

L.E.A.D Uganda

## **LOCATE EDUCATE ACHIEVE DREAM**

L.E.A.D Uganda locates forgotten children, educates them, and helps them achieve their dreams.

L.E.A.D Uganda is an educational leadership initiative for abandoned children affected by AIDS, war, and poverty. We give hope to children who had no future.

The children of Uganda are suffering. The AIDS pandemic and the conflict in the north has devastated whole regions of Uganda, amplifying poverty and despair. 1.9 million orphans saw their parents die of AIDS, one million children live in IDP camps, tens of thousands were abducted by rebels and forced to become child-soldiers and sex-slaves.

We serve these children. L.E.A.D Uganda gives children the ability to achieve through education.

### **LOCATE**

We locate the best and the brightest children living on the edges of society - AIDS orphans, former child soldiers, child laborers. We mold them into leaders.

We locate children through recommendations from our network of community organizations, referrals by schools, and by visits to refugee camps and rural villages by our staff. We look at their school reports. We interview teachers, neighbors, guardians, and the student. We observe them at home and at school. We ask them to tell us their goals and dreams.

We look for that special something that sets them apart from other children. It can be that look in their eyes, something they say, something we observe. One young man was abducted by rebels at nine, saw his father hacked to death, was forced to spend four years in the bush as a child soldier, lost his arm in battle. When we entered his hut in the refugee camp, we saw “no excuses” written on the wall. *No excuses*. That is the attitude we want. We took him in, helped him heal. He is doing well, is a leader at his school.

### **EDUCATE**

We educate our orphans in the best schools where they sit next to sons and daughters of wealthy and middle class youngsters. In order for them to outperform children who have all the advantages, our kids need to start on an even level.

That is why L.E.A.D Uganda provides complete wrap-around services for the students. We developed this approach because children in Uganda, face many

obstacles which keep them from achieving in school. Our children must overcome financial, medical, and emotional barriers before they can concentrate on school. Many have missed years of school. Child soldiers and AIDS orphans have seen parents and loved ones die. Our children suffer from malaria and other physical and psychological ailments.

We furnish them with everything they need to succeed: school fees, books and supplies, clothing, and food. We ensure they can go on class trips and take part in school activities. Our children receive medical care from the best doctors in the country. During school breaks, our students receive coaching in English, math, and science. They attend vacation workshops in leadership, web design, writing, video, and photography.

L.E.A.D Uganda is a family to our children. We give our youngsters a disciplined, loving family environment. Our professional staff and volunteers nurture them and help them overcome their traumas with counseling and emotional support. We build their confidence, as well as, their knowledge. We imbue the children with a strong work ethic.

#### Education / Academic

Most of our high school scholars attend the top ten schools in Uganda — schools where virtually every student goes on to university.

#### School Supplies, Food, Clothing

We provide clothing, shoes, books, school supplies, and a small amount of pocket money to our children. We do this because they must start on an even level if they are to outperform children who have all the advantages,.

#### Workshops & Tutoring

We run intensive workshops during school breaks. We bring in experts from American and Europe, as well as, hire Ugandan teachers and professionals.

#### Medical

Many of our children have malaria and suffer from malnutrition, drinking unsafe water, and general poor health. They miss weeks of school due to sickness. To enable our children to achieve the success they deserve, we provide them with the best medical care available. In addition to emergency care, our children receive annual medical and vision examinations. They are provided with mosquito nets.

#### Their Communities

We believe it is important for our students to remain part of their communities. Our students attend boarding schools. They live at school for eight months. They return to their guardian's homes and their villages during school breaks for the

first part of the vacation. A week or two before school starts, our children attend workshops at our compound in Kampala. (The kids call it, “our house”.)

### Family / Support & Counseling

Our staff of five professionals work with community volunteers who are trained peer counselors. They provide firm discipline and love.

Our young scholars care for each other. This intense family loyalty and feeling of ownership is what makes L.E.A.D Uganda unique. Our intensive, focused approach allows our students to achieve great things within a year or less.

### **ACHIEVE**

Our student-members attend the very best primary and secondary schools – where cabinet ministers send their children. Our scholars receive scholarships to top universities in Uganda, India, and the United States. Because of this, our children are transformed into leaders: teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs. Instead of remaining victims, they will be able to lead Africa into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In a few years L.E.A.D Uganda has transformed the lives of 90 youngsters:

- *Two 2009 high school graduates received full government scholarships to university to study pharmacy and business statistics.*
- One student received a scholarship to attend university in India to study information technology. Best in his class, he was given a scholarship to attend a leadership workshop taught by an American business consultant.
- *A student, who worked in a rock quarry, was accepted at the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg, one of Africa's top high schools. He is headed to university in the United States next September.*
- Three students were selected to be delegates at international conferences or to participate in international exchange programs.
- Half of the students received A averages or first grades on their national exams. Six compiled A-plus marks. Three ranked 1st in their classes. Three were second.

### **DREAM**

L.E.A.D Uganda gives our scholars the world-class social, entrepreneurial, and communication skills, as well as, the confidence, necessary to lead their countries into the future. Our distinctive, original vision is seeing that the solution to Africa’s problems exists in the hearts and minds of the current, generation of neglected and excluded children.

Our approach is holistic. LEAD Uganda melds our student-members into a family, a clan, a movement. We inculcate them with a sense of duty, a belief they can make things better, and the skills to make their dreams a reality. The students are a force for good. They burn with the desire to help other displaced Africans achieve their place in the sun.

Healing traumatized children and reintegrating them into their communities, makes the community stronger. Educating leaders expands human capital. Our students will become lawyers, judges, doctors, business owners, government administrators, journalists, artists, and aid givers.

Even though they are still attending or barely out of school, our students are already leaders and entrepreneurs in their communities:

- Sanyu used to beg people in her village for food when, at ten, she was head-of-household looking after two siblings. She is now a hero in her village. Parents and the elders of her village tell children to be like Sanyu. Sanyu was featured on CNN and by UNICEF. She plans to open a medical clinic in her village after she becomes a doctor.
- Alisen employed methods he learned in school to create the most productive farm in his region. He is investing the profits into other businesses.
- Richard makes videos for an NGO in Gulu and teaches video to war-affected children in IDP camps.
- Paddy, a graduate of Makerere University started a business designing original hand painted t-shirts. Two of his designs were licensed by TunicLove for use on their high-end tunics.
- Ntege was selected to be the student spokesperson at a L.E.A.D Uganda press conference organized by Senior Presidential Advisor John Nagenda. Ntege stayed up all night preparing and did a magnificent talking to the press.
- 11-year-old Rahim has been chosen to read the news on nationally televised children's news program

Nevertheless, our most significant gift is spiritual. We offer our traumatized children a family, a vision of a better world, and a desire to serve. We meld children from divergent tribes and religions into a robust family, seasoned with firm moral values.

## **Our Model Works**

We transform children's lives. We locate the best. We enroll and educate excluded youngsters - former child soldiers, AIDS orphans, children working in rock quarries, kids in refugee camps, young people in child-headed families, and street kids - in the top schools, help them climb to the top of their class, and propel them to university.

## **We Help Children Without Hope Become Leaders.**

**What is a leader?** 17-year-old Paul Ntege\* says it best:

“We L.E.A.D Uganda students believe that we will be the change we've always wanted to see – not only our lives but also in Uganda and in the world at large. We all have dreams, dreams of curing AIDS, dreams of being teachers, dreams of being entrepreneurs, dreams of helping fellow kids, dreams of achieving in our lives, improving our country, changing Africa.

But without education we will never realize these dreams. It is through the generosity, compassion and commitment of people like you that I and my fellow L.E.A.D Uganda scholars have been able to attend school, transform our lives, and help others. We thank you.”

## **Please Help**

Please support us so our talented children can realize their goals.

The success of our young scholars shows the leaders Africa desperately needs can be found among the groups most affected by crisis. Our young people burn with a desire to help others achieve their full human rights and potentials. If these talented young people are nurtured, if they are given world-class skills, they will lead their compatriots, their tribes, their countries, and the continent to a brighter future.

We ask your help so our children continue their journey to the promised land. Support us so our approach can serve as a beacon to our disoriented and drifting ship of state as it seeks to find a safe harbor in these dangerous and turbulent times.

Our model is replicable. While the education of young leaders and innovators will not solve all of Africa's woes, it is a crucial component of the solution and a proven remedy for poverty.