



TWO RABBITS

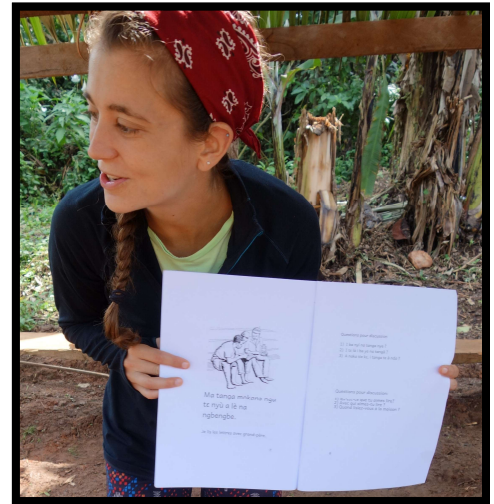
2019 Annual Report

Revolutionizing early education for the world's most marginalized children.

A Letter from our Founder

As we take time to reflect, 2019 was a big year for us at Two Rabbits - full of impact, learning, and growth. Our achievements were made possible by people like you who care about our work and communities. In this report, we want to honor your support and share with you the moments that made 2019 incredible.

Impact matters above all. This year, we tripled our number of children served, reaching 700 children in 20 villages. Our impact data shows our children have striking gains across developmental domains, teachers achieve international classroom quality standards, and families firmly believe that their children can “chase two rabbits at once” by learning to thrive in the classroom and their ancestral forest home.



Two Rabbits empowers historically marginalized communities, like the Baka in Cameroon, to lead the way. In this report, we bring you the stories of families coming together against all odds to provide the education their children deserve, the incredible community teachers who dedicate themselves to the children in their care, and our local partner ASTRADHE that tirelessly drives this work forward.

We have an important role to play in the push to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by offering the world a model that boosts access to quality education by uplifting marginalized voices and cultures. Looking ahead to 2020, we will focus on capturing what we know about empowering communities through preschool and sharing it with the global community.

As you read this report, I encourage you to consider your education experiences – perhaps as a student, a parent, a teacher, or a tutor. Think of the moments where you felt smart, loved, and capable. The joy of discovering your own power through learning is what drives us forward, and this is the spirit we wish to capture in this report.

Thank you for making this impact possible, and for making 2019 a remarkable year.

Sarah Strader
Executive Director

About Us

Our Mission:

To empower communities to create preschool programs that honor their identity and prepare children to lead the future as they define it.

The Baka:

We work with the Baka, an indigenous group in East Cameroon that practices hunting and gathering, and that honors the forest as their spiritual and physical home. They are masters of the forest, but face challenges in building the skills they need to engage with the rapidly encroaching outside world.

Teachers are almost exclusively from the dominant ethnic group. They teach in French, which few Baka children speak or understand. This prevents children from building vital skills in literacy, math, and other academic skills they need to communicate, know their rights, and defend their interests. Outsiders often pejoratively call them “Pygmies,” a name that conveys inferiority and primitiveness. Many Baka children grow up ashamed of their culture and identity, and learn to shun their heritage as primitive.

Their rich traditional knowledge is critical to preserve in the face of oppression, but desperation and stigma feed cycles of poverty, addiction, and shame that schools perpetuate. Baka parents shared with us the struggle of teaching children ancestral forest knowledge and skills, while also ensuring they went to school to learn and read and write. A Baka father described this as trying to “chase two rabbits at once” – if you try, you will lose them both.

By working closely with Baka communities, we aim to bring both “rabbits” within their reach.



About Us

The problem:

87%



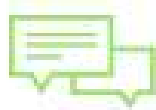
of children in the world's poorest countries do not attend preschool

60%



of Africa's poorest youth are unable to read a single simple sentence

93%



of indigenous children worldwide attend school in a language they do not speak

What We Aim to Achieve:

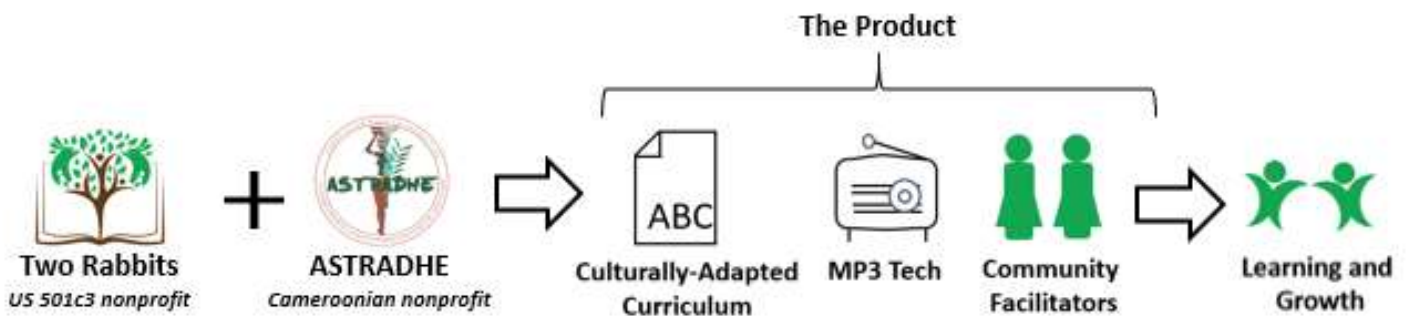
Quality early childhood care and education that is rooted in the local language and culture to empower communities and prepare children to thrive in the forest, school, and beyond.

Through building school readiness skills and pride in their identity, children from the most marginalized communities will be equipped to defend their rights.

Our Model

Our communities are our innovators. We collaborate with indigenous leaders, musicians, and storytellers to create a program that embraces their culture and prepares children for school.

US-based experts at Two Rabbits collaborate with our local nonprofit partner ASTRADHE in Cameroon to align international best practices, local culture, and national policy.

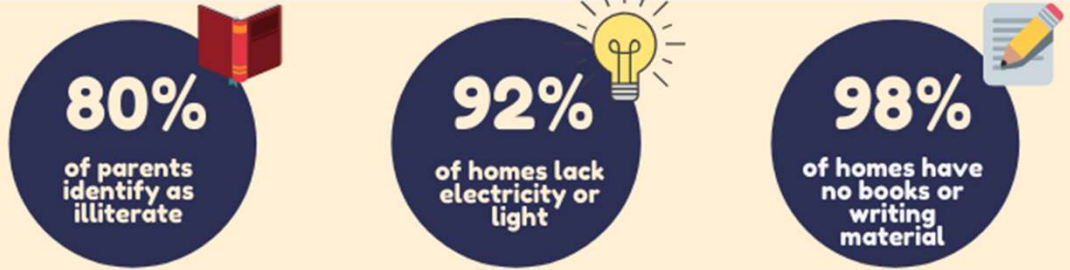


There are 3 pillars to our approach

1. **Engage** community members to create lessons, songs, stories, and games in the Baka language and style, and record them onto crank- and solar-powered MP3 players.
2. **Train and coach** village-nominated youth to serve as teachers to bring learning to life. Our recordings guide them to deliver high-quality early childhood care and education experiences despite their own low literacy levels.
3. **Build local capacity** to own and manage the program. This takes place at two levels:
 1. **Local organizational capacity.** Two Rabbits supports ASTRADHE to lead the program, building their capacity in early childhood development, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, and project management.
 2. **Parent-teacher collaboration.** Together, we empower parent-teacher associations to oversee the preschools by ensuring teachers are effective, classrooms are safe and clean, and children are well cared-for.

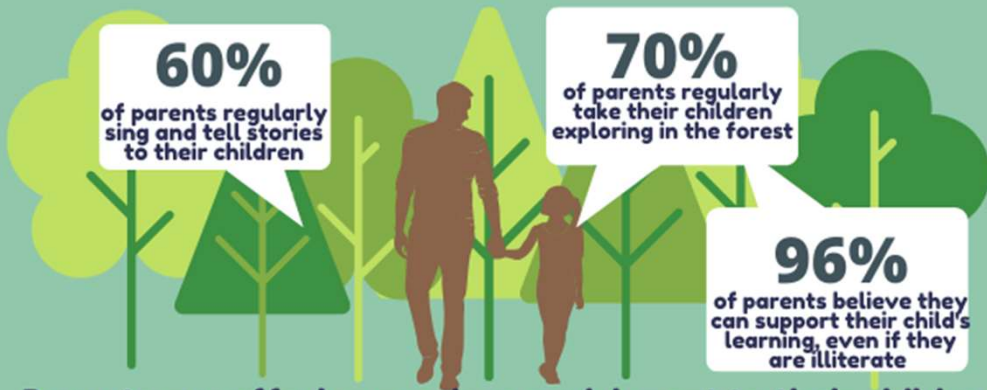
Our Impact

Challenge



Our children and their families come from generations of educational disadvantage

Opportunity



Parents are offering precious enrichment to their children in the home and the forest

Model



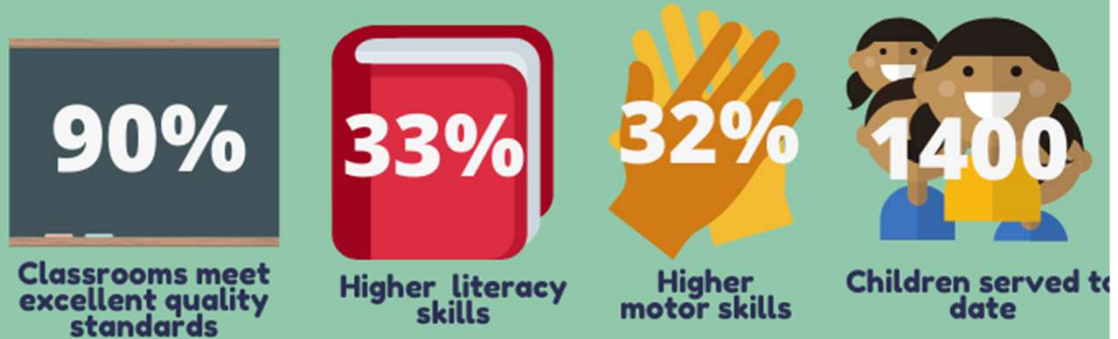
Hours of audio activities, songs, and games in local language

Community-nominated youth teachers

Children's books published in local language

Two Rabbits mobilizes parents and communities to support early learning

Impact



Classrooms meet excellent quality standards

Higher literacy skills

Higher motor skills

Children served to date

comparison of skill growth between treatment and control groups from 2018-2019

Two Rabbits boosts child development and preschool access to quality learning environments.

Nyame Hermine: A leader against the odds

If you had told Nyame Hermine that in four years she would lead a training of 60 teachers alongside four district inspectors, she would have laughed in your face.

Nyame came to Two Rabbits in 2015 energetic but reserved. A kid magnet with a passion for play, she was a solid choice by the village community that nominated her to become a preschool teacher in the first ever Two Rabbits school. But she lacked self confidence, especially in front of people from outside her community.

We have watched Nyame grow into a confident and outspoken leader with deep pride in her community, her kids, and her work. To capture her magic and share it on, we invited Nyame and two other Two Rabbits teachers to serve as master teachers in this year's teacher training. But this wasn't just any training: this one would host three times as many teacher trainees as ever before, and would be the first that featured Ministry of Basic Education inspectors as expert trainers.



Nyame was more than up to the task. For the week before the training, we worked with her and her teammates to prepare activity demonstrations, classroom case studies, and presentations. Then for two weeks, she delivered by far the most practical, joyful, and empowering sessions that we have ever had.

The trainees know Nyame and her story well, and were moved to see her as a leader and model. They left the training feeling ready to take on the challenge of caring for the Baka leaders of tomorrow, and to become leaders themselves as she did.

Two Rabbits works hard to put communities in the lead. We know our teachers are the experts of our model, and we strive to adapt to their experience and expertise to make our approach as effective as possible. Nyame is an example of the transformative leadership our communities are capable of, and we can barely wait to see what 2020 brings for her.

Our Parents: Believing in children’s potential

Every child has the ability to learn and thrive. This message permeates our curriculum, training, and every fiber of our work.

This idea is the foundation to fighting injustice. At school, Baka children often hear from teachers and classmates alike that they are primitive and inferior, which leads many to internalize self-hatred. For historically oppressed children like the Baka to stand up to racism, they need to firmly understand that society is wrong: that they are intelligent, and that their culture is an asset to their intelligence.



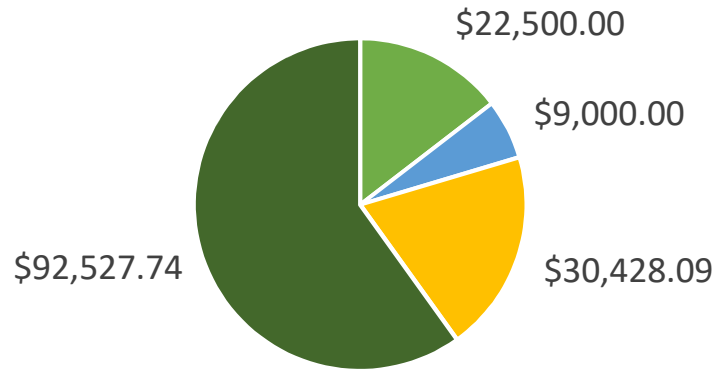
Our data shows that Two Rabbits parents and children alike believe in their capabilities as learners. Where others classify Baka children as “slow,” our parents assert that their children need enriching environments and learning opportunities to learn new skills. They note the importance of practice, making mistakes, and play in the learning process. They believe that “young children must learn to work hard” to continue forward. “Before becoming president, you have to start at school.”

We call this “growth mindset” – the idea that children’s experiences – and not their characteristics at birth – drive their ability to learn. Indeed, our 2019 impact data show that incremental gains in concentration, persistence, and motivation to complete a task, all key components of growth mindset, are associated with 15% gains in a child’s numeracy and executive function scores.

Our gains in academic skills like literacy and math are exciting, but the role of growth mindset is by far the most moving data point for us. If children and their families know that they are capable of anything they set their minds to, they can carry this attitude with them everywhere they go, challenge dominant narratives of discrimination, and fight for a more just future.

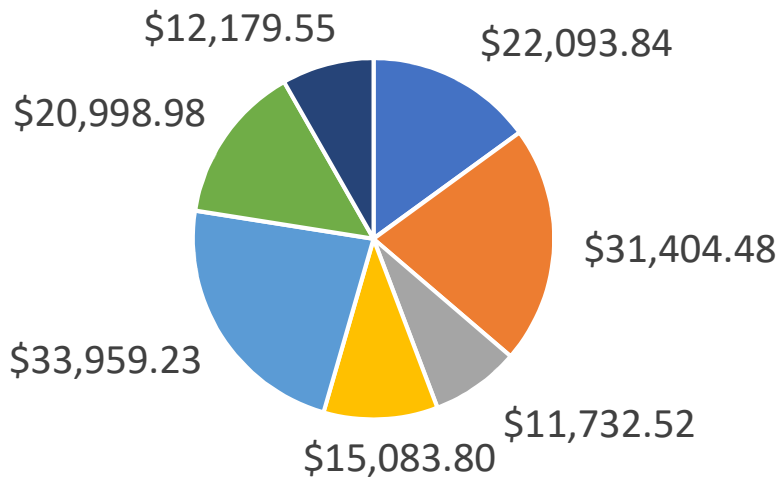
Financial Summary

Program Income



- Echoing Green
- Georgetown SIPS
- Individual Donations
- Saving Brains

Program Expenses



- Animator salaries
- Data collection
- Operations
- Classroom construction
- Curriculum development
- Teacher training
- Teacher monitoring and coaching

Based on internally prepared financial data

Our Supporters

Our donors are at the heart of our success, and we are deeply appreciative for your support.
Here are the people that made our impact possible this year.

Individuals

Sabra Bander	Randy Holtzman	Carole Pawloski
David Baran	Eric Hunkler	Deborah Purcell
Simon Baseley	Daryl Juran	Ellen Rambo
Wendy Beckwith	Cliff Kaehler	Chris Reich
Maris Benz	Rachael Kenney	Ann Rodgers
Philip Bolton	Katie Kern	Diane Saulter
Kenyon Bolton	Emily Koester	Nancy & Rich Schroeder
Stephen & Virginia Brooks	Robert LaJeunesse	Raymond Shiu
Christina Carlson	Nathalie Louge	Janice Shon
Terri Conley	Steven Lutz	Don Smyth
Benjamin de Bivort	Charlie MacCormack	Paul & Denise Smyth
Corey DeFreese	Jason Magee	Jay Strader
Jeanine DeLay	Hans Maier	Blake Strader
Aidan Dorman	Geri Markel	MaryBeth Strassel
Kari Eckley	Joe McGrath	Eli Terris
Hannah Ensign	Avni Mehta	Barbara Tucker
Doug & Cindi Fountain	Janet Morgan	Aaron Walkoviak
Octavia Frigon	Robin Nelson	Tracie Wolfe
Shari Gittleman	Shannon Norman-Kotre	Alfred Woodworth
Diana Hammond	Bridget O'Loughlin	Susie Woodworth
Mark Hardin	Tim Owens	Charles Woodworth
Emily Hayes	Josie Papazis	Dree Ziegler
		Michael Zilkha

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UBS



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Looking Ahead



2019 was a big year for Two Rabbits, but we are just getting started.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals commit the world to provide quality early childhood care and education to all children by 2030. **All children** means serving indigenous, displaced, and minority communities that society systematically pushes aside. **Now is the time for us to create approaches that are truly inclusive, challenging colonial models of assimilation by uplifting local cultures and languages.** We are proud to be a part of this movement in partnership with the communities we serve.

People like you are the reason we are here today. Your support changes the world in ways big and small. We want you to be a part of our story, and here are three easy ways.

1. **Sign up for our newsletter** at chasingtworabbits.org/contact to get regular updates on our learners, communities, and dynamic team.
2. **Participate in our flagship Cultural Exchange Program**, where classrooms, church groups, and youth clubs gain global citizenship skills by connecting with our learners in Cameroon to share stories and learn from one another's experiences. Express interest by sending us a message at chasingtworabbits.org/contact.
3. **Make a contribution** to support our kids and communities. You will be amazed to see how far your donation can go in bringing positive impact. Just \$60 sends a child to preschool for an entire year! Find out more at chasingtworabbits.org/donate.

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