

# A good life: not a question of financial status, but of personal fulfilment

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Development calls for all individuals to connect with the world in all aspects of life to lead a better life. A good life from our specific work perspective is an empowered youth living an independent life, where young people earn their own money without having to survive on the mercy of parents or partners. Empowerment calls for the availability and accessibility to information or knowledge and acquiring skills that can be turned into a lifetime source of wealth.

Though skills are instrumental in acquiring a better life, they should be accompanied with information on how, when and where to use the skills acquired for profitable results. Information on availability and access to employment, entrepreneurship opportunities, and other (free) social services, like insurance for everyone, pension after retirement, and education among others, are readily available with a globalized world. A variety of products are available on the world market with a wide range of choices that automatically result into an improved life. Information on human rights and how they can be exercised is also available.

Though Uganda is moving towards globalization, it benefits a very small population leaving out big numbers especially the youth in the slums that have limited access to information. There exists a big gap between the rich and poor people although they live close to each other. The poor have remained poor for over generations, even though in some cases a few have struggled to go to school; no significant difference is evident.

My work at Somero Uganda tries to make this gap smaller by offering access to information that can help slum youth channelize their energies into something productive and reach their full potential at a globalised level. A better life in my community calls for access to and utilization of information that helps young people live a meaningful life.

Somero Uganda provides an opportunity to the slum youth to acquire computer skills and knowledge and access internet services, so that they can connect to the rest of the world. Information on employment, entrepreneurship opportunities, health, behavior change, financial literacy and business management is provided through both an e-learning program and free workshops at the Somero centre. The organization also trains the young people in livelihood skills to maximize their chances of getting self-employment.

This will help many young people to get and create good jobs and also improve

the world step by step, raise their social levels from one status to another and can also break the cycle of poverty. A good life always calls for people who know what to do, how, when and where to do it and Somero Uganda, tries to provide this. Young people are empowered with skills to find employment or employ themselves to create an independent and self-sustaining life.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the most dynamic global development of the 21st century and has affected all aspects of life including the social, political, economical and educational spheres. However, the adoption of these technologies has varied hugely between areas, the rich and the poor, young and old, as well as between the genders in Uganda.

Kawempe division is one of the five divisions that make up Uganda's capital city Kampala and covers the largest slums in the district. The division harbors over 22,000 young people most of whom are young women. Though most of the young people have low or no chances of attaining an education, a good percentage have struggled to go through school but have still failed to attain a good life.

Though there are not enough employment opportunities for the young people in Uganda, the few available ones are provided to the rich class people in the country mainly because they have access to information and communication technology in areas where most of these jobs are posted.

Access to new information technologies makes a huge impact on young people's lives as it introduces them to new ideas and ways of thinking that opens up real life possibilities and opportunities for them. It is crucial that adolescent girls and young women, as well as young men, are able to benefit from its use. This means not only having access to the technologies but also acquiring the technological skills and expertise needed to earn a living. Acquiring computer skills is essential in increasing chances of getting decent work, boost entrepreneurship and break out of the cycle of poverty.

Education plays a big role in achieving a good life for all. With education there is change in attitude since it brings people of different cultures, religions and values together and they get to learn about the different ways of living together. It leads to a good life for all with people freely associating with each other, sharing resources (employment, information, and developed livelihood) and supporting one another in all aspects of life.

However, for education to play a big role in achieving a good life, it should have a better education system which does not only provide knowledge but also develops skills that an individual can make use of. The education system should be able to take individuals into the wider community so that they can tap into the opportunities beyond their boundaries, to achieve a good life.

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You can view his complete profile and the organisation he is associated with at: [http://www.learn2change-network.org/?About\\_Us\\_\\_Our\\_Network\\_\\_Activists#anker\\_gens](http://www.learn2change-network.org/?About_Us__Our_Network__Activists#anker_gens)