



sparkventures

2012 Annual Report

Celebrating 5 years of sustainable solutions lifting children out of poverty



We can do more
TOGETHER
than we can **ALONE.**

Dear Spark Investors,

You are the reason that we are celebrating five years of impact.

It's true... Spark Ventures wouldn't exist without that first inspiring trip the co-founders took to Zambia.
It's true... Spark is refining and replicating a unique partnership model that lifts children out of poverty.
It's true... we have a solid website, creative events and nice brochures.

But most critical to our success is our amazing investing community... **you.**

In the last five years, you have contributed over \$3 million, provided 250,000 meals, 3,000 check-ups and educated hundreds of children in Zambia who otherwise would not be in school. Your support helped launch a poultry farm that was profitable in its first year, raising and selling more than 15,000 chickens... and launching our first partner on the path to sustainability. And with your help, we have identified and begun our second international partnership with Asociación Las Tías of Nicaragua.

One of Spark's founding board members, Princess Kasune Zulu, said it back in 2007, and it has since become a theme for us: *We can do more together than we can alone.*

Imagine what we can do together in the next five years!

With gratitude and anticipation,



Rich Johnson
CEO

Dear Friends of Spark,

I remember clearly what things were like before partnering with Spark Ventures five years ago. My wife and I and the small staff of Hope Ministries were doing our best to meet the overwhelming needs of the many orphaned and vulnerable children in our Zambian community.

Today, we have 25 dedicated staff members who receive monthly salaries and allow us to provide meals, education and even healthcare to more than 350 girls and boys in Twapia.

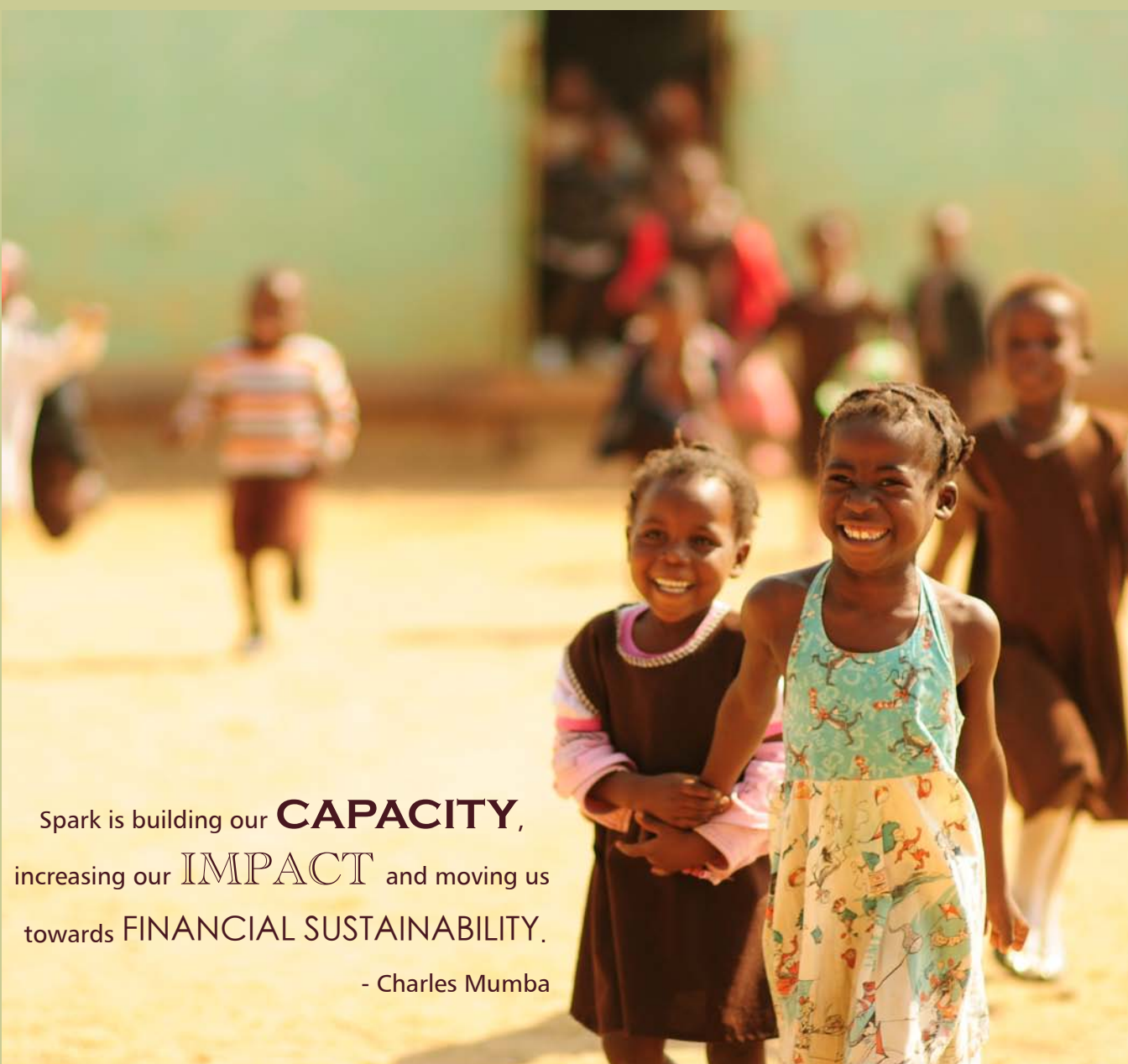
Nearly 200 new friends have made the journey that Dan, Rich and Scott took to visit us in Zambia, creating a network of advocates and ambassadors all over the world.

Our desire is not simply to lift our children out of poverty, but to create a sustainable future for them and for our organization. Spark is building our capacity, increasing our impact, and moving us towards financial sustainability. We are thankful for this collaboration and for each one of you who faithfully invest in our partnership.

We look forward to the next five years of impact!



Charles Mumba
Director, Hope Ministries
Spark's Zambian Partner



Spark is building our **CAPACITY**,
increasing our **IMPACT** and moving us
towards **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**.

- Charles Mumba

Celebrating 5 years of sustainable solutions lifting cl

July 2006

Rich Johnson, Scott Barbeau and Dan Marcus travel to Zambia and meet Charles & Margaret Mumba



May 2007

First medical clinic in Zambia



March 2007

Launch of meal program in Zambia



2006

2007

2008

2009



December 2006

Spark's 1st Investor, Cathy Crown, provides generous seed money



July 2008

1st Summer Partnership Trip

501(c)(3)

February 2007

Spark Ventures incorporates as a nonprofit



August 2008

1st full-time employee

Fall Events 2007-2012

TO CHICAGO FROM AFRICA

4 Miles to Hope

Children out of poverty...



April 2009
Hope House
dormage dedicated



November 2010
7th Grade Students achieve
pass rate of 100% advancing
to secondary school



May 2011
Poultry Farm launches
with 5,000 chickens



August 2011
Search for new, Latin
American Partner begins



9

2010

2011

2012

\$

March 2009 & April 2010
Two consecutive years of challenge
grants matched for a total of \$300k
by a generous Family Foundation

November 2010
Partner Director, Charles Mumba
featured at Fall Event, Awaken



April 2012
Partnership with
Groupon yields 40
new Trip Participants

July 2012
Visioning Conference
looks forward to the
next 10 years of Spark

sparkblue

AWAKEN

We are Spark.



Community of Investors

Sue Braun

Major Investor

Support from major investors like Sue is critical for Spark to take on large, capital-intensive projects, such as the the launch of the Poultry Farm and the expansion of our model to Latin America.



Spark Ventures

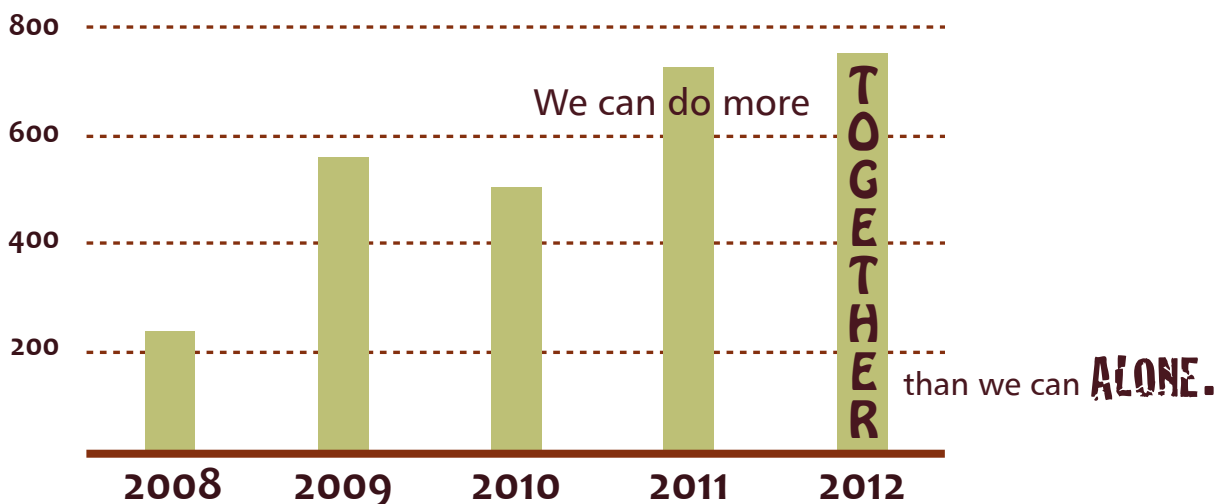
Mofya Michael Kabwe

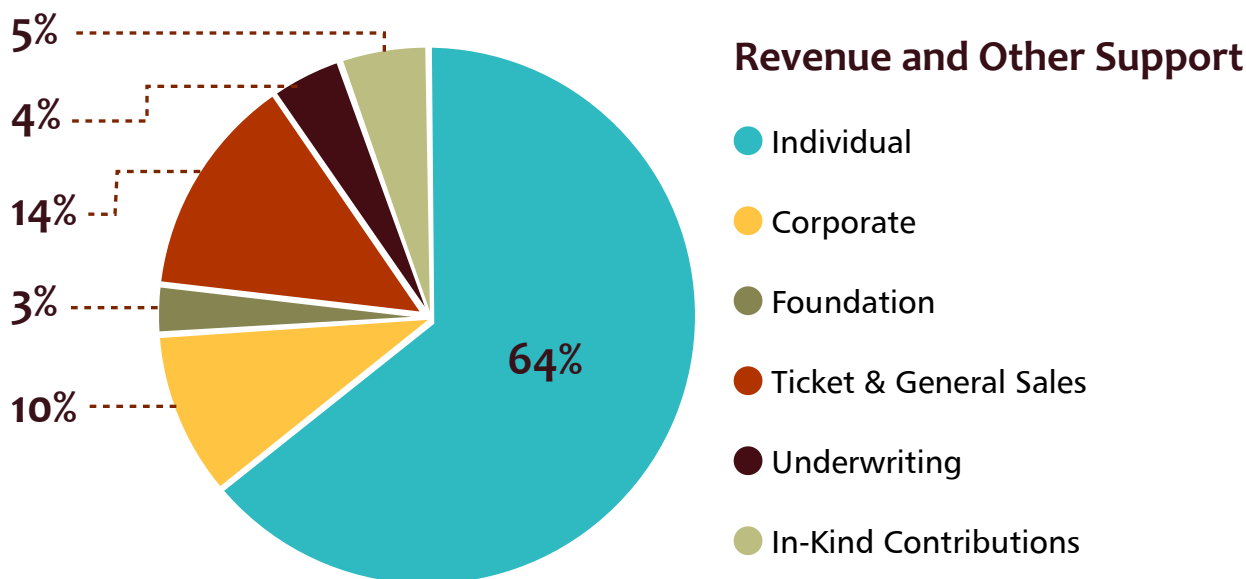
Advisory Council

With critical support from advisory council member Mofya, Spark has engaged new Zambian stakeholders and effectively raised awareness and support for Hope Ministries locally.



Total Number of Annual Investors





Aaron Chaiken

Tal Cohen

Volunteers

Choosing to spend a portion of their honeymoon visiting Spark's partner in Zambia, volunteers Aaron and Tal led a group training session and provided one-on-one coaching to the school and farm staff. They were able to share this adventure with each other, while sharing skills with our Zambian Partner.



Christina Royce

Partnership Trip Participant

Christina joined Spark's first ever Groupon Partnership Trip to Zambia in July. This collaboration brought over 40 new people from across North America into the Spark network.




Spark by the Numbers


In the past **5** years, support from **sparkventures** has...

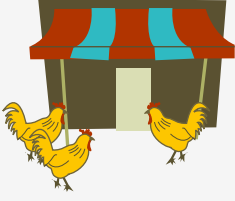
expanded our partner's programs by **300%** 

 funded over **250,000** meals,

 facilitated **600** annual medical check-ups,

 and provided free primary education to over **1,000** children.

 Our partner school has a pass rate of **100%** for 7th grade students advancing on to secondary school.

And the poultry farm, founded to provide direct revenue for our partner's work, sold over **15,000** chickens in its first year. 

2012 At a Glance	7	742	108	521
	Staff	Investors	Volunteers	Event Attendees



Meet Agnes

Age 12 | Grade 6

Hope Community School

Ndola, Zambia



Soft-spoken Agnes has lived with her grandmother for as long as she can remember - her parents died early. When her grandmother drinks, which happens more frequently than Agnes would like, she goes to a neighbor's house to play and complete her homework.

At school, Agnes is the top student in her 6th grade class, where she particularly excels in English. At the end of the day she starts her homework right away, cleans her grandmother's home, and looks forward to Sunday when she gets to sing in the church choir.

Agnes hopes to one day become a nurse. Her teachers at Hope Community School beam when they talk about her potential. With her teachers and the combined support of Hope Ministries and Spark Ventures behind her, Agnes has a bright future.





In 10 years, I hope to be **celebrating**
the **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**
of our first **TWO** partners!

Interview with Board Chair Tasha Seitz

Tasha Seitz joined the board of Spark Ventures in 2009 after traveling to Zambia to see the positive impact of Spark's partnership with Hope Ministries and meet the child that she was supporting at Hope Community School. After our Visioning Conference in June, we sat down with Tasha to see what she is most excited about in Spark's future.

What do you think Spark's greatest accomplishment has been in the past 5 years?

In my view, Spark's greatest accomplishment to date has been completing the full partnership cycle with its first partner, Hope Ministries in Zambia. Spark has been supporting Hope in providing education, nutrition and health care to the children at the community school for 5 years now, but the true culmination of the partnership model was the investment in the poultry farm. The farm had a successful first year in that the operations were profitable, and there's a lot of opportunity to grow and improve the efficiency of the farm operation. Though there is still work to do, the Hope Community School is on the path to sustainability!

Do you have a personal favorite moment with Spark?

I have a lot of favorite moments! One of my favorites was visiting Zambia for the second time, when the children at the Hope Community School sang the welcome back song, and I saw many familiar beautiful faces among the students that I had met on my first trip. The kids are just amazing – so full of promise and personality! Another favorite was having dinner with the team at Las Tías in Nicaragua during our partner selection visit. The Tías, or aunties, are an incredible group of very spunky women who saw a need in their community and started an organization to meet that need – they are terrific, and I can't wait to go back and see them again!

What excites you most about our new partner, Las Tías of Nicaragua?

I'm very excited to bring my family – my husband and two boys – to visit the children at Las Tías. And I'm excited to bring Spark's partnership model to Las Tías, which has a very different culture than the Zambian partner. It will be a challenge, but a rewarding one, and I'm looking forward to learning more about Nicaragua in the process.

What challenges do you anticipate for the organization in the next 5 years?

One of the big challenges will be to bring Spark's partnership model to new partners in different cultural and organizational contexts, so we will need to adjust appropriately to each new partner. And learn Spanish! Another big challenge will be to grow our fundraising to support the needs of multiple international partners as well as invest in Spark's infrastructure to support those partners.

What would you like us to be celebrating at our 10 year anniversary?

The financial sustainability of our first two partners!



View this report online

2012 Board of Directors

Tasha Seitz

Chair
Partner, JK&B Capital

Scott Barbeau

Vice Chair
Professional Musician

Nancy O'Leary

Treasurer
CFO, JK&B Capital

Gary Vlk

Secretary
Co-Founder and Executive VP,
One Smooth Stone

David Goldstein

Founder and Attorney,
David Goldstein & Associates, LLC

Dan Marcus

Investment Advisor,
Marcus Capital, LLC

Patti O'Neil

Treasurer and Assistant Professor,
Rush University Medical Center

Ross Parr

Director, Sales
Oracle

Koji Torihara

International Finance Specialist,
The Boeing Company

Stacy Wells

Senior VP, Relationship Manager,
Wells Fargo

Brian Wu

General Manager,
College Park Athletic Club

Leadership Team

Rich Johnson

CEO

Erin Dowland

Director of Resource Development

Lucy Jodlowska

Director of Partnerships

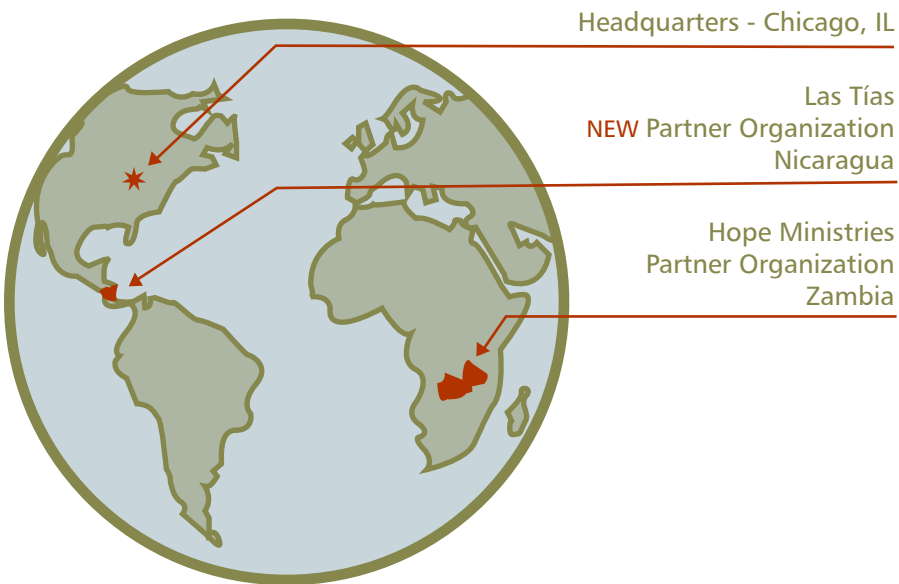
Stephanie Denzer

Program Manager



¿Hablas Español?

Stay tuned for even bigger plans in 2013.
Spark is going global...



sparkventures

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