

Supporting Nurture Africa's activities to address poverty, limited access to education, and promote environmentally sustainable practices among Uganda's most vulnerable communities

Grantee: A-Z Children Ltd Trading As (T/A) Nurture Africa (NA)

Location: Uganda, Africa

Grant Cycle: 2025 – 2027

Type of Grant: three-year program support, Human Welfare & Rights

Website: nurtureafrica.ie

Founded in 1997 by Irish volunteer Brian Iredale and Ugandan co-founder Lady Nakawunde Annet, Nurture Africa is a community-based NGO committed to empowering vulnerable families in Uganda. Headquartered in Nansana, Wakiso District (Uganda's most populous municipality) the organization implements a holistic, family-centered approach through its core program areas: health, education, sustainable livelihoods, and child protection. With over two decades of experience, Nurture Africa has built a strong reputation and trust among its partners and stakeholders.

Uganda is facing a youth crisis, with 77% of its population under the age of 30 and 90% either unemployed or engaged in informal work without contracts or social security. In Nansana Municipality, Wakiso District many young people feel trapped in poverty, leading to frustration, social unrest, and unrealized potential. Vocational schools in the area often lack strategic planning, resulting in uninspiring learning environments that hinder student success. In addition, education statistics reveal a troubling reality: only 39% of children in local government primary schools transition to secondary education. The high dropout rate is largely driven by poverty, particularly among female-headed households. With limited access to social assistance, these families often resort to harmful coping strategies, which further hinder children's educational progress

and long-term potential.

This project aims to empower young people by equipping them with entrepreneurial skills, practical tools, and access to opportunities. By fostering a supportive environment for youth-led businesses and innovative ideas, the project seeks to cultivate a generation of problem-solvers capable of creating sustainable enterprises. Ultimately, the project will contribute to long-term economic and social development by addressing youth unemployment and the scarcity of professional, engaging learning spaces. Moreover, Nurture Africa will implement the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) model, community-based microfinance groups comprising 10 to 30 members who collectively manage savings and provide loans within the group. Female headed guardians of students will receive training on forming and operating VSLAs, with these groups established in schools, ensuring a strong connection between pupils, schools, teachers, the school administration and these guardians. VSLAs have been shown to reduce poverty by empowering members financially and socially. They increase financial access, improve livelihoods, and provide social capital, particularly for women, enabling them to exercise agency within their communities. By improving the economic resilience of families, this approach helps ensure that children remain in school, ultimately contributing to a reduction in

dropout rates.

Alongside with its economic initiatives, the project will also address environmental challenges. Wakiso District and Nansana struggles with high pollution levels, overpopulation, and inadequate waste management infrastructure, contributing to increased disease outbreaks and erratic weather patterns, including droughts and unpredictable rainfall. By 2025, municipal solid waste generation in Uganda is expected to reach 6,313 tons per day. To address these issues, Nurture Africa will integrate environmental education into the project, emphasizing organic farming, eco-friendly practices such as climate-smart cooking and water harvesting, and biowaste recycling. Schools will be encouraged to participate in biowaste recycling initiatives and will receive compensation for their efforts, promoting environmental stewardship while also helping to offset students' school fees.

The project is supported by the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation (NaEPF), a long-standing partner of Nurture Africa since 2013, committed to addressing poverty, limited access to education, and inequality among Uganda's most vulnerable communities. With the NaEPF's support, the project aims to equip 1,000 young people with entrepreneurial skills, improve the education of 6,000 vulnerable children, and strengthen the livelihoods of 3,000 female-headed households and their 12,000 dependents, all while promoting environmentally sustainable practices.