

DIVINE HEARTS FOUNDATION

Annual Report

2024

January – December
Uganda · Washington, DC

Planting Seeds of Hope.

Education · Clean Water · EmpowerHer · Skills · Relief

Inside this report

03 A Word from our Founder & Executive Director

04 2024 at a Glance

05 Financial Summary

06 Our Board of Directors

07 Our Team

08 Education & Sponsorship

09 Clean & Safe Water

10 Launching EmpowerHer

11 Feature: Susan Nabirye on EmpowerHer

12 Skills Training in Jinja

13 Standing with Bulambuli

14 Aid & Hope for Kigulu Village

15 Thank You, First UMC Horseheads

16 Growing Stronger: Board & Digital News

17 Our Dreams & Needs for 2025

18 Partner With Us

19 Thank You & Sources



The Divine Hearts team in the field with a sponsored student.

WHERE WE WORKED IN 2024

Iganga, Jinja & Bulambuli districts, Eastern Uganda

Namunkanaga · Buwenge · Katebo · Kigulu · Jinja · Bulambuli

Who We Are

Divine Hearts Foundation is a Christian, 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving underserved communities in Eastern Uganda. Since 2012, we have walked alongside children, young people, women and families to remove barriers to development — through education, clean water, economic empowerment and compassionate relief.

With presence in Washington, DC and Uganda, and a field team rooted in the villages we serve, we work **One Community at a Time**, extending God's love through practical help, prayer and fellowship.

OUR MISSION

To work in partnership to empower vulnerable children through Education, Economic Development and Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) programs.

OUR VISION

A child who is socially and economically empowered.

OUR VALUES

Love · Integrity · Passion · Relationships · Innovation

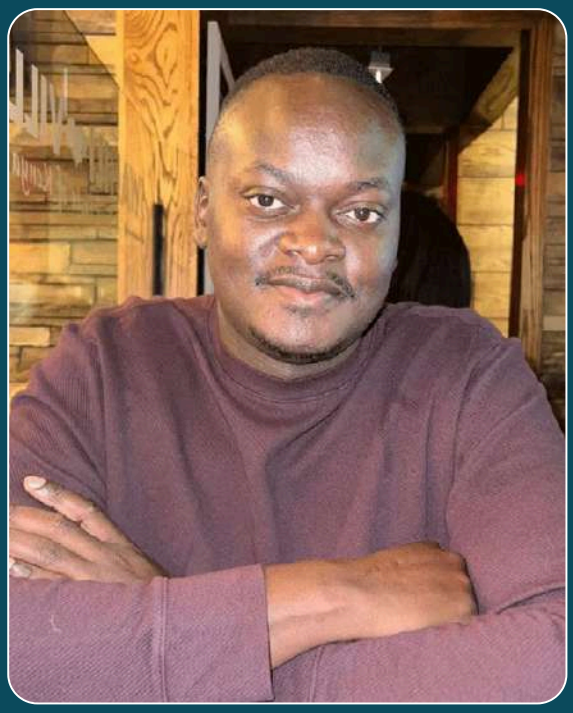
A Word from our Founder & Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Greetings from Divine Hearts Foundation! As I reflect on 2024, I am humbled by what God has done through your generosity. This was a year of growth, of new beginnings and of standing with families in their hardest moments.

Together, we sponsored **87 students** — up from 33 the year before — and drilled **three boreholes** in Namunkanaga, Buwenge and Katebo, bringing clean, safe water to more than **3,872 homes and over 11,000 people**. We launched **EmpowerHer** with 15 young mothers, trained community members in Jinja in entrepreneurship, book making, liquid soap making and health education, and brought food, clothing and school fees to 71 families in Kigulu.

When a deadly landslide struck Bulambuli in December, local leaders called on us. We answered with food, mattresses, prayer and counselling for seven grieving families — because being present in the darkest hour is at the heart of who we are.



In 2024 your gifts totalled $141,779.61 in cash and in-kind support. Every dollar, every prayer and every hour of service has become a child in school, a jerrycan of clean water and a mother with a skill.

I thank our Board, our dedicated staff in Uganda and the USA, our church partners — especially First United Methodist Church in Horseheads — and every sponsor and donor. As we look to 2025, our dream is bigger: more children in school, more villages with safe water and more women building livelihoods. I invite you to dream with us.

With gratitude and blessings,

Benjamin Musasizi

Benjamin Musasizi
Founder & Executive Director
Divine Hearts Foundation

2024 MILESTONES

- 87 students sponsored
- 3 boreholes · 11,000+ people with safe water
- EmpowerHer launched with 15 young mothers
- 3-day skills institute in Jinja
- Relief to Kigulu & Bulambuli families
- New website, Google for Nonprofits & BetterWorld



JANUARY – DECEMBER 2024

2024 at a Glance

What your generosity made possible

$49,395
Cash donations received

$92,385
In-kind donations of goods & services ($92,384.61)

$141,780
Total contributions in 2024 ($141,779.61)

87
Students sponsored through our Education & Sponsorship Program

3
Boreholes drilled in Namunkanaga, Buwenge & Katebo

3,872+
Homes now reached with clean, safe water

11,000+
People drinking safe water from our 2024 boreholes

15
Young mothers enrolled as EmpowerHer launched

3 days
Skills workshop in Jinja: entrepreneurship, book & liquid soap making, health

284
People in 71 families reached by our Kigulu outreach

7
Landslide-affected families in Bulambuli supported

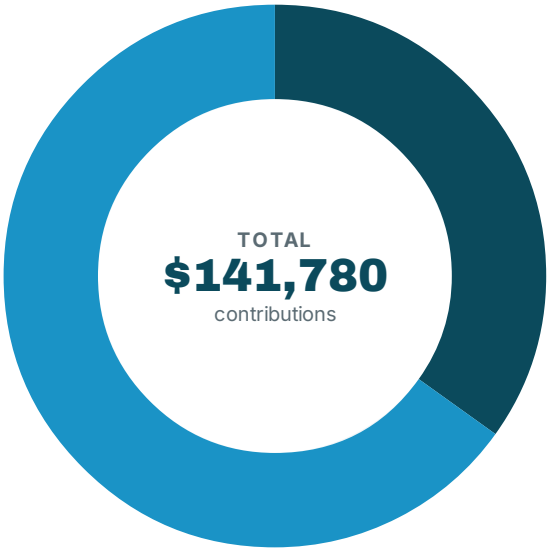
1
New Board Director: Dickson Mushabe, Technology & Innovation

Our sponsorship program grew from 33 students in 2023 to 87 in 2024 — more than two and a half times as many children learning because you gave.



Students sponsored per year

Financial Summary 2024



$49,395.00

Cash donations · 34.8%

Gifts from individuals, churches and online giving.

$92,384.61

In-kind donations · 65.2%

The equivalent value of donated goods, professional services and volunteer time.

Total 2024 contributions **$141,779.61**

Stewarding every gift

In 2024 our supporters entrusted Divine Hearts Foundation with $141,779.61 in combined cash and in-kind contributions. Nearly two-thirds of that value came as in-kind gifts — donated goods, professional services and volunteer time — which allowed every cash dollar to stretch further in the field.

Cash gifts funded school fees and requirements for our 87 sponsored students, the drilling of three boreholes, the launch of EmpowerHer, our skills workshop in Jinja, and relief for families in Kigulu and Bulambuli.

The power of in-kind giving

In-kind support included the professional build and hosting of our new website, digital tools through Google for Nonprofits, food, clothing and relief items, and the countless volunteer hours of our Board and friends in the USA and Uganda. These gifts are valued at their fair market equivalent.

We are committed to transparency and accountability, sharing our goals, finances and results openly with every partner.

$191

covers one child's school fees for a full term

65%

of 2024 support arrived as in-kind goods and services

+164%

growth in students sponsored, from 33 (2023) to 87 (2024)

GOVERNANCE

Our Board of Directors

Our volunteer Board provides vision, oversight and accountability, bringing together experience in ministry, finance, technology, fundraising and policy across the United States and Uganda.



Rev. Dr. Jeff McDowell
Chairman



Benjamin Musasizi
Founder & Executive Director



Paulette Bowles
Finance Director



Dickson Mushabe
Technology & Innovation Director



Doreen Bagonza
Director



Lee Rodio
Fundraising Coordinator



Dorothy Rutazaana
Director, Policy, Grants & Resources

In August 2024 we welcomed Dickson Mushabe — founder and CEO of Hostalite — to the Board as Director in charge of Technology & Innovation, strengthening our digital reach and systems.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORK

Our Team & Staff

From Washington, DC to the villages of Eastern Uganda, our staff turn your generosity into lasting change — visiting homes and schools, drilling boreholes, training women and responding when disaster strikes.



Benjamin Musasizi
Executive Director



Michelle Nicholette Mushabe
Chief Operations Officer



Margret Nalumaga
Country Director



Ronald Ssebakigye
Finance & Administration Manager



Peter Mugga
Sponsorship Coordinator



Patrick Ssali
Information & Systems Manager



Susan Nabirye
Community Engagement Officer



Zion Mutesi
Social Worker



Nassuna Milka Patricia
Field Officer



PROGRAM REPORT

Education & Sponsorship: 87 Students in School

In 2024, Divine Hearts Foundation sponsored 87 students through our Education & Sponsorship Program — more than two and a half times the 33 we supported in 2023.

Our sponsored students range from primary pupils to secondary students and young people at university, including students at Africa University. Many are orphans or children of single mothers and grandparents living on subsistence farming, for whom school fees would otherwise end their education.

Walking with every child

Sponsorship covers tuition and essential school requirements. Our team visits schools to meet teachers and review each child's discipline and academic performance, and visits homes to understand each family's needs. During our Kigulu outreach, we covered school fees for several children so they could continue learning without interruption.

Online giving grew in importance this year. Through our new website and BetterWorld fundraising page, donors sponsored 13 primary pupils, supported 9 secondary students and provided school requirements for 2 students at Africa University.

The need remains great

By mid-2024, 545 of the 567 children and young people in our database were still waiting for a sponsor. Across Uganda, only about half of children complete primary school, and roughly one in four completes lower secondary. For rural families in Busoga, school fees are often the single biggest barrier.

At just $191 a term, one sponsor can keep a child in school — and change the direction of a family's future.

UGANDA'S LEARNING GAP

53% primary completion rate
UNESCO UIS, 2017

26% lower-secondary completion rate
UNESCO UIS, 2017

82% of 10-year-olds in "learning poverty" — unable to read a simple text
World Bank

87
students sponsored in 2024, up from 33 in 2023

545
children in our database awaiting a sponsor (mid-2024)

$191
sponsors a child for one school term



WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

Clean & Safe Water: 3 Boreholes, 11,000+ Lives

Namunkanaga
Kigulu, Iganga

Buwenge
Jinja

Katebo
Eastern Uganda

In 2024 we drilled and built **three boreholes** in the villages of **Namunkanaga, Buwenge and Katebo**, providing clean and safe water to **more than 3,872 homes and over 11,000 people**.

Before the boreholes, many families drew water from open springs, swamps and ponds shared with animals. Children — most often girls — walked long distances with jerrycans before and after school, and water-borne illnesses such as diarrhoea and typhoid were a constant drain on family health and income.

What changes when water is near

- **Healthier children** and fewer clinic visits for water-borne disease.
- **More time in class** as children spend less time fetching water.
- **More time to earn** for mothers, who can farm, trade and train.
- **Safety and dignity** for women and girls who no longer walk far alone.

Each borehole was sited together with local leaders so the community owns and protects its water source for years to come.

UGANDA'S WATER GAP

56.6% of rural Ugandans have a basic drinking-water service
WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2024

9.9% of rural Ugandans have safely managed water
WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2024

33 Ugandan children die every day from diarrhoea
UNICEF Uganda

3,872+
homes reached · 11,000+ people served

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT · NEW IN 2024

Launching EmpowerHer: 15 Young Mothers, One Bold Start







In 2024 we launched the **EmpowerHer Women's Program**, enrolling **15 young mothers** under the supervision and encouragement of our Community Engagement Officer, **Susan Nabirye**.

EmpowerHer exists because when a mother earns, her children eat, stay in school and grow up with hope. Many young mothers in our communities left school early and now carry the full weight of raising children with little income, few skills and limited support.

What EmpowerHer offers

- **Vocational skills** matched to local markets, such as tailoring, agribusiness and crafts.
- **Entrepreneurship & financial literacy** — budgeting, saving and business planning.
- **Digital literacy** to reach new markets and opportunities.
- **Health & wellness education**, including nutrition and mental wellbeing.
- **Mentorship and peer support** from Susan and fellow mothers.

This first cohort is laying the foundation for a program we plan to grow in 2025 and beyond.

15

young mothers enrolled in the first EmpowerHer cohort

WHY YOUNG MOTHERS?

1 in 4 Ugandan girls aged 15–19 has begun childbearing
UDHS 2022

90%+ of women's jobs in low-income countries are informal
UN Women, 2024

FEATURE · FROM OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

EmpowerHer: Restoring Hope to Young Mothers



Susan Nabirye
Community Engagement Officer
Divine Hearts Foundation

> **"When a young mother discovers she can earn, she stands taller — and her children see a different future."**

The need we are addressing

In the villages where I work, I meet young women who became mothers while still girls themselves. Many dropped out of school, and some were left by the fathers of their children. They wake up each day wondering how to feed their babies, pay for medicine or one day send their children to school. Without skills or capital, they depend on casual labour that pays very little — and the cycle of poverty passes quietly to the next generation.

What hurts most is the loss of confidence. Many of these mothers told me they felt they had "missed their chance" in life.

How EmpowerHer began

In 2024 we enrolled our first 15 young mothers. We began by listening: What skills do you have? What could you sell in your village? What stops you? From there, we built training in practical skills, simple business and savings, and health and wellbeing, and we meet regularly to encourage one another.

The impact we are already seeing

The change has been beautiful to watch. Mothers who were once silent now speak up in our sessions. Several have started saving small amounts each week and are planning small businesses in tailoring, food vending and crafts. Some joined our training in Jinja and returned home with new skills in liquid soap and book making. Most of all, they have found sisterhood — no one walks alone.

Our plans for the future

- Provide start-up kits, such as sewing machines and soap-making materials.
- Form savings groups so graduates can grow their own capital.
- Link mothers to markets and to digital tools for selling.
- Enrol new cohorts in more villages in 2025.

Thank you to every donor who believes in these women. Your support is restoring hope, one mother at a time.

SKILLS & LIVELIHOODS

Gagawala ne Divine Hearts Training Institute, Jinja





Entrepreneurship
Business ideas, pricing, record-keeping & saving

Book Making
Producing exercise books for sale to schools

Liquid Soap
Safe, affordable soap making for home & market

Health Education
Hygiene, nutrition & disease prevention

In 2024 Divine Hearts Foundation conducted a **three-day workshop and training in Jinja** through the **Gagawala ne Divine Hearts Training Institute**, equipping participants with practical skills they can turn into income immediately.

The training covered four areas: **entrepreneurship**, **book making**, **liquid soap making** and **health education**. Each skill was chosen because it needs little start-up capital, uses locally available materials and meets real demand in the community — schools need exercise books, and every household needs soap.

Learning by doing

Participants did not just listen — they made products. By the end of the three days, they had mixed and bottled liquid soap, bound exercise books, costed their products and drafted simple business plans. Health education sessions linked soap making to hand-washing and hygiene at home, strengthening our WASH work.

Why it matters

Skills like these give young people and mothers a way to earn from home, save and support their children's education. Several EmpowerHer mothers took part, bringing their new skills back to their villages.

We plan to hold more sessions in 2025, add start-up support for graduates and expand to new trades.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE · DECEMBER 2024

Standing with Bulambuli after the Landslide

35	243	40+	7
lives lost (at least)	people reported missing	houses destroyed	families supported by Divine Hearts

On 16 December 2024, Local Council leaders of Bulambuli District appealed to Divine Hearts Foundation for help after a devastating landslide claimed at least 35 lives and left 243 people missing.

Triggered by days of heavy rain, the landslide swept through several villages, destroying more than 40 houses and displacing hundreds of people who were left without shelter, food or clean water. Bridges, schools and churches were damaged, isolating communities further. "This tragedy is beyond our capacity to handle," an LC5 representative told us.

How we responded

Divine Hearts answered the call. Our team travelled to Bulambuli and supported **seven families** who had lost loved ones, homes and possessions. We provided:

- **Food supplies** to meet immediate needs;
- **Mattresses** so families could rest safely again;
- **Prayer and counselling** to help survivors begin to heal from the trauma.

For families who had lost everything, knowing that someone came to sit with them, pray with them and listen was as important as the supplies. We also opened a BetterWorld campaign so supporters worldwide could give to the victims.

Eastern Uganda's mountainous terrain is highly prone to landslides; in 2010 a landslide in neighbouring Bududa killed around 300 people. We remain committed to walking with Bulambuli's families on the long road to recovery.

OUTREACH · 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

Aid & Hope for Kigulu Village







284
people supported

71
families reached

Food · Clothes · Shoes
plus school fees for sponsored children

"We are so thankful for this outreach, but there is still so much more that our community needs." — Kigulu resident

Divine Hearts Foundation carried out a transformative outreach in Kigulu village, delivering essential support to **284 people across 71 families**. Led by staff members Margret Nalumaga and Suzan Nabirye, with two other dedicated team members, the outreach distributed non-perishable food items, clothing and shoes to families facing severe need. The Foundation also covered school fees for several children in our Education Sponsorship Program, ensuring they could continue their education.

For many in Kigulu, the outreach came as a lifeline. Poverty, food insecurity and lack of access to education remain persistent challenges in rural communities like this one.

The team also visited schools where our sponsored children are enrolled, meeting teachers to discuss each child's discipline and academic performance. At Bulanga Primary School, Deputy Headteacher **Mr. Kintu Daniel** praised God for the Foundation's efforts: "Divine Hearts Foundation is making a significant impact on education in Eastern Uganda. We are grateful for their support in helping our children thrive and grow into responsible citizens."

This outreach was made possible by the United Methodist Women of Faith and members of First United Methodist Church in Horseheads, New York.

GRATITUDE · HORSEHEADS, NY · 25 AUGUST 2024

Heartfelt Thanks to First United Methodist Church

A church family in Horseheads, New York, standing with children in Eastern Uganda.

Thank you, First UMC Horseheads, for keeping children in school and bringing hope to families in Kigulu.



On 25 August 2024, Divine Hearts Foundation conveyed its deep appreciation to the women's ministry and congregation of **First United Methodist Church in Horseheads, New York**.

The occasion was marked by a visit from our Founder, **Benjamin Musasizi**, and Board member **Doreen Bagonza**. They were joined by **Rev. Dr. Jeff McDowell**, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church and Chairman of the Divine Hearts Foundation Board of Directors.

Since being introduced to our work in February 2023, First United Methodist Church has been a steadfast supporter. The church's active involvement and financial contributions to our Education Sponsorship Program have played a crucial role in its success — and helped make possible our Kigulu outreach through the United Methodist Women of Faith.

"Finding True Peace"

The day's service featured a sermon by Rev. Dr. McDowell titled "Finding True Peace," emphasising community and mutual support — principles that resonate deeply with our mission.

During the service, Benjamin and Doreen publicly acknowledged the church's impact, thanking the congregation for its generosity and commitment. This partnership shows the powerful effect a dedicated local community can have on a global cause.



Rev. Dr. Jeff McDowell
Senior Pastor & DHF Board Chairman



Benjamin Musasizi
Founder & Executive Director



Doreen Bagonza
Board Director

GROWING STRONGER

Board & Digital Milestones of 2024



Dickson Mushabe
Director, Technology & Innovation

12 AUGUST 2024 · NEW BOARD APPOINTMENT

In a significant stride towards enhancing our impact, we appointed **Mr. Dickson Mushabe** to our Board of Directors as Director in charge of Technology & Innovation.

Mr. Mushabe is the Founder and CEO of Hostalite, a prominent web hosting, design and software development company in East Africa, and founder of Cinnamon Clubs, a fintech for SACCOs, and Dolphin Fund, a digital crowdfunding platform. A bestselling business author, he has served on the Board of the ICT Association of Uganda and the Makerere University Innovation and Incubation Center.

"I believe in the transformative power of technology and innovation in advancing education and community development." — Dickson Mushabe

Our digital leap

New Website

Launched our new site, powered by Hostalite — fast, accessible and secured with SSL for online donations.

Google for Nonprofits

Access to Google Workspace, Ad Grants, YouTube Nonprofit Program and Google Earth to tell our story.

BetterWorld

A new fundraising platform powering our campaigns, including support for Bulambuli.



LOOKING AHEAD

Our Dreams & Needs for 2025

2024 showed what is possible when we work together. In 2025 we dream of reaching further — and we need partners to make each dream real.

🎓 Put more children in school

Grow sponsorship beyond 87 students and match more of the 545 children waiting in our database with sponsors, prioritising orphans and girls.

Need: sponsors at $191 per term ($573 a year)

💧 Bring water to more villages

Drill new boreholes and protected wells in villages still drinking from open sources, and train water committees to keep them working.

Need: borehole sponsors & WASH partners

👩🏾 Grow EmpowerHer

Graduate our first cohort, provide start-up kits and savings groups, and enrol new young mothers in more villages.

Need: start-up kits, sewing machines & trainers

🛠️ Expand skills training

Hold more Gagawala ne Divine Hearts Training Institute sessions and add new trades for youth and women.

Need: training materials & facilitators

🏥 Bring healthcare closer

Support community health education and work with partners towards a health center in Namunkanaga.

Need: health partners, materials & labour

🤝 Help Bulambuli recover

Continue walking with landslide survivors through counselling, household items and support for children's education.

Need: relief gifts via our BetterWorld campaign

Every dream on this page has a name and a face behind it. Will you help us make 2025 our most impactful year yet?



CALL TO ACTION

Partner With Us in 2025

Whether you are an individual, a church, a company or a foundation, there is a place for you in the Divine Hearts family.

Corporate Partnership Packages

	Recognition & Branding	Exclusive Access	Employee Engagement	Reporting & Accountability
Silver $10,000 / yr	✓	—	✓	✓
Gold $25,000 / yr	✓	✓	✓	✓
Platinum $50,000 / yr	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other ways to give

- **Sponsor a child** — $191 a term keeps a child in school.
- **Fund a borehole** — give a village safe water for years to come.
- **Equip a young mother** — support EmpowerHer start-up kits.
- **Give in kind** — services, technology, materials or skills.
- **Church partnerships** — adopt a village or host a mission trip.
- **Volunteer or fundraise** through our BetterWorld page.

Divine Hearts Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity (EIN 92-2494274). Gifts may be tax-deductible in the United States.

SCAN TO GIVE
divineheartsfoundation.org



Let's talk partnership care@divineheartsfoundation.org · 2001 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036

Thank You to Everyone Who Walked With Us

With deep gratitude we recognise the partners, churches and friends who made 2024 possible:

First United Methodist Church, Horseheads, NY

United Methodist Women of Faith

Ogden Baptist Church

Hostalite

Google for Nonprofits

BetterWorld

Gagawala ne Divine Hearts Training Institute

Local leaders of Kigulu, Namunkanaga, Buwenge, Katebo & Bulambuli

Our sponsors, donors, volunteers & Board

To every sponsor who kept a child in school, every church that prayed and every partner who gave time, skills or resources: thank you. You planted seeds of hope in 2024.

Sources

WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme via World Bank WDI: rural basic and safely managed drinking water, Uganda, 2024.

UNICEF Uganda, "Water, sanitation and hygiene" — unicef.org/uganda/what-we-do/wash.

UNESCO Institute for Statistics via World Bank WDI: primary and lower-secondary completion rates, Uganda, 2017.

World Bank, Learning Poverty indicator, Uganda.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2022 (adolescent childbearing).

UN Women, Facts and figures: Economic empowerment (updated 2024).

Divine Hearts Foundation, Quarterly Newsletter (August 2024); Strategic Plan 2024–2029; news posts on divineheartsfoundation.org: Kigulu outreach (28 Sep 2024), First UMC Horseheads (25 Aug 2024), Board appointment (12 Aug 2024), Bulambuli appeal (16 Dec 2024).



DIVINE HEARTS FOUNDATION

Sharing God's love · Helping others · Creating opportunities

Main Office
2001 L Street N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036, USA

Uganda Office
Plot 129A, Old Kira Road, Bukoto
Kampala, Uganda (P.O. Box 120308, Kampala)

care@divineheartsfoundation.org
www.divineheartsfoundation.org