

Vision 2020 Strategic Plan

Introduction

As we look back over the years since the creation of the Wellspring Foundation for Education in 2004, we are humbled and grateful that we have been able to accomplish a number of key objectives, some of which are listed below:

- Established the Wellspring Academy as a high quality Christian school that currently has over 650 students at primary and secondary levels. The Academy is now Rwanda-run and financially sustainable.
- Supported the growth of the Association of Committed Teachers (ACT) Rwanda, a grassroots movement dedicated to support teachers in their faith and profession, to hundreds of teachers throughout the country.
- Empowered vibrant school communities in 71 public schools in the Gasabo District and the Western province of Rwanda, benefiting 100+ school leaders, 1,700+ teachers, and over 92,000 students.
- Enabled Gasabo district to become the best performing school district in Rwanda.
- Established our Asset Based Community Development programs with parents from over 484 communities that feed into our schools.
- Worked with the Rwandan government to bring systemic change in the education system, including supporting the development of the five-year education strategy and the new national curriculum.
- Worked with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), the Council of Protestant Churches in Rwanda (CPR), the Evangelical Alliance, the Forum of Born-Again Christians of Rwanda (FOBACOR), and private Christian schools to establish a new National Association of Christian Schools (NACS) in Rwanda.
- Helped found the Rwanda Education NGO Coordination Platform (RENCP) to share best practices, improve collaboration, and represent civil society interests to the Rwandan government.
- Established the Abundant Leadership Institute (ALI) to train Christian leaders with a vision for transforming education in their context.

Yet, even whilst we can celebrate these successes, we work in a context that still has huge needs to address. In 2015, the Brookings Institution released a report that showed that when it comes to education, the differences between the developed and developing worlds remain stark. Considering the average number of years in school and levels of achievement, the developing world is about 100 years behind.

These poorer countries still have average levels of education in the 21st Century that were achieved in many Western countries by the early decades of the 20th Century.¹ In fact the situation is worse in many areas. According to the UNESCO Education For All Global Monitoring Report in 2013²:

- 57 million remain without schools and at the current rate it will be 2086 before access is reached just for poor, rural African girls.
- In poor countries, one in four young people are unable to read a single sentence.
- 130 million children remain illiterate and innumerate despite having been in school.
- To reach the goal of universal primary education would require an extra \$26bn per year, but aid to education has declined at a greater rate than overall aid budgets.

It is against this backdrop of immense educational and human need that the UN has developed the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of which a key goal is Goal 4: **To ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote life-long learning.**³ This goal aligns directly with Wellspring's core objectives and programs.

Whilst we have been part of seeing great improvements in the Rwandan education system, there is still a long way to go and it is in this context that we are launching Vision 2020, our four-year strategic plan. Our overarching aim is to be a catalyst for systemic change in educational eco-structures in the region we work in and to impact hundreds of thousands more children, teachers, leaders, and parents, giving them the tools they need to provide an education that will change a new generation's lives forever.

As well as seeking to fulfill our aim to provide a quality Christian values based education to hundreds of thousands of children in East and Central Africa, this is a plan that empowers and enhances our strong belief that every child, every teacher, every leader, every parent, and indeed every person that we work with, no matter where they are or who they are in the world, is worthy of dignity and respect. In that, we seek to enable them to break the cycles of poverty that they and their families have been subject to. We are not focused on material poverty alone, as we know that poverty takes many forms and that indeed, we are all poor in some way and we can all learn from one another. As Bryant Myers states:

"Both the poor and the non-poor need to recover their true identity and their true vocation. Everyone is poor in God's world, and everyone is in need of transformation⁴.

Vision 2020 is the product of a collaborative approach to strategic planning and has involved input from staff and stakeholders across the spectrum. It empowers our team to reach the objectives with internal action plans specific to each objective. The action plans are revisited on a number of occasions throughout the year including at strategic retreats in both Rwanda and Canada. As such, it is treated as a living document, with adjustments being made as required by the fluid circumstances we work in. New opportunities regularly present themselves and doors that appeared open one month may be closed the next. In assessing which doors to walk through, we will always seek to pursue God in the choices and decisions we make. We will practice wisdom and will never be afraid to push forward or back away as He leads. In so doing, we will always ensure our priorities mean that we never compromise our core operations. These are the creation of

¹ Winthrop R and McGivney E: Why Wait 100 Years? [Brookings Institution, June 2015]

² <http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/>

³ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

⁴ Myers Bryant L Walking With The Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development [New York: Orbis Books, 2011] p.17

vibrant school communities through our schools development and leadership programs, the promotion of systemic change in the education sector, and engaging in transformational relationships in all areas of our work.

In all that we do, our desire is that we might truly be able to live out our vision to be a catalyst for transforming education in Africa and to foster vibrant communities that address poverty in all its forms. In so doing, may we always follow the call of scripture in Micah 6:8 “to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with our God”.

Andy Harrington

Chief Executive Officer

The Wellspring Foundation for Education

Why does Wellspring exist?

We are passionate about real life change in all members of the Wellspring community, as we show the love of Christ by empowering a new generation of leaders in Central and Eastern Africa and beyond. We believe we are uniquely placed to be a catalyst for transforming education for hundreds of thousands of African children and fostering vibrant communities that address poverty in all its forms.

This leads to our vision and mission statements.

Vision - To be a catalyst for transforming education in Africa and to foster vibrant communities that address poverty in all its forms.

Mission - We will seek transformation in all members of the Wellspring community as we show the love of Christ by empowering a new generation of leaders in Africa.

Core Values and Guiding Principles

Core values

Our desire is to establish high quality Christian values based education that will produce creative, principled and capable leaders. We strive towards this end by empowering educators, developing schools, and enriching lives. We are motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, who alone has the power to change people's hearts. This faith is the foundation for our Core Values:

Transformation: We strive to influence positive change in people's relationship with God, themselves, society and their environment.

Empowerment: We strive to give people power, and challenge them to do likewise.

Stewardship: We strive to treat all resources entrusted to us with the highest level of care and accountability.

Partnership: We strive to build partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations.

Excellence: We strive to develop people and innovative models that can be emulated.

Guiding Principles

Over the next 4 years, we want to emphasize the follow guiding principles in terms of who we are and what we hope to be, in order to outwork our strategic plan:

An organization characterized by integrity: We will be true to who we are in every location in which Wellspring operates.

An organization characterized by humility: We recognize that we cannot change anyone's mind or heart, but we trust in the only One who can.

A learning organization: We will continually evaluate and learn new methodologies and ways to operate, in order to be the best servants in our field that we can be.

A constantly sharing organization: Open hearted, open handed, abundant in our own thinking.

A caring organization: A place where people are deeply and individually cared for as we serve together.

A deep organization: More concerned about substantial change than substantial scope.

Over the next 4 years, we will seek to be a catalyst for change as we invest in four key areas:

1. Abundant Leadership.

We will invest strategically in educational leaders with passion, vision, and values to make a profound difference in the lives of the next generation.

2. Vibrant School Communities.

We will extend our School Development approach and help public, private, and Christian schools become vibrant communities.

3. Innovative Solutions.

We will continue to develop as a leading organization in Central/Eastern Africa and beyond at developing, modeling, and sharing innovative and effective solutions for the education sector.

4. Transformational Relationships.

We will seek transformation in the lives of the entire Wellspring community as we engage together in our part of God's restorative work in the World.

Goal 1: We will invest strategically in educational leaders with passion, vision, and values to make a profound difference in the lives of the next generation.

1. We will continue to develop the Abundant Leadership Institute (ALI) to mentor educational leaders with greater potential and empower them for service at an advanced level.

- a. Maintain the involvement of excellent global facilitators who will provide input to the program, complemented by ALI graduates who will both facilitate training sessions and engage in coaching and mentoring of both students and others within their spheres of influence.
- b. Offer the ALI program to students from at least 4 countries in Eastern and Central Africa.
- c. Develop an e-learning platform for global coaching and distance learning and expand the leadership library.
- d. Build a dynamic alumni network of at least 100 educational leaders by 2020.
- e. Complete the accreditation of the ALI program with Trinity Western University.
- f. Share core ALI principles and practices with an additional 500 emerging leaders through ALI graduates.

- 2. We will prioritize leadership training for key stakeholders within the education sector.**
 - a. Make leadership capacity building the starting point for any Wellspring intervention in a new school.
 - b. Utilize ALI as an advanced professional development opportunity for Wellspring staff, gifted leaders from School Development Program model schools, and leaders from the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) member schools.
 - c. Develop an active peer-learning network among school leaders.
- 3. We will continue with our strategic leadership as a member of the Rwanda Education NGO Coordination Platform (RENCP).**
 - a. Initiate at least one collaborative research project through the RENCP Network that will provide tangible benefit and greater understanding of the situations faced in the Rwanda education sector.
 - b. Continue to serve as the communications hub for RENCP and its working groups.
 - c. Participate in key working group activities and relevant national policy development initiatives.

Goal 2: We will extend our School Development approach to help public, private, and Christian schools become vibrant communities.

- 1. We will empower the Gasabo District to be a learning platform for our work and a center for innovation and sustainability.**
 - a. Ensure the school communities (82,000+ students) in Gasabo District can sustain success without current levels of direct Wellspring intervention by December 2018.
 - b. Prioritize technical support in line with the implementation of the new Competence Based Curriculum to ensure Gasabo remains the top-performing district.
 - c. Utilize Gasabo District schools as a platform to pilot at least two new innovations that will add value to the education sector.
- 2. Continue to expand the School Development approach beyond Gasabo District.**
 - a. Expand the School Development Program (SDP) approach to 75 pre-primary and primary schools and 90,000 plus students in Rubavu District in the Western province of Rwanda.
 - b. Explore the opportunity to expand the SDP to up to two additional districts in Western province, containing an estimated 184 primary schools and 160,000 students.

- d. Emphasize pre-primary and primary schools in our chosen areas of operation.
 - e. Prioritize technical support in line with the implementation of the new Competence Based Curriculum.
 - f. Grow our capacity in the area of Early Childhood Education in order to increase readiness for learning.
- 3. We will continue to provide first class technical support to the Wellspring Academy in order for it to maintain its position as a leading Christian school in Rwanda.**
- a. As a key stakeholder operating under the authority of the Academy's board, we will provide advice, expertise, and on-site support to the Academy, and encourage the pursuit of spiritual formation and academic excellence.
 - b. Help recruit international teachers and equip current teachers for the successful implementation of the Cambridge curriculum.
 - c. Provide technical expertise to school leadership and teachers in order to facilitate the involvement of a majority of parents.
- 4. We will continue to be a leader in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) within the education sector.**
- a. Embrace Asset Based Community Development as a leitmotiv (driving force) for our work.
 - b. Share ABCD methodology to a wider group of stakeholders, including RENCP members.
 - c. Conduct an impact assessment in Gasabo District to learn from best practices and successful stories in order to inform the education sector.

Goal 3: We will continue to develop as a leading organization in Eastern and Central Africa at developing, modeling and sharing innovative solutions for the education sector.

- 1. We will engage in expansion of our operations beyond Rwanda within Eastern/Central Africa.**
- a. Engage in multiple small partnerships outside Rwanda by 2018.
 - b. Identify the partnerships with the most fruitfulness and develop a strategic plan by the first quarter of 2019.
 - c. Develop a country office, recruitment of staff, and registration in another country by 2020.

- 2. We will collaborate with partners in the development and implementation of an accreditation program for African Christian Schools that will move them toward higher standards of education.**
 - a. Collaborate with partners in the development of an accreditation program for African Christian Schools.
 - b. Foster an active association of Christian schools in Rwanda.
- 3. Embrace technology as a vehicle for developing and modeling effective solutions for the education sector.**
 - a. Upgrade all elements of Wellspring's web presence and provide a more integrated suite of products that showcases our work and enables others to access content by the end of 2017.
 - b. Develop an online platform for Abundant Leadership Institute students by having a dynamic web presence integrated into Wellspring's overall web content, that includes online resources, an e-learning platform, and a student management system by 2018.
 - c. Pilot at least two new information and communications technology innovations in schools where Wellspring operates, in order to discover the most effective way of utilizing technology in our work in the education sector.
- 4. Wellspring will continue to engage in the policy and research arenas in order to foster systemic change in national education.**
 - a. Conduct at least two external research projects on key programs by 2020 in order to discover and disseminate information critical to empowering success in the education sector.
 - b. Hold at least one dissemination event each year for key education sector stakeholders to highlight results, process of innovation, and key challenges faced in delivering on current programs or new innovations.
- 5. We will continually work on researching and developing new solutions to achieve our mission and vision and integrate them into long-term plans.**

Goal 4: We will seek transformation in the lives of the entire Wellspring community as we engage together in our part of God's restorative work in the world.

- 1. We will expand our community of volunteers and passionate advocates for the cause of Wellspring.**
 - a. Establish clear volunteer roles based on the needs of the North American office, and raise awareness of these opportunities among our partner community, beginning 2018.

- b. Appoint local representatives in strategic geographic areas across North America:
 - i. Recruit and develop two new Canadian, and one new American, representative(s) each year, beginning in 2018.
 - ii. Within twelve months of being appointed, representatives will host a local event.
- c. Engage at a deeper level with our current US partners, beginning late 2017.
- d. Expand our core public engagement and development team and provide the required resources to generate the funding necessary to fulfill Vision 2020 objectives, beginning 2017.

2. We will invest meaningfully in the lives of the Wellspring community and provide opportunities for transformational engagement within our work.

- a. Organize 1-2 Vision Trips per year, ensuring well-structured preparation and follow-up to equip participants and keep them engaged, beginning 2017.
- b. Bring members of our Rwanda Team to North America, by end of 2018.
- c. Develop and enhance our School Partner Program to create more interaction between partners and the school communities they support, beginning 2018.
- d. Provide opportunities for students in North America to engage with and learn from our work through establishing connections with local schools, beginning 2017.

3. We will use technology to facilitate communication and provide meaningful connection and staff care across our global Wellspring family.

- a. Set up a private Wellspring Family Facebook Group to be used by staff and board to share life's significant moments and prayer requests, by end of 2016.
- b. Create Family Email Newsletter every quarter, beginning March 2017.
- c. Begin to Skype as a whole team, once each quarter, beginning June 2017.
- d. Have an informational video created that raises awareness of the work of our North American Team and our partner community, by the end of 2018.
- e. Always pay attention to ensuring that our staff have the resources they need to thrive both professionally and personally, as they are our greatest and most treasured resource.