



EMERALD
FOUNDATION
Age With Dignity



2023 Annual Report

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Letter from the ED



This year has been the most eventful since the inception of Emerald Foundation Uganda. I reflect with pride on our accomplishments and look forward with optimism to our future work with older people in Uganda.

The 2020 words of António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, that "*no person, young or old, is expendable*," have been particularly relevant this year, resonating deeply with the circumstances of older persons globally—and, in my view, even more so in Africa.

In this first year of the post-COVID-19 era, recovery efforts, humanitarian work, emergency response, and development interventions have mostly targeted the dominant youth demographic dividend, overlooking older persons—despite the pandemic disproportionately impacting their health and well-being.

This oversight has further reinforced the perception that old people are past their prime, and relegated them to the fringes of society—essentially placing them in the departure lobby, on ‘their way out’! This has not only undermined their perceived worth but also deprived our communities of the valuable contributions they still have to offer to the pressing challenges of our society.

Against this backdrop, I couldn’t be prouder that our work this year has improved the well-being of older persons and transformed how our community and other age groups regard them. Notable among our many achievements, has been our quarterly music activities, which engaged older persons throughout the year, and culminated in a standout year-end Christmas festival. These events showcased older participants in music, drama, and storytelling and often attracted intergenerational audiences, reflecting a growing appreciation for older people in our community.

Additionally, the physical store we established in October to sell handcrafted products made by older persons—such as woven baskets, jewelry, and sisal ropes and handbags—significantly enhanced the livelihoods of our older persons, fostering a sense of independence and agency, as did our efforts in assisted daily living, welfare support, and rights advocacy.

Overall, our efforts to combat isolation, loneliness, neglect, abuse, poverty among disadvantaged older persons excelled this year - thanks to the tireless efforts of our youthful team, the generosity of our donors (particularly, Dr. Philip Ney, and the Braackmann Family), the commitment of our paying members, and the collaboration of our reliable partners.

As we enter the new year, 2024, I couldn’t be more confident of how much impact we shall make.


Salume Okure

**Executive Director
 Emerald Foundation Uganda**

Organizational Overview



Vision

Age with Dignity

Mission

To combat isolation, loneliness, neglect, abuse, and poverty among marginalized elderly individuals through comprehensive physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual care provided within our special purpose elderly care home and in-home services.

Values

Compassion

- Kindness & empathy are at the core of everything we do.
- We prioritize the well-being of older persons, ensuring they feel cared for and valued.
- We are patient, loving and advocate for an inclusive community

Accountability

- We take responsibility for our decisions, actions, and outcomes.
- We are open and transparent, and all stakeholders can trust in our work.
- We evaluate our impact regularly and make adjustments to improve.

Obligation To serve Elderly

- We embrace our obligation to serve the elderly.
- For us, serving older persons is a privilege, central to our purpose
- We foster intergenerational connections that enrich our lives & bridge the generational gap.

Integrity

- We maintain honesty and transparency in all our actions and communications.
- We honor our commitments and hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards
- We remain true to our mission, even in the face of challenges.

Accountability

- The experiential knowledge of God guides our mission and actions through His wisdom and love.
- Serving others, like the elderly, comes from knowing God.
- We strive to grow spiritually, grounding our efforts in the knowledge of God's purpose

Key Milestones



Website Published

In March, 2023, our organization's website (<https://emerald.foundation.ug/>) was successfully launched, designed by one of our volunteers. This website has become an important platform for outreach, resource sharing, and raising awareness about our work.



Growth in Direct Beneficiaries

Through our programs, we expanded our reach, growing the number of direct beneficiaries from 200 to 511. This reflects the positive impact of our efforts in providing essential services to older persons in our community.



Social Inclusion Project Launched

We launched the Social Inclusion Project, which aims to combat isolation and loneliness among older persons. The project includes quarterly socialization activities and culminated in a successful music festival in December 2023.



Helpline for Elder Abuse Launched

We introduced a helpline to empower community members to report cases of elder abuse. This initiative is part of our broader advocacy for the protection of older persons' rights and the creation of a safer environment for the elderly.



Community Health Camp Held

In April 2023, we organized our first-ever community health camp, providing free medical checkups, screening for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), referrals, and follow-up to older persons.

Key Achievements

Advocacy & Rights Protection

Community sensitization

Four community sensitization sessions conducted to raise awareness of older persons rights, available opportunities for the elderly, and avenues to seek legal redress in the event of abuse.



Ojula, our coordinator, discusses elder rights



2 By-laws influenced

We influenced the formulation of two by-laws in Opolai village, Asuret sub-county, Soroti district, aimed at protecting the rights of older persons. These included a by-law penalizing physical elder abuse, which had become rampant, and another mandating the inclusion of older persons in community decision-making processes.

1 Television Interview

Our Executive Director was hosted for a national television interview by Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), under the Youth of Purpose Program (YOP), where she raised awareness about rights of older persons, emphasized the vital role of young people in elder rights protection, and discussed our organization's efforts to combat age discrimination and promote inclusive policies.



Our ED, Salume In the TV interview at UBC

12 Radio Talk shows

We participated in 12 radio talk shows across various local stations in Teso, to raise awareness about the rights of older persons. During these shows, we educated the public on issues such as elder abuse, neglect, and the importance of social inclusion, and encouraged community support for older persons.

Legal Aid Linkage

We linked 7 older persons to legal aid services, ensuring they had access to justice and support in cases of physical and sexual abuse, land disputes, and inheritance conflicts. Notably, we averted the dispossession of land from an elderly widow and secured justice for another who had been assaulted by a disgruntled neighbor .

Nutritional Support

We distributed essential food items to our direct beneficiaries across all areas of operation on a monthly basis, ensuring they received proper nutrition to support their health and well-being. Each food package included posho, beans, rice, sugar, and basic household essentials like soap. We distribute these to groups to encourage social interaction, strengthen community bonds, and create a supportive environment.



Beneficiaries receive food packages in groups



Our Team sets up to start food distribution

Medical Camps

In partnership with the Rotary Club of Soroti and nearby health facilities, we organized two medical camps that provided free health screenings and consultations to 800 older persons within their communities, focusing on non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Referrals and follow-up were made for further management of identified health issues. These health camps also promoted positive health-seeking behaviors among older persons, encouraging them to prioritize regular check-ups and seek early treatment.

Health Education

We conducted nine health education sessions in the communities & participated in six talk shows on local radio stations to sensitize older persons, empowering them with knowledge on disease prevention and healthy living practices.



Older persons listening to our health talk

Mental Health Support

We conducted 26 home visits, 11 of which were to older persons identified by our community coordinators as being neglected and lonely, to provide individualized counseling, improving their mental health outcomes and overall well-being.



Walk About Day

The inaugural event of our 'Walk About' activity in October, where beneficiaries took guided walks around their villages before receiving food packages, attracted large participation, including young people, promoting physical activity while fostering intergenerational community engagement.

Music Festivals

We organized quarterly music festivals to celebrate the talents of older persons, where they performed in groups and solo, singing traditional and contemporary songs. These festivals fostered community spirit, promoted intergenerational connections, and provided a platform for older persons to share their rich cultural heritage with younger generations.



Akurut and Ikilai performing their song.

Cinema Shows

We organized 4 community cinema shows featuring cultural and Christian movies, as well as drama performances, where older persons enjoyed films together with younger people. These shows helped foster social interaction, encouraged intergenerational bonding, and promoted a sense of community among the participants.

After the cinema shows, we engage both the older persons and the young people in interactive sessions. During these times, the older persons, relate their experiences and the young relate to the lessons learnt. This has helped strengthen community ties, fostering inclusion, and bridging the generation gap.

In the communities where we have had cinema shows, subsequent activities requiring younger people to be involved, or offer a helping hand, have been made easier, like cutting grass to renovate older persons' huts.

Christmas Festival

We organized the first Christmas Festival for older persons, to close out the year, where they participated in music contests, both in groups representing each of our operational areas and in solo performances. They sang traditional cultural songs and dances, shared stories, and interacted with one another, many meeting for the first time and building new connections. The event was attended by representatives from the district.

In the festival, all 511 of our beneficiaries either actively participated or were represented, creating a festive atmosphere that celebrated the talents and traditions of older persons while strengthening community bonds. Although competitive, in the end, everyone was a winner, as all groups received prizes for their participation, and those from respective sub-counties returned home happy and fulfilled.



Solo Music performance by 83 year old Loyce, from Asuret



Group Music performance led by Mzee Yosepu

In-home assistance

We conducted monthly home visits to our beneficiaries, assisting them with daily tasks such as bathing, dressing, and meal preparation. During these visits, we invited their immediate neighbors to join us, and together, we shared a meal. This approach fostered social cohesion, a sense of belonging, and encouraged the community to participate in supporting older persons.



Our coordinators preparing a meal



Housing Improvements

We assisted older persons in repairing their huts, renovating places of convenience & tidying their compounds to prevent crawling reptiles, and adapting their living spaces to make them safer and more accessible.



Tidying the compound of Gladys' ramshackle hut & repairing the urinal

Mobility Aids Support

We distributed basic walking aids, particularly walking sticks to improve the independence & mobility of older persons.



William Odeke guiding blind Mzee Yosepu to sit during our meeting



Urinal shelter after repair

Group Fellowships

We formed 6 fellowship groups for older persons, creating opportunities for worship, Bible study, and mutual encouragement. These groups fostered a sense of community and belonging, allowing older persons to share testify, support one another in prayer, and strengthen their spiritual lives. Through these gatherings, many were comforted and encouraged, finding renewed purpose and hope in their old age.



Group Fellowship with older persons

Individual Counseling

We provided one-on-one spiritual guidance and counseling to older persons during home visits, offering comfort and support to those facing loneliness, grief, or anxiety. Led by Apostle Basil, our spiritual counselors listened to their concerns, prayed with them, and helped them reconnect with their faith. We also extended these prayers to other family members, encouraging them to continue supporting their elder members.



Apostle Basil praying with an old person

Community Prayers

We organized quarterly community prayer gatherings to foster spiritual well-being and encourage a sense of belonging among older persons. These events, involving both older persons and younger people, provided a space for communal worship, reflection, and the strengthening of faith. They created a supportive environment where older persons felt spiritually connected, valued, and uplifted by their community.



Community prayers involving older persons

Bible Distribution

We collaborated with the Bible Society of Uganda, Teso branch, to distribute Bibles to older persons who needed them, ensuring they had access to scripture for spiritual nourishment and personal reflection. In total, 54 of our beneficiaries received New Testament Bibles in English, while 23 received Bibles translated into Ateso.

After every bible distribution event, we conducted bible quizzes for the older persons in groups, creating a fun, learning and engaging environment.

Tree Planting

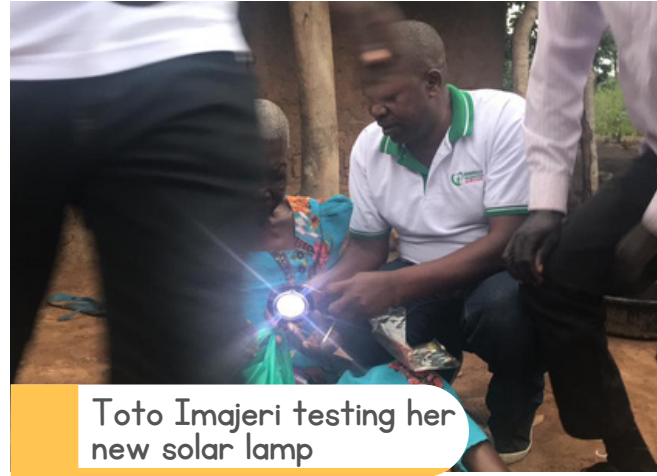
We organized two tree planting drives in collaboration with older persons and their families, focusing on increasing green cover in their homes and throughout the community. These not only helped conserve the environment but also engaged older persons in sustainable practices that contribute to their well-being. During interactive sessions, older persons shared their time-honored knowledge and practices on climate conservation.



Planting a tree in the home of an elder

Clean Energy Promotion

We distributed solar lights to older persons, significantly reducing their dependence on kerosene lamps and other polluting energy sources for lighting during dark hours. This enhanced their safety, as kerosene lamps posed a risk of burning their thatched huts, lowered associated energy costs, and promoted clean energy, contributing to a healthier environment and improving the overall quality of life for our beneficiaries.



Toto Imajeri testing her new solar lamp

Community Clean-Up

We organized community clean-up campaigns involving older persons & younger community members. Together, we cleaned and tidied homes of older persons & the surrounding community spaces, fostering intergenerational engagement while promoting cleanliness and environmental stewardship. These activities also enhanced a sense of belonging for the older persons, giving them the satisfaction being of relevant to their community



The home of an elder being cleaned

After the community clean-up events, we held community health sessions to sensitize older persons and the wider community on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) practices. These sessions emphasized the importance of maintaining clean water sources, clean places of convenience, proper sanitation, and hygiene habits such as soap hand washing, to enhance overall health and well-being



Health talk after clean up events

Skills Improvement

We trained 23 older persons to improve their craft-making abilities, building on their existing knowledge in skills like sisal rope making, basket weaving, and hand bag crafting. The training updated their techniques to meet modern demands. We also included their younger caregivers in the training, as they play a vital role in supporting the elderly. This training boosted income-generating capacities for both the older persons and their caregivers



Mzee Ewangu trained in sisal making

Elder's Agriculture Farm

We partnered with our beneficiaries in Asuret sub-county to establish a novel agriculture farm of 2 acres, where older persons engage in group farming of maize, our main staple food that is widely consumed by the community.

As our contribution, we provided seed, and management support, while the able elders participated in lighter tasks such as weeding. They were supported by their younger caregivers for tasks that were more physically demanding.

The farm not only provided fresh produce for their sustenance but also created an opportunity to sell surplus produce, generating additional income for the older persons and their families.

Craft Shop

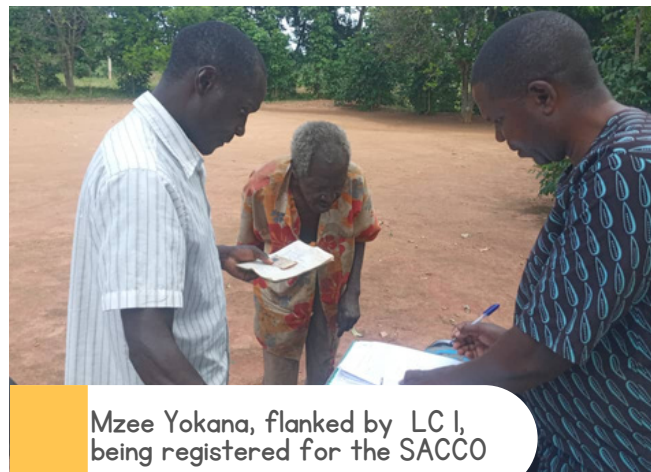
We established a craft shop where products made by older persons and their younger caregivers, are sold at prices higher than usual market rates. This setup offers the community an opportunity to support the elderly, with proceeds essentially serving as a form of fundraising to provide funds or meeting the daily sustenance needs of older persons, such as food, clothing, & shelter, while also offering financial empowerment & a sense of purpose.



Some craft items made by elders on display

2 SACCOS Formed

We facilitated the formation of two Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOS) specifically for older persons: one exclusively for our direct beneficiaries and the second open to all older persons in the community. Through these SACCOS, older persons are able to save money, access micro-loans, and enhance their financial security, promoting greater economic independence and stability.



Mzee Yokana, flanked by LC I, being registered for the SACCOS

Challenges

- **Inadequate Transport for Volunteers**

Our volunteers currently rely on bicycles to reach beneficiaries, whose homes are located between 8 km and 100 km away. This mode of transport is both physically demanding and inefficient, particularly given the distances involved, which significantly limits our ability to conduct routine visits, discipleship, health camps, and social gatherings in a timely manner.

- **Limited Resources for Timely Implementation**

Resource shortages continue to affect our ability to deliver services, including the provision of food, washing detergents, and medical supplies. Additionally, we lack the necessary media tools, such as cameras and other visual/audial devices, to document our work and share it effectively through our platforms.

- **Insufficient Human Resources**

We have fewer than 12 skilled volunteers and less than 20 unskilled community volunteers, which is insufficient to serve the 511 elderly persons in our program. This has led to volunteer burnout, especially during social gatherings, and points to a need for more recruitment and better wellness support systems.

- **Lack of Legal Aid for Elder Abuse Cases**

Many older persons in our community face abuse, yet the organization lacks access to legal aid, making it difficult to address these cases effectively and protect their rights.

- **Knowledge Gaps on Elderly Rights & Government Programs**

There are knowledge gaps about the rights of older persons and available government programs, such as the Social Security Fund. This issue affects not only the elderly but also their caregivers and local leaders, limiting their access to critical services.

- **Shortage of Administrative Resources**

We lack essential administrative resources, including adequate working space, printing and scanning facilities, computers, and media tools like cameras for capturing high-quality images and videos, impeding our operational capacity and outreach efforts

Recommendations

- **Scale Up Resource Mobilization Efforts**

There is need to expand resource mobilization through the recruitment of more membership subscribers and engaging well-wishers. We should also explore economic social enterprise ventures and increase outreach to corporate societies and individuals. Additionally, identifying and participating in more proposal writing calls can help secure additional funding.

- **Join Networks o like-minded organizations**

There is a need to join networks of like-minded local and international organizations. These collaborations can help foster the exchange of ideas, resources, and best practices, enhancing our capacity to serve older persons.

- **Seek Partnerships for Transport Solutions**

We recommend forming partnerships with local organizations, government agencies, churches, and international NGOs to secure transport support. Highlighting the importance of mobility, we could seek donations of bicycles, motorcycles, or vehicles to reach older persons in remote areas more effectively.

- **Organize a Fundraising Campaign for Transport**

A dedicated fundraising campaign focused on improving transportation, can support our work with older persons. This will ensure our volunteers have the necessary tools to reach the most vulnerable elderly in distant locations.

- **Increase Community Sensitization Campaigns**

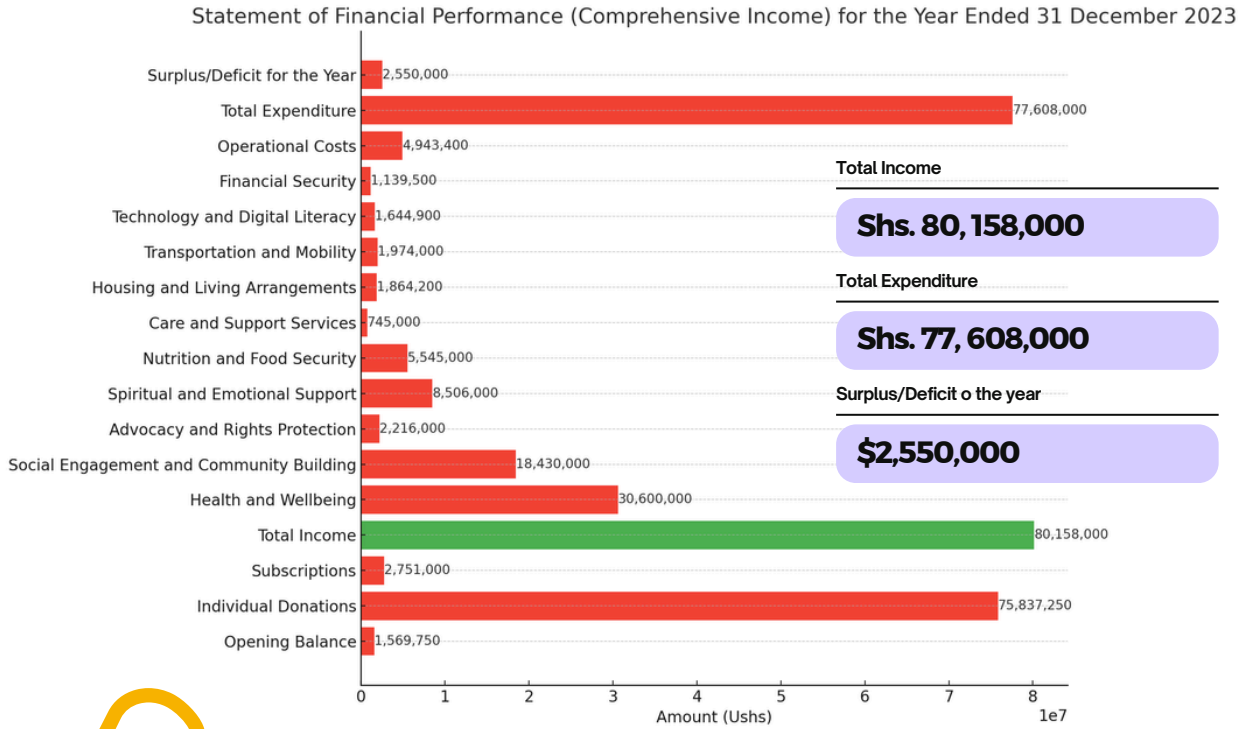
To address knowledge gaps on elderly rights and government opportunities, we recommend increasing the number of community sensitization campaigns. Working closely with local leaders and utilizing radio, TV, local meetings, and social media platforms can improve awareness.

- **Form Alliances for Legal Aid on Elder Abuse Cases**

Local businesses should be engaged to donate essential items such as washing detergents, medical supplies, and food. These businesses can also sponsor media equipment, such as cameras and video recorders, which are vital for improving the quality of content shared on our platforms.

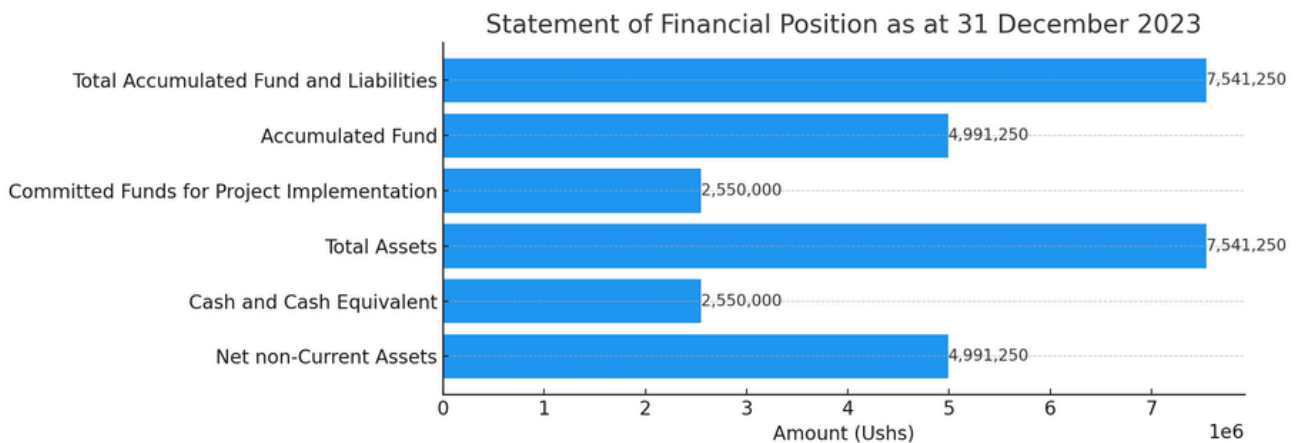
Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Performance



Statement of Financial Performance for the period ended 31 December 2023 illustrates the organization’s total income of Ushs 80,158,000, primarily derived from individual donations and subscriptions, showing the community's support for our activities. Expenditure amounts to Ushs 77,608,000, with major allocations towards Health and Wellbeing, Social Engagement, and Community Building. Surplus of Ushs 2,550,000 reflects our ability to manage resources effectively.

Statement of Financial Position



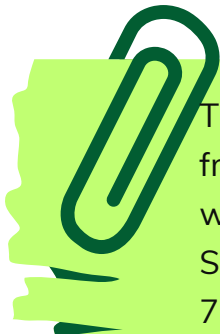
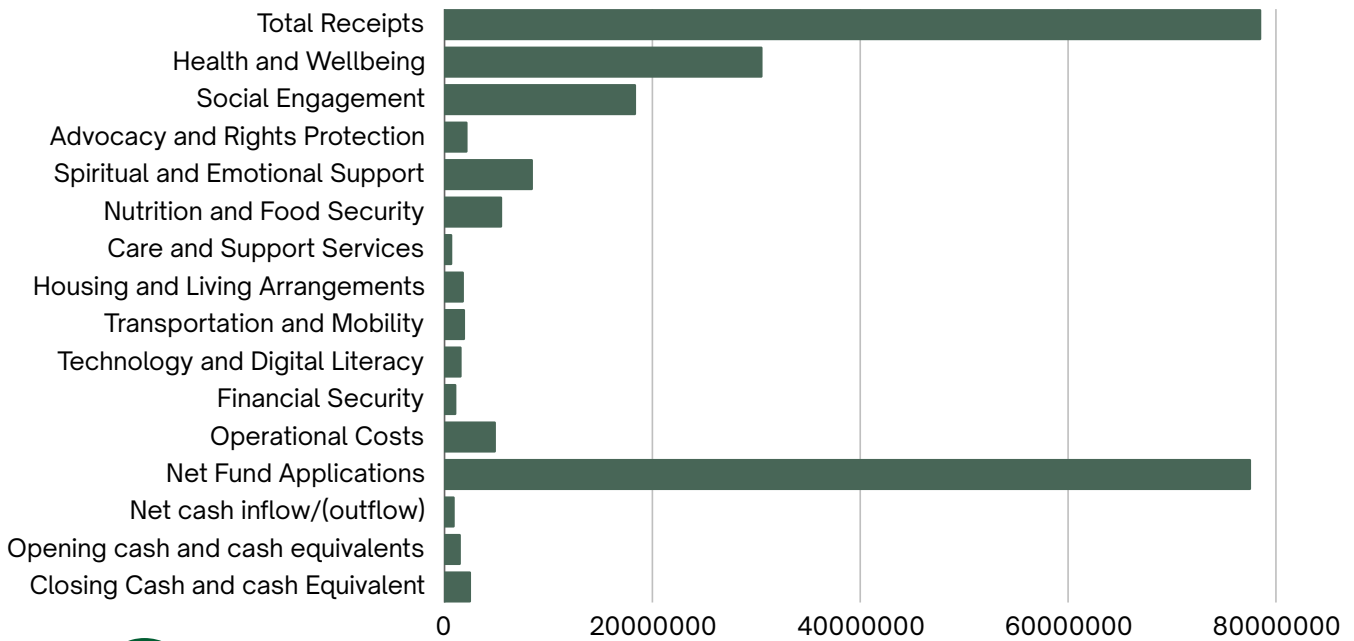
Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position



The Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2023 provides a snapshot of the organization’s financial health, with total assets amounting to Ushs 7,541,250, comprising of non-current assets valued at Ushs 4,991,250 and current assets, primarily cash, totaling Ushs 2,550,000. The statement emphasizes the accumulated fund, which reflects the organization's commitment to project implementation. The balance sheet demonstrates a solid foundation, ensuring that the organization is well-positioned to pursue its mission.

Statement of Cash Flows



Total receipts of Ushs 78,588,250 highlight robust income generated from various activities. The expenditure breakdown shows that funds were allocated across multiple areas, including Health and Wellbeing & Social Engagement, resulting in net fund applications of Ushs 77,608,000. Net cash inflow from operating activities is Ushs 980,250, leading to a closing cash balance of Ushs 2,550,000. This statement underscores the organization's effective cash management strategies

Future Outlook

As we reflect on our progress, we are also looking ahead to the future with bold plans and innovative solutions that will transform the care of older persons in Uganda, and indeed, provide models for emulation across Africa, and learning worldwide. Our vision is driven by the need to enhance elderly care while addressing sustainability, and we are excited to share the next steps on our journey.



Future Plans

- We plan to lead the way in elderly healthcare by constructing the first dedicated geriatric hospital in Uganda, ensuring specialized and comprehensive care for older persons.
- We aim to create a care home in Teso, the first in what will become a network of care homes spread across Uganda, addressing the growing needs of older persons countrywide.
- Through research and learning from global best practices, we envision being at the forefront of advocating for the integration of geriatric units within Uganda's health system.

Innovation

- Our care homes will operate in a rotational format, allowing elders to experience a change of environment by alternating between home and the care facility. This innovative model aligns with Africa's traditional caregiving practices, where elders prefer to age at home but need occasional support and change.
- As part of our sustainability plan, we will accept elders from wealthier families who may provide temporary financial support for their loved ones, ensuring that care homes can generate income while supporting those most in need.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the remarkable progress we have achieved this year. To our donors and partners, your unwavering support has been the foundation of our success.

We are particularly thankful to Dr. Philip G. Ney, from Canada, and Paula Braackmann, and the community *Bad Iburg*, in Germany, whose generous donations enabled us to conduct the end-of-year Christmas festival and run several other Social Inclusion activities, bringing joy and connection to many older persons.

We are also immensely grateful to our dedicated volunteers, both skilled and unskilled, who have tirelessly worked to support our beneficiaries, often traveling long distances by bicycle to bring care and assistance to older persons in remote areas. Your commitment and selflessness have been key to every success we have registered.

To the local leaders, government agencies, churches, and organizations who have stood with us in advocating for the rights and well-being of older persons, we thank you for your collaboration and partnership, and look forward to even more impactful partnerships.

We also express our heartfelt appreciation to members of Emerald Foundation Uganda. Your belief in our vision and continuous engagement have propelled us forward. As we look to the future, we remain motivated by your trust and excited about the journey ahead.

Above all, we thank God for guiding our steps and blessing our work throughout the year. We trust in His continued provision and protection as we enter the new year 2024



Emerald foundation

Our Team



Salume Okure

Executive Director



Steven Ewalu

Project's Manager



Catherine Imede (CPA)

Accountant



Mazune Emma

Projects' Administrator



Happy Ojula

Coordinator - Serere District



Odeke William

Coordinator - Amuria District



Okuni Emma

Coordinator - Soroti District



Paula Braackmann

Volunteer



Max Okello

Volunteer



Imelda Aiko

Volunteer



Miriam Pedun

Volunteer



Nancy Akello

Volunteer

Contact Us



+256 778 977 515
+256 764 844 187



info@emeraldfoundationug.org
emeraldfoundationug@gmail.com



<https://emeraldfoundationug.org/>



**Nakatunya, Soroti City West, P. O Box,
806, Soroti**



emerald-foundation-uganda



emeraldfoundationug



@EmeraldUganda



@EmeraldFoundationug