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INTRODUCTION MESSAGE FROM THE ED

2023INFOCUS: GROWTH, OPPORTUNITIES AND WAY FORWARD



Dear friends,

am delighted to present LGF's Annual Report for 2023, a year marked by significant achievements. Our team has continued to thrive, and I am proud to highlight some of the key milestones we have reached this year.

A notable highlight was our management team's participation in the inaugural cohort of the Collective Rising Leadership Institute (CRLI). Over nine months, our six-member team engaged in a rigorous coaching program designed to reconnect leaders with their purpose. This transformative experience, led by CRLI founder Joyce Malombe and her team of brilliant coaches, has invigorated our leadership and strengthened our resolve to make a lasting impact.

At LGF, evidence generation and dissemination are cornerstones of our approach. This year, we had the opportunity to share findings from our study evaluating our flagship Activate Critical Thinking Now (ACT Now) program in eastern Uganda.

The feedback we received was inspiring and affirming, underscoring the positive impact of our initiatives.

LGF has also doubled down on its focus on youth empowerment by introducing programs centered around climate justice and green skills. Building on last year's successful initiatives in refugee settlements, this year we reached out to both in-school and out-of-school youth in the districts of Terego, Yumbe, and Madi Okolo with specialized training in solar energy and domestic energy-saving stoves, with 200 individuals already certified by the Directorate of Industrial Training. A new cohort is now awaiting assessment and certification, marking another milestone in the program's ongoing impact.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the support and trust of our partners, donors, and the communities we serve. As we look to the future, we remain committed to delivering high-quality educational programs and driving positive change.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in our mission. Together, we are making a difference.

Warm regards,

Gillian Aluheige

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ABOUT LGF

Formerly operating as Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education, Luigi Giussani Foundation (LGF), is an indigenous for-impact organization that has for the last 15 years been responding to educational challenges in Uganda through research and capacity building.



VISION: An education ecosystem that nurtures dynamic, self-aware, and resilient learners and educators.



MISSION: To create opportunities for professional and personal development, which start from the recognition of the infinite value of the person and are developed through a method of personal engagement with one's life and the meaning of one's work.



CORE VALUES: Respect, Resilience, Self-awareness, Collaboration, Truthfulness, Responsibilty, Openness and Wonder





THEMATIC AREAS



Foundational Learning

have implemented context-relevant literacy and numeracy models that incorporate playful methodologies adapted for improved holistic learning outcomes among out-of-school and in-school children. These are Language Experience Approach and Weekly Foundation Stories and language learner-engaging approaches that promote reading and writing, the Concrete Pictorial and Abstract methodology for numeracy and Teaching at Right Level (TaRL), a pedagogical approach that helps children quickly gain basic reading and numeracy skills. All these approaches are aimed at nurturing the holistic development of each child, ensuring they have the skills and confidence to excel both academically and personally.



Life Skills and Values

In a world where people often encounter diverse and sometimes conflicting values, rules, and habits, it is crucial to cultivate a strong sense of personal identity and ethical clarity. Our approach integrates life skills and values into the curriculum, provides and prepares teachers to transfer them in the teaching and learning process, engages students in real-world problem-solving and ethical decision-making, and involves families and communities in the educational process.



Teacher Professional Development

The cornerstone of quality education is skilled and inspired teachers. At LGF, we invest heavily in the professional development of our educators. Through comprehensive training programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities, we strive to enhance their pedagogical skills and subject knowledge.



School Culture, Leadership, and Management

Through our leadership development programs, we aim to build the capacity of school leaders, enabling them to inspire and support their staff and students. By promoting strong leadership and effective management at all levels, we ensure that these schools are guided by a clear vision and a shared commitment to excellence.



HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023



Engagement with Headteachers

We had an inspiring session with over 50 headteachers from Luwero and Kampala primary schools whose teachers have been part of our Learning through Play (LtP) journey. We introduced the headteachers to LtP formative tools developed by LGF in collaboration with FHI360 and other institutions and delved into why play is essential for learning.



Integration of Life skills into curriculum

We were part of the Uganda ALiVE team that hosted National Curriculum Development Centre experts over the integration of life skills and values into the Uganda primary education curriculum at LGF premises in Luzira in Kampala



Climate Education Caravan

Took part in an education caravan as part of our deliberate approach of promoting climate education in our partner Vocational Technical Schools (VTIs) in West Nile under an Oxfam in Uganda-led DANIDA SPII project. The main aim of the caravan was to create awareness about the importance of climate education in the West Nile. Activities included stakeholder engagement with Madi-Okollo district leaders, presentation of a communique from youth from the VTIs to district leaders planting of trees and a caravan from Madi-Okollo.



CIES Conference/ALIVE Book

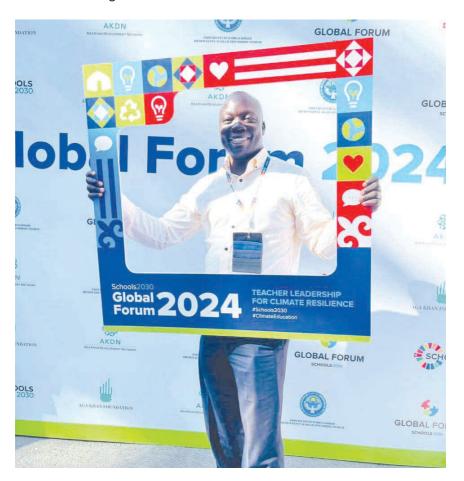
We were part of the Action for Life Skills and Values (ALiVE) East Africa team that launched an open access book at the CIES Conference in Miami, USA. Titled The Contextualisation of 21st Century Skills and edited by Prof. Esther Care, John Mugo and our own Mauro Giacomazzi, the book is a key resource to educators and policymakers who seek to empower young people with 21st century competencies. The book reports on levels of competencies of over 45,000 adolescents following a household-based assessment conducted in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.



Annual Report 2023

Schools2030 Global Forum

Addressing teacher agency is key in our agenda of building the capacity of educators. We were therefore delighted to attend the Schools2030 Global Forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan under the theme: Teacher Leadership for Climate Resilience: How might we transform learning through school and systems pathways for the future of the planet? The Global Forum brought together education leaders and change-makers from around the world to explore how Schools2030's model is working to strengthen collective educational response to climate challenges.



Collective Rising Graduation

Our management team participated in the inaugural cohort of the Collective Rising Leadership Institute (CRLI). Starting with an immersion in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2023, our six-member team over a period of six months, engaged in a rigorous coaching program designed to reconnect leaders with their purpose. This transformative experience, led by CRLI founder Joyce Malombe and her team of brilliant coaches, has invigorated our leadership and strengthened our resolve to make a lasting impact.



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Naivasha Conference

ED attended the Africa Systems Change Community of Practice in Naivasha, Kenya. An event brought together that change leaders system from various organizations across Africa, focusing on systems change discussions. It was a rich learning experience filled with valuable insights. Collaboration resonates deeply with us at LGF where collaboration is a core value.



LGIHE 4th Graduation Day

In December, our sister institution Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education held its 4th graduation under the theme: Nurturing Passion for Unveiling the Infinite Value of Every Child. The graduation marked a significant milestone for LGIHE which is now accredited by NCHE as an Other Degree Awarding Institution. LGIHE remains a strong hub for LGF's continuous professional development curricula.



Dissemination of RCT Findings

At LGF, evidence generation and sharing are part of our approach because we realise that whenever we evaluate and share outcomes of our initiatives, it shows a commitment to accountability and respect to our partners for their role in the process. We had the opportunity to disseminate findings from a study that we conducted on our Activate Critical Thinking Now (ACT Now) intervention in Namisindwa and Manafwa schools. The event that attracted key stakeholders from the two districts such as Teachers, Headteachers, District Inspectors of Schools, District Education Officers and Chief Administrative Officers.



Play Day

We were delighted to attend the National Play Day at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds in Kampala. At LGF, we know every child has a right to learn, grow and thrive and therefore we could not miss the opportunity to be part of the national celebrations and exihibt some of our tools. The tools are testimony of the work we have been doing with our partners; FHI 360, The LEGO Foundation, University of Notre Dame, among others, to improve teachers' experiences of learning through play.





Action Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALIVE)

ALIVE is a Regional Education Learning Initative (RELI) Africa initiative that aims to ensure children in East Africa acquire life skills and values in order for them to thrive both during and beyond schooling. The project which started in 2020 is now on Phase 2 which focuses on enhancing the capacity of education systems to focus on life skills and values, adapting contextualised assessment tools for 6–17-year-olds, generating evidence by conducting assessments and collating evidence from other life skills approaches and then using the evidence for learning and public policy advocacy.

Project: Humanitarian Development and Peace Initiative for Crisis Affected Population in Uganda (DANIDA SP II). Implemented in three refugee hosting districts of Yumbe, Madi-Okollo and Terego, the project has three main objectives: Just societies, Leaving No One Behind, and Climate Justice. Under the project, LGF is taking the lead in the implementation of education related interventions ranging from designing and adaptation of manuals for green skills, adaptation and delivery of TEDP manuals and capacity building of instructors.



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Project: Activate Critical Thinking Now (ACT Now)

Goal: Fostering critical thinking among secondary school teachers and learners. Under ACT Now, we support teachers in the development of critical thinking augmented lessons and with the designing of lesson plans and other instructional materials that enhance the development of transferable higher order thinking skills. Results from a randomized controlled trial study we carried out in Namisindwa and Manafwa where we are implementing the intervention in order to investigate how effective the approach was shows remarkable improvement in learning, teaching and school environment.



Project: Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment (SAY)

Under the Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment (SAY) project, we are partnering with AVSI Foundation to contribute to increased agri-skills levels and gainful employment of youth in the agriculture sector where we addressed challenges and barriers that limit the engagement of working-age youth in agribusiness. Specifically, our focus has been to provide youth with life skills training to effectively and efficiently handle emerging issues related to their workplace, and to be able to help fellow youth with similar challenges in their communities.

Project: Gender Equality in Training (GET)

Goal: Improving the capacities of vocational training schools to promote gender equality and reduce gender biases in both the vocational training sector and the labor market and contribute to the promotion of gender equality in Kenya and Uganda. In the project, LGF as an Implementing Partner oversees the general project activities in the vocational training institutions (VTIs) which are the direct project beneficiaries. LGF supervises their activities and provides VTIs with technical support, guidance and capacity building.



Project: Multiannual Resilience Plan (MYRP)

Goal: To carry out the inventory of the socio-emotional component in school programs and in classrooms, and the evaluation of student learning in the province of Tanganyika in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Our major role is to develop a basic inventory of the socio-emotional situation in the school programs, and specifically to: (a) collect data on children's learning levels in reading/writing, math, and social-emotional learning at the start of the program; (b) help inform remediation mechanisms in the MYRP to improve learning in emergencies during program implementation; and (c) effectively disseminate findings on Education in Emergencies to local, national and international actors. The study is guided by the following key questions: (1) What are the current levels of learning in the MYRP beneficiary population? (2) How are girls learning compared to boys? and (3) What are the important contextual factors associated with low and high levels of learning?



TESTIMONIALS

Marrion Atuhurra, Teacher of Biology and Chemistry - S2 & S3, Destiny High School Kaato, Manafwa



LGF efore trainings, teachers knew about lesson plans but often overlooked their true value. Teaching would sometimes proceed without proper planning, relying solely on activities from teacher's guides and learner's books. Personally. I used to look at assessment as only written responses from a learner. For learners' participation, I would mind about learners giving answers but I was not always keen on uplifting both categories - boys and girls. There was no emphasis on developing learners' skills, and that's why some teachers would dictate on what subject-based projects to be done. Learners expressing their opinions was a waste of time to me, so, I would take most of the time for the lesson. The training sessions by LGF facilitators on critical thinking, gender sensitivity, lesson planning, and continuous monitoring classroom were key in helping me improve my teaching practices. Also, the use of audio-visual aids and stories expanded my understanding of key concepts. As a result, I have observed a great improvement in how I develop lesson plans as guiding tools, designing more stimulating learner activities. assessing learners' abilities, and ensuring gender sensitivity in the classroom. As a teacher, I now know the importance of providing equal opportunities for both boys and girls to participate and I always endeavour to do throughout the lesson activities. Also, I learnt that assessment goes beyond written tests and involves other strategies such as listening and observing, which I now use in my lessons.

Grace Bwayo, Deputy Headteacher, Butiru Model Comprehensive School, Manafwa District



reviously, some of us were prone to using inappropriate language and even engaging in verbal abuse, particularly towards female students, which undermined their value and respect. However, through sensitization from activities of this [LGF's] intervention, there has been a great change. As teachers, a school, and learners, we have all benefited a lot from this initiative. For us teachers, it has mainly exposed us to critical thinking and gender responsiveness while teaching. We now genuinely appreciate both girls and boys equally, engage them the same way in all activities, use appropriate language, and encourage them to do the same towards each other. As a result, we have seen improvements in our learners' attitudes and behaviours. Boys have learned to appreciate and respect the contributions of girls. So, girls now feel more confident and are freely interacting with boys in class, knowing that their voices are respected and valued.

Joyce Akandu, (DANIDA SP Project) Bidibidi Refugee Settlement, Zone 4, Yumbe District



efore the LGF came to train us in, my life was overshadowed by conflict and uncertainty. I had a family to feed yet I had no source of income. That is why I was eager to join the training and acquire skills. There were many options but I settled on learning how to make briquettes—a sustainable alternative to traditional charcoal. The training was thorough, and I gained skills that I never imagined I would have. With the support of the trainers and the community, I started making briquettes and selling them. At first, it was hard to believe that I could turn this new skill into a source of income. But slowly and steadily, my business began to grow. The money I earned from selling briquettes allowed me to provide for my young family. I could buy food, clothes, and even pay for my children's school fees. The impact on our lives has been incredible. My children no longer have to go to bed hungry, and they have the opportunity to get an education, something that was once just a dream. The sense of pride and independence I feel is great. I am no longer a helpless refugee; I am a provider and a role model in my community.

2023 IN NUMBERS

IMPACT OF OUR PROGRAMS



Teachers 1,021 (35% Females)



Youth **2,265** (**45%** females)



School Leaders 136 (71% Males)

LEARNERS



Primary **2,475**



Secondary 9,450

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The financial figures presented for the year ending 2023 indicate a strong improvement in income.

Income:

Grants

There was a considerable increase in grants received, rising from UGX 4,988,046,393.21 to UGX 5,866,903,308.04, reflecting a growth of 17.6%. This is a positive trend, indicating stronger support or more successful fundraising efforts in 2024.

Consultancy

Consultancy income saw a substantial rise, growing from UGX 45,413,555.00 to UGX 107,661,934.40 in 2024, an increase of 137.0%. This suggests that the organization expanded its consultancy services.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our donors and partners for their unwavering support and generous contributions throughout the year. Your dedication and commitment has been instrumental in helping us achieve our mission of transforming lives through education. With your partnership, we have been able to improve the quality educational opportunities, empower communities, and foster a brighter future for countless individuals. Thank you for standing with us on this incredible journey.

















