



Building Foundations for Sustainable Rural Development

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Jane, a smallholder farmer in Hoima after receiving a grevillea tree seedling to mark Earth Day

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R-L: Gilbert (our Board member), Diana (our Executive Director) & the Director of Talent Agroforestry Ltd. take a selfie with a giant bamboo during a learning visit to his farm

LETTER FROM THE CEO



Greetings from Giving Hope Foundation (GHF). I am happy to share our 2021 Annual Report, which takes stock of our progress in a year that was like no other, majorly because of the challenges of COVID 19. 2021 also underscored the challenges of smallholder agriculture, an inherently risky profession. As an organisation, we adapted rather than expanded.

2021 is also the year we set up an office right in the middle of a rural community in Hoima District, this is our commitment to being closest to the farmers whom we serve. We focused on creating a strong relationships and supporting our beneficiaries - the smallholder farmers. This was a crucial year because we brought to life the strategic direction which we developed in 2018. The plan was to concentrate our efforts and limited resources in a small unprivileged rural community, where we had the best chances of creating a sustainable long term impact. We piloted the organic beans project and encouraged participating farmers to continue growing the improved cassava and later introduced organic farming, where we starting with growing beans.

We drew plans for integrating regenerative

agroforestry into the current smallholder farming setup for our members. We did this by introducing bamboo and tree planting. It is our hope that bamboo growing will be the start of several spin-off bamboo-related income generating activities for our members. This will also supplement activities in clean energy and therefore climate change mitigation.

In 2021, our core focus was on building resilience; internally we worked on strengthening our internal structures, building a team, culture and systems. We also worked on creating a foundation for our long term commitment to income diversification for our members as well as our own sustainability. Diversification means that we shall support smallholder farmers to have a variety of income streams on their small pieces of land. We will also never forget to integrate these efforts with environmental protection.

While the major goal is to deliver monetary impact (the market value of what a farm produces each season), at the same time, we think about how to equip farmers to accumulate assets like livestock, trees, diversify their family diets, and enrich their soil for future generations. Through this, we have not only focused on extending credit to farmers in form on quality seed and organic fertiliser, we are also looking to introduce biochar (for soil amendment) along with composting.

It is planned that by 2025, we will introduce value addition projects that will create employment opportunities and earn our members extra incomes. We are extremely excited to help hundreds of smallholder families manage risks, plan for their future, and build enduring paths to prosperity. I wish you a nice reading.

In service,
Nolbert Muhumuza - Founder/CEO

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

Empowered unprivileged communities with supportive environments

Mission

To build thriving grassroots communities where economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and emotional well-being are balanced to the long term benefit of all



Values

- **CREATIVITY:** we encourage a safe and supportive space for experimentation and innovation to solve problems
- **HUMILITY:** we show compassion and endeavor to understand, respect and value every individual
- **INTEGRITY:** we do what we promise
- **FAIRNESS:** we promote equality and mutual respect; working towards relationships that are inclusive, trusting and participatory
- **FUN:** we value the enjoyment in creating friendly and productive working environments

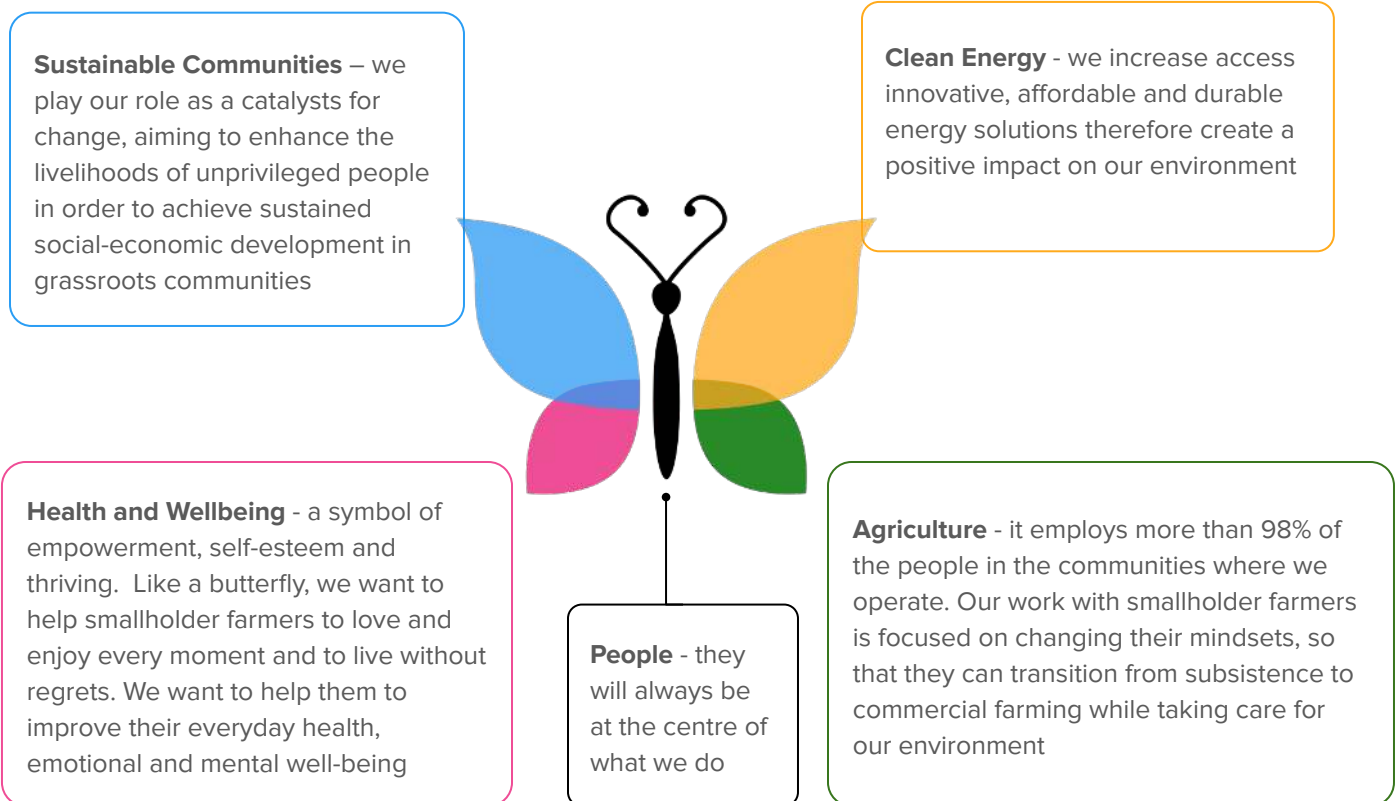
OUR LOGO

A butterfly represents simplicity! This is an expression of who we are, what we do and what inspires us. A butterfly undergoes different stages of transformation until it becomes an “adult” and ready to fly. This process represents how we will work with unprivileged smallholder farmers - based at grassroots in Uganda to bring about sustained development.

The wings are intersected; this means that all programs are interrelated. There is no one single solution to help lift people out of extreme poverty. The intersected wings also symbolize the fact that great things can happen if people from different backgrounds unite and work together on common goal. The wings spread and point outwards - meaning that the solutions are indefinite.

Each of the four colors of the wings perfectly symbolizes our key focus areas in bringing about holistic community development. The colors represent our commitment to working closely with rural populations, to help them improve their own lives. We want to help them to work smarter within these four focus areas in their daily activities, to diversify their incomes, and guide them to take concrete actions towards individual goals.

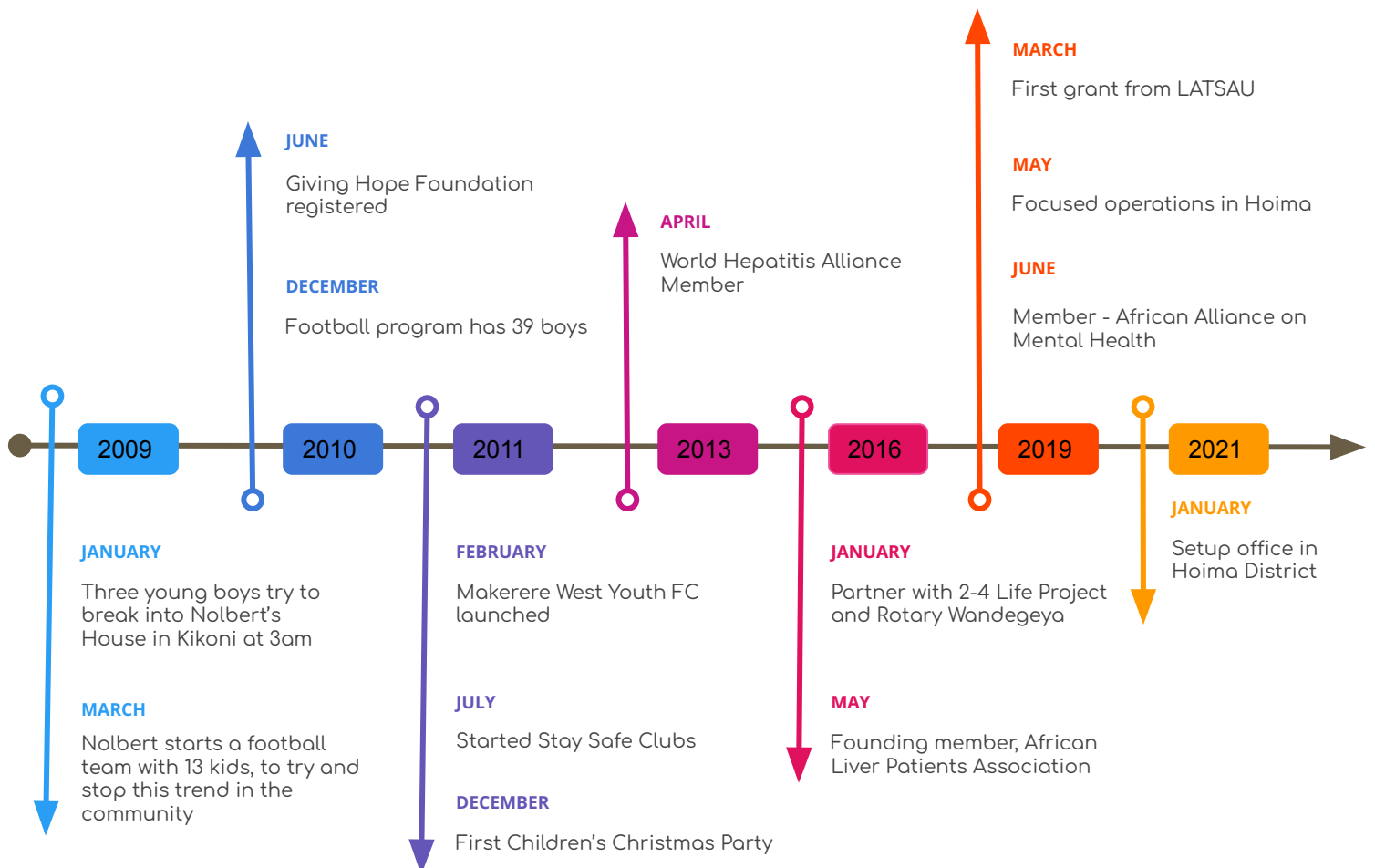
The tentacles of the butterfly form a heart; this is a commitment to love and respect humanity. It is also a reminder of our core values including communication, openness and transparency. The body of the butterfly is in the form of a human figure; again this is a reminder that every single person is important and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.



OUR JOURNEY



Members of our very first Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) in 2019



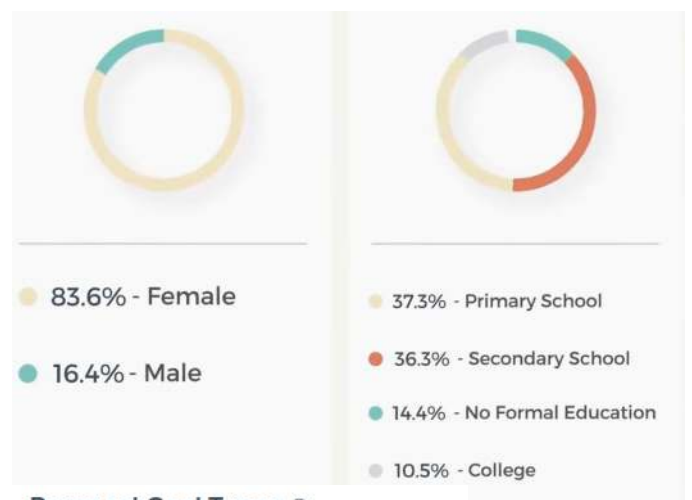
VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS ASSOCIATIONS



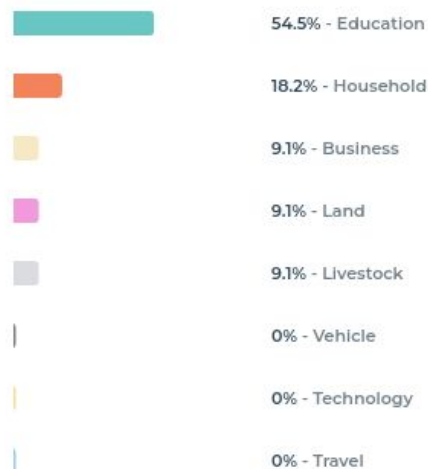
Selected farmer in Hoima attending a clean energy and biochar training

A Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) is a type of informal community banks that is local, self-managed, sustainable, secure and highly profitable. Members in each group meet frequently to make small contributions to a central fund. When a member needs money to expand her small business, to send her children to school or cover a medical emergency, he/she requests a short-term loan from the group. All interest earned on member loans is invested back into the central fund, so when one member's business grows, everyone benefits. It's an amazingly powerful model that's breaking the cycle of poverty for millions worldwide.

We have grown gradually from the initial pilot with 12 members in 2019 to 81 members. In a bid to digitise these grassroots village banks, we partnered with DreamStart Labs, through their simple and interactive mobile application called DreamSave. The app reduces meeting times and tracks individual financial goals while building their own credit history that can be used to assess larger financing from traditional financial services. Our goal is grow to 1,200 members by 2024.



Personal Goal Types



BAMBOO FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS & BUILDING COMMUNITIES' RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

In September 2021, Giving Hope Foundation initiated a project to support rural smallholder farmers in Hoima to plant trees around their pieces of land and grow bamboo in areas that are not so productive. The goal of the project is to empower rural farmers to become climate change resilient while improving their incomes.

In order to achieve this, we set up a fundraising campaign on GlobalGiving which had two phases. The first was to raise \$5,000 to kickstart the pilot project which would also earn us a permanent spot on the platform. This was successfully achieved through 68 unique donors. Eleven of these individuals that donated more than \$100 were rewarded with personal trees planted in their names by randomly selected farmers. Two other components of the project are; 1) introducing clean cooking gasifier stoves in the community (the stoves cook clean and fast and make charcoal as a byproduct), and 2) making biochar - which is a soil amendment. The second phase (in progress) is to raise an additional \$6,500 that will be used to research and pilot two viable bamboo value addition propositions, as well as monitoring the progress and documentation. You can make a contribution to the project through this link: <https://goto.gg/53167>

One of Uganda's leading bamboo experts from Talent Agroforestry was hired to train our farmers, who learnt about propagation, planting, care, harvesting and opportunities in bamboo growing. We expect the first harvest in 2025, by then GHF plans to have established long term opportunities for income generation. These will include exploring value addition possibilities including crafts, animal feeds enhancements, furniture, organic fertilisers and exploring carbon dioxide removal markets. It is hoped that this will spark several spin-off local cottage businesses in the community.



36

Farmers
trained



865

Bamboo seedlings
planted



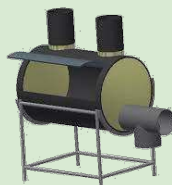
1,332

Trees planted



20

Gasifier
stoves
deployed



2

Biochar kilns
made



280+

Kilos of
Biochar made



THE ORGANIC BEANS PROJECT

GHF piloted the implementation of the Organic Beans Project (OBP) with support from Latek Stay alliance Uganda (LATSOU) and it benefited 12 members from two Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLAs). It had the following objectives; 1) to have at least 09 farmers increase agricultural production above their consumption. 2) to increase the income of farmers and get repayment of direct support costs and 3) to have vibrant and active organised village groups. Each member received 25 Kgs of beans (*Nambaale Short variety*) and four (4) kilos of organic fertilizer. The farmers were educated on the

importance of organic farming, care for their gardens and how to hand their harvests. Despite the delays in starting the project, which also affected the yields approximately 615 Kgs of organically grown beans were yielded. Since the market prices for beans was very low due the covid pandemic, only 281 kgs were sold to recover input costs while the rest were enjoyed by the respective families. A total of 20 farmers including all the first from the pilot have continued with the the project even after the project was completed in August 2021.



BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Our ability to help smallholder farmers to be more prosperous depends on the strength of our team. We have challenged ourselves towards building a strong foundation for a sustainable, robust and efficient organization. Making progress in this area is both a moral imperative and a necessity for our work. We have to be shockproof in order to see through our mission and long-term goal which is empowering smallholder farmers to thrive economically and socially while taking care of our environment.

We set out on a journey to make ourselves transparent and accountable to all our stakeholders. To achieve this, we are utilizing existing online systems that fit within our structure. We are spending a lot of time learning, collaborating and build a team culture and owning our core values. Our team is the single most important resource for our organization, so we try to support and take a very good care of each other. As a small organization, we are realistic about our limited budget, therefore, integrating existing technologies in our daily operations is the only way we can deliver our promises to our stakeholders with the required efficiency. In order to build our self-sustainable strategy we are required to source and spend sustainably, constantly be innovative and build partnerships while keeping in mind the bigger picture.

Achieving these targets is not easy, especially because we are based in a rural setting. The biggest stumbling blocks are finding the right human resources and infrastructure that suits our setup. It is a long journey ahead but we have taken the first steps, and we will continue progressing brick by brick.



A typical kitchen in the communities we serve



Farmers learning how to make biochar (for soil amendment) using the RoCC kiln



WAY FORWARD: 2023 GOALS

The world is facing a very challenging situation, but we remain ambitious and optimistic about the future. We will therefore focus on supporting farmers to become resilient in the face of changing economic circumstances. We will also look to continue our organic growth strategy while adapting to the prevailing conditions. These will be our targets:



VSLA Growth

We will cautiously work to reach 50 VSLAs with about 1,200 members



Improved Nutrition

We target 40% of our members adopting a vegetable crop, along with raising small animals like chicken and rabbits



Launch decentralized Retail Locations

To increase access to high quality agricultural inputs, we will setup various home-based retail locations in each village across our area of operation



Planting Trees and Growing Bamboo

We will support our farmers to plant 10,000 trees and to reach 1,200 bamboo seedlings



Access to Clean Energy and Drinking Water

To increase communities' environmental impacts, we will deploy more improved cookstoves and water filters



Smart Agriculture

We will increase access to climate smart technologies and training organic farming, composting and biochar application

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the following who have generously supported Giving Hope Foundation

Board of Directors

Diana Byali - Chairperson
Judith Sekyonda - Treasurer
Alfred Kusiima - Secretary (retiring)
Gilbert Mwebesa - Mobiliser

Volunteers

Asiimwe Simon Peter
Aliya Anita Patricia
Debora Van Ginkel
Mari Halford
Trevor Ahimbisibwe

SPECIAL THANKS

Partners

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Rotarian Peter Katuramu
Talent Agroforestry Ltd
We Make Change
Dreamstart Labs

Supporters

Everyone who supported our fundraising campaign through GlobalGiving

