

AFRICA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY (ANU)
STUDENT TEAM
PINE KAZI (KENYA)

OLUWAFUNMILOLA SOPEIN MANN
BOOSTY (NIGERIA)

JANICE KELSEY
SOLAR CITIES (USA)

JEEVA SENTHILNATHAN
PRIVANDO (USA/INDIA)

ANU STUDENT TEAM
FARM BOX (KENYA)

MUHAMMED DIMMA MAWEJJE
MAWEJJE CREATIONS (UGANDA)

CATHERINE NAKAYEMBA
SAFE GIRL REUSABLE PADS (UGANDA)

AJINKYA SHINDE
INVENZEE TECHNOLOGIES (INDIA)

MAGALI AMBROSI H
MAGS NEW TECH (USA)

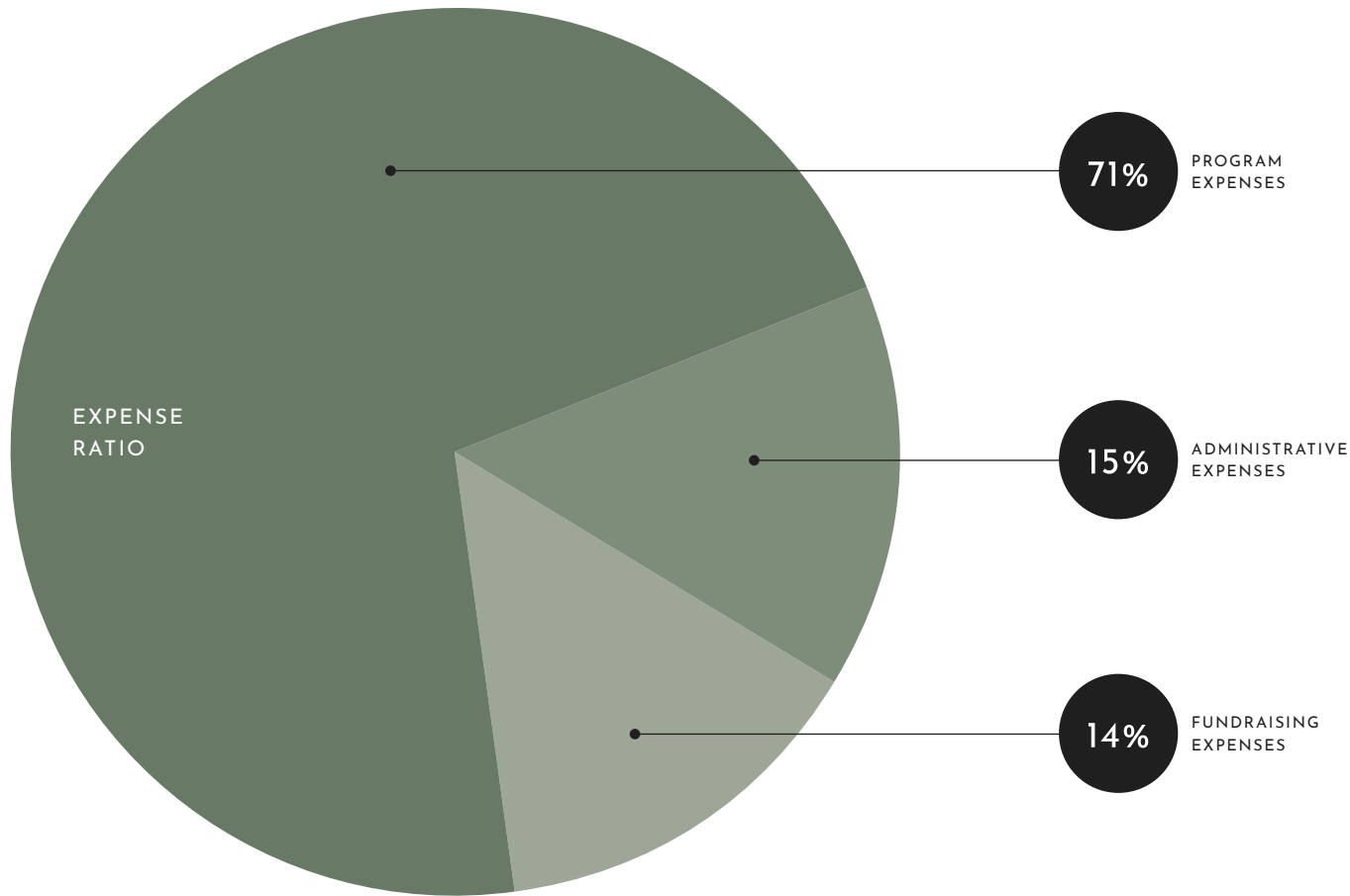
DORIS AKOTH OBONDO
FLORA NATURAL LIQUID SOAP (KENYA)

DONNA FRAZIER
HEELS THAT HEAL (USA)

I KOMANG SUKARMA
CILOTA BALI (BALI)

TSION ASMARE ALEMAYEHU
BITSITE BEREBASO LEATHER (ETHIOPIA)

JOY MWAGIRU
AFYEMA (KENYA)



REVENUE

\$688k

WAS RAISED THROUGH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DONORS, CAMPAIGNS AND GRANT FUNDING

\$612k

WAS DONATED TO TAKE OR SEND PAIRS OF THE SHOE THAT GROWS BY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGS

PROGRAM EXPENSES

\$903k

WENT TOWARDS FUNDING THE SHOE THAT GROWS PROGRAM AND GETTING MORE PAIRS TO MORE KIDS

\$119k

WENT TOWARDS FUNDING THE PURSUIT INCUBATOR PROGRAM AND TRAINING ENTREPRENEURS

Though 2020 wasn't without its challenges—financial and otherwise—we're very thankful to the individuals and organizations who continued to give and made it possible for us to accomplish what we did this past year.

THE SOLE

Members of The Sole give monthly to send pairs of The Shoe That Grows to kids and families in need of humanitarian relief worldwide.

In 2020, members of The Sole funded the distribution of 641 pairs.

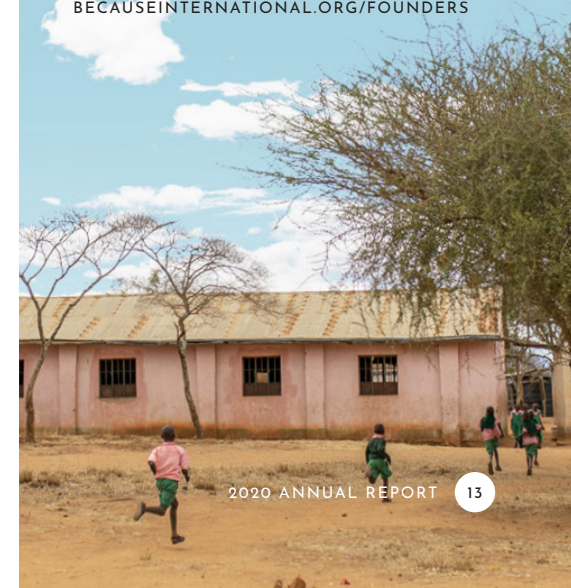
BECAUSEINTERNATIONAL.ORG/THE-SOLE

FOUNDER'S CLUB

The Founder's Club is a community of monthly givers who commit to donating \$100 or more a month to support poverty alleviation through meeting immediate needs and creating opportunities for empowerment.

In 2020, members of Founder's Club gave \$28,000 to support the mission of Because International.

BECAUSEINTERNATIONAL.ORG/FOUNDERS





IN WHAT HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR EVERYONE, OUR COMMUNITY HAS STUCK WITH US THROUGH IT ALL. WITH YOUR HELP, WE WERE ABLE TO EXPAND THE PURSUIT INCUBATOR, SAFELY DISTRIBUTE THE SHOE THAT GROWS TO FAMILIES, AND USE PRODUCTS AS SOLUTIONS TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS—FROM YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS TO YOUR ATTENDANCE AT OUR VIRTUAL EVENTS TO YOUR WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT—MEAN SO MUCH TO OUR TEAM. BECAUSE POVERTY IS A PROBLEM WE CAN SOLVE TOGETHER, THANK YOU.

WITH GRATITUDE,
YOUR FRIENDS AT BECAUSE



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