Dear Friend,

You continue to inspire me because you’ve changed thousands of lives in Uganda. Today, you’re educating 800 students. You’re empowering 7,301 grandmothers who are raising over 43,000 orphaned grandchildren. Thank you!

You’ve always ensured that every obstacle your babies faced was abolished. You provide education, nutrition, clean water, health, and safe homes with grandmothers empowered to care for them.

In 2015, one of your primary students, a little nine-year-old girl, was sexually assaulted by a 35-year-old man. I realized that there was a vital piece of our solution missing.

As we worked to help your student, we encountered problems many families face in Uganda. The police demanded $12.00 USD to arrest the rapist—half a month’s wage for many in the community. Families had to navigate a complicated court system. Perpetrators were paying bribes to get out of jail and then hurting more children. Hospitals were too expensive. There was no hope for counseling.

Seeing the terrible obstacles girls were facing, my wife, Tabitha Mpamira-Kaguri, decided to take action. Tabitha started EDJA Foundation that same year, and I’ve watched her efforts grow to serve 50 girls and women in southwest Uganda.

I’m so proud of the work she’s created and the lives she’s touched. Girls who had been beaten down and made to feel worthless found support and empowerment to become victors over their circumstances.

Now demand for EDJA is growing. As soon as families heard that there was hope for their children, they started to reach out. What had seemed like a small issue was suddenly much bigger.

I know you’ll agree: EDJA has to grow. This is why the Nyaka board made the decision to combine EDJA and Nyaka’s efforts. Together, with your partnership, more girls will be empowered to be victors in southwest Uganda and beyond. Please read on about the great work that your generous support will be making possible for survivors of sexual assault in Uganda. Thank you!

The Best is Yet to Come!

Twesigye Jackson Kaguri
Nyaka Founder and CEO

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Tabitha Mpamira-Kaguri is an experienced clinical therapist and doctoral candidate in Clinical Psychology at The Illinois School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University, Chicago. She is specializing in sexual trauma.

After merging her program with Nyaka, Mpamira-Kaguri is remaining with EDJA. She continues to oversee the program and to raise awareness and support.

In 2015, I traveled to visit your students and grandmothers with my husband and your friend, Twesigye Jackson Kaguri.

As I visited your schools, I encountered your nine-year-old student who had been raped by a 35-year-old man. On that same trip, I heard about a little five-year-old girl who had been raped by her grandfather, leaving her HIV positive. Then, I learned of a fourteen-year-old girl who had been raped by her father since she was just four.

I knew exactly what they were going through, because it had happened to me too when I was just 11 years old. For years, I had tried to forget it, but those girls’ stories brought that awful memory back.

I was enraged. These girls deserved justice. They needed support. They needed to have the voice that I never had.

I founded EDJA Foundation with the hope that I could help some of these girls. Since beginning the program, I’ve been blessed to be able to give counseling to over 50 girls and women from ages four through 38 in the districts of Rukungiri and Kanungu. The thirty-five-old perpetrator mentioned above received a 10-year prison sentence. Over 25 men have been legally sentenced for their heinous crimes toward your girls.

Like Nyaka, EDJA believes that empowerment and education are the best way to create lasting change. We use a holistic approach that addresses the medical, mental, and legal needs of those who have been assaulted.

Your support will help even more girls find safety and empowerment.
Rosette was a 14-year-old girl living with mental illness, which had prevented her from attending school. Her grandmother often worried about her safety. She usually kept Rosette close to home where she could watch over her, but one evening Rosette’s grandmother let her go fetch water with her older cousin, Moreen.

On their way to the tap, Moreen told Rosette that she had to stop by the bar where she worked. She convinced Rosette to follow her in. As soon as Rosette entered, Moreen pushed her into a room and locked the door behind her. Rosette found herself trapped in the room with a man she didn’t know. He grabbed her and raped her. Rosette didn’t understand what was happening. She thought she was going to die. As soon as the man was done, Moreen opened the door.

Rosette ran away as fast as she could. She was still naked, clutching her clothes and her torn underwear in her shaking fists. She ran all the way to her grandmother and told her what had happened. Her grandmother went to the police right away. They asked if she had money to take Rosette to the hospital. Her grandmother could barely afford food.

Fortunately, one police officer had heard about EDJA through the radio, and he made a call. Rosette received the medical attention she needed. The doctors were able to provide her with Plan B and life-saving medicines like PEP, which can prevent HIV infection if taken after exposure. Today, Rosette is in counseling. Her perpetrator and her cousin are under police investigation with help from EDJA’s legal advocate.
Outreach

A monthly radio show shares information about girls’ rights, what to do if a child is sexually assaulted, and advocates to end the stigma and victim blaming around sexual assault. Information is also shared through workshops and local gatherings.

Counseling

A social worker provides survivors with ongoing emotional support through counseling so survivors can begin to rebuild self-esteem and move toward healing.

Medical

Survivors are given a rape exam and emergency medical support (including PEP, which can prevent HIV contraction after exposure). Some girls need long-term support for injuries from their attack or sexually transmitted infections.

Legal

A legal advocate assists the police in arresting the perpetrator. The advocate guides the family through the complicated legal process. This includes filling out paperwork with them, providing transportation to court, and helping survivors and their families understand their rights.