

Dear Supporter

Thank you for your generous commitment to Shines in 2024.

*It has been another eventful few months for Shines UK and Shines Uganda. In this newsletter you will read about the Medical Camp held in Miiryia in October, the new program to train the young mothers in Makudui in tailoring, and the capacity building initiative for the teachers at Shines School.*

*You will also learn about next year's inaugural volunteering program; perhaps you or someone you know might like to participate.*

*But let's start where everything starts: with you, our donors and supporters, without whom none of it would be possible at all. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts!*



## NEWSLETTER — WINTER 24/25



*Above left: a UK volunteer doctor and a Ugandan volunteer Clinical Officer treat a patient at Shines Medical Camp. A total of 1569 patients were treated over two days.*

*Above right: the Dr Janet Wolf library, named in honour of the late academic at City of London University whose legacy enabled us to complete the construction of Shines School.*

*Below right: the first shelves of the library are filled with books donated by UK friends, as one of our volunteers leads a creative writing workshop for the older children.*



The first Shines Medical Camp took place in 2023, and in this second year of operation we were able to benefit from lessons learned, and to build on the success of last year.

Although a culture of charity volunteering is not well-established in Uganda, Shines' reputation locally enabled us to recruit over 100 volunteer clinicians and medical professionals for the camp. With multiple agencies working together in the first collaboration of its kind locally, we were able to run an even larger variety of clinics than last year, and to treat 1569 people—an increase of around 60% on last year.

The ophthalmology clinic was particularly well attended and treated over 300 patients, distributing a total of 127 pairs of glasses that had been donated in the UK.

Medical care is expensive in Uganda, and out of reach to many, who instead may turn to herbalists and traditional doctors. The free treatment available at Shines Medical Camp genuinely changes lives.

We are incredibly grateful to the Rockcliffe Charitable Trust for its continuing support of the camp.



Top and middle left: Volunteer doctors treat patients at Shines Medical Camp

Bottom left: Children wait to be seen by a doctor.

Bottom right: The Pharmacy team prepare for a day of dispensing medications to people who would otherwise be unable to afford them.

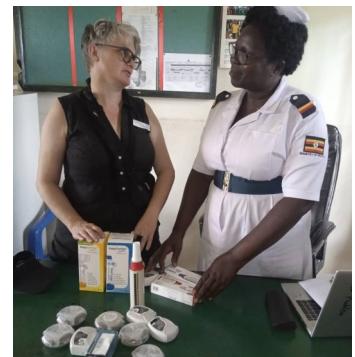
After the medical camp, Dr Wedgwood from the UK gave a talk at Masindi General Hospital on the diagnosis and management of asthma, and donated relevant items to the hospital (right and below right).

Asthma is a growing problem in Uganda. Most people cook indoors over charcoal, so the level of inhaled particulates is high. Traffic is increasing too, even in a small town like Masindi, and many vehicles are old and poorly maintained. All of this increases the risk factors for the condition.

Dr Wedgwood discussed trends in treatment around the world, with particular reference to the Africa-specific data published by Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA).

Meanwhile, children's author Gareth Edwards gave a puppet performance of his book "Never Ask A Dinosaur To Dinner" for the children of Shines School (near right), and then led a creative writing workshop in which children in the older year-groups wrote imaginative stories and then read or performed them for their peers.

Creative writing is not generally taught in Ugandan schools, and the children took to it enthusiastically!



We have secured a grant from the Waterloo Foundation to provide advanced teacher training to the teachers (left) of Shines School.

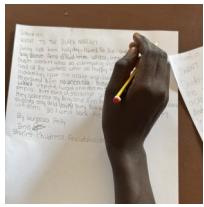
We will be engaging with Redearth Education, a wonderful charity founded some 20 years ago by Lynne Pritchard and Ron Katzler, which offers outstanding training programs emphasising child-centred teaching approaches. Ugandan teaching is often based around a rather old-fashioned rote-learning approach, with little attempt to cater to the needs of individual children. The training will bring a more holistic approach to the children of Shines School.

In 2023, Shines UK began working with a group of young mothers in the small village of Makudui, near Mbale in Eastern Uganda. A Ugandan Community Benefit Organisation, "Care For Girls", has now been established to manage this project, and this now represents the second Ugandan organisation that Shines UK supports, financially and practically.

These girls had all become pregnant at a very early age through rape or child marriage, but had then been thrown out by their families. A dowry system still operates in many parts of Uganda; sadly, a girl who has had a baby may no longer be seen as valuable to her parents, and of course the baby is an extra mouth to feed. Without education or any skills, the girls and their babies were living a life of total destitution when Shines first got to know them last year.

For young women like these, a chance to learn a skill, so that they can support themselves and their infants, is the greatest opportunity that can be offered. A one-off generous donation by an individual supporter of Shines has enabled us to secure training in tailoring for four of these girls, and they should qualify as tailors towards the end of 2024. As part of their training, they are making clothes for themselves and their children, and we are looking forward to buying some of their creations once they are qualified next year. Traditional Ugandan "kitenge" fabrics are colourful and attractive, and make wonderful soft furnishings as well as clothing.





## Volunteer with us

2025 will see the launch of Shines UK's first **volunteering program**. Volunteers can take part for a three week period either between 7 and 25 July, or between 28 July and 15 August, or alternatively can volunteer for the full six weeks.

Volunteering opportunities are available in a number of areas, including education, health, entrepreneurship, legal aid, sport, IT literacy and the environment—whatever your skills, we will find a role for you. Unfortunately we cannot take under-18s, but we are happy to welcome every other age group, from “gap summer” students to the retired, and everyone in between.

As well as the opportunity to offer your time and skills to the communities Shines serves, there will also be time for fun! The town of Masindi is close to Murchison Falls National Park, home to lions, elephants, hippos and crocodiles, and the Ziwa Rhino reintroduction project, and optional visits to both will be arranged for the weekends. Masindi itself is a pleasant small town, culturally a world away from everything we are used to, but friendly, welcoming and warm.

For more information, contact [info@shinesuk.org](mailto:info@shinesuk.org)

## Support our work in 2025

We are currently fund-raising to enable us to complete the final “piece of the jigsaw” at Shines School. In Uganda, children in upper primary school generally board at school, at least during the week, but Shines School does not have boarding accommodation at present. Shines School is now a beautiful building, with excellent teaching and a growing reputation throughout the region. Once the school has been able to build boarding accommodation for both girls and boys, its catchment area will extend far beyond the cluster of poor rural villages it currently serves. One-third of the school’s pupils will then be boarders paying full fees, one-third will be local children paying subsidised fees of about a half the “going rate”, and one-third will be sponsored and will receive a wholly free education. On this basis the school will become fully sustainable, without requiring ongoing financial support from Shines UK.

We have raised sufficient funds to build a girls’ dormitory in time for the start of the 2025 academic year, but **we need to raise a further £20,000 to complete the boys’ dormitory**. If you can help with this, please get in touch, or donate via our JustGiving campaign [www.justgiving.com/campaign/boardingforshines](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/boardingforshines)

The regular and ongoing support for Shines School that is offered by so many donors in the UK, sponsoring the fees and nutrition of an individual child, is invaluable. **To sponsor a child for just £195 per year or £16.25 per month**—which funds the school fees, uniform costs, shoes, breakfast and lunch for a child at Shines School who would otherwise be unable to afford an education—please get in touch. Sponsors receive regular updates about the child they support, including photos, school reports and a regular copy of our newsletter.

We also offer opportunities to sponsor individual schemes and activities within the communities we support, so if you have a particular interest in sexual and reproductive rights education, micro-finance and entrepreneurship, disability rights, employment skills training, or any of our other work, we would be delighted to discuss possibilities.

You can reach us at

[info@shinesuk.org](mailto:info@shinesuk.org)

on our website at: [www.shinesuk.org](http://www.shinesuk.org)

or via our Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/Shines-Childrens-Foundation-UK-Supporters-327308881431611/>