



# UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018





# ABOUT THIS REPORT

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We hope that this report helps readers to get a broader understanding of our activities in the spread of Buddhism in Uganda-Africa and our attempt to support sustainable development in communities. We aim to grow and develop together with our stakeholders, including our donors, members, and engaged communities, as Africa's source of Buddhism.

This Annual Report contains statements about our past activities and projects in the year 2018 and our future plans for the year 2019. Statements about future projects and events are expectations, projections, and estimates based on the present information and they may be subject to change due to limitations in financial support.

# MESSAGE FROM ABBOT & PRESIDENT

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## Looking back

The Uganda Buddhist Centre's long-standing commitment to preserve and spread the Theravada Buddhist teachings within the context of African culture has been the key guiding principle in all our activities and initiatives over the years.

It is now 13 years since the Uganda Buddhist Centre was established. The Centre was first established as a mobile temple. Now, we have a serenely beautiful temple. In 2018, we made a number of significant achievements.

We initiated projects such as providing clean water supply and sanitation, empowering communities through the women and youth economic empowerment programs, and offered scholarships to children from under-resourced families. The projects are some of the core activities in the Uganda Buddhist Centre where we aim to assist in promoting sustainable development in Bulega village and the surrounding communities. A significant result of such projects has also brought together people from neighboring communities for a monthly Dana & Metta gathering which aims at cultivating and sharing Buddhist values of love and compassion for all sentient beings. There have also been increased understanding and appreciation of the Buddhist culture of peace among the local people.

## Moving forward

Like any other growing organization, every success has a trail of challenges, but with the support of our donors, staff, and volunteers, we have always laid a strong ground to achieve continued growth and development. I am eternally grateful to everyone who has supported the Uganda Buddhist Centre since its inception until today. Moreover, I am excited to announce that we will have more new projects and collaboration with local universities and international organizations in the near future.

I look forward to having you on board.

With much Metta & deep gratitude  
Ven. Bhante Buddharakkhita





## About Uganda Buddhist Centre

*your source of Buddhism in Africa*

The Uganda Buddhist Centre (UBC) is the first and only Buddhist Centre in Uganda founded by Venerable Bhante Buddharakkhita on April 10, 2005. The Center was created to introduce and preserve the Buddha's teachings in Uganda, Africa within the context of African culture.

The Center is seated on two acres of land in Bulega, Garuga, Entebbe (about 5 km off Kampala-Entebbe Highway). UBC is open to all people who wish to cultivate peace, harmony and happiness.

Programs and ceremonies organized at the centre are offered to the public free of charge, reflecting its commitment to universal access to Dhamma and the attainment of ultimate peace and happiness.

The Centre achieves its vision and mission through the following strategies:

- Establish enduring home for the monastics to assure preservation and transmission of the Buddha's teachings.

- Provide a space for monastics and laities to learn and practice the teachings of the Buddha.
- Provide facilities for long-term volunteers and staff to assist in the running of the Centre.
- Initiate and create programs to serving the local community with social, cultural, environmental, educational and other humanitarian services.
- Create a stable and sustainable endowment for ongoing projects and activities.

The Centre now stands as a major initiative in the heart of Africa, providing a stable source of Buddhism in Africa.

## **Vision**

Peace for All

## **Mission**

To preserve and teach the original teachings of the Buddha, spread the Buddhist culture of peace within the African cultural context, and develop the leading center for Buddhist study and research in Africa.

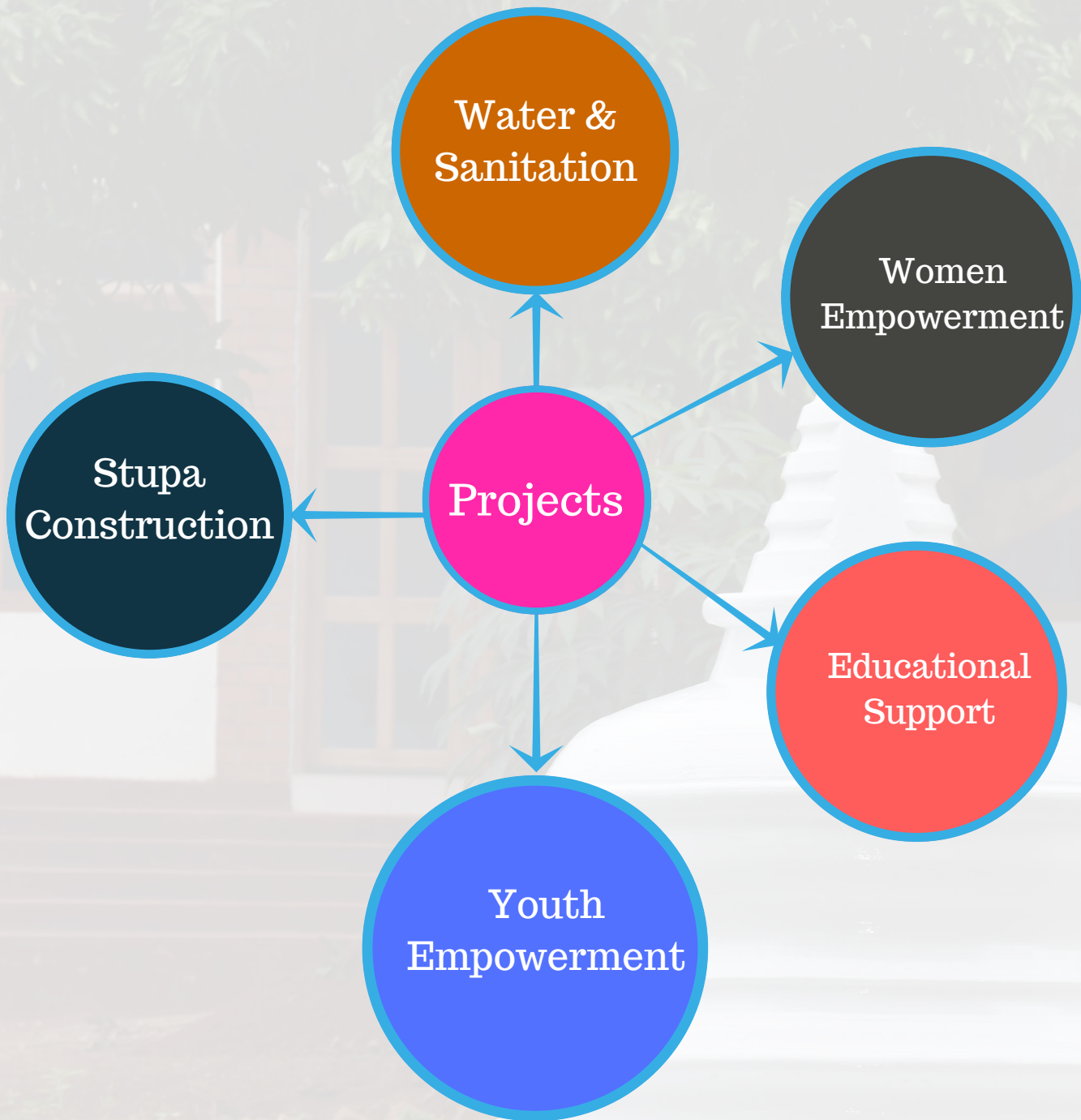
## **Core Values**

- Compassion
- Integrity
- Service
- Transparency
- Peace
- Wisdom

## CURRENT PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

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Since its inception, the Centre has dedicated to improving the social, economic and spiritual conditions of the local communities. Its activities are supported by both international and local supporters.





# Water & Sanitation

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Since the establishment of the Uganda Buddhist Centre (UBC) in 2005, water and sanitation project has been one of our key area of focus. UBC discovered that more than 100 households had no access to clean and safe water. As a result, UBC initiated the Water & Sanitation project aiming to provide sustainable clean water supply and improved sanitation to the local communities.

Four (4) boreholes have so far been installed. Two boreholes stand in the Bulega village supplying clean water to the local people, while two were installed in local schools—St. Paul Primary School Bulega, and Bugabo primary school.

In the year 2017, one borehole was drilled at St. Paul Bulega Primary School. The borehole was installed as a result of lack of access to safe and clean water by the school. The school had previously installed a water tank, but unfortunately, the tank was stolen. Thus, leaving the school with no other alternatives besides the water from the lake.

The Uganda Buddhist Centre was officially requested to extend its water project there. Local contractors were identified to drill the borehole. It was drilled with a depth of 76ft and 16ft, and completed in April 2017.

The borehole was officially opened on April 23rd with the blessings of the Most Ven. Dr. Sitagu Sayadaw and 10 other senior monks from Myanmar.

Meanwhile, a major challenge for Bugabo Primary School has always been access to clean water an issue that affects the basic running of the school. The Uganda Buddhist Centre constructed a borehole and students are now able to access clean and safe water.

Through the courtesy of Helen Lee and her family, we solved the problem of contaminated water for Bugabo Primary School.

The project was officially commissioned by Bhante Buddharakkhita in August 2018.



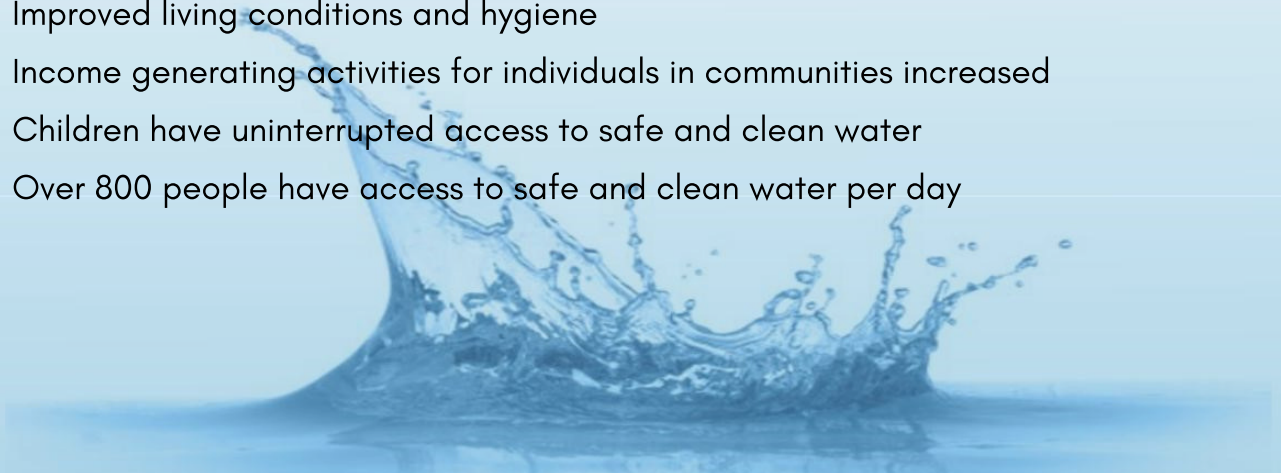


## Key Facts

- Project duration: 2006 – 2018
- Finances: 13,000 US Dollars.
- Set up 4 boreholes to provide clean water, benefiting the Centre, schools and hundreds of people from the neighboring communities.

## Impact:

- Provision of safe and clean water
- Reduction of walking distance to clean water sources
- Improved living conditions and hygiene
- Income generating activities for individuals in communities increased
- Children have uninterrupted access to safe and clean water
- Over 800 people have access to safe and clean water per day








## Uplifting Women's Economic Standards through the Women Empowerment Project

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Empowerment is one of the key elements of UBC's projects, with an intent of expanding community's access to services by way of strengthening education through the Peace School, promoting mental health through meditation practices and increasing individual income through skills development and livelihoods support. UBC's approach to empowerment encompasses empowering community by way of bestowing more control over its own development and management of resources as well as building community capacity to identify

its needs, and initiate programs that strengthen the community to identify solutions to its needs.


Towards this commitment, the Women Economic Empowerment Project (WEEP) aims at empowering women and giving them better management and decision-making skills in their daily life. The Center believes that women's involvement in identifying issues that affect their community, making priorities and decisions about their lives can enhance their growth and development than if the community excluded the women.



Additionally, involving women implies an attempt to eradicate poverty in the community since it makes development more holistic, and solves the real needs of the underprivileged groups, builds social cohesions, social capital, as well as strengthening women's voice in the community.

UBC's holistic approach to supporting women empowerment and development includes identifying, training, investing and monitoring for improvement.

The project has so far equipped over 30 women with various hand skills including beads making, sandals, an assortment of snacks, and other African crafts. Women in recent video interviews expressed how these skills have impacted their lives. They are able to use the skills to generate some income which helps them to support themselves and their families.



Furthermore, people in Bulega village and the surrounding communities have gained confidence in UBC's vision and mission, and gradually continue to understand and appreciate Buddhist teachings and values. As a result, two girls from the village were brought by their parents to UBC's novice ordination program to ordain as novice nuns.

Women have also actively participated in UBC's Dhamma activities including Buddhist festivals, meditation retreats. They continue to appreciate the Buddhist teachings because it is practical and appeals to one's emotional being. We have also noticed an increasing number of boys sent to the temple to temporarily ordain as novice monks. Moreover, the community has more confidence and trust in the Uganda Buddhist Centre.





## Enhancing Youths' Skills through Youth Economic Empowerment Project

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Due to poor fishing methods by the local people, the government of Uganda recently imposed restrictions on fishing on Lake Victoria. Yet almost 80% of the people in Bulega village depended on fishing for their livelihood. The government is promoting modern fishing methods, and therefore, they are banning what are supposedly known as traditional fishing ways. A significant number of fishermen cannot afford the modern tools of fishing, thus, causing joblessness and idleness among most young men. Additionally, the lack of alternative entrepreneurial skills and low levels of education in the village have caused a backlash among young people and men in playing their traditional roles as husbands.

To enhance these young men's skills, we developed the Youth Economic Empowerment Project (YEEP) to develop alternating entrepreneurial skills among youths and to challenge the traditional gender norms and discrimination in a very meaningful way. The project also came in a nick of time to train youths to be allies in women's participation in socio-economic affairs of their community.

The project is supported by the Royal Thai Embassy of Nairobi, Kenya.

We have kept a small number of beneficiaries to 12 due to limited resources. On the other hand, it has helped to ensure quality outcomes.



## The Construction of a Buddhist Stupa in Uganda and its Significance

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A stupa is a structural emblem and one of the most significant monument in Buddhism. Originally, the architectural features of the stupa were distinctively a semi-spherical shape, but over the years, shapes have been transformed to reflect cultures that have adopted it. A stupa houses relics of the Buddha and remains of enlightened followers of the Buddha known as arahants. These relics are believed to be the living presence of the Buddha and a depository of his living powers. The importance of stupa and its innards gradually increased as a result of the multiplication of the Buddhist relics

especially during the period of King Ashoka in India.

The gradual development of Buddhism in Uganda has seen the arrival of various Buddhist art and architectural constructions in the country and Africa in general. One of the first Sima (boundary) building on the continent was consecrated in 2016 and completed in 2017. A small Stupa was added on a small stretch of land in front of the Sima building adjacent to the temple. Due to the limited space we have, the Stupa covers an area of 10 square meters. Both the sima building and the Stupa of its kind stand as the first and only on the African continent.



## **What does Buddhist Art and Architecture mean to Uganda/Africa?**

Buddhism is steadily taking roots in Uganda and Africa in general. As it firmly continues to grow, it is attracting individuals from different walks of life. The stupa in Uganda is now a site of ceremonies and rituals although for most, people of Asian descent. Additionally, the Stupa is playing a role of inspiration to people of African descent to attract faith, understand and appreciation of the Buddha's contribution to the world. The presence of the stupa will attract tourism in the country and hopefully attract other Buddhist architectural constructions such as monasteries or temples around the country.



## **Education: Supporting Children in Schools**

At the Uganda Buddhist Centre, our great commitment towards education is to open doors for education to children. This means ensuring that they not only have access to the required and timely materials for school but also opportunities to advance in their education. As they attend school, their lives improve and their perspectives of the world gradually transform. This idea was well demonstrated and advanced in 2018.

In the year 2018, UBC focused on providing education materials, and organized training workshop for teachers from selected government and private schools in the neighboring communities. These workshops aimed at inculcating effective teaching methods, mobilizing community for development and to support efforts towards education in communities.

We identified that although great strides have been made in opening doors to education for every child, greater need is required in the area of providing tools that support children in schools. Both parents and schools rarely have sufficient budget to buy scholastic materials because of the lack of financial resources. This means that many children who are learning do not have sufficient materials to help them take their notes, practice and develop their skills.

Throughout the year 2018, the Uganda Buddhist Centre mobilized and supplied scholastic materials to school-going children from the surrounding villages. These materials included but not limited to exercise books, pens, pencils, sets, rulers, and others. We believe every child should have access to education, and nothing should stop them from completing their education.

We observed that these requirements help children focus, perform and develop crucial writing skills and increase knowledge on a wide range of subjects and encourages children to stay in school. A few of these children have been identified for scholarships to study in the local neighboring schools.

# Major Contributors

## Board Members

- Venerable Bhante Buddharakkhita, Abbot, Founder-president and Meditation Teacher.
- Ven. Dhammakami (Felister Nampiima), Vice-President and resident Buddhist nun. She is the first Ugandan Buddhist nun.
- Robert Zirabasanga, General Secretary.
- Eng. Frank Nelson Ntwasi, Building Consultant and Treasurer.
- Tom Muwanga Kaboggoza, Temple Coordinator and Cultural Director
- Sandra Kaboggoza, Peace School Coordinator and Education Director

## Friends and E-Board Members

- Dr. Mi Khin Khin Soe (Burmese)
- Patrice Binaisa (Ugandan-American)
- Ofosu Sumano (Ghanaian)
- Alem Makonnen (Ethiopia)
- Dora King (Sierra Leone)
- Azara Turaki (Nigerian)
- John Haywood (USA)
- Dr. Jo Nash (UK)
- Jon Freeman (USA)

## Advisory Board

Advisory Board:

1. Dr. Juuko Ndawula
2. Dr. Ilamyo Mike
3. H.R.M Princess Diana Teyeggala
4. Hon. Tofiri

## Volunteers

- Ven. Adicca (Myanmar)
- Andrew Mukomazi
- Andrew Bakaki
- Prof. Anyango Adhiambo (Kenya)
- Ven. Sangharakkhita
- Fernando de Almansa Peso (Spain)
- Melissa Cates (USA)
- Elke Vandamme

## Help UBC make a change by giving a donation

Your gift today can make a difference in the propagation of Dhamma in Africa

1. **You are welcome to donate online.** It is fast, easy and secure:

<https://xpresspay.ug/payments/ugandabuddhistcentre/index.html>

2. **Write a cheque** to Uganda Buddhist Centre and mail it to:

Uganda Buddhist Centre,

Bulega, Garuga, Entebbe

P.O. Box 898, Entebbe, Uganda.

3. **Bank wire transfer:** Below are the details of our bank account.

Account Name: Uganda Buddhist Centre

Account No: 41261302010523

Name of Bank: Orient Bank Ltd

Branch Address: Orient Plaza, 6/6A, Kampala Road.

Swift Code: ORINUGKA

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[twitter.com/ugandabuddhist1](https://twitter.com/ugandabuddhist1)



[ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com](mailto:ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com)

For further information about our activities, please visit our website.

[www.ugandabuddhistcenter.org](http://www.ugandabuddhistcenter.org)