About Hope Shines, Inc.

Hope Shines Invests

In the most at-risk and vulnerable children living in poverty in Rwanda. We equip these children with tools and life skills that will lead them to more opportunities and help them achieve their fullest potential in life.

Our approach reaches the deepest levels of the child’s development and involves a consistent positive presence in their lives. From these efforts, confidence and ability are born, which give the children new life and hope for the future. Last year, we supported 44 boys and girls ages 6-16 years old in the capital of Kigali, Rwanda.
A LETTER FROM...

Dan Gladden, Executive Director

To our incredible supporters and Hope Shines family,

As seems to be a cliche these days with most people in the news, in business, and every part of our daily lives, it was a challenging and testing last year. Covid has affected our lives in great ways and certainly, Hope Shines as an organization and for the people within it, we were not immune. With uncertainty abound, Rwanda lockdowns over and over, staff contracting Covid, families losing the ability to make a living, all coupled with the on-going ‘normal’ challenges of supporting children that suffer from trauma and require BIG hugs from those who love them, one can see that the past year was very difficult.

One thing we have always done, from the beginning of 2007, is finding ways to stay true to our mission and get the work done, and then some. This seems to be hard to believe that an organic grassroots organization like ours can not only survive for 14+ years now, but we do and to boot, we end up doing more. I am so proud of the dedicated staff we have working with us as a family in Rwanda. As a matter of fact, these passionate and driven staff all share similar backgrounds with the same children we serve and it shows. Their gentleness and concern on a daily basis can bring a tear to your eye when witnessing their relationships with the children and families. It makes me proud to know that since my start as Executive Director in late 2013, we’ve had nearly a 0% staff turnover rate! In the nonprofit world, and any industry for that matter, that is pretty unheard of. We got the right team and it shows.

I am happy to see that our footing is stronger, despite a tough and uncertain year behind us, and with more uncertainty to come it appears. Our board will be growing by 2 this year with super talented professionals that are passionate people and driven! Our support also improved through the formation of an Advisory Council consisting of experts in Legal, Refugees and Global Human Rights, and Social Work. Our ceiling is as high as we can reach and the footing to support this is in place and getting stronger. I thank each and every one of you, our supporters...our family as we call you, for continuing to believe in Hope Shines, in my leadership, and for loving our world and especially children who deserve a better life!

With Love & Gratitude
"I'm just going to keep my word. I'm going to help these kids."
~ April, Hope Shines Founder

Hope Shines
- Identify the most at-risk youth in the community
- Design & provide programs and resources to address the unique needs
- Measure our impact and adjust
- Constantly evaluate the changing needs of the children and families

The Children
- Commit to and attend all programming offered by Hope Shines
- Give 100% effort in everything you do
- Represent your family, community and Hope Shines each day

The Families
- Commit to the encouragement & support of your children
- Communicate progress & changes in the child and family life
- Reinforce and mentor the child reflective of programming objectives
- Share resources to help one another
The Republic of Rwanda is located in central East Africa, bordered by Uganda to the North, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the West, Burundi to the South, and Tanzania to the East. In 2010, the United Nations reported that 65% of the Rwanda urban population lived in the slums – the highest percentage of any country around the world.

Our organization works in the capital city of Kigali, Rwanda in the Nyamirambo sector with 44 children under our care.

Rwanda, a country of roughly 12 million people, suffered through a horrific genocide in 1994 – 1 million people perished in just 100 days.

The suffering of half a million children resulted from the Genocide Against the Tutsi and over 90% witnessed violence, thus adding to long-term trauma in their lives.

Rwanda is still on course for remarkable growth, but social and economic challenges still exist today.
Meet Our Governance Board Members

Laura Valdespino
Chair

Laura is an accomplished business enabler for both publicly traded global companies as well as seasoned in the Fintech start-up environment. With more than 20 years of experience in highly regulated industries, including but not limited to higher education, finance, global payments, and oil & gas, Laura has a vast knowledge of international regulations for 280+ countries. She has extensive experience in identifying, solutioning and mitigating risks for companies. She has interacted with international and domestic regulators and has a proven track record for navigating regulator audits and examinations. She resides in Austin, TX with her husband, 2 children and way too many pets.

Pema Richeson
Member at Large

Pema is a Director of Research Programs at Stanford University responsible for managing a portfolio of projects ranging from clinical genomics, to digital pathology, to SARS-CoV-2. Prior to Stanford, Pema served as director of operations for research operations housed in the Memory and Brain Wellness Center at the University of Washington. Pema knows the value of education and believes that all children should have access to inclusive and nurturing environments regardless of their financial position. Pema has always felt a pull towards Africa. She joined Hope Shines’ Board of Directors in January 2020. Pema holds a BA in International Studies with minors in Public Health and African Studies from Indiana University and an MA in International Human Rights from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies.

Dr. Sara Foster Fabiano
Health & Medical

Sara Foster Fabiano grew up in Angola in southwestern Africa and moved to the United States as a senior in high school. From an early age, she had experiences that piqued her interest in medicine and decided to pursue a career in this. Sara completed her undergraduate degree in South Carolina, went on to medical school at Wake Forest in North Carolina, and subsequently moved to Colorado for a residency in family medicine. After completing residency, she stayed on with the program as a provider with Denver Health. Having lived in an international context with a mixed family, instilled in her a desire to continue to be involved in international activities and service. Hope Shines has been able to serve as one of those outlets since joining the board in 2018.
Silke Sancaktar
Legal Council

Silke began supporting Hope Shines in an advisory capacity in 2015 while working as an attorney in private practice. She has since transitioned to an in-house role working for Newmont Corporation but continues to provide support to Hope Shines as a legal advisor. Silke was raised on the East Coast but found her way out West in 2005 as part of AmeriCorps, working first with the Coconino Rural Environment Corps in Arizona to cut overcrowded forest and build and preserve habitat for elk, pronghorn antelope, and birds before hanging up her chain saw to work with Montana Legal Services behind a desk in the area of consumer law. The engagement with Legal Services sparked her interest in law and before she knew it she was off to law school at the University of Denver. Most of Silke’s free time is spent enjoying the outdoors with her kids.

Peter Van Arsdale, PHD
Humanitarian Development

Peter Van Arsdale, Ph.D., retired from the University of Denver’s Josef Korbel School of International Studies in 2020, but continues to serve there as a Global Fellow (pro bono), advising its new Africa Center. Although he has worked worldwide, his most recent efforts have focused on East Africa (Tanzania, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya). Several of these projects are through Rotary. His emphases are human rights, community development (including water resources), and humanitarian assistance. His latest book, about to be released, is Encounters: 50 Fascinating Strangers from My Life on the Road. He is co-founder of The Denver Hospice and the Josef Korbel School’s Humanitarian Assistance Program.

Manoj Pardasani
Social Work

Manoj Pardasani, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., is a Dean and Professor at the School of Social Work. Previously, he served as an Associate Provost (Graduate and Professional Schools) and Professor of Social Work at Hunter College in New York, and a Faculty Research Scholar at the Ravazzin Center for Social Work Research in Aging and Senior Associate Dean at the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service. He has a Master’s of Social Work degree and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University. He currently serves a 1st Vice President on the NYC Chapter of NASW's Board of Directors. Dr. Pardasani has also documented the impact of diverse program models among immigrants, refugees and other oppressed groups with reference to HIV/AIDS, chronic mental illness and homelessness.
**Basic Needs for Education (BNE)**

Supports all basic needs for 44 children, so they can attend school without disruption. A core program that seeks to eliminate barriers that lead to failure.

**After-School (LEAD: Life Enhancement & Academic Development)**

Weekly activities and workshops taught by a teacher at the learning center. This staple program supports the children 4 days a week with feedings, social work, academic lessons, tutoring for National Exams, and supplemental arts.

**Healthy Child**

Crucial Health support across all programs includes annual health insurance, psycho-social support, healthy living workshops, feminine hygiene education, daily feedings, and clean water provisions.

**Parent-led Initiatives**

The Parent Co-op serves to involve parents of the children to help influence better outcomes. The parents work together to share resources, offer support for each family, and work to create opportunities for income to support themselves.
Basic Needs for Education (BNE)

The Basic Needs for Education program pays for qualified students’ school fees, school uniforms, school supplies, and health insurance. This program is a large contributor to achieving our objective of reducing the dropout rate of students in the district. Hope Shines strives to keep students in school and learning to complement our other education programming efforts. To remain in this program, students are required to achieve an above-average grade report each term, consistently attend and participate in the other Hope Shines programs during the year, display a willingness to learn, and act in good conduct at all times.
Healthy Child

One of the most basic tenets of Hope Shines is to empower Rwanda’s youth, which begins with each child understanding and respecting his or her own body. The Healthy Child Program is integrated within all Hope Shines’ programs and taught by trained teachers, health experts, and medical professionals. It includes annual health assessments of the child and promotes critical understandings of pro-actively taking steps in one’s life to stay healthy.

This past year we were able to continue to provide food, health insurance, and we even increased our feminine hygiene support with more supplies offered. The health of our children is key to them having the ability to learn at school and lead a healthy life. In the next fiscal year 2022, we are working with partners that can integrate a sex education curriculum into our after-school sessions. This will provide vital education to growing boys and girls and give them tools and understanding of their bodies and how to respect others.
After-School (LEAD)

The LEAD (Life Enhancement & Academic Development) program is Hope Shines’ After-School Program. Its goal is to engage students in active learning during and in between school terms, year-round. The program meets 4 days each week at the Learning Center in the Nyamirambo sector of Kigali. During the 4 days, the children can get help with homework, are taught a unique revolving curriculum that matches that of the national curriculum country-wide, are fed a nutritious cooked meal with filtered clean water on-site, and are prepared for their national exams when applicable. Saturdays are devoted to the arts and sport. The children practice traditional Rwandan dance, drumming, and sports such as football and gymnastics.
Hope Shines focuses on the whole child development. With that, we value and welcome the wrap around support that families can offer the child that compliments our programs and efforts. In 2021, we introduced training support for our parents and care givers, something that they have been asking for in past years. We are proud to report that we launched the Basket Weaving training which was a great success and one that we will continue to build upon.

Basket Weaving: 17 of our parents attended a 3-month educational workshop that taught the fundamentals of traditional basket weaving and how to manage the business. Today, many women and men are weaving and finding new markets in which to sell their handmade craft products.
"Ikibina" - Translated as "a group of people with a common goal"

This group initiative was born in 2019 by the parents alone and not sponsored by Hope Shines. The need to support each other became very apparent within the parents community of our children. They understand that by combining efforts collectively, there is a greater positive impact for all.

The simple existence of Hope Shines has brought together a group of parents in the community to share resources and collectively improve their lives by working together.
"Ikibina" - 2021 Statistics

Stats: The year 2021 showed an increase of 76% of savings, which was used for starting small venture businesses and paying for emergency needs.

Savings, 2021: The group saved 1,800,000 RWF (approx. $1,800 USD)

- 1 family started a chicken business
- 1 family was able to buy a small piece of land
- 1 family started a business of suppling flour for porridge
- ALL families and their children benefited from this opportunity!
COVID RESPONSE

Unprecedented Times

The challenges posed by Covid have been felt throughout the world and Rwanda was no exception. We immediately began to create protocols for our staff to operate safely and we wanted to ensure that our center was safe for the children. Our focus has been (and remains) to operate year-round safely and to ensure that we can continue to fund our efforts. Here is a recap of our response:

- We created a checklist of safety measures regarding Covid including temperature checks, visitor sign-in sheets for tracking, daily cleaning of the center, providing masks for the children and visitors, and supporting those who may be sick
- Constantly monitored the family situations while under lockdown and the center was closed
- We shifted feedings from just 44 children daily to the entire family, which totaled over 160 people
- We implemented more online hardship campaigns and reached out to donors to ensure future financial support

We are thankful that even now, our families and children have avoided becoming infected, which we are very proud of! Our center was open and available for the children whenever it could be. The effects of Covid on Rwanda are still present but improving as vaccinations increase.
DANCE LIKE NO ONE IS WATCHING

Traditional dance in Rwanda is something to see! The style is called Intore. We incorporated dance class every Saturday during the after-school programming a few years ago. Its choreography involves memorizing hundreds of moves and our kids are becoming masters at it!

In this challenging year, we have been limited to very few practices at the center due to lockdowns and of course, performances came to a stop. As the country opened back up, we are poised to continue to offer the dance sessions led by a new instructor Mr. Clement, who comes from a background in dance and performance. Theo, our Facility Manager, also assists given his dance background and passion for it.

Through fundraising, we were also able to upgrade the costumes and instruments used in the performances. The dancers work so hard each week and the qualitative results from their efforts are translating to better performance in the classroom and improved discipline!
LET'S EAT!

In 2020, we took on the task of bringing in 9 new students in the community that needed Hope Shines' support. All 9 came from our existing families, which allowed us to further support them at an even deeper level. The meals served at Hope Shines during the after-school program are a thing to depend on. The children love the hot cooked food and we can provide jobs to some of the family members as cooks and helpers.

With the 4+ lockdowns in Rwanda, serving food became a bigger task than in years past. We could not operate the center as "business as usual". We had to get creative. Therefore, we re-budgeted our feeding program by including the children AND their families due to many families losing jobs during Covid. Fortunately, with our donor support and fundraising efforts, we were able to feed over 160 people for almost half of the year! Each Friday, parents came to the center to receive the weekly ration for their family, and in return for this, they turned in that week’s homework from their child. This was a blessing of a stopgap during a tough time and the children were also able to stay on track with school. Win-Win!
Hope Shines social enterprise projects (recycled soap and chicken eggs) continued to produce revenue that was used to offset expenses for the year.

With donor support, we launched a chicken coop project that now produces over 200 eggs per week, which are in turn used in meal preparations and also sold to market. Future planning is in place now to expand the project mid-year.

New financial resources were allocated to the further development of Kiza recycled bathing soap and we added a full-time development manager to the project. With the spread of Covid, hand-washing became more important than ever and we are happy to be a supplier of clean usable soap!

Our focus on seeking long-term financial sustainability will remain and social enterprise projects will play a large role in this success.
Kiza Recycled Bathing Soap

Currently supports 6 jobs for families and other staff at our center where the bars are produced

The Kiza project was born from the global movement of Eco Soap Bank. Meaning “to save”, Kiza is saving lives by saving soap!

The project suffered last year due to the closing of so many hotel partners once tourism halted. The project is designed to acquire used soap bars from hotels once guests leave and without guests, many hotels closed or just couldn’t provide much soap supply for us at all.

The project has continued to operate off and on throughout the last year and we continue to seek ways to supplement our soap supply. We spent a lot of time developing demand for the product, especially in light of the need for sanitary soap in the country. We are currently shifting away from recycling until the tourism industry rebounds to creating a virgin new bar of soap. Also planned is to offer free hand hygiene workshops throughout the year!
## FINANCIALS

Summary & Allocation of Our Annual Expenses:  
July 1 2020 - June 30 2021

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<th>Category</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Spent in Rwanda</strong></td>
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<td>All programs and social enterprise, salaries, operations, and tax expenses.</td>
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<td><strong>Spent in Rwanda</strong></td>
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<td>1%</td>
<td>Event and Donor related expenses.</td>
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**Total Revenue** $87,807  
**Total Expenses** $81,031  
**Spent in Rwanda** $47,018

*Hope Shines, Inc. FY 2021 Annual Report*
HOW WE MEASURED

Fundraising
- Most revenues originated from the United States
- Total revenue = $87,807 (increase of 34% over full 2019/2020 year)
- Events consisted of online campaigns only due to Covid
- The chicken eggs project generated approximately $914 USD in sales

Social Enterprise Projects
- Recycled Soap:
  - Supply from hotels halted due to the tourism industry being affected by Covid
  - Soap production was put on pause and new ways to address supply were started
  - Leftover inventory of soap was either sold or given away
- Chicken Eggs:
  - Launched this project in January 2020, built a coop, and purchased 33 chickens
  - Generated a new job for one family member and over $900 USD of income

LEAD, After-School
- 87% attendance in the program
- Able to provide food for 160 people (the children and families) during 4 months of country lockdown
- The Center was closed due to Covid and inaccessible to the children for 16 weeks
- The yearly testing average was 64% (Credit Level)

Basic Needs for Education
- 89% of children promoted to the next grade level in school
- 36 school bags, shoes, socks, underwear, 72 school uniforms were distributed to the children
- 4 children enrolled in annual health insurance
- 100% of children enrolled attended school

Parent Co-Op & Committee
- 17 parents attended and passed a 3-month vocational workshop on basket weaving
- The 6-person parents’ committee ensured that the connection between Hope Shines and the families was stronger and communications flowed
- Savings & Loan scheme continued participation and families benefited from it
FAMILY & SUPPORT

Hope Shines families are some of the poorest and most in need in the city. Our aims in the last year have been to continue to create and offer new and unique ways to help the parents be better at parenting, earn a better income, and for the children to get the help they need from an academic and psycho-social lens.

Family household income has fluctuated since our current children enrollments in 2016. At that time, families lived off of around $15 per month then as a result of the efforts of hiring family for our projects and programs coupled with skills training, families are now able to contribute more to the family. Covid took a hit on the families starting back in March of 2020 and now families are working to makes ends meet along with support from Hope Shines.

Through our social worker program launched in the Spring of 2021, we are working individually with the children and soon to be their families. We have seen a greater need to help address the families psycho-social support as well since the children are so influenced by their home lives.

Future family support will come in the form of enhancing and scaling these co-ops, developing long-term sustainable livelihoods, hiring more family as staff in our growing social enterprise, and administering job skills trainings for entrepreneurial minded people.
Since its inception in 2021, the Social Worker program at the Hope Shines center has created a much-needed outlet for our children to have someone to talk to that is trusting and safe. Our children come from very challenging home lives and many of the struggles they face, derive from their families and guardians/parents. Through individual and group therapies sessions, our social worker has uncovered many issues that will be worked on to ensure that the children can live mentally stable lives. Below are some quotes taken from those private sessions. We will continue to fund this program so that each child can get full support from Hope Shines so they will become more hopeful in life.

"I currently live with my step dad; he constantly reminds me that he is not my father. He beats me and my siblings and at times uses wounding language to address us."
- Hope Shines Boy, Age 13

"My wish is that at least one of my parents could make an effort to get employed or come up a strategy to provide for our family."
- Hope Shines Girl, Age 13

"At times when my parents get money from relatives, they have to prioritize and they end up paying for rent and leaving out other basic needs such as food."
- Hope Shines Girl, Age 13
WHAT DO THE CHILDREN SAY?

Although there are some hard times for each of our children at Hope Shines, they are still trending upwards and our efforts are making a positive impression on them. The idea of Hope Shines is to instill hope, even when all things seems hopeless! Hear what our children say and feel inspired!

"I have always wished to become a medical doctor. That’s why I always work hard to achieve it." -- 15 year old girl

"Most of the time when you set goals for yourself, you achieve them if you work hard with motivation. I have learned that I will always set goals for myself and work my hardest to achieve them." -- 14 year old girl

"I believe that someday I will be living a better life, and I will help others just like you do for me." -- 18 year old boy
HEAR FROM THE STAFF

What is one funny thing that the kids do that makes you laugh and love them even more?

"The kids call me “Father”! It used to be funny in the beginning but I am now used to it. But it makes me love them more because of the place I have in their life."

~ Phillip, Country Director

What motivates you to work with vulnerable children each day?

"When I see those children I see myself in them. I get motivated because I hope that someday, they will be someone great if they work hard for it."

~ Liliane, Programs Manager
2022 GOALS

- Graduate 11 children to advance from Primary school to Secondary school
- Employ up to 4 more family members in the social enterprise projects
- Pair 19 unsponsored children with new sponsors and be able to fully fund them
- Continue to expand our board of directors
- Get full health and dental exams performed and issues addressed
- Redesign and launch new updated website
COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

The sponsorship program at Hope Shines has been an amazing platform to connect those who want to support Hope Shines with the children we serve. Launched in 2018, we immediately matched sponsors with almost 15 of our children. This easy to use and navigate program has created relationships that will last a lifetime. Many sponsors have reported that they are so thankful to know that their financial support gets them front-row seats into the child’s life. They learn of their challenges and successes through letter writing and can even send birthday cards each year as an extra special form of love and support. Some sponsors have even met their children in their homes when they visited the country!

We are so grateful to now have 25 children matched with loving sponsors! This program is by far the best and most intimate way to support Hope Shines and BE a part of Rwanda. This connection with the child supports them emotionally and provisionally. Our constant goal of remaining financially sustainable relies heavily on this program’s success. Come and take a ride with us and visit our program at our website and be prepared to change the world!
CHILD SPONSOR TESTIMONIAL

The commitment to children is one of Hope Shines core values

My connection with my child has made me more aware of the challenges she faces, as well as her resilience and determination to meet those challenges. I'm confident my financial and personal support are well placed. Investing in her potential and her future wellbeing is a decision I'm grateful to have made.

~ Christine