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Let's Walk Uganda

ANNUAL
REPORT

Annual Report

LET'S WALK UGANDA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

INTRODUCTION

As we step into the promising horizon of 2024, it is with immense gratitude and reflection that we come together to celebrate the remarkable strides and enduring spirit of Let's Walk Uganda. Amidst the ever-evolving landscape of challenges and triumphs, our LGBTQ+ youth-led organization has remained resolute in its commitment to advocacy, resilience, and community empowerment.

With each passing year, Let's Walk Uganda has woven a tapestry of hope, unity, and progress, shaping a future where equality and acceptance thrive. As we bid farewell to the chapters of 2023, let us pause to honor the collective journey we've embarked upon—a journey defined by resilience, compassion, and unwavering dedication to our shared mission.

In the face of adversity, Let's Walk Uganda has emerged as a beacon of light, illuminating the path toward a more inclusive and equitable society. Together, we have challenged injustice, championed the rights of marginalized communities, and fostered a spirit of solidarity that knows no bounds.

In this annual report, we invite you to embark on a voyage of reflection and celebration—a testament to the indomitable spirit of Let's Walk Uganda and the transformative impact of collective action. From legal triumphs to community empowerment initiatives, each achievement stands as a testament to the boundless potential of unity and determination.

In the embrace of 2024, let us reaffirm our shared commitment to advocacy, resilience, and community building. Together, let us forge ahead with renewed vigor and unwavering resolve, as we continue to pave the way towards a future where every individual is celebrated, cherished, and embraced for who they are.

With heartfelt gratitude and anticipation for the journey ahead, we extend our deepest appreciation to our donors and each member of our Let's Walk Uganda family. Your unwavering support and dedication have been the cornerstone of our success, igniting a spark of hope and possibility in the hearts of countless individuals.

As we embark on this new chapter together, let us stand united in our pursuit of equality, justice, and human dignity—for it is through our collective efforts that we shall continue to shape a world where all are free to live, love, and thrive.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Let's Walk Uganda is a registered Human rights LGBTQ+ Organization in Uganda, established in 2015 to advocate for the rights and well-being of marginalized individuals, particularly the LGBTQ+ community. Since its inception, the organization has exhibited remarkable growth, evolving into a beacon of hope and progress for LGBTQ+ rights in Uganda. Under the authentic and visionary leadership of its founders, Let's Walk Uganda has consistently demonstrated a commitment to fostering an inclusive society through its grassroots initiatives.

From its early stages, Let's Walk Uganda has been at the forefront of the struggle for equality, respect, and justice for LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda. The organization's impact has been felt through its pioneering efforts, such as the establishment of the first open queer shelter in the country, providing a vital safe space for those in need. Through its youth-centric approach, Let's Walk Uganda has effectively engaged and empowered young people, nurturing the next generation of leaders and advocates for LGBTQ+ rights.

Let's Walk Uganda's progressive trajectory and unwavering dedication have positioned it as a trailblazer in the fight for equal opportunities and social acceptance for LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda. With an open and transparent leadership, the organization has garnered trust and support from local and international communities amplifying its impact and influence. Let's Walk Uganda's journey is a testament to the transformative power of grassroots activism and the potential for positive change when driven by genuine passion and unwavering commitment.

Our Mission

Our mission is to create a safe and inclusive environment, drive social change, and promote equal opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals. We strive towards a future where everyone can live authentically without fear of discrimination or persecution

Our Values

Our organizational values guide our actions and decisions, shaping the culture and identity of our organization. We are committed to continuously refining and articulating these values to ensure they reflect our dedication to inclusivity, diversity, transparency, respect and accountability.

Our Vision

A Uganda where LGBTQ+ individuals live justly, equally, and freely, with their human rights fully upheld without discrimination, fostering a society that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

1. Diversity:

Embracing and celebrating the uniqueness of individuals and communities, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic. We are dedicated to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued and respected for their differences, recognizing that diversity enriches our organization and enhances our ability to achieve our mission.

3. Transparency:

Committing to openness and honesty in all actions and communications, fostering trust and accountability within the organization and with external stakeholders. We recognize the importance of transparent communication in building trust with our stakeholders and maintaining integrity in all our interactions.

2. Inclusivity:

Ensuring that all voices are heard and valued and that everyone, regardless of background, has the opportunity to participate and contribute to the organization's mission. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are welcomed, and all individuals have the chance to engage meaningfully in our work.

4. Respect:

Upholding the dignity and worth of all individuals, promoting a culture of mutual understanding and consideration. We are dedicated to creating a respectful workplace where every individual is treated with dignity, fairness, and empathy.

5. Accountability:

Taking responsibility for actions, decisions, and their outcomes, and being answerable to stakeholders, the communities served, and the public. We understand the significance of being accountable for our actions and decisions, acknowledging the impact they have on our stakeholders and the broader community.

6. Teamwork:

Cultivating a collaborative and supportive environment where members effectively work together, leveraging diverse perspectives and skills to achieve shared objectives.

7. Empowerment:

Advocating for self-determination and agency among marginalized individuals, supporting their ability to make informed choices and take control of their lives.

8. Courage

Demonstrating bravery and resilience in the face of adversity, advocating for change, and standing up for the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, even in challenging circumstances.

9. Integrity:

Upholding ethical principles and moral values, and conducting all activities with honesty, fairness, and professionalism

10. Innovation:

Embracing creativity and forward-thinking approaches to address the evolving needs and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda, while seeking continuous improvement in the organization's programs and services.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Expanding Access to Shelter and Welfare Services

- Establishing additional safe spaces and resource centers across Uganda to provide temporary housing, counseling, and basic needs support for LGBTQ+ individuals through emergency support initiatives.

Strengthening Legal Aid and Support Services

- Providing legal knowledge, representation, and advocacy through a team of pro-bono legal professionals to address discrimination, harassment, and human rights violations against LGBTQ+ people.

Advocating for Policy Reforms and Legal Protections

- Engaging with government officials, legal bodies, funders, and community leaders to advocate for inclusive laws, anti-discrimination policies, and equal access to healthcare, education, and other services for LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda.

Advocating for Policy Reforms and Legal Protections

- Engaging with government officials, legal bodies, funders, and community leaders to advocate for inclusive laws, anti-discrimination policies, and equal access to healthcare, education, and other services for LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda.
- To cultivate inclusive engagement and collaboration with other organizations, including those with similar objectives and general community organizations, to enhance advocacy efforts, share resources, and promote intersectional approaches to addressing social justice issues and community acceptance.
- To design and execute comprehensive sensitization programs and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting acceptance, understanding, and tolerance of LGBTQ+ individuals within Ugandan society, including local communities.
- To advocate for and conduct research and data collection to gather evidence-based information on the experiences, challenges, and needs of LGBTQ+ people in Uganda, informing advocacy efforts, policy development, and program planning.

Comprehensive Support Services for LGBTQ+ Youth

- To provide a wide range of support services for LGBTQ+ youth, including mentorship programs, mental health support, and educational opportunities aimed at empowering and uplifting the next generation of LGBTQ+ leaders.

Collaboration with Healthcare Providers

- To collaborate with healthcare providers and organizations to enhance access to LGBTQ+ affirmative healthcare services, encompassing HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, mental health support, and gender-affirming care.

Empowerment through Skills Training and Economic Initiatives

- To empower LGBTQ+ individuals through skills training, entrepreneurship support, and economic empowerment initiatives, thereby enhancing their financial independence and resilience in the face of discrimination and social exclusion.

Strategic Partnerships for Advocacy

- To establish strategic partnerships with local and international human rights organizations, diplomatic missions, and global LGBTQ+ networks to leverage local and external support, expertise, and solidarity in advancing the rights and well-being of LGBTQ+ people in Uganda.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Let it resound far and wide, and echo through the halls of gratitude, that Let's Walk Uganda extends its deepest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all the generous donors who have stood by us, hand in hand, throughout the transformative year of 2023. Your steadfast commitment to advancing global health and advocating for the rights of marginalized populations has inspired us and emboldened our efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

To all our esteemed donors, both near and far, known and anonymous, we extend our deepest gratitude for your unwavering support and generosity. Your contributions, whether big or small, have made an indelible impact on the lives of countless individuals, illuminating the path toward dignity, equality, and justice for all. It is through your unwavering support and generosity that we have been able to advance our mission, advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, provide vital services, and empower marginalized communities across Uganda. Your belief in our vision and dedication to our cause have fueled our determination and strengthened our resolve in the face of adversity.

To each donor, including **QUEERE NOTHILFE, UNAIDS, WEAID, GATE, UHAI, AARON AND FITT FOUNDATION, CSD BERLIN, QUEER AMNESTY BERLIN, DIGNITY FOR ALL, ALLOUT, MUTEBI EDWARD, LWU STAFF AND BOD**, we offer our most heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your compassion, generosity, and commitment to creating a brighter, more inclusive future for all. Your partnership is not only a testament to the power of collective action but also a source of inspiration and hope for generations to come.

As we embark on the journey ahead, let us carry with us the spirit of gratitude and the knowledge that, together, we can overcome any obstacle and achieve extraordinary feats of compassion, kindness, and solidarity.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Let's Walk Uganda Family,

As we reflect on the journey of 2023, I am filled with gratitude for the unwavering dedication and resilience of our community. Together, we have navigated challenges, celebrated victories, and forged ahead with determination and hope.

I am profoundly thankful to every one of you for your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to our shared mission. Your passion and dedication have been the driving force behind our progress and impact. As we embark on the path ahead, let us carry forward the spirit of solidarity and compassion that defines Let's Walk Uganda. Let us continue to stand together, united in our pursuit of justice, equality, and dignity for all.

With your support, I am confident that we will continue to create positive change and make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our cause.

Warmest regards,

Derrick Kimera
Executive Director Let's Walk Uganda.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Let's Walk Uganda's Legal Desk and Their Fight Against the Anti-Homosexuality Act

Let's Walk Uganda's Legal Desk has been actively involved in advocating for human rights and equality, particularly in challenging the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 in Uganda. Despite facing numerous obstacles, LWU has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to challenging the Anti-Homosexuality Law in the constitutional court of Uganda. As of 18th December 2023, four consolidated petitions were heard, marking a significant milestone in our pursuit of justice and equality. We now eagerly await judgment on notice, which will be a crucial step in determining the future of LGBTQ+ rights in Uganda.

In addition to our efforts against the Anti-Homosexuality Act, our legal team has also been instrumental in responding to 14 human rights violation cases. These actions reflect LWU's steadfast dedication to standing up for individuals affected by the discriminatory provisions of the Anti-Homosexuality Act 23. Through these endeavors, Let's Walk Uganda continues to be a leading advocate for human rights and equality, striving to create a more just and inclusive society for all Ugandans.

Re-imagining Uganda: Shaping a Transformative Future

In a historic 3-day gathering in Nairobi, Let's Walk Uganda convened for the first physical meeting of "Reimagining Uganda." This visionary LGBTQ+ community-led initiative, spanning 15 years from 2024 to 2039, aims to advance human rights, foster inclusivity, and create an affirming environment where all individuals can thrive. The experience was unique and inspiring, setting the stage for exciting developments in 2024. LGBTQ+ leaders, allies, experts, and partners convened in this momentous gathering aimed at forging a path toward a more inclusive and accepting future for the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda. Before the physical convening, three virtual convenings were held which aimed at gathering ideas to form the 15-year strategic plan to guide community advocacy and ensure positive community attitude change towards LGBTQ+ individuals.

The "Reimagining Uganda" initiative represents a significant step forward in the ongoing struggle for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusivity in Uganda. By bringing together diverse voices and perspectives within the LGBTQ+ community and its allies, Let's Walk Uganda is working to create a comprehensive and sustainable roadmap for progress over the next 15 years. The initiative's focus on human rights advocacy, inclusivity, and fostering positive community attitudes reflects a deep commitment to addressing the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda.

The physical meeting in Nairobi served as a pivotal moment for the initiative, providing an opportunity for direct engagement, collaboration, and strategic planning among key stakeholders. The participation of LGBTQ+ leaders, allies, experts, and partners underscore the broad-based support and commitment to driving meaningful change within Ugandan society. The preceding virtual convenings played a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of "Reimagining Uganda." By leveraging technology to facilitate dialogue and idea generation, Let's Walk Uganda was able to harness the collective wisdom and insights of participants from diverse backgrounds. This inclusive approach ensured that the 15-year strategic plan reflects the aspirations and needs of the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda while also fostering broader societal understanding and acceptance.

As "Reimagining Uganda" moves forward, it holds the potential to catalyze transformative change across multiple dimensions. By advocating for human rights, fostering inclusivity, and promoting positive community attitudes, this initiative seeks to create a more equitable and affirming environment where all individuals can thrive regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.





Strengthening Security and Providing Shelter

Let's Walk Uganda has made significant strides in strengthening security and providing shelter for those in need. The organization's commitment to safety led to the relocation from Busabala to Muyenga, where it currently operates two shelters. These shelters serve as a home for individuals in need, offering necessities and fostering a secure environment.

To ensure the safety and security of the shelter occupants, Let's Walk Uganda has implemented various measures. One notable initiative is the installation of 24-hour surveillance cameras both inside and outside the premises. This proactive approach to security not only deters potential threats but also provides a sense of safety and protection for the individuals residing in the shelters.

The decision to relocate to Muyenga demonstrates Let's Walk Uganda's dedication to creating a safe and supportive environment for those seeking refuge. By providing not just shelter, but also essential resources and a secure setting, the organization plays a vital role in addressing the needs of vulnerable individuals within the community.

Through strategic measures such as surveillance systems and the establishment of secure shelters, the organization continues to make a meaningful impact on the lives of individuals in need.

Our commitment to safety led Let's Walk Uganda to relocate from Busabala to Muyenga. Currently operating two shelters, we provide a home to those in need, offering necessities and fostering a secure environment. To ensure heightened security for our shelter occupants, 24-hour surveillance cameras were installed both inside and outside the premises.



Emergency Response: A Lifeline for 27 Individuals

In the face of crises, Let's Walk Uganda's Emergency Response Team demonstrated its commitment to supporting vulnerable individuals by providing essential aid to 27 individuals facing forceful eviction. This support included financial assistance, provision of food, emergency relocation, and crucial guidance. Additionally, Let's Walk Uganda (LWU) extended its impact by sub-granting six community-based organizations to carry out emergency responses in various regions of Uganda.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community during emergencies, LWU developed a comprehensive crisis and emergency response manual. This manual, comprising valuable information and guidance, was distributed in hard copy to different parts of Uganda, with over 400 copies disseminated. Furthermore, the manual is readily accessible online, ensuring widespread availability and reach.

In a significant step towards enhancing accessibility to emergency services, LWU successfully established an emergency toll-free helpline (0-800-358358). This initiative empowers individuals within the community to access critical services promptly and without financial barriers during urgent situations.

The Emergency Response efforts undertaken by Let's Walk Uganda reflect the organization's unwavering dedication to providing immediate support and resources to those in dire need. Through these initiatives, LWU has not only directly impacted the lives of 27 individuals but has also empowered community-based organizations and facilitated the dissemination of crucial information through the comprehensive crisis manual.



Hands of Hope: Nourishing Lives

In September 2023, LWU initiated the Hands of Hope Nutritional Support program to address the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals affected by evictions, job losses, and stigma caused by AHA 23. The program aimed to provide food relief to these marginalized individuals and offer them hope during a difficult period. By December 2023, LWU had extended its support to over 125 individuals in the areas of Kampala, Jinja, and three shelters, demonstrating its commitment to addressing the nutritional needs of vulnerable communities.

The impact of the Hands of Hope Nutritional Support program was significant, particularly in the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals who were marginalized and vulnerable. By providing food relief, LWU not only addressed a basic human need but also contributed to the overall well-being and resilience of these communities.



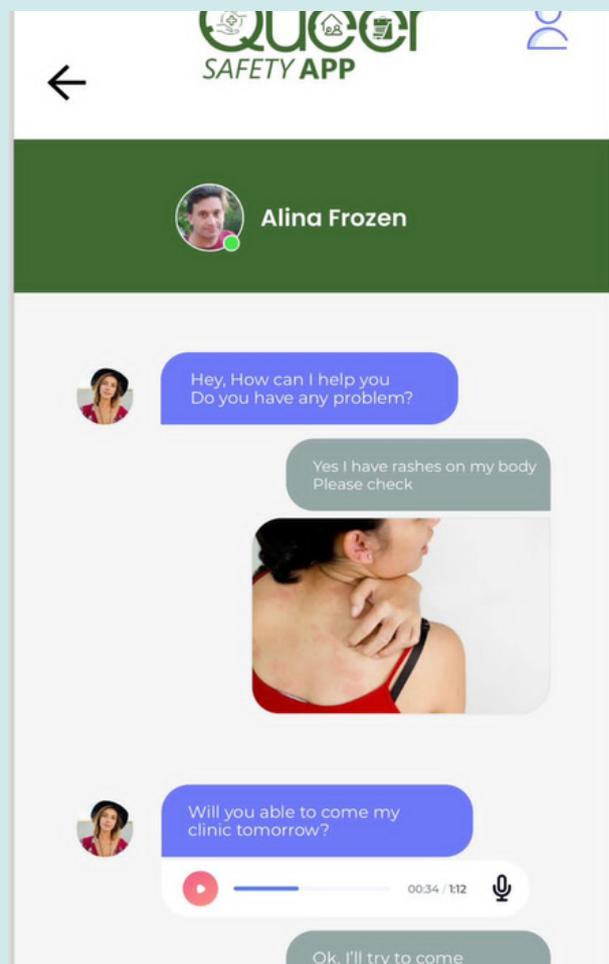
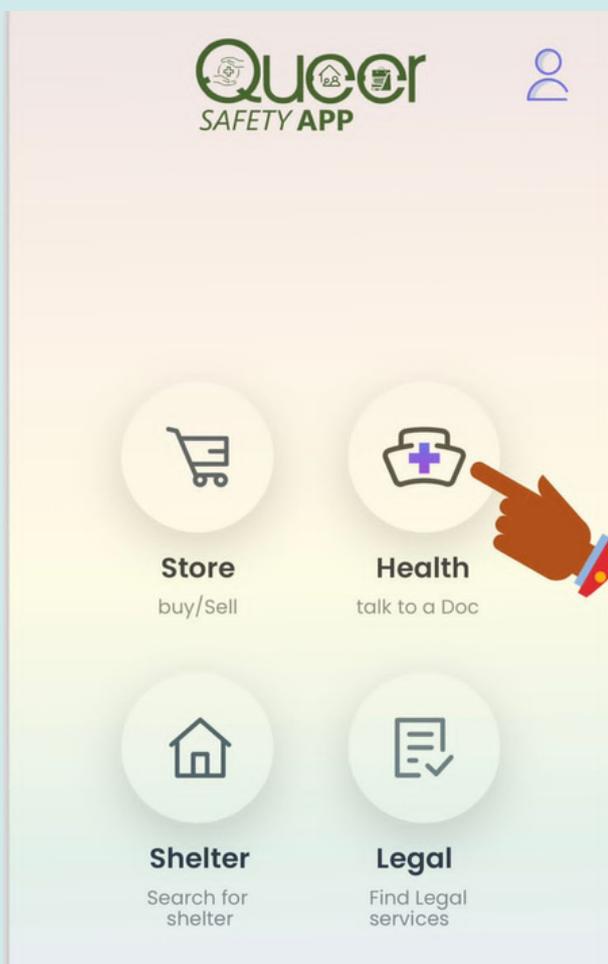
Innovative Solutions: The Queer Safety App

To enhance the well-being and safety of the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda, Let's Walk Uganda is working on developing the Queer Safety App. This mobile application, set to be fully operational by early 2024, aims to connect the community with essential services such as health, legal, shelter, and commercial resources.

The Queer Safety App is a groundbreaking initiative that addresses the unique challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda. By providing easy access to crucial services, the app aims to empower its users and improve their overall quality of life. The development of this innovative tool is a testament to Let's Walk Uganda's commitment to fostering a safer and more inclusive environment for all members of the community.

As the app's launch approaches, Let's Walk Uganda will ensure that the community is well-informed about its availability and how to utilize its features. The organization understands the importance of transparent communication and will work diligently to ensure that the community feels supported and connected through this powerful digital resource.

The Queer Safety App is a significant step forward in addressing the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda. By providing access to essential services, the app will empower its users and contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and supportive environment. Let's Walk Uganda's dedication to innovation and community support is evident through the development of this groundbreaking tool, and the organization looks forward to its successful implementation in early 2024.

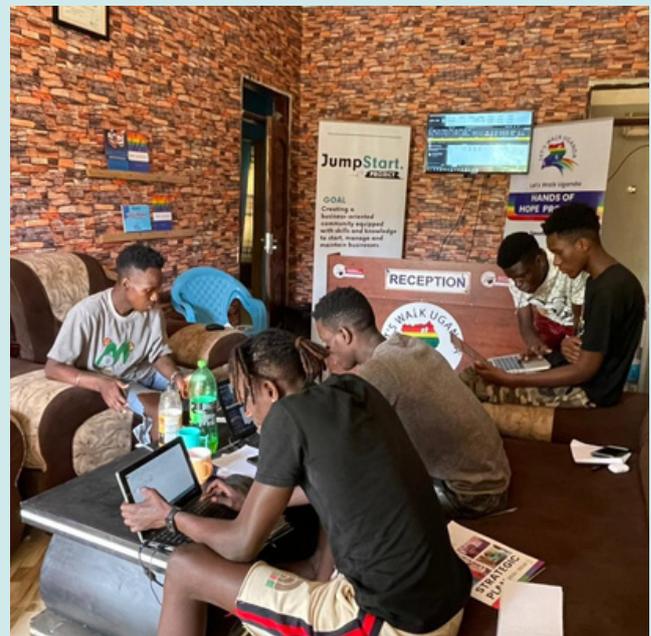
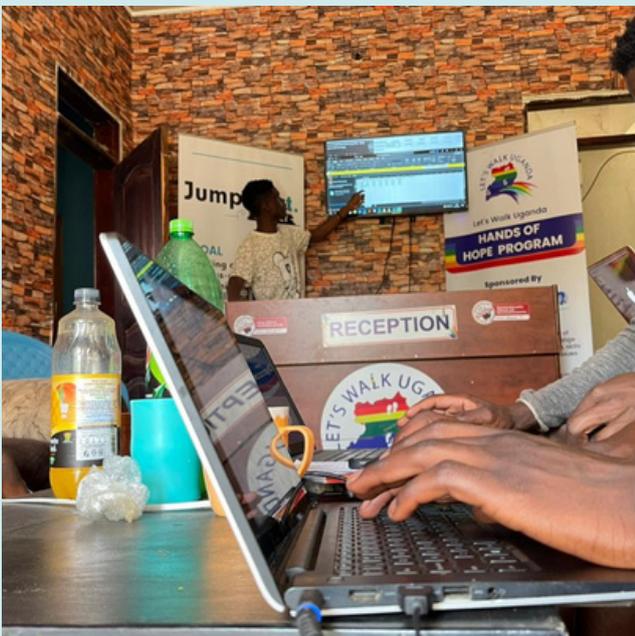


Empowering Lives: Skills Development for the Future

The Hands of Hope Community Empowerment Program is a comprehensive initiative aimed at uplifting individuals by providing them with practical skills and knowledge. The program focused on empowering participants to become self-sufficient and confident members of society.

The skills development initiatives offered through the program were designed to address the needs of the community and equip individuals with marketable skills. The soap-making training enabled 16 participants to acquire the knowledge and expertise required to produce high-quality soaps, creating opportunities for entrepreneurship and income generation. Additionally, the computer skills training equipped 8 individuals with essential technological competencies, enhancing their employability in today's digital world.

As a result of their participation in the skills development initiatives, the beneficiaries have experienced a significant transformation in their lives. They have transitioned from being solely skilled individuals to becoming earners who are capable of contributing to their households and communities. Moreover, the newfound confidence they have gained is invaluable, as it empowers them to pursue their aspirations and take charge of their futures.



The impact of the Hands of Hope Community Empowerment Program's skills development initiatives is evident in the positive transformation experienced by its participants. Through soap-making and computer skills training, individuals have not only gained valuable expertise but have also emerged as confident earners, better positioned to shape their destinies.

HIV & Health Awareness Program: Bridging Gaps, Promoting Well-being

The primary focus of this project was to promote health service provision, awareness, and HIV prevention efforts. The organization conducted football and netball tournaments in Masaka, Kampala, and Mbarara, reaching a total of 97 individuals with condoms, facilitating 25 HIV tests, distributing 96 lubricants, and providing counseling and self-testing kits to the crowds

In response to the mental health challenges that emerged after the AHA23 event, Let's Walk Uganda organized various mental health sessions. One of these sessions included a virtual reality program designed to help relieve stress and tension, ensuring the mental well-being of the community they serve.



Community Engagement: Making a Difference Across Uganda

Let's Walk Uganda made significant strides in community engagement by conducting six outreach programs across different areas of Uganda. These programs aimed to provide essential services and education to the community, with a focus on offering free HIV testing, raising awareness about HIV/AIDS, and distributing relevant Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials.

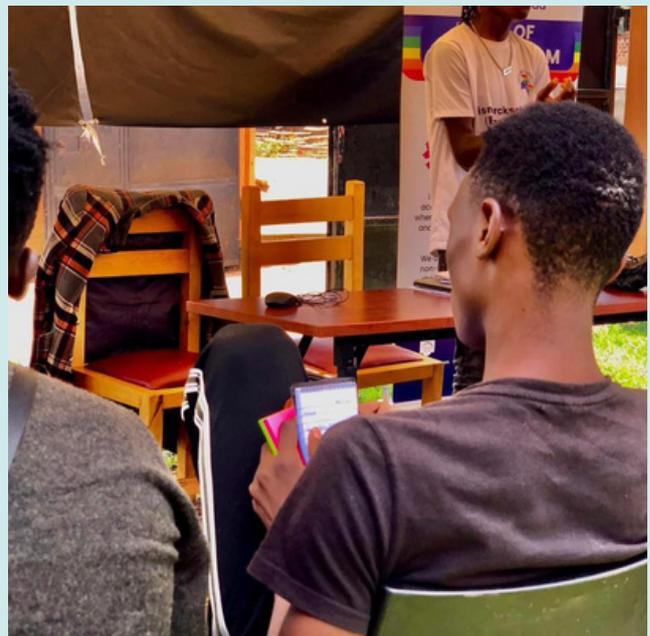
The outreach programs were strategically designed to address the pressing health issues faced by the communities in Uganda. By offering free HIV testing, Let's Walk Uganda aimed to increase access to crucial healthcare services and promote early detection of HIV, which is vital for effective management and treatment.



Additionally, the awareness campaigns conducted during these outreach programs played a pivotal role in educating the community about HIV/AIDS prevention, transmission, and stigma reduction. Furthermore, the distribution of relevant IEC materials served as an important tool for disseminating accurate information about HIV/AIDS and promoting healthy behaviors within the community.

Let's Walk Uganda's commitment to community engagement not only contributed to improving public health outcomes but also fostered a sense of empowerment and solidarity within the communities it served. By actively engaging with the local population and addressing their healthcare needs, Let's Walk Uganda demonstrated its dedication to making a tangible difference across Uganda.

These outreach programs extended beyond the immediate provision of services; they represented a proactive approach to public health that prioritizes community involvement and education. Through these initiatives, Let's Walk Uganda exemplified the power of grassroots engagement in creating positive change and promoting holistic well-being.



Networking and Partnerships

Let's Walk Uganda successfully engaged in several local, regional, and international engagements to network and build strong partnerships to build visibility and also resource mobilization for its sustainable work for the community it serves. These partnerships have been instrumental in the organization's growth and impact on the community.

Let's Walk Uganda has been proactive in engaging with local stakeholders, regional organizations, and international entities to foster relationships that support its mission. By participating in these engagements, the organization has been able to create a network of support that spans across different geographical levels. This approach has not only increased Let's Walk Uganda's visibility but has also facilitated the exchange of knowledge and best practices with diverse partners

The organization placed strong emphasis on building enduring partnerships with various entities, including local community groups, regional non-profit organizations, and international development agencies. These partnerships were established based on shared values and a mutual commitment to addressing the needs of the community. Through these alliances, Let's Walk Uganda was able to leverage resources, expertise, and influence to further its impact and reach.

By collaborating with diverse stakeholders, LWU has been able to access a wide range of resources, including financial support, technical assistance, and in-kind contributions. This has enabled Let's Walk Uganda to sustain its operations and expand its programs for the benefit of the community it serves.



World Bank Consultations with CSOs.

Lets Walk Uganda participated in a week's long workshop convened by the World Bank focusing on Understanding the specific risks related to the Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA) and developing mitigation measures for each of the 19 projects that the World bank had been funding and were being implemented by GOU, prior to the bank's decision to halt the said funding.

Lets Walk Uganda participated as a grassroots organization supporting persons directly affected first by the enactment of the draconian AHA and secondly as ordinary citizens of Uganda who could have directly or otherwise benefitted from the various projects that were being funded by the Bank to support development and economic growth as well as accessibility of basic social services to the common Ugandan.

We premised our contribution on the need to identify opportunities for our communities. We focused on devising ways through which our grassroots members can take advantage of these projects to foster individual but also collective growth.

We highlighted that our ask to GOU and the Bank is to incorporate the aspect of Equity in their risk assessment and proposed mitigations. We explained that whereas we appreciated the mitigation measures aimed at non-discrimination in the implementation of the projects that highlighted Women, PWDs, Refugees, we proposed that the mitigation measures be equitable enough to specifically highlight LGBTQI+ persons who are criminalized by a harsh law, intentionally documenting measure tailored to accommodate us.

We are closely following up on subsequent discussions and engagements.

Pride Month Celebrations

Let's Walk Uganda had the honor of being invited to the Berlin Pride 2023 in Germany, where the organization seized the opportunity to shed light on the ongoing human rights violations in Uganda. This event provided a platform for Let's Walk Uganda to update the global community on the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda and advocate for their rights.

The participation in Berlin Pride 2023 allowed Let's Walk Uganda to engage with an international audience and raise awareness about the human rights situation in Uganda. By sharing firsthand accounts and experiences, Let's Walk Uganda contributed to a deeper understanding of the struggles and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda. The organization also highlighted the importance of international support and solidarity in addressing these issues.

Let's Walk Uganda's participation in Berlin Pride 2023 was a significant milestone in advancing its mission to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and address human rights violations in Uganda. The organization's presence at this event underscored the importance of international solidarity and collaboration in promoting equality and justice for all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.



Annual General Meeting

Let's Walk Uganda (LWU) is committed to maintaining a strong organizational culture, which includes the organization of annual general meetings. These meetings serve as a platform for the staff and the Board of Directors to convene and deliberate on matters pertinent to the organization's operations. The annual general meeting held in June 2023 in Kampala was a significant event where members came together to discuss and make decisions regarding LWU's developmental issues.

The annual general meeting is a crucial aspect of LWU's governance structure, providing an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in strategic discussions and decision-making processes. During the meeting, various developmental issues were addressed, and key decisions were made to steer the organization towards its goals and objectives.

The physical gathering in Kampala facilitated meaningful interactions among the participants, fostering a collaborative environment conducive to constructive dialogue and decision-making.

LWU's annual general meeting serves as a cornerstone of its governance framework, enabling stakeholders to come together, deliberate on critical issues, and make informed decisions that shape the organization's path forward.



CHALLENGES FACED

Hostility:

- LWU faced significant legal challenges that posed barriers to advancing LGBTQ+ rights in Uganda. These challenges required sustained advocacy efforts and strategic partnerships to bring about meaningful change. The hostile environment made it crucial for Let's Walk Uganda to collaborate with other organizations and individuals to create a supportive atmosphere for the LGBTQ+ community.

Resource Constraints:

- The limited funding posed significant obstacles in achieving the organization's objectives, as it hindered the ability to reach a wider audience and make a more substantial impact on the community. Let's Walk Uganda had to carefully prioritize its activities and allocate resources judiciously to ensure that essential programs continued despite the financial limitations. This necessitated strategic planning and efficient utilization of available resources to maximize their impact.
- Furthermore, the financial constraints affected the organization's capacity to invest in staff training, infrastructure development, and outreach efforts. Let's Walk Uganda had to operate within strict budgetary constraints, which restricted its ability to expand its reach and enhance the quality of its services. The organization had to seek alternative sources of funding and explore partnerships with other entities to mitigate the impact of resource constraints.
- Resource constraints presented significant challenges for Let's Walk Uganda, impacting its ability to sustain and expand its activities. However, through strategic planning, efficient resource allocation, and proactive fundraising efforts, the organization endeavored to mitigate these constraints and uphold its commitment to making a positive impact on society.

Social Stigma and Discrimination:

- The social stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda have posed significant obstacles for Let's Walk Uganda. Despite the organization's efforts to promote inclusivity and acceptance, societal attitudes have remained entrenched, creating barriers to progress. The prevailing discrimination has not only hindered the organization's outreach and support for LGBTQ+ individuals but has also impeded broader societal acceptance and understanding.
- The challenge of social stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda has significantly impacted Let's Walk Uganda's mission to promote inclusivity and acceptance. However, through sustained advocacy efforts, comprehensive sensitization initiatives, and strategic partnerships, the organization can strive to overcome these challenges and foster a more inclusive society.

LESSONS LEARNED

Security Concerns:

- Ensuring the safety and security of LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly in the face of threats, harassment, blackmail, and violence, remained a critical challenge that required vigilance and proactive measures to mitigate risks.

The Power of Collaboration:

- By working together with various entities, Let's Walk Uganda has been able to extend its reach and influence, ultimately making a greater difference in the communities it serves.
- Collaboration has allowed Let's Walk Uganda to tap into a wider range of skills, knowledge, and resources. Local partnerships have provided the organization with a deep understanding of community needs and dynamics, enabling tailored and culturally sensitive interventions. On the other hand, international collaborations have brought in specialized expertise, innovative approaches, and additional funding sources. This combination has proven to be instrumental in addressing multifaceted issues such as healthcare access, education, and economic empowerment.
- Furthermore, the power of collaboration has facilitated knowledge exchange and capacity building within Let's Walk Uganda. Through interactions with diverse stakeholders, the organization has gained valuable insights and best practices that have enhanced its operational effectiveness. Additionally, collaborative initiatives have fostered a sense of shared responsibility and collective action, aligning efforts towards common goals and sustainable outcomes.

Resilience in Adversity:

- Our ability to navigate and overcome adversity, including legal setbacks, funding constraints, and social stigma, underscores the resilience and determination of our organization and community.

Adaptability and Innovation:

- Embracing innovation and adaptability enabled us to respond nimbly to evolving needs and circumstances, fostering creative solutions and enhancing programmatic effectiveness.

Transparency and Accountability:

- Upholding principles of transparency and accountability in organizational governance and operations builds trust, credibility, and confidence among stakeholders, strengthening our relationships and sustainability over time.

FUTURE OUTLOOK AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

As Let's Walk Uganda continues its journey into 2024, our commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ rights and fostering inclusivity remains unwavering. Looking ahead to the coming year, we are excited to outline our strategic priorities and key objectives that will guide our efforts toward a more equitable and accepting society.

1. Program Expansion

- **Objective:** Expand and strengthen existing programs while introducing new initiatives to address emerging needs within the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda.

Strategies:

- Assess the feasibility of establishing additional safe spaces and resource centers in regions with identified gaps.
- Develop specialized programs to address unique challenges faced by specific segments of the LGBTQ+ community, such as transgender individuals and those with intersecting identities.

2. Resource Mobilization

- **Objective:** Diversify funding sources and increase financial resilience to sustain and expand impactful programs.

Strategies:

- Actively seek new grant opportunities from local and international donors, foundations, and governmental agencies.
- Strengthen relationships with existing donors through regular communication, impact reporting, and tailored engagement strategies.
- Explore innovative fundraising campaigns and partnerships with corporate sponsors aligned with our mission.

3. Capacity Building

- **Objective:** Enhance the skills and capabilities of our team, volunteers, and partners to ensure effective program delivery and organizational sustainability.

Strategies:

- Implement a comprehensive training program focusing on legal advocacy, mental health support, and community engagement.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and professional development to keep our team informed about evolving issues and best practices.
- Establish partnerships with academic institutions and organizations offering capacity-building resources.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

- **Objective:** Strengthen collaboration with stakeholders, including government bodies, community leaders, and international partners, to amplify our impact and influence.

Strategies:

- Engage in regular dialogues with government officials and legal bodies to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusive policies.
- Collaborate with other human rights organizations, community groups, and NGOs to share resources and expertise, and amplify advocacy efforts.
- Leverage digital platforms for increased public awareness and engagement, fostering a broader understanding of LGBTQ+ issues.

5. Advocacy for Policy Reforms

- **Objective:** Continue advocating for inclusive laws, anti-discrimination policies, and equal access to healthcare, education, and other services for LGBTQ+ individuals in Uganda.

Strategies:

- Strengthen partnerships with advocacy groups and legal professionals to influence policy changes.
- Engage in strategic communication and public awareness campaigns to build public support for LGBTQ+ rights.
- Collaborate with international organizations and diplomatic missions to exert external pressure for positive policy reforms.

6. Innovation and Technology

- **Objective:** Embrace technology to enhance outreach, service delivery, and community engagement.

Strategies:

- Launch the Queer Safety mobile application to connect the LGBTQ+ community with essential services.
- Explore virtual reality programs and online platforms for mental health support and community building.
- Regularly assess and adopt innovative tools and technologies to improve program efficiency and impact.

Through the pursuit of these strategic priorities, Let's Walk Uganda aims to not only address current challenges but also anticipate and respond to the evolving needs of the LGBTQ+ community in Uganda. We believe that with collective effort, resilience, and strategic action, we can contribute to the creation of a society where every individual is free to live, love, and thrive without fear of discrimination or persecution.

7. Research

- **Objective:** To inform evidence based advocacy.
 - :To document data on gaps, challenges and issues affecting the community.
 - : To document data to inform community tailored interventions

Strategies:

- Train and build capacities of community members to conduct research into community experiences with access to major social and economic services.
- To develop community capacities to seek and demand for social and economic services.
- Develop community networks to provide a support platform for psychosocial and economic needs.

CONCLUSION

Let's Walk Uganda remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ rights and creating a more inclusive and equitable society in Uganda. Through strategic planning, collaborative partnerships, and a steadfast dedication to our mission and values, we will continue to confront challenges, seize opportunities, and strive for positive change in the years ahead. Together, we can build a future where every individual is celebrated, cherished, and embraced for who they are.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Dear Let's Walk Uganda Community,

On behalf of the board of directors, I extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for your unwavering support and dedication to our mission. Your resilience and commitment have been the driving force behind our collective achievements in 2023.

As we look ahead to the opportunities and challenges of the coming year, let us remain steadfast in our pursuit of equality, justice, and dignity for all. Together, we can continue to create positive change and build a more inclusive society where every individual is celebrated and respected.

Thank you for your invaluable contributions to Let's Walk Uganda. With your continued support, I am confident that we will achieve even greater milestones in the days ahead.

Warm regards,

Edward Mutebi
Chairperson, Board of Directors Let's Walk Uganda.

LET'S WALK UGANDA TEAM

Mutebi Edward- **Founder**

Kimera Derrick- **Executive Director**

Kusemererwa Charity- **Programs Director**

Kiyegga Andrew Tendo- **Program Coordinator, Re-Imagining Uganda**

Alex Martin Musiime- **Legal Head**

Bamuloze Dahlyn- **Legal**

Ndyanga Isaac, Mulinde Herbert- **Communications**