



**GUFASHA**  
GIRLS FOUNDATION  
Empowering girls



# Gufasha Girls Foundation

Empowering Girls

**BI-ANNUAL REPORT**

January - June 2025



## ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

### Enhance Institutional Capacity

Strengthen GGF's operational and programmatic systems to deliver high impact interventions efficiently, ensuring sustainability and scalability in our fight against child marriage and for girls' education.

### Advance SRHR & GBV Awareness

Increase knowledge and shift attitudes on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through targeted education, community dialogues, and youth-friendly advocacy.

### Empower Grassroots Advocates

To empower and build the capacity of School Management Committees (SMCs), School Clubs (MJC), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and partner organizations to champion GBV prevention, SRHR education, and girls' rights within their communities.



## INTRODUCTION

Gufasha Girls Foundation is a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to ending child marriage and advancing girls' education and rights across Uganda. Through advocacy, awareness campaigns, education support, and capacity-building initiatives, we strive to empower vulnerable girls, challenge harmful norms, and create a future where every girl can make informed choices about her life, health, and education.

### Our Vision

A world in which every girl achieves her fullest potential and contributes to all aspects of life.

### Our Mission

To end child marriage and empower girls and young women in Uganda through Advocacy, Capacity building and Education support.

### Our Values

1. God-centered
2. Commitment
3. Leadership
4. Integrity

### We work to:

- 1: Eradicate child marriage through grassroots activism, policy engagement, and community sensitization, while providing psychosocial support to victims and survivors.
- 2: Promote girls' education through sponsorships and by breaking barriers like period poverty, ensuring access to menstrual hygiene products and academic mentorships
- 3: Advance sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) education, equipping adolescent girls and teenage mothers with knowledge to safeguard their health, dignity, and futures.

### How We Create Change

- 1: Advocacy & Awareness: Leveraging social media and partnerships to demand policy action and amplify girls' voices.
- 2: Community Outreach: Direct engagement to shift mindsets, educate families, and establish safe spaces for girls.
- 3: Holistic Support: Providing menstrual kits, SRHR education, and mentorship to help girls thrive not just survive.



## AREAS OF OPERATION

"Gufasha Girls Foundation operates in the rural areas of Kayunga District - Uganda"





## ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PERIOD

**Objective1:** Strengthen GGF's operational and programmatic systems to deliver high impact interventions efficiently, ensuring sustainability and scalability in our fight against child marriage and for girls' education.

### Develop and implement a Fundraising / Resource Mobilization Strategy

Gufasha Girls Foundation (GGF) is yet to formalize a fundraising strategy limiting her ability to sustainably scale impact. To address this gap, the organization recruited a Volunteer Resource Mobilization Officer tasked with; identifying funding opportunities (grants, proposals, and partnerships), ensuring alignment between donor priorities and GGF's program objectives and spearheading the development of GGF's first comprehensive Fundraising Strategy.

Also, during the period, a donor mapping exercise was conducted that identified high potential funding sources (NGOs, CSR programs and government grants); prioritized diversified income streams like grants, individual donations and corporate

partnerships; trained 5 staff and volunteers on proposal writing, donor reporting, and financial compliance requirements.

### Develop high quality grant concepts & proposals with external TA where applicable

Gufasha Girls Foundation actively pursued strategic funding opportunities/proposals developed and submitted to advance its mission, including:

**1:** Amplify Change. Project Title: Promoting Adolescent Girls and Youth SRHR Services in Kayunga District (PAGY-K). Focus: Expanding access to sexual reproductive health rights for vulnerable girls.

**2:** Urgent Action Fund. Project Title: Strengthening Coordination for GBV/SRHR Advocacy in Kayunga & Mukono Districts. Focus: Enhancing CSO coalition efforts to combat gender-based violence and SRHR disparities.

Status: Rejected

**3:** Global Fund for Children, New Africa Fund, GiveFreely and Charity Navigator. Submitted Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to diversify funding streams for program scalability.

Status: Awaiting notification

Status: Awaiting notification

To further amplify her impact, GGF initiated collaborations and new partnerships with the sole and main objective to leverage joint advocacy, capacity building, and resource mobilization for sustainable change.

These include;

1. Irise Institute East Africa
2. Kayunga District Local Government
3. Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights – SRHR Alliance (Preliminary)
4. Reach A Hand Uganda - RAHU (Fellowship Program for the Team Leader)
5. SmartGirls Uganda
6. Naguru Teenage Health and Information Center – NTHIC, CEHURD (Legal & Advocacy Support)
7. Madaraja Foundation
8. Wekuume App

## Hold quarterly organizational review progress meetings

During the reporting period, GGF conducted 13 program team meetings to ensure effective implementation of programme initiatives.

These meetings served as a critical platform for;

1. Program implementation review where the team tracked progress against project activity milestones and deliverables, advocacy coordination to ensure planned and evaluated advocacy campaigns are on track.
2. Reviewed compliance with Annual Work Plans (AWP)
3. Monitored budget utilization and financial reporting
4. Assessed resource mobilization efforts and funding pipelines
5. Identified and addressed implementation challenges.
6. Conducted team capacity building sessions and shared best practices and lessons learned.

## Hold Board/Committee Meetings

GGF held 2 strategic board meetings for the period, in the first quarter and second quarter of 2025. The meetings attended by all Board members focused on Annual program planning and target setting, fundraising strategy development and revenue targets, compliance framework review and improvements and organizational risk assessment and mitigation.

These board meetings ensured proper oversight of organizational operations while aligning strategic priorities with available resources. The discussions resulted in; clearer program implementation guidelines, strengthened financial sustainability plans and improved staff support mechanisms.

**Objective2:** Increase knowledge and shift attitudes on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through targeted education, community dialogues, and youth-friendly advocacy.

## Develop and disseminate advocacy-oriented M&E impact stories 2024 on GBV&SRHR in Uganda laying out advocacy agenda for existing strategies and tools

Gufasha Girls Foundation (GGF) in March 2025 conducted a comprehensive rapid impact assessment of her three flagship project initiatives implemented during 2024.

The main purpose was to evaluate the organization program effectiveness, identify challenges, and generate evidence based insights from the community to refine future interventions.

## SheThrives Education Sponsorship Program

There was increased school attendance among beneficiaries like 85% retention rate in 2024.

There was enhanced self-confidence through mentorship, with 90% of girls reporting improved leadership skills.

## Annual Gala for Girls

Mobilized over 1000 stakeholders, amplifying advocacy against child marriage.

Increased awareness on GBV and SRHR.

## My Menstruation, Is My Dignity

Skilled 300 girls from three partner schools to make their own reusable pads and empowered them with menstrual health information.

Reduced school absenteeism by 40% among participating girls.



## Conduct media campaigns on SRHR & GBV using selected TV, Print, radio/ social media platforms

Gufasha Girls Foundation (GGF) executed targeted media campaigns across multiple platforms to amplify awareness of Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Uganda.

The campaigns leveraged social media (Twitter/X, Instagram). During the period over 200 posts and over 10,000 interactions on the social media platforms were recorded.

The main key achievements during the period were;

1. **219** posts disseminated across all GGF's social media platforms
2. **11,126** engagements (likes, shares, comments) on key issues on Child marriage,
3. **5** viral campaigns on ending child marriage and menstrual health

## Campaign Highlights

Trended on Twitter with **5,246** mentions  
Short Video sessions reached **8,321** viewers  
**#empowering girls**  
**#endchildmarriage**  
**#LetGirlsLead**  
**#Menstrualjusticeforall**  
**#educategirls**

## Conduct Fireplace Conversations on GBV & SRHR in Kayunga

Gufasha Girls Foundation is revitalizing traditional platforms for storytelling and conflict resolution through its Mkutano Fireplace Conversations, fostering safe spaces for open dialogue on child marriage, and girls' rights in Kayunga district.

In its initial phase, one session was successfully conducted in Baale Sub-County, engaging **25** participants, including local leaders, parents, teachers, victims of child marriage, adolescent girls, and clergy. The session focused on three key objectives:

- Raising Awareness on Child Marriage through highlighting the risks and consequences of early marriage, particularly its impact on girls' health, education, and economic prospects.
- Girl Empowerment Through



Confidence Building. This is done by featuring survivor led storytelling to inspire resilience and self-advocacy among adolescent girls.

- Myth Busting Through Role Playing. Challenging harmful misconceptions, such as the belief that “*marriage protects girls from poverty,*” with interactive exercises.

*“When we send our girls to make money on the roadside after school in the evenings selling pancakes and tomatoes, they come back late in the night and we forget the consequences of our actions. Most times these girls’ risk being raped or being deceived by boys and boda boda men out there, which at the end of the day ends up being cases of teenage pregnancy.”*

Local woman leader

*“I urge every parent to take responsibility not only for their own children but for every girl in this community and beyond. To build safe and thriving communities, we must commit to encouraging, supporting, and empowering every girl.”*

GISO (Bbaale sub county)

*“Many girls face a significant shortage of crucial supplies that are vital for their well-being and education. For instance, they often struggle to access sanitary pads while at school, which are essential for managing menstruation, leading to challenges in maintaining their health and hygiene.”* Teacher

*“Parents take girls to school at a very late age, with the shame and stigma that surrounds studying while old, they end up dropping out of school and getting married at a young age.”* Youth Leader

*“Our parents no longer give us time; we lack safe spaces at our homes because our parents tend to be busy with their own work. This affects us so much and we end giving our attention and time to the wrong people who at the end of the day mess up our lives.”*

Adolescent girl

## Call to Action/Way Forward

During the discussions participants agreed that breaking the cycle required;

- Door-to-door enrolment drives targeting 5–6 year-old girls
- Encourage overage friendly schools with age-appropriate support for overage students
- The district authorities enforce parental penalty systems for delayed enrolment
- Parents needed to address indecent addressing among their girls and boys at home and in the communities
- Community leaders, and women leaders to embrace and support girls in

every aspect of their journeys, not just by sending them to school.

The way forward was to have continuous community awareness raising about the issues of child marriage and to create safe spaces in the communities, to support girls. Among the participants, a committee was formed and this was the structure formed;

### Mkutano fireplace conversation committee

1. Chairperson - Ssenkunga William
2. Vice Chairperson – Namajja Christine
3. Secretary – Sirajje Bazibu
4. Publicity – Mbajjwe Robert

The Mkutano Fireplace Conversation Committee will organize quarterly community dialogues to discuss the dangers of child marriage, gender equality, and girls’ rights.

These sessions will involve parents, religious leaders, local authorities, and youth to foster collective responsibility. This committee is also to disseminate information among different community members and serve as an ambassador for the Gufasha Girls Foundation in the community.



**Objective3:** To empower and build the capacity of School Management Committees (SMCs), Menstrual Justice Clubs (MJC), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and partner organizations to champion GBV prevention, SRHR education, and girls’ rights within their communities.

## Conduct GGF Leadership Camps (Session One)

On June 14, 2025, Gufasha Girls Foundation proudly launched the Gufasha Girls Leadership Academy under the theme ‘Empowering the Next Generation of Female Leaders.’ This transformative five-week program is designed to inspire, educate, and equip young girls with the confidence, leadership skills, and mentorship they need to become change-makers in their schools and communities.

The objectives of the leadership camp;

1. Build Confidence & Self-Esteem Help girls recognize their unique potential and self-worth, fostering the courage to pursue their ambitions.
2. Develop Essential Leadership Skills. Equip girls with communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities to lead effectively in any setting.
3. Provide Role Models & Mentorship. Connect participants with inspirational Ugandan women leaders for guidance, encouragement, and real-world insights.

4. Promote Gender Equality & Advocacy. Educate girls on their rights and responsibilities, empowering them to challenge stereotypes and advocate for themselves and others.
5. Encourage Civic Engagement. Inspire girls to take active roles in their schools and communities, driving positive change as tomorrow’s leaders.

A total of 40 participants (girls aged 12-19yrs) from 4 partner primary schools which included Bbaale c/u pri. School, Pride junior school, Standard primary school and Trinity children’s center The session was held at Bbaale Church of Uganda (CU) School, Bbaale Sub-County.

The academy will culminate in a graduation ceremony on 3rd October 2025 at the Gufasha Girls Annual Gala.

During the activity the following sessions were highlighted;

### Breaking Barriers with Confidence

Activities like public speaking drills and role-playing scenarios helped girls overcome self-doubt and embrace their voices. Slogans adopted during the session

included; *"Your opinion matters speak up!"*

### Leadership Through Action

Girls participated in team challenges like collaborative problem-solving tasks to practice decision making and accountability. A debate on *"What makes a great leader?"* revealed hidden strengths and perspectives. *"A good listener is a very good leader."* Participant

### Celebrating Sisterhood

Bonding activities, like storytelling circles and vision-board creation, fostered a supportive network of peers.

### After the sessions;

- 100% of girls participating reported feeling more confident in their leadership abilities.
- 85% identified at least one female role model they admired by the session's end.

This eye opening activity challenged stereotypes and reinforced the need for more visible female role models.

## Conducted Girl Power Sessions

The Gufasha Girls Foundation hosted 4 dynamic Girl Power Sessions in partner schools, designed to unlock potential, challenge stereotypes, and build sisterhood among participants.

These interactive sessions equipped girls with practical skills, confidence, and inspiration to become change-makers in their communities.

A total of 56 (11- 19) years girls from two partner schools (pride and divine embassy primary school) schools participated in the girl power sessions.

The key session highlights were;

*Understanding Body Changes During Adolescence. Educate adolescents about the physical and emotional changes they experience during puberty.*

*Academic Mentorship for Adolescent Success. Provide guidance on academic growth, career planning, and skill development.*

*Adolescent Health & Well-being. The main aim was to promote holistic health (physical, mental, and emotional) among teens.*

### Key Takeaways for Participants:

1. Increased awareness of their changing bodies and how to manage them confidently.
2. Stronger academic support systems and mentorship networks.
3. Better health literacy and habits for long-term well-being.

## Conduct Informal discussions with young girls on issues of SRHR and GBV and HIV prevention.

To advance girls' health, safety, and rights, we conducted monthly informal discussions with young girls across communities, creating safe spaces to address critical issues.

A total of 252 girls gained knowledge to protect their health and rights. During the discussions 86% reported increased confidence in discussing SRHR/GBV issues in public. 12 community led initiatives were launched like teen health clubs and advocacy dramas.

The key issues discussed by the Girl Ambassadors and Peer mentors in the communities included; Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), GBV & HIV prevention especially providing education on menstrual health, identifying abuse, reporting mechanisms, and legal rights, contraception, and bodily autonomy to combat misinformation.

This was done through the interactive Q&A sessions to break taboos and foster informed decision-making.

As part of the way forward and next phase it was agreed to scale up with parent teacher dialogues to strengthen systemic support.

## Conducted training of 10 community leaders in Bbaale Subcounty

The trainings were aimed at; challenging harmful myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation, equipping participants to advocate for menstrual justice in their communities and reach 3,000 people with accurate information to combat cultural taboos and gender inequalities linked to menstrual injustices.

The 10 leaders included; Mr. Kayemba Abasi – Baale Chairperson, Mr. Ssenkungu William – Political leader, Rev.Zephania Kayigwa, Mrs. Nakikayila Ruth – Local Woman councilor, Mrs.Kirya Prossy Nasandde – Teacher, Mrs. Muligirwa Grace – Business Woman, Mr.Mbalagadde Sulaiman, Mr. Mudiibo Nelson – School Headteacher, Mr.Alfred Lukaye and Mr. Mbajjwe Robert.

### Key Issues noted

Many girls in Kayunga District particularly in rural areas like Baale S/C face critical shortages of menstrual hygiene products and other essential supplies, severely impacting their health, education and dignity.

Menstrual health inequities continue to undermine girls' education and health in Baale S/C, with Kayunga District reflecting nationwide disparities.

## By the Numbers:

*In Kayunga, 62% of girls report using improvised, unhygienic materials like old cloth or mattress stuffing (District Health Office Survey, 2022)*

*Widened gender gap in secondary education completion (currently 42% female vs 58% male in Kayunga - UBOS 2023)*

*In Kayunga, 37% of girls start primary school after age 7 (District Education Office, 2023)*





## Achievements;

1. 10 Community leaders were successfully trained and empowered with accurate knowledge about menstruation, menstrual health and its importance in achieving gender equality.
2. The leaders gained the skills and confidence to speak publicly, challenge harmful myths, and engage their communities in open conversations about menstruation.
3. The training included men and women making menstrual health a community concern and not just a “women’s issue.”
3. The training transformed passive influencers as a noticeable shift in attitudes was observed, especially among male leaders who previously avoided/stigmatized the topic into active change agents who will sustain advocacy beyond the Menstrual Justice project.
4. The identification of the menstrual justice advocates in schools was a smooth process.
5. 8 Peer champions for menstrual justice identified at the three partner schools. (Bbaale Secondary School and Bbaale C/U Primary School.

The trainings addressed misinformation about menstruation that fuels gender inequality, limiting girls’ education and dignity. By equipping these champions with knowledge and advocacy tools, GGF is transforming silence into systemic change.

*“I now know how important menstrual health and hygiene is for girls and women. I am more willing than ever before to support my daughters and share with other community members about this important cause”*

– Mr. Ssenkungu.

*“Honestly, we never used to feel like talking about this issue in church is important. However, I have learnt that it is everyone’s responsibility to support menstrual-related matters and I am much willing to include this topic during my preaching session.”*

– Rev. Zephania.

## As a way forward/ Next Steps;

- Peer champions will lead school-based campaigns.
- Expand trainings to 5 new villages in Q3 2025.

## Conduct trainings of girls and boys through the menstrual justice clubs in 3 schools on Menstrual Justice and Feminist Leadership.

The meetings were conducted were conducted from 20th March – 04th April 2025 in Bbaale S/C. The 3 schools attending the trainings; St. Andrews C/U Primary School, Mukono Comprehensive Secondary School and Bbaale Secondary School

### The main objectives of the trainings were;

1. To increase awareness and knowledge on menstrual hygiene among girls.
2. To increase confidence and leadership Skills of the club members
3. To empower girls to gain acquisition of advocacy skills.

During the trainings, 375 girls participated and were supported to better understand menstrual health, breaking taboos and misconceptions surrounding menstruation.

There was increased Confidence and Leadership Skills as the club members, gained the confidence to take on leadership roles, speak up against gender biases, roles and discrimination, and advocate for gender equality within their schools and communities.

Acquisition of Empowerment and Advocacy Skills by the project beneficiaries as the training empowered students to speak up and demand about menstrual justice within their schools and communities.

### Key Issues Noted

Menstruation is seen as shameful and impure, as it is deeply rooted in cultural norms and gender inequality.

Menstruation-related school absenteeism due to the stigma that girls face during menstruation, with many dropping out entirely because of fear of being bullied especially if they stain clothes, lack of sanitary pads and lack of gender-sensitive washrooms in the schools.

Early or forced marriage linked to menstruation marking “readiness” for marriage.

Menstruation is politicized where boys/men mock girls, and male-dominated leadership ignores the issue.

In most schools, some teachers (often male) refuse to discuss periods, calling it a “girls and women’s business.”



## Lessons Learnt

Community engagement is critical. Sustainable change requires local ownership. Activities like Mkutano fireplace conversations succeeded because the activities involved elders, religious leaders, and parents as partners.

Safe spaces foster openness during discussions on sensitive issues. Girls shared sensitive issues like SRHR and GBV only in non judgmental environments. Peer champions and female facilitators increased participation.

The activity representation matters. The “Identify Leaders” exercise revealed how few female role models girls knew. After the sessions, girls cited GGF Girl Ambassadors as inspiration.

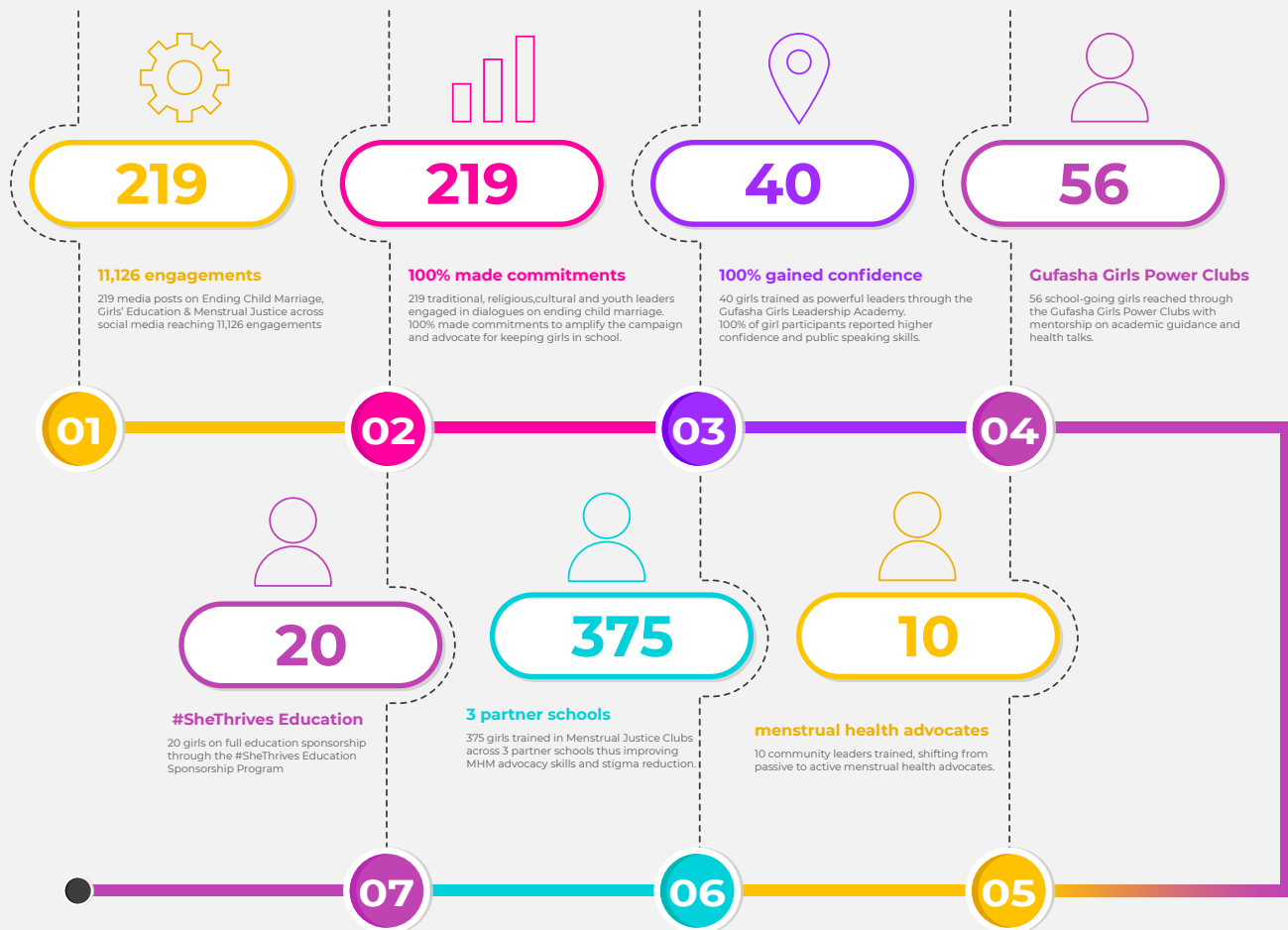
Youth-Led Advocacy is Powerful. Peer champions like menstrual justice advocates influenced peers more effectively than adults.

Involvement of Men and Boys as key allies. The training sessions with male leaders shifted attitudes towards gender equality.



# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

— JAN - JUNE 2025 —



## Challenges

Resistance to gender equality like child marriage and menstrual taboos from traditional leaders and elders during project activity implementation. GGF ensured that they engage religious/cultural leaders as advocates like training them as "champions of change") and use of community dialogues (like Mkutano fireplace talks) to gradually shift mindsets.

Overreliance on donor funds restricts program scalability like GGF was unable to reach all target villages. As a mitigation, the organization has strategies for diversifying income via social enterprises like selling reusable pads and partnering with local government to integrate programs into public budgets.

The low Male engagement. Men and boys often excluded or hostile to gender equity efforts. GGF has ensured to design male-focused workshops on positive masculinity and involve fathers/husbands in economic empowerment activities.

Data Collection Barriers. The project interventions require data collection and utilization. Tracking long-term impact is difficult like girls' progress after programs. As a way of mitigating the challenge, GGF has capitalized on use of mobile-based surveys for real-time feedback partner with

schools/clinics to monitor outcomes like the school retention rates.

The conflicting and competing priorities for Girls. In the rural areas poverty forces girls to prioritize labour over leadership programs. Therefore, GGF has adopted offering flexible timings like evening sessions and use link participation to tangible benefits like free sanitary kits and stipends.

Gufasha Girls Foundation (GGF) faces persistent funding shortages that hinder scalability, preventing expansion into underserved communities and limiting our ability to hire skilled volunteers for resource mobilization and program delivery. Insufficient funds restrict operational capacity, delaying critical initiatives like mentorship programs and advocacy campaigns.

Without sustainable financing, we struggle to retain trained staff, procure essential materials, and respond to growing community needs. These financial barriers not only slow our current impact but also curb opportunities to replicate successful models in new areas. Investing in GGF's financial stability would directly enhance our reach, allowing more girls to access education, safety, and leadership opportunities.

## Conclusion /Way Forward

Despite facing deep rooted cultural barriers and resource constraints, Gufasha Girls Foundation (GGF) has demonstrated that empowering girls through education, safe spaces, and advocacy creates lasting transformation. Our proven initiatives including the Mkutano community dialogues, Menstrual Justice Training, and the Leadership Academy show how grassroots engagement drives progress.

By mobilizing elders, schools, and peer champions, we've successfully converted local stakeholders into powerful allies for gender equality, proving that targeted interventions spark wider societal change. To deepen our work in Kayunga, GGF will;

- Scale successful programs, expanding our peer educator network to reach more girls.
  - Strengthen institutional systems by partnering with local authorities to implement and enforce equitable policies.
  - Build sustainable solutions, such as livelihood projects that empower girls economically.
- To realize this vision, GGF urgently requires financial support both cash and in-kind donations to ensure operational stability and project execution. We invite donors, partners, and the public to join our movement. Together, we can amplify our impact and create a future where every girl in Uganda can thrive.







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