

Empower Life Project – Progress Update May - August 2025

Dear Friends,

We are deeply grateful for your continued support of the Empower Life Project in Northern Uganda. Over the past few months, we've seen inspiring progress in Kitgum and Mucwini, alongside challenges that remind us why your partnership is so vital.

Progress Made

- **Community Mobilization:** Parents have stepped up in remarkable ways, pledging bricks and water for school construction. Brick production is already underway—clear evidence of local ownership and determination.
- **Environmental Efforts:** Tree-planting initiatives are thriving, bringing long-term benefits for both students and the environment.
- **Day of the African Child:** In August, JLOF joined the national commemoration in Kitgum Municipality. Our staff not only supported logistics but also played leading roles—our Communication Officer served as Master of Ceremony, ensuring children's voices were at the center of the event. We were honored with a Certificate of Recognition for our consistent community engagement.
- **Amplifying Voices:** A highlight this quarter was the Jeremiah Lucas Opira Memorial Essay Contest. This year's essay was arranged to enable boys and girls, men and women to express themselves about gender equality and social inclusion. The questions on which essayist wrote on were:
 - What can we do to help people stand up against unfair treatment based on gender and encourage everyone to be included and treated equally?
 - Write an essay about how cultural activities like festivals or community events can help promote gender equalityOver 100 participants shared essays in Acholi and English on promoting fairness and inclusion. Winners received scholastic materials, school bags, and awards, while the best entries will be published to inspire others. Students also performed poems, including a heartfelt tribute titled 'Legacy of the Jeremiah Lucas Opira Memorial Essay Contest.' This event reaffirmed our mission: empowering youth through education, creativity, and voice.

Challenges Still Ahead

- **Teacher Housing:** Some teachers still sleep in classrooms. In the first phase, we need 4 housing units (\$20,000 total).
- **Learning Facilities:** Library remains underutilized without solar power (\$2,000 needed), and classrooms require basic furniture (\$1,000).
- **Sanitation & Health:** Many girls miss school due to inadequate menstrual hygiene support. Several latrines are unusable. Functional washrooms and hygiene kits are essential.

Community Spirit

Even in hardship, families are giving what they can. What they cannot provide - cement, roofing sheets, solar equipment, and educational supplies - can be bridged through your generosity.

How You Can Help

- Donate: Support Empower Life on GlobalGiving (<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/empower-life-inclusive-quality-education/>)
- Fundraise: Host small events in your community to raise awareness and resources.
- Volunteer: Share your skills in grant writing or program support (info@jlof.net).

Together, we can make sure children in Kitgum and Mucwini have safe classrooms, motivated teachers, and the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you for believing in this vision and being part of the change.

With deep gratitude,
The JLOF Team