A word from our Leadership Team

Dear Girl Up Initiative Uganda Community,

We write this introduction letter with immense gratitude. Your unwavering belief and faith propel our vision of a world where girls can achieve their full potential.

As the co-founders and visionaries of Girl Up Initiative Uganda, it is deeply satisfying to witness the impact of our model to educate and empower thousands of adolescent girls, youth and young women. Our continued success is proof of our dedicated and talented team of 20 staff members and volunteers, 85 percent of whom are under the age of 35 years or younger and 80 percent of whom are women. We believe strongly in the principle that “it is not just what you do, but how you do it” which is why we not only promote and encourage young women leaders through our programs, but also through longer-term employment opportunities that enable professional and organizational skill development. Our team is made up of young people from the same slum communities as our beneficiaries; they act as “coaches” to all participants in our programs.

Looking back on 2016, we are overwhelmed by the achievements our team has made. We continue to expand the reach and impact our Adolescent Girls Program and refine and improve on our Young Women’s Economic Empowerment Program. 2016 also marked the first year of our engagement with the Ni-Yetu Youth Program, led by Plan International Uganda, which empowers youth with knowledge on sexual health, gender-based violence, and advocacy skills. Given our strong community and individual engagement, Plan International Uganda continues to showcase Girl Up Initiative Uganda as an example of a growing youth-led organization that, with capacity-building support, can strengthen our holistic empowerment model and transcend boundaries! We are also pleased to welcome onboard new partners, including Segal Family Foundation and Women of the Year UK, and look forward to their continued engagement in 2017.

Our motivation is derived from the personal stories of our participants challenging gender inequalities, building confidence, and standing up for
their rights. Many stories highlight our impact – like the brave young woman who reported abuse perpetrated by her step-father to the police, or the peer educator who stopped beating his wife after learning the effects of domestic violence on her health and their relationship. These stories teach us that together we have the power to transform the reality for girls and women in Uganda. Throughout the pages of this report, you will read more impact stories of the individual change created by our model.

While our program participants continue to raise expectations for themselves, we too look ahead expectantly to our future. What role can Girl Up Initiative Uganda play in the girls’ education movement in Uganda? How can we best tell our story and measure our impact? As a lean, grassroots organization, we will continue these conversations with our community and never stop learning and growing.

Thank you for walking this journey with us and ensuring the continued success of our girls, women and youth. You allow us, our girls, and the youth to wake up each morning believing that success and transformation is possible. We look forward to another successful year together!

ASPIRE! INSPIRE!

With gratitude,

Monica Nyiraguhabwa
Executive Director

Kimberly Wolf
Deputy Executive Director

“With Girl Up Initiative, I have learnt to love myself”
- Amina, 14
Girl Up Initiative Uganda’s mission is to provide young women and girls with opportunities to succeed and thrive as leaders in their communities through holistic education and economic empowerment.

Mission

We envision a world where girls can achieve their full potential through access to an education, and develop into economically independent, empowered young women capable of contributing to their families and communities as a whole.

Vision
February

• Launches school scholarship program for ten vulnerable Girl Up girls

January

• Launch of the Ni-Yetu Program in all five divisions of Kampala with youth and sub-county leaders, includes: peer-led outreach sessions, youth-friendly SRH/GBV health camps, drama group community theatre performances, male change agent outreaches, formation of youth advocacy network, and advocacy trainings

March

• Establishes the Adolescent Girls Program at Luzira C.O.U Primary School
April
- Joins the Girls Not Brides global network
- Conducts peer education training for 60 in-school youth together with CEDOVIP

May
- Opens Mazuri Designs online shop on Etsy.com to reach US customers
- Begins second six-month vocational skills training in sewing and tailoring
- Attends Women Deliver Conference in Copenhagen

June
- Organizes first youth-friendly SRHR Camp for more than 400 youth participants
- Begins parents’ engagement meetings
- Attends Plan International Uganda celebration for the Day of the African Child in Masaka

July
- Hires two seamstresses for Mazuri Designs, both graduates of the 2015 vocational skills training
- Adds briquette production to Girl Up Club activities

August
- Establishes Ugandan Board of Directors
- Attends Segal Family Foundation Annual Board Meeting in Kampala
- First donor visit to Kampala, Uganda
- Produces three-year strategic plan in a participatory process
- Holds first Boys Champion session on sexual health and puberty
- Travels to Kasese town in Western Uganda to train 205 women in producing reusable sanitary pads
**September**

- Launches Big Sister Mentorship Program with a two-day leadership and mentorship training
- Facilitates and participates in Peace Corps Uganda workshops on parent engagement and youth clubs

**October**

- Establishes the Adolescent Girls Program at two new schools – St. Kizito Primary School and Kiswa Primary School
- Produces second advocacy song entitled “Webale” (Thank you)
- Holds a Mazuri Designs photoshoot to showcase our designs

**November**

- Organizes an advocacy march for the 16 Days of Activism and graduation ceremony with over 530 attendees
- Coordinates the Music Campaign to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy with Ugandan artist Irene Ntale, leaders of the KCCA (Kampala Capital City Authority), and the Ministry of Gender

**December**

- Raises over USD 10,000 during two fundraisers/celebrations in California with co-founders Monica and Kim
- Mazuri Designs produces largest order – 100 chalkbags for Rwenzori
Adolescent Girls Program
Impact Numbers 2016

- 6000 Primary school children educated in mass education campaigns
- 3320 Meals served during trainings
- 400 Adolescent girls joined the Adolescent Girls Program
- 455 Girls learned how to make reusable sanitary pads in Kampala, Kasese, and Masaka
- 148 Hours of training sessions over the course of 37 AGP trainings
- 60 Big Sisters trained in mentorship and leadership
- 10 Girls granted school scholarships
- 5 Primary schools where GUIU is active
After completing the year-long Adolescent Girls Program

With a primary school retention rate of only 42% among girls (EMIS, 2009), Girl Up Initiative Uganda supports adolescent girls to realize their right to an education and gain the knowledge and skills to make healthy and informed decisions. The Adolescent Girls Program aims to promote gender equality and girls’ education by empowering each adolescent girl to be a leader in her community, home and school; gain control over her life and body; and develop her confidence to fully realize her educational potentials.

Adolescent Girls Program Stories

Racheal is one of the pioneer trainees from the 2014 Adolescent Girls Program in St. James Bbiina primary school. She has now completed her primary education with the assistance of a school scholarship and is a Big Sister and mentor to the rest of the girls.

"Thank you so much for the great support you have been rendering my daughter Racheal. You came at a point when we needed it because there was no money to continue paying for Racheal’s education; Racheal always tells me that they learn a lot during the club days and also during the training sessions which I think is amazing and also relevant for our children.” -Racheal’s mother

- 100% of girls passed their exams and were promoted to the next classes
- 100% of girls reported knowledge of how to take care of their bodies during puberty
- 100% of girls reported knowledge of their human rights
- 100% of girls reported knowledge of the legal age of marriage in Uganda
- 100% of girls reported believing that they have equal capacities as boys
- 96% of girls reported believing that it is not ok to take money from an older man
- 96% of girls reported feeling more empowered to communicate their ideas or feelings
- 100% of girls reported that they shared the information and skills that they had learnt with others in the community, 92% to close friends and 8% to others
- No girls missed class due to menstruation
Ni-Yetu Youth Program
Impact Numbers 2016

4159
Community members participating in drama group outreach sessions

2400
Youth accessing sexual and reproductive health services at service camps

41
Youth advocates trained in advocacy skills

2481
Out-of-school youth reached with SRHR information

100
Local leaders engaged in youth advocacy

30
Peer educators mentored in SRHR training
Ni-Yetu Youth Program

Girl Up Initiative Uganda, together with the Ni-Yetu partner consortium, provides youth-friendly information and services on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence to youth ages 13-24 years in Kampala. According to UNICEF (2011), 35% of girls in Uganda are mothers before the age of 18 years and 64% of women have ever experienced gender-based violence (Uganda Demographic and Health Survey Report, 2011). Youth not only receive information, knowledge and skills, they are empowered to improve their lives and become peer educators and mentors.

Program Stories

“Thank you Girl Up Initiative and Ni-Yetu team for creating awareness on issues concerning my community. Through the session, I have learnt that it is important to involve the youth in decision-making processes and especially on things that affect them.” - Local council officer after Advocacy Training

“Before joining the Ni-Yetu Programme I was an introvert, shy and not free to speak out on some issues. I even did not know how to use a condom and also how to check the expiry date. I was careless with my life and he was not conscience of the fact that I could get other infections from using..."
expired condoms. Thanks to the trainings done by the peer educators, I was able to learn all these things and the need to take care of my life so I can remain safe and not get any infection. Today, I am very confident and able to speak out on issues and advocate for the youth to use condoms.” (Moses, participant of peer-led outreach sessions)
Young Women’s Economic Empowerment Program

According to the World Bank (2008), 83% of young people (15-24 years) in Uganda are unemployed, with figures much higher for uneducated young women. We recognize the unique challenges young women, specifically single mothers, face in becoming economically self-sufficient and accessing necessary financial service. The Young Women’s Economic Empowerment Program provides the space and support for young women to develop their business ideas, learn new vocational skills, and join a community of supportive women. The program includes: Mazuri Designs, the Sewing Our Futures Project, and a Savings Group.

YWEEP Stories of 2016

“I heard about Girl Up Initiative Uganda from the local chairperson who told us that there was an organization recruiting out of school girls for a six months training in tailoring. I want to complete my tailoring course at Mazuri Designs and start up my own business as a fashion designer.” - Anna, sewing and fashion design trainee

“I am a single mother to one girl. When I heard about the savings club, I was so interested and wanted to join immediately. I want to save and buy land and also raise school fees for my little girl. I have a beauty salon as my business for now and I would like to see it grow.” - Madina, member of the Savings Group
Contributing to the Global Community

Girl Up Initiative Uganda sees the value in sharing its stories, experiences and knowledge with the local and global online community of change makers. In 2016, we experimented with new strategies to engage and grow our followers both in Uganda and globally. We increased our original content on the blog section of the website, writing a total of 27 blog posts and were featured in two Ugandan national newspapers. We also revived our Instagram (@GirlUpUganda) account, have 600+ Twitter followers, and reached over 2,000 likes on Facebook.

GUIU Published Articles

- What is the Fourth Industrial Revolution and why does it matter?, Global Citizen, January 2016
- Failures in Finance: Lessons Learned in Micro-lending and Savings, Girls Globe, March 2016
- The 2030 Agenda: What role does menstrual hygiene play?, Global Citizen, June 2016
- Girl Up Initiative Uganda and the SDGs: Youth Perspectives, Girls Globe, October 2016

GUIU in the News

- Ugandan Empowerment Program Helps Girls Learn Their Rights, Decreases Dropout Rate, Global Press Journal, July 2016
- Keeping the UPE girl child in class, The Daily Monitor, October 2016
- Parents, pupils match against violence, The Daily Monitor, November 2016
Financials 2016

Girl Up Initiative Uganda has an extremely lean US office to maximize our impact on the ground in Uganda. Our US office has no employees and relies on independent consultants for fundraising and communications work. They support our 16-member team in Uganda. 2016 is the first year that conducted an external audit of our finances.

86% Programs
8% Administration
6% Fundraising

*N_cumulative budget

Ni-Yetu Music Campaign Team
November 2016
The Dream Team comprises young leaders from four countries who believe in the power of gender equality to transform our world. They bring a diversity of life experiences to a team full of energy, ideas, and commitment to realizing the rights of women and girls.

**Leadership Team**
- Monica Nyiraguhabwa, Executive Director
- Kimberly Wolf, Deputy Executive Director
- Saidi Alikwan, Head of Finance and Administration

**Uganda Team**
- Marion Acom, Program Assistant, AGP
- Joan Atimango, Office Attendant
- Miriam Kabayo, Seamstress, Mazuri Designs
- Gloria Komukama, Program Officer, AGP
- Annet Kyokutamba, Head Seamstress and Trainer, Mazuri Designs
- Hajara Namuyimbwa, SRHR Specialist and Nurse
- Susan Nantale, Seamstress, Mazuri Designs

**Volunteers/Consultants**
- Caroline Achola, Programs Volunteer
- Shanée Ascarrunz, Graphic Designer
- Maxine Chikumbo, Content Creation and Social Media Specialist
- Janice Nason, Business Development and Marketing Advisor, Mazuri Designs
- Sharon Nayebare, Programs Volunteer

**Uganda Board Members**
- James Oromait, Chairperson
- Brian Sekayombya, Treasurer
- Monica Nyiraguhabwa, Secretary
- Enid Nambuya, Board Member
- Hawa Kagoya, Board Member

**US Board Members**
- Sofie Fredlund-Blomst, President
- Daniel Weeks, Treasurer
- Harvey Wolf, Secretary
- Hilary Haber, Board Member

*“If you want to walk fast, walk alone, if you want to walk far, walk together!”* - African proverb
Thank You!

Thank you to all our supporters for walking this journey with us! From the beginning days of an empty office with two volunteers to today with a busy office, three thriving programs, and a team of 20, we have achieved much. We look forward to walking even farther together!

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