



## 2023 Annual Report

### **ABOUT 10KLWC**

10,000 Lights Women's Center (10KLWC), located in Kampala, Uganda, and its Empowerment Program for survivors of Commercial Sex Exploitation and Trafficking (CSET) was established by founding partners, Amilia's Light, and Daughters of Freedom - Uganda (DOFU). In 2016 we opened a salon and boutique, where on the job training was offered for ten young women. In 2017, we began to shift focus toward vocational education training, and have continued to change, grow, and expand to better meet the needs of our beneficiaries, through a holistic program with three components, wellness, vocational education, and life skills. This holistic approach enables survivors of CSE to heal, transform and be empowered as they journey on their path toward freedom.

*Through Self-discovery, beneficiaries gain a deeper understanding of culture, themselves, and their lived experiences (their story), fostering clarity and authenticity in their voice.*

## **THE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM**

### **2022-2023 Class**

#### Enrollment:

In 2022 we initiated a new enrollment process. We developed a Commercial Sex Education and Trafficking (CSET) Workshop and trained local allies, who made referrals to our program. Referrals were invited to a program orientation and Health forum where they learned about our program and the commitment it would take. They were also invited to attend a full day health care workshop, where they learned about self-care, healthy living, family planning and STD/AIDS prevention. Part of the new enrollment process is a medical exam, which 1) identifies applicants that need treatment, and 2) identifies health conditions that would prevent or impact attendance, learning, and availability. PTSD clinical assessment, by our psychotherapist, is also done during the application process, and continues throughout the year.

#### **WELLNESS**

##### Self-Care & Health Talks

Health talk's sessions were held, and covered UTI prevention, treatment and management, food and nutrition, personal hygiene and personal safety, family planning and STD's.

### PTSD assessments

Initially these were done at the beginning and end of the program. This year, we changed the cadence to an ongoing and as needed basis. This has helped counselors, staff, and trainers, to get ahead of crisis situations.

### Ethics and Character Development

Beneficiaries were introduced to faith-based ethics and character building. By year's end, personal growth was achieved, as evidenced by the changes observed and experienced in beneficiaries conduct and character, by staff, trainers, internship supervisors, caregivers, and local community leaders.

## **EDUCATION**



- Beneficiaries were given vocational education in hairstyling or fashion & design, based on newly established curriculum.
- Former 2022 intern, Doreen Natocho was hired as ESL trainer. Her degree is Adult and Community Education, Kyambogo University. She is using and adapting widely available ESL curriculum. Her service is under appraisal pending appointment.
- Hair Styling and Fashion teaching curriculum was formalized and instituted this year, to expand beneficiary's capabilities and standardized testing.
- Beneficiaries were given orientation on test taking. Exams were given midway, and prior to internships, to assess progress and readiness, as per curriculum standards.
- A new modified electrical industrial sewing machine was purchased for Fashion and Design to simplify beneficiaries' work and expose beneficiaries to industrial production and access to work in companies producing for global markets.
- Hair Dressing Curriculum was formalized.

## LIFE SKILLS

A Life Skills curriculum was created for 2023, with weekly workshops, focused on self-improvement. Beginning with how to conduct oneself and expectations for the program, and delving into concepts about knowing oneself, growing up, relationships, conflict resolution, decision making, substance abuse.

In Q1 the participants were trained in Kitchen/Backyard gardening, to help participants improve nutrition habits and address food insecurity.



Participants learning homemade fertilizers.

Other workshops were taught on financial literacy, business skills, work ethics, goal setting, career building, getting a job and more.

## HEAL TRANSFORM EMPOWER

### Internships & Graduation

22 participants were enrolled to train in vocational business skills. 86% (18) participants completed the sessions and passed their standards. 10KLWC trainers helped participants search for internship placements. All 18, received placements, and all successfully completed their internship.

The 2023 Graduation theme was “A girl’s voice can be heard”, and graduates were reminded of how far they have come. Michelle Luhrmann sent a video message that summarized how the program has helped them to heal, transform their lives and be empowered, and with newfound confidence, to use their voice, and effect change. She referenced the movie, Enola Holmes.

***“There are two paths you can take here, yours, or the ones others choose for you.”***

*“Enola Holmes”, directed by Harry Bradbeer  
Warner Bros Pictures, 2020*

### ***Closing message to graduates***

- To Choose the best path for you, not the easiest one, or one that someone chose for you.
- To look for the light in the darkness
- That you are a beloved child of God, and you deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.
- To stand up for yourself and others and use your voice to speak out against injustice.

*“And one last thing to remember, another line from the movie,  
**Sometimes you have to make noise, to be heard”***



Hairdressing Students



Fashion & Design Students

### **Post-Graduation Employment**

Upon completion of internships, 61% (11) were retained and offered permanent jobs, 16.7% (3) are volunteering, 11.1% (2) plan to start their own business and 11.1% (2) are still looking for jobs. 10KLWC staff are helping the two remaining participants find job placements.

### **ALUMNI**

In 2023, alumni gatherings were re-established. In Q3, 28 alumni attended, and another is planned for mid-December. Two local Kawempe Division Council Leaders attended, the Guest of Honor, Women Counselor Kawempe Division, Kaitesi Rose and Youth Council Kawempe Division, Honorable Nanteza Percy Rebecca.

### **FATIMA**





Fatimah joined 10KLWC in 2017, in hairdressing and graduated in 2018. Due to hard work, commitment, and good behavior, she was offered a job at her internship placement and worked there until she was able to save money and open her own salon and purchase equipment and set ups and supplies.

She is independent and has a home with her husband, which she calls her own. She is very hard working and makes sound decisions. She has transformed her life and is empowered.

Challenges faced:

- Customers don't want to pay the going rate.
- Some customers don't pay, they can pretend to withdraw money from an ATM, but don't come back or find any other ways of leaving without paying.
- All her equipment was recently stolen, and now she must start over and work from home. ***"This did not stop me from doing what I love" (says Fatimah).***

She says that although all her things were stolen, she can style from her home, or the customer's homes. Fatimah is married and they have one child; she reported that her husband is very supportive, loving, and caring. She also emphasizes that her husband has been very available to support and encourage her all the time, even when her equipment was stolen.

Future plans

1. She is planning to open two salons: one for men and the other for women
2. She is passionate about helping other girls and she said that she can only achieve that by bringing one or two girls to train in her salon for free at least every year for as long as she is working.

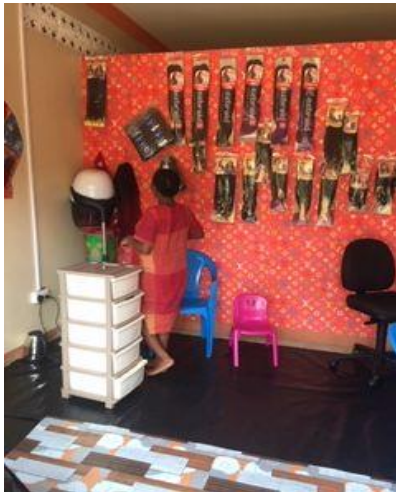
## **MILLY**

Milly was trafficked from the village to the city center with the aim of working as house help. Her job was to take care of her sickly mother and pay for her siblings' school fees.

Things didn't work out as planned so she ended up running away with a man whom she thought would be of help to her but instead he mistreated her and sexually exploited her. She ran away from him and started living in a church where Madam Miriam found her and she was taken through 7 Steps, a former DOFU program. She graduated from the hairstyling program in 2018.

### **Current status**

Milly is living with her boyfriend and their baby girl, and they are expecting another baby. They have plans to build a home soon, for their family. She and her boyfriend have recently opened a women's salon, in a family house so she does not have pressure for rent. She also repairs clothes, as she has skills in fashion and design. Milly reported that this helps her with small things like diapers and groceries.



### **Challenges Faced**

Milly tells us, "Just like any other new business, sometimes there are few clients and sometimes no customers at all."

### **Future Plans**

1. Having a well-equipped salon in the near future
2. Included cosmetics and skin care at the salon.
3. Set up men's section.
4. Training others

### **Observation**

Milly has healed. She is ready to give life another chance from a different angle. She is determined to work so hard and give her small family the best.

## **MARIAM**

She dropped out of school in Primary 7 because of school fees. A relative told her mother that he would help with school fees, in Kampala. Instead of being taken to school, he forced her to work as a maid, and then without consent brought her to another home, to work as a maid. While there she was mistreated and sexually exploited by the homeowner's brother-in-law. She became pregnant. Her exploiter threatened to harm her when she informed her of the pregnancy. She ran away from home and returned to the village. She came back to Kampala after giving birth, and was referred by a local community leader, Madam Robinah. She joined 10KLWC in 2020 and graduated in 2021 in hairdressing.

#### Current Status

- Currently, Mariam is living in Kalerwe Sabiina, with her daughter. She opened a salon in the slums of Kalerwe, with the help of her child's grandmother, who gave her a free room to operate in, wall mirrors, and a big dryer.
- Mariam was able to buy a few braids to get started.
- She reported that she can provide basic needs for herself and the daughter.

**“I can pay my daughter's school fees on time,” says Mariam.**

Challenges: Customers are scarce, and materials are expensive.

#### Future Plans

- To work so hard and buy her own land
- To be training Interns in her salon.

#### Observation

Mariam is very focused and determined to live transformed, to give her daughter a better life and to make sure that her daughter does not experience what she went through.

## OUTREACH

### **International Women's Day**

March 8, 2023, we inaugurated 10KLWC's first International Women's Day Event, a day long health camp. This was the very first community wide outreach event organized by 10KLWC, and it was a success. Over 250 community members were able to get free health services from the organizations that partnered with 10K. Yita Life medical services, Baylor Uganda, Reproductive health, and UCI. Medical services included, Free HIV/AIDs testing and counseling, Deworming, Free blood pressure and diabetes screening as well as psychoeducation on UTI's, STDs, and Nutrition and Family planning.

The goal was to engage in community outreach, a department we are expanding, in an effort to identify local community NGOs and government resources for beneficiaries and alumni and create a network of allies for program referrals.

Event goal:

- 1) Women's Health Education (Awareness)
- 2) Raise community awareness about 10K's services
- 3) Collect information about women affected by CSE in the community. (metrics)

285 women and children benefited from health services provided by 10K's partners:

-69 women were counseled and tested for HIV/AIDs and out of 69,5 tested positive and were referred to Baylor to start their ART treatment and care.

-76 women received reproductive health services and family planning health talks.

-15 women were referred to reproductive health Uganda to access the services.

-209 women/children were administered with deworming tablets which were provided by Yita.

### **Caretakers meeting**

On May 16, 2023, held a caregivers meeting. Staff shared participant progress. In addition, parents were able to inspect the work done by participants.

They were informed of the training syllabus, schedule for training, internships, and Graduation. They were also given a description of the empowerment program, brief history, and services provided. Parents were updated on the forthcoming internships and how to prepare and support participants during the period of internship, and upcoming graduation. Participants shared their experience at the center.

In the comments, caretakers were very appreciative of the work done



## **Community Allies Network**

The purpose of the partnerships is to identify CSE victims for referral. Reference above Enrollment process. The networking process is improved this year, by assigning a staff member to oversee each small ally group of 5 and holding weekly meetings.

### **Community Allies Commercial Sex Exploitation (CSE) Workshop:**

In 2021, a CSE training workshop was developed by 10KLWC staff, under the direction of Acting Director, Michelle Luhrmann. In Q3, a 2nd training was held for community allies, who 10KLWC has partnered with. The purpose of the CSE workshop is to help community members to identify and alert authorities about CSE situations, and to refer potential beneficiaries for 2024 Enrollment. 15 community leaders including a doctor, social workers, pastors, youth leaders were invited to participate.

Improvements were made to the Allie referral program, and small groups were established by location and overseen by staff members, who meet with allies weekly, to troubleshoot, and provide advice. This is a pre-enrollment process. Last year, allies referred about 70 young women, who then began the application process, leading to 28 applicants, 22 enrollees and 18 graduating beneficiaries.

We continue to review and improve the CSE training workshop and the ally program, with the goal to 1) have fewer, but more qualified applicants, 2) identify applicants with a wider capacity to attend a full-time program and thereby increase our class size to 30.

## **ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS**

### **10KLWC MANAGEMENT**

Daughters of Freedom, Uganda, named Martin Munialo, as their Chief Executive Officer, and Executive Director of 10KLWC. Martin assumed responsibility, from Acting Director, Michelle Luhrmann, 10KLWC Co-founder, and President of Amilia's Light. Martin, who resides near Kampala, splits his time at the center with his full-time work responsibilities. Martin has been a welcome addition to the team. He began the year by evaluating the program's operation's, identified challenges, and reorganized administrative tasks, as we transitioned from remote U.S. based management, to on-site management.

He began by regrouping from remote management to on-site supervision, and set forth a plan to:

- Maintain weekly on-site management meetings to carry out the 2023 work plan
- Re-align the implementation of activities according to departments

- Evaluate the operations needs and challenges monthly, quarterly, and annually.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Over the last several years, we have evaluated how to begin to establish better metrics, to evaluate and monitor the program. To that end we began, by creating a survey, with a data set of information to gather, and a scoring sheet, for comparisons.

### **Case Management**

Our beneficiaries are given case numbers and pseudonyms to protect their privacy. This year, our counselor, Esther Achola, completed post graduate work in Case Mgt, and has been working to improve how we track, report, and follow beneficiaries from enrollment, through 5 years out. This provides us with data, to improve programming, which support observational analysis.

### **Higher Graduation Rates**

Improving enrollee graduation rates and reducing the number of beneficiaries that exit. From 2017- 2020, 37% of enrollees exited the program, prior to graduation, and 63% completed. We have adjusted the application process, programming and relationship building which has led to a higher graduation rate, with 86% of enrollees graduating since 2021.

### **Improved Beneficiary Relationships**

Covid created a large gap in the number of alumni, we are able to stay in contact with, and support. Many moved out of the area and changed phones. Post covid, a concerted effort to re-engage with alumni by hiring Christine Atim, our Field Coordinator, who has been able to reengage with over 70% of our enrollees, most of whom have graduated the program, and 93% of that group are currently employed, and are living independently. Of that group, we are aware of only 2 participants that have relapsed. Most are settled, are in stable relationships and are building their futures, as well as looking for ways to pay it forward.

### **New Alumni Survey**

We are in the process of developing metrics to evaluate beneficiary's success over time. The first step was to conduct an alumni survey to determine

- If Alumni benefited from the program and if further changes are needed to improve success rates, in terms of program retention, alumni follow up (contact) and recidivism.
- whether the program empowers beneficiaries to be independent and have agency for themselves.

In January, we will review the results and plan for any needed adjustments to programming and curriculum.

### **2nd annual staff retreat**

was held in Q2 and attended by 10KLWC staff, the Executive Director, Martin Munialo and 10KLWC Cofounder/DOFU Cofounder Fulukas Boroa. DOFU's mission and 10K's

organization's values, mission and vision were reviewed, and personal growth topics were discussed, and staff concerns were resolved by the DOFU BOD directorates.

- Professional Development: Staff attended a Grief - Healing Atmosphere workshop, organized by [TAS] Touch A Soul.

### NGO Compliance

10KLWC achieved full compliance with the Kampala City Authority (KCCA) and established a Memorandum of Understanding, with the NGO Bureau, resolving URA tax assessment and formal NGO status. 10KLWC initially was established and licensed as a business, in 2016. (The licensing process to change operations to an NGO program, was stalled due to Covid, and the passing of former Director, Miriam Enyaga, who was the signatory).

### Personnel

Amilia's Light engaged a human resource consultant, to provide assessments of organizational set up and personnel standards, and the DOFU board is undergoing an analysis of competitive NGO personnel provisions. Work will commence in 2024.

### 10KLWC Partnership Agreement:

Amilia's Light and DOFU agree that a formal MOU is needed. Amilia's Light has engaged a Ugandan attorney, to provide guidance in creating a mutually beneficial document, that is focused on improving capacity, and productivity, while increasing the betterment of more survivors of CSE.

## FUNDRAISING

### Grants

This year we began to identify more grant opportunities that may be a match for Amilia's Light. We are in the process of first steps, with letters of introductions. UCC- Medfield also provided funding after a lapse of several years. More work and a dedicated volunteer/or development person is needed for this. DOFU, also began to apply for grants.

### Fundraisers

Amilia's light successfully raised over \$10K, during the 2022 End of Year online Campaign, And in March, held our first public event post covid. A new event, with a new audience, a Tavern Tour in Philadelphia, PA. The inaugural event raised \$7000,

## Going Forward

No doubt, 2023, was another challenging year for Amilia's Light and 10KLWC. Early in the year, there were hiccups, primarily communications related, as DOFU was reengaging, and working toward finalizing NGO status.

In spring of this year, we were invited into Deloitte's Step-up Program. Initially, we were going to work with them, on identifying new potential partnerships, to expand 10KLWC beyond Uganda's program. During Q1, volunteer board membership changed, and Deloitte graciously pivoted, and provided us with a prioritization lab. In July, they presented their recommendations to us.

We were and remain extremely grateful to Deloitte, as the plan is flexible and can be adjusted according to the skills of new volunteers, a priority for Q1 - Q2. 2024.

### **A note from Michelle**

*The work is hard, but the rewards are many. We know we've helped change the lives of young women surviving the trauma of sex trafficking. We are grateful for the capacity to grow the program in Uganda, and work with up to 30 beneficiaries per year. We're grateful our dropout rate decreased, thanks to funding for more staff. (field outreach coordinator) and improved enrollment processes.*

*We also know there is more to do, sadly with the increased use of social media and black web access, the problem still exists. We would love to eradicate the problem and be put out of work - but that's unlikely. Our mission is to empower victims, to become autonomous independent women, who are making wise choices as they journey toward freedom.*

*For that, we are most grateful to all those who come alongside us, because together, we are healing, transforming, and empowering young women and helping them find their voice to fight back against injustice.*

*I am privileged to do this work, and it must be said, that it could not be done without the support of our donors. They make it possible for the voices of our young women to be heard.*

*Blessing for the New Year,*

*Michelle Mannarino Luhrmann  
Founder, President, Amilia's Light, Inc.*