

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Rounding Up the Edges (ROUTE) International Ltd
*"The one-stop provider of soft skills for Employability,
Business and Life to Young Adults in Africa".*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. 2020: RESILIENT GROWTH	3
2. ABOUT OUR COMPANY	5
OUR VISION	5
OUR MISSION	5
OUR CORE BELIEFS	5
OUR CORE VALUES	5
3. OUR PRODUCTS & SERVICES	6
TRAINING APPROACHES	8
TARGET GROUPS	8
CERTIFICATION	9
OTHER SERVICES	9
THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMPANY	9
4. MEET OUR TEAM	10
5. HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020	11
6. OVERCOMING WITH DIGITAL SOLUTIONS	11
7. FURTHERING THE CAUSE	13
8. CLIENT-SPECIFIC MARKETING	13
9. WIDENING OUR FOOTPRINTS	14
10. OUR STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS	16
11. WHAT CLIENTS SAY ABOUT US	16
12. FUTURE OUTLOOK FOR 2021	19
13. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	20

2020: RESILIENT GROWTH

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER AND CEO

The year 2020 started off with the intent and plan of building on the achievements of 2019 to meet our clients' needs. However, towards the end of the first quarter, the COVID-19 pandemic reached Uganda and along with it came lockdowns, restrictions on physical movements, closure of educational institutions and slowing of economic activities and businesses. I am proud to report that ROUTE effectively adapted to the "new normal" by going digital, thus diversifying our approaches, continuing to serve our clients and expanding our geographical reach.

In the face of this unprecedented pandemic, our team pulled together admirably to continue delivering on our mission. They worked tirelessly in uncertain circumstances to expand our portfolio of products and services and increase our reach to meet the emerging demands of clients. This birthed our self-led Online Learning Platform and virtual trainings. They are unique, interesting, and creatively developed to actively engage the learner while maintaining their superior didactic qualities. The incredible response from our clients, stakeholders and partners to these new products and services and their eventual uptake was extremely motivating. All this ensured the continuity of our services beyond geographical boundaries. The outstanding resilience displayed by the team and our stakeholders to advance the company's objectives, despite the challenges of the period, makes the theme of this year's annual report befitting, "Resilient Growth".

Before the pandemic, ROUTE had established some strategic partnerships. These have been key in our ability to respond to clients' needs during the pandemic and will remain essential in creating a stronger, more integrated support network on which to leverage to expand our horizon. Our

appreciation goes to all our stakeholders and partners that have supported us this year as well as to the Board of Directors. We ask for your continued support and patronage to help us serve our growing clientele.

As one of the leading soft skills training companies, we continually improve ourselves to raise the bar in training and mentoring in highly innovative and transformational ways. The significant technological advances we have made in these areas have changed and accelerated the way we provide training and other services.

Looking ahead, I see opportunities. We shall further invest into digital services, strengthen our brand, expand our client base, provide memorable customer experience, monitor, and evaluate, learn and adapt, and share our experiences. We shall diversify our funding and explore new partnerships. I am incredibly excited about this journey and truly believe that the best is yet to come.

On behalf of ROUTE, I have the pleasure of inviting you to read this report, explore our website and social media platforms, and learn more about our skilling young adults program, visit <https://skillingyoungadults.com/skillingprograms/>

Sincerely,



Dr. Kayondo Jane Frances KENGEYA
Founder and CEO

Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. At ROUTE, we believe we can go as far as our minds let us. We have achieved what we believed, despite all odds.

Rounding up the Edges (ROUTE) International is a non-profit company registered in Uganda in 2013. Since 2019, ROUTE has implemented a Skilling Young Adults program for training, supporting, and mentoring young adults in Africa, who make up the majority of the continent's population, in soft skills for Employability, Business, and Life. The goal is to enable young adults find job openings easily, become more competitive in the job market, more productive at work, better positioned to start and succeed at micro,

small and medium-size businesses and more able to become well-functioning adults who contribute meaningfully to their communities. The company mainly targets young adults between the ages of 18-35 years and embraces young adults of all educational, religious, political, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. The ROUTE Equity Fund guarantees the participation of the financially disadvantaged with a special focus on the unemployed, women and those living with disabilities.





ABOUT OUR COMPANY



OUR VISION

To be the leading one-stop not-for-profit company empowering Young Adults in Africa with Soft Skills for Employability, Business, and Life.



OUR MISSION

To provide high quality, innovative and transformational training, guidance, support and mentoring in soft skills for Employability, Business, and Life in order to enable young adults in Africa make optimal contribution to the social and economic development of the continent by turning their acquired knowledge, hard skills, talents and life experiences into effective employment, career progress, lucrative business, and fulfilling lives based on proven principles.



OUR CORE BELIEFS

We are guided by three major beliefs:

- Soft skills are vital for long-term success in work, business, and life, are hard to master but are what make humans indispensable
- Individuals with higher levels of soft skills



get jobs easier, learn better on the job, are more productive, earn more and are in better health

- Soft skills are not hereditary. They can be learnt, must be taught, and it makes good business sense to teach and propagate them



OUR CORE VALUES

- Committed to experiential and learner-centered methods of soft skills building
- We are action-focused and need-responsive in solving problems to guarantee success
- We put service before self and work until the job is done
- We encourage early acquisition of soft skills to yield the greatest impact
- We are committed to respectful and non-discriminatory practices
- We prioritize the underprivileged
- We maintain confidentiality, professionalism, excellence, and integrity
- We learn from our shortcomings and apologize when expectations are not met



OUR PRODUCTS & SERVICES

OUR SKILLING MODULES

We possess a solid, diverse, high-quality, unique, and stand-alone set of training modules in soft skills for Employability, Business and Life.

For each of these modules we have:

- A summary of the module for our website
- A text that can be adapted (flyer or noticeboard advert) to advertise and invite learners to register for the training
- A module outline
- High quality multi-purpose PowerPoint slides that can be used for physical and virtual training as well as on our online eLearning platform.
- Comprehensive notes/factsheet for learners

1. Soft Skills for Employability

These are skills that prepare young adults for the job market, facilitate them in finding jobs, increase their productivity at work, enhance their career progression, and make them an invaluable resource at their places of work. Among the soft skills for employability, ROUTE focuses on:

- Skills for finding and making sense of job adverts
- Writing a compelling Curriculum Vitae (CV)/resume and Cover Letter
- Tactics for succeeding at a job interview
- Rules and etiquette of work
- How to practice professionalism at work
- Problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Improving personal engagement at work through mindset change
- Critical thinking
- Emotional intelligence
- Time management
- Customer care.



2. Soft Skills for Business

These are skills that prepare young adults in starting, managing, and successfully sustaining micro, small, and medium-size businesses including those in the hospitality sector. Among Soft Skills for business ROUTE focuses on:

- Skills for developing high impact business ideas
- Meeting the requirements for starting a business
- Carrying out a simple business market survey
- Preparing a basic business plan
- Success factors for business including marketing and sales
- Customer care
- Skills for the hospitality sector such as food safety and hygiene

3. Soft Skills for Life

These are those skills that position young adults to take advantages of life's opportunities, that help them address and overcome the challenges and dilemmas of life, enable them to have more meaningful relationships and enhance their abilities to better manage their lives and experience personal growth. The soft skills for life that ROUTE focuses on include:

- Skills for managing personal money
- Skills for resilience
- Skills for healthy living
- Finding your purpose
- Self-knowledge
- Skills for behavior change
- Courtship and marriage
- Navigating power and gender relationships
- Discipline
- Good habits
- Skills for planning retirement



TRAINING APPROACHES

We use six approaches to deliver training to our clients/target groups:

- One-on-one training – in-person or virtually. Virtually has no geographical restriction
- Covid 19 SOPs` compliant group physical training at our center or elsewhere
- Virtual training via zoom – any number depending on registration. No geographical restriction. Our current zoom package can host up to 100 learners at once.
- Self-led online E-learning – any number depending on registration. No geographical restriction.
- On air – via radio and TV – We established collaborations with Sanyu FM and Fresh TV
- On social media via YouTube, Facebook, and Webinars

TARGET GROUPS

Our target groups for the training program include:

- Students in **universities** and other **Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)**.
- Early-age, low & mid-level **workers in the corporate and business world**
- Members of **common interest youth clubs** e.g., Rotaractors, sports clubs
- Members of **Religious youth** organizations – of all denominations
- **High school** finalists and long vacationists
- Clients of Non-Governmental Organizations (**NGOs**) working with youth
- Members of **Special needs groups** (refugees, people with disabilities and single mothers/widows).
- Young adults in the general population

We deliver a different set of modules to each of our target group and use target-specific promotion flyers including:

- Pre-uni package for A-level students
- Package for universities and other institutions of higher learning
- Package for partnering with Religious Institutions
- Corporate package
- Package for Rotaract clubs



CERTIFICATION

A certificate is given to learners upon completion of a particular module. It is a certificate of completion based on contact hours, not grades or marks, since the emphasis of the training is on skilling and practice, not on tests and marks.

OTHER SERVICES

- Career counselling
- Occupational profiling
- Provision of consultancy services in skills for employability, business, and life
- Provision of corporate training facilities (training center hire)
- Updating and posting information about national, regional, and international labor employment opportunities on the Job bank
- Link young adults with reputable employers for internship and work placement opportunities
- Link young adults with local and international higher education institutions for further training
- and up-skilling

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMPANY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NAME	COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE
Dr. Jane Kengeya-Kayondo	Uganda
Mr. Moses Kayondo	Uganda
Mr. David Martin Luswata	Canada
Dr. Joanita Noelina Nattu	Norway
Ms. Stacia Nkizi Andrea	Switzerland
Mr. Michael Amany-Ebye	Syria
Mr. David Katungye	Uganda

MEET OUR TEAM

The company prides itself in having a technically competent, highly professional and committed team. This is the team behind the remarkable success ROUTE has achieved this year. They have beaten the odds to make it all happen.



NAME	QUALIFICATIONS	ROLE	FROM	TO
Kayondo Jane Frances Kengeya	MChB, MSc	Founder & CEO	Jan 2019	Current
Flavia Nyinomugisha Katungye	BBA Finance	Company Secretary	Jan 2019	Current
Stella Sibo	(MSCE -IT Systems Engineer	IT Consultant	Jan 2019	Current
Mr. Dennis E. Bitature	Behavioral & Clinical Psychologist)	Trainer		Current
Ms. Regina N. Musaazi	Msc. Agric. Econs	Trainer	2019	Current
Fred Kawoya Ssebatta Abdalla				
Betty Akite	BBA Accounting	Finance	2019	Current
Joseph Kahuma				
Joseph Walusinbi				
Ronald Keskende				
Robert Ssuna				
Henry Atugonza				
Irene Kushemererwa				



MEET OUR SERVICE PROVIDERS



A big thank you to these individuals and companies for their generosity and for sticking with ROUTE even during covid 19 troubles. ROUTE would not have achieved what it achieved without you.

Often, at that early stage, clarity of designations, roles, responsibilities and reporting lines were unclear but this did not stop you giving ROUTE your best.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

Despite the pandemic-related challenges with which the year was fraught, the company registered a number of achievements. Read ahead as we share with you some of our notable results in 2020 and how the company steered through the first phase of COVID-19 pandemic in the country and embraced the “new normal”.

OVERCOMING WITH DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The advent of COVID-19, its associated restrictions and public safety consciousness implied that in-person services and transactions in organizations and businesses were limited to the bare minimum. To overcome these obstacles, digital options were embraced to ensure that services are taken to clients' locations and transactions are conducted remotely. In this regard, ROUTE fast-tracked the implementation of its digital strategy by introducing the Self-led Online Learning Platform and virtual training.

Introducing virtual training services

The advent of the Online Learning Platform

The company introduced its Self-Led Online Learning Platform in July 2020. The platform is user-friendly and interactive. Ten modules were launched on the platform. They were professionally developed, easy-to-understand with a blend of theory interspersed with practical, real-life exercises and activities. Learners can self-instruct a module at their convenience and in the safety of their locations within three months. A certificate of completion is automatically generated when a module is completed. Over twenty learners registered for different modules. Through the in-built pre and post training evaluation mechanisms of the platform, ROUTE was able to receive feedback from learners. It was remarkable and motivating. The platform and modules are undergoing further enhancements to optimize the users' experience. Other modules will be uploaded to give clients a wider range of options.

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Virtual trainings commenced

To overcome physical barriers imposed by the COVID-19 restrictions, expand our reach to clients across the globe with a range of digital services, ROUTE also introduced virtual trainings. The platform has the capacity to host 100 learners per training session. These are conducted in all the modules by highly professional and experienced trainers. We adopted a flexible training approach; a monthly training schedule and demand-based training (for individuals or groups). Virtual trainings create an opportunity for learners to interact and share experiences with the trainer and among themselves in the convenience and safety of their locations. This has made the trainings quite popular. The first virtual training session was held on 20th August 2020. This year, up to 100 people from different parts of the world including Nairobi, Abu Dhabi, Canada and London, were trained in various modules.

"Extremely insightful", "real value for money", "I liked how practical the training was", "I learnt a lot", "it met my expectations and more", "the trainers are so knowledgeable", were some of the comments coming through from learners.

Company operations take a somewhat remote turn

The company introduced a range of safety measures and hygiene protocols to ensure the safety of its team, clients, and partners. These included strict hygiene and social distancing measures at the training center, limitations on in-person meetings and introduction of "remote working". We digitized transactions and processes with our stakeholders and partners and worked closely with them, using these means, to fulfil our commitments despite the challenges of meeting physically presented by the pandemic.

Through virtual means, the company engaged eleven (11) stakeholders including Universities, companies, religious and social organizations. The engagements are at different stages and their outcomes will inform the course of our work in 2021.

In-person transactions limited but still relevant

Although limited, in-person trainings and meetings remain an inevitable aspect of the company's profile. We are aware that many of our clients have very limited or no access to or capacity to utilize digital options. To meet their needs, trainings and meetings were held while observing strict COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Several training sessions were held at the center and different locations. A total of 27 people were trained from these.

The new engagements notwithstanding, our past stakeholders and partners continue to remain significant and relevant in increasing our reach to clients.

FURTHERING THE CAUSE

Creating a community of learners

The company has trained over 200 young adults through virtual and in-person trainings. One of the uniqueness of ROUTE's Skilling Program is the provision of post-training support and guidance to its learners. This is done in-person and/or virtually. Regarding the latter, we created a virtual community of learners to continue experiential sharing, networking, peer mentoring and resource sharing. Over 80 learners have joined the community and number keeps increasing. Walk-ins to the training center constitute a significant number of learners who receive mentoring and guidance.

CLIENT-SPECIFIC MARKETING

Customized flyers for our stakeholders

During the year, the company produced customized flyers for Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning, Corporate Organizations, Religious Organizations and (International) Secondary Schools. These providespecific information to each category of stakeholders. The information provided includes: Benefits of partnering with ROUTE for both parties, expectations from both parties and modules recommended for the stakeholder. The flyers are brief, easy to read and understand and attractive. Over 500 copies of each flyer were produced and disseminated. The company has been contacted by several stakeholders who received the flyers. With some, interactions for future collaboration were initiated. The nature and scope of future engagements with them is being explored.

LEARN HOW TO
**START YOUR
OWN BUSINESS**



TRAINING COURSE **ON HOW TO START A BUSINESS**

ROUTE – Skilling Young Adults will conduct a training on how to start a Business for those aged 18-35 years

WHEN: Tuesday, 27th AUGUST, 2019

WHERE: ROUTE- Training Center
S&S Mall, Nkumba

TIME: 5:00pm -7:30pm

PAYMENT: 29,000/= per person

BOOK NOW: +256 414672497

SUBSCRIBE & JOIN US NOW

www.skillingyoungadults.com



WIDENING OUR FOOTPRINTS

Extending our stakeholder engagements and partnership

During the year, the company initiated and advanced engagements with several stakeholders. Key among these were: Mbarara University, St. Joseph University, Mbarara, Rotaract Club, Youth Secretariat of Kampala Catholic Diocese and Kenya Youth Society. The company is at different levels of engagement with them. A few trainings have results from these interactions. Future plans are underway to formalize some of these engagements. The new engagements notwithstanding, our past stakeholders and

partners continue to remain significant and relevant in increasing our reach to clients.

Our grand media entrance

Amplifying our voice through Sanyu FM Radio

On 26th July 2020, ROUTE signed an MoU with Sanyu FM Radio. Sanyu FM is the Pioneer FM station in Uganda that has been in existence since December 1993. It is one of the leading English-speaking radio stations preferred by urban youths and corporates. It is rated highly among the top radio stations and this is attributed to intensive engagement and interaction with listeners.

ROUTE also features in a program called, "The Lounge" where topics relating to ROUTE's products and services are discussed.



Advertisement voice overs on ROUTE run from 09.00hrs till 15.00hrs every weekday.

The agreement is already yielding fruits; We have had clients reaching out to us after having listened to or heard about ROUTE International from here. One such client is WAVE Media a notably popular and well established printing powerhouse.

We are looking to extend our partnership with Sanyu FM next year to further widen our talkability amongst the youths in Kampala and greater Kampala.

Also excitingly, the CEO was chosen by Sanyu FM radio to be their go-to "Radio Doctor".

Dr. Jane, as she is popularly (and fondly) called, features periodically on air to discuss topical health issues and respond to listeners' questions and comments on the same. This has given her and the company, by extension, very wide exposure and reputational mileage.

Seeing is believing, our journey with Fresh TV starts

In a bid to increase our talkability and viewership as well as extend our vision to the respective target market, ROUTE International entered a partnership with Fresh Television. Fresh TV is a Christian Television Channel under Fresh Fire Deliverance Ministries in Kampala.

In April 2020, Route International signed an MOU with fresh Tv to further our mission and vision of teaching soft skills to the young adult on all media forums. Route's purpose was and still is to reach out to the masses on the business front through a program entitled the Golden mind which airs every Monday from 19.00hrs-20.00hrs. The show features a business topic every Monday evening with a slot for live call ins from viewers.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Stakeholder engagements and partnerships have strengthened the company's reach to its clients. We remain resolute in our commitment to ensuring their effectiveness to further the common cause for which they were initiated. Thank you for standing with us.



WHAT CLIENTS SAY ABOUT US

See how we are helping our clients reach their full potential with our services. Register with us today and be part of this exciting journey towards success.

Meet Naasir, a second year student of Nkumba University.

In 2019, a meeting between him and an employee of ROUTE completely changed his life. He attended two trainings on, "How to Write a Compelling CV" and "Tactics for Succeeding at a Job Interview". He wrote an outstanding CV, passed the interview and got a part-time job. His success story is not over. In his words,

"I got a part-time job late last year. Being my first job, I had no idea what was expected of me, how to conduct myself and how to relate to my employer and co-workers. I was nervous because I really wanted to succeed at my job. The training I attended in ROUTE on, "Rules and Etiquette of Work" was a precisely what I needed. There were so many things I was taking for granted at work which apparently, were very important. I became equipped for the world of work. I was pleasantly surprised when my boss told me that I was being considered for a higher position of team supervisor. Thanks to ROUTE, I can see myself climbing the career ladder.

Watch my space,"

**Naasir,
Third year student,
Nkumba University, Entebbe**

"I completed my Diploma in Catering and Hotel Management. I was wondering what next. Being from a humble background, I didn't have capital to start a business and didn't know where to get it. I had absolutely no idea how to start a business. My friend gave me a flyer on the trainings ROUTE offers. I attended the training on, "How to Start and Succeed in Business". It revealed a lot to me. The training was exhaustive and practical with real life case studies. At the end of the training, all participants left with a business plan for their potential ventures which they had been guided to develop. With this and the skills I got, I should be able to source for some money and start my own small business."

**Nina,
Recent Graduate,**

Entebbe Vocational Training Institute

"Although I eventually wanted to get married, I had given up on love after a series of failed relationships. Our church organized a training on, "Courtship and Marriage". It completely changed my perception about love relationships. I realized my shortcomings. I was skilled on how to build and sustain a healthy love relationship. I'm hopeful that my next relationship will work out. In the near future, a wedding is truly within my reach".

**Zawedde,
Youth Leader, Mpala Catholic Parish,
Entebbe.**

"I have been trying to get a job for a long time but I wasn't making any progress. First, I was overwhelmed by the number of job adverts. Secondly, I couldn't understand what I read or figure out if it was the right job for me. I almost fell prey to a fake job advert. The virtual training by ROUTE on, "Finding Job Advertisements and Making Sense of Them", was brilliant. It answered all my questions on job adverts. I can confidently say that I know my way around the maze of job adverts. I'll definitely identify my dream job soon."

Phillip,

Final year student,

"Thank you ROUTE for coming up with an innovation that is unique and relevant to the job market. It is one thing to be educated and a professional and another to have the requisite knowledge and skills to be resourceful and perform effectively at the workplace. The soft skills ROUTE provides are highly essential in today's job market. All those that have attended ROUTE's trainings appreciate how much the skills have equipped them. Testimonies are many regarding the relevance of the Skilling Program. On a personal note, I have seen tremendous change in some of my staff who attended trainings on, "Professionalism" and Rules and Etiquette of Work". I have recommended the trainings to all members of staff. The rippling effect of these trainings will be result in a more productive Municipal Council. Which leader wouldn't want that?"

Kayanja V.P.

Mayor, Entebbe Municipal Council

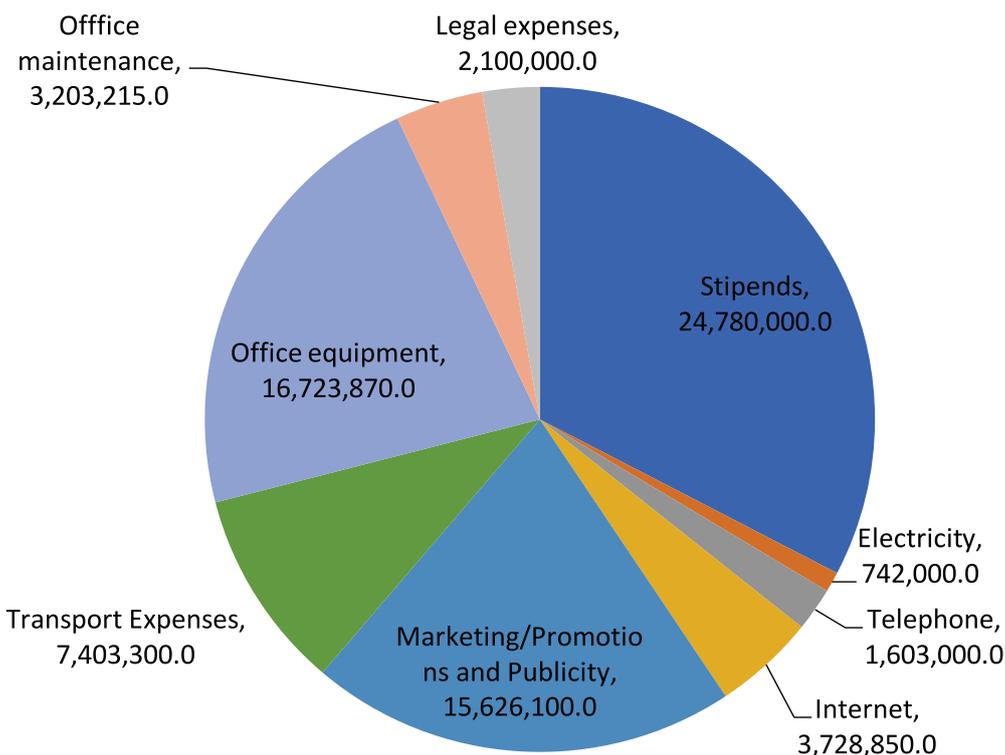
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2020

This year the organization like almost all other business in the country was not spared the negative effects of the Covid-19 lock down that was effective 21st March 2020. As noted from the year 2019, the year 2020 was also fully supported financially by founder/ Directors.

The year 2020 total budget expenditure was Seventy-five million nine hundred ten thousand three hundred and thirty five shillings only (75,910,335) and the expenditure breakdown as shown below.

ROUTE FINANCIAL INFORMATION YEAR 2020 TOTAL BUDGET 75,910,335

Amounts in Uganda Shillings



Based on the above summary.

Rent was not accrued because we are still holding discussion with the landlord. We thank the landlord for being very understanding and allowing to occupy the premises despite unpaid rent arrears of the whole lock-down period.

FUTURE OUTLOOK FOR 2021

This was an unusual year, not only for ROUTE but for all companies across the country. The skilling industry was most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because of the physical restricts that were imposed. This necessitated companies to change their modus operandi by exploring digital options in all spheres of operation in a bid to remain relevant. Our company was no exception, we embraced the paradigm shift by fast-tracking the implementation of our digital strategy. The company was able to develop an Online Learning Platform and start virtual trainings. For these and the other successes that were registered, we owe to the entire team that exhibited outstanding resilience in very daunting and uncertain circumstances. As well as to our clients, stakeholders and partners who faithfully supported us throughout this period. These propelled the growth of the company to new heights.

While COVID-19 presented significant challenges to our usual interaction with clients (learners), stakeholders and partners, continuing to offer them direct support and training will remain a priority for ROUTE in 2021. By observing local safety and hygiene measures and using innovative digital alternatives, shall ensure that we carry out our mandate across the country and continent.

As we look ahead to another year, our focus will be on the following: Building capacity in e-infrastructure, improving operational efficiency, re-igniting/stimulating demand for our products and services (following the lull in the economy) by developing innovative tools and methods, expanding our virtual space (presence), leveraging on existing networks, increasing e-marketing and promoting and intensifying the use of our social media platforms.

While the shift to digital options is envisaged to increase in 2021, it will not completely preclude in-person transactions. These will remain viable options in training and strategic meetings but with the strict employment and observance of COVID-19 SOPs. This is because many of our clients and stakeholders in Uganda are yet to afford, access and use digital alternatives.

Our focus on identifying new stakeholders and building strategic partnerships will continue in 2021. However, we shall also continue to nurture our current stakeholder engagements with a view of formalizing them.

The unpredictability of the spread and containment of the COVID-19 virus and the associated uncertainty it poses, will require the company to be more creative, innovative and think "out of the box" to remain relevant and meet the changing needs of its clients. These should propel us to even greater heights.

“Share your success story with us. We would love to read about it.”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, our gratitude goes to the team that compiled and produced this report. We thank you for all the effort you put in to ensure that we got an outstanding report. We are also grateful to our learners, stakeholders and partners who agreed to share their experiences with us and feature in the report.

We thank the Board of Directors for their unwavering support throughout the year. Each of the members provided us with extensive personal and professional guidance, financial and non-financial assistance.

We are indebted to all the individuals who have contributed to the company in various ways. Your constructive ideas, advice, encouragement, financial and non-financial support have brought us to where we are.

Finally, to our learners, you are the reason we exist as a company. We thank you for choosing to consume our products and services. Your enthusiasm, keen interest and support for our products and services as well as your feedback have provided us unending inspiration.

Our heartfelt thanks to all of you. Your support during this difficult year of the COVID-19 pandemic is appreciated and duly noted. It was a great comfort to have you stand with us

and to know that you were willing to navigate through the year with us despite all odds.

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