



MAKING  
CONNECTIONS

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



creative action  
INSTITUTE

**This past year has been about connection. After two years of virtual programming, it has been a true joy to convene in person again! The power of physical connection fosters community and enables greater collective action, which has always been at the core of our journey.**

Our program vision this year was infused with the wisdom of writer and radical feminist, Audre Lorde, who wisely stated, “There is no such thing as a single issue struggle because we do not live in single issue lives.” We know that the complexities of systemic racism, gender inequity, and the ever-increasing impacts from climate change demand that we approach our work through an intersectional lens that takes into consideration the disproportionate impacts these persistent challenges have on women and girls and other marginalized groups. Gender equality is essential for achieving a sustainable future as it affects all aspects of life from health to education. A holistic approach allows us to see how these issues are intertwined and how they can be addressed in order to create lasting positive change.

Recognizing the importance of girls understanding climate change and their place in it, we incorporated a climate justice curriculum in our Sauti ya Dada Program and the East African Girls’ Leadership Summit. Empowering girls with knowledge about climate change and encouraging them to become agents of change has been transformative. They have not only recognized their role as leaders but have also brainstormed solutions to combat the pressing issues affecting their lives.

Similarly, our environmental programs have integrated new programming that connects climate, gender, food security, and food sovereignty issues. The Community Resilience courses in Latin America and West Africa seek to equip environmental leaders and organizations with the tools they need to strengthen their communities’ capacity to respond to unexpected challenges brought about from climate change. The courses examine the gendered dimensions of climate change; food security and food sovereignty; water, hygiene, and sanitation; and health.

Our Creative Advocacy Practicums, a component of all our programs, continue to equip leaders with the tools to combine art and leadership skills to advocate for community-level transformations. Art helps shift thinking, inspire, and present new ways for people to organize around social issues. For instance, in Guatemala, our participants organized a creative arts parade to draw attention to the conservation of a national park. The parade was joyful, inspiring, and



pushed the community to take action to protect their natural resources, culminating in the mayor’s commitment to preserve the park against mining interests.

Time and time again, we witness the power that collective and creative action has to change hearts and minds to encourage ordinary citizens to achieve extraordinary things. Our organization draws its strength from our partners who through our training are able to make those connections for themselves, to deeply understand the issues that affect their lives, and integrate new tools to create solutions in partnership with their communities.

Thank you to our donors and partners for accompanying us in this incredible work. We begin 2023 feeling even more connected to our international network of people passionate about making the world a better place for everyone. Your support allows us to continue making these connections between local communities and global issues, and to create a web of support for grassroots change-makers on the ground.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clare".

Clare Dowd,  
Executive Director





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2022 Impact Numbers - 6
- Our Approach - 8
- How We Work - 9

## **GENDER EQUITY PROGRAMS:**

- Sauti ya Dada (SYD) - 11
- SYD Creative Advocacy Practicum - 13
- East African Girls' Leadership Summit - 18
- 2022 Impacts of Sauti ya Dada - 19
- Sukeji's Story - 20
- EAGLSX - 22
- Impact of EAGLSX - 23

## **CLIMATE JUSTICE PROGRAMS:**

- Creative Environmental Justice Program - 25
- CELP Creative Advocacy Practicum (CAP) - 26
- Community Resilience Program - 28
- CAP Highlight from Cameroon - 31
  
- Consulting Services - 32
- Financials - 33
- Supporters - 35
- Program Partners - 37
- Board and Staff - 39



# 2022 IMPACT NUMBERS



**3441 HRS**  
of training and coaching

**1789**  
Participants  
in Creative  
Advocacy  
Practicums



**572** Workshop  
Participants

**420 GIRLS**  
in East Africa equipped with  
leadership skills, advocacy tools, &  
knowledge about climate change



Worked in  
**12**  
countries



**99%** of girls in our Sauti ya  
Dada program stayed  
in school

**99%** did not become  
pregnant



**127%**  
increase in girls'  
knowledge of Sexual &  
Reproductive Health



**97%**  
of Girls in Sauti ya Dada know  
their rights and feel confident  
in advocating for them

## Through Creative Advocacy Practicums, co-created with our grassroots partners:

**6** Reforestation  
Projects  
Implemented



**1** New Farmers  
Cooperative  
formed in  
Cameroon



**10** Community food  
gardens created in  
Nicaragua



**1** Forest  
preserved in  
Guatemala



**22** Chiefs and community leaders  
implemented systems of  
support around gender-  
based violence in Kenya



**2** Beach  
Clean-ups  
in Honduras



Training and  
curriculum  
developed for  
**5** Mission-  
aligned  
Organizations

**New Mentors trained 27**  
to support teen  
girls in Sauti ya  
Dada clubs

Utilized arts activism  
to call to action over  
**9,188**  
community members  
on issues related to  
climate change and  
gender equality!

# OUR WORK IS GROUNDED in the following approaches:



## Learner-Centered

Learners are actively engaging with ideas and one another to master skills by drawing connections between their education and life outside the classroom

1

2

## Popular Education

Respects and acknowledges the inherent knowledge and experience of the learner and empowers them to work out solutions to their problems



## Feminist

Addresses power imbalances present in institutions by recognizing the impact of gender, race, & class in all parts of our lives so that power can be shared and leveraged more equitably

3

4

## Creative and Artistic Expression

Engages all different types of learners while also building creative thinking, empathy, problem-solving, and collaboration



## Intersectional

Considers the ways that people's social identities can overlap, compounding experiences of discrimination

5

# HOW WE WORK

We create opportunities to activate learning through advocacy. Integral to every program is our Creative Advocacy Practicum (CAP), a unique opportunity to blend knowledge gained in the courses with arts-based methodology to generate community-driven solutions to pressing challenges. Art builds empathy, opens spaces for dialogue, and generates solutions that spring from diverse lived experiences.

We offer platforms for peer exchange and sharing best practices to strengthen movements. Spaces for exchange and convening (whether physical or virtual) are integral in deepening connections among peers. We create this space through summits and forums that allow our partners to showcase their successes, present problems for collective input, and learn from each other.

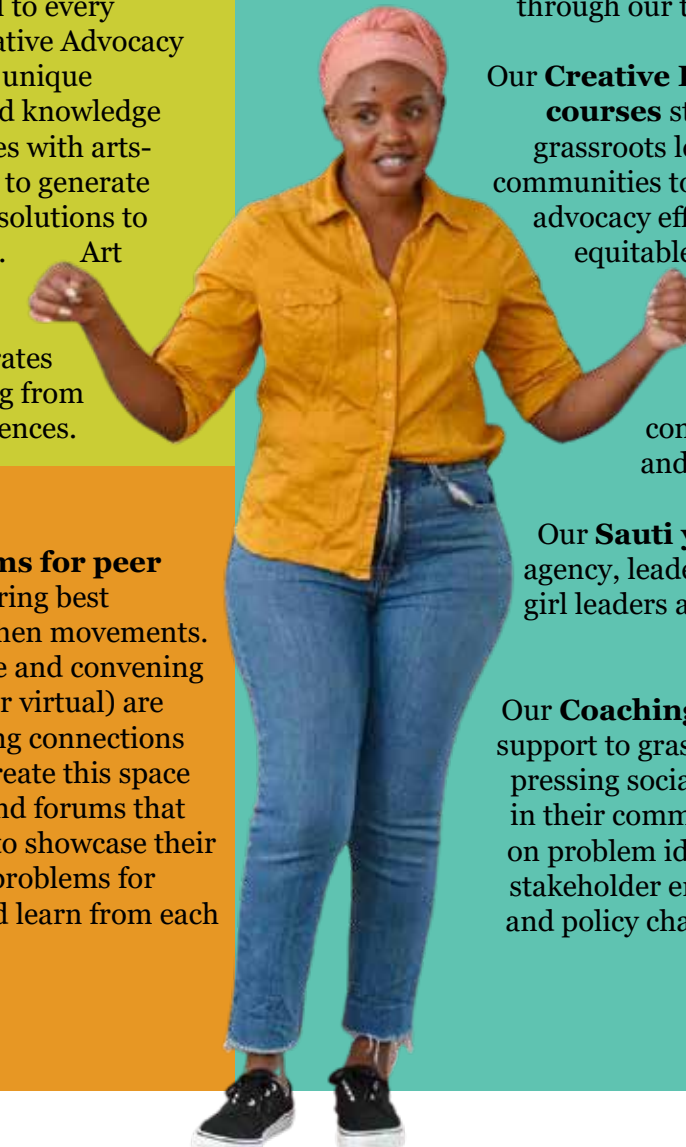
Change should be led locally; so, we invest our resources in building leaders through our transformative curriculum:

Our **Creative Leadership and Advocacy courses** strengthen the capacity of grassroots leaders to collaborate with communities to generate solutions and lead advocacy efforts that fight for a gender-equitable and a climate-just world.

**Climate Resilience courses** help deepen local knowledge and strengthen community capacity to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

Our **Sauti ya Dada Circles** build the agency, leadership, and advocacy skills of girl leaders and the mentors who support them.

Our **Coaching services** offer continuous support to grassroots leaders as they tackle pressing social and environmental issues in their communities. Together, we focus on problem identification, project design, stakeholder engagement, media strategy, and policy change to generate sustainable solutions.





# GENDER EQUITY PROGRAMS

## Sauti ya Dada

Sauti ya Dada (SYD) helps marginalized girls in East Africa complete their secondary school education by providing support, learning, leadership and advocacy skills. Girls' education has far-reaching benefits, yet there are still limited resources to help girls overcome barriers and stay in school. This program seeks to eliminate the obstacles blocking girls from completing their education, including poverty, climate change, gender inequality, sexual violence, teen pregnancy and child marriage.

### How it Works:

During this two year program, we partner with grassroots organizations that already work with marginalized girls from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Rwanda but do not have specific leadership and mentorship programs. The girls are organized into Sauti ya Dada clubs. Each club meets bi-weekly with women mentors in their community to work through our girls' leadership curriculum, which builds competencies in leadership, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), advocacy skills, climate justice, and promotes a community of support and collaboration within the group. The girls also receive monthly dignity kits with menstrual pads to ensure that menstruation does not prohibit their school attendance. Due to cultural taboos around menstruation and the high cost and scarcity of menstrual pads, especially in rural areas, up to 10% of girls in the region have been pressured into trading sexual favors for menstrual pads. With a dual focus on SRHR education and the provision of menstrual pads, girls in our program are twice<sup>1</sup> as likely to finish school than their peers.

*"Through the Sauti Ya Dada program, I'm now able to express myself in front of people... I know who I am and my role in society."*

-Nailati 15, Morogoro, Tanzania

Mentors in our program undergo an extensive mentorship training program to be able to support and guide the girls in their club. In 2022, we expanded Sauti ya Dada from 8 to 14 clubs, training and partnering with 14 mentors to reach a total of 240 girls!

In addition to bi-weekly meetings, girls in the program receive regular SMS text messages from "Aunty Nala" to encourage them in their education and provide critical SRHR knowledge. Girls can also follow and participate in the creation of the Sauti ya Dada podcast series, which features stories by girls, for

<sup>1</sup> 99% of Sauti ya Dada participants complete school, compared to country averages for girls: "Lower secondary completion rate, female", The World Bank, October 24, 2022, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.CMPT.LO.FE.ZS>



other girls, in the program.

As a culmination of their 2-years of learning, Sauti ya Dada clubs have the opportunity to lead a Creative Advocacy Practicum. This is our second year integrating the CAPs into SYD and is an important step for the girls to put their learning into real world action. These projects are designed and led by girls around a critical gender or climate change issue that are barriers to girls' education in their communities. CAI provides the group with project design guidance, the support of an artist facilitator, and funds to implement the project.

*"This program taught me more about my body and my menstrual cycle. Now I can manage my hygiene and I do not worry about missing class because of my period!"*  
-Caren 17, Siaya, Kenya



## Creative Advocacy Practicum (CAP):

Integral to every program is a CAP, a unique arts-based methodology used to generate community-driven solutions to pressing challenges. Art builds empathy, opens spaces for dialogue, and generates solutions that spring from diverse lived experiences. Advocacy campaigns create an opening for girls to engage decision-makers and shift attitudes and behavior to disrupt barriers to girls' education. Learn about the CAPs led by Sauti ya Dada clubs in 2022:



**\* Girls Take Education into their Own Hands** - Only 35%<sup>1</sup> of girls in Tanzania complete secondary school. The SYD club with partner Girls Livelihood and Mentorship, in Arusha, Tanzania, designed their project to better understand why many girls dropout and to create solutions to change that. The girls identified a variety of causes. At the societal level, negative norms such as child marriage and the belief that girls do not need an education as well as lack of access to adequate healthcare were contributing to dropout. In schools, corporal punishment, sexual misconduct by teachers, and a lack of school infrastructure to support girls' hygiene are common. At the personal level, girls explored the lack of menstrual pads, food, and not having enough time to study due to a large amount of house chores. The girls worked with a local artist to create a theater drama and paintings to address these issues and present them to fellow students, parents, and teachers. As a result of the final event, the parents committed

to be more attentive to their daughters' life goals and consider how education plays a role, not subject them to early marriages, and to allow them more time to study at home. The headmistress promised to be more vigilant to stop teachers from abusing students and the teachers agreed to be more flexible with students and take their home context into account.

**\* Girls Raise Voices Against Negative Peer Pressure** - The Segga Girls Secondary SYD club, in Morogoro, Tanzania, noticed that academic performance was dropping amongst girls at their school. They created a CAP to find out why and to generate solutions to this problem. Through analysis and discussion, they determined that an increasingly negative environment of peer pressure and misinformation amongst their peers was impacting girls' educational performance. Together, with their mentor

<sup>1</sup> "Lower secondary completion rate, female", The World Bank, October 24, 2022, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.CMPT.LO.FE.ZS?locations=TZ>



and a local mural artist, the girls proposed better ways that girls could handle harmful social situations. In a final presentation for 320 peers and school staff, they used theater, poetry, and song to educate their school community and call them to action to change negative behaviors. During the event, 200 students made a pledge to create a more positive learning environment and to speak up when they see negative behavior amongst their friends.

✳ **Reproductive Education to Prevent Teen Pregnancy** - Girls in the Girls Castle SYD club, in Turkana, Kenya, come from a community where teen pregnancy is a barrier to girls' education. For example, misinformation on contraceptives and a lack of sexual and reproductive health education for girls is common. But girls who become pregnant are stigmatized and prohibited from continuing their education. Furthermore, some parents who see cases of girls getting pregnant while in school begin to distrust the education system and refuse to send their daughters to school. The girls in this CAP worked with a local artist to utilize theater, dance, poetry and visual art to engage and educate over 400 students and community members on this multifaceted problem. As a result of the event, the school administration agreed to allow pregnant students to complete their education; medical providers promised to treat girls with more respect when they go in for reproductive health services; and parents promised to share sexual and reproductive health education with their children.

✳ **Girls Speak out Against Gender-Based Violence** - 40%<sup>2</sup> of women in Kenya experience gender-based violence (GBV) in their home. The SYD club at Ruma Girls Secondary School, in Siaya, Kenya, wanted to change that through their CAP. Some of the causes they identified contributing to GBV included lack of awareness around the issue, regressive cultural practices that hinder women's participation in decision making, the practice of wife inheritance, and sexual harassment. With the guidance of their mentor and a local artist, the girls created theater art and paintings with educational messages about the negative effects of, and possible solutions to, gender-based violence - which they presented to over 500 students, chiefs, and community leaders. As a result of the event, the 3 chiefs and 19 community leaders

<sup>2</sup> Kwamboka, Dolphine. "The road to ending violence against women and girls in Kenya." World Vision International, December 6 2022, <https://www.wvi.org/stories/kenya/road-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-kenya#:~:text=Indeed%2C%20government%20statistics%20from%20the,percent%20respectively%20in%20the%20country>



agreed to work together to prevent and respond to cases of gender-based violence in their communities; the mentor of the club was invited to sit on the community's security council to consult on gender-based violence cases; and the girls now have resources and agency with which to take action when they witness or experience GBV.

*"This program contributed a lot to my development. My family told me that I changed into a mature girl due to the guidance and support from my mentor and what we learned from Aunty Nala."*

-Kevine 14, Kigali, Rwanda



✳ **Theater Changes Views on Child Marriage** - In Uganda, 34%<sup>3</sup> of girls are married before they turn 18. The SYD club with partner Triumph Uganda, in Jinja, Uganda, used their CAP to raise awareness in their community around this problem of child marriage and how it negatively impacts girls. The girls worked with a local theater artist to design a play to counteract the belief that educating girls is a waste of time, to call for greater involvement of women in decision-making in the community, and to raise awareness of the negative impacts of child marriage on girls. As a result of the event, community members, parents, and the local council committed to fighting child marriage in their community; to refer victims of child marriage to supportive NGOs; to support girls' equal access to opportunities; to educate girls on sexual and reproductive health; and to provide counseling services.

<sup>3</sup> "Uganda: Prevalence Rates." Girls Not Brides, 2022, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/uganda/#:~:text=What%27s%20the%20prevalence%20rate%3F,married%20before%20their%2018th%20birthday>



✳ **Preventing Teen Pregnancy and School Drop-Out** - The teen pregnancy rate in East Africa is 25%<sup>4</sup> and the rate in Rwanda<sup>5</sup>, specifically, has been increasing. Noticing this trend within their school, the SYD club with partner Club Rafiki Youth Friendly, in Kigali, Rwanda, designed a practicum to reflect on the negative impact and causes of teen pregnancy in their communities. They painted a mural to raise awareness of the problem, which they then presented to community members in a final presentation. As a result, parents, school teachers, and government officials at the event committed to offer better sexual and reproductive education to teens and to encourage girls in their education. The girls who participated in the project made a commitment to focus on their education and made plans to educate and involve boys in preventing teen pregnancy.

<sup>4</sup> “Early childbearing can have severe consequences for adolescent girls.” Unicef, 2019, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-health/adolescent-health/>

<sup>5</sup> Iribagiza, Glory. “Is teenage pregnancy screaming lack of access to contraception?” The New Times, August 23, 2023, <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/194042/News/is-teenage-pregnancy-screaming-lack-of-access-to-contraception>

*“I can confidently say that I am now more empowered in public speaking and I know my values as a leader! Today, I can stand in front of the class and even the whole school and explain to them how we can prevent teen pregnancies!”*  
-Emelyne 16, Kigali, Rwanda



## East African Girls' Leadership Summit (EAGLS)

An important component of the Sauti ya Dada program is the annual East African Girls' Leadership Summit. This 5-day Summit provides an opportunity for girls in SYD clubs from across Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Kenya to gather for peer exchange, gain additional leadership and advocacy skills, learn about climate justice, and be inspired by the advocacy projects that recent SYD graduates led in their communities.

This year's Summit was the first time in two years that we were able to convene in person again - an exciting change for everyone. This year's participants analyzed how pre-existing gender inequalities are exacerbated during climate change-induced events. These events disproportionately impact girls, resulting in reduced access to education and increased rates of child marriage and other forms of gender-based violence. They learned about advocacy efforts undertaken by girl climate justice leaders globally and met with inspiring women leaders working in climate activism in Nairobi. As a result, the girls gained a new understanding of the important role they can play in climate justice solutions.

*"What I've learned from the Summit is that girls can advocate for the challenges that they face in their communities regardless of the belief that community members and leaders have that girls can't do anything."*

- Karen 15, Kenya



## 2022 Impact from Sauti ya Dada

99% of girls in SYD stayed in school (whereas 24-80% of girls in the region do not finish high school)

99% did not become pregnant (whereas up to 34% of girls in the region are married or pregnant before 18 years of age)

93% of girls in the program have a clear understanding of sexual and reproductive health and know they have a right to control what happens to their body

95% understand what climate change is and how to reduce its impact in their communities

90% know how to take action against gender-based violence

94% of girls in SYD stayed in school (whereas 24-80% of girls in the region do not finish high school)

97% know their rights as a girl and how to advocate for themselves

97% know how to use art as a tool for social change



## Sukeji's Story:

*"Being a South Sudanese means a lot...because as a South Sudanese child, particularly as a girl, we have a lot of harmful cultural practices going on. All of East Africa, but South Sudan in particular, has the highest rates of child marriage, in addition to abuse, gender-based violence, and others. The state of girls in South Sudan is really what makes me passionate to do this work."*

These are some reflections that former participant and current girls' rights activist, Sukeji, shares with us in a recent conversation about the impact Creative Action Institute had on her life.

Since she was young, she always had an interest in supporting other girls and fighting against injustice, but she did not always feel well-equipped with the confidence and tools to know how to lead and organize for greater action. Sukeji says the turning point in her life was when she was able to attend Creative Action Institute's East African Girls' Leadership Summit (EAGLS).

*"I treasure every second I spent at the East African Girls' Leadership Summit. That's where my leadership journey started. Before, I used to talk to girls but in a less impactful way because I was not so well-equipped. But when I went to the summit, I came back as a mentor, and I had skills to offer."*

In 2019, Sukeji was chosen to represent her country at the EAGLS summit in Nairobi. This was a big breakthrough for Sukeji because it meant that she would have the chance to meet and collaborate with other girl leaders from across East Africa. She says, "not just ordinary girls, but fellow girl leaders like me that want to make change... I was so excited because I was going to get a space to discover myself, I was going to be mentored; I was going to meet a lot of incredible people; and my network was going to get wider...it meant a lot to me because it was a lot of responsibility- I was representing my whole country and the challenges that girls in my community face."

From the moment Sukeji arrived in Nairobi, she knew that this was going to be a life-changing experience. She was welcomed warmly by the facilitators, who made her feel at home. Sukeji was amazed by the incredible network of girls that she met at the summit. She met girls from Tanzania, Somalia, and many other countries. These girls were like her, they were passionate about making a difference in their communities, and they all had big dreams.

Sukeji was eager to learn everything she could from the Summit. She attended sessions

on communication skills, leadership, menstrual and reproductive health, girl's rights, and techniques for using creativity and art to engage the community. She absorbed all the knowledge she could and came back to her community with a new sense of purpose.

Upon returning home, Sukeji was intent on utilizing these new skills to bring about change for girls in her community. She utilized the handbook from Creative Action Institute that had guidelines on starting a girls' club, talking to other girls, and tools for collective organizing. Sukeji began sharing her knowledge with and mentoring other girls: She formed a club against gender-based violence in her school, and created a school-wide girls' mentorship program that supported 150 girls each week; she successfully petitioned the school administration to give her space for speaking about girls' issues at the beginning of every school-wide assembly; she educated girls about menstrual and reproductive health, their rights as girls, spoke out against child marriage and against cultural myths and stigmas impacting girls. Sukeji quickly became known in her school and in the wider community as a role model and a champion of girls' rights. She soon began to receive invitations to speak at local and national conferences and on radio shows.

Sukeji's passion for empowering girls led her to form an organization with other girl leaders in the region called Girls Voices for Change. The organization empowers girls through girl-centered communication and leadership. She also helped found the Children's Parliament of South Sudan, which amplifies children's voices and pushes for their inclusion in governmental decisions.

Sukeji's story is proof that when we empower girls, it creates a ripple effect that can empower communities and countries. The potential for change and leadership is present in so many girls across the region, they just need the opportunity to discover it. When we mentor and empower girls, and give them the tools they need to be effective leaders, we can change the world!



## EAGLSx

After six years of convening girls from five East African countries for the East African Girls' Leadership Summit (EAGLS), in 2022 we piloted a country level summit called EAGLSx to reach a larger network of girls and explore barriers to girls' education with a country-specific lens. The new EAGLSx program provides an opportunity for girls to learn, discuss relevant issues, deconstruct problems, and seek solutions to their challenges. While the EAGLS is an integral part of the two year Sauti ya Dada program, EAGLSx uses the Summit model to introduce girls who are not in the Sauti ya Dada program to our transformative leadership development curriculum in order to develop their self-confidence, creativity, knowledge around gender and climate change issues, and advocacy skills to be empowered agents of change.

In September 2022, we held our first in-country EAGLSx in partnership with SEGA Secondary School in Morogoro, Tanzania. The Summit was attended by 60 girls and eight teachers from eight schools in four provinces in Tanzania. The girls explored issues on leadership, sexual reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence, and climate change. The girls that participated in our EAGLSx in Tanzania had limited experience with these issues beforehand.



*"I will go back to my community and advocate for an end to teen pregnancies."*

-Hidaya 16, Tanzania

## 2022 Impact from EAGLSx in Tanzania





## CLIMATE JUSTICE PROGRAMS

### Creative Environmental Leadership Program

The Creative Environmental Leadership Program (CELP) equips leaders to incorporate transformative leadership practices that leverage collaborative, inclusive and creative approaches for both internal and external stakeholder engagement. Over a two-year period, participants go through four training modules that deepen their personal leadership, their ability to effectively collaborate and facilitate the learning and participation of all stakeholders, and incorporate a systems lens throughout their work.

Through CELP they design and enact creative advocacy projects with their stakeholders, harnessing the power of arts to support problem analysis, build consensus around complex issues, develop inclusive solutions, and shift behaviors to support a more sustainable planet.

Although the 2021 CELP course participants began their training on our virtual platform due to the pandemic, they had the opportunity to join their cohort colleagues in-person in Guatemala for their last module in 2022. While virtual training has many benefits, blending it with in-person training allows participants to build powerful connections and strengthen the network of environmental leaders in the region.

*“After the Creative Systems course, I will keep in mind the principles of systemic thinking and put into practice the ‘iceberg analysis’ to discover the mental models that influence people’s actions and that allow certain environmental issues to persist,”* shares CELP participant Jennifer Ortiz, from the organization Semillas del Oceano in Guatemala.

To apply her learning, Jennifer is leading a Creative Advocacy Practicum (CAP) in her community for later in 2023. Her CAP, in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, will address the problem of ocean pollution through education on the negative consequences of solid waste and include a community visioning process of alternative waste reduction practices such as recycling and reuse. Through the use of art, creative sign-making, and collaborative organizing techniques they will inspire local residents to change harmful behaviors around waste disposal.

## Creative Advocacy Practicums for CELP Participants

As in all of our programs, CELP provides opportunities for environmental leaders to put their learning into real world practice through leading a Creative Advocacy Practicum (CAP). Creative Action Institute provides coaching and mentorship, the support of a local artist facilitator, and a small grant to fund the project.

One of the most inspiring CAPs to come out of this year's cohort was conducted by partner One Planet, a CELP participant. They have been one of our long time participants in CELP trainings, learning how to use collaborative processes, creative tools, and an intersectional lens to address and advocate for the conservation of indigenous people's land in the Peruvian Amazon. In their CAP, they worked with 25 indigenous Maijuna youth and a documentary film-maker to create four short films that showcase their traditional culture and connection with the land, in order to defend their ancestral lands.

Over several days, the youth went through a creative facilitation and brainstorming practice, utilizing Creative Action Institute's methodologies to unite the group, share experiences, analyze the threats to their culture and land, and spark their creativity. Out of this collaborative and creative process, the youth wrote, acted, directed, and filmed these inspiring and beautiful short films.

These films have now been viewed by over 450 audience members in various screenings locally and internationally. The film "Mothers of the Chambira" was selected as a finalist in the 2023 Eugene Environmental Film Festival. These screenings have generated a greater awareness of their culture and of the threat to their land. Additionally, a majority of the youth who participated in the project were motivated through the process to get involved in conservation efforts and they continue to be actively engaged today. Visit our website to watch the films.



# Community Resilience Program

Climate change impacts are increasingly prevalent, such as decreasing biodiversity and water scarcity. Additionally, we are witnessing its ripple effect on other areas of society such as the intensification of human conflict around natural resources, reduced food, and an increase in child marriage and poverty.

We developed our new Community Resilience Program in response to these types of challenges, in order to give grassroots leaders the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and to foster community-level resilience to climate change.

The program kicked-off in 2022 with our new Food Sovereignty and Food Security course. The food sovereignty movement comes from the bottom up; starting with farmers, fishers, and indigenous peoples most impacted by hunger, poverty, and climate change. Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to access healthy and culturally appropriate food that is ethically and sustainably sourced. It is intrinsically linked to climate change; when droughts, floods, and fires occur, food supplies are disrupted.

11 of our partner organizations joined us virtually from across Latin America (Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Belize, El Salvador, and Nicaragua) to participate in this pilot course, creating opportunities for peer exchange and network building and a deeper understanding of food systems.

2022 also involved the development of a new course for implementation in 2023, Climate Justice. The course equips leaders with knowledge on how climate change deepens pre-existing inequalities, particularly for women and girls, and tools to ensure their work is climate just.

*"The training helped me to improve my activities with rural communities. In particular, to facilitate more creative communication. The pandemic forced us to rethink how we obtain information and share knowledge. Using the techniques I learned has helped me build more trust in the people we work with and understand the needs of those around me. I have understood that you have to learn to listen and communicate clearly and assertively."*

-Marco Acevedo, Ecologic Development Fund, Mexico

*"Part of my work is advising communities to create backyard gardens and strengthen their food systems... I would like to train and transmit the knowledge acquired in this course in my organization in the same flexible way that Creative Action Institute has; I want to change many of its forms of thinking, that have been established for a long time, with more sustainable ones."*

-Cesar Coadro, AMMUDIS, Guatemala



## Community Resilience CAPs

Participants from this new Food Security and Food Sovereignty course had the opportunity to put their learning from the course into practice through a final Creative Advocacy Practicum. Creative Action Institute provided participants guidance with the design of their project, the support of an artist facilitator, and a small grant for implementation.



## CAP highlight: Women Reimagining Food Systems to Protect the Ebo Forest:

After the Amazon, the Ebo Forest in Cameroon is considered to be the second lung of our planet. The forest is home to hundreds of plant and animal species of ecological importance and of international concern. The over 40 communities living near this forest depend on it for much of their livelihood as well as for medicinal and other benefits. Despite its importance, the forest land is being lost due to farmland encroachment, destroying wildlife habitat in the process.

Sekakoh, an environmental organization in Cameroon, identified the need to address local community food systems while at the same time foster forest preservation. It was important to address both needs simultaneously so that community members had an adequate source of food and income without sacrificing the health of the forest.

35 community members participated in this Creative Advocacy Practicum, the majority women, as women take on a dominant role in food production and family nutrition decisions in these communities. Using Creative Action Institute's collaborative methodology, participants were led through a visioning process to first identify and analyze current food systems in their community. They reflected on what is currently being utilized well and areas where food production and food processing could be improved. Community members determined that food and animal production could be achieved with less chemical inputs, which would create healthier food, healthier environment, and create employment at the same time.

The workshops culminated with the painting of a community mural to illustrate the various food production and processing units within and around their community.

Sharing new lessons learned from the project, participant Balogoc Ruth says "I will improve my farms' yields by utilizing animal waste in my farms to improve soil fertility." When participants were visited in follow-ups after the CAP, 80% of participants demonstrated an increased commitment to improved household waste management and diversity of crops in their farms.





## Consulting Services

In addition to our own programs, Creative Action Institute is able to share its expertise with other organizations who engage our services to develop programs, curriculum, and toolkits, and design and facilitate trainings around topics of climate justice and gender equity. Organizations collaborate with us due to our creative methodology that we weave into content made for others, our expertise in climate justice and gender, and our approach that centers the lived realities of grassroots leaders and communities. Some examples of the projects we have undertaken as consultants this year are:

- Developed a comprehensive Climate Justice Education and Leadership Curriculum for adolescent girls
- Co-created a Feminist Leadership Toolkit for Young LGBTQI+ Organizers for the FRIDA FUND
- Designed a Food Security and Food Sovereignty course for environmental leaders
- Designed a Gender and Climate Justice course for environmental leaders
- Adapted FAWE's 12 Unit Gender Responsive Pedagogy Toolkit to both a facilitated and self-guided online format, and designed training-of-trainers.

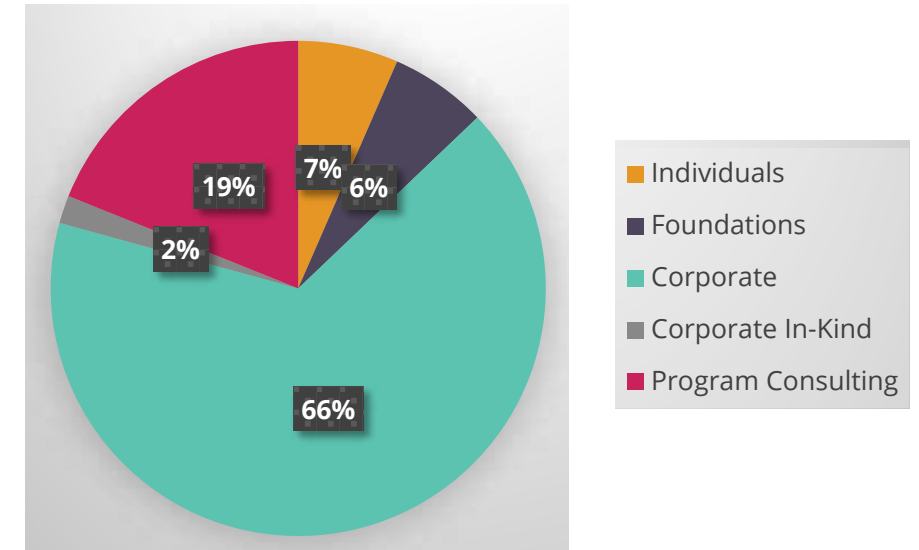
*"The team at Creative Action Institute were phenomenal to work with. The transparent communication, flexible work style, and commitment to a quality product were exceptional. Their expertise on climate change and curriculum development greatly benefited us as a new organization working in this space. With the support of their technical expertise, we can begin an intervention working at the intersection of gender and climate. We look forward to more opportunities to collaborate on future projects and highly recommend working with CAI."*

- Abigail Spangler, Room to Read

## Financials

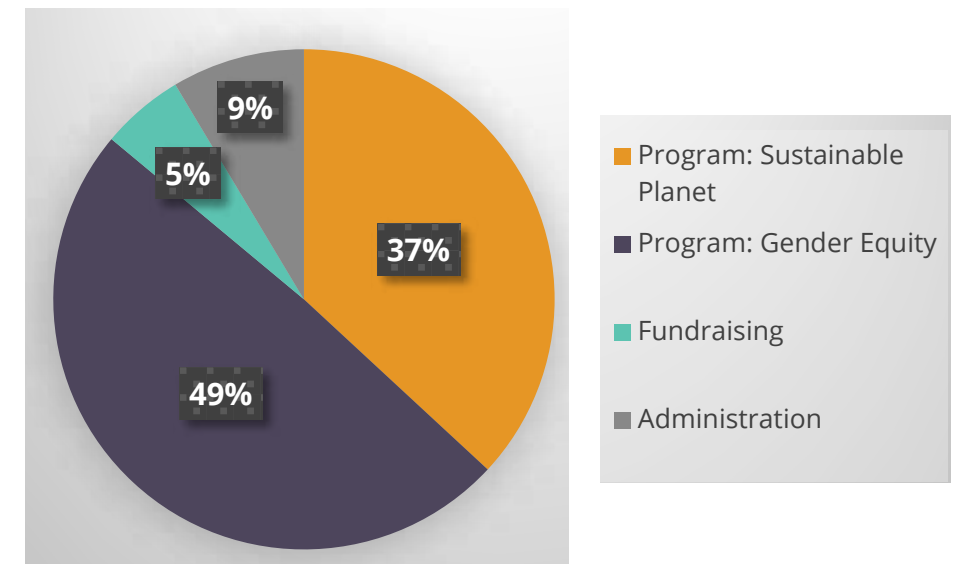
Total  
Income:  
**\$1,657,985**

### INCOME SOURCES



### EXPENSE ALLOCATION

Total  
Expense:  
**\$857,826**







## Program Partners

### Partners:

- Ahado Youth Environmental Club
- Foundation for Ecodevelopment and Conservation (FUNDAECO)
- Ya'axché Conservation Trust
- Organization for Gender, Civil Engagement, and Youth Development (OGCEYOD)
- Sekakoh
- Asociación Movimiento de Jóvenes de la Isla de Ometepe (AMOJO)
- EcoLogic Development Fund
- One Planet
- Forests, Resources, and People (FOREP)
- Instituto de Derecho Ambiental de Honduras (IDAMHO)
- Semillas del Océano
- Asociación Multicultural de Mujeres para el Desarrollo Integral y Sostenible (AMMUDIS)
- El Porvenir
- Asociación para la Conservación Ecológica de las Islas de la Bahía de Honduras
- Artistas Para La Sopa (AFS)
- Fundación ProPetén
- Red Chabelita Castro
- Guanacaste Dry Forest Conservation Fund
- Cultural Survival
- Fauna y Flora Internacional
- Mancomunidad de Municipios del Centro de Atlantida (MAMUCA)
- Wanki Tangi
- SEGA Secondary School
- Club Rafiki
- Concern for the Girl Child
- Triumph Uganda
- Girls Leadership and Mentorship Initiative
- Rafiki wa Maendeleo Trust
- Girls Castle
- The Girls Foundation
- Empowered Girls

- She Deserve to Soar
- CADWOKI
- With Women Kisoboka (WWK)
- Their Voice Foundation
- Bwiza Youth Bridge

### Clients:

- Room to Read
- Forum for Women African Educationalists (FAWE)
- FRIDA Fund
- With Women Kisoboka
- Arthur B. Schultz Foundation
- New England Biolabs Foundation
- VVOB



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