



JMERC
JM EDUCATION & RESEARCH CENTRE

A background image showing a group of students in a classroom. A young boy in a white shirt is standing and looking to the right. Other students are seated at desks, some wearing masks. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid.

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT

Table of CONTENTS

i	Message from Chairman B.O.G	3
ii	Message from Executive Director.....	4
1	Our Vision & Mission	5
2	Introduction	5
3	Looking back in order to look forward.....	6
4	Our Achievements/Accomplishments	8
5	Looking ahead	16
6	Pictorial Captions of the visits	17
	we hosted at JMERC 2022	

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Most welcome to JMERC 2022 annual report!

“ *There are gaps to be bridged in the education system of our country, among which, is the provision of psycho-social support for the teachers!* ”

“ *For a long time, parents never played their roles; they loaded the burden to schools. Schools saw children as their source of income.* ”



I am grateful to be surrounded by wonderful board members, a strong leadership team and the highly dedicated and motivated staff, that have shared the vision and mission for relevance and growth in this ever-changing world. With this support, I am certain that JMERC will continue to thrive to greater heights, despite these challenging times.

“**It takes a village to raise a child**” (African Proverb). It has never been harder than today to educate the young people and prepare them for a future that is continually becoming uncertain. Getting only an academic qualification is no longer a true measure of readiness to navigate the current and future social, economic and political challenges of our time. One needs to be ablest with social and emotional learning competencies, commonly called soft skills and be a lifelong learner. To support the young generation, especially girls, to develop these skills, requires the support of everyone including the young people themselves, school leaders, teachers, parents, community members, development partners and policymakers.

For this reason, I am grateful to everyone who has supported us in ensuring that all children learn, achieve and thrive.

Prof. Anthony Muwagga Mugagga,
Chairperson Board of Governors, JMERC

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I warmly welcome you to our first annual report, 2022!

“ Surely, it has been a year worth celebrating. 2022 is the year that we shall always refer to in our records of JMERC’s official and full-time operation as a non-for-government organisation. ”



I congratulate the wider JMERC family, for accomplishing the third year since our official incorporation in Uganda in January 2020. The Board of Directors and Governors, Management, the Donors and Partners supporting the holistic Vision and Mission of JMERC. With the profound and steadfast spirit of supporting the holistic education of the vulnerable children and youth, especially girls, we have built a strong organisation and are offering hope to the initially downhearted souls, through direct intervention for the girls and youth, as well as supporting the education systems at school and national levels.

Still on track with our systemic approach to youth and girls’ education and empowerment, we have realised positive changes in the lives of these youth and girls and the education systems; as we observed new challenges that need urgent attention. The year 2022 gave us greater appreciation of the decisions we made in 2020 and 2021, to employ this approach to the youth and girls’ education and empowerment. More strategic and priority needs were identified as we engaged various partners and education stakeholders in our programming. Consequently, we have also developed a five-year strategic plan (2023-2027), and this will be our guide for the next phase of growth.

We are equally grateful to be part of the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) network; Given our mandate and strategic vision of ensuring a world where all children and youth learn, achieve and thrive; we look forward to greater horizons for the children and youth especially girls, in Uganda.

With such great strides amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic, we are keeping the faith that JMERC is on the right track to realise more successes and offer more systemic support to schools and the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda.

John Mary Vianney Mitana PhD
Founder & Executive Director, JMERC

1.1 Our Vision and Mission



We envision a world where all children and youth learn, achieve and thrive, with a mission to provide a school ecosystem of support to uplift learners' life-outcomes with a focus on intervention for youth, teachers, school leaders and caregivers.

1.2 Our Core Values



Hope – Optimism/Aspiration/Assurance/light at the end of the tunnel/Promise/Longing



Collaboration – Partnership/Alliance/Teamwork/Cooperation/ Networking



Dependability – Trust/evidence-based/reliability/integrity



Audacity – Courage/Heroism/Guts/dynamism/Valour/Confidence

2.0 Introduction

JM Education and Research Centre (JMERC) is an impact non-profit Organisation incorporated in 2020 to improve the quality of learning outcomes with a focus on youth and girls' education and empowerment in Uganda. While the first two years (2020-2021) of JMERC were impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic, the period allowed us to learn better the educational needs of the youth and girls in our communities through action research and community engagement. Having directly engaged more than 300 school youth (158 of whom were girls), 30 school leaders and over 100 teachers during the pandemic, we were able to understand the real educational needs of the youth and

girls in Uganda. It also allowed us to support school leaders, teachers and girls to navigate the pandemic challenges as they prepared for the re-opening of schools.

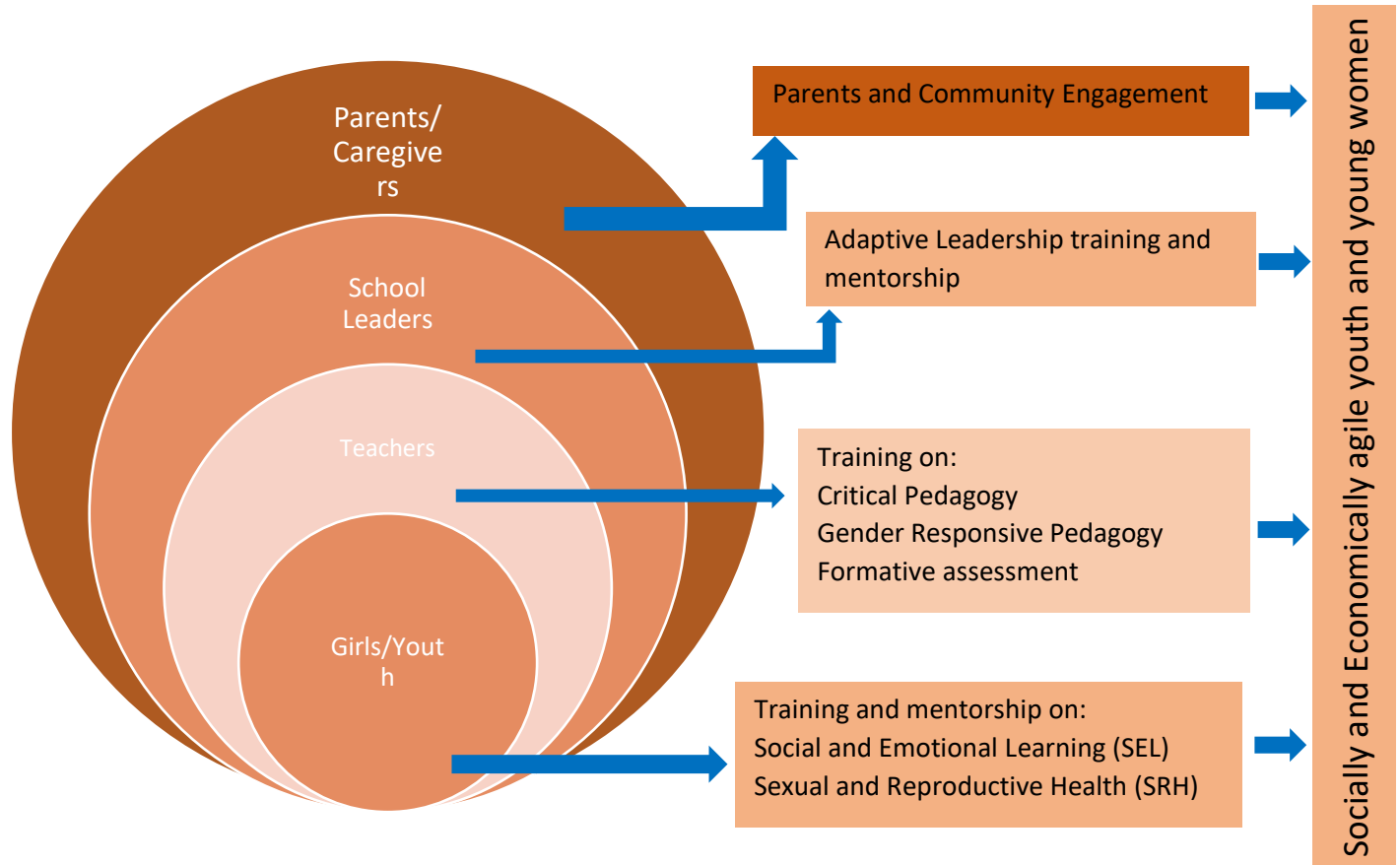
Given the lessons learnt and the changing needs of the youth and girls that now require more systemic, engaging and human-centred approaches, we developed our programming priorities and institutional capacity to scale to more schools, youth and girls in the country.

In this report, we are sharing our best practices in youth and girls' education and empowerment, plus education systems support for improved learning and achievement.

3.0 Looking back in order to look forward

The year 2022 has been a period of deconstructing and reconstructing the future, consolidating our foundation and strengthening our pillars for strategic impact. The previous two years came with challenges, especially related to the Covid-19 pandemic, but also critical lessons and opportunities for JMERC to re-examine the main question: Why do we exist? And, for whom do we exist? With support from Issroff Family Foundation (IFF), through the Collaborative Learning Initiative (CLI), we have been able to refocus and redefine not only the strategic direction but also our approach to girls' education and empowerment.

3.1 Our Ecosystem



At the centre of our model is the girl-child and the youth

4.0 Our Achievements/Accomplishments

4.1 Building the foundation

We are consciously building a foundation that is healthy for the sustainability of JMERC in the long term and our ultimate goal is to contribute to quality education in Uganda by creating a school-wide ecosystem of support to uplift youth, especially girls with a focus on intervention for girls/youth, teachers, school leaders and parents/caregivers and other stakeholders collaborating to generate socially and economically agile youth and young women.

4.1.1 Our Programmes

In preparation for the implementation of our school programmes, in 2022 we started working on the development of training modules, synthesis, power points, etcetera, as per our school ecosystem, which works are still ongoing. The different topics, are:

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) under the Girls/Youth Empowerment programme;
- Critical Pedagogy (PD), Gender Responsive Pedagogy
- Formative Assessment Under the Teacher Development Support;
- Adaptive School Leadership under the School Leadership Support; and lastly; 7) Parents and Community Engagements.

4.1.2 Institutional Capacity Development

With support from [Issroff Family Foundation \(IFF\)](#), JMERC has consolidated its leadership, management and governance capabilities, Programme Model & strategy, Fundraising & Development strategy and financial management. JMERC has also developed the necessary policies and operational manuals required for the effective and efficient implementation of this strategic plan, 2023-2027.

4.1.3 Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts (TLFC) project

In November 2022, we embarked on a four-year collaboration with CODE to support the TLFC project in sub-Saharan Africa. The Refugee/IDP Education Specialist in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Fragile Contexts (TLFC) project. It is a four-year project funded by the Government of Canada to improve learning outcomes through inclusive, quality, safe and gender-responsive education across primary levels in fragile African contexts.

In this project, we shall also facilitate the access and use of research by African education sector policymakers and practitioners to improve sustainable literacy and learning outcomes for children in African Refugee and IDP contexts, including in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

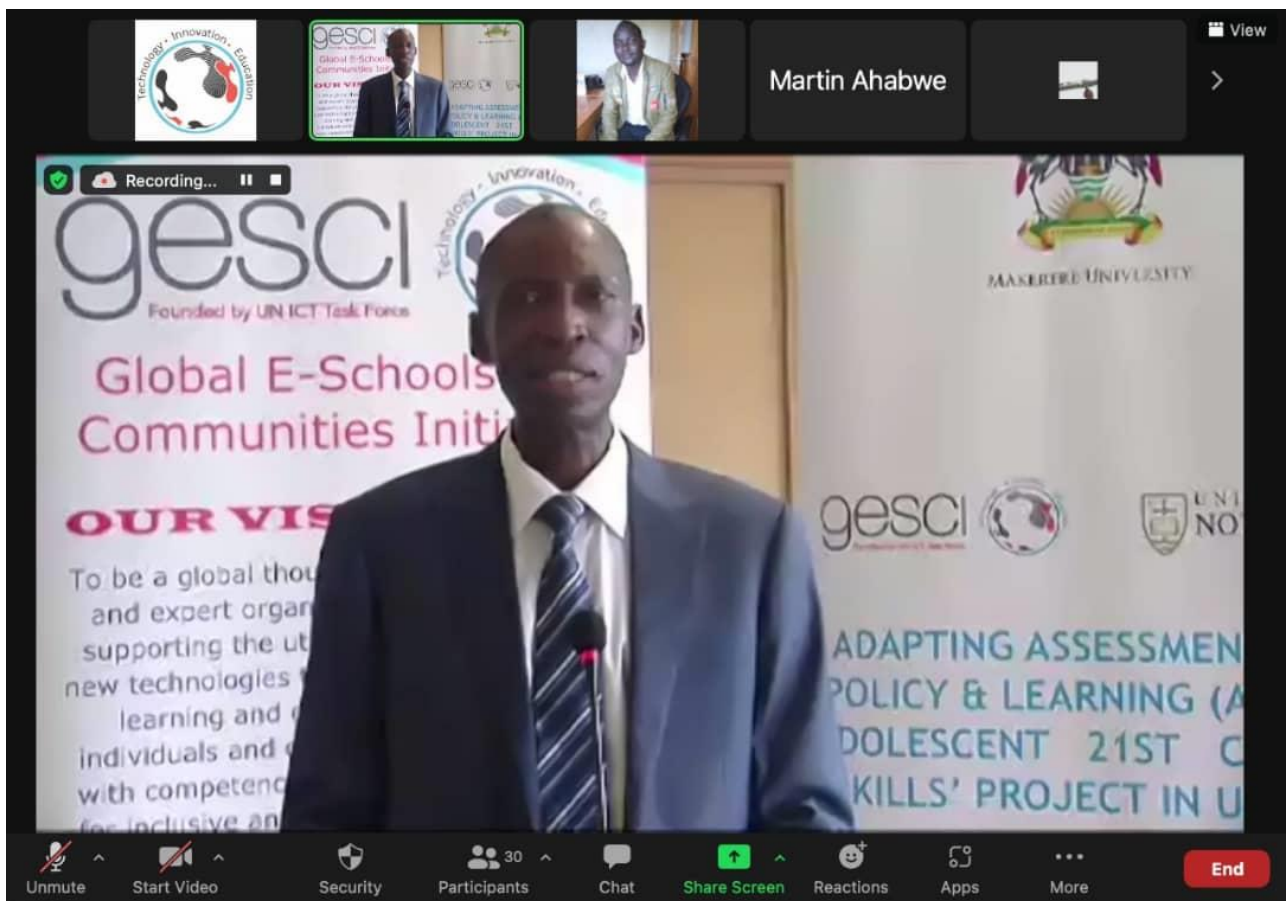
We have developed a detailed work plan and are currently working on a rapid literature review. We consider this as a great opportunity to contribute to inclusive education and girl's education in the region as well as an opportunity to engage in a global conversation to foster teaching and learning in Refugee and fragile context.

4.1.4. Adapting assessment into policy and learning (ADAPT)

In February 2022, we launched the ADAPT project at Makerere University. ADAPT is a research initiative seeking to promote the acquisition of 21st-century skills among adolescents in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. ADAPT initiative has three main objectives:

- i) to generate lessons from past and present national and regional learning assessments and initiatives to enhance national data-driven decision-making;
- ii) to build the capacity of a dynamic learning community to integrate and assess 21st-century skills and support the utilisation of learning assessments at the school and sub-national levels;

- iii) to mobilise policy uptake on the utilisation of learning assessments in the education plans, curriculum frameworks and teacher development.



Above is a zoom screenshot of Prof. Anthony Mugagga during the launch of the ADAPT project in February, 2022.

4.1.5 Formation of NAG

We formed the National Advisory Group (NAG) comprising key strategic policymakers – Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEb), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU), Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM), the Association of Secondary School Headteachers of Uganda (ASSHU), various departments of the MoES, and members of the Civil Society Organisations (CSO). *Below is a photo captured during the NAG meeting in July 2022.*



4.1.6 Formative Study Report of ADAPT in Uganda

In October, we launched the Formative study research report that we made on learning assessments in East Africa – with a focus on Uganda. The main research question for that study was, “How can we use the learnings from past assessment experiences to establish and strengthen a dynamic learning community in East Africa?” in this research, we identified several key actors in the conceptualisation, design, implementation, and utilisation of learning assessment in Uganda. Some of those identified include: The Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB) and the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT); International Development partners such as UNICEF, UNESCO; Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as Twaweza East Africa, and now Uwezo – Uganda; There are also government agencies and organisations like NCDC and Kyambogo University; Then also the MoES, DES, among others.

The study findings also revealed that there is minimal coordination and collaboration among these stakeholders and networks, reducing the possible benefits of synergies and associated benefits such as peer learning for improvement. There is also unnecessary duplication of initiatives leading, sometimes, to initiative fatigue at the school level since most of these initiatives target schools.



Above is a photograph captured during the panel discussion at the launch of the ADAPT report in October 2022 and here below is a photograph captured when the study report was officially launched.



We concluded the year with an activity of Mapping Learning Assessments in Uganda and the key actors. This activity, a two days' workshop, was successfully attended by key stakeholders in the education sector of the country. There were representatives from CSOs, different sections/departments in the MoES, District Education Offices, UNEB, Public and Private universities, Secondary schools, etcetera. (A summary video of the whole workshop on our YouTube <https://youtu.be/cLMFwbwBhEc>)



On the left is Dr. J.M.V Mitana during his presentation at the ADAPT systems mapping workshop which happen in November, 2022 at the ResilientAfrica Network offices in Kololo Uganda.



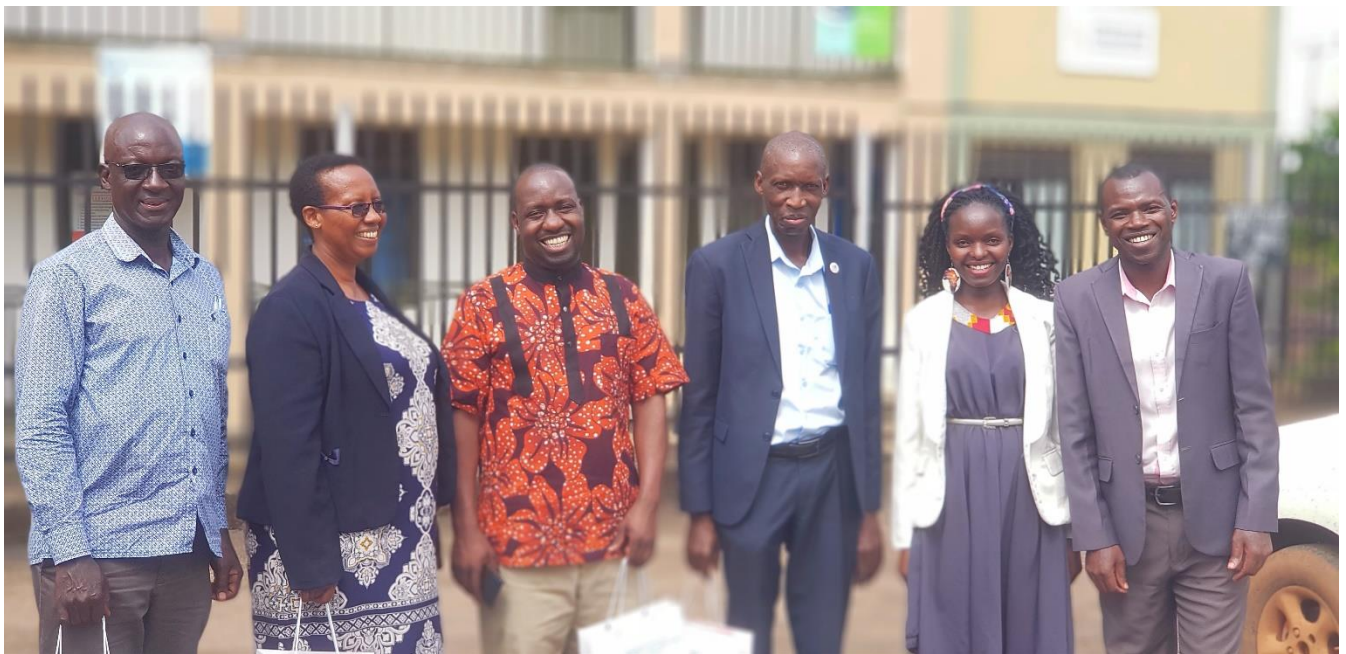
The workshop which was positively attended by participants from a number of



educational organisations and bodies around the country was concluded with a certificate awarding ceremony to the participants as seen in the photograph above.

4.1.7 Dan Kyagaba joins the JMERC Board.

We were officially joined by Mr. Dan Kyagaba of UNEB, a strong education enthusiast on the Board of Governors of JM education and Research Centre making it now a team of 5, each purposefully different from the other who we believe will enable us achieve our goals and keep us on track in regards to our journey motive. Dan is the Manager of National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE), UNEB. He joins Prof. Anthony Mugagga Muwagga (Board Chair), the Principal College of Education and External Studies, Makerere University; Ms. Annet Mugisha Assistant commissioner (Vice Board Chair), Teacher Education Training & Development, Ministry of Education and Sports Uganda; Mr. Opio Joseph Rosseau, Human Resource Manager The Guy Morel Institute, Ma Joie Mahe, Sychelles and Rev. Fr. Henry Ssentenza Kajubi, Director of Education East Africa



Holy Cross Congregation.

4.1.8 Conferences and outreach

In the year 2022, we had two main presentations and outreaches, further creating strategic linkages and awareness about JMERC activities:

- **Information Session: April 2022**, Context Matters Research Grant Program - 2020-2022 – Selected by CODE to share our experiences on “Preparing a research grant application”
- **Adapting assessment into policy and learning (ADAPT)**: Adolescent 21st Century skills in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Paper presented at the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) Uganda, July Convening 2022.

5.0 Looking ahead

During the year 2022 and with technical and financial support from Issroff Family Foundation (IFF), we have consolidated our leadership, management and governance capabilities, Programme Model & strategy, Fundraising & Development strategy and financial management. Through year-long support, we have developed all the necessary policies and operational manuals required to pilot-test our school-wide ecosystem model of support in 10 community schools. We are targeting at least 3,000 youth, 1,500 of whom will be girls, 300 teachers, 30 school leaders and 500 parents/caregivers in the next two years.

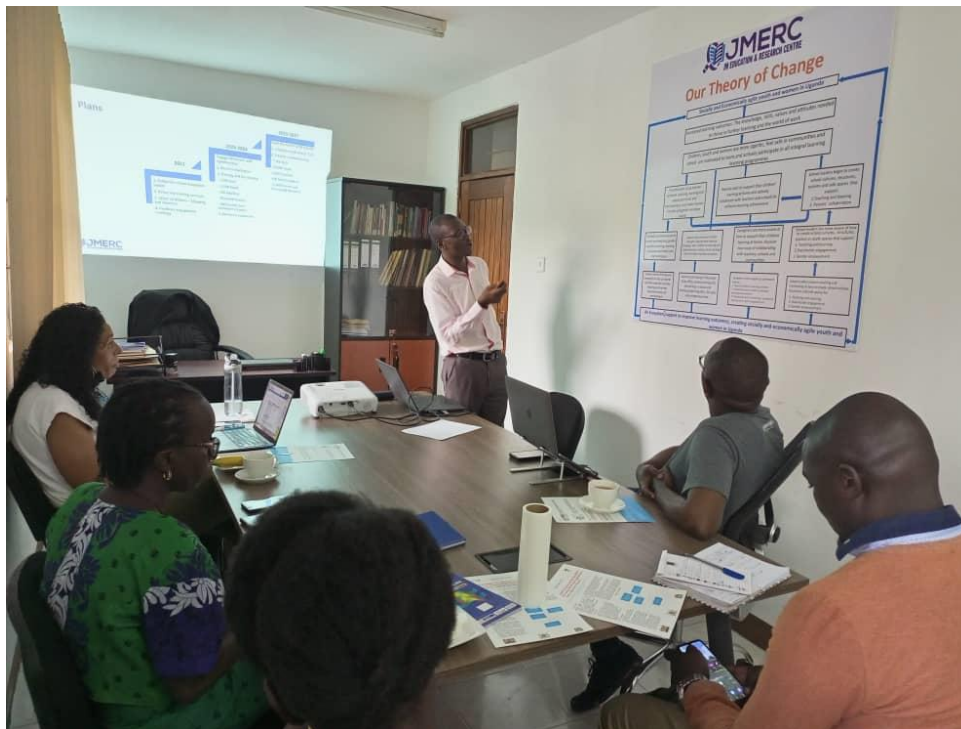
To achieve this, we have developed a five-year strategic plan (JMERC 2023-2027) with five strategic priorities namely;

- Girls’ Education and Empowerment: ***Every adolescent girl and young woman in Uganda is socially, emotionally and intellectually empowered to learn, achieve and thrive***
- Life skills and Values for youth: ***Every youth in Uganda develops life skills and values they require for life-long learning and the world of work***
- Schools and Community Engagement: ***Schools and communities support effective learning for all and girls’ empowerment***
- Institutional development: ***JMERC is adequately resourced, sustainably funded, and well-governed to effectively promote the right to quality education in Uganda***

- Institutional Internal Capacity to Scale: ***JMERC is well positioned to effectively provide girls/youth empowerment using a school-wide ecosystem model***

We are grateful to all our partners who have made this journey a success and we look forward to a great impact on the learning achievement for children and youth, especially girls in Uganda as well as the wider educational policy and practice in Uganda and the region.

6.0 Pictorial Captions of the visits we hosted at JMERC 2022.



In August, we hosted the Blood Water team at our offices in Luzira. As seen in the photo aside.

On the right is a photo taken during our visit to the chairman B.O.G with RELI Kenya Co-Lead Sam Otieno(Gesci Kenya)



Above is a photo taken when Ms. Jacklyn Makaaru Arinaitwe visited us from Echidna Giving.



And in November, we received a warm visit from Ms. Annette Kiberu, former President of the Reading Association Uganda and current the Chairperson of the International Development Committee of Africa; Internatuional Literacy Association.

Thank you our partners;



Promoting every
child's right to read

