

Build a sustainable future for the children, the youth and communities we serve!



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

LEADING CHANGE UGANDA (LCU)

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Annual Report is to review the activities and initiatives that Leading Change Uganda (“LCU”) has conducted over the course of 2017. In carrying out its various programs, LCU experienced great successes, and a few challenges along the way, on its journey to change the world. This change begins with three communities in the Central Uganda Wakiso district. The women and children of the Buwaali and Bbanga Villages have seen their lives transformed through empowerment and are using the little resources they have to change their lives and their communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success attained in 2017 was made possible by the women and children in the Buwaali and Bbanga Villages who were the foundation of this success story, and the LCU team who oversaw the effective and efficient implementation of our programs.

We have benefitted enormously from the opportunity to work closely with a number of people, organizations and institutions that have been instrumental in supporting our Action Plan for 2017 including the following: the HUGGS fundraising team; Markinch Stitch Club; African Youth Development Link; Sabral Allied Limited Company; Markinch District Community Choir; Pass It On Trust Uganda; Tella Designs; Hope Nursery; and Primary School Buwaali Village.

We are also grateful for the support and resources received from Linda Mitchell and our other beloved sponsors Carol Ann Hedley, Jean Inness, Bruce Davies and Anne Reddick from Scotland, and for the guidance provided by Stephanie Brenker, our Chair of the Board. We would also like to thank the LCU team, both those who contribute on the ground in Uganda and the international team, for all their efforts in seeing that LCU achieves its objectives. And finally, to the community of Buwaali-Namulonge Village, we thank you for your support, encouragement and dedication to improving your community for the benefit of all.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

“It has been a privilege to volunteer with LCU and witness its inspiring journey over the past year. This Annual Report contains moving accounts of the way in which both joy and progress have been brought to the women and children of Buwaali and Bbanga Villages in Uganda. Such stories are a testament to the dedication and passion of the LCU team, who care deeply about lifting these women and children out of poverty and teaching them skills so that they, in turn, can lift up their communities.

In particular, I want to thank Lillian Nanteza Bwowe, our CEO and founder, for her tireless work for LCU and for these communities. She is fond of citing the quote often attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, “*be the change you want to see in the world*”, and I believe it is because it perfectly encapsulates her mission and the mission of LCU. Lillian, and LCU, strive to put words into action. Nothing could be clearer from the pages of this Annual Report.

Thank you also to our sponsors and supporters, without whom the accomplishments set out in this Annual Report could not have been achieved”.

Stephanie C. B. Brenker
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

"I take this opportunity to thank the Almighty God for the journey he has enabled us to travel in the year 2017. Throughout this journey, Leading Change Uganda has seen lives change in her effort to achieve the goal and mission. This year has had its challenges and opportunities but we have sailed through and enjoyed every moment of the way. The challenges have made us grow stronger and the successes have motivated us to work harder. One of our greatest achievements was the registration of LCU as an organisation in Uganda and being able to raise funds through the fundraising drives LCU which LCU held over the course of the year.

Another exciting moment was the support that 17 children received to go back to school and also the help rendered to the women of the Wangari Women's Project to fight poverty. The visit from Linda Mitchell drastically changed the lives of the children and women, and made them become more motivated to create change in their lives and in their community too.

I therefore, thank everybody who has continuously believed in our vision of creating an informed, educated, empowered and just society; you are truly pillars on which LCU is standing high. To all our sponsors, thank you for helping the Ugandan children acquire an education. The HUGGS Benefit Concert team; Bruce Davies thank you for your beautiful voice, the team did a tremendous job and you indeed made the Ugandan girls get stronger. Linda Mitchell, Rebecca Roberts, Stephanie Brenker, Carol Ann Hedley you are such great women who are part of our inspirational change story. The LCU international team, Emna, Stephanie, Mohammed and Ivan, thank you for the funds, time, ideas, effort and energy you have put in to LCU to help it grow stronger. The Ugandan team, youth, leaders and the communities in which we work, we thank you too for your great support during the year 2017.

I look forward to an even more exciting year in 2018.

Together we can make a difference in the lives of the children and women of Uganda!"



Lillian Nanteza Bwowe
TEAM LEADER AND CEO

ABOUT US

Leading Change Uganda is a registered non-governmental organization which was founded in January 2013 by a group of young people who wanted to create the change they wanted to see in the world, beginning with the children and women of Uganda. Leading Change Uganda is inspired by the belief that the world should be a better place for everyone regardless of sex, age, religion, color and nationality. Leading Change Uganda strives to empower children and women to efficiently participate in their social economic development through training, access to education, information and through improvement of basic needs in order to raise their standard of living.

OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to build and strengthen sustainable individuals, families, institutions and community initiatives for poverty eradication, education and development through partnerships at all levels.

OUR VISION

"An informed, educated, empowered and just society".

OUR MAIN OBJECTIVES

1. To contribute towards poverty alleviation in Uganda, particularly for women and children.
2. To promote access to education and basic needs while imparting life and entrepreneurial skills.
3. To promote sustainable development while strengthening and empowering our communities.

OUR TEAM

Leading Change Uganda is made of a dynamic team with vast knowledge and a passion to change the world. The team is made up of individuals from different parts of the world who work hard to see that LCU achieves its objectives. They invest in the organization so that others can live a better life. They are passionate about putting a smile on another person's face.'

Management and operations:

Lillian Nanteza Bwowe - Uganda (CEO and Founder)
Bwowe Alexander - Uganda (Finance and Administration)
Matovu Stella - Uganda (Programs Coordinator)
Ivan Begovic - Croatia (Communications Officer)
Sebagala Jonathan - Uganda (Programs Officer)
Namubiru Florence - Uganda (Field Coordinator)
Nazziwa Winfred - Uganda (Finance Assistant)
Micheal Nkalubo - Uganda (Children Coordinator)

Board:

Stephanie Brenker - Australia (Chair)
Baker Kasawuli - Uganda (Treasurer)
Linda Mitchell - Scotland (Advisor/ Fundraiser)
Chikhaoui Emna - Tunisia (Member)
Khammassi Mohamed Ghazi - Tunisia (Member)
Kigozi Nicholas - Uganda (Member)

OUR PROGRAMS

Leading Change Uganda has four main projects, which are: (i) the Smile of a Child Project; (ii) the Wangari Women's Project; (iii) the Community Reading Club; and (iv) our volunteering program. During 2017, a number of activities were carried out to improve the lives of the women and children in Buwaali, Buso and Bbanga villages, including fundraising, training, celebrations and sharing donations received from our sponsors.

1. SMILE OF A CHILD PROJECT

The Smile of a Child project is a community project that assists a number of children in the villages of Buwaali, Buso and Bbanga. The project has so far impacted 62 children, 20 babies, 20 young mothers and 43 other women. Among the 62 children, 17 were provided with free education and school items such as stationary, books and uniforms, as part of a campaign to enable them to, over time, change their communities. A number of activities were carried out to empower these children and their mothers, as outlined further below. Empowering mothers improves the life of the child, as LCU believes mothers are the guardians of the future of their children.

1.1 Smile of a Child "Education for All" Campaign

The "Education for All" campaign focuses on sending children back to school and supporting those who would otherwise be unable to get an education because of circumstances beyond their control. The children selected are community children who are underprivileged, bright, and focused on changing their destinies and communities by all means. On 22 January 2017, an induction meeting was held to announce the sponsorships and to discuss the expectations of stakeholders, which are the parents and LCU. Much excitement was seen on the faces of the parents and children who were eager to go back to school and start again from where they had stopped. The school term started on 6 February 2017. This campaign was made possible by Linda Mitchell and the generous donations of her family and friends. The meeting concluded by handing out donations from Stella Matovu, our Programs Coordinator, to the children and parents.

One challenge faced by LCU in 2017 was the poor performance of several of the sponsored children. We found the biggest problem to be the English language and peer pressure from fellow children. In 2018, we hope to provide further counseling and support to the children and their parents, and we recognize the importance of intervening with at-risk children earlier in their schooling years to reduce the risk of them leaving school prematurely.

1.2 A tragic loss

On a tragic note, before these children could start school, one of the those chosen for the program, Mubiru Rodgers who was 10 years' old, passed away. He had received a scholarship to study after staying home for two years. He was a jolly young man who was excited to go back to school. His dream was cut short by his sudden death. He died of malaria and, sadly, the herbal medicine given to him by his mother couldn't save him. Malaria is one of the biggest killers of children in this part of the country. The government of Uganda has attempted to provide free mosquito nets but they have not helped the situation. This is due to the failure of community leaders to deliver the required mosquito nets to the recipients, as directed by the government,

and due to the lack of education surrounding malaria: for example, many people who receive mosquito nets use them in their gardens to cover the nursery beds. Therefore, the community needs to be better educated on how to protect themselves from malaria.

1.3 Summary of the sponsored children

An evaluation meeting was held on 9 December 2017 to assess and evaluate the program. The children and parents reviewed the campaign and suggested ways to make it better in the year 2018. Below is an overview of the children supported by LCU in 2017.

- Kasoma Brian loves studying but he had stayed out of school for so long that catching up with the other children was a challenge. He found this to be very frustrating, to the point of rejecting himself and school. We counseled him and his mother so that he could stay focused on his studies and stay in school. In this part of the country, children drop out of school if issues such as self-rejection and peer pressure is not well-handled. On our advice, his mother made the decision to take him to another village school, where he was not known, for a fresh start.
- Nabakema Annet is a promising student who loves to dance and sing. Her best subject is science where she hopes to become a nurse someday. She maintained her good performance and focus on her studies throughout the year. The sponsorship of Annet enabled Namubiru Florence, her mother, to finally have peace of mind ever since Annet was enrolled in the program.
- Namuli Mary has improved in her studies over the course of the year. She enjoys going to school more than ever before. Her hygiene has also improved thanks to the new uniform she received at the beginning of the year. According to her mother, Mary felt an improvement in her welfare at home, as she could afford basic needs she never previously had.
- Muwanguzi Pretty likes English and this was demonstrated in her good performance in this subject at the end of the year. However, her performance was affected by the long distance she travels every day to attend school. She is a very jolly young girl who hopes to become a teacher someday.
- Mulungi Jemimah is a very shy girl who loves school. She has a lot of friends at school and enjoys English lessons. She hopes she can speak like Linda Mitchell one day! Jemimah's performance has also been affected by the long distance she travels every day to reach school. Unfortunately, this is a common issue with students given the low number of schools in the region.
- Namutebi Erivason is a quiet girl but she is very bright and focused. She talks less than other students, but she loves small children, which comes from taking care of her baby brother so well. The program enabled her

to have the confidence to open up to the other children taking part in the Smile of the Child project. We believe that by the time she finishes school, she will be more confident and outgoing.

- Nkalubo Micheal is a focused student who believes that, through education, he will become a doctor someday. He is a lovable young man who shows a lot of respect to other people, including to the elders. He supports LCU's the Smile of Child project by helping to organize the other children. He is a bit shy, though the program is building his confidence. He has continually performed well in his school subjects, even when he lacks the necessary books. His mother is very proud of him. He loves sports, most especially football.
- Tomusange Daniel is a shy young man when he meets elders, though he can be stubborn with his peers. He enjoys eating and puts his studies at the forefront too. He was able to attend school throughout the year, compared to the years before enrolment into the program during which his attendance was less consistent. This year he completed his Primary Leaving Exams to join secondary school in 2018.
- Nabukalu Joyce became a young mother at the age of 14 years. She is a loving mother to her baby boy, however, she also managed to sit her final Primary Leaving Exams. She is eager to continue with her studies. She is a very bright pupil and very promising, but she was affected by her early child pregnancy. She was counseled and advised on how to handle motherhood at such a young age. With the support of her grandmother, she will be able to leave the baby at home and go back to school to make her dreams of becoming a nurse come true.
- Sebugwawo Daniel is deaf and stays with his grandmother who is very old and ailing. Being deaf has affected his studies because the school he attends does not cater for deaf students. His studies have been affected by his age too, as he thinks he is too old for the class he goes too. Because of his age, he has been bullied by his fellow pupils. The LCU local coordinator intervened and the school administration worked on the issue. He was counseled to stay in school and stay focused. Our hope is that, he will stay in school, and we will continue to monitor his situation.
- Nankya Florence is a very promising pupil who loves school. Her best subject is English. She hopes to become a teacher like her English teacher. Her grandmother says she has improved in her studies and her interest to attend school since joining the program.
- Sekitto Ibrahim is a cheerful and creative young man who loves school. He is the kind of person who will request what he needs to see that he does better at school. He is very confident and has better English skills compared to his peers. He is a quick learner and this year he passed his final Primary Level Exams, meaning that he will join secondary school in 2018. He stays with his grandmother who is very proud of him.

- Tomusange Savior is a very quiet and charming young man. He loves football and hopes to become a soldier someday. He had spent about two years without going to school but his passion to stay in school has been revealed by how he tries harder to be better every time. His teachers believe that he will make it through. He knows Swahili and sometimes he helps the head teacher to translate some of the information to English. He believes that with this new opportunity to get an education, he will be able to change the world.
- Ndibayisa Olivia is a very bright student, though she is also very shy and quiet. She is the sister to Kasoma Brian. She loves reading and enjoys playing with her friends. Her mother is very proud of her and she believes that Olivia is her hope for a better future. Olivia's enrolment into the program has enabled her mother to regain hope for their future as a family. She is glad her girl can attend school again, having stayed home for a year.
- Namakula Daniella loves English and speaks better than her peers. She loves school and is a very responsible young girl. She takes care of her little brother when her mother goes to the market to sell maize and mangoes. She enjoys dancing and sports, especially athletics. She is a very smiley girl. Her mother is so happy and Daniella's enrolment has given her hope for a better future.

1.4 On-site visits; Homes of the sponsored children

Linda Mitchell, who helped to organize sponsors for the children of the Smile of a Child project to go to school, arrived in Uganda in August 2017. During her stay in Uganda, she visited the homes of the sponsored children to learn more about them and their families. This enabled her to collect information about the children to take back to their sponsors. It was a lovely time and the families showed us so much love and generosity. She visited the sponsored children and interacted with them, as shown in the photos below.



Micheal and Anette giving Linda gifts



Kasoma and Olivia with Linda at their home

2. COMMUNITY READING CLUB PROJECT

The Community Reading Club project focuses on promoting learning skills, listening skills and enhancing the talents of the children through sports, music, dance, drama, art and crafts. Over the past year, LCU realized that many of the children participating in the Smile of the Child project were not performing well at school. This was mainly due to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the English language used at school. This was mainly because the children did not have a place to practice the language. As a result, we created the Community Reading Club where the children's studies were supplemented by practicing academic skills including reading, writing and counting, among others. They were also given extra support regarding their weak subjects at school. The children were taught and led by Harriet Nalwoga, a young woman taking part in the Wangari Women's Project (see further below) who boosted their confidence in English and other areas. In this community club, the children were counseled and advised on how to keep safe and stay in school. This community club has helped mothers and other women of the Wangari Women's Project to learn how to read, write and count where, at the beginning, the majority of them could hardly write their names or read.



Reading shelter



Children having fun with the new footballs from *Linda Mitchell*

"Because of the Community Reading Club, I can now express myself very well in English. Before I was so shy and scared of making mistakes but now am confident and no longer care who is listening or what mistake I have made while speaking because learning is a process".

- Nkalubo Micheal, Senior One, Namulonge Senior Secondary School

On International Youth Day, 30 children involved in the Smile of the Child project were taught how to read and write by Sebagala Jonathan, our Programs Officer. Through storytelling, the children's listening and concentration skills were enhanced. During the session, the children asked a number of questions, which enabled the trainers to assess the children's ability to understand, listen and express themselves in English.

“The children are very poor at reading and understanding English but we encouraged them to use art to create the world they wanted to see and, to our amazement, they really did a great job”.

- Sebagala Jonathan, Programs Officer



Sekitto Ibrahim

“I am an orphan and I live with my grandmother. I have been given a great opportunity and another chance to continue with my studies. The burden has been lifted from my grandmother who had to work so hard to look after eight of us. Through the Community Reading Club, I have been able to improve my English because I can now read and understand the questions during exams”.

- Sekitto Ibrahim, Primary Seven at Hope Nursery and Primary School Buwaali

3. WANGARI WOMEN'S PROJECT

The Wangari Women's Project started with only five women in Buwaali Village. Since its inception, it has equipped 20 young mothers and 43 other women of the Buwaali and Bbanga Villages with skills in personal development, leadership, creative arts and innovation training, entrepreneurship and financial training. The women are divided into two groups, being the Bbanga Women's Group and the Buwaali Women's Group. Each group has its own leadership team, chosen by the group members themselves. The women have been trained in finance skills, art, tailoring and agriculture. This training has empowered the women with skills to improve their employment prospects, by working together and achieving success in setting up small businesses/projects.

“The women have realized that working together is the only way they can fight poverty, as together we can make a difference”.

- Namubiru Florence, Field Coordinator.

3.1 Wangari Women agricultural projects

The women worked on four farming projects: (i) one acre of sweet potatoes; (ii) one acre of tomatoes; (iii) pig farming; and (iv) one acre of beans. The profits from these projects were shared among the women in the group, the Smile of a Child project and LCU, thus investing in the sustainability of the project. LCU received 30% of the profits and used these proceeds for administrative costs and for management of the Wangari Women's Project.



Books donated to the children by the Wangari Women's Project

1. Sweet potato farming: the women harvested sweet potatoes, which had been planted in 2016. Profits came to UGX 217,500, which was shared between the women in the group, the Smile of a Child project children and LCU. The women received 50% of the profits, worth UGX 108,750, which was used to start a piggery project by purchasing two piglets (see further below). The women decided to support the Smile of the Child project using 20% of the profits by buying books worth UGX 43,500 for the children participating in that project. LCU received the remaining 30% of the profits, worth UGX 65,250, which was used to fund the management of the project.

2. Tomato farming: this project was unfortunately badly affected by the weather and the harvest was not as good as expected. Though the quality of the tomatoes was good, the size was smaller than anticipated. A box of tomatoes was sold for 6 US Dollars because of their small size. The women did a great job at being cooperative and working harder to try and make up for the poor weather. The LCU team provided financial, technical and moral support to the women during this project and thus supported their journey to financial prosperity. The women collected a total of approximately 222 US Dollars from the sale of tomatoes. The proceeds were used to buy a third piglet for the piggery project and to plant beans for sale.





3. Piggery project: as mentioned above, the women acquired three piglets following the sale of their tomatoes and sweet potatoes. The piglets are kept at the homes of three members who are responsible for looking after them. However, each member contributes to the feeding and medication of the piglets. Thereafter, when the piglets have grown and given birth, the piglets will be shared on a rotational basis with one member being responsible for one piglet.
4. Beans project: after the tomato harvest, part of the money was used to plant beans which were then harvested. The profits earned came to UGX 83,000, which were shared among the Smile of a Child Project children, Wangari Women's Group and LCU. The amount donated to the Smile of the Child project was UGX 16,600 and was used to buy pencils and pens for the children. The women used their share of the profits worth UGX 41,500 to buy feeds for the piglets, while LCU used its share of the profits worth UGX 24,900 to manage the progress of the project.



3.2 Wangari Women's Group Monthly Meetings

To keep the Wangari Women's Project on track, a number of meetings were held either with the LCU team or by the women's groups only. In these meetings, the women discussed possible solutions to the challenges they were facing during implementation of their projects.

The Wangari Women's group faced several challenges while implementing its projects, and the monthly meetings were instrumental in assisting the women brainstorm solutions to overcome these challenges, as set out in the table below.

Challenges	Solutions	Lesson Learnt
The bad weather, which led to poor yields	Follow the planting seasons to plan for dry or rainy seasons	• Learning more about seasonal changes • Focus on beans and sweet potatoes, which are easier to grow than other crops.
The leaders of the Buwaali Women's Group lacked management skills, thus leading to challenges in managing the gardens and members, which led to poor accountability and harvests	• Management skills training • Team work • Share opportunities among group members • Transparency by the group leaders and members • Improve trust among themselves	• Communication is key • Follow up on issues raised by the team
Poor feeding of the piglets due to members' lack of money, thus piglets were fed less nutrients.	Buy a variety of feeds such as Chacu, mukene and other foods	Use more types of local feeds so that the piglets can get more nutrients.
• Poor quality animals • The veterinarian is far away from the village where the piggery project is located	• Early immunisation of the animals • Buy medicine in bigger bottles for emergencies • Serwanga, the son of one of the members, was suggested by his mother to help the ladies with treating the pigs if medicine is available	• Find local means to treat the pigs, such as using human urine • Make ropes using the skills Linda Mitchell taught to tie the animals.

3.3 Wangari Women's Group agricultural training

In our experience, LCU has learned that farming is an important potential business for the women in Buwaali and Bbanga Villages. The majority of the women in the Wangari Women's Project already have farming experience and love to plant and harvest crops. Therefore, we organized a training session in August 2017 to equip them with better farming methods.

The women were trained in tomato, banana, maize and other vegetable planting. They were equipped with skills to enable them to perform even better in the following seasons. The training included onsite visits to the land where the crops were planted, to ensure that the training was practical and had direct application to the land in question.



"This is a great training; it is an eye opener on the way we have been doing farming. Most of us are still using rudimentary ways of farming and were unaware of the new breeds of seeds and pesticides. We hope to make better yields next time".

- One member of the Wangari Women's Project

3.4 Innovation training workshop; art, crafts and tailoring

During her visit to Uganda in August 2017, Linda Mitchell trained the women of the Wangari Women's Project in tailoring, art and crafts skills. This was done with the help of Stella Matovu, the Programs Coordinator, who is also very skilled at these activities. Forty-three women were trained over a four-day workshop. The women successfully made a number of items including dresses, re-usable sanitary pads and bags, bracelets, necklaces and headbands using threads and rubber bands.

"It was exciting to see them making their own bags, and the women received great feedback from these sessions".

- Lillian, LCU Chief Executive Officer.

"Am very happy to be part of this training and the most exciting thing I have learnt today is how to make my own bag using a t-shirt. I will make a bag for my child to use as he goes to school".

- Rebecca, Youth Female Leader.

Through the training workshop, the women acquired skills using the creative part of their minds, which will enable them to start their own businesses and sustain themselves and their children.

LCU bought two sewing machines for the Wangari Women's Project, which enabled the women to implement and practice the skills gained during the workshop. The women continued to instruct one another how to make the items they were taught.

LCU's focus is now on making re-usable sanitary pads. This is because the majority of women in the area cannot afford protection and menstruation often causes girls to miss large periods of school. During the past year, LCU has discovered that having re-usable sanitary pads is key to keeping girls in school and improving the hygiene of women. Disposable sanitary pads on the market are too expensive (above USD 1 for only 7 pads), while the re-usable sanitary pads can be sold to the village women and girls at an affordable price of 500 Ugandan shillings (USD 0.13) per pad.

3.5 Creativity at its best

After the workshop, the women became very creative. They realized that they could use local materials to make ropes for sale and use the skills Linda Mitchell taught them to make necklaces. The ropes were made using more robust materials and were thus able to be used to tie animals and other heavy things. Fiona, a member of the Wangari Women's Group of Buwaali, volunteered to pass on some of the skills to the children of the Smile of the Child project.



One of the women was so happy after making her necklace out of threads



Other women being taught how to make re-usable sanitary pads



Here, two women are showcasing the bags they made, while others are busy making their bracelets.

Beginning in 2018, the women will be grouped into different categories based on their interest in what was taught to them:

Item	Buwaali village	Banga village	Items needed
Crocheting (table mats)	4	1	Needles & thread
Tailoring (pads, dresses & bags)	4	0	Kitengi material, pad material
Ropes	4	0	Obukutiya
Puff holders	4	0	Hair holders

4. CELEBRATIONS AND DONATIONS

4.1 International Youth Day celebrations

On International Youth Day, 12 August 2017, the children were taught personal hygiene skills such as how to brush their teeth, and the importance of brushing one's teeth every day, through the Community Reading Club. The majority of the children could not afford a toothbrush and toothpaste, as they cost USD 1 each, which is a price that their parents could not afford. We were grateful that our friends from Scotland donated about 50 toothbrushes and tubes of toothpaste, which were given to the children and provided an opportunity to practice these personal hygiene skills.



Other donations from our supporters in Scotland and Uganda were given to women in our community on International Youth Day. These items included clothes, baby sweaters, baby blankets and feeding bottles. This was done as a way of improving the lives of the women and children of Buwaali, as clothing is an important basic need that is generally lacked in this part of the country. There were 30 children, 25 women, 5 pregnant women and 20 babies who received these donations.



4.2 Independence Day celebrations

On 9 October 2017, as Uganda celebrated 55 years of independence, LCU celebrated with the sponsored children of the Smile of Child project. Each child was given 15 pairs of shoes. The shoes were bought by the funds raised through a HUGGS (Helping Ugandan Girls Get Stronger) concert event in Scotland organized by Linda Mitchell and Jean Inness, and performed by Bruce Davies and the Markinch Community Choir (see further below).



"The children can now walk comfortably to school".

- Nkalubo Micheal, Children's Leader.

4.3 Easter Celebrations

On Good Friday, LCU celebrated Easter with the women and children of Buwaali and Banga Villages. Rebecca Roberts, our friend from the United States of America, told stories and read to the children. The children were excited to meet someone from outside Uganda and were eager to learn English, which is not easy for them to speak. Rebecca Roberts donated books to the Community Reading Club as a way of helping the children to master the language. LCU gave out Easter gifts to 30 children, 10 babies and 40 mothers. The beautiful dresses, dolls, beanie hats and sweaters were donated by the Markinch Stitch Club based in the United Kingdom. They indeed put a smile on the faces of the children and their parents.

At this event, the women were taught how to fight poverty by managing their personal finances, thus finding solutions through empowerment, changing their destinies and their communities.

4.4 End of Year Celebrations

On 9 December 2017, LCU celebrated Christmas and the end of the year with 40 children and 43 women of the Buwaali and Bbanga Villages. Community celebrations is one of the ways that LCU gives back to the people who mean so much to it. On this day, a meeting was held in which the community discussed how to make 2018 a better year. LCU celebrated its achievements

and challenges, which made it stronger in the year 2017. The women and children were treated to a special array of eats and drinks to thank them for their hard work over the past year. It was a time of sharing stories and learning from one another. New ideas were presented and we hope to implement them in 2018, as we focus on improving the lives of the women and their children in these Villages.

Christmas was celebrated with donations such as clothes, shoes, lingerie, bags, sandals etc. received from our sponsors in Scotland and the LCU team. This left a big smile on the faces of the children and parents. Three women were lucky to regain their eye sight thanks to new glasses donated by HUGGS.



"What a beautiful Christmas they had, as they can now sew and see things they could not see before. Nothing makes a day brighter than putting a smile on someone else's face".

- Lillian, LCU Chief Executive Officer

5. VOLUNTEERSHIP

LCU is an organization founded on volunteerism. The team is made up of 13 volunteers: eight volunteers managing the organizational work, four Board members and one Advisor. All these people are not paid for their work but put in the time, resources and energy to see that the women and children of this world live a better life. LCU volunteers are from both within Uganda and outside Uganda, including countries such as Australia, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and Croatia.

5.1 Online/remote volunteers

In 2017, LCU was assisted by online volunteers who did a lot of work from their countries such as reviewing documents, updating the LCU website, managing social media platforms, creating short videos to showcase LCU work, connecting LCU to like-minded individuals and organizations, and supporting administration through drafting documents. Online meetings via Whatsapp, email and Facebook were held to provide guidance, share ideas and understand the work LCU is doing.

5.2 Hosting volunteers in Uganda

During the year, LCU hosted two volunteers: one from the United States of America and another from Scotland.

Rebecca Roberts arrived in Uganda on 30 January 2017 from Alaska, USA. She spent three months in Uganda. She is interested in dancing and teaching dance. LCU connected her to a partner organization, TEENS Uganda, whose focus is on teaching music, dance and drama to young adults. She helped the children of the Community Reading Club by reading to them stories during the Easter celebrations and she donated a number of books to that club.

Linda Mitchell arrived on 23 August 2017 from Scotland. She spent two weeks in Uganda. During her stay, she visited the families of the children sponsored by the Smile of a Child project and held a workshop on innovation skills for the Wangari Women. She was interested in learning about the work of LCU and meeting the people LCU was helping.

6. FUNDRAISING DRIVES

The fundraising drives in 2017 were carried out by both individuals and groups of people who believed in the work of LCU. Our fundraising efforts included the following:

6.1 HUGGS Concert – 10 June 2017

This was a benefit concert organized by Linda Mitchell and Jean Inness of HUGGS (Helping Ugandan Girls Get Stronger) to raise funds for two charities: Leading Change Uganda and Pass It On Trust Uganda. Bruce W Davies, one of the greatest singers in Scotland, supported the HUGGS Concert as the headline performance. We were humbled and grateful for his generosity and love. He performed along with the Markinch District Community Choir, led by Carol Ann Hedley, who took part with their amazing voices to create a smile in the lives of Ugandan girls. The concert was able to raise GBP 950 (USD 1,265) with thanks to the HUGGS team, which included Linda, Jean, Zara, Tikki, Angela, Carolyn, Douglas and the rest of the team who did an incredible job ensuring the success of the concert.



The HUGGS fundraising stall for LCU at St Margaret's Church, Glenrothes, Scotland



Bruce W Davies



Markinch District Community Choir

6.2 Markinch Stitch Club

This is a club of lovely ladies who meet to knit, sew and donate the end results to the Smile of a Child Project. The club has donated beautiful dresses, baby sweaters and baby blankets, amongst other things, through Carol Ann Hedley, a member and organizer of the club. LCU is grateful for the support of the Markinch Stitch Club over the year 2017, which has enabled LCU to clothe the children of the Buwaali and Bbanga Villages.



The Markinch Stitch Club in Scotland

6.3 Global Giving Fundraising platform

This platform was introduced to Leading Change Uganda by Stephanie Brenker, who assisted LCU with the application process and advised LCU on all the necessary documentation. LCU's application to be part of the Global Giving platform was accepted and on 26 May 2017, Lillian Nanteza (CEO) attended a workshop on fundraising organized by Global Giving entitled "How best can organizations fundraise for their projects?" LCU took part in the Global Giving Accelerator program in June 2017 and raised USD 531 for the Smile of the Child Project. LCU is currently reviewing the sustainability of this platform.

6.4 Linda Mitchell

As explained above, Linda Mitchell is an Advisor to LCU and she has been the key to our fundraising initiatives over the past year. In addition to helping to organize the HUGGS Concert, she fundraised for the Smile of the Child Project entitled 'Education for all' and secured 15 sponsors for 15 children. She also held a number of talks in Scotland to groups of women and church members about the work of LCU. She further donated many items to the women and children participating in the Smile of a Child Project and Wangari Women's Project. Finally, Linda taught women in Scotland how to make dresses, which were later donated to the children of the Smile of a Child Project.

LCU is grateful to Linda Mitchell for making the dreams of the women and children of Uganda come to pass. May the good Lord bless you and enrich you more and more!

7. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

During 2017, LCU showcased its work on a number of social media platforms. The main challenge we have faced is lacking a single individual to fully update the various platforms on behalf of LCU. We have found that social media platforms need a lot of engagement to keep them up to date and active to our membership. Thus, in 2018 we hope to find a volunteer to manage such social media platforms. We believe this is key to creating an impact on the wider, online, community and to be able to share the work we are doing with the world.

LCU also launched a new website in 2017. While the website now contains relevant documents, photos and information, we similarly hope that a future digital media volunteer can keep the website relevant and up to date.

In 2017, LCU joined several Facebook pages which has linked the organization to new ideas, people, advice and opportunities, such as the Small International Development Charities Network Facebook group.

A list of LCU's current public platforms includes:

- LCU Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LeadingChangeUganda/>
- LCU Website: <https://leadingchangeuganda.wixsite.com/home>
- Twitter: https://twitter.com/LCU_Uganda
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/leading_change_uganda/

LCU also uses online platforms to communicate within the organisation.

8. GOALS FOR 2018

- Starting up a Wangari Women's Loan Program, to empower the women individually by granting them small loans to help them to start small, individual business projects. This program will start in 2018.
- Creating new partnerships: LCU has partnered with Mordern World Banga Primary and Nursery school to support the children who are shy and feel too old to go back to school. We also hope to create further fundraising partnerships, or to at least build upon those partnerships that we already have, in 2018.
- Strengthen the Community Reading Club, by building a temporary structure where the children and women can learn. In this building, there shall be books to read, a blackboard and chairs. LCU will invite volunteers both within Uganda and outside Uganda to help the children and women learn how to read, write and listen. LCU will carry out a fundraising exercise to achieve these goals.
- Recruit a digital media volunteer to assist us with our online platforms.

9. CONCLUSION

While we celebrate the successes outlined in this Annual Report, we recognize that the journey has not been a smooth one. The organization, the women and the children of our community faced a number of challenges over the past year, and we have also learnt many lessons which we are sure will make 2018 an even better year. Despite those challenges, the year was full of fun and learning experiences and we built strong foundations upon which LCU, and the community it serves, will grow. The organization is continuing to focus on helping women and children find sustainable solutions for themselves and their communities.