

# girls education COLLABORATIVE

the whole girl. the whole world.

10 YEARS OF  
ALLYSHIP & IMPACT



**August 2011:** Executive Director Anne Wadsworth travels to Tanzania to meet with the Immaculate Heart Sisters of Africa and see the site for the Kitenga Girls School.

## We are Girls Education Collaborative

### Mission

GEC brings social change through the transformational power of girls education and our fight for global gender equality. We link arms in allyship with local change agents in rural, under-served regions in developing economies where high rates of gender inequality and economic poverty persist. We help girls transform their own lives through education.

### Vision

A gender-equal world where all girls are in school and no longer barred from a life-equipping education simply because they are girls.

**129,000,000**

Girls out of school worldwide

# We build opportunities for girls

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ten years ago, I stood on the grounds of Kitenga for the first time. The Immaculate Heart Sisters of Africa told me of their vision to empower women through girls education. They had a mighty dream to create an extraordinary school for girls and have it be the vehicle to bypass the often formidable barriers between a girl and her future. On that August day in 2011 there were the beginnings of the school: a set of three classrooms and a dormitory foundation on a footprint of 1,000 rural acres. The Sisters asked us to join hands with them to help make the rest of the dream come true. The journey to get to today has been filled with challenges, joy, setbacks, and victories. It has led to a dream being realized as a community embraces alternative futures for their girls, ones not marked by female genital mutilation and bartered child marriage but by agency, opportunity, and ambitions to make their mark on the world. Kitenga students are crushing it.

On the following visit, I was walking with Sister Janepha when we met a village girl who wanted to tell us her story. She said she wanted to go to school but her father didn't want to pay her school fees, he wanted to sell her into marriage for a cow. She asked Sister Janepha for help. Sadly, her story is but one that has been shared with me these past years. These stories remind me of the urgency of the problem we're trying to solve, only worsened by the pandemic. Unfortunately, Kitenga Girls Secondary School wasn't built in time for this girl, but it is for those following behind her—perhaps a sister, a neighbor, or a future daughter.

It has been a remarkable decade and we have learned so much. As an organization, we are ready to build on what we have learned and grow our allyship model so that even more girls have the chance of the life they deserve. Stay tuned.

GEC couldn't have done this on our own. We have the deepest respect for the IHSA community who have worked tirelessly on behalf of their community to make this happen. Our profound gratitude extends to our community of supporters, advocates, and mentors for being the wind in our sails. Kitenga is truly a product of communities connecting for the common good. Let's keep it going.

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**Anne Wadsworth**  
Executive Director



**May 2015:** IHSA & GEC celebrate the dedication of the completed Alice Kryzan Memorial Library and the Science Center at KGSS.

## We are solving a problem

Globally, **millions of girls fail to receive 12 years of safe, high-quality education**. Whatever the barriers—early marriage, unsafe distances to school, a family's priority to educate their sons—GEC builds paths through them by joining hands with local, community-led organizations.

### Fewer pregnancies

Experiences 3 fewer births on average

### Higher wages

Each year of education results in a 14% income increase

**When a girl receives 12 years of safe, quality education**

### Reduced HIV risk

Every additional year of schooling reduces the risk of HIV by 11.6%

### Later marriage

6x less likely to be a child bride

**54%**

Women in the Mara Region of Tanzania who are married before turning 18

**January 2017:** Kitenga Girls Secondary School opens with 58 students living and learning on campus. In 2020, enrollment grows to 130.

## We link arms to advance solutions

We believe that **deep allyship can catalyze local ambitions for social change**. In 2011, the Immaculate Heart Sisters of Africa invited us on their journey to create opportunities for girls by building an exemplary model residential school.



Thirty years ago, IHSA was granted 1,000 acres of rural land in the northern reaches of Tanzania. **The Sisters envisioned empowering the women in their community with new jobs, improved health care and, most of all, a school for girls.** They worked towards this vision, but faced numerous challenges. It was not until a fortuitous series of events connected IHSA with Anne that the school became a dream realized. Before her next visit, she co-founded GEC with a group of committed Buffalonians because they recognized that this early-stage, community-led project could leap forward with additional resources and serve as a model for girl-centered work.

Aligned through a shared vision, IHSA and GEC both invested in building a **trust-based relationship** as a pathway for creating long-term impact and sustainable change. Now, girls from all over Tanzania proudly call themselves Kitenga students and GEC is poised to partner with additional girl-centered work in other communities.

**11,000,000**

Girls worldwide who might not return to school worldwide due to the COVID-19 crisis



September 19, 2017: GEC co-sponsors a lecture by Malala Yousafzai as part of the Distinguished Speakers Series at the University of Buffalo.

## We began by building a foundation

Our commitment—to Kitenga, to girls education—is deeply rooted. We invested our early resources in building awareness, relationships, and school infrastructure. Those resources generated a student-centered and sustainable campus, an enduring relationship with a group of community leaders, and a fierce cohort of advocates.



Betsy's Guest House



Ribbon cutting for the Theodore & Pauline Cohen Dormitory

27%

Girls in Tanzania who graduate from lower secondary school





“The vision of GEC aligns with our personal values. Girls, and the women they become, bring life into their communities—physically, economically, and spiritually. An educated girl possesses the knowledge and intellect to choose her singular path to adulthood and her place as a citizen of our collective community. Why wouldn't we support education as the very foundation of her personal infrastructure so that collaboratively our community is stronger and healthier?”

-The Castiglia Zingapan Family, GEC supporters

**December 2020:** Amidst singing, dancing, and a feast, KGSS celebrated its first graduation with 30 students completing their lower secondary education.

## We are inspired by the Pioneers



We're incredibly proud of the Pioneers, the first class to graduate from KGSS. They, and the class of 2021, have shown us the power of educating girls. They leave Kitenga equipped with a multitude of keys—knowledge, leadership skills, self-efficacy—to unlock their futures.

### Meet Norah, a Pioneer

My name is Norah and I grew up in Musoma, Tanzania. I chose KGSS because I knew it would empower me spiritually, mentally, and physically in order to have a bright future. My favorite memory from Kitenga was having frequent visitors from abroad, like Buffalo, because this is different from other schools. Kitenga pushed me academically and helped me achieve my goal of scoring Division One in my exams. I am currently in advanced level schooling at Serengeti High School in Mara and aspire to be a lawyer who can fight for girls' rights which have been violated.



**100%**

KGSS Class of 2020 graduates who are continuing their education



**February 2021:** The first graduates' National Exam results come in—all students pass in Division I or II, ranking KGSS as the #1 small school in the district and #11 in the nation.

## We create change through allyship

Our work is to develop long-lasting partnerships with locally-led, early-stage, girl-centered initiatives. As in Kitenga, we engage with a spirit of flexibility and responsiveness in order to accelerate their impact. What they need, we help provide, be it project management, fundraising, thought partnership, or technical guidance.

### Case Study: Allyship in Action

**March 17, 2020:** United Republic of Tanzania mandates all schools to be closed within 24 hours.

#### GEC's Response: The Kesho Fund

"Jambo, Sister. How are you? The girls? COVID has changed everything. How can we help?"

"Jambo, my friends. We miss our students. We need them to be safe and healthy when they return. The students need better access to health care and handwashing and we have to be sure we can get to a hospital in an emergency—these roads are sometimes impassable in the rainy season!"

"We can help with that! Since you are still rebuilding the dorm after the fire, can we convert some of the dorm rooms into a student clinic & infirmary? Let's see what we can do about turning those dirt tracks into actual roads..."

"Asante sana! Some of the girls' parents have lost their jobs. Can we also provide more scholarships?"

- Install more touchless hand washing stations on campus
- Convert 4 bedrooms in the original dormitory into a student health center
- Construct proper roads on campus that would be passable even during the fierce rainy seasons
- Purchase a 4x4 vehicle
- Increase financial aid, helping to ensure no students left school because of the impacts of COVID

**35.1%**

Tanzanian students who passed their National Exams in Division I, II, or III in 2020



**May 2021:** GEC's Board of Directors approves an expanded Strategic Direction for the next three years that will help Kitenga thrive and grow while also bringing the GEC model to new relationships and initiatives.

## We are headed in a new, but familiar, direction

Kitenga is realizing anticipated outcomes and demonstrating significant impact on girls' lives. This early but measurable success fuels our decision to support additional partnerships with proximal leaders driving girl-centered change because we know **Kitenga is but one community brimming with potential.**

### Our Next 1,000 Days

#### Kitenga

Continue investing in Kitenga's growth, quality, & sustainability

#### Invest in Allyship

- Early-stage, community-led, girl-centered
- Flexible & responsive support
- Invest in emerging leaders

#### Invest in Girls' Futures

- Planet & people agriculture
- 'Future forward' digital job skills

**1.1%**

The estimated percentage of US international giving awarded directly to locally-led organizations





"I am so grateful to Anne and the entire family of GEC for all you have done for the IHSA school project and the Kitenga community as a whole. Together as partners, we have made the dream come true. Asante Sana. If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. This is an African proverb. Together we have gone far, we have done a great job. Thank you."

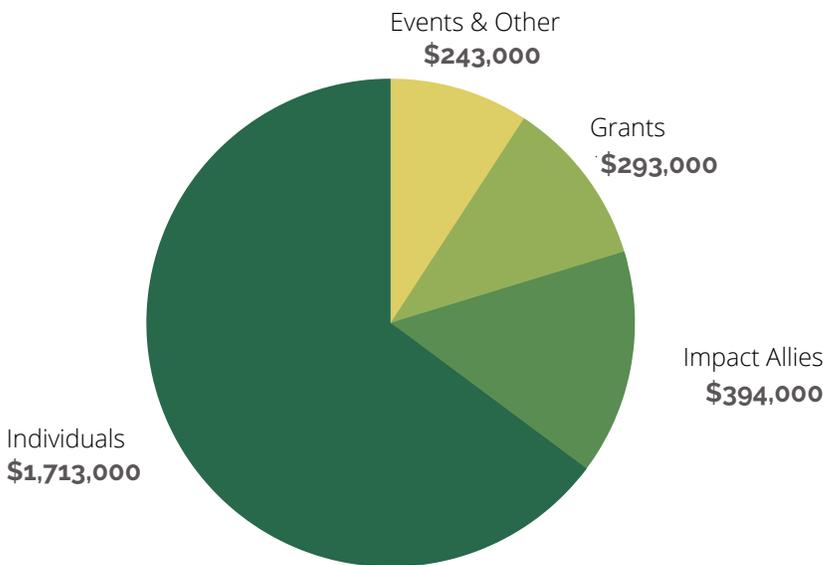
-Sister Lucy Magumba IHSA  
Mother General

**June 2021:** Building on the success of Betsy's Guest House, a new Center for Collaboration & Visitors' House opens, preparing Kitenga for a new era of reciprocal learning.

## You are GEC

### Financial Snapshot: From our Founding to Present

Funding by Source



**Your steadfast commitment to our shared vision is galvanizing.** When COVID-19 or the dorm fire could have shuttered this young school, you instead renewed your efforts. Over the past ten years, your volunteer hours, dollars, and words of support have resulted in an extraordinary school that has an even bigger and bolder future ahead. Your commitment is rippling through hundreds—and some day thousands—of girls' lives.

[View GEC's financial information, 2012-2020](#)

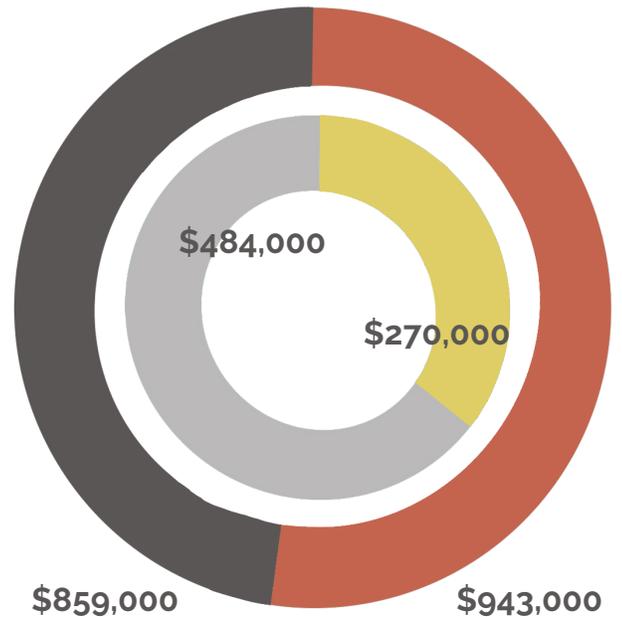
Expense Allocations

**Total Program: \$1,802,000**

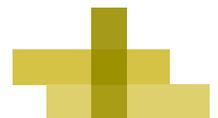
- Kitenga Infrastructure
- Other Program

**Total Core Support: \$754,000**

- General Operations
- Fundraising



Infrastructure projects: **10**  
 Number of donors: **1,783**



# We are a village

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The core of GEC's work has been to walk alongside the Immaculate Heart Sisters of Africa to help make the world a better and more equitable place for girls. It has been an honor and a privilege to accompany them on this quest for social justice. When we have encountered bumps along the way, we have faced them together via rolling up our sleeves, breaking bread, singing, dancing, or just going deeper—into trust, faith, respect, and love. Steeped in gratitude, GEC feels profound respect for the IHSA leadership these past ten years: Sisters Lucy, Lucy, and Flavia. And to the whole IHSA community—you clearly prove, every day, that there's nothing a girl can't do.

**We hold the deepest gratitude for the GEC community who continuously fuels our call to action.**

**Our enduring appreciation goes to past and present:**

- Donors
- Employees
- Impact Allies
- Board members
- Circle of Advisors
- In kind supporters
- Corporate sponsors
- Volunteers and interns
- KGSS faculty and staff
- Kitenga construction team
- Everyone who has shared words of support
- Our special friends who guide us safely and have taught us so much about Tanzania



There's nothing a girl can't do.

