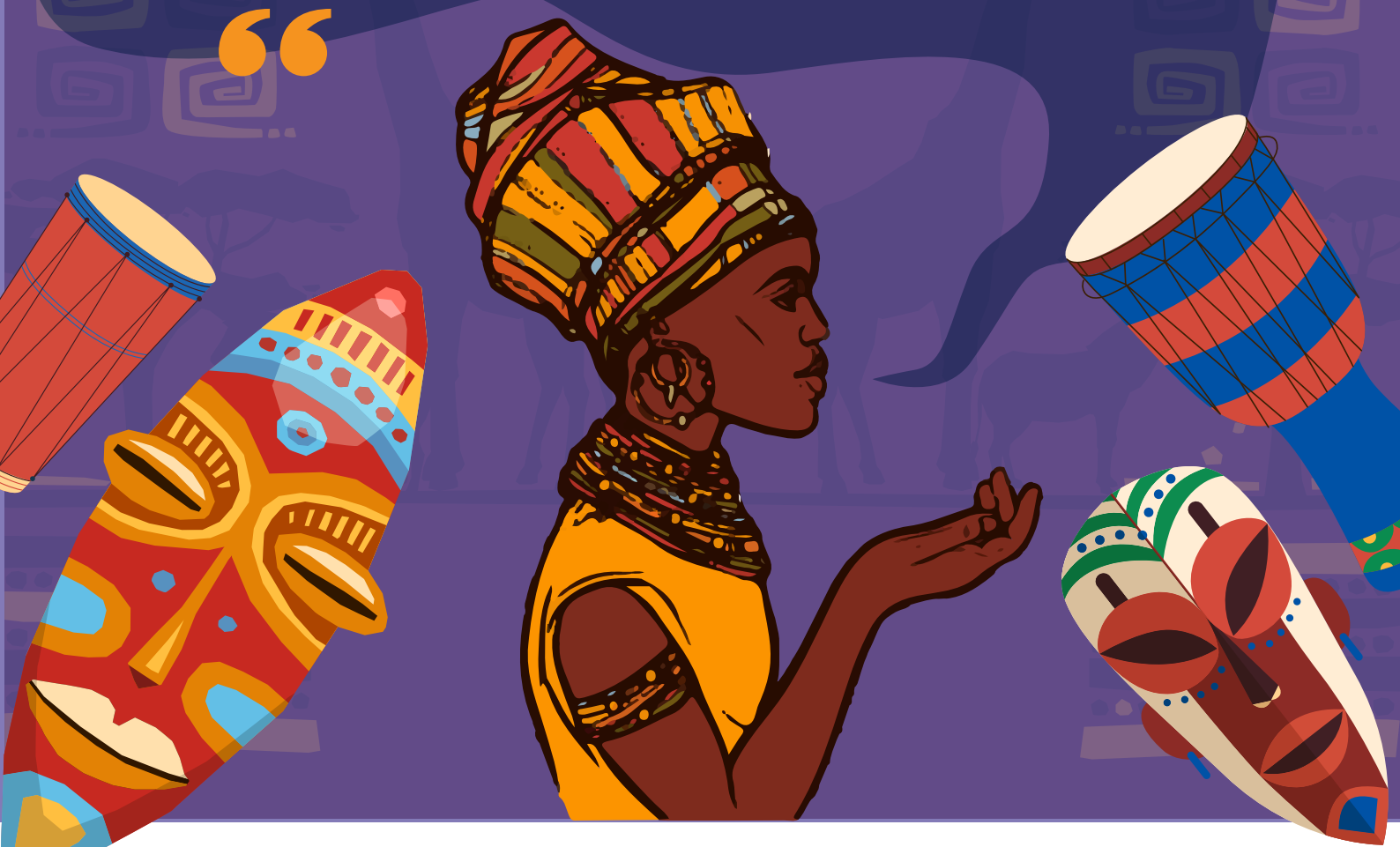


KUONYESHA ARTFUND

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE STORIES

2020



Brief Overview of Kuonyesha Art Fund (KAF)

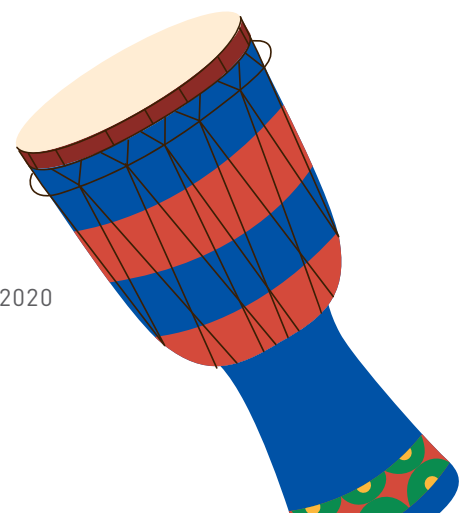
Kuonyesha is a Swahili word that means “**show**”. The Kuonyesha Art Fund (KAF) is one of the funds implemented and managed by CivFund, a fund of funds; the grant making arm of CivSource Africa with support from its partners Stichting DOEN and Robert Bosch Foundation.

Kuonyesha Art Fund exists to support, nurture and develop art in Uganda; to promote and/or support artists to improve the quality of arts in a way that enhances the meaningful influence and participation of art and artists in the issues shaping society and public life in Uganda today.

The Kuonyesha Art Fund mission is “**To support, promote, celebrate Art and artists in all their diversity in Uganda.**”

The first year of the fund (October 2019 to October 2020) was a pilot phase, during which the Fund was open to, and deliberate, about learning and growing as it went along — learning from the artists themselves, learning from and about the art field, learning from and with the Advisory Committee, and learning from and with the partners of the fund and other stakeholders. The Objectives of the Kuonyesha Art Fund are:

1. To enhance the vibrancy of the art industry and in so doing legitimize what artists do.
2. Seeks to build bridges between and amongst artists and various art forms.
3. Support artists to create for their own reasons e.g. expression, freedom, influence community, social, and cultural change in various respects.
4. Nurture and build confidence amongst artists i.e. the fund recognizes artists in all their diversity and supports them to thrive in whatever they do.
5. To enable artists to develop new ways of or deepening relations with the audience and/or the community.



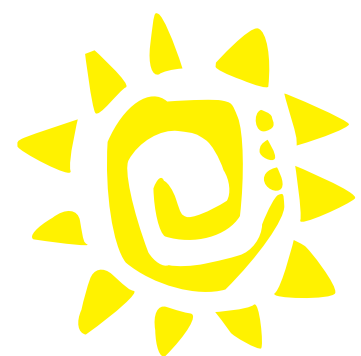


Key Achievements of Kuonyesha Art Fund 2020

KAF 2020 was an opportunity to test the viability of a funding mechanism for the arts sector in Uganda. In initial conversations held between one of the funders and CivSource Africa, the fund was intended to explore independent forms of civil society. This is the opportunity the arts sector provides in its diversity of art forms, as well as arts and their levels of organization i.e. both as groups and individuals. Furthermore, it was an opportunity to test a national/local fund management institution.

The Kuonyesha Art Fund was established following wide consultations with artists, which contributed to a report that provides a mapping of the arts resulting in a document. This process ensured that KAF was designed with a good understanding of the arts sector in Uganda, and was responsive to the needs of the artists. The investments in understanding the sector paid off, as reflected in interviews with grantees, as well as the results of an online survey that informed this evaluation.

This survey found out that the majority (89.5%) of the respondents considered the fund relevant to them ;with relevance being the extent to which the fund met its goal through the support given for individual artists i.e. financial support, nurtured and contributed to the development of art in Uganda, as well as the extent to which the fund promoted and/or supported artists to improve the quality of their work. For those who regarded the fund as partly relevant and responsive (10.5%), this was because the artists received only a part of the funds applied for, and in other instances required support for marketing and visibility –something that KAF was not set up to do.



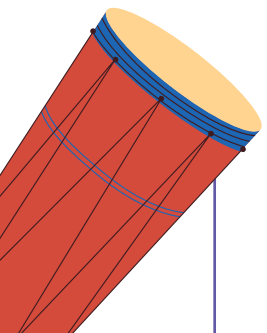
KAF registered the following key achievements:

The KAF was established, and its systems and processes operationalized. It was able to award grants to 58 grantees, and to support these during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to one of the respondents, “... the fund achieved more than we had expected, especially regarding the number of grantees... they reached far more than we anticipated.” KAF funder.

The Fund created a new space. Whilst there has been some funding for the arts sector, access has been limited to well established groups and or well-known individuals. According to some artists, in some instances, the criteria used for accessing these funds were not always followed. KAF therefore provided a much-needed opportunity with a fund that would be credibly and transparently managed, and accessible to artist of all persuasions.

Kuonyesha Art Fund had a specific focus on inclusion, reaching out to artists with disabilities, and targeting regions like Karamoja, that tend to be left behind in other funding opportunities. Furthermore, KAF supported individual artists, doing away with the stringent requirements for formal groups and/or registration, which made the fund even more accessible. According to one respondent, “...that this pilot happened at all is a big plus i.e. first conversation about this was about five-years ago...” Member KAF Advisory Committee.

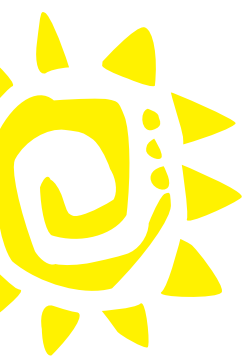
One of the concerns raised about the arts sector during the fund design workshops/meetings was the lack of a collective forum that could bring artists together and strengthen their diversity. Whilst KAF did not set out to establish a common forum/platform of artists, through its engagement with diverse artists and in providing opportunities for them to interact both face to face and virtually, the fund was able to contribute to the emergence of a burgeoning community that can be further cultivated and/or leveraged for collective action.



KAF provided an opportunity for greater understanding and appreciation of the arts sector in Uganda — both the challenges, as well as the opportunities presented by various artists. The project also provided for a clear recognition that arts matter, and that they contribute to various aspects of life like social justice, awareness, employment, and tourism.

The challenge of access to resources was also clear; artists find it difficult to eke out a living as full time artists.

KAF provided the opportunity for the empowerment of artists. Serving as a catalyst through the injection of funding KAF enabled some of them to fulfil their dreams and to practice/refine their craft. Activities like publishing books, making and releasing music albums, and holding art exhibitions, that were only dreams at various levels of implementation, were helped across the finish line by the funding and support from the KAF team. According to one respondent, **"...it is a dream come true i.e. someone is willing to pay for the realization of your dream..."** KAF grantee.





1. What changes have happened for/to you because of receiving the Kuonyesha grant?

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Through the Kuonyesha grant, we ventured into utilizing our animation products beyond only videos into published books; this has exposed us into venturing in new and different marketing lines both online and offline/in person.

- Rita Kayeny

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The Kuonyesha grant contributed to my self-discovery that is, during the execution of the project, I was able to identify cow-horn as a special material with endless possibilities. The Kuonyesha grant enabled me to create a variety of interior light lampshades which were used in advertising hence creating broader markets for my cow horn products.

- Makumbi James

“

I have gained more skills and knowledge and was able to produce many artworks than before. I trained 17 deaf girls/women for the first time and this has greatly moved me from another level in my social art movement. I am more exposed and renown in my community now and I got many followers due to the art project.

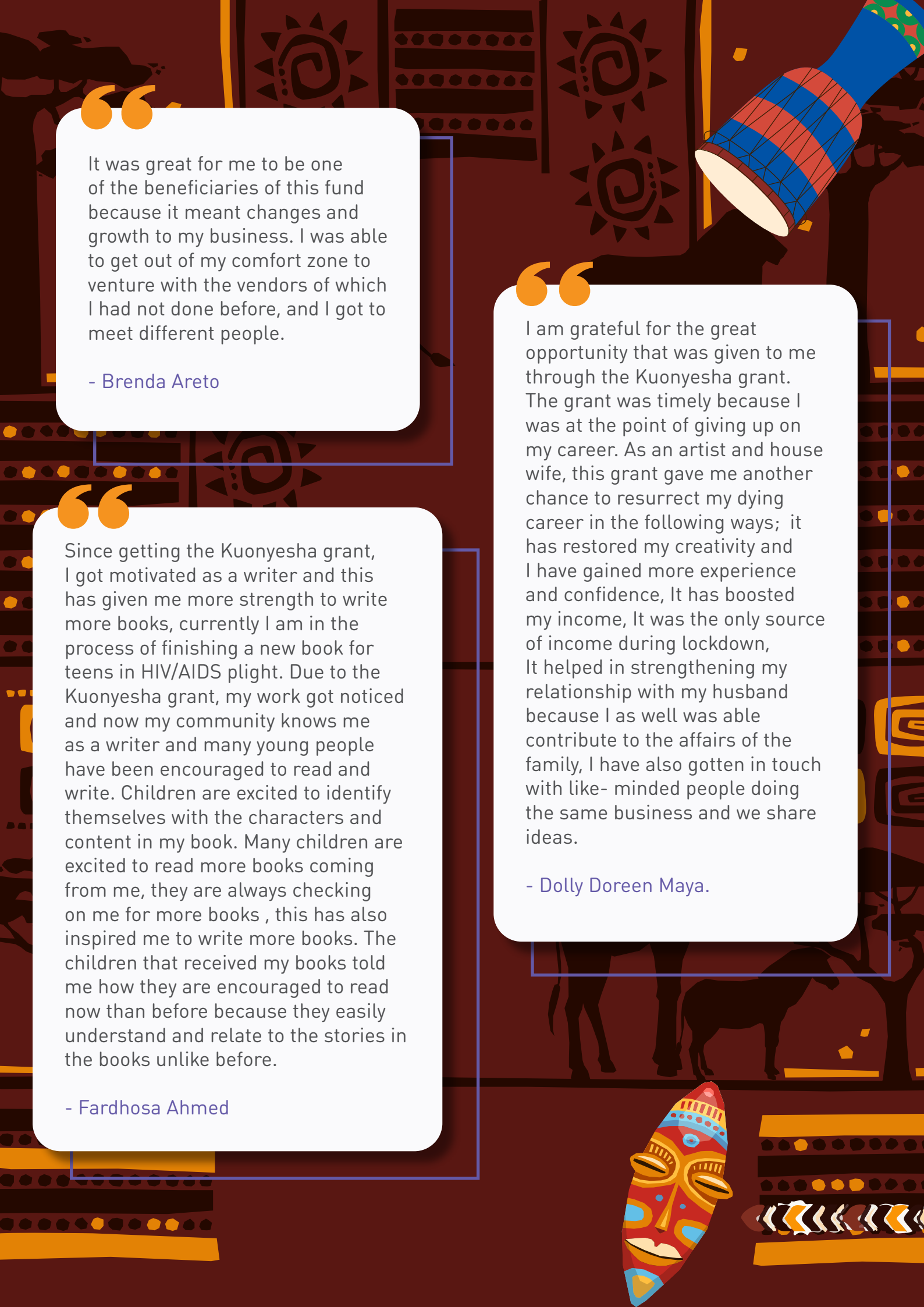
- Atimango Brenda Ruth

“

I now have a better understanding of how a good documentary is produced; the different stages one should follow to have a good documentary. My skills in different areas like budgeting, finance, directing, editing and production have improved as well.

- Gladys Oroma





It was great for me to be one of the beneficiaries of this fund because it meant changes and growth to my business. I was able to get out of my comfort zone to venture with the vendors of which I had not done before, and I got to meet different people.


- Brenda Areto

Since getting the Kuonyesha grant, I got motivated as a writer and this has given me more strength to write more books, currently I am in the process of finishing a new book for teens in HIV/AIDS plight. Due to the Kuonyesha grant, my work got noticed and now my community knows me as a writer and many young people have been encouraged to read and write. Children are excited to identify themselves with the characters and content in my book. Many children are excited to read more books coming from me, they are always checking on me for more books, this has also inspired me to write more books. The children that received my books told me how they are encouraged to read now than before because they easily understand and relate to the stories in the books unlike before.

- Fardhosa Ahmed

I am grateful for the great opportunity that was given to me through the Kuonyesha grant. The grant was timely because I was at the point of giving up on my career. As an artist and house wife, this grant gave me another chance to resurrect my dying career in the following ways; it has restored my creativity and I have gained more experience and confidence, It has boosted my income, It was the only source of income during lockdown, It helped in strengthening my relationship with my husband because I as well was able contribute to the affairs of the family, I have also gotten in touch with like- minded people doing the same business and we share ideas.

- Dolly Doreen Maya.



I have been invited to moderate discussions about mental health and the role of music in Gulu and Jinja. I have improved my organizational, teamwork and problem-solving skills through the project. Ensuring all project activities run smoothly, working with different individuals and combating unexpected challenges like movement restrictions, hikes in prices have greatly helped build my resilience and personality. We have seen an increase in engagement and reach online because on my music for mental health project.

- Benjamin Komagum

I have become more confident in the work that I do; artisanry using leather. Receiving the grant showed me that others out there appreciate and have interest in my projects and the work that I am doing. This has greatly boosted my confidence and I was able to have my first solo exhibition.


- Agol Isabel

I have gotten better in writing, mixing and mastering music and production due to the regular practice now that I have my own equipment. I have upped my game in making beats due to the availability of equipment which I bought with the Kuonyesha grant.

- Nicholas Eko Frank

I interacted with young people living positively with HIV/AIDS and how they were managing to cope especially with the challenges of the lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus was mainly on how we could collectively use music, dance and drama to address the challenges. I was glad to be enrolled as an honorary member of the Makerere University-John Hopkins(MUJ-HU) drama team. We created skits together that address the areas of stigma, testing, discordance and safe sex. The young people were promised funding for their drama activities by the MUJHU administration after seeing what we had achieved together.

- Kenneth Kimuli



We have been able to successfully start, create and produce different products using the "Kyangwe" sponge material (luffa aegyptiaca). We now have a show room and a proper workspace which we did not have before. We purchased some of the crucial machinery that we needed for production. The production is now much more consistent.

- Studio Byangwe group (Kanakulya Lydia Nambawadde / Irene Victoria Nakyobe ,Nakitto Sandra Suubi)



I became a publisher of 2 books thanks to the Kuonyesha grant. I also sell these books to earn money to improve my livelihood.

- Sara Nawoova



The Kuonyesha grant has helped me open the online space for children's fiction and helped introduce a new mode of distribution for local stories. Since my Kuonyesha funded series launched, I have seen similar other Ugandan writers take on similar processes of getting their stories out there.

- Ernest Bazanye



The Little stars children's choir Kotido were able to record their music in a professional studio which they had never been able to do; they recorded four songs on personal hygiene, sanitation , environmental conservation and gender based violence.


- Little Stars, Kotido.



I have been in position to sell/promote and grow my brand by marketing the eco-print fashion products that I made using the Kuonyesha grant. This has enabled the brand name and products to reach many clients both locally and overseas in Europe and Lithuania.

- Anena Sharon





We
have been able
to acquire some items
like a laptop for the group
film editing and production.
We managed to produce one of
our films and it is currently in the
post-production stages. We are
now exposed to the community and
are well known and trusted as
Filmmakers.

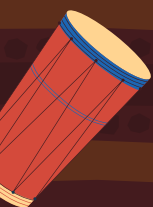
- Loduk JohnBosco

I
was able to
buy music production
equipment and set up a
home-based music production
studio; this studio has made me
very popular in Moroto as a music
producer even more than before.

- Longes Gabriel-AirJ.

The
Kuonyesha
grant helped me realise
how to empower individuals
more, especially using the creative
arts and performances. As opposed
to the previous times where we would
only give out food stuffs, this time we got
an opportunity for our members (who are
all differently-abled artists) to share their
own performances and experiences
and expressions through the "Unseen
dreams" dance festival.

- Tereka Kenneth Desire





2. What changes have happened in your art practice/team/collaborations, because of you or your project receiving the Kuonyesha Art Fund?

We have gotten collaborations with online book clubs and now have more access and linkages to more schools where we can show our animations.

- Rita Kayeny



Since the art of product development is a process with more than seven stages including research, there was an improvement in my research skills whenever executing a project and it is also a basis of future projects that can have an overwhelming impact to the market of my artworks.

- Makumbi James



I have gained more skills and experience and improved on my artwork so much. The girls and women that I trained have been able to acquire livelihood skills in jewelry making. I have also learnt to collaborate with persons with and without disability.

- Atimango Brenda Ruth



As a team, several of us have improved our skills. This was as a result of the mistakes that we made during the shooting while working on our project. As a team, when we realised the mistakes we had made the previous day, we would ensure we don't repeat it. This therefore improved our different skills as we knew what works and what does not work.

- Gladys Oroma





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Due to my back injury that made me wheelchair bound for life; I initially did not have a team to work with; I would train people and they would leave. However, because of this project, I have been able to train a team of single mothers to join in my company. We have been able to produce more products than ever before.

- Brenda Areto

Currently I am in touch with craft shops where I display and supply them with my products at relatively affordable prices. This has given me a steady market for my products.

- Dolly Doreen Maya

“
For our art practices, we have afforded what we normally would not have if Kuonyesha Art Fund had not helped us. We upgraded operations to a finer quality that we could not afford solely before. Kuonyesha has helped my team to be exposed with the wide media coverage we could not afford comfortably before, which in turn helped them to grow in connections and value as professional artists in filmmaking.

- Atusasire Barbra

”

I appreciate the support from Kuonyesha because the fund enabled me get experience of printing, editing and finally finalizing the book and getting it out to the readers. Now I know the challenges and the process of getting a book out there. The fund inspired me to keep writing. From this first project, many NGOs got to know about my work and they are interested in collaborating with me in the near future. The illustrator of the book got exposure and promoted as well. At first people thought one couldn't get an illustrator or author in Karamoja, many now know we have the potential and that I was able to do it. I really appreciate the Kuonyesha Art Fund and I believe this fund has changed many people's lives however small the fund could be. This is the first of its kind especially a fund for art, many people don't believe in art but this fund has helped to expose the work of artists and I believe one day the whole of Uganda will appreciate art and the many talents out there will not be wasted!



- Fardhosa Ahmed



I got to connect with fellow artists who are passionate about community development and we are currently looking at ways of building each other through collaborations. The project introduced me to new partners to work with for career growth and development like studio producers and promoters of music and experts in the mental health field. This project helped me realise the need for mental health advocacy and support and confirmed the fact that so many people are still unaware of what mental health challenges are and where to get support.

- Benjamin Komagum






We have adopted the young dramatists in our annual theatre plans and hope to showcase their talent in the next theatre festival scheduled to take place in November 2021 at Ndere center. MUJHU has expressed interest in partnering with us to share the message with their young people country wide.

- Kenneth Kimuli



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- Atusasire Barbra



Our bond as a team has grown stronger like never before. Our YouTube and Facebook following has gradually increased. We regularly meet to freestyle and do rehearsals as a team now. We have been able to work on music collaborations with a few artists in Moroto like GWills and Grantymers. Our creativity in crafting music has been elevated to a whole new level.

- Nicholas Eko Frank

My published books are now available for reference especially in schools and part of the proceeds from the book sales are donated to the students' association Nkobazambogo.

- Sarah Nawoova

There has been increased publicity of our music since we were able to professionally record and increase the number of themes covered by our music as inspired by the varied community challenges.



- Little Stars, Kotido.

We got to consistently collaborate as an artist, an architect and a social worker; this has made our practice stronger. We appreciate each other's practice a lot more and now think through each of those aspects when creating individually and collectively. We are more open to collaborations and have opened up beyond to other artisans that we work with. We now see our clients as well as collaborators because they use the products and know what they need and want, and this guides our productions. We no longer work in isolation through the process. Through Kuonyesha, we have been introduced to a number of creatives whose processes and products offer great learning for what we are doing.

- Studio Byangwe group (Kanakulya Lydia Nambawadde / Irene Victoria Nakyobe ,Nakitto Sandra Suubi)

In my practice, I have been able to return to writing for children and also increase my focus on writing about Africa and Ugandan traditions in general.

- Ernest Bazanye



I have been able to employ and train a lady full time who is a single mother at my workshop; she is continuing to learn the eco-print process and also explore and experiment making different patterns of different kinds of prints.

- Anena Sharon





We now have an established office as a filmmakers' group. Work has become easy for us to do since we now have our own equipment.

- Loduk John Bosco

Among the major changes is the empowerment in relation to the persons we work with who are mainly differently-abled artists. Most of the persons we worked with during the "Unseen dreams" festival that was supported by the Kuonyesha grant got an affirmation that they could actively get involved in the arts by themselves without relying on me to give workshops. Some have now been invited to lead workshops and others are planning to have individual solo performances created by themselves which is amazing.

- Tereka Kenneth Desire



Now that the studio is at my home; since I am blind, this has greatly improved accessibility for me. The more time I spend in the studio, the more I get learn and to practice some production skills and I am able to produce more music as much as I need. I hire other producers too who come and work from my studio who I learn from as they produce the music. I hope to improve even more after I acquire another computer soon.

- Longes Gabriel Air-J

3. What changes have happened within the community you are based because of you or your art project being part of the Kuonyesha Art Fund ?

For now, due to COVID-19 and the closure of public schools, we have halted some in-person activities; however, in the future, the alternatives we have explored is the online book clubs although this limits the practical participations in the sessions. The only challenge with the online is the uncertainty on when/if there will be a possibility to subscribe to practical sessions soon, we are however hopeful. We have the online material content as a resource.

- Rita Kayeny

Using the machines acquired from the Kuonyesha grant, I have managed to equip and train eight fellow youth around my community which will help us improve the income generating capacity of my local community by setting up home-based small-scale industries hence creating employment opportunities and also earning a daily income.

- Makumbi James

It is thanks to the Kuonyesha grant that I am able to skill a few single mothers in my community so that they can use these skills to change their living status whether they remain with our company or decide to start their own.

- Brenda Areto

My craft project has helped the girls and women who have hearing problems to come together, socialize with others and share skills. Many times, deaf persons are left behind when opportunities come by since it is hard to communicate with them, but my project has given equal chance for them to learn and produce craft artworks for the community and also earn a living.

- Atimango Brenda Ruth



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The people I interviewed for my documentary got to tell their stories for the first time and the challenges that they have faced since the Lords' Resistance Army rebel invasions and abductions. In a way it was therapy for some of the people as they were able to air out their grievances.

- Gladys Oroma

“
I have become a role model to other women in my community and currently I have started engaging them by giving them skills training on crafts making which is my field of expertise.

- Dolly Doreen Maya

“
We reached out to the community more because of the facilitation that we were now able to afford. My community and the surrounding ones were sensitized about domestic violence and it opened up an endless discussion about the matter. Men and boys listened intently when we shared while promoting the film. Our community has a film to refer to in terms of combating and communicating about domestic violence; through the law by applying the knowledge which we shared. Due to the wide coverage, we got through the fund, people in the community have asked to join the team of actors to help share other stories we had to tell thereafter. We as artists have been helped greatly because of the Kuonyesha art fund because no one had risen to help us artists in Uganda which made us not achieve as much as we should through quality productions and wide campaigns of our work. We appreciate your contribution to our arts industry and ask that you continue supporting us till we can make steady progress. We appreciate; the project of TIRED SOULS appreciates Kuonyesha Art Fund.

- Atusasire Barbra



One of my projects was a book I wrote on COVID-19 and the life and effects of a cattle keeper boy in the Karamoja pastoralist community. This book enabled young children to learn and understand more about COVID-19 and its prevention through story telling. My community are appreciating the books, they believe it can improve the habit and spirit of reading in children which is a challenge in the Karamoja community. The book also brought some parents closer to their children because I encouraged them to read the books together with the children.

- Fardhosa Ahmed

Farmers and weavers of the banana-fibre material were able to appreciate the end products from the waste materials and the required technical labour put into making the material. More students have signed up for the training in weaving this kind of banana fibre material.

- Agol Isabel

There has been an increase in awareness and interest in mental health through the educational messages packaged in the Nicango EP album. There has been a positive improvement in the lives of the people who have listened to the EP album. From their feedback they expressed feelings of relief and joy as they listened to the album. Thanks to the project, there have been questions from the public about where there is a dedicated platform that people can go to ,to talk about mental health. This shows how much they are eager to talk about these issues but have not got the right platforms to do so.

- Benjamin Komagum



I have had the opportunity to work on projects for a few other artists in Karamoja like Master Doh, Dr.Galz, Moon man. I have had the opportunity to share knowledge with other music producers like GWillis, Starocie. I have also had the freedom to share short clips of my upcoming projects which has been appreciated by the music community in Karamoja. Quality music can now be produced in Karamoja and this has reduced the number of musicians travelling to other districts to produce music.

- Nicholas Eko Frank

Through studio Byangwe, we have been able to create employment for 3 more people. The "byangwe"/ sponge farmers (*luffa aegyptiaca*) now have constant market in and out of season and proper prices that do not fluctuate, and this allows for proper value for each player in the value chain. There is a stronger feeling of ownership for Ugandan grown material like "Kyangwe" now. We have clients who say the products make them proud to be Ugandan.

- Studio Byangwe group (Kanakulya Lydia Nambawadde / Irene Victoria Nakyobe ,Nakitto Sandra Suubi)

The young people have formed units of 10 people that will reach out to the community to sensitize them about stigma and how to support young people living with HIV/AIDS. We liaised with the local area leaders that pledged to support the young peoples' campaign in HIV/AIDS sensitization. The drama skits were uploaded on our social media pages and promoted widely and this was very powerful in communicating as we received young people contacting us seeking for help; some of them were HIV positive and we gave them contacts of the youth support groups that could help them. We also had some other organisations requesting to use our drama skits during their workshops.

- Kenneth Kimuli

People in my community that purchase the books learn how to read in their local language and develop vocabulary about things in their environment. There is a permanent source of literature for reference for people in their homes and schools.

- Sara Nawoova



I am glad to hear that many of the parents and teachers who have received my work report that their children have developed an interest in traditional folk tales and reading in general.

- Ernest Bazanye

We have been in position to receive more contracts as the fashion brand; Ajura, has sold more products and in the process, we have employed extra people who are part time to manage the increased production and support the completion of the various projects.

- Anena Sharon

Our music was and is continually played on two radio stations; Voice of Karamoja in Kotido and Karibu FM in Abim. Our music has been used for the community sensitization on hygiene and this has helped in the reduction of open defecation which is still a big community problem in Karamoja.

- Little Stars, Kotido

Some community groups, which also sensitize the community on issues affecting the area approach us for services like script writing and video shooting for example the Matany young mothers' group. The community is getting sensitized on the bad cultural practices like early childhood marriages, drug and alcohol abuse, cattle raids, child trafficking using the films that we produce.

- Loduk JohnBosco



“ I have been able to communicate to the communities that I was a grant beneficiary of Kuonyesha and this has created a positive impression of the program in my community. The studio has changed the transport costs of myself and other artists as we can now produce music locally in Moroto without having to travel long distances.

- Longes Gabriel Air-J

” In the community where we held our festival practice sessions, it was the first time for them to see disabled persons performing as artists. Our community is now more aware of the work of differently abled artists and are more inclusive and receptive to them than before. Whereas having the dance festival online was a backup plan caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it provided us with unimaginable opportunities; the dance festival was watched over 3000 people online which was a lot more than would have seen it, had we had the normal show at the theatre. It also helped us to link and connect to other people and organisations who do similar work.

- Tereka Kenneth Desire

“ There has been an amplification of the visual arts practitioners and their practice thanks to the spotlighting done by the 256 Arts TV project. Having successfully produced this, I have been able to apply to other funding entities and hopefully the project can acquire another financial shot in the arm to continue its goal of documenting the arts in an audiovisual format for posterity.

- Moses Serugo

” I have supplied copies of the book to art schools, and I believe this has provided access to local art content in the cartoon/illustration genre. I have had several young people approaching me with questions on how they can grow in cartooning. The art field appears to be growing more and more attractive/appreciated and no longer taken as mere jokes.

- Jimmy Spire Ssentongo

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