

# Annual Report 2024

Building Impact, Embracing Transition

FOR THE PERIOD OF:  
NOVEMBER 2023  
TO  
DECEMBER 2024

PRESENTED TO:

Our Partners,  
Supporters, Friends, and  
the Entire WSI  
Community

PRESENTED BY THE  
FOUNDER:

Esther Mercy Atim

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# Message From The Founder

It is with deep gratitude and reflection that I present to you the first annual report of WSI Uganda.

When WSI Uganda was founded in November 2023, it was not the result of a spontaneous idea or a neatly packaged plan. It was the outcome of years of lived experiences, both personal and communal, and a growing urgency to respond differently to the persistent gaps I witnessed in the lives of women and girls.



What began as questions and journal entries eventually became conviction, and that conviction gave birth to WSI Uganda. Our guiding belief was, and remains: no woman should have to walk alone.

Too often, the challenges faced by women and girls are compounded by isolation, by a lack of access to information, to opportunities, and to safe, supportive spaces. WSI Uganda set out to respond to this, not by reinventing the wheel, but by anchoring our work in presence, proximity, and purpose.

We did not start with a blueprint. We started with vision. With the image of girls missing school due to menstruation. Of women being excluded from decision-making spaces. Of potential stifled not for lack of ability, but for lack of opportunity.

And so, we moved; deliberately and incrementally. One school. One mentorship session. One reusable pad. One conversation. From that foundation, a movement began to grow. One voice became many. One effort multiplied into a platform. Our work may still be in its early stages, but what has been most affirming is witnessing how purpose, when paired with persistence, can take root and begin to shape something far greater than imagined.

This report is not merely a summary of activities. It is a reflection of our beginnings; of the values that ground us and the kind of impact we are committed to making.

We are not driven by numbers alone. We are driven by the stories, the relationships, and the change that happens when development is done with intention, not obligation.

As you read through these pages, I hope you see the heart behind our work. I hope you see not just impact, but commitment. Not just projects, but purpose. And most of all, I hope you see possibility; the same possibility that sparked the beginning of WSI Uganda.

As we reflect on our first year, we recognize that impact is not static, it grows, shifts, and transitions. This season marks a turning point for us; not of departure, but of deepening.

We are embracing transition as a necessary part of growth, allowing it to sharpen our focus, expand our reach, and clarify our path forward. The journey ahead will require continued courage, adaptability, and faith; but we remain rooted in the same vision that started it all: communities and lives marked by dignity, agency, and opportunity.

Thank you for believing in this journey with us. Your support has not only fueled our beginnings but is now actively shaping what comes next. As we build forward into this new chapter, we invite you to keep walking with us; to co-create, to amplify, and to continue reimagining what is possible when communities lead the way.

Thank you for believing in this journey with us.

**With Gratitude,**  
**Esther Mercy Atim**  
**Founder – WSI Uganda**

# Reflections on 2024: A Year of Impact and Transition

The year 2024 marked a significant chapter in WSI Uganda's journey of growth and transformation.

We advanced our transition toward becoming a fully-fledged community foundation, shaped and supported by our engagement in the Community Foundations Incubator Program.



Key strategic initiatives including the launch of Woni Reusable Pads, The Legacy Shop, and the launch of The WSI Mentorship Program; solidifying our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and empowerment.

Throughout the year, we amplified our visibility and influence in both national and regional spaces, particularly around philanthropy, gender justice, and youth empowerment. It was a year of intentional building, bold experimentation, and steady alignment with our long-term vision for transformative, community-led development.



# ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

## ABOUT US

The Women Solidarity Initiative (WSI Uganda) is a social enterprise of Ethur Community Foundation; a community-led philanthropy and grant-making organization dedicated to empowering formal and informal grassroots groups in Abim district to implement sustainable solutions to pressing local challenges.

WSI Uganda is dedicated to empowering the next generation of women leaders in Uganda's careers space and championing women's employment rights while driving financial sustainability and resilience for the organization as a whole.

WSI Uganda operates through a dual business model that combines structured mentorship and leadership development programs with income-generating product lines and consultancy services.





# OUR MISSION AND VISION

## OUR VISION

A future where young women in Uganda are confident, influential leaders driving positive change in the professional space and beyond



## OUR MISSION

To empower and equip young women in Uganda with the leadership skills, mentorship, and resources needed to excel in their academic pursuits and professional careers.



# OUR PROGRAMS

## Economic Empowerment: Building Sustainable Livelihoods

At the heart of our mission is the belief that when women are economically empowered, entire communities thrive.

In 2024, through our Economic Empowerment Program, we launched the **Start Her Up Project**, a bold step towards equipping women with the tools, knowledge, and platforms to build sustainable sources of income.



The program not only provided practical skills but also laid the foundation for financial independence, confidence, and long-term economic participation. It marked a strong beginning for our work in economic empowerment rooted in dignity, agency, and opportunity.

# Impact Report: Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is not a privilege; it is a right, a necessity, and a tool for restoring dignity. For many women in Uganda, especially those at the grassroots, entrepreneurship is not just a dream, it is survival. Yet despite their courage and creativity, systemic barriers such as lack of legal recognition, access to skilling, or start-up capital keep many women in cycles of economic vulnerability and dependence.

At WSI Uganda, we believe that women must not only be encouraged to dream, but also supported to build. In 2024, we launched the **Start Her Up Project**; a flagship initiative within this program focusing on three key pillars: **skills training, business formalization, and market access.**

We equipped women with **tailoring skills, created awareness on the legalization of small businesses, and supported the formal registration of a women-led enterprise.** To bridge the gap between training and economic return, we also established an Instagram shop to market and sell the products created by the participants.

## Advocacy: Beyond the Individual to the Collective

Our Economic Empowerment Program was also grounded in advocacy. Through online storytelling campaigns, we educated the public on how:

- Women's financial independence is directly linked to reduced vulnerability to violence
- Informal labor, often undervalued, forms the backbone of Uganda's economy
- Communities benefit when women are equipped, not just applauded



# Impact Report: Economic Empowerment

## The Legacy Shop

As part of our commitment to economic empowerment and sustainability, we launched **The Legacy Shop**, an online marketplace designed to promote and sell artisanal products created by beneficiaries of our Economic Empowerment Project Hosted on Instagram, the shop connected skilled grassroots women entrepreneurs under our program with ethically-minded consumers who value community-driven development.

THE LEGACY SHOP



BY ETHUR COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION





# Meet Our Beneficiaries of the Start Her Up Project: Stories That Inspire



**Dinah** became the first beneficiary of our Economic Empowerment Program when she enrolled in a tailoring course in December 2023.

We fully sponsored her 10-month training and provided consistent support throughout her skilling journey.



Upon successful completion, Dinah received a brand-new sewing machine and startup capital to launch her own tailoring business.

Her radiant smile as she received her equipment captured the essence of what we strive to do; restore hope, unlock potential, and create pathways to sustainable livelihoods.



# Meet Our Beneficiaries of the Start Her Up Project: Stories That Inspire



In June 2024, **Zuena** and **Tina** joined the Economic Empowerment Program and began a six-month tailoring apprenticeship under the guidance of fellow program beneficiary and fashion entrepreneur, **Flavia**.

Their journey reflects a powerful model of peer-to-peer mentorship and economic sisterhood, where empowered women become enablers of others. This approach not only strengthens skills transfer but also builds a sustainable ecosystem of support, collaboration, and shared growth within the community.







## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**4**

Total Direct  
Beneficiaries Reached:

**UGX 320,000**

Made in sale of Beneficiary  
Products through online platform

**UGX 2,560,000**

Total Funds Raised for and Invested in  
the Project Activities

**1**

Tailoring Start Up Kit  
Provided

**1**

Small Women-led  
Businesses Registered



# OUR PROGRAMS

## Education Program: Championing Her Dreams

At WSI Uganda, we believe that every girl deserves the right to dream, learn, and lead. Yet, for many girls in Uganda, education remains an uncertain journey; disrupted by poverty, gender-based barriers, and inadequate menstrual health support.

Through our Champion Her Dreams project, we launched our Education Program with a bold and compassionate commitment: to not only keep girls in school but to ensure they thrive.



Recognizing that period poverty continues to hinder school attendance, we also designed and produced reusable sanitary pads, ensuring that menstrual health is not a monthly obstacle to education.

This initiative marked the beginning of our long-term vision to create education pathways grounded in dignity, access, and opportunity for every girl.

# Impact Report: Education

Education remains one of the most transformative tools for breaking cycles of poverty and inequality. However, across Uganda, many girls continue to drop out of school, not due to a lack of potential, but because of entrenched socioeconomic barriers, stigma, and limited access to support systems. In alignment with our mission, WSI Uganda launched the **Champion Her Dreams** initiative under our Education Program.

This initiative is designed to support girls at risk of school dropout by providing holistic, long-term educational support that includes not only tuition, but also psychosocial and mentorship interventions to support their academic and personal development

## The Story of Doreen: A Journey Rewritten

In early 2024, WSI Uganda awarded its first full secondary school scholarship to **Doreen**, a bright and determined young girl whose education was at risk due to financial hardship. Through this initiative, she was enrolled in Sir Apollo Kaggwa Secondary School in Mukono, and received comprehensive support including:

- Full tuition and registration fees
- Scholastic materials and school supplies
- Continuous mentorship and psychosocial support
- Monitoring and follow-up to ensure retention, performance, and wellbeing



# Meet Our Beneficiary of the Champion Her Dreams Project: Stories That Inspire



**Doreen's** growth extended beyond academic achievement into personal development and leadership.

She became an active member of the Girls' Football Team at her school, where she demonstrated discipline, teamwork, and resilience. Her outstanding performance during an internal school tournament earned her a recognition award, highlighting her commitment and emerging leadership potential.



Subsequently, Doreen represented her school at the Brave Girls Football Tournament hosted by the International University of East Africa; an initiative designed to merge sports with empowerment and self-confidence for adolescent girls. Her participation in this tournament reflects the broader impact of the Champion Her Dreams initiative: nurturing well-rounded individuals equipped to excel both in and outside the classroom.



# Meet Our Beneficiary of the Champion Her Dreams Project: Stories That Inspire



In addition to her extracurricular achievements, Doreen exhibited strong academic performance throughout the academic year, consistently ranking among the top students in her class each term.

Her commitment to excellence and her positive attitude toward learning positioned her as a role model among her peers.



Doreen's leadership potential was further recognized when she was elected to serve on the Executive Committee of her school's Scripture Union. This role not only reflects her growing confidence and influence but also aligns with WSI Uganda's goal of nurturing holistic growth; academically, spiritually, and socially.



# Impact Report: Education

## Peer Mentorship: Girls Supporting Girls

As part of our holistic approach to education, WSI Uganda introduced a peer mentorship model designed to foster support, guidance, and leadership for our beneficiaries.

Recognizing that academic success is closely linked to emotional and social well-being, Doreen was paired with Lillian, a Senior Three student, who served as her peer mentor.



Through this mentorship, Doreen received practical guidance on navigating school life, mastering study techniques, and cultivating personal growth.

This structured, co-curricular support not only eased her transition into secondary school but also reinforced WSI Uganda's commitment to nurturing the whole girl, beyond academics, toward confidence, resilience, and leadership.

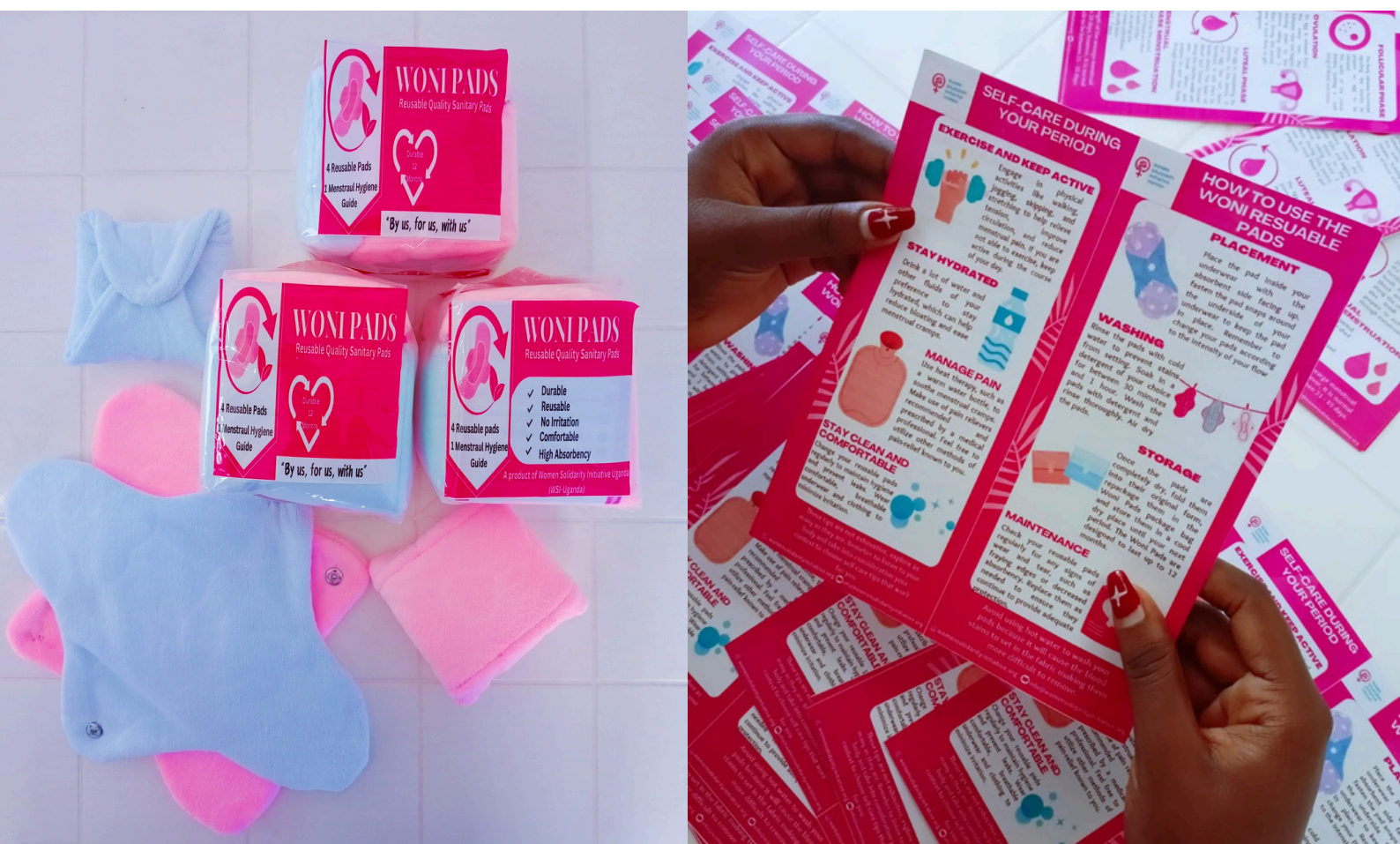


# Impact Report: Education/Woni Reusable Pads

## WONI Reusable Pads: Bridging the Period Inequality Gap

Under the Education Project at Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda, the **Woni Reusable Pads** initiative was implemented as a strategic intervention to address period poverty; an often overlooked barrier to gender equality, education, and economic participation for women and girls.

The initiative aimed to ensure that every girl and woman, regardless of socio-economic background, had access to safe, sustainable, and dignified menstrual hygiene solutions.



The Woni Reusable Pads initiative reflected our broader commitment to advancing inclusive education and gender equity by providing cost-effective, eco-friendly menstrual products. Beyond distribution, the initiative integrated menstrual health education and skills development, promoting self-reliance, sustainability, and informed menstrual care management.



# Impact Report: Education/Woni Reusable Pads

Central to this initiative was a strong emphasis on skills development and economic empowerment for young women. WSI Uganda partnered with skilled a artisan; **Gloria**; a talented local craftswoman who played a pivotal role in the production of the reusable sanitary pads.

This collaboration not only ensured high-quality, sustainable menstrual products for schoolgirls but also created meaningful income-generating opportunities her.



Through such partnerships, the initiative reinforced the dual impact of meeting girls' practical needs while advancing women's economic inclusion.



# Impact Report: Education/Woni Reusable Pads







## EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPACT SNAPSHOT

1

Total Direct Beneficiary  
sponsored for a year

UGX 2,860,000

Total Funds Raised for and Invested in the  
Project Activities

1

Beneficiary Supported  
with Scholastic Material  
for a Full Year of Study

1

Beneficiary Supported  
with Psychosocial  
Support



# OUR PROGRAMS

## Leadership Development: Launch Her Legacy

At WSI Uganda, we recognize that empowering young women to lead is fundamental to driving lasting community transformation. This program was dedicated to cultivating courageous, purpose-driven young women leaders.

Grounded in the conviction that leadership is developed through intentional mentorship and skills-building, the program equips participants with the confidence, strategic mindset, and resilience necessary to excel in diverse leadership roles.



Through the program, WSI Uganda is building a generation of confident, visionary leaders poised to champion social change and advance gender equity across Uganda and beyond.



# Impact Report: Leadership Development

## Strategic Tools for Impact: The Fearless Futures Workbook

As part of our commitment to cultivating bold, visionary leadership among young women, WSI Uganda developed the **Fearless Futures Strategic Planning Workbook**. This tool is designed to guide emerging leaders through the process of intentional goal setting, personal and professional visioning, and building strategic action plans.

In 2024, we produced the first draft of the workbook, which was shared with a select group of peer reviewers. Their feedback was instrumental in refining the content to ensure it is practical, context-specific, and grounded in lived experience.



The **Fearless Futures Workbook** forms a critical component of our Leadership Development Program, equipping girls and young women not just to dream, but to lead with clarity, confidence, and courage.

Final publication is scheduled for 2025, with plans to integrate the workbook into our broader mentoring and capacity-building efforts across schools and communities.



# Impact Report: Leadership Development

In 2024, we birthed the **WSI Mentorship Program** under the belief that no woman has to walk alone in her professional journey. This was a four-month journey designed to deliver not just inspiration, but tangible results in the lives of young women ready to lead and thrive in the career space.



## Starting with Vision: Why We Built This Program

In Uganda, countless brilliant young women graduate from university or step into the workplace unsure of their next step. They wrestle with self-doubt, lack of direction, and limited professional networks.

We saw a gap; not just for knowledge, but for intentional relationships that nurture leadership potential. In response, we launched an open call for mentees and mentors. Over 70 young women and professionals applied, affirming that the desire for mentorship, guidance, and community was not only present but also urgent.



# Program Design: 6 Sessions, Countless Shifts

Running from June to September 2024, the WSI Mentorship Program produced measurable growth.

Each of the six sessions helped participants gain clarity on their goals and build meaningful connections that continue to support them long after the program ends.



Each session was strategically structured to address key areas essential to holistic empowerment, including personal strategic planning and goal setting, financial literacy, professional development, leadership and resilience, and leveraging networks for growth. The program emphasized active engagement; participants were not passive recipients of knowledge but were encouraged to reflect on their experiences, share insights, and contribute meaningfully to discussions. This participatory approach fostered a collaborative learning environment, enabling mentees to internalize concepts, build practical skills, and translate knowledge into action.



# Program Design: 6 Sessions, Countless Shifts

## Session 1: Self-Leadership & Personal Branding: "The Ultimate Professional Glow Up"

Facilitated by **Alesi Majorine**, this session emphasized the foundational principle that effective leadership begins with self-awareness. Participants explored how to lead and present themselves with authenticity, intention, and integrity; recognizing that a personal brand extends beyond online presence to how one lives and shows up consistently.

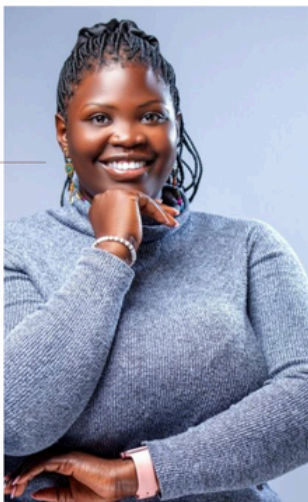
## Session 2: Emotional Intelligence & the Art of Communication: "Speak Smart, Lead with Heart"

Led by **Patience Poni Ayikoru** and moderated by mentor **Georgina Asizu**, this session highlighted the value of emotional intelligence in leadership. Participants engaged in practical discussions on managing emotions, building empathy, and communicating with confidence; skills essential for navigating both professional and personal spheres.



### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1

### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1



#### Session 1: Self-Leadership and Personal Branding

GUEST SPEAKER

#### ALESI MAJORINE

Executive Director - Zoota Initiative for Development

**DATE:** Saturday 29th June 2024

**TIME:** 9:00am - 11:30am

**VENUE:** Online - Zoom



#### Session 2: Emotional Intelligence and the Art of Communication

GUEST SPEAKER

#### AYIKORU PATIENCE PONI

EU Youth Sounding Board  
Member Uganda | Austrian Embassy  
Development Cooperation

**DATE:** Saturday 6th July 2024

**TIME:** 8:00am - 10:30am

**VENUE:** Online - Zoom

# Program Design: 6 Sessions, Countless Shifts

## Session 3: Personal Strategic Planning: "Chart Your Path, Achieve Your Goals"

Author and leadership coach **Sylvia Bonaabaana** guided mentees through a transformative journey of goal setting, mindset realignment, and life planning, drawing from her book *The Power of Intentionality*. A symbolic book exchange was also held, where each mentee gifted and received a book, reinforcing the value of shared knowledge and collective growth.

## Session 4: Professional Development & Leveraging Networks: "Grow. Connect. Succeed."

In this session, **Pimer Peace** equipped mentees with tools for building strong professional identities, expanding networks, and leveraging opportunities with excellence. The session emphasized the importance of authenticity and strategic positioning in career growth.



### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1

#### Session 3: Personal Strategic Planning

GUEST SPEAKER

**SYLVIA BOONABAANA**

Author | Mentor - Girls for Girls  
Uganda - STEM Chapter

**DATE:** Saturday 20th July 2024

**TIME:** 8:00am - 12:00pm

**VENUE:** Eureka Place Hotel



[womensolidarityinitiative.org](https://womensolidarityinitiative.org)

[womensolidug](https://www.instagram.com/womensolidug)



### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1

#### Session 4: Professional Development and Leveraging Networking

GUEST SPEAKER

**PIMER PEACE MONICA**

Founder and Executive  
Director- Nile Girls Forum

**DATE:** Saturday 27th July 2024

**TIME:** 9:00am - 11:30am

**VENUE:** Online - Zoom



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[womensolidug](https://www.instagram.com/womensolidug)



# Program Design: 6 Sessions, Countless Shifts

## Session 5: Financial Literacy & Independence: "Master Your Money, Master Your Life"

Delivered by **Ann Nakidde**, this session provided practical guidance on personal finance management. Mentees explored budgeting, saving, investing, and long-term financial planning as critical pillars of economic empowerment and independence.

## Session 6: Leadership & Resilience: "Step Up, Stand Out"

Concluding the mentorship series, this session, facilitated by **Regina Namugerwa** focused on cultivating resilience, vision, and public leadership. It challenged mentees to lead with purpose and impact, regardless of formal titles, and to embody the values of courage and service in their leadership journeys.



### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1



#### Session 5: Financial Literacy and Independence

GUEST SPEAKER

**ANN NAKIDDE**

Finance Professional- CPA

**DATE:** Saturday 3rd Aug 2024

**TIME:** 9:00am - 11:30am

**VENUE:** Online - Zoom

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### Women Solidarity Mentorship Program Cohort 1



#### Session 6: Leadership and Resilience

GUEST SPEAKER

**NAMUGERWA REGINA**

Lawyer | Climate Justice Advocate | Rotaractor

**DATE:** Saturday 10th Aug 2024

**TIME:** 9:00am - 11:30am

**VENUE:** Online - Zoom

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# Graduation: Celebrating Excellence and Marking New Beginnings

The Women Solidarity Initiative Mentorship Program concluded with a formal graduation ceremony in **September 2024**. This event served not only as a celebration of the mentees' transformative journey but also as a milestone for the growth and expansion of the mentorship community.





# Highlights from the Graduation Ceremony

**Mentee of the Cohort:** Ms. Olga Naomi Tumugonze was recognized as the Outstanding Mentee of the Cohort, in acknowledgment of her exemplary personal and professional development, leadership, and consistent engagement throughout the program.





# Highlights from the Graduation Ceremony

**Mentor of the Cohort: Ms. Achola Elizabeth Brenda** was honored as the Mentor of the Cohort, commended for her consistent commitment, mentorship excellence, and impactful contribution to the growth of the mentees.





# Highlights from the Graduation Ceremony

**Most Proactive Mentee: Ms. Nanvubya Benah** received the award for Most Proactive Mentee, recognized for her initiative, active participation, and dedication to maximizing every learning opportunity provided by the program.





# Highlights from the Graduation Ceremony

**Perfect Attendance Recognition:** Both **Ms. Olga Naomi Tumugonze** and **Ms. Wirica Fiona Patricia** were acknowledged for their unwavering commitment, having attended and fully participated in all six thematic sessions of the program.





# Highlights from the Graduation Ceremony

- **Leadership Transition:** In a significant milestone for the program, four mentees were officially transitioned into mentorship roles, a reflection of their growth and readiness to contribute to the development of others.



- **Launch of the Alumni Network:** The event also marked the formal launch of the **WSI Mentorship Program Alumni Community**, a platform established to sustain ongoing engagement, peer learning, and leadership development beyond the program's lifecycle.







## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**90%**

of mentees had developed clear, actionable personal and professional goals as a result of our session on personal strategic planning.

**60%**

60% of mentees expanded their networks, either through mentorship relationships, peer collaborations, or new professional connections sparked during the program.

**UGX 3,761,000**

Total Funds Raised for and Invested in the  
Project Activities

**70%**

More than 70% reported a measurable increase in confidence, particularly in communicating their ideas and taking initiative in leadership or professional spaces.

**63%**

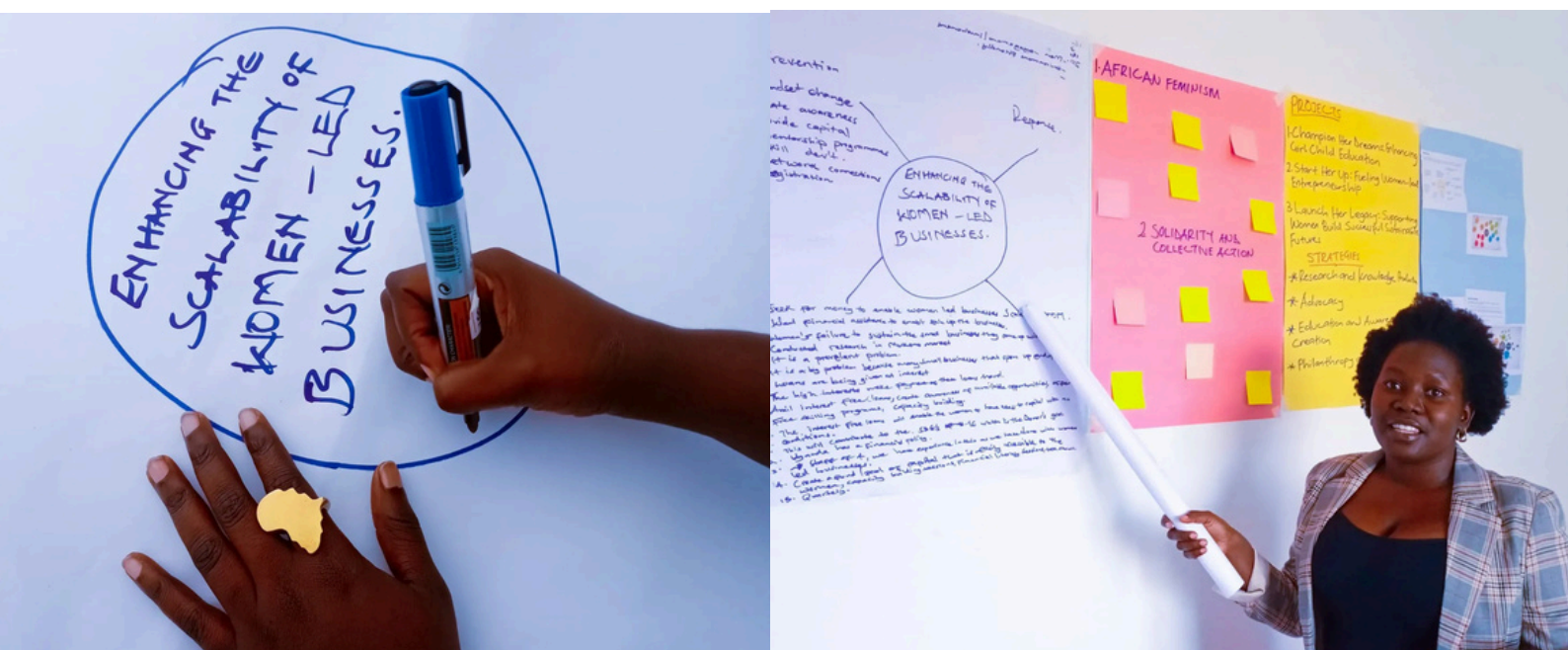
Our financial literacy and professional development sessions enabled 65% of participants to begin budgeting, saving, or pursuing income-generating activities.



# Impact Report: Institutional Development

## Strengthening from Within: Building the Capacity to Sustain Impact

At WSI Uganda, we recognize that meaningful and sustainable community transformation begins with a strong internal foundation. Institutional growth and development remain central to our mission. We understand that we cannot extend lasting impact externally without first investing in and empowering our own systems, structures, and people. By continually strengthening our institutional capacity, we ensure that our programs remain effective, our vision remains focused, and our ability to serve communities grows steadily and sustainably.



In 2024, WSI Uganda conducted its first internal capacity building workshop focused on proposal writing, under the theme **“From Concept to Contract: Strategies for Crafting a Persuasive Proposal.”** The workshop aimed to strengthen the team’s ability to develop high-quality, funder-aligned proposals that effectively communicate the organization’s mission and programs. As a result, staff enhanced their skills in translating ideas into structured, compelling proposals, deepened their understanding of donor expectations, and improved their capacity to align program goals with funding opportunities. The session fostered a shared language around fundraising, encouraged collaboration, and marked a significant step in strengthening WSI Uganda’s internal systems to support sustainable growth and resource mobilization.



# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

## Voices Rising: Advocacy, Awareness, and Action for Women's Rights

At Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda, our campaigns have been the lifeblood of our advocacy; a powerful medium through which we inform and inspire people to stand up for women's rights and gender justice.



What role do grassroots women's organizations play in driving social change, and how can we better support their efforts?




#WomensRightsWednesdays

SWIPE TO READ

In our inaugural year, we committed to building narratives that are not only educational but deeply human, highlighting lived experiences while calling for societal change.

Our campaigns have woven together history, knowledge, personal stories, and urgent calls for justice; all in the spirit of collective action and empowerment.



## TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW


# GENDER

**Gender is relational** and is not simply about men or women but about the **relationship between them**

Refers to **Socially constructed** roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, **relative power**, and **influence** that **society ascribes** to the two sexes on a differential basis.

#womensrightswednesdays

✉ info@womensolidarityinitiative.org 🌐 womensolidarityinitiative.org



## A Snapshot Of The History of Women's Rights

**ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS:** In ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece, women had limited rights and were often considered property of their husbands or fathers. However, there were exceptions where women held positions of power and influence.

**MEDIEVAL PERIOD:** Women's rights were further restricted during the medieval period in Europe, with women being largely confined to domestic roles and lacking legal rights such as the ability to own property or participate in governance.

#womensrightswednesdays



## A POSITIVE MENSTRUAL EXPERIENCE IS POSSIBLE FOR ALL

Share your period positivity moment with us





# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

## **Women's Rights Wednesdays: Turning Awareness into Action**

In 2024, WSI Uganda transformed its digital platforms into powerful learning spaces through the **#WomensRightsWednesdays series**; a weekly initiative aimed at building knowledge, sparking reflection, and mobilizing action on women's rights. Designed to empower women and allies with accessible and engaging content, the series became a consistent source of insight for our growing online community.

### **Key thematic areas explored included:**

- **Historical Context of Women's Rights:** By tracing the evolution of women's rights from early struggles to contemporary movements, we honored the trailblazers who paved the way and inspired our followers to see themselves as part of an ongoing legacy of change.
- **Understanding Advocacy Language:** We broke down complex gender justice concepts; such as body autonomy, period inequality, and unpaid care work into relatable, easy-to-understand terms. This allowed our audience to participate more confidently and effectively in advocacy conversations.
- **Challenging Social Taboos:** During Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we unpacked victim blaming and highlighted the importance of shifting harmful narratives. We encouraged our community to become active voices in disrupting the silence surrounding gender-based violence.
- **Menstrual Health and Period Equity:** Through informative posts and stories, we addressed menstrual hygiene as a human rights issue, demystifying menstruation and advocating for equal access to products, information, and dignity.



# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

- **Body Autonomy and Economic Justice:** We emphasized the critical right to agency over one's body and life decisions, while also exploring the economic impacts of unpaid care work and the need for systemic recognition and redistribution.
- **Celebrating Grassroots Leadership:** By amplifying the work of community-based women leaders, we demonstrated the power and importance of local advocacy efforts and offered practical ways for others to support and amplify them.
- **Reflections from Within:** A unique feature of the series was the inclusion of personal reflections from WSI Uganda's mentors, mentees, and team members. These stories grounded the work in lived experience, giving voice to the diverse and powerful ways individuals define empowerment through voice, agency, choice, knowledge, and confidence.

**Women's Economic Independence**  
#WomensRightsWednesdays

**Building a Supportive Community of Women**  
#WomensRightsWednesdays

**BODY AUTONOMY IS A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE**  
my body  
MY CHOICE

**A POSTIVE MENSTRUATION EXPERIENCE IS POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE**  
There are an array of menstrual products you can use based on your preferences. If you can, explore available products to find what makes you feel most comfortable, confident, and empowered during your period. The goal is for you to have a positive experience during your periods.

**Menstrual Hygiene is a Human Right....and a Feminist Issue**  
Here's Why:

Reproductive Justice	Gender Inequality	Economic Empowerment
Menstrual hygiene is a matter of reproductive justice, encompassing the right to manage one's reproductive health safely and	The stigma and shame surrounding menstruation perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and contribute to the marginalization of menstruating	Lack of access to menstrual products and facilities disproportionately affects marginalized communities, including low-income individuals and those living in poverty hence hindering economic



# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

## **My Period Positivity Moment Campaign: Breaking Silence, Building Pride**

In recognition of Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Month, WSI Uganda launched the **My Period Positivity Moment campaign**; a strategic initiative aimed at dismantling menstrual stigma, promoting body literacy, and advancing menstrual equity. Through storytelling and community engagement, the campaign provided a safe, empowering platform for individuals to share lived experiences that challenge shame and normalize menstruation.

**The campaign featured diverse narratives that highlighted practical solutions, cultural reflection, and empowerment through education:**

- **Lydia's** Testimony illustrated the affordability and dignity offered by reusable sanitary pads, reinforcing WSI's Woni Pads program as a sustainable intervention in the fight against period poverty.
- **Aggie's Cultural** Lens offered a reframing of tradition, demonstrating how positive cultural practices can be tools for dismantling stigma and restoring menstrual dignity.
- **Q-Media Advocacy's** Contribution included practical self-care advice, made accessible through our Menstrual Hygiene Guide; a freely distributed resource both online and at our office.
- **Faith's** Perspective emphasized the link between cycle tracking and bodily autonomy, advancing the conversation around menstrual health as integral to women's rights.



# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

The campaign not only raised awareness but actively contributed to fostering a cultural shift toward menstrual dignity and acceptance.

By sharing authentic stories and practical resources, it empowered participants and the wider community with essential knowledge, encouraging informed conversations around menstruation.

This openness promoted self-advocacy, reduced stigma, and strengthened solidarity among women and allies alike. Ultimately, the campaign reinforced WSI's ongoing commitment to advancing gender equality by ensuring menstrual health is recognized as a fundamental human right, supported through accessible, affirming, and culturally sensitive health narratives.



# Impact Report: Online Campaigns

## 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2023: Healing, Solidarity, and Action

In alignment with the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, WSI Uganda actively contributed to advancing prevention and holistic healing for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) in 2023. Recognizing that access to therapeutic support is often hindered by cost, we partnered with **Harmony Counselling and Consultancy Services (HARCOS)** to provide free counseling sessions, addressing a critical gap in survivor care.

### Key initiatives included:

- Providing **four survivors with two free therapy sessions each**, offering vital emotional and psychological support during their healing journeys.
- Implementing a transparent and accessible registration process to ensure equitable access for those most in need.
- Developing and disseminating educational content centered on the campaign theme, "Unite! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls," emphasizing the shared responsibility of governments, communities, and individuals in mobilizing resources and taking strategic action.
- Commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women with awareness posts highlighting the pervasive nature of GBV and its profound social and economic consequences.
- **Launching the #NewProfilePic** campaign as a visual demonstration of solidarity with survivors and a public call for accountability and zero tolerance toward violence.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

## Leveraging Strategic Platforms to Amplify Voices and Influence Change:

Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda understands the power of strategic engagement in regional and continental spaces to drive systemic transformation. In 2023 and 2024, WSI actively participated in key convenings that served as critical platforms for advocacy, learning, collaboration, and visibility.

Through these engagements, we have amplified the voices of Ugandan women and grassroots communities, contributed to shaping gender-responsive policy dialogues, and strengthened partnerships that are vital for promoting sustainable development, gender equality, and youth empowerment across Africa.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

## YouLead Summit 2023 – Nairobi, Kenya

Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda was actively represented at the 2023 YouLead Summit, joining hundreds of young leaders across East Africa in shaping the regional development agenda. The summit provided a strategic platform for engaging youth in high-level policy discourse and decision-making processes.

- **Strengthening Global Alignment:** WSI reaffirmed its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda by endorsing the SDGs Commitment Board, reinforcing our role in global development conversations and accountability frameworks.
- **Mainstreaming Gender Equality:** As co-lead of Uganda's post-summit agenda within the Gender Equality thematic group, WSI Uganda played a pivotal role in embedding gender perspectives across all key thematic areas; Politics, Business, and Climate Action, ensuring that gender equality is treated not as a standalone issue but as an essential cross-cutting priority.
- **Promoting Localized Solutions:** During a national post-summit debrief hosted by the Julius Nyerere Leadership Center and Uganda's National Youth Council, WSI advocated for the integration of indigenous knowledge and community-based approaches into regional strategies, highlighting the need for context-responsive and sustainable solutions.
- **Driving Strategic Implementation:** By leading key sessions within the Gender Equality Working Group, WSI contributed to the development of actionable strategies and implementation plans for gender interventions that align with the broader outcomes of the summit and set the stage for sustained engagement ahead of the next convening.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

The YouLead Summit positioned WSI as a key actor in regional youth and gender advocacy spaces, strengthening our visibility, credibility, and strategic influence. It also deepened our collaborative partnerships with like-minded organizations, laying the groundwork for sustained, cross-border action toward transformative and inclusive development.





# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

**4th Pan African Youth Conference & African Youth Commission General Assembly – Nairobi, Kenya:** Women Solidarity Initiative was honored to be represented at the 4th Pan African Youth Conference and African Youth Commission General Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya. This high-level convening brought together young leaders from across the continent to advance a shared agenda on youth-led socio-economic transformation and continental integration.

- **Gender Mainstreaming:** WSI actively advocated for the integration of gender perspectives across all youth-related policies and development frameworks. We emphasized the importance of placing African women and girls at the center of continental youth initiatives, moving beyond tokenism to ensure meaningful inclusion.
- **Addressing the Digital Divide:** Our contribution included policy-oriented insights on closing the urban-rural digital divide, with a strong call for accessible and community-driven technological solutions that empower underserved populations.
- **Inclusive Political Participation:** WSI championed the normalization of women's participation in political processes beyond quota systems. We underscored the need for equitable political competition, where women and men engage on equal footing across all levels of governance.
- **Leadership Through a Gender Lens:** WSI emphasized the imperative of electing women leaders who are genuinely committed to advancing gender equality. We called upon feminist activists and youth leaders to step into transformative leadership roles that challenge systemic inequalities.
- **Comprehensive Policy Engagement:** WSI actively engaged in a range of thematic dialogues, including peace and security, equitable access to education, and the evolving landscape of work; particularly the opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence for African youth.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

Through the 4<sup>th</sup> Pan African Youth Conference and the African Youth Commission General Assembly, Women Solidarity Initiative further solidified its position as a strategic and influential actor within continental youth and gender policy spaces.





# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

## **Beijing +30 East Africa Consultations — Nairobi, Kenya**

As part of the preparatory process for the 69th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) in 2025, Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda (WSI) took part in the Beijing +30 East Africa Consultations convened by FEMNET, Akina Mama wa Afrika, and the Zamara Foundation.

- WSI highlighted the imperative for strengthened accountability mechanisms that hold governments and institutions to their gender equality commitments, while also centering sustained feminist organizing and movement-building as catalysts for meaningful change.
- We underscored the importance of adopting intersectional and localized approaches that reflect the lived realities of East African women and girls; particularly those from rural, marginalized, and underserved communities.
- This engagement not only provided WSI with valuable insights to inform our strategic direction, but also reinforced our commitment to advancing transformative, inclusive, and context-responsive gender justice initiatives aligned with continental priorities and global feminist movements.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

Women Solidarity Initiative's participation in the Beijing+30 East Africa Consultations reaffirmed its position as a committed and credible advocate for gender equality in the region.





# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

**African Philanthropy Network (APN) Assembly 2024 – Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe:** At the 2024 APN Assembly, themed “Collective Freedom from Collective Struggle,” Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda engaged in forward-looking discussions on the evolving role of philanthropy in advancing sustainable development across Africa.

- **Power Dynamics and Community Agency:** WSI contributed to critical conversations aimed at dismantling entrenched power imbalances to promote genuine community participation and self-determination in development processes.
- **Community-Led Development:** We emphasized the necessity of adopting multi-issue, intersectional approaches that address the complex and interconnected challenges facing African communities, rather than isolated single-issue interventions.
- **Feminist Philanthropy:** WSI actively participated in sessions exploring the impact of Southern feminist funds in promoting women’s rights and social justice, with a focus on lessons from West and Central Africa.
- **Fiscal Hosting Innovation:** We celebrated the launch of the Sub-Saharan Africa Online Fiscal Hosting Directory by CivSource Africa; a vital tool designed to enhance the operational capacity and sustainability of African philanthropic organizations.
- **Movement Building:** WSI contributed to strategic dialogues on cultivating resilient and sustainable social justice movements deeply rooted in African cultural contexts and values.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

Through our participation in the APN Assembly 2024, WSI reaffirmed its commitment to advancing innovative, inclusive, and culturally grounded philanthropy as a key driver of equitable and transformative development across the continent.





# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

## **Community Foundations Learning Forum — Nairobi, Kenya**

WSI Uganda participated in the Community Foundations Learning Forum convened by the East Africa Philanthropy Network and regional partners, joining a cohort of community foundation leaders from across East Africa.

- This learning engagement provided WSI with valuable insights into the foundational principles, operational models, and strategic potential of community foundations in driving localized, sustainable development. Through sessions focused on institutional capacity building, grassroots empowerment, and alignment with global development goals, WSI deepened its understanding of how community foundations can effectively respond to complex social challenges.
- The forum further equipped WSI with knowledge and tools to explore community philanthropy as a viable and impactful mechanism for nurturing resilient, self-determined communities. This experience marked an important step in WSI's journey towards strengthening its community-rooted work and advancing inclusive development models grounded in local agency.



# Impact Report: Strategic Convenings

WSI's participation in the Community Foundations Learning Forum marked a pivotal moment in its exploration of community philanthropy as a strategic pathway for sustainable development.

The insights gained reinforced WSI's commitment to investing in community-led approaches that prioritize local ownership, resilience, and long-term impact.





# The Community Foundations Incubator

In the past year, Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda embarked on a pivotal journey through the Community Foundations Incubator Program; a 12-month capacity-strengthening initiative supported by CivSource Africa and CivLegacy Foundation. This strategic program is designed to equip and empower community leaders with the knowledge, tools, and frameworks necessary to establish and manage sustainable community foundations; locally rooted institutions that harness community resources to drive long-lasting, inclusive development.

WSI's participation in the Incubator Program marked a deliberate and strategic shift from its previous structure toward becoming a fully-fledged community foundation. This transformation was guided by the desire to deepen community ownership, enhance financial sustainability, and increase organizational agility to respond to the evolving needs of the communities served.



The transition process involved comprehensive institutional restructuring, a realignment of governance and leadership models, and the integration of community foundation principles that center local leadership, transparency, collective ownership, and inclusive decision-making.



# The Community Foundations Incubator





# The Community Foundations Incubator

## Impact and Future Outlook

The Community Foundations Incubator Program has been a transformative journey for WSI. It equipped the organization with strengthened leadership frameworks, robust financial stewardship capacities, and a clear roadmap toward becoming a sustainable community foundation.

Most notably, a major outcome of this journey was the formal birth of **Ethur Community Foundation, based in Abim District**; a locally led community foundation that now serves as the umbrella institution to WSI Uganda. As part of a strategic realignment for sustainability and community ownership, WSI Uganda was formally merged into Ethur Community Foundation and now operates as its social enterprise arm. This restructuring has enabled WSI's programs and services to generate income and contribute to the resilience, sustainability, and autonomy of Ethur Community Foundation.

This transition reflects a broader vision of building durable, locally anchored institutions capable of catalyzing lasting change. This journey has positioned Ethur Community Foundation to be a pioneering force in Uganda's community philanthropy movement rooted in values of equity, shared power, and sustainable impact.





# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

In 2024, Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda deepened its commitment to feminist leadership, transformative community development, and social justice through intentional and impactful partnerships. We believe that solidarity, collective action, and inter-organizational collaboration are fundamental to building thriving and self-reliant communities.

Our engagements ranged from thought-leadership forums to grassroots innovation labs, and from policy dialogues to capacity-building workshops. Each partnership strengthened our voice, expanded our reach, and accelerated progress toward gender equity, dignity, and inclusive development.

These collaborations were not only relational; they were strategic, outcome-driven, and aligned with our broader institutional goals. Through shared learning, joint advocacy, and collective visioning, we advanced actionable strategies that are already translating into improved policies, stronger institutions, and empowered communities.





# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

## 1. Feminist and Legal Sector Collaborations

### Learning Visit to Women ProBono Initiative (WPI)

We were warmly hosted by the Women ProBono Initiative (WPI) for a benchmarking and peer learning visit. This engagement provided us with critical insights into organizational strengthening, feminist governance, and sustainable activism. WPI's generosity in sharing strategies and lessons exemplified feminist solidarity in action and reaffirmed the value of intergenerational mentorship among women-led organizations.

### Legal and Policy Engagements

Our team actively participated in a CSO mentorship training and feminist legal framework review organized by WPI Uganda. These convenings sharpened our understanding of legal compliance, digital safety, and policy advocacy, particularly regarding the Sexual Offenses Bill 2024, to which we contributed substantially.





# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

## 2. Conversations on Reimagining Aid and Philanthropy

In various spaces convened by CivSource Africa, East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN), and the Uganda Philanthropy Forum, we reimagined the future of development financing and locally led philanthropy.

In the groundbreaking dialogue “Reimagining Aid: Varied Approaches,” we explored shifts in the aid ecosystem that center community agency and local decision-making.

At the “Weaving Resilient Communities” conversation, we examined how philanthropy can activate grassroots power and catalyze social change.

During vision boarding and strategy sessions with CivSource Africa, we mapped our path toward becoming a fully operational community foundation; consolidating our long-term vision and institutional sustainability.





# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

## 3. National and Community Advocacy Spaces

### National Open Court Day

We were honored to take part in Uganda's first National Open Court Day at Kololo Independence Grounds; a powerful initiative to demystify court systems and advocate for accessible justice, especially for women and children.

### Grassroots Mobilization and Local Advocacy

In collaboration with EAPN and the Philanthropy Forum of Uganda, we participated in strategic conversations on participatory community mobilization and transformational leadership. These engagements strengthened our grassroots organizing approach and our ability to center communities in our advocacy.





# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

## 4. Amplifying Women's Voices in History and Development

We proudly participated in an exhibition by Because of Her Uganda, celebrating the contributions of Ugandan women throughout history. This space reminded us of the feminist legacy we inherit and our responsibility to continue amplifying women's voices in both historical and contemporary development narratives.



## 5. Education Financing and Equity Advocacy

At the forum “Revolutionizing Education Financing in Uganda,” we joined national actors in pushing for equitable, inclusive, and quality funding models in education. As an organization committed to girls’ education and retention, this engagement aligned with our goal of influencing systemic reforms in Uganda’s education sector.



# Impact Report: Partner Engagements

## 7. Solidarity and Celebration with Feminist Allies

We stood in solidarity with Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) during the launch of their Feminist Hub — a vibrant space for organizing, healing, and collective dreaming. Our presence reflected our belief in the necessity of joy, celebration, and sisterhood within feminist movements.





# Celebrating One Year of Impact

**"One Year Down, Forever to Go!"**

On 21<sup>st</sup> November, WSI Uganda proudly marked its first anniversary; a significant milestone celebrating 365 days of feminist leadership, grassroots organizing, transformative initiatives, and community empowerment. This anniversary was a moment of reflection, appreciation, and renewed commitment to our mission





# **The Transition: Merging WSI Uganda into Ethur Community Foundation. A New Chapter For Women Solidarity Initiative**





# Merging WSI into Ethur Community Foundation

2024 marked a pivotal and transformational moment in the journey of WSI Uganda. As part of our participation in the Community Foundations Incubator Program led by CivSource Africa, we undertook an intensive process of learning, reflection, and strategic realignment; one that ultimately culminated in the birth of a new structure: Ethur Community Foundation (ECF).

WSI Uganda now functions as the dedicated social enterprise arm of Ethur Community Foundation, a community-led philanthropy and resourcing organization operating primarily in Abim District in the Karamoja Sub-region of Northeastern Uganda. Established in response to the need for localized, culturally grounded, and participatory approaches to development, ECF is committed to activating, resourcing, and amplifying local change agents and community-led solutions.

As part of our institutional transformation, a strategic decision was made to fully merge Women Solidarity Initiative Uganda into Ethur Community Foundation. This includes:

- Full operational and legal integration: WSI ceases to exist as an independent legal entity and is now absorbed into Ethur Community Foundation.
- WSI becomes an enterprise arm of Ethur Community Foundation, continuing its signature programs under a more sustainable, community-grounded model.
- All of WSI's programs now fall within Ethur Community Foundation's programmatic pillars and resourcing funds.



# Merging WSI into Ethur Community Foundation

## What This Means for Our Partners, Supporters , and Community

This transition presents immense opportunities for deeper and more sustainable impact.

It enables us to:

- Expand our reach to more communities across Uganda
- Strengthen local philanthropy by pooling and circulating community resources
- Reduce reliance on donor cycles through social enterprise and income-generating models
- Ensure long-term continuity and flexibility for existing and future programs
- Uphold feminist principles of shared leadership, radical care, and collective accountability

To our partners, funders, and collaborators, your support remains vital to our work. To our communities; our commitment to you has only grown stronger, now supported by a structure designed to serve you better and longer.

## Closing One Chapter, Opening Another

This is not the end of WSI Uganda, it is its rebirth in a more powerful form. Everything WSI Uganda has represented; feminist leadership, radical care, youth engagement, and transformative grassroots action will continue through Ethur Community Foundation, with even deeper roots and broader vision. **WSI Uganda walked so Ethur Community Foundation could run.**

With courage, clarity, and love, we move forward.



# Looking Ahead: A New Chapter Begins

In 2025, WSI Uganda enters an exciting new chapter as a social enterprise of Ethur Community Foundation. This strategic integration marks a purposeful evolution of our work; grounded in feminist values and committed to sustainable, community-led development.

This transition represents:

- A deepened alignment with localized philanthropy and participatory resourcing models;
- A deliberate shift toward sustainability through social entrepreneurship and impact-driven innovation;
- An expanded platform to scale our contributions to feminist philanthropy, grassroots leadership, and economic empowerment.

We are proud of the strong foundation WSI Uganda has built in its formative years, and we look forward to multiplying our impact as part of the Ethur Community Foundation ecosystem.



# Financial Overview

During the reporting period, we raised and utilized **UGX 12,977,000** across four core areas of our work:

- **Leadership Development: UGX 3,761,000 (28.98%)** was invested in our Leadership Development initiatives, including mentorship program and strategic planning tools.
- **Education Program: UGX 2,860,000 (22.04%)** was directed towards supporting access to education, menstrual health, and holistic girl-centered learning.
- **Economic Empowerment: UGX 2,560,000 (19.73%)** was invested in skills development, entrepreneurship support, and local production initiatives.
- **Operations & Compliance: UGX 3,796,000 (29.25%)** was spent on operational costs. These included digital tools (e.g., Zoom, Canva, Website, etc), website maintenance, transport and incidental costs spent while at convenings, and significantly, expenses related to institutional compliance such as registration and legal requirements.

This financial year reaffirmed the importance of strategic resource allocation not only to drive impactful programming, but also to strengthen the operational and compliance infrastructure that sustains our mission.

**Thank You to our  
Supporters, Friends, and  
Community**



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