

# Extraordinary Resilience



# Everyday Leaders

Impact Report – 2017



# Contents

A Message from Our Leadership	3
Stepping Stones International - Overview	4
2017 – A Year of Achievement	5
Enhancing Child Protection through Systems-Strengthening	6
Our Footprints	7
Development Initiatives: January – December 2017	8
Stepping Stones by the Numbers	9
Stronger Together – Our Partners	10
Our Donors	11
‘Breakthrough to English’ Literacy Program Embraced by Ministry	11
Art Therapy Helps Youth Start the Healing Process	12
Our Volunteers	12
Summary of Our Financials	13



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# A Message from Our Leadership

More than a decade has passed since Stepping Stones International first opened its doors to orphaned and vulnerable youth in Mochudi. With the support of hundreds of local and international volunteers, sponsors and donors we have grown from an after school program with 30 children in a single village, to serving orphaned and vulnerable youth across Botswana through our national literacy, child protection and life skills programs.

**“Our vision is for a world where vulnerable youth are empowered, become leaders and achieve their dreams.”**

We do this by actively engaging with youth and their families on various levels. Our psychosocial support, educational programs and leadership skills development will enable them to support themselves, their families and their communities.


To achieve our mission to unlock the potential of youth ages 12-25 through holistic development, enriching families and activating sustainable opportunities to become self-sufficient, Stepping Stones International works with youth to identify their challenges and find solutions to them. SSI also utilizes global best practices and methodologies that are adapted to suit the local context. Our service model is designed to meet the needs of children and youth at all levels – the individual, the family, service providers and the wider community – in order to build a network of support that enables vulnerable young people to succeed in life.

In 2017, we implemented literacy, life skills, child protection and psychosocial support programs in 10 districts across Botswana, many of which are highlighted in this report. This year we spent time reviewing the impacts of our programs, shared lessons learned and explored opportunities to improve quality and scale up our work to uplift the lives of young people.

Stepping Stones International was represented at several international forums this year, including the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of a Child in Sudan, and the Child Rights Network for Southern Africa meeting in Botswana. Working in collaboration with our peers, we are helping to ensure young people in Botswana are able to reach their full potential.

In closing, we graciously thank our partners, who are central to our work, including the Government of Botswana and the House of Chiefs, for their leadership in initiating progress towards harmonizing child protection policies and activities and the European Union, PCI and USAID, Stephen Lewis Foundation, FACET Foundation, Barclays Bank, and BIHL for their generous financial support. Together we are building a brighter future for the young people of Botswana, and generations to come.

Sincerely,



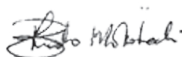
**Lisa Jamu**

Executive Director & Founder  
Stepping Stones International



**Tinny Seitei**

Operations Manager  
Stepping Stones International



**Ludo Mokotedi**

Chairperson  
Stepping Stones International  
Board of Directors



# Stepping Stones International - Overview

## Vision

A world where vulnerable youth are empowered, become leaders and achieve their dreams.

## Mission

To unlock the potential of vulnerable youth ages 12-25 through holistic development, enriching families and activating sustainable opportunities to become self-sufficient.

## Core Services

Youth Empowerment  
Family Enrichment  
Strengthening Youth Services  
Advocacy for Child Protection

## Our Values

Respect • Youth-Centric • Family-Focused  
Skills for Life • Cultural Diversity • Evidence-Based

## Program Pillars



### Leadership Skills

We empower young people to develop self-confidence, career-readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy skills to gain self-sufficiency and independence.



### Life Skills & Education

We equip young people with study skills, sexual & reproductive health education, goal-setting and decision-making abilities, literacy and educational motivation.



### Psychosocial Support

We nurture the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of young people, through counselling, personal growth and development initiatives and caregiver engagement.



### Societal Outreach

We advocate for gender equality, protection of children's rights and access to services through community capacity building and systems-strengthening.

## 2017 – A Year of Achievement



### Judo Champion takes Botswana by Storm

Stepping Stones International uses exposure to sporting activities, such as judo, to encourage young people to develop balance, flexibility and channel frustrations into a positive outlet.

Atang Setshwane joined our Judo Club in 2016. At just 15 years old, she already demonstrated talent and discipline, and quickly acquired new techniques. Her hard

work and dedication paid off when she brought home a silver medal from her first judo tournament in Gaborone.

Two weeks later, Atang went on to qualify for the 5th Edition of the Botswana Games in 2017. This was the first time judo was introduced to the Games. Atang reached the Botswana Games podium twice, winning silver and gold, defeating a seasoned national

athlete. She was featured on BTV's national broadcast.

Atang is well-positioned to enroll in Botswana's National Judo Team, and potentially participate in the African Games in 2018 and the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. We are proud of Atang and will continue to support her, and her peers, so that they can fully unlock their potential.

### Trained Community Mobilizer Secures Access to Services for Struggling Family

When Joan,\* one of our trained community mobilizers, came across a household with teenaged twins who were consistently absent from school, and a disabled child who was not accessing government services due to the caregiver's lack of knowledge, she knew exactly what to do.

She supported the family in qualifying for the Department of Social Services' food basket

program, as well as a travelling voucher for people living with the disabilities. She also ensured they were referred to Motswedi Rehabilitation Centre for people leaving with disabilities.

Trained school-based facilitators conducted school monitoring visits for the twins and made the guidance teacher aware of their situation. The guidance teacher intervened

by providing the twins with necessary support.

Remarkably, both of the twins noticeably improved and no longer derailed from their studies. Harassment by other students subsided. The twins will write their Form 3 (Grade 10) exams later this year.

*\*name changed to protect identity*



# Enhancing Child Protection through Systems-Strengthening

Communities have a tremendous influence on the wellbeing of our children. Our 'Ke Boikarabelo Jwa Rona' (Setswana for "It's our Responsibility") project sought to improve the response to and prevention of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) cases through improved service quality and reporting and enhanced community ownership of the Botswana Children's Act.

SSI conducted research on the preparedness of service providers to handle child sexual abuse and exploitation cases. As a result, 10 key recommendations, based on modeling, were developed to improve the response to child sexual abuse and prevent this heinous crime in the future. We circulated a petition in Botswana and internationally for people to support change, garnering 21,400 signatures of solidarity.

SSI worked with service providers (police, social workers, health care providers, magistrates and educators) using a scorecard system that enabled them to assess their preparedness for handling child sexual abuse cases and develop registers to collect all pertinent information.

“This resulted in improved data collection in 75% of selected service sites.”

We strengthened community ownership by training 13 Child Protection Committees on the Children's Act and issues related to child sexual abuse in four project sites. Every committee developed an action plan to educate their communities, and promote the implementation of the Children's Act (focused on Section 56: Right of protection from neglect, and Section 25: Right of protection from sexual abuse and exploitation). Through the committees' targeted outreach activities, they have engaged a total of 1213 community members.

The House of Chiefs committed themselves to take part in the first-ever expert meeting with legal partners, initiated by Stepping Stones International.

The 'Ke Boikarabelo Jwa Rona' program on Radio Botswana 2 (RB2) engaged a diverse panel of guests to speak out on child protection issues. The guests included partner organisations, champions of child protection work and survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation.

Survivors added a human side to the issues and encouraged those who have not spoken out, to do so.

## Red Card Campaign

The Red Card campaign utilizes the concepts of football where, when a serious offence is committed, a Red Card is issued. Child Protection Committees distributed the Red Cards to people in the community and sensitized them about gender based violence. The campaign is designed to mobilize communities to blow the whistle and hold each other accountable to social ills, such as sexual harassment, beating a partner and defilement, to name but a few.



***'Ke Boikarabelo Jwa Rona' was made possible with generous support from the European Union – European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)***

## Our Footprints

### Junior School Student Receives Scholarship

After participating in Stepping Stones International's 2-year intensive United States Embassy-funded English Access Micro Scholarship program and passing his Junior Certificate, Aubrey Lenong was accepted to Maru-a-Pula Secondary School, an esteemed private school in Gaborone, on a full scholarship.

*"My favorite subjects at MAP are physics and mathematics. My ambition is to become a mechanical engineer."*

- Aubrey Lenong

*"I didn't come this far, only to come this far."*  
- Author Unknown



### 'Finding the Leader Within' Prepares Youth for Success



The FACET Foundation built the Graff Leadership Center in 2011. Since the initial opening of the center, more than 300 young people have participated in the "Finding the Leader Within" leadership program. The Graff Center has hosted over 72 training sessions to educate and build the capacity of staff members and the community in child protection, leadership, organizational capacity, literacy, gender based violence, and the list continues. "Finding the Leader Within" has expanded to our partner, Baylor, who implements the program in the capital city of Gaborone.

In 2017, 81 out of school youth graduated from the "Finding the Leader Within" program with increased confidence, skills and ambitions. Half of the out of school youth successfully completed job shadowing placements.

*"I feel I have grown professionally from this opportunity and have realized my limitations, which I will work on improving."*

- Nametsegang Ntswetswe

### Youth Build STEM Skills in Design Squad Global Club

Children explore engineering through fun-packed, high-energy, hands-on activities—and they partner with a Design Squad club from a different country! 10 youth in the after school program participated in an international pilot project with the Association of Science & Technology Centre, partnering with Technopolis, a science house in Belgium.

The experience has boosted the self-confidence of the participants, as they are now able to articulate themselves with peers across the world who

are excited about using science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to solve challenges in their communities. Individual donors continue to support the program through the Global Giving platform.



## Development Initiatives: January – December 2017

PROJECT	PARTNERS	FUNDERS
<p><b>Finding the Leader Within</b> – Mochudi, Kgatleng District and Gaborone</p> <p>Botswana Comprehensive Care and Support for Orphaned &amp; Vulnerable Children (OVC) – National</p>	<p>Botswana-Baylor Children’s Clinic, Barclays Bank, Corporate partners hosting internships</p> <p>District Councils, Office of Social Welfare &amp; Community Development (S&amp;CD), Civil Society, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE)</p>	<p>FACET Foundation</p> <p>Project Concern International (PCI) funded by USAID</p>
<p><b>Young, Yet Women Enough: Reducing Gender-Based Violence by Empowering Young Women &amp; Grannies</b> – Mochudi, Kgatleng District</p>	<p>Botswana Police Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Gender Affairs Department, Botswana-Baylor Children’s Clinic</p>	<p>Stephen Lewis Foundation</p>
<p><b>‘Ke Boikarabelo Jwa Rona’- It’s our Responsibility: Improving the Response to and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse</b> – Kanye, Goodhope, Bobonong &amp; Selibe-Phikwe</p>	<p>The African Women Leadership Academy (TAWLA), Gov2U, THC Foundation, Department of Social Protection, Gender Affairs Department, Botswana Police Services, MoBE</p>	<p>European Union – European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)</p>
<p><b>English Access Micro-scholarship Program</b> – National</p>	<p>Regional English Access Micro-scholarship Program, University of Utah Reading Clinic</p>	<p>FHI360, United States Embassy Botswana</p>
<p><b>Wings of Independence: Creating a Nurturing Environment for OVC to Soar</b> – Gantsi District (Gantsi, New Xade, Kuke, Groot-Laagte and D’Kar)</p>	<p>MoBE, District and Village Child Protection Committees, Dikgosi (traditional leaders), S&amp;CD, Ministry of Youth, Sports &amp; Culture</p>	<p>European Commission: EU Non-State Actors</p>
<p><b>Ready to Work</b> – National</p>	<p>Oodi College, Barclays employees</p>	<p>Barclays Bank</p>
<p><b>Breakthrough to English Literacy Training</b> – National</p>	<p>Public schools, University of Utah Reading Clinic, University of Botswana</p>	<p>Botswana Insurance Holding Limited (BIHL), MoBE, Out of School Education &amp; Training (OSET)</p>



# Stepping Stones by the Numbers

Est. **2006**

**350**

LEADERSHIP  
PROGRAMME  
GRADUATES



**4000** FAMILIES  
REACHED

**500**

TEACHERS  
IMPROVING  
ENGLISH LITERACY  
FOR 6000+ STUDENTS



MORE THAN **500** VOLUNTEERS

**6**  
NEW  
START-UP  
BUSINESSES



**13**

CHILD PROTECTION  
COMMITTEES ACTIVATED

**3225**

READY TO WORK  
PROGRAM  
GRADUATES



OF LEADERSHIP  
GRADUATES  
ACCESS  
JOBS OR RETURN  
TO SCHOOL

**405**

DIKGOSI/CHIEFS  
ENGAGING IN CHILD  
PROTECTION



# Stronger Together – Our Partners

<p><b>INDIVIDUAL DONORS</b> 30 individual donors demonstrated their commitment to advancing the lives of young people in Botswana. We are especially grateful to those donors that donated for the first time this year!</p> 	<p><b>VOLUNTEER SUPPORTERS</b> 18 local and 8 international volunteers donated their time and knowledge to our Life Skills &amp; Education, Psychosocial Support, Societal Outreach, Leadership and Operations departments.</p> 	<p><b>STAFF &amp; CONSULTANTS</b> 52 staff showed compassion towards our supported families and youth, and helped them build a brighter future.</p> 
<p><b>CORPORATE PARTNERS</b> This year our corporate partners, including Bokomo, Pie City and Woolworths, provided in-kind food donations. Barclays Bank and BIHL provided financial support for our programs.</p> 	<p><b>INSTUTIONAL PARTNERS</b> University of Utah Reading Clinic, University of Pennsylvania, University of Ohio and Design Squad Global provided us with technical support.</p> 	<p><b>STRATEGIC PARTNERS</b> Aflatoun, ECPAT, UN agencies, Multi-sectoral Child Protection Working Committee and Botswana-Baylor Children’s Clinical Centre of Excellence helped us protect children’s rights.</p> 

## A message from our Chairperson

**Ludo Mokotedi, Chairperson**  
**Stepping Stones International**

**Internal Communications Manager**  
**The De Beers Group of Companies**

I was raised to believe in giving to society through the contribution of your time and whatever else you may have to offer throughout your lifetime. I joined Stepping Stones International’s board because its mission and values are aligned with my own. I’m proud to be connected to an organization that is focused on unlocking the potential of vulnerable youth and empowering them to be self-reliant. This is my own way of giving to society and being part of the solution to some of the socio-challenges young people in our country are facing.

Stepping Stones International has changed many lives and communities, and even at the national level, they are having great impact. They have inspired open dialogue about child protection and educational issues at the national level, and this is a very compelling reason to support their work.


## SSI Awarded 5-star Charity Rating on Greatnonprofits.org





**garrettfllnt**  
Volunteer 10/30/2017

★★★★★



2

Stepping Stones International is filled with a team who literally dedicate their lives to supporting the youth of Botswana. I think one of their biggest strengths is their direct contact with the community, because they ARE the community. Everyone knows them, respects their work, and knows they are doing great things for Botswana.

Share this review: [✉](#) [🐦](#) [f](#) Flag review 🚩

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# Our Donors

**Madalyn & Jim Seaman**  
**Monthly Donors - since 2006**  
**Salt Lake City, Utah, USA**



We first learned of Stepping Stones International when it was just starting. For us, it was a matter of faith – we saw Lisa as a person very passionate about helping children, in a difficult context. We were impressed that the Roman Catholic Church in Mochudi had provided the land to build the first center.

Over the years, we’ve read the stories in e-newsletters and on the website. It’s remarkable how much the program has grown, and how they have managed to mobilize the right supports for these children.

We have some handicrafts in our home that came from Botswana, and whenever someone asks about them, we explain that Stepping Stones International is helping adolescents, many of whom are orphaned, and working on the AIDS situation there. They are helping those with the greatest need, and making their lives better.

The work our donation supports is at the core of Christianity – you can’t just go around saying you’re Christian; you need to do something and help someone. As Jesus taught us,

**“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”**  
**- Matthew 25:40, 45, NIV**

## ‘Breakthrough to English’ Literacy Program Embraced by Ministry of Basic Education

After training 420 teachers and out of school facilitators in the Whole Class and Next Steps University of Utah Reading Clinic’s (UURC) literacy curriculum, 22 schools across Botswana have seen improvements in English literacy. The initiative was supported by Botswana Insurance Holdings Limited (BIHL), as part of their ‘Adopt a School’ corporate social responsibility initiative. As a result, the Ministry is working with SSI and UURC to include the “Breakthrough to English” program in the curriculum. SSI and UURC are conducting Whole Class literacy courses with the Education Department at the University of Botswana. The Department of Out of School Education and Training (OSET), in partnership with the Ministry of Basic Education, sent three educators who passed the master trainer course, to attend classes at the University of Utah Reading Clinic (USA), where they received three Masters credits.



# Art Therapy Helps Youth Start the Healing Process

We provide integrative counselling, which is a combined approach to psychotherapy that brings together different elements of specific therapies. Integrative counselling takes the view that there is no single approach that can treat each client in all situations. Each person's needs are considered as a whole and counselling techniques are tailored to their individual needs and personal circumstances.

One such technique is art and drama therapy, which allows the child to express him or herself without feeling pressured to verbalize and, at the same time, the child starts the healing process.

Expert psychologists and psychotherapists from Canada and the U.S. donated their time to train Stepping Stones International staff in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) which is "hope-friendly." Our psychosocial department uses SFBT to uncover clients' histories of strength,

resources, successes, coping and positive intention, thus building hope for clients, which fosters positive therapeutic change. These conversations also contribute to an "atmosphere of activated resources" that is a prerequisite for therapeutic change.



## Our Volunteers

**"Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would rather have talked." -Mark Twain**



### Jestina Pflöging, Life Skills Volunteer Bremen, Germany

I am a 21-year-old student, and I joined Stepping Stones through, «Eine Welt Netz,» a German volunteering program. I worked mainly with the Life Skills department, and supported the whole of the organization. The experience taught me humility and gratitude, because every child I worked with was loving, caring and full of energy.

I grew personally and professionally, both from my interaction with the youth, as well as with Batswana staff (people of Botswana). Although Germany and Botswana have very different cultures, I learned to take the role of listener and observer, and became very adaptive and appreciative of diverse backgrounds.

# Summary of Our Financials

The majority of Stepping Stones International's income originates primarily from foundations. This is comprised of donations from the Stephen Lewis Foundation and For Africa's Children Every Time (FACET). FACET was established by Mr. Laurence Graff of Graff Diamonds.

Our bilateral or sub-grants come from donor governments, other NGOs and foundations. Bilateral agreements include grants from the European Union, Project Concern International, funded under USAID, the Canadian Fund and a small portion from the Botswana-Baylor Children's Clinical Center of Excellence.



- 39% Bilateral/Subgrant
- 55% Foundations
- 1% Individual Giving
- 4% Private Sector
- 1% Government of Botswana

In 2017, private sector funding comprised Botswana Insurance Holdings Limited (BIHL) for literacy and Barclays Bank Botswana for the "Ready to Work" employment-readiness program. Other in-kind donations from the private sector came from Bokomo, Woolworths and Pie City for the nutrition program.

The Government of Botswana, Ministry of Basic Education supported SSI to implement the University of Utah Reading Clinic program.

Individual giving encompasses the smallest portion of SSI's funding, and is due to grow in 2018 onwards.



- 10% Administration
- 45% Youth Empowerment
- 16% Advocacy For Child Protection
- 8% Strengthening Youth Services
- 21% Family Enrichment

*Since its inception, Stepping Stones International has received annual unqualified external audits.*



## Protect • Empower • Lead



### Stepping Stones International

Private Bag 00421  
Gaborone, Botswana

☎ +267.573.9858

☎ +267.573.9898

🌐 [www.steppingstonesintl.org](http://www.steppingstonesintl.org)

📌 @SteppingStonesInternational

You can help unlock the potential of youth in Botswana.

Visit [www.steppingstonesintl.org](http://www.steppingstonesintl.org) to learn more about how you can provide youth with life-changing opportunities.

Botswana Nonprofit Registration: CO2006/6619  
United States Charity Registration 501(c)3: 20-2900537