



Let's Walk Uganda



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LET'S WALK UGANDA END OF YEAR

newsletter

Celebrating a Year of Resilience, Advocacy, and Community

Dear Let's Walk Uganda Family,
As we bid farewell to 2023, we take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've embarked on together. Let's Walk Uganda, an LGBTQIA+ youth-led organization, has triumphed over challenges, celebrated milestones, and forged ahead with unwavering determination. We are proud to share with you our End-of-Year Newsletter, highlighting the remarkable achievements that have defined our year.



1. Legal Triumphs: A Step Closer to Equality

Let's Walk Uganda's Legal Desk has been at the forefront of the battle against the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda. LWU amidst several challenges stood out to challenge the Anti-Homosexuality Law in the Constitutional court of Uganda. "As we share this newsletter, the four Consolidated petitions were heard on 18th December 2023, and now awaits Judgement on notice. Our legal team has also responded to 14 cases of human rights violations, standing up for those affected by the AHA 23.



2. Reimagining Uganda: Shaping a Transformative Future

In a historic 3 days gathering in Nairobi, Let's Walk Uganda convened for the first physical meeting of "Reimagining Uganda." This visionary LGBTQIA+ 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. LGBTQIA+ leaders, allies, experts and partners came together in this momentous gathering to forge a path towards a more inclusive and accepting future for the LGBTQIA+ community in Uganda. This journey included one physical and 3 virtual convenings all aimed at gathering ideas to form a 15 years strategic plan to guide the community advocacy to ensure positive community attitude change towards the LGBTQIA+ existence.



3. Strengthening Security and Providing Shelter

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 security of our shelter occupants, we installed 24 hours surveillance cameras inside and outside the premises.



4. Emergency Response: A Lifeline for 27 Individuals

In the face of crises, Let's Walk Uganda's Emergency Response Team reached out to 27 individuals facing eviction by providing financial support, food, emergency relocation and essential guidance. Here we have also been able to sub grant 6 community based organisations to also carryout emergency response efforts in different areas of Uganda.

To help the LGBTQIA+ community to self defend themselves, we developed a crisis and emergency response manual and distributed more than 400 hard copies to different areas of Uganda, this manual is also available online. We also installed an emergency toll free helpline to assist the community to freely access our services in times of need.



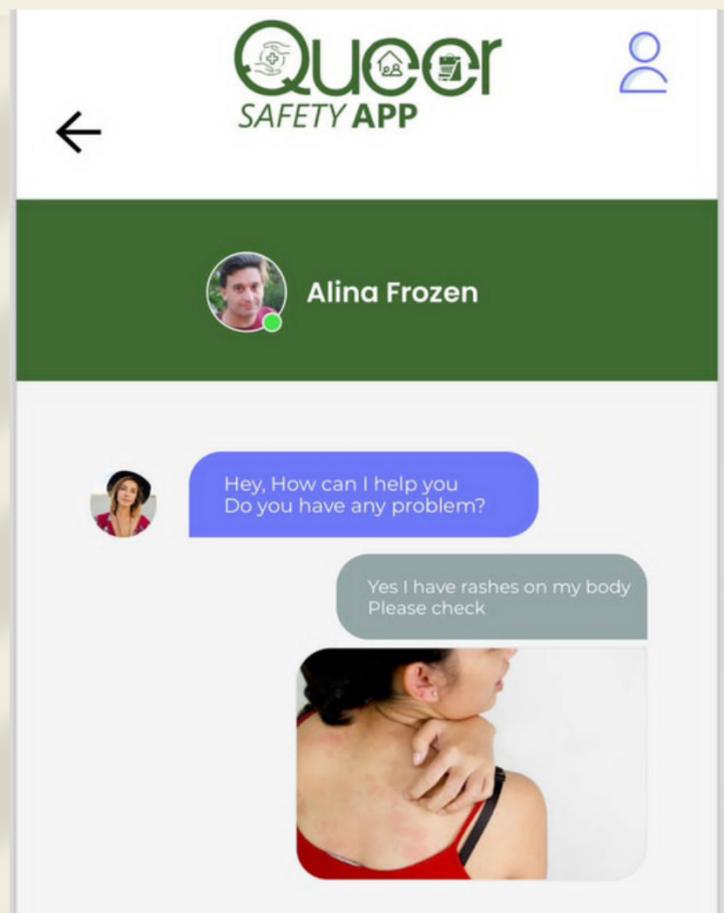
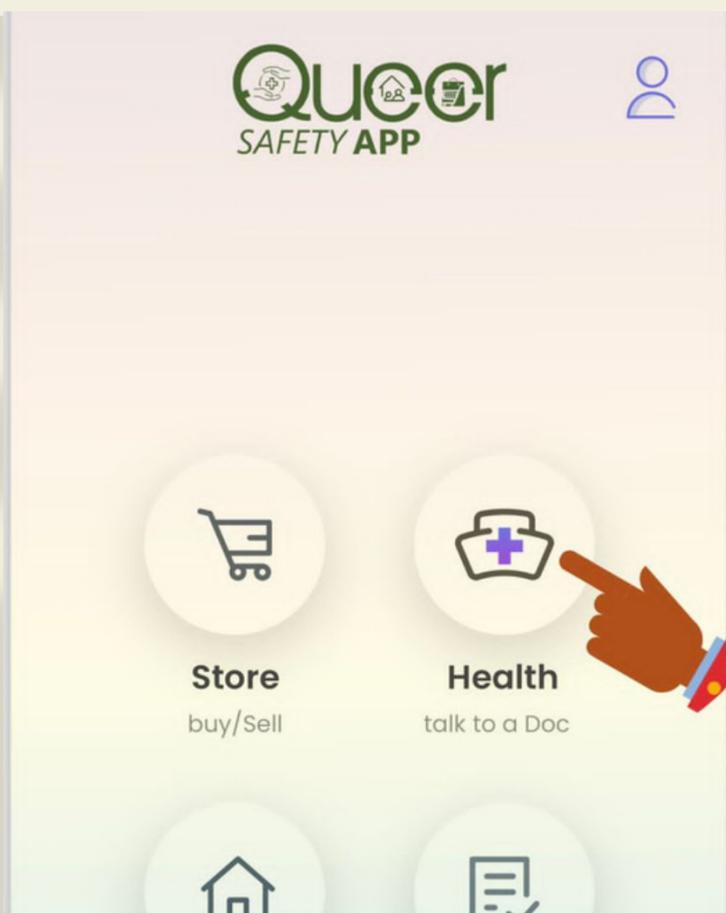
5. Hands of Hope: Nourishing Lives

In September, under the Hands of Hope Nutritional Support program, Let's Walk Uganda assisted 30 LGBTQIA+ individuals affected by evictions, job losses, and stigma caused by AHA2023, with food relief. This December, LWU has registered 125 people around Kampala, Jinja, and 3 shelters which are going to benefit from our nutritional support this festive season.



6. Innovative Solutions: The Queer Safety App

Looking ahead to 2024, Let's Walk Uganda is developing a mobile application called the Queer Safety App, connecting the community to health, legal, shelter, and commercial services. This powerful tool will be fully operational in February 2024 and the community will definitely be informed of the official launch.



7. Empowering Lives: Skills Development for the Future

Through the Hands of Hope Community Empowerment Program, 16 individuals gained skills in liquid soap making, while 8 acquired computer skills. Today, they are not just skilled individuals but earners with newfound confidence.



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

Let's Walk Uganda carried out an Inclusive Health Through Sports Project that promoted health service provision, awareness and HIV prevention efforts. Through both football and netball tournaments organised in Masaka, Kampala, and Mbarara, we reached 97 individuals with condoms, facilitated 25 HIV tests, distributed lubricants, and provided counseling and self-testing kits to the crowd.

Mental health issues became a visible challenge in this error of the AHA2023, to respond to this challenge, Let's Walk Uganda carried out different mental healing sessions including the virtual reality program to ensure mental wellbeing of the community that we do serve.



9. Community Engagement: Making a Difference Across Uganda

Lets Walk Uganda has conducted six outreach programs across different areas, offering free HIV testing, awareness campaigns, and distribution of IEC materials to the community.



10. Networking and Partnerships:

Lets Walk Uganda has engaged in several local, regional and international engagements to network and build strong partnerships with an aim of building visibility and also resource mobilization for its sustainable work for the community it serves.



11. Pride Month Celebrations:

The existence of the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 in Uganda didn't allow the organization of a collective pride celebration in Uganda for 2023. Lets Walk Uganda had a pleasure to be invited for the Berlin Pride 2023 in Germany where we had an opportunity to update the world on the ongoing human rights violation in Uganda.



12. Annual General Meeting.

As part of our culture, we organise the Annual General Meeting every year where members and the Board Of Directors meet to discuss and make decisions on behalf of the organization. In June, we organised a physical Annual General Meeting in Kampala where members met and decided on the organization's developmental issues.



As we celebrate these achievements, we extend heartfelt thanks to God, our partners, donors, and the dedicated Let's Walk Uganda staff. Special thanks and appreciation goes to the resilient community members that we serve, thank you for trusting us and standing strong amidst the wave of challenges we have faced as a community. Your unwavering support has been the driving force behind our success. As we step into 2024, we carry the promise of a better future for all.

A Message from the Executive Director:

Dear Let's Walk Uganda Family,
As we close the chapter on 2023, I am filled with gratitude for the resilience, passion, and unity that defines our community. Together, we have achieved incredible milestones, standing up for justice and creating a safer space for everyone.



In 2024, let us continue this journey with even greater determination, knowing that our collective efforts will shape a brighter future for the LGBTQIA+ community in Uganda. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

My Special Thanks goes to:

- QUEERE NOTHILFE
- WEAID
- UNAIDS
- GATE
- UHAI
- AARON AND FITT FOUNDATION
- CSD BERLIN
- QUEER AMNESTY BERLIN
- DIGNITY FOR ALL
- ALLOUT
- MUTEBI EDWARD
- LWU STAFF AND BOD

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with love, joy, and hope.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Derrick Kimera
Executive Director, Let's Walk Uganda.

May the holiday season bring you warmth, and may the coming year be filled with progress, acceptance, and love.

In solidarity, Let's Walk Uganda Team