



Phase 4: Evaluation

Global Livingston Institute

Cornell Institute for Public Affairs
Spring 2022 Capstone Team

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All the GLI staff and industry experts who interviewed with us about our evaluation plan and analysis of programs in developing countries

Team Bio



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Ronnie Schinker is a second-year Master of Public Administration student at the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA), concentrating in Human Rights and Social Justice. Prior to Cornell, Ronnie attended the University of Nebraska, where she studied anthropology, history, and ethnic studies. Upon graduating, she spent two years serving as a Literacy Specialist in the Peace Corps in Kachumbala, Uganda. She then moved to Lira, Uganda and spent a year working as the Communications Specialist for Mango Tree Literacy Laboratory.

As a Graduate Consultant for Global Livingston Institute, her responsibilities include conducting research on the cultural context of nonprofit organizations in Uganda, leading interviews with stakeholders, analyzing previous reports for findings and recommendations, and contributing to the editing and writing of the project documents.



Coordinator and Editor

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As a Graduate Consultant for Global Livingston Institute, her responsibilities include coordinating information exchange with the client, conducting research on past NGO trends, analyzing interview findings for recommendations, and contributing to editing and writing of the project documents.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2022 Capstone report for Global Livingston Institute focuses on the agricultural project implemented in Lira, Uganda. The project started in 2017, with the goal of teaching best agricultural practices to Lira farmers, most of whom are war-affected persons, as well as the adults in the region who were abducted as children. Northern Uganda has a long history of instability, with the Lord's Resistance Army having abducted tens of thousands of children. Those children, now adults, were left to reintegrate back into society without the lived experience of learning from their families as they grew up, and many thus had insufficient knowledge of how to survive or earn a livelihood.

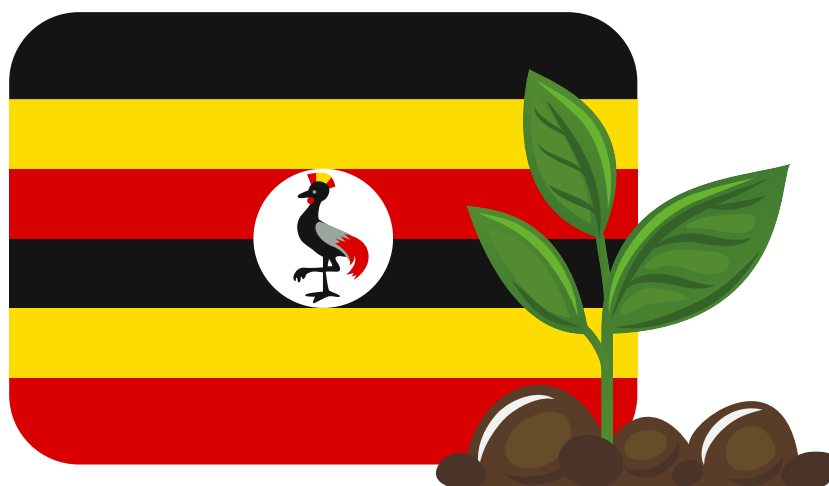
With this and other projects, GLI hoped to provide war-affected persons with the opportunity to obtain a skill to sustain their livelihood and to simultaneously incorporate mental health counseling into trainings to address issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, abuse, and depression.

This report details the 2022 Capstone Team's work to carry out thorough research to map out a timeline of the project, assess GLI's work in Lira, study the initial goals and objectives of the program, and provide recommendations as to GLI's next step in the country with respect to new projects or programs.

Using research documents published by GLI and other non-profit organizations in East-Africa, GLI's past annual reports, previous Capstone reports on the project, and interviews conducted with a variety of GLI staff and industry representatives, the 2022 Capstone team has put together a report that is supposed to serve as the basis

of a proper evaluation plan for the project and give GLI a detailed look into what worked and what failed during the project.

The 2022 Capstone team hopes that the summary of interview and report findings and our recommendations will serve as a foundation for new projects that are holistic, strategized, and beneficial to the Ugandan community



2. INTRODUCTION

The Global Livingston Institute (GLI) was founded by Jamie Van Leeuwen in 2009, who was then traveling to Uganda and Rwanda as part of the Livingston Fellowship he received from Bonfils-Stanton Foundation. During his travels, he discovered the communication gap between NGOs coming to East African regions to implement change and the local communities; as a result, he created GLI to follow his motto of listening and thinking before acting.

GLI is a community-based research institute that was established with the goal of developing strategic partnerships in both the United States and East Africa with a focus on education and social impact. It follows the same structure as The Aspen Institute, a global non-profit organization, focusing on change through leadership, action, and dialogue. GLI's focus is not to fix Africa, but to use its unique philosophy of "Listen, Think, Act" in the communities it visits and hopes to help.

Creating a place at the table for both community leaders and aspiring students by facilitating a discussion on innovative solutions to poverty alleviation, the organization encourages students to spend time in these communities, engage in dialogue with Ugandan and Rwandan community members, business owners, and local leaders, and implement projects in various East African regions that create positive change. GLI has two key areas of focus: Education and Social Impact, both of which help them build partnerships with the people of East Africa and improve communities globally.

GLI's mission is:

"To convene global communities to learn and advance best practices in community development and create equitable, sustainable, and culturally responsive solutions to challenges in the areas of health, economic development, and the environment."



Since its conception, GLI has conducted 47 immersion trips, employed over 200 Ugandans in its various projects, engaged over 4000 community leaders and scholars, and taken more than 300 individuals on immersion experiences in Rwanda and Uganda.

In the future, it hopes to expand its programs and its social impact footprint globally.





3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review aims to provide the history behind the term “former child soldiers”, non-profit organization projects in Uganda, and the creation of GLI’s current agricultural project in Lira, Uganda. Through learning best evaluation practices in East-African settings, challenges non-profit organizations face in developing countries, and the development of colonized societies, this section will identify how recommendations can be formulated for future programs, how the ongoing projects can be facilitated, and the drawbacks of the limitations in current research done on Uganda.

Collectively, the project report aims to answer the following main research question:

Research Question

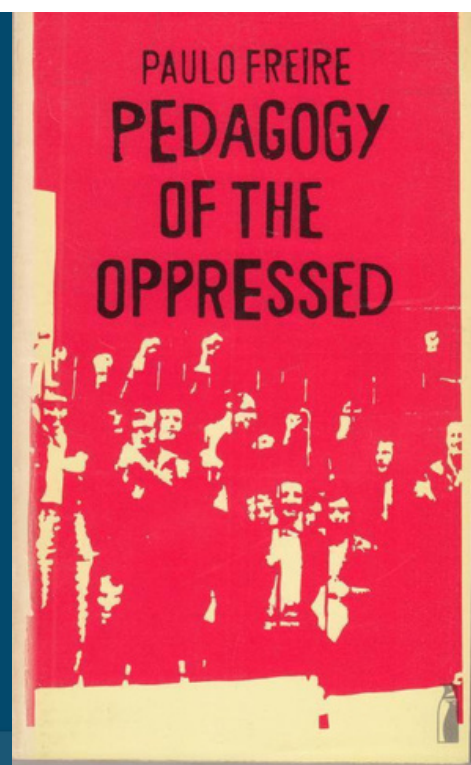
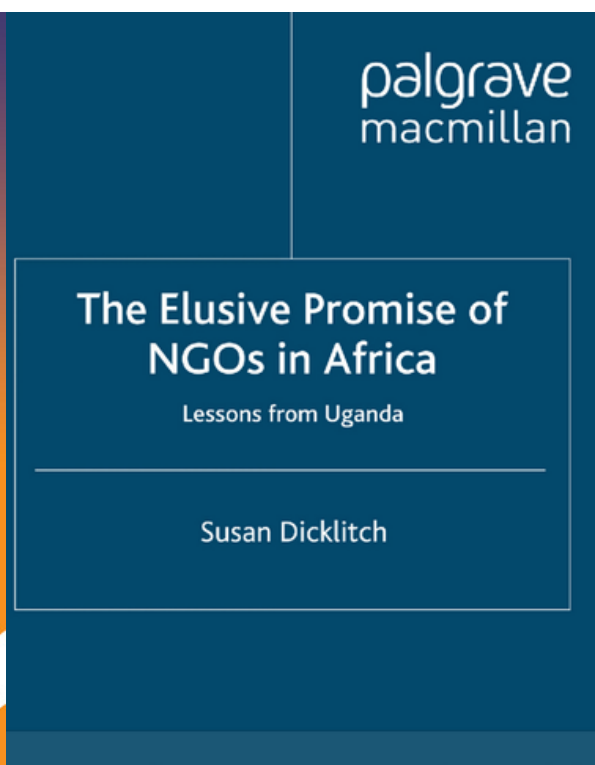
Through critically analyzing GLI’s work with Ugandans who had been abducted as children in Lira, UG, what can we find to celebrate and learn from in order to facilitate collective reflection, formulate recommendations, and arrive at potentially better strategies for future work?

This report is divided into two sections:

1. Assessment of documents reviewed for the purpose of understanding non-profit evaluation and best practices
2. Review of GLI and Capstone reports

General Assessment of Qualitative Research

In the 1990s, much of the Global North held Uganda up as an example of a country making what appeared to be a considerable positive change in terms of poverty reduction (King, 2015). However, that was in the early years of the presidency of Yoweri Museveni, who first took that position in 1986 and has remained president to this day (King, 2015). Since that time, Museveni has come to be understood as a semi-authoritarian ruler under whom much funding is given to Uganda’s military and much less attention is given to everyday citizens, resulting in a concerning level of rising inequality (King 2015). Foreign investors have taken note of the state of Uganda’s government and have increasingly directed their funds to NGOs to maintain their influence in the country while having reduced contact with the government (Dicklitch 1998).



Non-Profit Organizations in Uganda

The result of the growth in funding to NGOs in Uganda has been what Susan Dicklitch (1998), in her book *The Elusive Promise of NGOs in Africa: Lessons from Uganda*, contextualizes as NGOs becoming “intermediaries between the unorganized masses and the state” (p. 3), which she then describes as being potentially too tall of an order. She also outlines several different classifications that can be used to categorize NGOs based on the roles they fill, from voluntary organizations to grassroots NGOs and gap-fillers. The most common of these within Africa is the gap-filler, which are NGOs born out of the failure of a government to provide for the basic service needs of its citizens (Dicklitch 1998). These NGOs are driven primarily by the desires of their donors and thus have a narrow focus, which tends to exclude from their purview the broader impact of their actions. They see an immediate need that should be met; what they do not see is that by intervening in that space they are potentially preventing the pushback from citizens that would force the government to act on that issue (Dicklitch 1998). To have a functioning democratic society, a government should understand that it is accountable to its citizens. With that crucial feedback loop prevented due to the addition of an NGO with international funding, many NGOs are either failing to empower or furthering the disempowerment of those whose best interests they claim to be operating in (Dicklitch 1998).

On this topic, Sophie King (2015) conducted a yearlong study of the impact of a specific research and development NGO within the rural agrarian sphere in Western Uganda for her doctoral thesis, and in “Increasing the Power of the Poor? NGO-led Social Accountability Initiatives and Political Capabilities in Rural Uganda,” she both provided an analysis of the context that this particular NGO—which is kept anonymous in the report—was working in and also raised questions regarding what factors influence the goals and priorities of NGOs in Uganda. King draws attention to the important relationship between NGOs and ‘social accountability,’ which is described as the actions, led by citizens, that serve to highlight the responsibility of those tasked with providing services to deliver those services (King 2015).

As mentioned above, NGOs often step into the role of bridging the gap between the general public and the government (Dicklitch 1998). King takes an optimistic approach, stating based on her research that there are strategies NGOs can use to fill that space in a way that adds to, rather than detracts from, the legitimacy of the government and its process of obtaining feedback from citizens (King 2015). However, she adds the important caveat that this “is unlikely to do more than ameliorate the status quo in short-term and limited ways, if [NGOs] fail to organize low-income groups in ways that challenge the social norms and power relations that obstruct effective popular pressure for better public goods outcomes in agrarian contexts, characterized by semi-authoritarian political regimes” (King 2015, p. 888).

To avoid this, King suggests that NGOs create goals centralized around political learning, employing ‘Freirian-style conscientization’ to truly empower those served by the NGO by incorporating a process of cultivating an individual understanding of power relations, both formal and informal, in the national and local context (King 2015). In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire [LJM1] (1972) also emphasized that it is important for anyone interested in intervention to never assume that they have more to teach than to learn from those with whom the intervention is being conducted. Those who have been systemically disadvantaged may not have knowledge of the language of power relations, but they have been observing the impact of them throughout their lives, and thus will always have a deeper and more intimate understanding of the situation than the intervener (Freire 1972).

King uses the Freirian framework to show that the work that NGOs are doing is inherently political, and as such, the most crucial work that should be done alongside any focused agricultural or economic intervention is that which will catalyze “disadvantaged groups, like subsistence and smallholder farmers, to organize for the accumulation of [socioeconomic and political] power, to more effectively represent their interests, and make meaningful claims of the state” (King 2015, pp. 899-900). This criterion is not a typical standard for evaluating the work of NGOs, but it is based firmly on Freirian analysis, and an intervention organized around it thus has a tremendous amount of potential power to make lasting change.

How to Evaluate Agricultural Programs in Uganda

One of the main goals of the 2022 Capstone team is to evaluate GLI’s agricultural project in Lira, Uganda, using best practices implemented by other organizations and evaluating agencies.

Uganda's Plan for The Modernization of Agriculture

The Plan for Modernization of Agriculture, PMA, framework was first created through the national Poverty Eradication Action Plan, PEAP, in 2000 and implemented first in 2001. It focuses on poverty eradication through an agricultural and agro-industrial sector that is competitive, profitable, dynamic, and sustainable (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005).

The PMA focuses on evaluation through **seven** priority pillars:

Research and technology development,	Improving access to rural finance,
National agricultural advisory services,	Agro-processing and marketing,
Agricultural education,	Sustainable natural resource utilization and management,
Physical infrastructure.	

Overall, the PMA pillars help distinguish between district and sub-county levels, help formulate coordinated and harmonized strategies, and stress the importance of the involvement of local governments in implementing a local structure and leveraging funding in the best manner to facilitate training programs.

Impact Evaluation

Impact evaluation – an important policy analysis concept – is an integrated approach to monitoring, evaluating, and learning from and supporting future innovation platforms. In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, a study done by Warinda et al discusses capacity building and policy harmonization to support sustainable development in the region (Warinda et al., 2020). It links an increase in income with the adoption of low-cost crops and leveraging access to adaptable technologies, sustainable livestock and milk production, and factors such as gender equality, enhanced food security, and capacity development to design future interventions. Most importantly, it explains how to use program evaluation to diagnose problems such as low crop productivity, low transfer of skills among farmers, and integrating marginalized community members into various projects.

Another evaluation by Macours et al focused on training Farmer Trainers to equip them with the necessary skillset and knowledge to help farmers improve dairy production practices, crop planting and harvesting, and raising livestock. The results showed that the treatment group – i.e., participants trained by Farmer Trainers before undergoing agricultural practices – reported higher crop yield, better dairy production, and more sustainable crops (Karen Macours et al., 2015).

Best Practices for Impact Evaluation

One particularly interesting method of determining whether an NGO is valued by its community—a more classic method of evaluation—and is thus likely to be a good model of ‘best practices for other NGOs was found in “A Client-Community Assessment of the NGO Sector in Uganda,” published in the Journal of Development Studies in 2006. In this article, Barr and Fafchamps detail their attempt to evaluate and draw conclusions regarding Uganda’s entire NGO sector. They did this by conducting 268 structured group interviews, speaking to more than 2,500 people during that process. While 2006 was more than fifteen years ago, this study is nevertheless a useful perspective on the NGO sector in Uganda and can serve as a guide to the roots from which some modern-day problems may stem. For example, Barr and Fafchamps’ findings were that the majority of Ugandan NGOs do not keep detailed financial records, which might point to the systemic lack of accountability faced by NGOs. This might seem intuitively odd to someone who knows that most of the funding for the Ugandan NGO sector is provided by international NGOs, which do typically have standardized, detailed reporting requirements (Barr and Fafchamps, 2006). However, in reality, those funds only reach a select few NGOs, while a far larger number of NGOs receive small grants from domestic NGOs that do not require strict recordkeeping (Barr and Fafchamps, 2006).

Additionally, as part of their study, Barr and Fafchamps created a particular evaluation strategy that is adapted to the Ugandan context. It is worth including here in its entirety, as it has the potential to be useful in future evaluations that the Global Livingston Institute (GLI) conducts regarding its work and impact. According to Barr and Fafchamps (2006):

The structured group interviews yield several measures of the client communities' satisfaction with the NGOs they are evaluating. One of these is a measure of the communities' willingness to pay for the continued existence of the NGOs. To elicit this measure, we ask the client-community group to imagine that they find out that the NGO is going to stop doing its work in Uganda, that a large sum of money is needed to make it possible for the NGO to carry on doing its work, and that their parish has been asked to help find this money. Then, they are asked to imagine that the government gives their parish a grant and they are the committee that has to decide what to do with the grant. The government has said that they can share all, some, or none of the grants equally among the households in the parish and can contribute all, some, or none of the grants to the NGO to help keep it working. The representatives are given a pile of beans representing the grant and asked to separate it into two piles, one representing the money that they wish to be shared among the households and one representing the money that they wish to help keep the NGO working. The proportion of the beans allocated to the NGOs is taken as an indicator of their willingness to pay, conditional on the availability of funds, for the continuance of the NGOs' activities. (p. 619)

The results of the above method when conducted in Barr and Fafchamps’ study were that, on average, the client communities were willing to give a little over 60 percent of the grant to the NGO. More than a third of the client communities would give all of the grants to the NGO, and only three percent of the client communities were not willing to give any of the grants to the NGO (Barr and Fafchamps, 2006). Important to note here is that none of the NGOs being evaluated were involved with the selection of the members of the client-communities; rather, enumerators employed by Barr and Fafchamps contacted the parish chairman, who was then asked to select six to ten community members of all genders and ages to attend a meeting that is conducted by a trained enumerator (Barr and Fafchamps, 2006).

GLI Reports

As components of this report consist of follow-up research based on work already completed by previous Capstone teams and the GLI team, a section of this literature review focuses on the analysis of all the previous reports.



GLI Progress Report – May 15, 2019

This progress report builds on foundational work done in 2017 and 2018, elaborating further on workforce training conducted in Kampala, Uganda, along with agricultural training done in northern and southern parts of Uganda. It also focused on working with marginalized communities in Uganda, including individuals with disabilities, individuals newly entering the job market, and aspiring entrepreneurs.

One of the main focuses of the report is on key partnerships fostered in 2018 and 2019, including ones with:

- **Angel's Center:** GLI partnered with Angel's Center for Children with Special Needs to create a job placement and training program for disabled children and their families. A ten-day training course was designed and included children and young people with Down's Syndrome, where participants learned Adaptive Living Skills (ADLs) that will aid them in performing basic tasks and routines required to live independently – these included exercises such as washing clothes, sweeping the property, and cleaning cookware. Following the training, GLI and Angel's center followed up with identifying and training organizations that were interested in mentoring young people with Down's Syndrome for job placements. Additionally, measures were put in place to ensure the rights of the trained people were respected and met within the job industry.
- **Children of Peace Uganda (CPU):** GLI's agricultural project based in the Lira district of Uganda focuses on the best agricultural and crop storage methods for rural farmers. GLI's work with CPU is mainly to eliminate price fraud that farmers – mainly former abductees that are victims of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) – face while selling their crops, including unfair prices for their produce, especially from “middlemen” that then sell the crops to large buyers for a profit. CPU's work centers around providing economic, entrepreneurial, and psychological support for community members. The initial pilot model implemented in 2018 comprised of 50 farmers, expanding to include a total of 353 farmers across four sub-counties in the Lira District. The training included skill-building related to soya bean growing, financial literacy, and post-harvest handling, through the provision of 25 kilograms of soya beans and one acre of land from the two partners. CPU also agreed to facilitate transactions of crops between the farmers and international agricultural buyer, Mt. Meru Group, which agreed to purchase the yield at market price. The training also included knowledge sharing regarding the enterprise and business of soybean production.
- **Kyusa:** GLI partnered with Kyusa in January 2019 to empower school dropouts to use their interest in business as a motive to build sustainable careers through mentorship, entrepreneurship training, and free online coursework. The program trained 44 entrepreneurs (majority females) in success practices, creating business opportunities, and launching a new business idea.
- **KCCA:** GLI worked with the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) to train 221 people in practice-based skills for job search and retention. Those already employed found the training helpful in building skills related to seeking better opportunities in their industries of interest.

GLI Progress Report – September 15, 2019

This report focuses on GLI's ongoing efforts to provide income improvement opportunities to youth, job seekers, smallholder farmers, and vulnerable populations across Uganda. Their partnerships built with organizations in 2018 and early 2019 facilitated the training programs. They continued working with Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and KYUSA to continue programs centered around workforce readiness skills, entrepreneurship skills, and building viable businesses.

Moreover, GLI discussed their Sustainable Farming Cooperative built with CPU that facilitates easier access to market and trains farmers about sustainable farming methods. This report also mentioned their inter-program collaborations with Sanders Family Philanthropic Foundation that have enabled initiatives like the Women's Leadership Retreat and academic partnerships.





Sanders Report – January 2019

This report reviews the results obtained from GLI's training programs that center around former child soldiers, farmers, children with disabilities – such as Down's Syndrome – and women, in Lira, Kampala, and Entusi. In Lira, the Children of Peace team in Uganda is responsible for providing staff support to provide check-ins and monitoring with all farmers.

Additionally, through a partnership with KAD Africa, around 30 female farmers received training to become empowered and engaged in farming practices. The report also discussed an increase in income of farmers to 75% and placing farmers in cooperatives where they can enhance their skills and get better access to the agriculture markets.

Sanders Report – 2021

The 2021 report discussed re-evaluating the program design using data and feedback from participants and the challenges posed due to COVID-19 that included limitations in program development and implementation and farmers facing hindrance in selling crops. Nevertheless, their perseverance led to connecting farmers with sustainable markets both domestically and internationally. Also, they helped improve community incomes and post-harvest handling mechanisms such as packaging and storage.

Capstone Reports

CIPA Capstone Report – Fall 2015

The fall 2015 Capstone team worked on strengthening the socioeconomic conditions of former child soldiers in northern Uganda, through conducting primary and secondary research and evaluating the children's social, physical, mental, and vocational needs. The project's goal was to strengthen the future of children and their families, thus supporting the community and society at large.

They explained the Ugandan political history along with the role of the Lord's Resistance Army in recruiting child soldiers and the resultant psychological trauma and health impediments the child soldiers faced. They also discussed the abducted women and the associated economic impediments due to the army's actions.

Furthermore, their data and methodology section included the interviews conducted to gather more information about the project and limitations in their current research.

CIPA Capstone Report – Fall 2016

The fall 2016 Capstone team reported current socioeconomic conditions in Uganda along with existing programs designed to provide vocational training and opportunities to improve mental health through a dedicated program of former child soldiers in Lira, Uganda. They analyzed the 37 interviews conducted by the previous capstone team, analyzed existing programs centered around improving mental health, surveyed community members about their perception of former child soldiers, and drafted recommendations for forming partnerships with existing former child soldier rehabilitation programs.

CIPA Capstone Report – Spring 2018

The spring 2018 Capstone team conducted a needs assessment and gathered baseline data to measure future social effects to assist GLI in designing better training programs to launch in summer 2018. They surveyed the local farmers to assess their training needs of local farmers and collected data from local farmers to measure the social impact of these programs. They found that farmers have basic agronomic knowledge, need practical training to grow sustainable crops, and could not afford agricultural tools without GLI funding.



CIPA Capstone Report – Fall 2018

The fall 2018 Capstone team developed a three-month follow-up survey, based on the baseline survey administered in spring 2018, and provided recommendations for a data collection tool – ZERION iFormBuilder – to digitize data collection efforts in Kabale and Lira.

CIPA Capstone Report – Fall 2020

The fall 2020 Capstone researched and identified current challenges former child soldiers face in Lira along with the gap in their needs and what GLI is offering through their training programs. The team's work focused on surveying former child soldiers and non-FCS participants in the training programs to assess their current needs. They also built a survey tool to facilitate future surveying of teacher groups. Their findings included a difference between the income of FCS and non-FCS participants, along with the need for emotional support in former child soldiers.

CIPA Capstone Report – Spring 2021

The spring 2021 Capstone team conducted desk research and literature reviews on the mental health of former child soldiers and children born in captivity. Their focus was on two factors, (i) stigmatization and discrimination from the society, and (ii) lack of resources and poverty. Although this is a project separate from the agriculture training, this report was reviewed to get an idea of how desk research is conducted for GLI work.

Limitations in the Research

The research available on agricultural programs in Uganda is abundant but it has a few drawbacks discussed below:

- **Timelines of research:** Most of the reports based in Uganda are either limited to one region or are from the early 2000s, leaving a lot of gaps in the information the Capstone team can use for their evaluation of GLI's project.
- **GLI reports:** The GLI reports reviewed by the Capstone team have gaps that are not accounted for; most importantly, the reports are only from 2019 and 2020, leaving a lot of questions regarding whether there is a gap in publishing, or the research is limited. Moreover, both of the Sanders report discussed above do not provide a detailed picture of the goals GLI has set for its project.
- **Discrepancies in data:** The CIPA Capstone reports have data that is contradictory. The 2015 Capstone report does not accurately list the number of former child soldiers, stating that the number is 20,000 and 2 million in the same document, leading to confusion regarding data verification. The 2016 Capstone report lists that 100% of the population was surveyed, while another section of the report lists a different percentage.
- **Insensitive usage of terms:** Previous Capstone reports included surveys and interviews with 'former child soldiers,' teachers, and farmers in Uganda. However, in "Child soldiers or war affected children? Why the formerly abducted children of northern Uganda are not child soldiers," published in *Intervention*, Margaret Angucia asserts that the term 'child soldiers' is an overgeneralization and is a term that is not applicable to the Ugandan context.

She based this on a study she conducted between April 2006 and December 2008, during which time she interviewed and conducted focus groups with a total of 255 Ugandans who were impacted by the war but had not been abducted, as well as conducting 27 in-depth interviews with Ugandan children who had been abducted (Angucia 2014). These children consistently used language which showed that, throughout their involvement with the Lord's Resistance Army, they considered themselves to be prisoners who were forced to do what 'they,' the soldiers, told them to do (Angucia 2014). This distancing makes it evident that, while abducted and forced to participate in activities that would usually be conducted by soldiers, they themselves did not transition into the mentality of soldiers and remained abducted children (Angucia 2014).

Angucia provides a history of the term 'child soldiers' as being one that has consistently been used in humanitarian terms in order to play on the emotions that it evokes in those who are potential donors. She also points out that many children in Northern Uganda were seriously impacted by the war and suggests instead considering the use of more inclusive language such as 'war affected children' or, in the specific context where it is necessary, 'formerly abducted children' (Angucia 2014). This is because many of the children who

were growing up in that time had their lives disrupted by the necessity of night-commuting for their own safety or moving with their families to Internally Displaced Persons camps; the current needs of those who took extraordinary measures to avoid abduction and those who were actually abducted might not be so dissimilar in many contexts.

The reports compiled by former capstone groups seem to either not have had access to this literature or to have disagreed with this perspective, as their reports consistently use the term 'former child soldiers.' When the 2022 Capstone Team interviewed GLI staff member Amany Jerry and asked what those he works with would prefer to be called, he confirmed that "when someone is called a 'former child soldier' it comes with some sort of stigmatization, especially for those kids who never went through counseling or had any sort of psychosocial support from the experts." He also said that, "Whenever you are in the community and you are shown that, hey, by the way, that is a former child soldier, you will know that and then call them by their normal names. You would not say, hey, you are a former child soldier, but rather you would say 'Hey Grace' or whichever name. It's two ways: the stigma can come from the community members themselves or sometimes from the child soldiers themselves." However, his response was mixed, as we then asked whether he thought that, if those he works with were to see the research that GLI has published in which they are referred to as former child soldiers, they would be okay with that. Jerry responded that, "It would not be a problem, and actually ethically, when you go into the community and you have been allowed by the government to carry out research, you are supposed to share the findings with the community members. It's okay if they read the report and see the term former child soldiers—I don't think they would be offended by that."

Based on the above research, as well as Jerry's confirmation that there is a stigma around the term, the 2022 Capstone Team has chosen to avoid the use of the term 'former child soldiers' whenever possible. We instead spoke of "Ugandans who had been abducted as children."

Challenges Faced by NGOs

The East-African region is ripe with opportunities for international development, attracting dozens of non-profit organizations every year. To assess the challenges organizations like the Global Livingston Institute have faced in Uganda, the Capstone team has first researched the common challenges non-profits face in developing countries (Jennifer, n.d.) (Omona & Mukuye, 2013).

- **Lack of strategic planning:** Organizations develop goals and objectives, without formulating a framework that maps out their project indicators, outcomes, and outputs. This affects the development of their program and hinders project timeliness.
- **Lack of credibility:** An organization must build up its positive reputation so the locals can trust them to bring change to their communities. However, non-profits face challenges while building their credibility, including a lack of transparency in their actions, doubts about their legitimacy (especially by the local government), mistrust among their partners, and little accountability for their actions (which sometimes lead to negative externalities in their projects). As a result, service delivery and program implementation suffer, leading to non-profits earning a bad reputation among their peers and in society.
- **Lack of knowledge about appropriate fund usage:** Non-profits require a healthy flow of funding to accomplish their project goals. Some organizations lack the skill to attain proper funding, while others do not build a financial plan to appropriately use their funds, leading to beneficiaries doubting their abilities and retracting funding.
- **Absence of networking:** Non-profits must recognize the need to build strong partnerships with local administration and organizations and not see peers as competitors. There are plenty of opportunities to take partnerships as a form of mentorship and support and learning best practices that facilitate effective allocation of resources and project implementation.





DATA COLLECTION/METHODOLOGY

The 2022 Capstone team's research objectives include identifying strategies to improve future GLI projects and strengthen the overall skillset of those who were abducted as children through training geared towards knowledge sharing and dealing with mental health concerns. To meet these objectives, the team utilized multiple sources of data and research methods, relying on both primary and secondary data collection to determine our findings.

Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data collection section of the project report includes a thorough analysis of GLI publications, reports compiled by previous Capstone teams, government publications centered around agricultural projects in East Africa, and scholarly articles and documentation that discuss impact evaluation, challenges non-profits face, and the potential strategies for success in implementing projects in developing countries.

Primary Data Collection

The primary data collection section of this report focuses on the interviews conducted of Global Livingston Institute (GLI) staff members, former Capstone students involved in the project, industry specialists who have experience in project evaluation, and experts who can guide how to map out challenges non-profits face in the East-African settings and how to overcome them to strategize future programs that meet the needs of the communities that GLI is involved with.

Finding Interviewees

The Capstone team determined that it was important to start the project off by interviewing the Capstone advisor, Laurie J. Miller to get her input about the project pilot and how the first few stages were implemented in 2018. Her feedback helped pave the way for the data methodology section and will also facilitate the findings section of the final report.

Through Laurie, the team contacted Alessandra McCormack, a fellow executive Master of Public Administration student who was also affiliated with USAID and has work experience in Nairobi, Kenya, due to which her feedback was important to determining common challenges international organizations face in developing countries. Alessandra also provided the team with contacts of other leaders in the international development sector; the Capstone team interviewed two of them: Nicolas Ford and Stephanie Gaffney.

Moreover, from the GLI staff, the team first interviewed the CEO, Jamie Van Leeuwen, to gain better understanding of the problems GLI encountered while implementing their project, and from there they identified that they should speak to staff members in the operations and academic research departments to investigate the role of different partners in the project, and the overall results of the training that were conducted.

Lastly, the team managed to interview teachers affiliated with the training, the staff previously in charge of the project implementation, and representatives from GLI's partners in the program, specifically Children of Peace, in the final weeks of the project.



Interviews

The details of the people interviewed for the Capstone project are mentioned in Appendix I. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to one hour, and followed a scripted format using the interview questions outlined in Appendix II.

Interview Questions

The Capstone team identified several sources that were useful to our process of formulating the evaluation questions for the interviews that the team would conduct. The first of these is a document that was created by the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, which encouraged attempting to view the program from the perspective of those who it was designed for and the factors in their lives that might impact their participation in the program ((Buckley, n.d.). It also suggested questions that would prompt the interviewee to reflect on the planning stages of the program, and whether those items were carried out as intended or if certain circumstances had arisen and become impediments.

The next source that was utilized was “The Boundaries for an Evaluation: Specify the Key Evaluation Questions,” published online in 2016 by BetterEvaluation (Specify the Key Evaluation Questions | Better Evaluation, n.d.). This article drew attention to the importance of creating questions that would give the interviewee a chance to discuss the program’s appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficacy. The final source was an article written by Ally Krupar, who is an Adjunct Instructor at American University’s Office of Graduate & Professional Studies, and who more specifically teaches the class Qualitative Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation (Krupar, 2021). Her article, “Asking Program Evaluation Questions,” provided background on the methodology one should consider when formulating evaluation questions, emphasizing a specific focus on questions that would allow one to determine the exact problem that the project had attempted to address and whether it had thus far done so or merely addressed issues related to that problem. Upon completion of this research, the team formed interview questions, included in the appendix of this report.

Following the team’s interview with Alessandra McCormack, the team reflected on the interview questions created and determined that they were aligned with her recommendations for the evaluation of a program.



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Throughout this project, the 2022 Capstone Team used the documents outlined in the Literature Review section of this report, as well as interviews conducted with various stakeholders and industry specialists in order to evaluate the Agriculture Program to the best of our ability. Primarily, we found that there were a number of inconsistencies within these reports, which led us to question the appropriateness of the use of some of the documents as the basis for this project. A clearly delineated project proposal document, which could have been adapted as the program evolved, would have been beneficial to this project. We also found that a great deal of the steps taken within this program's development were based on verbal communication that does not exist in written form anywhere and thus could not be included in this evaluation. These challenges influenced our interview process, which was lengthy but often only tangentially related to the core of the program.



Secondary Data Findings



Project Proposal

In our interview with Alessandra McCormack, she stated that it is necessary to begin a project by creating a comprehensive plan, which should include adaptive programming as well as a risk management strategy. One way to begin this process is by filling out a project proposal document. As a more grassroots-level organization, GLI might not yet have created a template for this, so we recommend seeking out those that are available online from organizations such as the United Nations (UN). We found a project proposal template that gives thorough guidance as to what should be considered when in the beginning stages of a project. This document is a project proposal application for the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability (UNVFD).

The UNVFD document has five sections: background and justification of the project, objectives of the project, project implementation and management plan, project monitoring and evaluation, and project budget. These sections each contain prompts designed to allow the organization proposing the project to think through their plan from a variety of angles. For example, the Background and Justification section asks for descriptions of:

- a) The problem or critical issue which the proposal seeks to resolve
- b) How the proposal relates to other relevant national development strategies and policies
- c) Whether there are other programmes and activities which will complement the proposal
- d) How the need for the project was determined
- e) How the intended beneficiaries were involved in project identification and planning
- f) What kind of assistance the concerned Governmental offices will provide
- g) What kind of resources the Implementing Agency and other non-governmental organizations will provide

Most of the above would have been very relevant to consider in advance of implementing the GLI Agriculture Program.

It is possible that some sort of proposal was drafted before the GLI Agriculture Program began; however, the 2022 CIPA Capstone team was not provided with that document. Of the capstone reports that we were given, which seem to be the primary basis for the GLI Agriculture Program, none appeared to be explicitly in the format of a project proposal. Our research, as well as the interviews we have conducted with industry specialists such as Alessandra McCormack, has shown that a strong project plan is not optional; rather, it is the determining factor for whether the project will create measurable success.

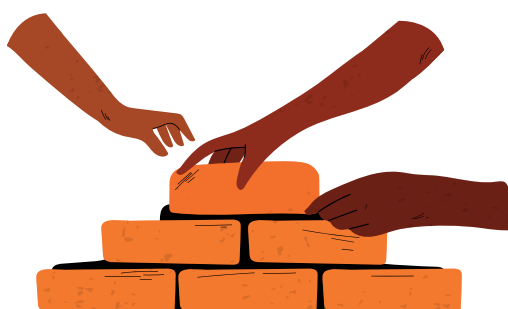
A comprehensive plan can also serve as a useful tool if the project begins to deviate from its stated objectives. Using the project plan, mid-term evaluators will be able to determine what the plan had projected for each phase of the project and thus have a higher chance of correcting any issues before they become great enough to derail the project entirely.

As such, evaluators who are lacking the guidance of a strong project plan will be essentially in the dark regarding the original intent of the program and whether it managed to fulfill expectations. The 2022 CIPA Capstone Team were evaluators who did not come into the project until it had already finished—or had been paused, at the very least. We were very reliant on documents to gain any kind of understanding of the program and made that need known to GLI, requesting to be provided with all project-related documents at multiple intervals. The Cornell Capstone program began collaborating with GLI to conduct research for this project in 2015. We were sent four reports in total from GLI, called “Sanders Reports,” as they were created solely for the purpose of communication with the donor organization, The Sanders Family Foundation. Three of these reports are from 2019, while the last is from 2021. Summaries of these documents included in our literature review show that most of their content is dedicated to other programs that GLI is implementing in Uganda; most of the reports have only one brief section devoted to explicating the status of the Agriculture Program in Lira.

While we do have the Cornell Capstone report from 2015, it consists of more than 40 pages of literature review, with only three pages dedicated to data and methodology (once the summary of the information from the literature review is extracted from that section). A review of the literature is helpful background for those who are unfamiliar with Ugandan history, and an understanding of the Ugandan context is crucial for anyone who is attempting to create a program there. However, measuring the success of projects that have already been conducted in the region does not explicitly specify a way forward for the project at hand. It is also questionable whether Cornell students who likely did not have any specific familiarity with Uganda before this three-month capstone project would be able to obtain any kind of comprehensive level of cultural context in such a brief span of time.

The Cornell Capstone report from 2015 is also considered by the 2022 Capstone Team to be a document of questionable reliability for a variety of reasons. The first of these is the inconsistency throughout the document regarding the number of Ugandan children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). On page three of the report, which is the first page of the executive summary, the document states that “the LRA... abducted and displaced hundreds and thousands people [sic] living in Northern Uganda and neighboring countries, leaving more than **2 million** child soldiers.” On page seven of the report, at the beginning of the section on Uganda’s political history, it reads “[the] LRA produced over **200,000** former child soldiers...”. On page 13 of the report, in a section on the population of the LRA, it reads “The total number of children abducted by the LRA was roughly **20,000** during the 19-year conflict.” Such a large discrepancy in quantitative data, especially when that data is on the topic that is at the center of the research project, is a glaring error. There are other aspects of the document that more subtly point to a lack of attention to detail. On page five, when describing Uganda’s geographic position, the document states “It is bordered by Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Congo, and Sudan.” This is inaccurate information. This report was compiled in 2015, four years after South Sudan had gained independence on July 9, 2011 (Aufiero and Tut Pur, 2021); since 2011, Uganda has been bordered by South Sudan, not Sudan. While this error, unlike the previous one, does not change the entire tenor of the document, it is one among many weaknesses found throughout the document which, taken together, show the 2015 Capstone Team’s lack of familiarity with Uganda.

These students were entrusted with the creation of interview questions that would be asked directly to Ugandans who had been abducted as children, and then two of the students went to Uganda to conduct the interviews. This was an interesting way forward, for which no explanation is provided.



2016 Interviews with Stakeholders

The 2015 Capstone Team created a list of 55 questions to be used in the interviews with those Ugandans who had been abducted as children. These interviews formed the basis for the next two Capstone reports, which together with the first Capstone report constitute the foundation for the project as a whole.

The 2015 Capstone Report does not specify how the interview questions were developed; it only mentions that help was given by GLI. There is no explanation as to what factors were considered in the decision to conduct individual interviews rather than create focus groups or provide potential respondents with a printed survey. At this time the reasons could only be guessed at; a written record of the process of developing the interview method as well as the interview questions themselves should have been a crucial aspect of the document, so it is unfortunate that the 2015 Capstone Team did not see fit to include their reasoning or sources. The 2015 Capstone Report was completed prior to the interviews being conducted, so that report does not include any interview responses or analysis of those responses.

The 2016 Capstone Report, completed in December 2016, summarized the findings from the interviews with Ugandans who had been abducted as children, which had been done in January 2016. The long gap between interviewing and analyzing the interviews is notable and is most likely a byproduct of working with a graduate class where it is unpredictable whether a potential consulting project will be chosen in each semester.

The 2016 Capstone Report was able to provide the methodology behind the selection of interviewees. Initial interviewees were selected by researchers—it is not stated whether this term refers to GLI staff or Cornell Capstone students—from a list of those who had been abducted as children and were enrolled at the Rachelle Rehabilitation Center in Lira upon their release or escape from the LRA. After the initial interviews, snowball sampling was used, in which those interviewees provided contacts to others who had also been abducted as children. The 2016 Capstone team seems to have been similarly frustrated with the lack of explanation regarding the interview question selection in the 2015 Capstone Report, as the 2016 report states on page 11 that “The snowball method by which researchers selected interviewees as well as the type of information collected, consisting mostly of demographic data, makes it difficult to support generalizable claims about the lives and socioeconomic status of former child soldiers in Lira district.”

The 2016 Capstone Team was nevertheless able to take the findings from interviews, which primarily pointed to the interviewees’ common interest in a variety of vocational programs and recommend that an agriculture training program be created.

Limitations to Secondary Research Findings

The 2017 Capstone Report, compiled throughout the Spring of that year, shows that that team noted and researched the potential impact of climate change and the lack of infrastructure in rural parts of Uganda. That report also presented case studies of other programs in the East African region working with the issues of agriculture and citizens who had been abducted as children, in order to analyze the aspects of those programs that might be applicable in the Ugandan context. The 2017 Capstone Team then interviewed one GLI staff member, one CPU staff member, and three people with ties to Uganda or East Africa who were not involved with GLI.

These three reports are the extent of the materials that the 2022 Capstone Team had access to in order to attempt to understand the genesis of the GLI Agriculture Program through desk research. As previously mentioned, we were also provided with four of the Sanders Reports, but unfortunately these were from well into the second year of the program and do not contain much information on the Agriculture Program. The Sanders Reports also must be used with caution, from the perspective of an evaluator, because even the most transparent of organizations will want to phrase their efforts in a positive light when communicating with a donor.

This meant that the 2022 Capstone Team struggled with a lack of clarity on the program itself—how the trainings were developed and what they involved, how many people were coordinating the trainings, how consistent the follow-up was, whether mental health aspects were incorporated along with the agriculture training, and many other aspects. We understood from our initial conversations with Laurie Miller, our Capstone Advisor, that the trainings themselves were conducted by Children of Peace Uganda (CPU), but that due to misallocated funds, GLI no longer had a relationship with CPU. This hindered our evaluation, as we were unable to ask our questions directly to the people who had been the most involved in the trainings. As such, we deviated from our planned interview questions and spent a portion of our interviews with GLI staff instead asking exploratory questions about the implementation of the program itself, rather than questions intended to evaluate the interviewee's perspective on the successes or failures of the program.

Information about the interviews conducted by the 2022 Capstone Team continues in the next section.



Primary Data Findings

This section focuses on the interviews conducted for the project. After reviewing the USDA Capstone report provided by the Capstone advisor, Laurie Miller, the team decided against including interview transcripts due to privacy concerns. Instead, the interview findings have been presented by weaving details from the interviews into recommendations provided to the client.

Interview Findings

This section is divided into two. First is interview findings from other programs operated by a global organization, titled Global Communities in East Africa. The second section summarizes interviews done with GLI staff.

Interviews with Industry Representatives

The Spring 2022 Capstone team received the contact information of a few industry representatives from Alessandra McCormack to interview about challenges in East-African settings. The first interviewee, Nicolas Ford, is the country director for global communities in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Nicolas Ford has worked for international organizations for over 25 years and has managed programs in different parts of the world, primarily in Africa, some in the Balkans, and some in South Asia. Global Communities, founded in 1952, is a global development organization that has grown to reach over 35 countries per year. The organization's work in Tanzania is primarily in the education sector, focusing on school feeding programs in collaboration with the Tanzanian government.

The second interview was with Stephanie Gaffney, Technical Advisor for Integrated School Feeding & Sustainable Programming at Global Communities. She works in the San Diego, California, office but communicates regularly with Nicolas Ford about the organization's school-feeding project in Tanzania.

The findings from both interviews have been summarized here. One of the biggest challenges that any non-profit organization faces is the design of its programs. With projects in the agricultural and sustainability fields, the projects' activities are oftentimes discussed at the start but not measured during the process, leading to situations where the project objectives become unclear. For example, a program can conduct tens and hundreds of trainings but fails to identify the changes that took place because of those training and whether the behavior was changed. Also, it is unclear whether the changes were at an individual, community, or regional level. If a project's goal is to move from point A to point B, some programs fail to identify what "point B" will be, and whether it is achievable or not. This means that the proper metrics to measure success are absent; projects are constructed at the beginning, without knowing exactly what is to be produced at the end.

Another challenge organizations face is through partnerships. It is common practice in developing countries to jump into partnerships without understanding the partner's system and plan. It is only after a huge sum of money has been invested that the partnership appears to be cracking, and by then it is too late to pull out of the program, leading to both financial loss and project failure. By contrast, a good partnership stems from laying out project goals clearly at the beginning and adhering to strict rules that map out each partner's role in the programs.

In the case of international organizations like Global Communities, partnerships are formed only after a thorough screening of associates, followed by the signing of an agreement that clearly outlines what is expected of the organization, including quarterly reports that summarize the project's progress. Additionally, Global Communities regularly monitors their partner's activities. Their primary goal is to build the capacity of local organizations, through a rigorous system that enables monitoring without having to police their partner and acting instead as a mentor.

Aside from the challenges, an important factor NGOs must consider in developing countries is the role of the local government. When it comes to community development in countries like Uganda, the government usually oversees skill or technical training, monitoring the project regularly. Traditionally, NGOs used to work in parallel with the government to avoid bureaucracy, red tape, and project delays. In the case of NGOs like GLI, organizations opt for either partnership with the government or keeping them informed through progress reports.

It is important to understand that creativity comes hand in hand with infrastructure. Partners have to be creative to solve problems, and if a contract does not allow for creativity, a clear structure needs to be mapped that explains the roles and responsibilities from the beginning and includes an auditing function – both programmatic as well as financial.

Most projects in the agricultural sector are fairly complicated, in that there are program activities, budgets, targets, and relationships. All these factors add up to making one successful project. If an organization does not take time out in the last quarter to reflect on the progress made, the goals achieved, and the technical implementation, it is unlikely there will be an improvement in the next phase.

Companies like Global Communities have dedicated dashboards to track, monitor, and analyze data to see what the project has achieved so far, what are the challenges, what has caused delays, and what bottlenecks can be eliminated in the short run to speed up progress. They also create quarterly plans – which are part of their annual plan – and then have quarterly reviews.

One quick recipe for success for any international organization is having a good system in place that documents everything efficiently and has the proper checks and balances for the separation of duties. This also includes awarding delegation powers to the relevant body, primarily to an external firm to conduct annual audits to see if the checks and balances are in place.

Another important factor to note is the extent to which an international organization are involved in a developing country for projects, including whether the projects are being managed locally or through headquarters in another country. Since the local people know the challenges they face the best, management authority that is dissociated from the community is not likely to pinpoint problems – or their solutions – accurately. Thus, it is crucial to delegate management authority and responsibility to the people closest to the problem, for projects to have a better chance of success.

When it comes to outlining the success factors of a project, it is important to identify the problem that needs to be solved from the start. Frequently, projects try to address the symptoms rather than the real problem, as they do not analyze the situation before starting the project. Organizations collect data with little idea about where the data will be used and what each piece of information can tell them. Most projects are guilty of collecting more information than required that they discard after a few years without analyzing it properly.



Another major factor of success is the people behind the project. Their dedication, roles, and skills matter for the project's completion.

Lastly, an organization needs to conduct an evaluation of all the projects it implements. Without an evaluation that looks at the people involved, the project's expectations, and the goals achieved, the company cannot learn from its mistakes.

It is easy to write success stories that claim change has happened, but the people at the heart of the program, especially the program participants, need to be interviewed to see whether they saw a good effect of the project or not. It is also important to consider the role of the donor as they are usually the ones that set the tone for what the project should and should not do and what exactly they are funding.

In case GLI is interested, Global Communities might provide a template or a dashboard for forming project objectives and proposals.

GLI Interviews

Moving on to the interviews conducted within GLI, the team started with the CEO and founder, Jamie Van Leeuwen. The initial interview with him provided an overview of the project and the motivation behind the program. The subsequent interviews with Jamie focused on the evaluation plan the Capstone team was creating for the project and any suggestions Jamie might have about who else should be interviewed from GLI.

The next two GLI staff members interviewed were Nick Dowhaniuk, the new Director of Academic Partnerships & Research, and Tom Karrel, the previous Director of Academic Partnerships. Tom ran the global classroom programs section of the organization, handling group research projects with students centered around teaching best practices about community development. Tom mentioned the importance of listening to and understanding the communities as in many cases foreigners come into a setting with no real intention or understanding of what is going on in communities and trying to help without a proper plan. Tom's role involves working with over 30 academic partners in the states, as well as East Africa, to run programs centered around GLI's "Listen, Think, Act" philosophy. Nick Dowhaniuk first assumed Tom Karrel's role as a director then moved on to consulting in Northern Uganda.

GLI's work with formally abducted Ugandan children has evolved into workforce development in agriculture. Tom and Nick's work has focused on working with the students who are researching for on-ground partners or GLI staff members.

The term "formally abducted children" is being used, as literature and the various interviews the Capstone team conducted indicated that the "former child soldiers" term is stigmatizing and, to some extent, demeans the struggles of the affected children. This stigma can come from both community members and outsiders.

The next interview was with Amany Jerry, Research and Community Outreach Manager, and Jacob Sorum, Program Associate, who were interviewed to fill in other gaps for later iterations of the program. They joined the training in Phase 2 and were responsible for research related to the program in Lira.

The next interview was with Emmanuel Oumo who assisted Jerry in research for the project. He joined GLI in 2018 as a business development associate. One year later, he was promoted to workforce development program manager, working on the ground, implementing GLI's workforce development program, and supporting the youth and vulnerable groups around East Africa, especially Kampala. In 2020, he switched roles to become the community partnerships manager in Lira. He assisted Jerry in managing the projects and programs in the north. He now works in another nonprofit organization as a regional manager for global training.

The last interview from GLI staff was with three GLI members: (i) Moses Twahirwa, Community Action Director, who oversees all community-related projects and follows up to ensure the implementation is being done in terms of the sustainability mode of the projects, (ii) Raymond Bokua, who oversees GLI's social impact projects in the Community, and (iii) Hallan Oyaro, who coordinates between the farmers and GLI, in terms of mobilizing the farmers in training them in the best agronomic practices and logistics information about the best markets to sell produce.

To get an idea of GLI's partnerships, the Capstone team also interviewed Geoffrey Ojok who is working with Pilot Light Foundation as an Office Director. His work involves supervision, planning, and monitoring of the field staff.



Before the project implementation, data was collected to gauge the interest of the community members in the agricultural program. There was not a centralized place in the beginning to store the data collected, which is why the team agreed to collect and manage it on Kobo, a data collection tool.

Two surveys were conducted, one baseline and one for more feedback, with the assistance of enumerators and Emmanuel.

There were approximately 800 respondents. At this time, the Capstone team does not have access to the survey responses so this report will not focus on the analysis of the survey responses. The quality of the survey data was not 100%, the reason being that accessing the target groups was challenging as most of the main beneficiaries of the program were scattered in different locations. Some places were extremely remote, not accessible by cars or 25 to 30 kilometers away from where the group was set up.

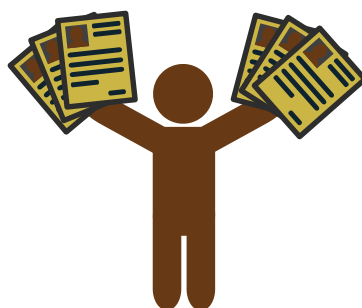
Additionally, the majority of the respondents were women as they are directly involved in agriculture. In most cases, the woman in charge of the agriculture in the house would be taking care of children and would not have time to dedicate to the survey. The enumerators also noticed that some of the women did not understand the questions very well and they needed to get someone to help them interpret these questions, for example, into their local language to make sure that they were asking the correct question.

The training in the agricultural program started with 20-30 farmers attending training on a daily basis for a couple of weeks, which eventually increased to 50-100 farmers, then to 350 farmers. By the end of 2020, GLI had 500 farmers, and by end-2021, they had 1000 farmers that were registered and working with GLI. The members comprise 60% women, and a significant part of those 1000 farmers is the formerly abducted child soldiers. Reportedly, the farmers made 30-40% more than they made before they entered this cooperative. A typical training looked at agricultural practices, some of them around different planting methods, spacing of crops, how to diversify crop yields, rotate crops machine season, and other typical agronomy type training. There was also a focus on post-harvest handling, how to prevent crop losses from the past, some introduction of basic savings and lending concepts, and introducing the beginnings of sort of cooperative structures of how to farm.

The training was conducted on weekdays and usually involved being in the garden; so typically, a lot of farmers will go in the garden in the mornings and evenings, to build a rapport with the children. GLI had three field staff members, who were Lira community members and spent 60 to 70% of their time in the field. They were responsible for group training, and then throughout the growing season, those three field staff members would travel out to all the communities and touch base or troubleshoot issues.

The program was built in partnership with Children of Peace (CPU), and towards the end of the training, the relationship between GLI and CPU became tenuous due to financial management and accountability issues on CPU's part. One of the field staff appeared to be misappropriating funds that were supposed to go directly towards buying seeds for some of GLI's farmers. In a finance meeting, the team met up and crunched numbers, which revealed that the amount of yield they had predicted was not anywhere near the actual results.

Following this, GLI's staff members implemented a much stronger presence on the fields. However, it seems that there were issues at the executive level of the organization, specifically with the Executive Director. Apart from CPU, GLI did not have any other implementing partners in the agricultural program. There has been an ongoing partnership with Cornell University and Colorado School of Mines for research and literature review, and their duties mainly include writing Capstone and research reports for GLI's reference. After the partnership with CPU fell through, GLI partnered with Pilot Light Foundation for future work.





RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations have been made by the 2022 Capstone Team based on the information available to us, the limitations of which has already been elucidated in this report.

Recordkeeping



The primary obstacle that was encountered by the 2022 Capstone Team was the lack of consistency in recordkeeping throughout the course of the Agriculture Program. The capstone reports themselves exist and were available to us, with some elements neglected, such as an explanation of the interview process in the 2015 Capstone Report. Each capstone report was provided to GLI upon completion, and it is our understanding that GLI then used that research to build the Agriculture Program. However, the reports that we were provided in this regard were very sparse, and our interviews with GLI staff were not as fruitful as we were hoping for, as staff were attempting to recall events from between five and seven years ago and only a certain level of detail can be expected at that point. Given the number of times the 2022 Capstone Team attempted to ascertain that we had been given all available documents and no further documents were produced, it appears that much of the process of creating the Agriculture Program is now invisible.

Because of this, our main recommendation is for GLI to pay closer attention to how information is being transmitted and recorded in all current and future projects. This would involve several elements. First, we recommend that GLI set a specific meeting frequency for those staff members working on each project, whether that is monthly or quarterly. This meeting should ensure that all stakeholders are updated and are able to voice any concerns, so that the project's objectives can be met or changed in order to incorporate this on-the-ground feedback. This meeting should also have a person who has volunteered or been designated as the notetaker for the meeting. Their notes should be shared with all participants following the meeting. The second element of this recommendation is for all documents related to each project to be kept in a central location. During the interviews conducted by the 2022 Capstone Team, we heard of several documents that were important to the Agricultural Program but were not able to be located. Other documents were eventually located after a great number of emails and effort was expended to find them. This is certainly far less than ideal, as it means that potentially valuable information has vanished.

Recordkeeping is especially important in a project such as this one, where those who are constructing the project participate for only one semester. That amount of change can be beneficial, as each new person brings fresh ideas, but it can also result in the loss of institutional knowledge. Hopefully, when more detailed records are kept and are centrally located, each person who is added to the project will be provided with enough information to get their bearings and begin to be able to make a meaningful contribution.

Project Planning

Another area, somewhat related to the 2022 Capstone Team's first recommendation, that has a great deal of room for improvement is that of project planning. Based on our interviews, it seems that all who were directly involved with the Agricultural Program knew the next step to take, but that is not enough; ideally, all participants would know how the steps they are taking fit into the overall plan for the program.



This does not mean that the plan needs to be set in stone—indeed, it should not be. Rather, a project plan with adaptive elements can be flexible enough to fit the needs of a program that is evolving through the input of frequent new researchers, as this one has done. A project plan will also be able to provide an opportunity for GLI to lay out some guidance on risk mitigation strategies, which is especially important when so much of the work being done is accomplished alongside partner organizations.



Evaluation

An important aspect of any project plan is to specify the frequency at which the project will be evaluated. If there is a projected timespan for the program, an evaluation should be conducted midway through and at the end of the project. Sufficient funding should be set aside at the beginning of the project to carry out both evaluations, in order to ensure that they are able to occur. If there is no anticipated end date for the project, then a primary evaluation should be conducted within the first three to five years so that any issues can be determined and corrected for before the project gets too far along.

One of the aforementioned documents that needed to be hunted down, and even then, was only partially found, was a survey that was conducted to evaluate the Agriculture Program in early 2019. The survey questions were able to be located, but the results of the survey were not.

This survey had been discussed thoroughly in the interviews conducted by the 2022 Capstone Team, as we were able to speak to those who had been responsible for conducting the survey. They had mentioned that the survey was unrealistically long, but we nevertheless did not expect the 33 pages of questions that we received when the survey was located. As the survey results were not found, we are unable to discern whether each of those questions were asked. The 2022 Capstone Team recommends that future surveys be edited in order to inquire only about the most salient aspects of the program's potential impact, out of respect for the time of the interviewee.

Another area for improvement is that of the training of enumerators. Those we interviewed mentioned that, even though half a day was given for the training of enumerators on the Kobo system that was being used to transcribe responses, it was not enough. In addition to an insufficient familiarity with the system, enumerators also faced a challenge in that the survey questions were not adequately translated into the local language of Leblango. As a result, the quality of the data suffered. Because of this, the 2022 Capstone Team recommends that more time is allotted in the future to the training of enumerators. We also recommend that someone who is employed in the translation of English to Leblango be sought, in order to ensure that the spirit of the questions is being communicated with respect to cultural context. One such person, recommended by Ronnie based on her experience in Lira, is James Odongo, who is employed as a Language Specialist at Mango Tree Literacy Lab. He can be contacted at jodongo@mangotreeuganda.org.

In addition to factoring an evaluation plan into current projects, the 2022 Capstone Team recommends that a more thorough evaluation be conducted of the work done in the Agriculture Program. The most important stakeholders were not able to be reached through the evaluation that has been delineated in this report—the farmers themselves. We recommend that farmers from each of the three phases of the Agriculture Program be contacted and interviewed, preferably by those who speak Leblango and are familiar with the cultural context and the background of the program in order to ensure that the questions are being understood as intended and relevant answers are gleaned.



Intervention Strategies

The 2016 Capstone Report gave a thoroughly researched summary of the issues preventing many farmers in Northern Uganda from growing the number of crops that their lands have the potential to yield, based on data from research stations in the area, and then from subsequently selling the crops, they do grow at the optimum profit margin. To give an even briefer summary, these issues are lack of access to motor vehicles, lack of reliable roads, lack of resources and knowledge needed to process the crops, lack of access to farming tools, lack of access to crop storage facilities, lack of access to sell crops directly rather than through middlemen who pay the farmers little in comparison to what the crops are then sold for, and lack of organized groups that could generate collective bargaining power (2016 Capstone Report, pg 28). It appears that GLI made the decision, at least partially based on this information, to partner with Children of Peace Uganda (CPU), an organization with which GLI already had some prior familiarity, for this project as well in order to utilize their connections with Ugandans who had been abducted as children and their mental health programming to add an agricultural component to that training and expand it to both those who had been abducted as children and those in their communities so as to promote a sense of solidarity.

After this program began, GLI then made the decision to tackle other barriers in the way of farmers earning the full profit potential from their land—namely the lack of access to crop storage facilities, for which GLI partnered with engineering students from the Colorado School of Mines to design, and the lack of access to sell crops directly rather than through middlemen, for which GLI itself decided to start buying crops from farmers at a fairer rate than what those farmers would have gotten from middlemen. This, according to an interview with Jamie Van Leeuwen, GLI's CEO, has not worked. The anticipated crop yields were not reached by the farmers, which meant that GLI, having bought the crops before they were harvested, was unable to make a profit. These aspects of the project are understood to be paused indefinitely at the moment.

Instead of continuing on this path, attempting to intervene in order to artificially remove the barriers on behalf of farmers, the 2022 Capstone Team recommends pursuing the issue of farmers not yet being formed into organized groups (Freire 1972). Many of the impediments to farmers earning a livable profit from their land are too widespread for one organization to tackle. Rather, issues such as roads that frequently become impassable depending on the season and corrupt middlemen who are not subject to regulation represent the responsibility that a government has to protect its citizens. Ideally, the farmers whom GLI has developed a relationship with can be encouraged to use their voices to change the balance of power and work to hold their own government accountable for the basic needs that are not being provided for.



Future Research Areas



The 2022 Capstone team has identified a few areas where more research is needed and could be prioritized:

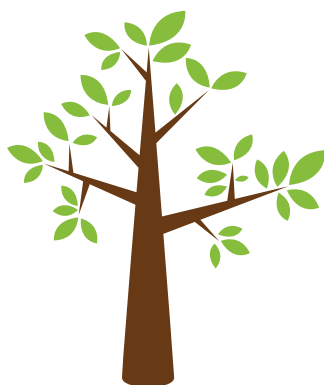
Terminology for the Children

The interviews and literature review have revealed that the "former child soldiers" terminology is stigmatizing. There is debate surrounding the ethical and moral duty development organizations have towards these children and whether it takes away from their struggles if they are referred to as "FCS". The Capstone team suggests a survey on a sample size to gauge opinion about the terminology and also to ask what is the best way to refer to the children's past lived experiences with what happened.

Viable Solutions for Farmers

More research needs to be conducted for solutions that can be profitable for farmers.

- **Storage:** The current project has focused on training, but interviews conducted with various Pilot Light and GLI members suggest that surveys need to be conducted to see what the farmers can profit from and learn from. One suggestion is to look into storage facilities that allow farmers to produce large crops and store them for sale later. One of the biggest challenges right now is the sustainability of the crops over a long period of time as the farmers cannot afford facilities. The interviews also indicate farmers have provided feedback that they need storage facilities that are accessible and near their farms.
- **Selling:** Moreover, the farmers also need training about how to sell in bulk. It is easy to eliminate the middle man but if they do not have experience selling crops, then it is not viable for them to make deals on their own. The project should involve experienced community members who can act as reliable business partners and help the farmers get a fair price.
- **Transportation:** In a lot of cases, the storage facilities appear to be some distance away from the farmers, forcing farmers to transport their crops in waves.
- **Cost-effective solutions:** Finding better means of collecting produce from farmers today in terms of costs and while trying to be competitive.



APPENDIX I - INTERVIEWEES

Interviews

The following people have been interviewed:

Name	Role	In what capacity
Laurie J. Miller	CIPA Capstone Advisor	Find information about her role in the GLI Capstone projects
Jamie Van Leeuwen	CEO, GLI	Get an overview of the agricultural project implemented in Lira and the challenges faced
Tom Karrel	Director of Academic Partnerships, GLI	Get an overview of Tom's role in the project and his input regarding future strategies
Amanya Jerry	Research and Internship Coordinator, GLI	Find information about farmer training
Jacob Sorum	Program Associate, GLI	Get details about the project partnerships
Nick Dowhaniuk	Director of Academic Partnerships & Research, GLI	Find out more details about the project
Alessandra McCormack	EMPA student, CIPA	Discuss the role of non-profits in developing countries and get contact information of industry specialists to conduct more interviews
Emmanuel Oumo	Data Analyst, GLI	Discuss role in the agriculture project
Nicolas Ford	Country Head, Global Communities, Tanzania	Discuss common challenges NGOs face in development settings
Stephanie Gaffney	Technical Advisor, Global Communities	Discuss common success factors of agriculture-based projects
Moses Twahirwa	Director of Community Action, GLI	Get information about role in the agricultural project
Hallan Oyaro	Researcher, GLI	Discuss the research done for the project
Raymond Bokua	General Manager, GLI	Get overview of role in the project
Geoffrey Ojok	Program Office, GLI	Find out about challenges faced in the project

APPENDIX II - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What are the underlying assumptions of the program?
- How involved was the target population in the construction of the program?
- Were the objectives met? If so, how? If not, why not?
- From your perspective, what did the target population think of the services? Were they satisfied?
- From your perspective, were the program services beneficial to the target population?
- What unintended outcomes (positive and negative) were produced by this program?
- What about this program was done in an innovative way?
- To what extent can changes in the target population be attributed to this program?
- What were the particular features of the program and context that made a difference?
- What was the influence of other factors on the program or target population?
- To the best of your knowledge, how has this program contributed to the achievement of outcomes in conjunction with other initiatives, programs, or services in the area?
- Was this program the best use of resources? If not, what would have been a better use of resources?



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