

Empower Life - Progress Report - May 2024

We are deeply grateful to all the individuals and organizations who have generously supported our cause. Your donations and unwavering commitment empower us to make a meaningful impact. With your continued support, we are confident in our ability to overcome challenges and bring lasting change to the communities we serve.

Field Visit Insights

In March 2024, our team had the opportunity to visit one of the schools we collaborate with in Kitgum, northern Uganda. This visit significantly enhanced our comprehension of the existing challenges and opportunities that are integral to our mission of utilizing education and sports as catalyst for sustainable development.



Meeting with students under the school bell tree, during the school visit

Our visit shed light on the resilience and determination of the communities in northern Uganda, who persist in their pursuit of a brighter future despite facing socio-economic challenges and the repercussions of global geopolitical tensions. Additionally, it brought attention to the significant obstacles they encounter, such as limited access to quality education and impacts of climate change. While these communities strive for self-sufficiency, they still require external support in various crucial areas.

Challenges and opportunities identified

1. **Accommodation for school teachers:** The parents in the community bear the responsibility of constructing teachers' accommodation. There are currently eight teachers in this school. Thanks to the assistance of the Food for the Hungry organization, housing for four of the teachers has been established. Nevertheless, the remaining four teachers are forced to sleep in the classrooms, due to the lack of insufficient accommodations. This situation often leads to their separation from their families. Furthermore, it is not hygienic for the students that their class room at night function as bedrooms. The cost of each unit of teacher's accommodation is estimated at around \$5,000, amounting to a total of \$20,000. Further contributions from the local education authority and the parents, will be necessary to address this pressing issue.



The ruins left after forest fire destroyed the teachers' thatch huts

2. **Library/Resource Center:** While the library/resource center has some books, it cannot be utilized fully due to the lack of adequate lighting. The suggested solution is to install solar panels and batteries, with a total estimated cost of \$2,000, including installation.
3. **Cupboards for Lower Grades:** The four lower grades need cupboards in the classrooms to keep their books. Each cupboard costs \$125, totaling \$500.
4. **Sports field upgrade:** The school discussed the importance of integrating sports into the curriculum to foster holistic student development by promoting physical well-being, teamwork, discipline, and resilience. In addition to dedicated time slots for sports activities within the regular timetable, they strive to upgrade and expand the sport fields and to provide adequate facilities and equipment, train teachers and collaborate with community organizations to offer a diverse range of sports programs. Additionally, the school aims to organize inter-school competitions, sports festivals, and recreational activities to foster a culture of sportsmanship and teamwork among students.

5. **Tree planting:** Deforestation is a major challenge because of the need for food, medicine, charcoal, and timber. There is a call by the community and the school management to further embark on additional tree planting exercise. Cost of planting a tree amounts to \$10. Tree planting efforts spearheaded by JLOF in the past has yielded positive result as seen in the photograph below.



Trees planted facilitated by JLOF

Strategies and Call to Action

To address these challenges effectively, we discussed the importance of intensifying collaboration with relevant local stakeholders and adopting multifaceted sustainable approaches. We invite you to join us in empowering communities and creating lasting change. Your support can make a tangible difference in the lives of the students and their families. Here are some ways you can get involved.

- Make a one-time or recurring donation to sustain our programs and initiatives at <https://www.globalgiving.org/dy/v2/checkout/billing/>
- Organize fundraising events to mobilize resources and share to raise awareness. <https://www.globalgiving.org/dy/v2/fundraisers/start/?fundraiser.projids=62873>
- Volunteer your time and expertise to help us map and write grant applications. Reach out to us at info@jlof.net

Looking Ahead

As we press on in our journey, our dedication to overcoming challenges and unleashing the full potential of the communities we support remains unwavering. Through the powerful combination of education and sports, we strive to pave the way for a more radiant and fair future for those we serve. Your backing is crucial in transforming this vision into a tangible reality, creating a lasting legacy of hope and resilience for the future generations. By enhancing schools' capabilities to provide top-notch education and incorporating sports into the curriculum, we aim to support well-rounded student growth. Our commitment to inclusivity also encompasses advocating for the rights of students with special needs, ensuring that every child is included in the pursuit of fair education.

In conclusion, the progress achieved thus far stands as a testament to the collaborative joint effort and unwavering dedication of our supporters and partners. Together, we can continue to make significant advancements towards a brighter tomorrow for the communities we are privileged to serve.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication, support and being a vital part of our mission