



# Wangari Women Project PhotoBook



## Background

LEADING CHANGE UGANDA (LCU) is non-governmental organization, which started in January 2013 by a group of young people who wanted to create the change they want to see in the world among children and women. LCU is inspired by the fact that the world should be a better place for everyone, regardless of their sex, age, religion, colour and nationality. LCU is a not for profit, nonpartisan youth led non-governmental organization based in Kampala and Wakiso districts. The organization is fully registered with the NGO Board and Uganda Registration Services Bureau. The mandate of the organization is to create positive change in the lives of children and women. LCU strives to empower children and women to effectively participate in their social economic development through training, access to education, information and other basic needs to improve their standard of living.

Many communities in Uganda cannot access education, information and basic needs. This is because most people live below the poverty line, staying in slums and villages. At LCU, we understand that education is key to getting people out of the debilitating and dehumanizing clutches of poverty. Hence, education is at the forefront our mission.

Access to education, particularly for the children in the poorest of poor families, is not always available. LCU is equipped to pass on knowledge and skills to children, youth and women, enabling them to live better lives. The youth and children are Uganda's future tomorrow, and women are the mothers of the nation who bring life into this wonderful world.

At LCU, knowledge and skills are acquired through a variety of training, such as entrepreneurship, financial management, consumerism, ICT and environment. The communities are also provided with basic needs such as clothes, school fees and food. As a youth-led organization, we allow enthusiastic young people to share their skills with other youths who have not had that chance. By sharing our skills, we are holding hands together to fight and end early child marriages, high youth unemployment, youth and community illiteracy, poverty, environmental degradation, and improve markets and livelihoods.

Many communities in Uganda cannot access education, information and basic needs. This is because most people live below the poverty line, staying in slums and villages. At LCU, we understand that education is key to getting people out of the debilitating and dehumanizing clutches of poverty. Hence, education is at the forefront our mission.

## The Wangari Women's Project

The project aims to empower women between the ages of 15 and above who are at a socially, culturally, and economically disadvantaged. It is made of five women groups with a total of 200 women in the rural areas of Buwaali, Vumba, Kawaala, Nansana and Nsekwa women groups. The project creates togetherness among the women as they work together on various projects such as revolving animal farming, tailoring, soap making and charcoal business. This project also equips women with skills in: personal development (5D Cycle of Self-Discovery), leadership, creative arts and innovation, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and Peace and conflict resolution. Therefore, this project sees women taking lead in their communities through providing employment and making important decisions in their homes and communities.

The women are divided into five groups based on location and each group has its own leadership team, chosen by the group members themselves. The project has supported the women groups since 2017 through agriculture, tailoring and entrepreneur projects as a way to support them to take their children to school thus fighting early child marriages and illiteracy in this part of the country. To keep the Wangari Women Project on track, the groups are encouraged to carry out monthly meetings where the women discuss possible solutions to the challenges they are facing during implementation of their group projects.





## Trainings

The trainings have 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.

"These are great trainings; an eye opener on the way we do farming. Most of us were using rudimentary ways of farming and 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

Training of women in Conflict Resolution by Hellen Ziribagwa in 2019 (Photo 1-3)



## Agricultural projects

In 2017, the Women group of Buwaali implemented a number of agricultural projects such as one acre of sweet potatoes; one acre of tomatoes; pig farming; and one acre of beans. The profits from these projects were shared among the women in the group, towards the Smile of a Child project and LCU, hence sustainability. Over the years, LCU has learnt that farming is an important potential business for the women in rural villages. Many of the women in the Wangari Women's Project have farming experience.

Trainings have been organized to equip the groups with better farming methods. The women have been trained in tomato, banana, maize and other vegetable farming. The trainings include onsite visits to the land where the crops are planted, to ensure that the training is practical with direct application.

### **The Maize farming project by Buwaali & Banga women**





## Innovation training Workshops

The women are trained in tailoring, art and crafts, since 2017 during the innovation training workshops. The first training was done by Linda Mitchell in 2017, who volunteered with LCU for two weeks in Uganda and trained Forty-three women from Buwaali and neighboring villages 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, with great feedback from the sessions". - Lillian, LCU Chief Executive Officer. "I was very happy to be part of that training and the most exciting thing I learnt that day was how to make my own bag using a t-shirt. I made a bag for my child to use at school". – Rebecca

Therefore, the training workshops, have enabled the women to acquire skills using their creativity thus being in position to start their own businesses and sustain themselves and their children.



## Tailoring Project-Re-Usable Sanitary Pads

To support the tailoring project, donations were made by friends in Scotland and Nancy and Douglas Tripp of United States towards sewing machines to enable the women implement and practice the skills gained during various training workshops in tailoring. The women are in position to make re-usable sanitary pads. Thanks to Linda Mitchell, the making of the reusable sanitary pads has been a great innovation because majority of women and girls in rural areas can hardly protect themselves during menstruation periods. And often causing girls to miss school due to heavy periods. Hence, many dropping out of school because they are either too shy after having gotten their periods, or because they have been convinced to sleep with men in exchange for money to buy pads, among other things hence early child marriages. This Project is one of the ways LCU is using to fight early child marriages and school drop-out rates in these rural areas.

LCU discovered that having re-usable sanitary pads is very key to keeping the girls in school and improving hygiene of women. And they are cheaper and affordable compared to the disposable sanitary pads on the market which are not affordable to the rural woman and girl.





## Menstruation Hygiene training

The members of the Wangari Women carried out menstruation hygiene trainings in various schools during the years and donated reusable sanitary pads to the girls of Modern World Banga Nursery and Primary School thus women taking the lead in their communities.

In August 2019, the girls of Primary Four to Primary Seven of Modern World Primary and Nursery School in Banga village were trained on how to keep clean during their menstruation period and were provided with reusable sanitary pads made by the women groups and donated by Linda Mitchell. Thus helping the girls to stay in school during their periods and protect them from men who would sexually abuse them with an excuse of providing them with sanitary pads, hence reducing early child marriages.

During these trainings the girls open up on how they struggle to keep safe during their period. Some testified that during their period, they do not want to attend school. Others use banana fibers as a replacement for sanitary pads, while others have been lured into sexual activities during their search for money to buy sanitary pads at a cost of 2000/- per pack



## COVID-19

During COVID-19, the Wangari Women groups in their various communities urged people to wear masks and wash their hands thoroughly as a preventive measure against COVID-19. Linda Mitchell donated handmade masks to LCU which were given to different communities. The masks helped both the women and youth to move freely as they did their work. The country was put under lockdown because of COVID-19, this was a devastating period for most LCU beneficiaries who could not afford food because they could no longer go to work, travel movements were banned and schools closed.

Our friends from Scotland and Australia, donated funds which were used to buy food items; salt, sugar, oil, beans, flour, soap and rice to feed 100 families in different communities which included elderly women and men of Buso, Buwaali and Banga villages and families of young people taking care of their siblings because of parents being locked down in different places of the country.

During trying moments, the LCU Field coordinator visited families and provided them with psychological support through counseling and finding ways on how to successfully get out of the lockdown without depression.

- Food items were donated to the families of the Wangari Women and community during the Covid-19 Pandemic with support by Janson and Stephanie Brenker from Australia and Lillian Nanteza





## Siroptomists International

Siroptomists International, this year 2023, supported the Wangari women groups with a donation. The donation was used by the Buwaali women group to facilitate their business idea and learnt how to make Liquid soap. (each 5 Litres Jerrycan costs UGX 10,000/- ) The Vumba women group under their tailoring program bought kitengi materials for sewing clothes for sale and renting study shelter. The Kawaala women group increased their capital in their charcoal business from 4 bags to 10 bags. The Nsekwa women's group started rearing goats and pigs in a revolving way so that each member can be in position to start a piggery and a goat farm.



## The Wangari Women Revolving Micro-Finance Scheme

In 2019, LCU organized the women groups of the Wangari Women Project and started a savings scheme named the Wangari Women Revolving Microfinance Scheme. The Wangari Women Revolving Micro-Finance Scheme is used by members to save for uncertainties and obtain money through loans to enable them start businesses, educate their children and improve their health, thus improving their standard of living. This project targets rural women who are uneducated, and socially and economically deprived in the villages of Vumba, Kawaala, Nansana, Nsekwa, Buwaali, Buso and Banga in Wakiso district and Slums of Kampala district.

The scheme started with 50 members who eagerly started saving starting 16 August 2019. By the end of 2019, the scheme had 76 members who were diligently saved with the Scheme and currently the scheme has 200 members.

The scheme is supported through donations, savings, and interest on loans made by members and through collective income-generating projects undertaken by the women, such as farming and tailoring, among others. The profits are used to support the expansion of the Scheme so that it continues to support other women, thus improving their welfare and that of their families.

LCU carries out monthly Financial Literacy Clinics where members are equipped with financial knowledge and management to enable them become financially independent. The women are taken through the new guidelines on the management of the revolving scheme. During the clinics, members share experiences on savings and loan management.





LCU organizes peer-to-peer meetings of the women groups to encourage and empower one another through sharing their life stories on how they have been able to succeed in their businesses, loan handling and saving. The women gladly shared their stories on how the loans have uplifted their lives, improving their standard of living and enabling them to start their own businesses where they can now employ other women. One of the ladies shared that she can now discuss money matters with her husband which was not the case before! This confirms that there is increase in confidence of the women in these villages to make decisions in their homes and communities.



Case Study: Florence Namubiru and Christine Nandego 'Florence Namubiru has been able to build a house for her family through the scheme while Christine Nandego was able to buy windows for her house and other ladies have been able to do farming in all the seasons because they could easily prepare their land. There has been improvement in feeding of their families.'



## LCU on the farm Project

The project started in 2018 and provides learning opportunities to youth of the Smile of the child and members of the Wangari women projects on crop farming and animal rearing. The project has provided LCU with an opportunity to create a model animal farm where the participants come to learn and share experiences. The women have learnt animal rearing skills, including how to care for animals on a small piece of land, how to feed them and how to use animal waste as fertilizers. The animals are looked after from the land provided by the LCU Field Coordinator in Buwaali village.

This project includes five pigs, two goats, two cows and sheep and these project animals are donated to members of the different groups on a revolving basis. When the donated animal gives birth, the young one are donated to the other members in the groups. The women and youth are selected based on interest thus acquiring rearing skills through hands on experiences.









If you are interested in supporting the work of LCU, Please feel free to get in touch.



Linda Mitchel  
lindamitchell1@mac.com / lindamitchell2001@hotmail.com  
Scotland



Stephanie Brenker  
stephanie.brenker@gmail.com  
Australia

**Address:**

Leading Change Uganda

P.O Box 11548, Kampala

Email: [leadingchangeuganda@gmail.com](mailto:leadingchangeuganda@gmail.com)

Website: <https://leadingchangeuganda.wixsite.com/home>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LeadingChangeUganda>

Instagram: @leading\_change\_uganda

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/LCU\\_Uganda](https://twitter.com/LCU_Uganda)

Telephone: +256 779196023