



Open Space

Centre

2022 - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who we are.	4
Message from the Board and Team leader	8
Key Partners	10
Impact Summary	11
Relevance of the Centre's programs	25
Key results & achievements	27
Lessons learned	31
Financial Statements	33
Our Partners	37

 **WE ARE**

OPEN

SPACE

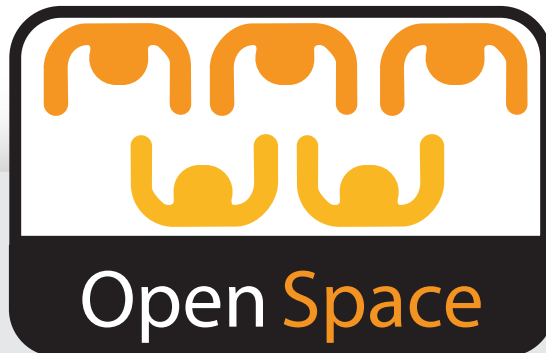
CENTRE

Our Vision:

A society where young people have limitless opportunities and dignity.

Our Mission:

Create dynamic spaces to unlock young people's (15-29) full potential to utilize opportunities and improve their well-being.



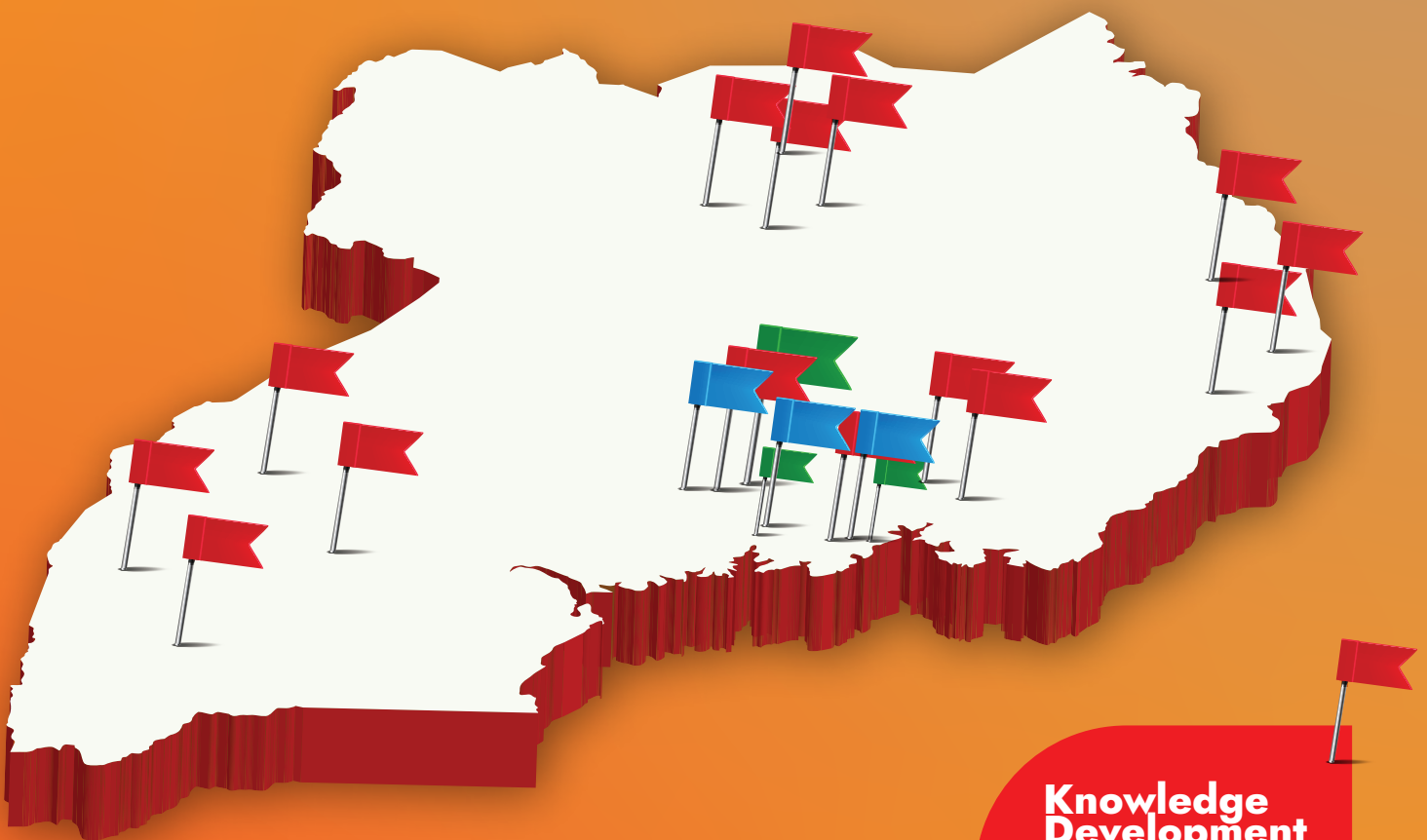
Open Space Centre is a not-for-profit youth development agency that creates dynamic spaces for young people aged 15 to 29 years to unlock their full potential and utilize available opportunities to improve their well-being and positively contribute to their social and economic development.

The organization was founded in the year 2009 and has gradually grown into a youth development agency with established experience in organizing and mobilizing youth empowerment initiatives all across Uganda.

The Open Space Centre model is strongly centered around nurturing youth and prospective young leaders' capacity through debate and dialogues in their communities. The center also incorporates physical and virtual platforms to reach wider groups of young people.

Geographical Coverage

At the moment, Open Space Centre's work and impact have been felt in over 15 districts from regions all across Uganda, as illustrated in a Map of Uganda below



Leadership Development

Kampala
Wakiso
Mukono

Influencing Foreign & Domestic Development Agendas

Kampala
Wakiso
Mukono

Knowledge Development & Sharing

Kampala
Wakiso
Mukono
Mayuge
Kumi
Jinja
Mbale
Iganga
Bukedea
Mubende
Fort Portal
Kasese
Bushenyi
Oromo
Lira
Gulu
Pader

WHAT WE DO



OPEN SPACE PROGRAMS

The organization's work and programs are hinged on 3 strategic themes :

Leadership Development

The Open Space Leadership Development Programme equips current and prospective youth leaders at national and sub-regional levels with multifaceted skills to lead, organize, and influence public policies that serve the interests of youth.



Influencing Foreign & Domestic Development Agendas

Open Space is committed to empowering youth and youth leaders to advocate for an enabling legal and financial environment to help realize the local and global development agendas.



Knowledge Development & Sharing

Open Space is keen to improve access to information, tools, and equipment to further the aspirations of vulnerable and marginalized youth in slums and rural communities.

Message from the Board & Team Leader

In Uganda today, youth civil society funding is fragile and anchored on development funding systems that are restricted to projects with specified periods/durations. In addition, Youth engagement in development processes and access to policymakers and decision-makers is highly limited and is often rudimentary, and tokenistic, reinforcing negative perceptions of youth as being highly incentivized.

In other words, youth are trusted to bring energy and passion, but less as leaders which limits their effective participation in the country's governance processes. Young people also encounter immense health challenges that exacerbate negative outcomes regarding their education.

At the moment, Uganda's teenage pregnancy rate stands at 25 percent — the highest in East Africa. One in four Ugandan girls and women aged 15-19 has given birth before turning 18, and 34 percent of girls are married before the age of 18.

In recognition of the country's youth context and civil society environment, the organization's programs have been designed to address youth inequalities that limit their participation in development processes. Our 5-year strategy (2021-2026) charts a roadmap on how Open Space Centre will achieve its desired goal of creating a society where young people have limitless possibilities. This year 2022/2023, has provided unique learning and growth opportunities that have extended the organization's reach to over 10 districts in the Central, Eastern, Western, and Northern parts of Uganda. All the organization's programs in the year 2022/23 have been aligned with the Government of Uganda's (GOU) third National Development Plan 2015-2020 (DPI) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our programs have built the leadership capacities of youth through debating and dialogue programs, mentorship, and training in institutions of learning and communities.

We are proud of the support and collaborations we have received from our various partners including the US Mission Uganda, Uganda National NGO Forum, the British High Commission/UKAID, and Crossing Borders in Denmark that have enabled the organization to grow and serve more young people and work more effectively with others to create young leaders in Uganda who meaningfully contribute to the growth of their societies.



Abubakar Muhammad Hadj
Board Chairman, Open Space

Wakibu Bunnya
Team Leader, Open Space

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Leadership Development

1055

Participants in Total

The Youth Debate Support Programme

Training of debate alumni (YDS)
Mentorship sessions (YDS)
Open air debates (YDS)
University Debate Nationals
Community Dialogues (YDS)

999

Participants

Philanthropy for Development

Philanthropy symposium (G4G)

56

Participants

Influencing Local and Global Development agendas

803

Participants in Total

The Meaningful Youth Participation Program

Inception meeting
Leadership training
Conversation spaces
Advocacy spaces
National Youth Leadership Dialogue

634

Participants

The localizing SDGS project.

Youth parliaments
Mini-level SDG Projects
The National Youth Festival

169

Participants

Knowledge Development & Sharing

2535

Participants in Total

The Nile Explorer Bus Project.

Nile Explorer stops
HIV Symposium
Annual National Youth Festival

Enhance the organization's
institutional arrangements
for pragmatic governance
and management

28

Annual General Meeting

Participants

OUR KEY PARTNERS



Strategic Theme:
Leadership Development



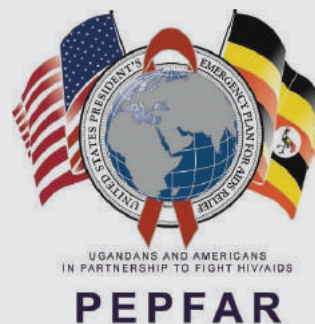
Strategic Theme: _____

Influencing National and Global Development Agenda



Strategic Theme: _____

Knowledge Development & Sharing



Impact Summary

Thematic focus:

Influencing National and Global Development Agenda



Programs:

Meaningful Youth Participation Program

Localising SDG's Project

Program: Localising SDG's Project

Since the year 2021, Open Space Centre with support from Crossing Borders has been implementing the Localising SDGs project in local grassroots communities of Kampala, Wakiso, and Mukono districts targeting young people and enabling them to create and take ownership of localizing the SDGs through grassroots activities. In this project, the center successfully established and leveraged community task forces comprised of youth and their leaders, teachers, and students to conduct a series of engagements that would enable more young people in Uganda to be part of the implementation of the sustainable development goals. Additionally, through the project initiatives many young people in local communities were able to design and advocate for actions to address their most pressing issues that align to the Sustainable development goals.

Under this project, the center implemented the following activities.

1. Community-level Mini-SDG projects

To strengthen young people's ability to implement and lead action towards the localization of sustainable development goals, Open Space Centre facilitated the implementation of 6 mini-SDG projects led and initiated by the youth leaders from the community task forces within communities at the grassroots level in communities in Kampala, Wakiso and Mukono districts. The overall objective of the SDG projects is to empower youth leaders to lead and take action toward the localization of the SDGs in their communities through practical innovative solutions that tackle pressing community issues.

A total of 12 youth leaders from within the community task force came up with innovative ideas that provided immediate and long-term solutions for some of the community challenges identified during the project youth parliament sessions.

Impact Summary 1

Program:
Localising SDG's Project

The table below highlights the level projects across the project districts.

Location	Mini SDG Project
Wakiso district- Nansana Municipal Council	Nansana Medical Camp
Namugongo division, Wakiso District	The Clean-up campaign at Namugongo
Rubaga division, Kampala District	Towa Uchafu Waste Management Campaign
Kamwokya, Kampala district	Urban farming Training at Emiti Emito foundation in Kamwokya
Namugongo division offices, Wakiso District	Katosi-Mukono Medical Camp
Makerere, Katanga, Kampala district	Be clean! Be healthy! Campaign in Makerere Katanga

Program:

The Youth Parliaments -Seesaamu sessions

The youth parliaments reinforce the center’s primary objective of enhancing youth and their leaders’ capability to identify their community challenges that are innately anchored to the sustainable development goals and identify solutions and actions they can embark on to address the community challenges.

The youth parliaments provided the community task forces with an opportunity to mobilize fellow young people and members of their communities, to discuss pertinent community issues and as a means of normalizing conversations about Global Goals. Community engagement and subsequent support are integral to our collective SDGs localization Agenda.



Impact Summary 1

Program:

The University Debate Nationals' Dialogue-SDG policy dialogue

On the 28th of November, during the University Debate Nationals, the center implemented a Youth Dialogue on Governance as a policy platform for over 140 youth, their leaders, and policymakers to come together to share views and generate policy ideas and commitments around SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions under the theme “Uganda at 60: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”.

The objective of the dialogue was to engage young people in debate and dialogue with their leaders and policymakers around SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.



Impact Areas

- 1. Leadership development** - This project has built the leadership capabilities of young people and their youth leaders within their communities in Uganda to lead and articulate issues of young people as well as their communities to policymakers through their youth parliaments. As a result, young people are now able to mobilize, organize, and conduct SDG-related activities in their communities in Uganda.
- 2. Built capacity of youth and their leaders to influence national SDG policy**- Previously the Sustainable development agenda was thought to be confined to the government and civil society organizations, casting aside the involvement of young people. Through this intervention, many young people through the task force training are now able to harness their potential to lobby and advocate for supportive policy frameworks from their policymakers through their youth parliaments, SDG awareness events, and national platforms such as the SDG symposium.
- 3. Youth Engagement with policymakers**- Providing young people with unique opportunities to access, interact, and engage with policymakers. Young people now have access to Policymakers who are usually hard to meet and engage with on topical issues and discussions. The National SDG symposium has successfully bridged this gap and provided young people with the opportunity to articulate their issues to relevant stakeholders in a bid to lobby and advocate for supportive environments.



Impact Summary 1

Program:

The Meaningful Youth Participation Program (MYPP).

Political leaders at the parish, subcounty/division, and district levels are an integral part of all local government processes through monitoring, budget appropriation, monitoring service delivery, accountability, community engagement, and lobbying. In light of this, often time youth leaders at the local government level are often heavily marginalized in these critical processes, which limits their abilities to serve their communities effectively.

In recognition of these disparities, the center fronts its commitment to support more young people to achieve their leadership aspirations and engage meaningfully in all government processes as partners, collaborators, and not just beneficiaries. Over the years this has been mirrored through structured leadership engagements that support youth to engage meaningfully in development processes.

The center also recognizes that youth leaders at the local government level are faced with a multitude of challenges that inhibit their participation in governance processes ranging from:

- limited understanding and appreciation of the local government architecture.
- limited evidence-based engagements by youth leaders in local government planning, budgeting, and accountability; and
- limited opportunities for interaction between young people and policy decision-makers and influencers at the local and central government levels,

Open Space Centre designed the Meaningful Youth participation program to address the ineffective youth participation in local government processes and further contribute to a transparent and accountable local government structure. This year (2022/2023), the center implemented the 2nd phase of this project in 3 parishes of Makerere 3, Kyaliwajala, and Katosi in Kampala, Wakiso, and Mukono districts respectively.

This year's activities centered on;

- Structured training on Local government processes including budgeting, planning, and accountability.
- Conversation and advocacy spaces where young people have a unique opportunity to interact with decision-makers and have discussions around issues that are most pertinent to them.
- Establishment of operational structures such as youth desks in the 3 parishes that provided an opportunity for young people to forward their needs to their community leaders and duty bearers.



Impact Summary 1

Program:

The Meaningful Youth Participation Program (MYPP).

Success stories from the Meaningful Youth Participation program

1. “Before the project, there was a lot I could not do for instance, I did not see the value of government programs and never engaged young people to take part, and because of this, young people did not benefit from these programs, particularly Emyooga. Worse still, I was not aware that the programs had a given proportion for young people, I used to think they were only for a selected part of the older people. Am now more active in mobilizing young people to take part in government programs and we have several of them that have signed up for PDM. Secondly am now more intentional in taking part in the local government budgeting processes and I have attended several conferences and meetings which was not the case before.” Ibrahim Youth chairperson, Katosi Parish.

2. Before the project, I was afraid and did not have the confidence to speak in front of a large group of people but I can now stand anywhere and speak to people. The project instilled confidence in me and encouraged me to always be knowledgeable about the issues in my community and the country at large. Secondly, we were not working together as youth leaders because we perceived each other as enemies. After the training, we started cooperating. “Bint Juma, Makerere 3 Parish.

3. <https://youtu.be/pH4hg3zHhJE> Mariam Seguya - RCC Kawempe Division

4. <https://youtu.be/2M6L4hryefk> Docu-series of the Meaningful Youth Participation Program



Impact Summary

2

Thematic focus:

Knowledge Development and sharing.

Programs:

The Nile Explorer
Bus Project.

The Annual National
Youth Festival.

Under this thematic area, as highlighted in the 2021-2026 strategic plan, the center is committed to equipping current and prospective youth leaders with multifaceted skills to lead, organize, influence, and rightfully serve the people they lead in their respective jurisdictions.

Several initiatives have been undertaken by the Centre to contribute to the fulfillment of the thematic objective. The following are the key milestones across the organization's programs that have been realized in the year 2022/2023.

Program:

The Nile Explorer 3.0 (Mobile programming Platform)

The Secondary school dropout rate in Uganda, as of 2023, stands at 30% (Ministry of Education, 2023). The high dropout rate in Ugandan secondary schools is attributed to vast reasons ranging from poverty, early marriages, poor quality of education, gender discrimination, teenage pregnancy, and child labor. Young people particularly teenage girls from rural and underserved communities succumb to the greatest burden of these challenges that ultimately halt their ability to complete their education.

Partners:

Uganda National
NGO Forum

Us Mission
Uganda



Impact Summary 2

Program:

The Nile Explorer 3.0 (Mobile programming Platform)

Open Space Centre with support from the US Embassy and PEPFAR in Uganda designed the Nile Explorer Bus, a mobile American Space to a reduction in school dropout among secondary school-going learners aged 12-19 years across districts in Uganda. The program has been running since the year 2021, reaching out to the most marginalized youths in underserved communities and schools in regions across Uganda.

The program has reinforced the center's knowledge development arm through 3 major components;

1. Science, technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM),
2. Health
3. Life Skills through Career Guidance.

Specifically, the Nile Explorer aims at;

1. Provide students in remote Uganda with access to educational enrichment, including STEM learning, reading material, computers, and the Internet to motivate them to stay in school. These sessions also involve empowering the students with skills in Liquid soap-making.
2. Enhance understanding of American values, culture, and history through providing information on opportunities from the US Embassy, and the American Centre, and highlighting some of the US Flagship programs such as the YALI and Mandela Washington Fellowships, Ed USA among others.
3. Provide students and community members with relevant and accurate information about health and safety issues, including preventing HIV transmission, gender-based violence, and malaria. In addition, students are trained in Menstrual health management and making sanitary pads.

Regions Impacted

Eastern	Western	Northern
Mayuge Kumi Jinja Iganga Mbale Bukedea	Mubende Fortportal Kasese Bushenyi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Omoro• Lira• Gulu• Pader

Impact Summary 2

Program:

The Nile Explorer Students' Leadership Retreat(s).



The Nile Explorer student's leadership retreat(s) were designed as complementary platforms of engagement for students beyond the Nile Explorer bus training.

The leadership retreats capitalized on strengthening youth leadership capacity for students aged 12-19 years in underserved schools in Uganda as well as exposing them to the American Center and notable personalities from America. In this year 2022/23, the Center conducted 3 leadership retreats for 100 students from the Eastern, Western, and Northern regions of Uganda.

The students had the opportunity to engage further on the bus components in STEM and health to reinforce their leadership capabilities and support their schools/communities with information in health and STEM.

During the retreats, the students enjoyed sessions with notable American personalities such as the former U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, Her Excellency Ms. Natalie Brown who shared her experiences in leadership and her passion for technology.

Other key American personalities include Ms Ellen Masi, the Public Diplomacy Officer, Ms. Nell Wilson, grants Manager, PEPFAR Ms. Amy Petersen, the Public Engagement officer, and Dr. Emilio Dirlikov, the former CDC Services branch Chief among others. The retreat sessions focused on student-led innovation and health awareness on issues such as HIV/AIDS, Gender-based violence, and other communicable diseases with different facilitators and approaches.

Program:

The National HIV/AIDS Symposium

Open Space Centre participated in the 1st National HIV/AIDS symposium where the Nile Explorer Bus was one of the major highlights of the exhibition showcasing the program's health impact across the project districts to over 161 young people, key policymakers, representatives from civil society, Academia, and media.



Impact Summary 2

Program:

The National HIV/AIDS Symposium

The symposium theme was “Ending Inequalities among Adolescents Girls, Young Women and Boys”. The theme was intended to focus on adolescent girls, boys, and young women because of their vulnerability to HIV, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. The national HIV and AIDS exhibition created an opportunity to showcase the country’s achievements in addressing HIV and AIDS as well as share research findings for evidence-based HIV and AIDS programming.



Success stories from the Nile Explorer 3.0 Mobile program.

1. <https://youtu.be/7Dibd18SEZg> US Ambassador to Uganda, Natalie. E. Brown - Nile Explorer Bus
2. <https://youtu.be/rHuA8ju6VFo> Nile Explorer Bus Beneficiary, Shivan Kyokunzire
3. <https://youtu.be/0PxBEzrvZHM> Nile Explorer Bus Program Beneficiaries (Mariam Nafuma & Sebukulu Shamps - Mbogo Progressive School Mukono, Ivan Kateregga & Fatumah - Bunnya Secondary School)

Program:

The Annual National Youth Festival 2023



The Annual National Youth Festival, currently at its ninth edition remains one of the greatest youth gatherings hosted by Open Space Centre since the year 2011. The overall goal of each year’s festival has been designed in the hope of supporting young Ugandans aged 15-30 years to meaningfully engage, contribute, and broadly have access to relevant information and opportunities across the sectors of health, leadership/governance, agriculture, and education.

Impact Summary 2

Program:

The Annual National Youth Festival 2023



In the year 2020, the grievances of youth in Uganda were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic which disrupted the country's economy and halted the association of youth in Uganda and globally. As a result, many young people were further impoverished due to losing their livelihoods and many developed mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety. Furthermore, during this time, the National Youth Festival was halted in response to the government's standard operating procedures to curb the spread of the deadly virus.

This year 2022/2023, the Annual National Youth Festival 2023 was re-awakened with the theme "Your story matters", in the hope of amplifying young people's voices to share their experiences and stories of overcoming the COVID pandemic and their various achievements on a multi-sectoral level. The youth festival was attended by over 1,000 young people and more than 50 exhibitors from various sectors such as health, agriculture, innovation, education, and governance.

The youth festival was themed "Your Story Matters" in the hopes of amplifying young people's stories of their achievements, challenges, and unique experiences. The youth festival theme was also chosen based on supporting young people to share their stories on how to overcome adversity in their lives and work in their diverse sectors especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the two-day festival provided a unique platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue for citizens, stakeholders, and policymakers to discuss issues regarding Uganda's sustainable development, showcase innovations, and share best practices around the SDGs. Some of the festival activities included Infotainment sessions, exhibitions, interactive workshops, plenary sessions, and professional camps such as medical services.

Regarding the Sustainable development goals, the festival amplified youth voices, efforts, and initiatives towards the localization of the sustainable development goals in Ugandan communities. This was done through engaging discussions from the community task force members and youth leaders on the efforts that youth leaders at the grassroots level have employed to create awareness and promote the localization of the SDGs in Uganda. Some of the stories included the support given to teenage mothers to lead healthy lives, training and skilling projects for young people, and using digital skills for sharing information on the SDGs among others.

The annual national youth festival brought together various stakeholders including young people in secondary schools and universities, youth within the communities, media personalities, and policymakers who collectively shared their views and progress towards achievement of the 2030 SDG agenda through unique and inspiring stories of their achievement, challenges, and actions moving forward. This was all done in the spirit of promoting collaboration and cohesion between different stakeholder groups to generate trust and enrich the process of localization, implementation, and synergizing for the agenda 2030 in Uganda.



Impact Summary 3

Thematic focus:

Leadership Development

Programs:

The University Debate
Nationals (UDN)

The Youth debate support
program

The philanthropy
symposium

The Open Space Leadership Development theme equips current and prospective youth leaders at national and sub-regional levels with multifaceted skills to lead, organize, and influence public policies that serve the interests of youth.

Partners:

Uganda National
NGO Forum

Program:

The University Debate Nationals (UDN)

Open Space Center convened the eighth edition of University Debate Nationals which hosted a total of 149 participants in total, comprising 84 University Students, 7 local media stations, members of parliament, and policymakers. The overall objective of the University Debate Nationals was to provide young people in higher institutions of learning a platform to network, share views, and exchange ideas around topical issues defining the governance landscape in Uganda and to build youth capacity in debating, public speaking, and critical thinking as key tools for active citizenship.

This year's theme of the 2022 University Debate Nationals was "Uganda at 60: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions". The theme is inspired by the current context in which Uganda is celebrating its 60th Independence as a sovereign state yet several threats exist towards building peace, and justice, and strong institutions are alive in today's struggles. Through this theme, young debaters from institutions all over Uganda explored and critically reflected on several intersecting topics including the regularity of elections, the functioning of government institutions, and existing justice systems and governance structures in Uganda since independence.

Impact Summary 3

Program:

The University Debate Nationals (UDN)

The 8th edition of the University Debate Nationals also featured keynote addresses from personalities such as Don Wanyama, the Chief Executive Officer of Vision Group, who applauded the young people in universities for taking the initiative to engage in spaces that nurture their critical thinking skills and abilities in preparation for their leadership aspirations in future.



Program:

The Youth Debate Support Program

Since the year 2009, Open Space Centre has gained remarkable experience in the use of debates and dialogues in institutions of learning, and communities as tools to build the capacity of young leaders in articulating issues and fostering positive change in their communities.

In a bid to enhance youth efforts toward contributing to good governance in Uganda, the center with support from the US Embassy in Uganda, designed the Youth Debate Support program, as a means to encourage youth debate and dialogue around topical civic issues including human rights, democracy, peacebuilding, leadership, media literacy, and access to information. The program has registered a tremendous impact in institutions of learning and communities, engaging young people as debaters, mentors, and judges. Some of the most outstanding successes of the project include.

a) Open Space Centre designed and implemented a wholesome youth debate support program that fully engaged young people as debaters, mentors, and judges. Specifically, the center trained a total of 90 debate mentors. The debate mentors designed training manuals for both the World School and British Parliament debate formats, creating a strong network of debate alumni as well as mentoring and training current and aspiring debaters and young leaders in schools and universities. The network of trained debaters has been equipped with the knowledge and skills to ensure the sustainability, reliability, and dynamism of the debate clubs formed in the different secondary schools. For the debate clubs in university, a platform has been availed to them to compete in both national and international debate tournaments.

Impact Summary 3

Program:

The Youth Debate Support Program

b) Through the Open Aire debates and mentorship sessions, the youth debate support program impacted a total of over 500 young people in both schools and communities to engage on topics such as leadership and governance, media literacy, and human rights.

c) Through the youth debate support program, young people were able to gain an understanding of the role of the US Embassy in Uganda and its priorities for Ugandan youth through engagement with officials from the US Embassy and resources who shared important information on the need for Ugandans to collaborate with Americans.

d) Through the youth debate program, young people were able to register and sign up for membership at the American Centre to utilize resources and information that can support them in taking on programs such as the EdUSA program and US exchange programs such as the Mandela Washington Fellowship (YALI).

e) Through the Youth debate program, Open Space Centre was able to revive and create debate clubs in secondary schools and institutions where the debate clubs were non-existent and not functional. These structures will carry on the work that has been done to support young people in these institutions to take part in the debate.

f) Open Space Centre leveraged the Annual National Youth Festival celebrations to implement the debate and dialogue series that attracted over 1,700 young people to have themed discussions on the broad thematic areas of leadership, Innovation and ICT, climate change and h, and health.



Impact Summary 3

Program:
2nd Philanthropy Symposium.

Generosity and informal philanthropy are significant on the African continent. The various religious roots, as well as traditional and cultural heritages, contribute to a culture of generosity across societies in Uganda.

Currently, the emergence of tools to encourage and facilitate giving such as technology has led to new ways of giving through social media, fundraising campaigns, and mobile platforms, especially for young people.

Since the year 2020, Open Space Centre has actively mobilized and engaged young people to exercise the heart of giving/philanthropy as a means of enhancing community transformation and development. In November 2022, the center through its partnership with the Uganda National NGO Forum organized a Local giving fair during the African Philanthropy Network assembly that brought together over 400 stakeholders from all over Africa, part of whom participated in exhibiting and showcasing their philanthropic initiatives across the continent and globally.

Some of the stakeholders included representatives from civil society organizations, the media, and research/academia. The local giving fair was a unique platform that recognized individual/community philanthropic practices that impacted people's lives and demonstrated partnerships that empower communities and provide evidence of advancing the culture of philanthropic giving in the continent.



Relevance of the Centre's programs.

Uganda is largely considered a youthful country with 78% of the total population of Uganda being below the age of 30 years. However, young people only hold 30% of the parliamentary seats besides the five youth-specific positions which include four regional positions and one national chairperson position, who are all from the ruling party.

These statistics speak to the systematic and structural barriers that indicate there are not enough youth representatives in the government, and their interests are therefore not well represented and implemented.



What is the **RELEVANCE** — of the — **Centre's** **Programs**



Program Relevance



Young people’s priorities as reflected in the 2021-2026 National Youth Manifesto are dependent on the government’s funding priorities that are highlighted in the National development plans. The government of Uganda began transitioning from output-based budgeting to program-based budgeting in 2013 in a bid to improve the link between budgeting and national strategic objectives. For the year 2022/23, Uganda’s national budget was **UGX 48.13 trillion** with an allocation of 4 billion directed towards the National Youth Council to support young people’s development initiatives all across the country.

The Parish Development Model has been launched to take development closer to the people especially those who are vulnerable and underserved, to improve household incomes; enable inclusive, sustainable, balanced, and equitable socio-economic transformation; and increase accountability at local levels. Through the Parish Development Model (PDM), the government is seeking to lift the country’s annual GDP growth rate to at least 7% by 2040 – up from 5.1% projected for 2022. Local governments responded fast to activate an institutional infrastructure to implement the PDM with administrative structures for the program set up at the Parish and integration supporting frameworks designed at the districts, municipalities, town councils, sub-counties, and villages in all districts to manage the program.

The table below summarises Open Space Centre’s programs and their alignment with Uganda’s NDP III.

Open Space Centre’s programs and their alignment with Uganda’s NDP 3.	
Program	Uganda NDP 3 Pillar
The Localizing SDGS project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Mobilization and Mindset program Natural Resources, Environment, Climate Change, Land and Water Management Programme
Nile Explorer 3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital transformation program
Youth Mentorship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance and security program
Meaningful Youth Participation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance and security program
Philanthropy engagements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Mobilization and Mindset program

Open Space Program Alignment to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	
Program	SDG focus
The Localizing SDGS project	SDG 1-17
Nile Explorer 2.0	SDG 4, SDG 3, SDG 5
Youth Mentorship Program	SDG 16
Meaningful Youth Participation Program	SDG 16
Give for Good	SDG 1, 2, 3



**Key results & Achievements
across the thematic areas.**

**Influencing
Foreign &
Domestic
Development
Agendas**

**Knowledge
Development
& Sharing**

**Leadership
Development**

Key results & Achievements across the thematic areas.

1

Access to STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and Maths) & health knowledge among secondary school-going children in underserved communities.

The 2020 UNESCO report stipulates that the school dropout rate among lower secondary students stands at 37.2% with more girls than boys. The salient contribution to the school dropout rates involves a lack of access to information by the students which manifests through their inability to achieve their academic and life goals.

Through the distinguished Nile Explorer bus project, the center has proudly been able to plant seeds of transformation among students in underserved communities. This has been done by providing students with relevant and age-appropriate health information. Resources and skills to combat health issues such as HIV/AIDS, School Gender-based violence, and malaria as well as uphold proper menstrual health and hygiene management in their school environments. The information has supported young adolescents all across Uganda to make the right health choices to keep them in school.

2

Establishment of unique knowledge-sharing platforms between young people, policymakers, and key stakeholders in their different diversities.

For the strategic Year 2022/2023, the center revamped the Annual National Youth Festival for its 9th edition. The youth festival is an extraordinary youth meeting that provides a platform for ordinary young people, elected representatives, and key stakeholders to share ideas in line with leadership and governance, agriculture, innovation, career opportunities, and health.

During this year's festival, young people in their broad diversities were availed a unique opportunity to freely interact and engage with politicians, academia, media diplomatic missions, the private sector, and civil society organizations through debates, dialogues, training, keynote addresses, and exhibitions. The festival theme "Your story matters" amplified the voices of youth across various sectors on their various achievements, challenges, and opportunities to contribute to their personal development as well as that of their communities.

Key results & Achievements across the thematic areas.



Amplifying young people's role in Localization of the Sustainable development goals.

Uganda, like other states and countries across the globe, has made tremendous efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals. The center-aligned the achievement of the sustainable development goals to its thematic area of influencing local and global development agendas to create awareness among young people and equip them with knowledge and skills to understand the SDGs and actively participate in grassroots activities geared towards the achievement of SDGs by 2030.

The center used the localizing SDGs project as a pipeline to guide the young people to identify community problems, align them to the SDGs, and come up with sustainable solutions to address the problems. This resulted in collective solutions to address the SDG's goals of no poverty, good health, and well-being as well as climate action in their communities.



Active participation and monitoring of government programs by young people.

In FY2022/2023, the government of Uganda rolled out the Parish Development Model (PDM) to eradicate poverty, strengthen household income and increase access to basic needs. The Parish Development Model is being implemented as a framework for the National Development Plan (NDP III). The PDM recognizes and places the parish/ward as the epicenter for multi-sectoral community development, planning, implementation, monitoring, and accountability. The PDM is executed on the notion that a PDM committee is best placed to identify, relate, and respond to the needs of the people in the community.

The PDM entails addressing the concerns of marginalized groups including the young people with a 30% allocation of the funds. This calls for the mandate of the youth leaders to take responsibility for ensuring that young people benefit from the program. For the 2022/2023 financial year, Open Space Centre selected parish youth leaders from Makerere 3, Katosi, and Kyaliwajjala in the districts of Kampala, Mukono, and Wakiso respectively, and trained them on what the PDM entails, their unique roles towards its success and how they can become beneficiaries of the program in their parishes. The endeavors of the center are testified against as the parish youth leaders have actively participated in the PDM, influenced other young people to become beneficiaries, and have with ease monitored the progress of the PDM in their parishes.

Key results & Achievements across the thematic areas.

5

Appreciation of Philanthropy as a means of development for young people.

Oftentimes, philanthropy has been affiliated with the government, politicians, and the rich in many communities, as opposed to one of how communities can make significant steps to achieve development. In the spirit of building young people's leadership capacity, Open Space Centre has embraced and taken the lead in nurturing young people's leadership through philanthropic initiatives and local giving to address some of their community challenges.



Lessons Learned



Description of the lessons from the different projects that are run by the center.

Knowledge Development & Sharing

The presence of resourceful individuals and personalities from diverse backgrounds as a strategy for leadership/knowledge development and sharing projects has been a very effective way of transmitting accurate information on opportunities and development programs among young people.

This has been done by engaging decision-makers, representatives from the National Youth Council, representatives from the US Embassy, and community leaders to engage meaningfully with young people in schools and communities.

Peer to peer Learning

The use of different debate alumni across the project Universities to serve as mentors and adjudicators for the debate sessions helps to maximize the debate mentors' expertise and provide a wealth of debate knowledge for the students. This approach also ensured a peer-centered method of learning and skills acquisition in debate within institutions.

Diversity of Trainers

In line with adolescent/youth programming, the use of diversified technical perspectives in the fields of health and STEM from both the American and Ugandan health networks, offers a lot more insight and gives room for students and their teachers to probe and ask questions about issues they feel are of concern to them.

Additionally, this approach supports the facilitators to leverage information and technical feedback from the guests on what new elements can be added to make the program more inciteful.

Lessons Learned



Description of the lessons from the different projects that are run by the center.

Given Approach

Exposure visits to the American Centre were instrumental in supporting the students and their teachers to learn more about America broadly and the US Embassy in Uganda.

The students and their teachers have a unique opportunity to appreciate US Exchange programs and educational programs such as the Ed-USA program that will ultimately encourage more young people to aspire for a future in the United States.

Gender, Equity & Marginalized groups

Gender considerations in all Open Space's program areas and interventions have been effectively addressed ensuring equal representation and access to opportunities, outcomes, and benefits for both young men and women, boys and girls.

In the majority of communities, women and girls are generally among the poorest and most disadvantaged people in society, suffering the greatest burden of poor representation in decision-making spaces as well as sexual and reproductive health crises.



Financial Statements

OPEN SPACE CENTRE LIMITED
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023



Statement of Financial Performance

	Notes	2023 "Ugx".	2022 "Ugx".
Grants & donations	4	2,105,645,479	1,540,177,926
Total contributions		2,105,645,479	1,540,177,926
Program costs	5	(1,316,962,290)	(1,006,774,934)
Administration expenses	6	(130,952,750)	(127,094,253)
Professional fees	7	(2,950,000)	(8,143,600)
Employment expenses	8	(295,014,887)	(189,172,216)
Surplus/(Deficit) before depreciation, finance costs & tax		359,765,552	208,992,923
Net finance costs	9	(3,260,262)	(1,786,943)
Surplus/(Deficit) before depreciation & tax		356,505,290	207,205,980
Depreciation		-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) before tax		356,505,290	207,205,980
Tax expense		-	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		356,505,290	207,205,980

The statement of profit or loss & other comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the notes to and forming part of the financial statements set out on **pages 15 to 22**.

Financial Statements

OPEN SPACE CENTRE LIMITED
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023



Statement of Financial Position

	Notes	2023 "Ugx".	2022 "Ugx".
Current Assets			
Cash & cash equivalents	11	179,140,790	187,881,201
Prepayments	12	177,364,500	19,324,779
Total Current Assets		356,505,290	207,205,980
Total Assets		356,505,290	207,205,980
Accumulated Funds & Liabilities			
Accumulated Funds		356,505,290	207,205,980
		356,505,290	207,205,980
Total Accumulated Funds & Liabilities		356,505,290	207,205,980

The financial statements on pages 9 to 22 were approved by the Directors on the 07 day of December 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:-

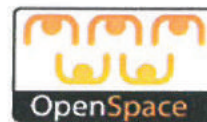


Team Leader/Executive Director

The statement of financial position is to be read in conjunction with the notes to and forming part of the financial statements set out on pages 15 to 22.

Financial Statements

OPEN SPACE CENTRE LIMITED
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023



Results of the Year

The results of the company for the period are shown in the statement of profit or loss on page 9 :

	2023 "Ugx".
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	356,505,290
Tax expense	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>356,505,290</u>

Auditors

Wade & Partners, Certified Public Accountant of Uganda were appointed having expressed their willingness to continue in office in accordance with Uganda Companies Act, No. 1 of 2012.

By Order of the Board

Company Secretary

**MUNGURIEK JAMES
ADVOCATE**
P.O. BOX 74576, KAMPALA
Email: munguriek@barensiadvocates.com

11/2/2023

Acknowledgements

Open Space Centre extends its deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to our mission of fostering positive change and enhancing the well-being of our communities during the fiscal year of 2022-2023. We recognize and appreciate the invaluable support, dedication, and generosity of the following individuals, organizations, and partners:

Founders & Leadership:

Board of Directors: Your guidance and strategic insights have been instrumental in steering our organization toward success.

Donors & Supporters:

Individual Donors: Your generous contributions have enabled us to sustain and expand our programs and services.

Corporate Partners: We extend our appreciation to our corporate partners for their commitment to social responsibility and for their ongoing support.

Government Agencies: We thank the government agencies whose grants and funding have helped us implement vital initiatives and projects.

Volunteers & Staff:

Volunteers: To all the selfless individuals who have dedicated their time and skills to support our mission, we are profoundly grateful for your commitment and passion.

Staff Members: Our dedicated team members have demonstrated unwavering dedication and professionalism in advancing our organization's goals.

Collaborators & Community Partners:

Partner Organizations: We extend our gratitude to our collaborative partners for their shared commitment to creating positive change in our communities.

Local Communities: We are grateful for the trust and support of the communities we serve, whose engagement and participation are essential to our success.

In-Kind Contributors:

In-Kind Donors: We acknowledge with thanks the contributions of goods and services from our in-kind donors, which have helped us maximize our impact and efficiency.

Acknowledging the collective effort and support of all those mentioned above, we reaffirm our commitment to continue our mission of creating a brighter future for all.

Thank you for your unwavering support and belief in the vision of the Open Space Centre.

Sincerely,

Wakibu Bunnya
Founder, Team Leader

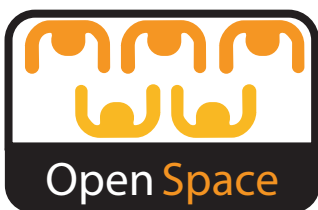
Abubakar Muhammad Hadj
Board Chairman, Open Space

OUR PARTNERS









Annual Report 2022-2023

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