SPARK MICROGRANTS
2014 ANNUAL REPORT
VISION:
A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE LIVES WITH DIGNITY & DETERMINES THEIR OWN POSITIVE FUTURE.

VALUES: FACILITATORS. We don’t impose; we enable others to generate impact. COMMUNITY-DRIVEN. We are motivated by what is best for the greater good. PROCESS-CENTERED. The how of what we do is just as important as the what. AUTHENTIC. Our vision and values live in everything we do. PASSIONATE. We are deeply committed to our work and love what we do!
SINCE 2010

102 communities
3 countries
79,820 lives reached
94% project sustainability
1.85 = catalytic effect
97% communities continue to meet
89 Independent Projects Launched
Dear Friends,

When we started Spark four years ago, we did not know what was possible. We believed that communities facing poverty should be in charge of their own development, but we did not know that a six-month facilitation process and a small grant could catalyze communities into long-term action.

Recently I visited Bihanga, Rwanda, one of the earliest Spark communities. Today, the 91 families of Bihanga meet monthly to discuss the issues affecting their community. Families contribute $0.15 each month to their community savings account that is used to meet the most pressing community challenges – from supporting a family that cannot afford health care to building a community electricity line. In the past two years they have collectively saved a total of $2,143 – a huge feat.

As I walked down the steep hill from Bihanga with Aloys, a Rwanda Program Manager, he expressed his wish for all aid organizations to let communities choose their own projects because it leads to community pride and ownership over local development. I could not agree more with Aloys.

Today, we know what is possible. We know that communities can champion their own development and we know that bold progress in expanding this work will help build towards a world with dignity where everyone can drive their own positive future.

Our team of 30 passionate changemakers in East Africa are working hard to serve their communities. The passion of the Spark team is shared with our 100 partner communities across Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi and over 1,000 global advisors and supporters.

Every day I feel fortunate to work with our team and global community. Every year I feel more overwhelmed with gratitude that we are building a better world together. This past year was our most momentous yet: In 2014 we raised over a $1,000,000 and reached our 100th community partner.

In 2015 we are planning more bold progress, but most importantly we are establishing ourselves to build the world Aloys wished for: A world that works to strengthen communities to be the founders of their own development and drivers of their own future.

Thank you!

Sasha Fisher
Co-Founder &
Executive Director
“Through the Spark Process I have gained so much knowledge and have been using this knowledge in my household as well. Before my husband wouldn’t sit with me to make decisions. Now we sit together and analyze the decisions we make as a family.”

– Oyella Concy,
Gum Pe Genge Community, Uganda
2014 was a big year

**January:**
Burundi Program launched

**February:**
Country exchanges for staff launched

**March:**
Our logo got a makeover

**April:**
Bukhonzo Parish’s Health Center averages 8 patients a day and the community launched a collective savings group and loaning circle.

**May:**
Great Lakes Coffee funded Spark after seeing the business benefits of the Spark model on the livelihood of coffee farming families.

**June:**
The US State Department hosted Sasha in four cities in East China to share Spark’s model with leading foundations and social entrepreneurs.

**June:**
Rwanda program received the honor of 2nd ‘Most Effective NGO’ in Burera, Rwanda from the Rwandan government.

**July:**
Facilitated session on community-driven development at Segal Family Foundation annual meeting.
**JULY:**
NORTHERN UGANDA PROGRAM LAUNCHED

**AUGUST:**
SPARK PROCESS SHIFTED FROM PROBLEM/SOLUTION FRAMEWORK TO GOAL SETTING FRAMEWORK

**OCTOBER:**
CO-FACILITATED SESSION ON COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT IN MEXICO

**NOVEMBER:**
AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS DRAPER RICHARDS KAPLAN FELLOWSHIP

**NOVEMBER:**
FACILITATED ROUND TABLE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF AID SESSION IN NYC WITH HOWARD DEAN

**SEPTEMBER:**
DANIELA GUSMAN BECOMES FIRST EAST AFRICA DIRECTOR

**DECEMBER:**
SURPASSED $1,000,000 RAISED

**DECEMBER:**
REACHED 100TH COMMUNITY
“I now know that to help myself, I must help others. The Spark process has shown me that I have something to contribute to my community. I am valuable.”

- Betty Fungo
Bunaliba Village, Uganda
THE SPARK MODEL

To catalyze change, Spark employs and trains local university graduates through an in-country facilitator fellowship program. Facilitators reach out to infrastructure-poor villages and engage them in a six-month planning process, leading them through a structured series of weekly meetings. Community members build consensus on a communal goal, identify a project to realize the goal, develop a project implementation strategy, budget and democratically elect a leadership committee.

After each community develops their own project proposal, the Spark leadership team liaises with sector-specific experts to provide project-specific feedback to each community. Community members integrate this expert feedback and finalize their proposal, which includes community contributions towards costs that ensures community ownership. Spark then awards a one-time microgrant of up to $10,000 for project implementation, providing six months of management support and two years of follow-up. Communities have launched projects including vocational training schools, pit latrines, bridges, health centers, social enterprises and more.
SPARK’S UNIQUE APPROACH: STRONGER TOGETHER

TODAY THERE IS A GROUNDSWELL OF FRUSTRATION WITH GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT.

SPARK IS DRIVING A NEW MODEL WHICH IS UNIQUE IN THREE BIG WAYS:

1. FROM ZERO TO GO
   We work to unite families that are not yet working together, thus catalyzing communities to take collective action for local change – often for the first time.

2. COMMUNITY-DRIVEN
   We work directly with local communities in East Africa so they can select, design and implement their own projects. Our process engages the whole community, not just existing leaders or special groups.

3. REPLICABLE
   Our facilitation process paired with a seed grant is streamlined and adaptable to communities all over the world that face rural poverty.
WE’RE JUST THE SPARK

Each Spark community receives a one-time seed grant, which enables them to put ideas into action. Spark communities have such a positive experience that they often go on to launch independent projects thereafter. For every 10 projects that Spark backs, 8 projects are launched by the community.

ANIMAL REARING

GRANTED:  
LAUNCHED INDEPENDENTLY:  

= 100 animals

SAVINGS AND LOAN GROUPS

GRANTED:  
LAUNCHED INDEPENDENTLY:  

= 1,000 in group savings accounts
In May of 2014 Matooto Village in eastern Uganda implemented a goat rearing project. As their secondary project, they launched a community savings group to help increase capital for future projects. Only six months into being, the savings group has already saved over 3 million Ugandan Shillings ($1,200 USD). The community gives small loans to members with an interest of 10%. These loans help community members pay school fees and purchase farming equipment. The savings group has not only created a culture of saving in Matooto but has also worked to foster community cohesion. Community members trust each other and want to invest in their future together as a community. The savings group has also improved the community’s capacity in financial accountability and record keeping, which will help them as they start to sell goat milk and manure from their original Spark financed project.
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- 50% increase in group cohesion across partner communities.
- 31 community savings groups launched.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- 380 leaders have emerged through elections.

GROUP COHESION

- For every 1 meeting Spark facilitates, the community facilitates 3.
- On average 65 people come to the meetings.

FEMALE PARTICIPATION

- 40% naturally elected female leaders.
- Female participation increases 57% over the course of the process.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- 94% project sustainability.
- 70% of communities launch independent secondary projects
- 89 total secondary projects.
"Working with Spark brought us from the dark where we did not even know our neighbours to the light where we are free to know all, mobilize our resources, and work together as a community towards a better future."

- Kaana Mwenyi, Nasitsape Village, Uganda
Four of Spark’s partner communities in eastern Uganda (Bufuma, Bunakusi, Bumakhase, and Bugizaza) chose health as their primary goal and are in the process of constructing and opening local health clinics. In order to manage the operating costs of the clinic, each of the four communities has designed a membership-based community health financing and insurance scheme. These schemes will allow the community to run the clinic without external funders or organizations. In each community, residents join a communitywide membership program, and contribute a small, yearly membership fee, which buys them access to a community-run savings and loans group (SACCO) and health insurance at the center. The operating costs of the health center are paid for through a combination of treatment fees, membership fees and interest paid by members of the SACCO. A portion of the interest accrued from the SACCO is used to provide community members with free or reduced health services as part of the health insurance provided in their membership.

Through the membership-based community health financing and insurance scheme, community members develop a strong sense of ownership and commitment to the survival of the health center. Community members improve their finances through access to a SACCO, and improve health-seeking behavior through access to health insurance at the center. The membership program also provides funding for the operating costs of the health clinic.
Spark catalyzes communities into action. We instill the capacity and confidence in communities so they can drive their own positive development. We start at the heart of the matter: people.

CATALYTIC EFFECT

THREE TIERS OF IMPACT

INDIVIDUAL IMPACT
Community members increase their self worth, financial management capacity and confidence.

COMMUNITY IMPACT
Spark builds community capacity to organize and provides a space for meaningful and action oriented community participation.

SYSTEMIC IMPACT
Spark co-creates the space necessary for communities to engage, strengthen, and build local systems of governance, service delivery, and trade.
SPARK GROWTH

- Communities: 15, Employees: 3, Countries: 1
- Communities: 50, Employees: 10, Countries: 2
- Communities: 100, Employees: 30, Countries: 3

Cumulative Income
Cumulative Expense
## INCOME AND EXPENSES SINCE FOUNDING

### Spark MicroGrants
 Profit & Loss
 Accrual Basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Jan - Dec 14</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>$9,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Contributions</td>
<td>15,554</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events Income</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Grants</td>
<td>829,059</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Contributions</td>
<td>140,346</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>16,093</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web Donations</td>
<td>34,378</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Income</td>
<td>5,824</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,051,415</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microgrants</td>
<td>149,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Expenses</td>
<td>25,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>36,238</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td>52,235</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>51,355</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payroll</td>
<td>240,924</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Benefits</td>
<td>20,220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Banking Fees</td>
<td>8,279</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Services</td>
<td>14,182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write-offs</td>
<td>3,523</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uncategorized Expense</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expense</strong></td>
<td><strong>602,459</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Net Income**  $448,956
“Spark is different because it brings people together. Never before have we worked together as a community. Now we are growing to trust each other and learning to plan for our own development.”

– Nyabenda Monaen, Nyarutuntu Community, Burundi
**PARTNERS**

**COMMUNITY VISIONARIES: $100,000+**
- Segal Family Foundation
- Planet Wheeler
- Draper Richards Kaplan

**COMMUNITY LEADERS: $50,000 – $100,000**
- Open Road Foundation
- Keurig Green Mountain
- Child Relief International
- Anonymous

**COMMUNITY ADVISORS: $10,000 – $50,000**
- Anonymous
- Paul English
- RA5 Foundation
- Imago Dei
- Rockdale Foundation
- World Connect
- Ben Goldberg
- Cordes Foundation
- Global Good Fund
- Philip Murphy
- Great Lakes Coffee

**FACILITATORS: $5,000-9,999**
- All People Be Happy
- African Hope Network
- Peter Sherris
- Amy Joelson
- Julia Morgan Fund
- Newman's Own
- Sandra Wijnberg

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS: UNDER $5000**
- Maureen White
- Cheryl Jones
- Allison Devore & Ross Levinsky
- Lisa & David Issroff
- Tonya Huston
- Shari Berkowitz
- ROI Community
- Goldman Match
- Jewish Communal Fund
- S Amir Hoda
- Chaim Motzen
- Alex Johnston
- Andy Byrant
- Daphne Liu
- Jeanette & Paul Wagner
- Lionel Spiro
- Philip Mactaggart
- Susan Adams
- Suzanne Joelson
- Eric Friedman
- Simon Eder
- Daniel Pincus
- Dr. Arthur A. Gray
- George Darby
- James Hayman
- Oliver Bushnell
- Jonathan Jackson
- William Penn
- Neil Kudler
- Arthur Gray
- Lana Burshteyn
- Anonymous
- Dale Melcher
- Dan Burstein
- Martin Ambrose
- Neal Lesh
- C. Richard Cox
- Carlos Aponte
- Michael Dunkle
- Patricia Frosina
- Rowena Luk
- Soraya Svoronos
- Carey Klutz
- Jeffrey Pascoe
- Richard Sloan
- Aaron Yassin
- Amanda Waite
- Brette Soucie
- Daniela Gusman.
- Gail Waitkun DeRice
- Geoffrey Grubs
- Iain Tonna
- Jay and Carol Devore
- Jennifer McGregor
- John Riggan
- Kerry Ridley
- Linda Pohlman
- Liz McKenna
- Michael Goldberg
- Scott Daniels
- stefan heeke
- Christina Kelly
- Georgia Van Zanten
- Mahathi Kodamanchili
- Allison McCrea
- Christopher Brigger
- Emily Maskin
- Inbar Ziv
- Jana Haimsohn
- Mick Emmett
- Sally Hayman
- Alana Davis
- Ben Yih
- Anthony Saulnier
- Barry Gleeson
- Cari Beth Head
- Hilary Haber
- Joanna Matheson
- Katya Schapiro
- Lindsey Platt
- Louis Thompson
- Molly Crossin
- Norma Beatriz
- Ralph & Edwina Levin
- Stephanie Carter
- Second Wave Recycling
- Aileen Palmer
- Natalie Myers
- Pooja Singal
- Andrea Spada
- Ashley DeMazza
- Emma Williamson
- Fokrul Islam
- Ross Heyman
- Kiki Johnson
- Anders Jones
- Lauren Stossel
- Tara and Dan Goleman
- Susan Leighton
- Barbara Johnson
OUR TEAM

ADVISORY BOARD
Howard Dean
Jim Kreissman
Maureen White

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Martin Ambrose
Andy Bryant
Allison Devore
Ranu Dhillon
Sasha Fisher
Grace Lesser
Jon Jackson
Anders Jones
Neal Lesh
Sandra Wijnberg

TEAM
Wao Acellam, Uganda Facilitator Fellow
Macrine Bakesiima, Rwanda Finance
Heartwell Bikirwenkya, Uganda Finance
Mike Burshteyn, Chief Operating Officer
Rebecca Calderara, Global Health Corp Fellow
Sasha Fisher, Co-Founder & Executive Director
Jean Habumugisha (Barack), Rwanda Facilitator Fellow
Josette Ingabire, Rwanda Facilitator Fellow
Aloys Gashema, Rwanda Senior Facilitator & Communications Officer
Daniela Gusman, East Africa Director
Cari Beth Head, Monitoring and Evaluations Manager
James Kaggwa, Global Health Corps Fellow
Lilian Mable, Uganda Facilitator Fellow
Katy Lindquist, Communications Manager
Allen Makabayi, Uganda Program Manager
Jean d’Amour Manirere, Rwanda Country Director
Joshua Menya, Monitoring and Evaluations Assistant
Alex Myama, Uganda Facilitator Fellow
Aime Nahayo, Rwanda Senior Facilitator
Erister Nambafu, Uganda Senior Facilitator
Metuselas (Bob) Ndayirata, Burundi Facilitator Fellow
Geofrey Nsamba, Uganda Facilitator Fellow
Peniel Nzoshima, Burundi Facilitator Fellow
Fred Onyango, Uganda Program Manager
Chloe Tomlinson, Program Director
Consolee Umwiza, Rwanda Program Manager
Oyella Vento, Uganda Facilitator Fellow
Emmanuel Waiswa, Uganda Country Director
Arthur Walera, Uganda Administrative Assistant
Bjorn Whitmore, Burundi Country Director
UGANDA
Wanteete
Kigundu
Kitimbwa
Dokolo
Mbale
Kyanaisoke
Bushenyi
New Hope Christian School
Budembe Mercy Children’s Care
Mustard Seed Ministry
Genesis Christian School
Knowledge of Truth Ministry
Cref Ministry
Bugodo Baptist Church
Kayago Community Child Center
Bufuma
Bukhfonzo
Namiendo
Bumakhase
Sikela
Buyaka
Buwangota
Nasitsape
Bunatsoma
Bunyanwa
Bunakusi
Chetum
Bugizaza
Nabweya
Kizigo
Kiyagi Kitula
Matooto
Bunaliba
CRO – Street Youth
Kisenyi
Malungi

Kachwali
Bunandudu
Waroco Paco
Lagotoluma
Sikomosi
Makutano
Ayugi
Gum Pe Geng
Handle Youth Group

RWANDA
Bukomero
Karama
Ruhango
Nyabegeni
Tubeho
Shiginiro Anti-HIV Youth Club
Gisagara
Association Duhuguka Bagore
Nyarutosho
Kanembwe
Gitarama
Nyamagabe
Gisovu
Muhororo
Rutete
GS Rugarama
Bihanga
Kanyendara
Nyarorwondo
Kajevuba
Murambi
Gahunga
Ruhimbri
Ruehehe
Karuganda
Gacondo

BURUNDI
Kibanga
Kabanga
Gasasa
Nyabiga
Nyagatovu
Nyaruntuntu
JOIN THE COMMUNITY
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