

INSIDE:

INMATES TRAINING

PERFORMING
ARTS STORY

EX-INMATES RELATIVES
(SUPPORT SYSTEM)

IMAGINEUGANDA

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*The Ex-prison Inmates
and their Communities:
Giving Everyone a new Lease of Life*



EUROPEAN UNION

CARITAS

Schweiz
Suisse
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Svizzera





Note from the Country Director

Dear Reader

A well-known saying goes: "It is not only what we do, but also what we do not, for which we are accountable." This has greatly inspired our work with youths behind bars. We live in a generation where people have seen and still continue to see prison as a place of punishment. We do not, however, blame anyone for having that kind of mindset because, until recently, prison was indeed a place where people were taken to be punished whether guilty or not,

provided the courts of law sent you there. This has all changed under the leadership of the current Commissioner General of Prisons, Dr Johnson Byabashaija. A new approach in the operation of the Uganda Prisons Service has been adopted. Prison is now a correctional facility where offenders are rehabilitated to prepare them for life after imprisonment. This approach has replaced the once punitive and retributive modus operandi. Needless to say, some ex-inmates still reoffend and are sent back to prison. However, this change in approach, spearheaded by a fully-fledged social rehabilitation and reintegration directorate, has seen the Uganda Prisons Service become the best institution in the rehabilitation of prison inmates in the whole of Africa. We are extremely proud to be associated with such a huge milestone already achieved even when there is still so much to do.

In this issue of *Imagine Uganda Magazine*, we feature the story of Stella Lutwal whom we met at Kitgum Women Prison in Kitgum district. She was serving a three-year jail term for failure to pay money she owed to a village savings (VSLA) group. Stella was the chairperson of her VSLA group. As bad luck would have it, she was waylaid and robbed of USh. 1,800,000 which she was going to bank. The members of her group were not ready to listen to her explanation for how the money got lost. All they wanted was their money – all of it. Even when her brothers offered to pay USh. 700,000 and she committed to working hard so as to clear the balance by instalments, the members still preferred that she go to jail for three years if she could not pay all the money at once. With nowhere to turn, her only option was to go to jail. Upon release from prison, Stella went back to her father's home to begin life afresh. She now rents a small room in Pajule trading centre where she prepares chips and groundnut paste, besides baking mandazis and chapattis, which she sells for a living. Just like Stella, many people end up in prison because society still views prison as a place of punishment where people have to pay for the wrongs they have committed.

Severally, we have been asked the question: Why do we support prison inmates yet there are so many people out there who could potentially benefit from our intervention? Our director of programmes took the time to put the need for our work with the Uganda Prisons Service and youth inmates into perspective. We also bring you the opinions of people who are living with ex-prison inmates regarding their reintegration.

We continue to remain indebted and grateful to everyone who has supported us to fulfil our vision of a safe and free society where young people live with dignity and realise their full potential.

RWANKANGI RONALD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

IMAGINEUGANDA

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

- Disability is not inability: Muzamil Ali on life and work with Advance Afrika
- Supporting vulnerable youths to nurture their talent in music
- Engagement of community stakeholders in Amuru
- Advance Afrika in West Nile

This issue is for September 2018.

We love to hear from you, send us your favorite story/comment or opinion about life after prison to info@advanceafrika.org and we will feature them. Help us become better with each issue.

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Inmates Training

SSP Aliyo Natukunda, the UPS Legal Officer hands over a certificate of completion to one of the trained inmates in Gulu as the RPC Great North, SSP Margaret Orik looks on

Advance Afrika has trained 198 prison inmates in entrepreneurship and life skills. The 10-day training for prison inmates from 14 prison units in the Lango and Acholi sub-regions was conducted in July and August 2018. This was the third consecutive training carried out annually under the Economic Empowerment and Social Reintegration of Youth Ex-prisoners Project implemented by Advance Afrika in partnership with the Uganda Prisons Service with support from the European Union and Caritas Switzerland.

According to the Advance Afrika Chief Executive Officer, Ronald Rwankangi, the training was aimed at equipping

youth prison inmates with skills in business and life to enable them to start and run their own enterprises upon release from prison besides reintegrating into society.

Through this training, Advance Afrika is tackling the root causes of crime by intervening in the lives of youths who have come into conflict with the law and inculcating in them a different approach to making a living on their own instead of resorting to crime. "As you may recall, Advance Afrika launched this project in April 2016. The core objectives is to economically and socially reintegrate youth ex-prison inmates by developing their entrepreneurship and life skills, establishing learning and mentorship

mechanisms to accompany them in the development and implementation of small businesses, providing them with start-up kits to launch small businesses, improving reintegration into communities and strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders. So this training is only the first step for the trainees. We hope they will use the skills acquired starting right from inside prisons on in-prison projects such as carpentry, weaving, the performing arts, tree planting as well as in their communities upon release from prison to impact their lives for the better," Rwankangi said.

Rwankangi said that the time lost by an inmate while serving their sentence



▲ Trained inmates at Gulu Main and Gulu Women Prison pose with guests who attended their graduation ceremony

cannot be recovered and it becomes a great hindrance to reintegration if one focuses on it instead of making their lives better. That is why this intervention is looking at keeping them busy inside prisons by training them and making sure they start thinking and planning for their life after incarceration.

He, therefore, urged the trained youth inmates to become agents of change and win back the trust that their people or even the community may have lost in them by desisting from criminal activities and by engaging in productive ventures once released.

On his part, one of the trainees, Adelo Moses, from Uganda Government Prison, Loro Farm appreciated Advance Afrika for the timely intervention. He said it was fruitful, as his outlook on life even while still in prison had already greatly improved. He volunteered to actively help his colleagues with translation and personal reading in the course of the training. He said he could only learn well and memorise what they were being taught by playing an active role in class.

"I thank Advance Afrika for this training: it has been an eye-opener to me because it helped build my self-esteem. And I also realised that for me to start a business, it doesn't have to be very big. I would rather start small and grow it as I provide for my family," Adelo said.

Speaking on behalf of the Commissioner General of Prisons, the Director Correctional Services at the Uganda Prisons Service, Mr Samuel Akena, said

the training had greatly improved the quality of their work as a department tasked with the responsibility to rehabilitate inmates. "For long, prisons have always been seen and believed to be a place of punishment, but over the years, there has been a systematic shift from punitive to a more rehabilitative approach while providing humane custody. We shall always work towards ensuring that all prison inmates under our care are rehabilitated and you the inmates should also be ready to be helped."

He added that Advance Afrika is a long-term partner of the Uganda Prisons Service that has spent a lot of resources on rehabilitating inmates by giving them skills through entrepreneurship and life skills training over the years. The inmates should, therefore, put the skills

they acquire to better use and become better persons in the community. He also urged the trainees to be disciplined so that when they are released, there is positive reception towards them from the public outside.

This year's training was the last under the Economic Empowerment and Social Reintegration of Youth Ex-prisoners Project, which is a three-year action launched in April 2016. It was designed to reach out to 1,200 prison inmates by imparting to them entrepreneurship and life skills as well as supporting 600 ex-prison inmates with start-up kits to set up their own businesses. In the first and second years, 997 inmates were trained, leaving 203 to be trained this year. However, only 198 out of the 203 successfully completed the 10-day training.

Samuel Akena, UPS Director Correctional Service, SSP Simpson Ebil, RPC Mid North & Rwankangi Ronald, CEO Advance Afrika handing over a certificate to a trained inmate in Lira. ▼

This year's training was the last under the Economic Empowerment and Social Reintegration of Youth Ex-prisoners Project, which is a three-year action launched in April 2016





The **Ex-prison Inmates** and their **Communities:** *Giving Everyone a new Lease of Life*

My name is Lutwal Stella. I am a single mother of four boys. My eldest son is in Senior Four and the youngest is in Primary Three. My husband

succumbed to high blood pressure when I was six months pregnant with my last-born son. At the moment, I live in Kal Kwaro village at Pajule trading centre with my brother and his family at our late father's home.

Before going to prison, I was a businesswoman in Kitgum Town. I was also the chairperson of a village savings group in Pandwong. As the chairperson, one of my responsibilities was keeping the group's savings. One day at around 2 pm on my way to the bank to deposit the group's weekly saving, I was waylaid and robbed of USh. 1,800,000 that had been collected. I immediately reported the incident to the police and the area Local Council chairperson. A few days later, my group members started demanding their money. All my pleas fell on deaf ears. They couldn't believe that I was robbed. All they wanted was their money in lump sum. They later opened up a police case against me.

I stayed in police custody for three days before I was taken to court. From there, I was remanded to Kitgum Prison for two weeks before I was bailed out. As a bail condition, I had to report back to court in two weeks. Thereafter, I was remanded for three months. When I was arraigned before court for the hearing, the presiding judge asked me to pay back the stolen money or face a three-year jail term. My brothers raised USh. 700,000 as initial payment to allow me to resume business and pay back the

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Stella packing chips for a customer



Stella and her mother at her shop in Pajule



Stella serving a customer

balance later. The complainants refused to receive the money and preferred having the entire sum at once. I was disappointed in them. I had no option but to accept to serve the three-year sentence at Kitgum Main Prison from January 2016 to January 2018.

In jail, I heard about business training, for which I immediately enrolled. I took part in the entrepreneurship and life skills training offered by Advance Afrika in June 2017. Prior to imprisonment, I sold dried fish in Kitgum town market. When I heard about the training, I thought to myself that it would be an opportunity to gain more business knowledge to apply when released.

I was taught about managing small businesses, how to treat customers, how to live with other people at home, including my complainants once released, among other topics. When I was released in January 2018, I met

Immediately after my release, my elder sister supported me with US\$ 150,000 to start up a business. It was easy because I had learnt how to write a business plan during entrepreneurship training

a few former group members and life continued normally. I forgave them in my heart while in prison much as I was initially bitter with them.

My original home is in Kitgum town. When I was released from prison, I

stayed there for a few days and decided to go back to my father's home in Pajule to start life afresh. My mother had taken over my responsibilities but couldn't afford to keep my children in school. My eldest son, who should have sat for Uganda Certificate of Education exams in 2017, could not. He is repeating the same class because there was no money for UNEB registration and school fees at that time.

Two other children are in Senior Two in Kitgum district while the youngest, 12 years old, lives with me at Pajule and is in Primary Three.

Immediately after my release, my elder sister supported me with US\$ 150,000 to start up a business. It was easy because I had learnt how to write a business plan during entrepreneurship training. I bake cakes, mandazi, chapati and prepare chips, groundnuts and simsim paste. I rent the business premises at US\$ 20,000 per month.


Business is going on well. On a good day, I make between US\$ 50,000 and 100,000. (I met Stella in the afternoon and she had not yet counted her money, so I couldn't verify this.)

In prison, I was a bitter person but the life skills I received helped me deal with it. If somebody offends me, I easily forgive them in order to live a free life. I am always happy and satisfied with the small business I have.

My biggest worry right now is paying school fees. As my children progress in education, the cost of keeping them in school also rises. I struggle to meet the cost of educating them and I am not able to clear their school fees at once; I pay in instalments as the money comes in.

To supplement my small earnings, I have also ventured into farming. I planted groundnuts and maize but the harsh weather destroyed them. I only harvested a sack of groundnuts and all the maize did not yield anything because the heat hampered its growth. I am now waiting for the next planting season with hope for better weather.

The people I live with know I am an ex-inmate and I mix with them so well. I also know other ex-inmates and once in a while, we meet and talk about life. We are all doing something to make our lives better.

A man in a black jacket is playing a yellow paper guitar in front of a crowd. The guitar is made of yellow paper with black lines for the fretboard and sound holes. The man is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a large crowd of people, mostly men, wearing yellow and orange shirts. The scene is outdoors on a grassy area.

◀ An inmate with an acoustic guitar replica during one of the performances in Gulu

Inmates use Music & Drama to Forget Pain

Prison inmates from the Lango, Acholi and West Nile sub-regions have resorted to the performing arts to forget what landed them in trouble and mirror how to live after incarceration.

Inmates from Lira Main, Lira Women's, Gulu Main, Gulu Women's and Arua Women's prisons engage in music, dance, drama, poetry and theatre as they get accustomed to prison life.

Prison authorities say the energy and skills the inmates put into the performing arts are very impressive. A female inmate, who is on remand over murder at Lira Women's Prison, says the performing arts are not only for leisure and entertainment, but also to help them discover their talents. "So it is really educative and will help to correct

the mistakes which happened before. You can be here acting or singing, and when you get out of prison, you can become a very good actor," she says. Sarah, who has been on remand at Lira Women's Prison over murder since 2016, engages in music as part of stress management and therapy. "Being an inmate, we may think of other things but we always commit ourselves to dancing and singing. For those who know how to read, they can also borrow books from the prison library and read," she adds.

Prison authorities say the energy and skills the inmates put into the performing arts are very impressive



Female inmates during a performance in Lira

Last month, dozens of elderly and youth inmates at Lira and Gulu Central prisons performed poems, songs, drama and dances. The events' main objectives were to increase community receptiveness in order to reintegrate former inmates as well as to nurture their skills and talents.

The events were premised on the theme "Rebuilding life after imprisonment". They were organised by the Uganda Prisons Service with support from Advance Afrika, a non-governmental organisation that works with vulnerable youth, including, but not limited to, prison inmates and ex-inmates whom they assist by supporting them with knowledge and skills to seek work, develop decent enterprises and/or expand their already existing businesses.

When asked why Advance Afrika gives inmates an opportunity to creatively express themselves through music, dance and drama based on personal experiences, Mr Rwankangi Ronald, the Chief Executive Officer of Advance Afrika, said they promote the performing arts as a tool for

Mr Rwankangi Ronald, the Chief Executive Officer of Advance Afrika, said they promote the performing arts as a tool for rehabilitating the inmates

rehabilitating the inmates. "The concept is that these inmates spend a lot of time in prison and as a result, they need something to engage them. So we believe that music, dance and drama can help them to relax their minds and acquire some skills."

Mr Rwankangi also encouraged the inmates to forget the past and move on. "Being an inmate does not mean the end of your life. We have seen many inmates who have reformed and gone back to their homes and made a difference in their lives," he said.

Mr Rwankangi further said that the future is still bright for those in prison. "You can still leave here and become a useful citizen for yourself, your family, the community and the country. That is why we are heavily involved in working with inmates and creating opportunities for them," he said.

The performing arts initiative for prison inmates is not new in the Uganda Prisons Service. However, it was mostly heard of only in Luzira Prison until Advance Afrika supported the establishment and launch of two performing art centres for prison inmates in Lango at Lira Main Prison and in Acholi at Gulu Main Prison as well as an in-prison band for inmates at Gulu Main and Gulu Women's Prison and forum theatre for inmates in Arua in early 2017. The centres, which are fully equipped with an assortment of both local and modern musical instruments, aim to contribute to skills development and psycho-social well-being among the inmates by helping them discover and nurture their talents in music, dance and drama.

The performing arts initiative in northern Ugandan prisons is supported by the European Union, Caritas Switzerland, the German Embassy in Uganda and AGEH – Civil Peace Service.

Ex-inmates **Relatives** *(Support System)*



COLLINA ANYEKO
POLYCARP'S MOTHER

In 2011, my son was involved in a fight with my brother's son over a woman they were both wooing for their close friends. Unfortunately, his uncle was discovered dead by the roadside the next morning. My son became the prime suspect since people said that he died of a blow he sustained on the head as a result of the fight. The following day, someone informed us of a plan by the family of the deceased to seek vengeance. Therefore, for fear of our life, we ran away together with my son. The deceased man's family came to our home and took away most of our property, including goats, chickens, ducks, mattresses and a bag full of my clothes, and also destroyed what they could.

A month after my son was arrested, they demanded that we compensate them for the death of their own son. I sold part of my land and the other family members topped up, and we paid them some money. I went with a clan leader to pay that money. He sat us down and warned the other family to never disturb us again. My son was later sentenced to eight years in prison for manslaughter.

Since we are closely related to the family of the deceased, we want to organise mato oput now that my son is out of jail. However, I am not able to afford it in my current state. When he was released, he found me already weak. I cannot do anything now. He is the one who started helping me to rebuild our home. Clan leaders had earlier said that they would see what to do once my son was out of jail. So I hope they will help us like they did during compensation. I know this will not fully restore the relationship between our families, but it is what tradition demands.



MICHAEL OGWANG
KASIBANTE'S UNCLE

I was in South Sudan doing construction work when I learnt that my nephew was in prison after being caught with stolen goods in his shop. I learnt that he used to buy cheap goods from some boys who stole them from their workplace.

I returned to Uganda and came back to Patongo, but I found him renting in the trading centre. I understand he was mistreated at home in the village and he decided to come and live in town. He is a hardworking boy, but only unfortunate, because after quitting his work in a restaurant to start his own business, thieves broke into his house and stole his things when the business was just picking up. Right now I have again rented for him a hut in another area as he works with me to raise money for setting up another business.

For the short time I took interest in his business before he was robbed, I realised he still struggles with using money. He is yet to learn how to save. His expenditure is also more than what he earns. Besides, the way he treats his friends is not businesslike; he sells them his goods on credit and never follows up.

My home is always open to him whenever he comes around. Also, since I am into the construction business, I always come with him to my construction sites whenever I get a contract to enable him to earn some money as a helper. My plan is to help him raise some money of his own as I also look for capital to set up a restaurant for him because he is good when it comes to running a restaurant.

ABONGO DENIS

CATECIST, ST THOMAS, AYITU
CATHOLIC PARISH



One day, a lady I later came to know as Catherine came to St. Thomas Ayitu Chapel. After church she approached me and told me her problem. She did not look well at all. She was pale and she was trembling. My intuition told me that she was telling the truth. I later appealed to the congregation and, together, they were able to fundraise for her to start renting a place where she could stay with her children. They also collected some food items as well as cooking utensils and gave them to her to use as she moved into her new home. I check on her every now and then when I'm free because we live in the same neighbourhood. Her challenge now is raising monthly rent, feeding her children and finding money to send her children back to school.

Reconciliation



Community members during the reconciliatory meeting in Amuru

Advance Afrika facilitates the reconciliation and healing process in rural communities in northern Uganda. On 28 July 2018, a joint team from Advance Afrika and the Uganda Prisons Service welfare department led by Jolly Aceng, visited Komakech Michael and Olara Charles at their home in Seven Corner, Amuru district. Their task was to participate in a reconciliation meeting between the family, clan members and the two brothers who were involved in a fight which led to the death of their elder brother and, subsequently, their imprisonment.

The meeting, which was also attended by local leaders, including the area LC1, the youth councillor, community elders and religious leaders, was participatory. Everyone in attendance was free to speak their mind as they recounted the events of the fateful day, how it had affected livelihoods in the bereaved family and a possible solution to enable the affected family to move on.

The journey to reconciliation started while Komakech and Olara were still inside prison. That was when prison social workers reached out to their mother and she agreed to visit them at Gulu Main and Pece prisons, respectively. When they got out of prison, a joint team from Advance Afrika and the Uganda Prisons Service, under the Task Force on Community Reintegration for Ex-prison Inmates, again visited them at home and organised another meeting with the family and community members.

All the meetings elicited tears from both the two brothers and close family members, with the community misinterpreting Advance Afrika's intervention as favouring ex-inmates who have committed crimes. However, this presented an opportunity for the joint team to sensitise the participants of the meeting to the importance of reconciliation and reintegration, as well as the mandate of the Uganda Prisons Service.

Close relatives of the two ex-inmates expressed bitterness towards them, asserting that the actions of Komakech and Olara had brought a great deal of shame and a curse on their family. They added that they were abused at the marketplace and the community borehole as well as segregated by the community because no one wants to mix with them even during communal farm work.

The elders and leaders who participated in the meeting recommended that the parents of the ex-inmates should immediately mobilise resources and organise a cleansing ceremony where the spirit of their late brother would be appeased and his death compensated.

This story was written by Opio Ramadhan, a project assistant on the Victim Offender Relationship Project



Shea butter



A total of 60 women from three groups were trained in the diversification of shea tree products and post-harvest handling



Participants carrying out group practicals

Some of the participants during the training

Advance Afrika equips women producers and processors with skills to diversify shea tree products.

A total of 60 women from three groups were trained in the diversification of shea tree products and post-harvest handling. The women producers and processors of shea tree products were equipped with technical skills and practices in post-harvest handling, standardisation and diversification of shea butter products as well as skills involved in adding value

to shea tree products and how to market and generate income from the products.

The two-day training, which was conducted at the Omiya Anyima sub-county hall in Kitgum on 24 and 25 September 2018, was facilitated by experts in the areas of value addition and diversification of shea tree products and also attended by district councillors, the sub-county chief, the District Production Officer and National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) officials.

Advance Afrika was contracted by NEMA to train women producers and

processors of shea tree products in Kitgum district. This followed successful training of producers and processors of shea tree products in Agago, Otuke, Kitgum and Abim districts in north-eastern Uganda in 2017 under a project aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of threatened savanna woodland in the Kidepo Critical Landscape in north-eastern Uganda.

The project was implemented by NEMA with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).



Frederike

I was warmly welcomed and I felt like a part of the team from the very first moment. They helped me create a network and advised on different aspects of my research along the way

In the past two months, I worked as a research associate with Advance Afrika. As a master student, I conducted field research in Kampala and Gulu. Now writing from the capital, I am finalising my field research, and I can say that my experience working with Advance Afrika was very positive.

I was warmly welcomed and I felt like a part of the team from the very first moment. They helped me create a network and advised on different aspects of my research along the way; they came up with ideas on who to speak to for interviews and topics that would be interesting to focus on in my

research. During field visits – no matter how far – I was always accompanied. This was helpful when translation and guidance were necessary. We discussed and reflected on topics during our drives back to the office.

I would like to thank all the staff members of Advance Afrika for their warm welcome, their ideas and for making my stay inspiring and productive.

FREDERIKE VAN DIEME
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Why *we* work *with* prison inmates *and* ex-inmates



Over the years, we have developed a unique niche in working transformatively with extremely vulnerable individuals. And the decision to work with prison inmates/ex-inmates was not a difficult one for us to make, because they are one such vulnerable category of individuals in our midst who have often been left out in several interventions. Life in Uganda is already hard for young people, considering they are the majority of our population. Now imagine you are a young person and you are an inmate/ex-inmate; life is even more challenging for you. Our programme and the relationship we have built with the Uganda Prisons Service as a result of a clean track record in supporting vulnerable individuals have effectively enabled us to restore ex-inmates to their communities, give hope to the prison

inmates, ensure that there is reduced recidivism and complement the mandate of the Uganda Prisons Service. We also work with prison inmates/ex-inmates to improve on community perception of the prison systems and not just inmates. We acknowledge the correctional changes taking place in the Uganda Prisons Service that Ugandan society should recognise and thus appreciate the reformation of prison inmates. From a broad perspective, we hope to maintain our high levels of concern for and commitment to this vulnerable group and ensure a safe and free society where these young inmates live in dignity and realise their full potential.

SHARON ATUKUNDA
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMES
(ADVANCE AFRIKA)

NEW STAFF



ANDREW EMMANUEL OMARA
PROGRAMME MANAGER



Andrew Emmanuel Omara joined Advance Afrika in March 2018 as a Programme Manager. He is a social development analyst with extensive experience in managing education programmes. Prior to joining Advance Afrika, Andrew worked with Windle International Uganda and The Ford Foundation International Fellowships Programme. While at Windle International Uganda, he managed programming for education in emergencies for the marginalised children and youths in refugee and conflict-affected contexts. He is proficient in project management and policy-oriented research.

Andrew received a Joint Japan/World Bank grant and graduated with a Master of Arts in International Social Development from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England. He also attained a Master of Arts in Development Studies from Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi and a postgraduate Diploma in Project Planning and Management from Uganda Management Institute as well as a BA in Social Sciences from Makerere University.



MARK TURASIIMA
ACCOUNTANT



Mark Turyasiima is an accountant who joined Advance Afrika in April 2018. He has extensive experience in Finance and Management Accounting, Audit and Business Administration. While working with Body of Christ International Ministries, Youth Social Work Association and Peace and Transformation Initiative, Mark managed finances and accounting, ensuring that the organisation ran smoothly. He has developed expertise in managing donor-funded projects, including Friends of Canada, Friends of UK, UNICEF and the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). He has a proven track record in executing various assignments characterised by conformity and adherence to plans, policies, procedures, laws, regulations and limited time frames.



ELIZABETH NORBLE
VOLUNTEER



Elizabeth Norble, is Irish but spent the first 18 years of her life in Uganda. She completed the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years and Diploma Programme at the International School of Uganda (ISU). During her time at ISU she was also volleyball team captain and a member of the Student Council. She is currently a third-year Undergraduate Psychology student studying at the University of Surrey in England and plans to pursue a career in Human Resources. Elizabeth is currently doing a year-long internship as part of her university course as a Human Resource volunteer at Advance Afrika. Throughout this year she hopes to contribute to the development of Advance Afrika's Human Resource Department to enhance the growth and performance of the organisation's employees.



GAËTAN BIDAUD
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE



After obtaining his master's degree in Economics in Switzerland and in Finland, Gaëtan first worked for the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Canton of Fribourg in Switzerland, mostly supporting the Head Economics Advisor of the politician in charge of the department. Then he worked as Communication Manager for the Unemployment Service of the Canton of Fribourg.

With the aim of diversifying his work experience, he took up the opportunity to be a teacher. He has been teaching many topics to different age groups of students, ranging from Economics to high school students and Mathematics and French to young Eritrean refugees in Switzerland. Additionally, as travelling and exploring the world is a deep passion of his, he had the chance to volunteer and teach English to women and children in both India and Cambodia.

While teaching, he also worked as a consultant on SME development for micro-enterprises based in Switzerland. This allowed him to build strong knowledge of the challenges faced by micro-entrepreneurs and a good understanding of the best way to lead them to independence and success.

More recently, he also successfully completed university courses in Law in order to further his education and strengthen his skills.

At Advance Afrika, Gaëtan supports the organisation regarding its entrepreneurship programme by providing technical advice and deepening the knowledge of the staff. He is involved in monitoring and evaluation to help Advance Afrika get a better understanding of the efficiency of its projects and improve its work. Gaëtan is also strengthening the capacity of the staff by working on improving their working skills, from planning to information technology.



GERALD NALODA
SENIOR FINANCE AND
ADMINISTRATION OFFICER



Gerald joined Advance Afrika in April 2018 as a Senior Finance and Administration Officer. He is a professional accountant who possesses over six years of experience in the NGO and private sectors, with expertise in promoting financial planning and high standards of financial accountability and budgeting for NGOs, the public sector and other private enterprises. He has a track record of good analytical, communication and presentation skills with a high sense of honesty, integrity and ethical standards, especially having managed various donor budgets and reports.

Gerald has over the years promoted strategic financial planning and high standards of financial accountability, and provided leadership with integrity to staff, directing and controlling the financial resources of the units in line with the organisations' policies/procedures and implementing cash management strategies to the highest possible standards of excellence, transparency and compliance with all external regulations as well as accounting and financial management standards.

Prior to joining Advance Afrika, Gerald worked with Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) as a Project Accountant/Senior Accountant. He has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration (Accounting) of Makerere University and is now pursuing ICPAU training level two.

VISION:

A safe and free society where young people live with dignity and realise their full potential

MISSION:

We address the root causes of vulnerability by developing opportunities for economic empowerment and transforming the social functionality of communities

VALUES:

Courageous leadership, Passion,
Appreciation and Professionalism