

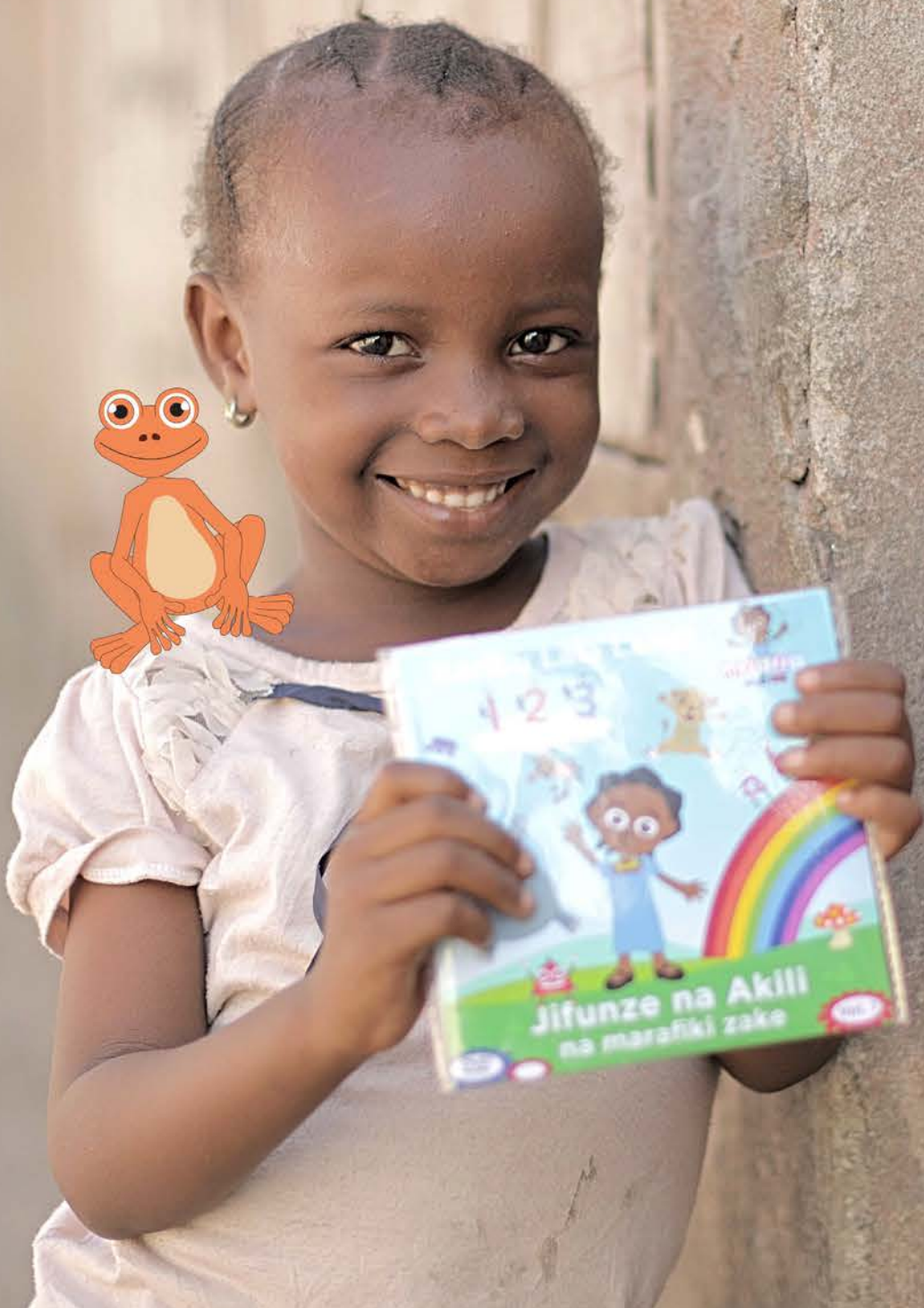


2018
ANNUAL REPORT

ubongo

CONTENTS

Letter	2
The Challenge	4
Mission & Vision	6
Products	9
Timeline & History	11
Key Achievements	12
Core Values	15
Ubongo Impact	17
Financial Overview	23
What's Next?	25
Acknowledgements	27





Dear Friends,

It's hard for me to believe that January 25 this year marked the 5th anniversary of our first edu-cartoon, Ubongo Kids. We started Ubongo to bring kids fun and localised learning via the technologies that their families already use... like TV, radio and, increasingly, mobile phones. And for the past 5 years, we've been developing and delivering multi-platform content to help kids learn and leverage their knowledge to change their lives. Over that time, we've quadrupled our team size. We've "ten-axed" our reach from just over a million to eleven million kids. We've also pivoted revenue models countless times, reincorporated from for-profit to non-profit, struggled with government censorship, and been through some very tough times that we honestly weren't sure we'd survive.

We Ubongoers live and work by a set of principles that we've created for ourselves, but one of them shines above all the others as our guiding star: "Do it for the kids." We are blessed to have kids in our office almost every day, bringing their endless curiosity, wonder for learning, and giving much more honest feedback than we'd ever get from adults. It's seeing their smiles and that moment their eyes light up because they understand or have discovered something new, that gives us the inspiration we need to keep pushing forward. And so rather than continuing on myself, I'd like to hand it over to one of our very own "Ubongo Kids" to finish the letter from here...

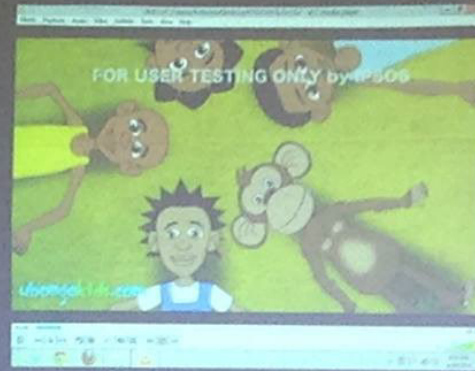
Nisha Ligon
CEO & Co-Founder



Hi there! My name is Melody Tirane, and I'm a child voice actor for Ubongo Kids. Ubongo has been an important part of my life for a long time. You see, when I read the scripts, I'm also learning from them. And I use this knowledge in school and also in my daily life. Whenever I'm met with challenges, I tell myself, "Melody, yes you can!" I've learnt to ask for help, do my research, be creative and keep going - and even when I fail, it's still an opportunity to learn.

I truly believe that Ubongo has not only benefited me but all the children that watch the shows! THEY DO IT FOR US! They want us to have the knowledge and skills to change our own lives. For too long, the story of the African child is that we need help and to be saved, while in reality, all we need is the opportunity to unlock the magic already within us. I'm hoping for many more years of Ubongo!

Melody Tirane
Voice Actor



**“Man, this show is so cool!
If kids were always taught
this way they’d be doing
so well. Why don’t you
have a school?”**

**-SMS message from
viewer in Tanzania**

Kids in Africa face challenges throughout their educational journey...

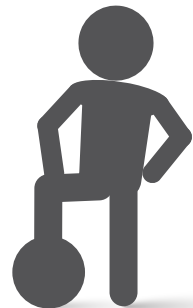
2 BILLION
babies born
in Africa by
2053



44%
of 3 to 4-y.o.'s
have low
cognitive or
social
development



50%
to 80% of 2nd
graders can't
read a short
sentence



40%
of 2nd
graders can't
do a one-digit
addition
problem



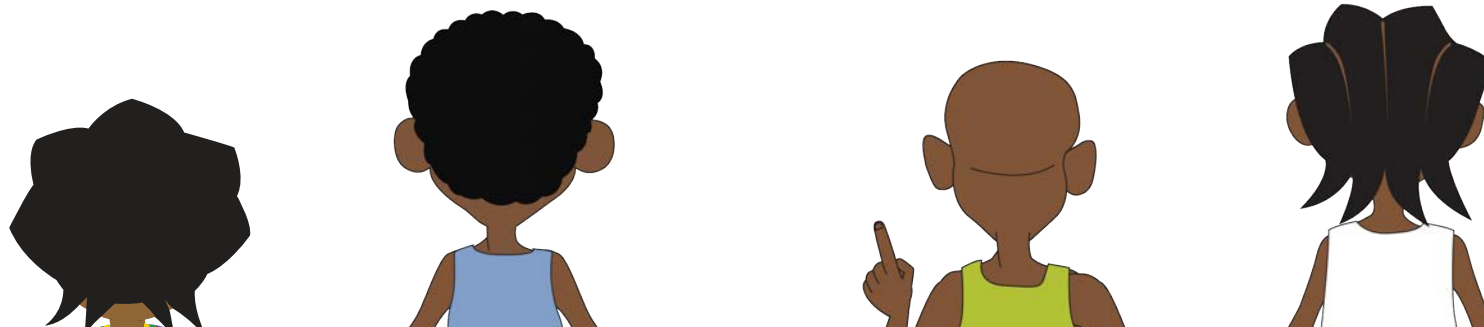
23%
of girls and
19% of boys
are out of
primary
school



60%
of youth
between
15 and 17
are not in
school



8.8%
of the
population is
enrolled or has
a university
degree



Data Source: 1. UNICEF, 2017 2. McCoy et al, 2016 3. World Bank, 2018 4. Facing World Bank, 2018 5. UIS, 2016 6. UIS, 2016 7. World Bank

What are we doing about this ?

We are providing kids meaningful learning experiences at low-cost and massive scale through the technologies they already use.

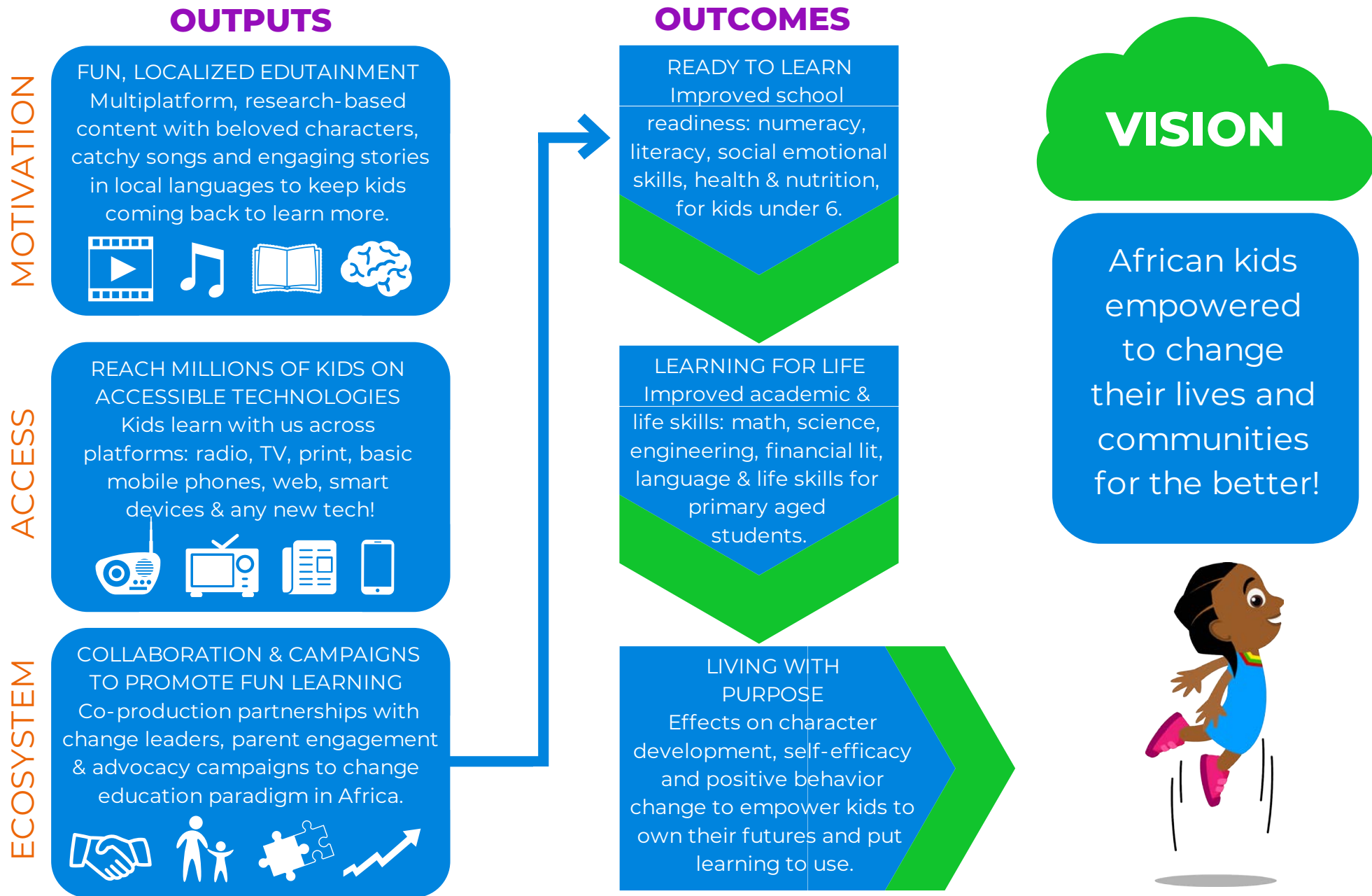



Mission.

To use top quality, localised edutainment to help Africa's 440 million kids learn, and leverage their learning to change their lives.

Vision.

To equip Africa's next generation with the educational foundation, critical skills and positive mindsets to change their own lives and communities for the better.





“One day I was teaching my students about decimals for the first time. I asked the class if anyone knew what decimals were, one student said he learned about decimals through watching Ubongo Kids. He was even able to demonstrate how to do different operations using decimals on the board for the rest of the kids. This shows that kids are understanding and enjoying the show.”

-Teacher in Tanzania




Akili and Me is our preschool edu-cartoon that teaches 3 to 6-year-olds numeracy, pre-literacy, English as a second language, art and socio-emotional skills for holistic early childhood education. Young learners join 4-year-old Akili on her learning adventures in Lala Land, and are invited to actively engage in helping her learn.



Ubongo Kids is our primary school STEM cartoon that helps kids aged 7 to 14-years-old find the joy in learning math, science, technology, engineering and life skills through fun, animated stories and catchy original songs. The show follows Kibena, Kiduchu, Koba, Baraka, Amani and their animal friends on problem solving adventures in Kokotoa Village.

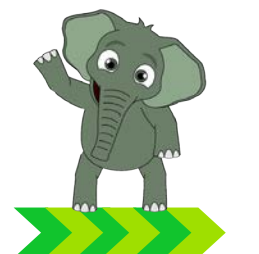
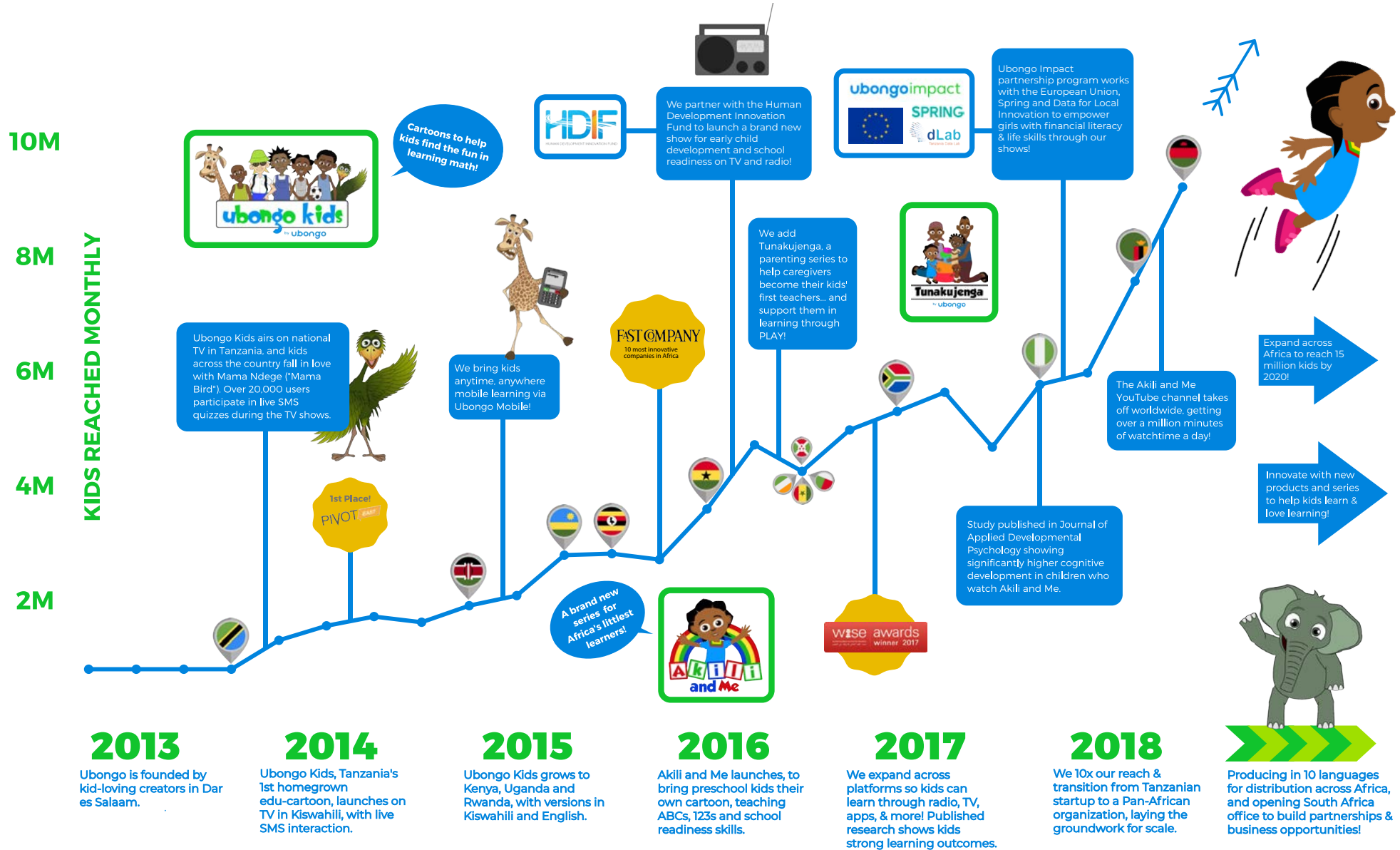


A young girl with a joyful expression is holding a portable music player. She is wearing a red top. The device is a rugged, grey and orange portable music player with a speaker and a microphone. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a white wall or a banner.

“Working with the Ubongo team has far exceeded our expectations. They have been incredibly collaborative in producing high-quality content that aligns with our goals and intensely focused on creating measurable impact on the lives of African children.”

**-Eugenie Teasley
CEO of The Goodall Foundation**

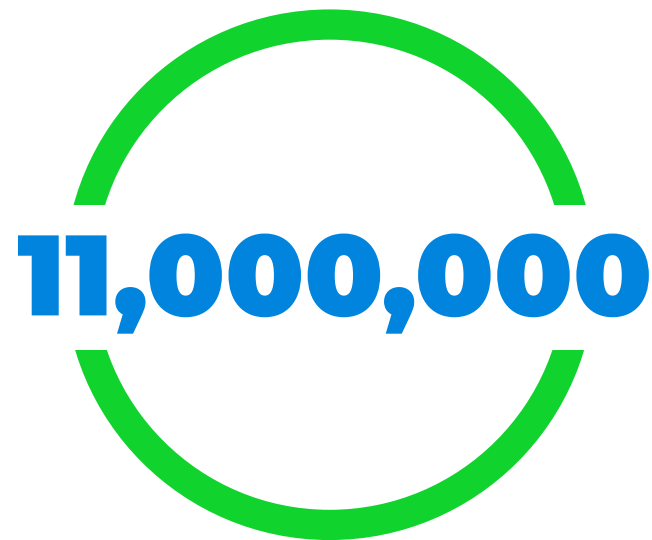
Timeline & History



- Kiswahili
- English
- French
- Kinyarwanda
- Kikuyu Luo
- Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Twi



Countries on
free TV



Monthly users



Languages

Our viewers have

12% 

higher cognitive development than control groups¹

16%

of parents said parenting skills improved since watching (TZ and KE)²

81%

81% of parents say quality of life improved (TZ and KE)²

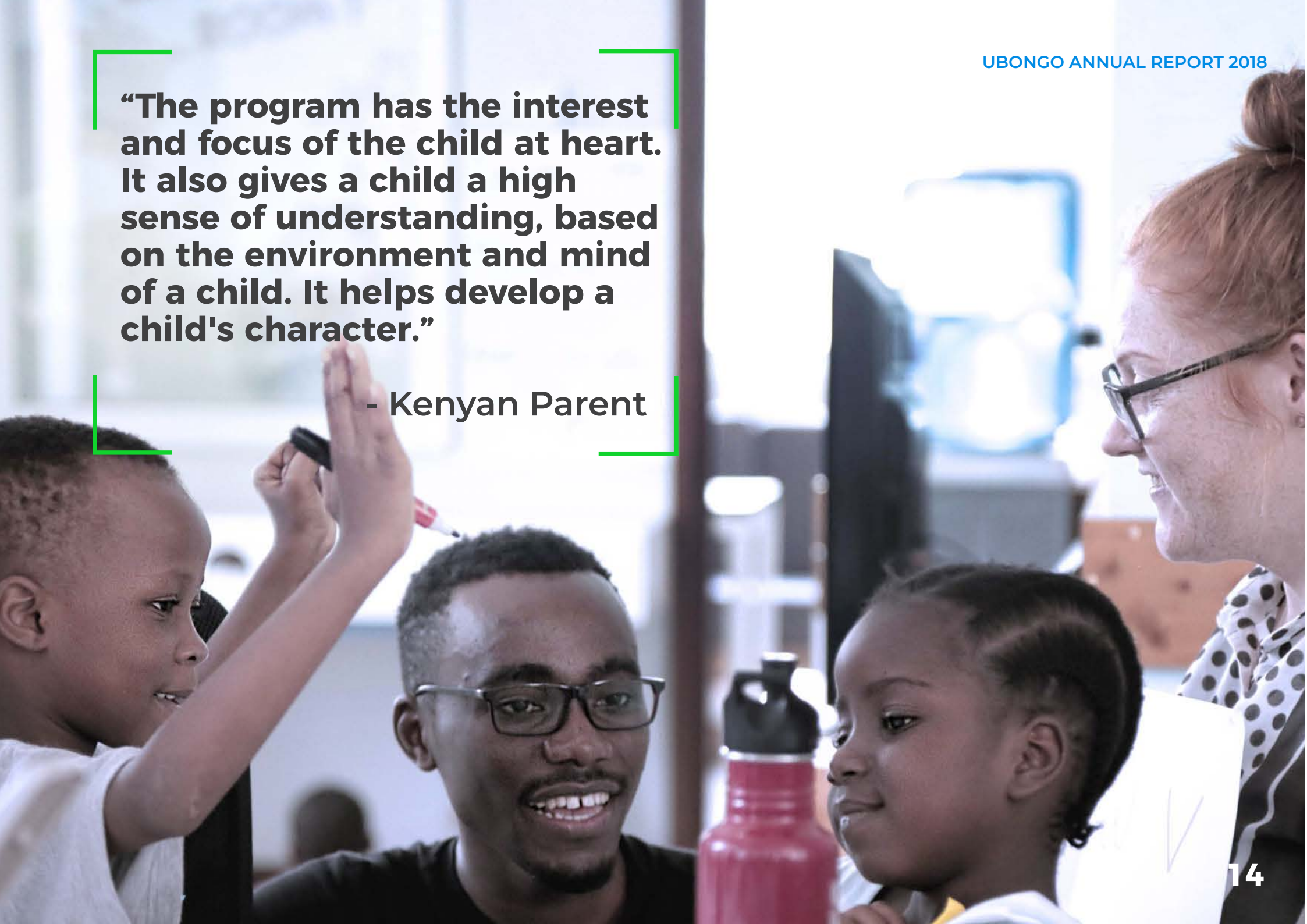
Muraho!



Proof of concept that **new language adaptations** of shows **are effective** educationally

“The program has the interest and focus of the child at heart. It also gives a child a high sense of understanding, based on the environment and mind of a child. It helps develop a child's character.”

- Kenyan Parent





UBUNIFU (Innovation)

We use our brains and limited resources to create the most effective and entertaining content and products for kids.

- Innovate and Simplify
- Are Always Learning
- Do More with Less



UJASIRI (Courage)

Creating change takes courage. We support kids to be bold in their learning and ambitions, and encourage the same attitude across our company.

- Fail fast fail forward:
- Own it
- Speak up and speak out



USTAHIMILIVU (Grit)

We are passionate and committed towards transforming learning for 440 million kids in the continent, and this requires hard work, perseverance and consistency.

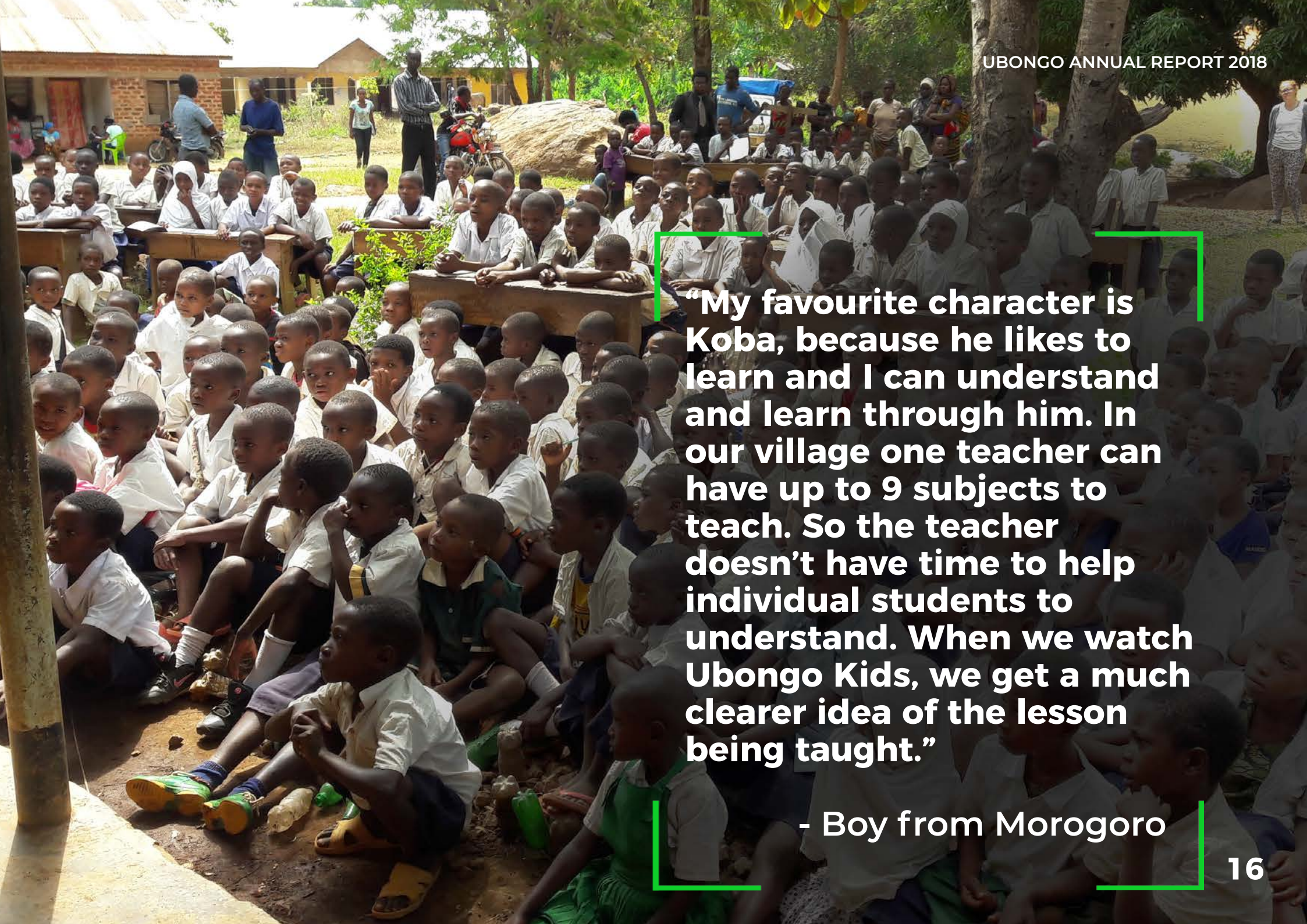
- Go all in
- Have a growth mindset
- Deliver quality results



UTU (Humanity)

The work we do is grounded in our shared humanity. We take responsibility for each other and our community, share with transparency and collaborate with compassion.

- Work together and lend a hand
- Are all teachers
- Do it for the kids



“My favourite character is Koba, because he likes to learn and I can understand and learn through him. In our village one teacher can have up to 9 subjects to teach. So the teacher doesn’t have time to help individual students to understand. When we watch Ubongo Kids, we get a much clearer idea of the lesson being taught.”

- Boy from Morogoro

The world is rapidly changing and its problems are getting increasingly complex. Over the years we've realised that while it's important for kids to learn mathematics, science, and literacy skills, there are other critical skills, habits, and mindsets that they need to transform their lives and the continent.

As a result, we work hand in hand with non-profits, multilateral organizations, and foundations to solve problems in health, agriculture, environment, energy and more through Ubongo Impact.

UBONGO IMPACT is a service offering that allows leading development changemakers to use Africa's favourite cartoons to deliver life-changing messages to millions of kids across the continent. We have created a process that combines human-centred research and design, content creation, distribution, and impact evaluation.

So, what problem is your organisation working to solve?

We have a powerful platform that is loved and accessed through TV, radio, and mobile by over 11 million people in 9 countries across Africa. As well as a top-tier team of education specialists, content creators, and researchers who tell powerful and relevant stories that transform habits, mindsets, and lives.

Email us at: partnerships@ubongo.org

2018 Ubongo Impact partners:





“It helps my children a lot because it teaches them not to give up even when subjects are tough. Now they know that if you fail somewhere you need to add more effort until you become successful.”

- Tanzanian Parent

LEVERAGING AFRICA'S FAVORITE EDU-CARTOONS TO EQUIP GIRLS WITH SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The disparity between the amazing capabilities of women and girls and the opportunities afforded to them by society still prevails in most African countries. According to the World Economic Forum, "Africa still retains the largest gender gap in the education of girls and boys of any world region". As a result, women are still greatly excluded from formal employment and gaining financial independence. In 2018 we partnered with Data For Local Impact (DLi), SPRING, and the European Union to create content that addresses the multiple challenges affecting the future of girls in Africa.

Data for Local Impact: Using data to engage girls in a conversation about their dreams and financial literacy

With funding from DLi we collected and shared data on the career aspirations, employability skills, and financial literacy of adolescents across Tanzania. We crafted a series of multiple choice and open-ended questions to ask our TV audience during broadcasts of Ubongo Kids in Tanzania, and viewers were encouraged to answer via SMS. We then presented the research back to our audience through infographics and live-action videos hosted by girl role models, who also shared additional employability skills and financial literacy knowledge with the audience.

Read more at www.ubongo.org

Spring: Promoting Self Efficacy Through Financial Literacy

In addition to sharing the data with our audience, we also used the insights from the research to co-create 3 Ubongo Kids episodes with SPRING. The episodes helped girls develop critical financial literacy habits of saving, earning and budgeting. An impact study on the effect the content is currently underway.

Read more at www.ubongo.org

EU: Equipping girls with skills for improved lives

Lastly, we partnered with the European Union to create a 3 episode mini-series covering consent, gender rights, and negotiation skills for the girl child! We chose these topics after conducting extensive research with girls to determine which life skills were most important for them to learn to be able to overcome challenges related to gender-based violence and unemployment.

We are looking forward to working with more partners in 2019 on episodes around menstrual health, self-confidence and efficacy.

“I have learnt what am I supposed to teach as a parent, what are my roles to help my child.”

- Tanzanian Parent



EQUIPPING CAREGIVERS WITH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING GAMES FOR WHOLE CHILD DEVELOPMENT

In 2016 we conducted a study with the University of Maryland that showed that kids who watched Akili and Me for 1 month outperformed kids who watched another cartoon by 12% in overall school readiness. This was a good start, but we knew that we had to get caregivers on board to help kids learn even more. You see, the message that parents across Africa have been hearing for years is:

"Your job is to send your children to school. School is where they will be developed into successful people."

But there is a key problem with that:

90% of brain development happens in the first 5 years of life. And most kids in Africa don't start school until they are 5 or 6!

School here COMPLETELY MISSES the most critical developmental window for a person's brain. And most parents and other early caregivers are not educated and empowered to promote a kid's early development.

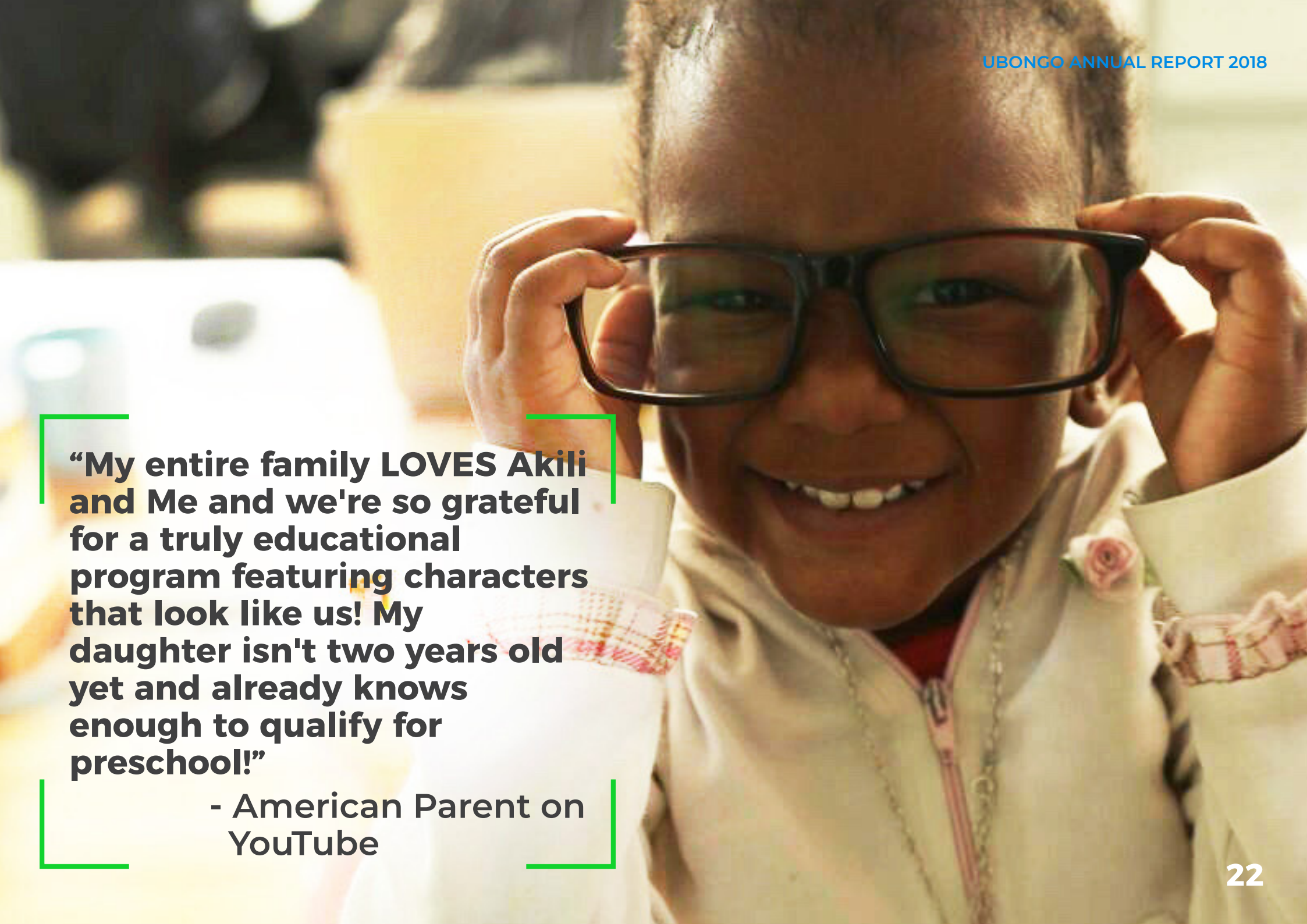
Consequently, in addition to creating content that specifically aims to help kids develop critical learning and life skills like literacy, analytical thinking, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, we are also committed to creating localised content under our 'Tunakujenga'...

(Swahili for "we build you up") brand that gives parents resources and tools that help them better understand their role in the development of their kids and start adapting positive parenting behaviours in their day to day life.

In 2018, we partnered with the International Rescue Committee to co-produce 10 short fun instructional videos that teach parents in refugee camps in East Africa different games that they can play with their kids to help them develop specific social and emotional skills. The goal of the partnership was to promote the development of critical social-emotional skills in kids through direct caregiver engagement.

The videos are shared in caregiver clubs at churches, and supplementary easy-to-use material like animated worksheets are provided for caregivers to take home. Therefore the program is powerful because respected and trustworthy members of the community teach Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to caregivers. Moreover, caregivers are the ones passing along SEL to their kids. Every user is learning from a caring and supportive relationship. Moreover, the caregiver videos will also be airing on TV in Tanzania from September 2018 – July 2019.

Read more at www.ubongo.org

A close-up photograph of a young girl with dark skin and short hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a light-colored jacket. She is smiling broadly and adjusting her glasses with both hands. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom or school setting with a yellow container and a white object.

“My entire family LOVES Akili and Me and we're so grateful for a truly educational program featuring characters that look like us! My daughter isn't two years old yet and already knows enough to qualify for preschool!”

- American Parent on YouTube

Financial Summary

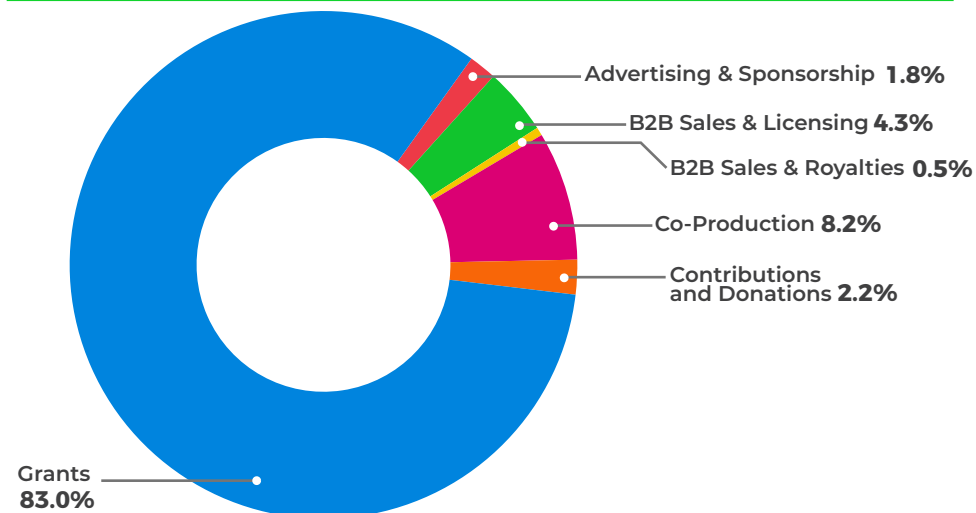
Increase of Revenue in 2018 **35%**

Income Statement (2018)	Amount
Commercial Revenue	\$ 98,310
Less Cost of Sales	\$ 1,207
Gross Profit	\$ 97,103
Co-Production and Grants	\$ 1,228,926
Total Income	\$ 1,326,029

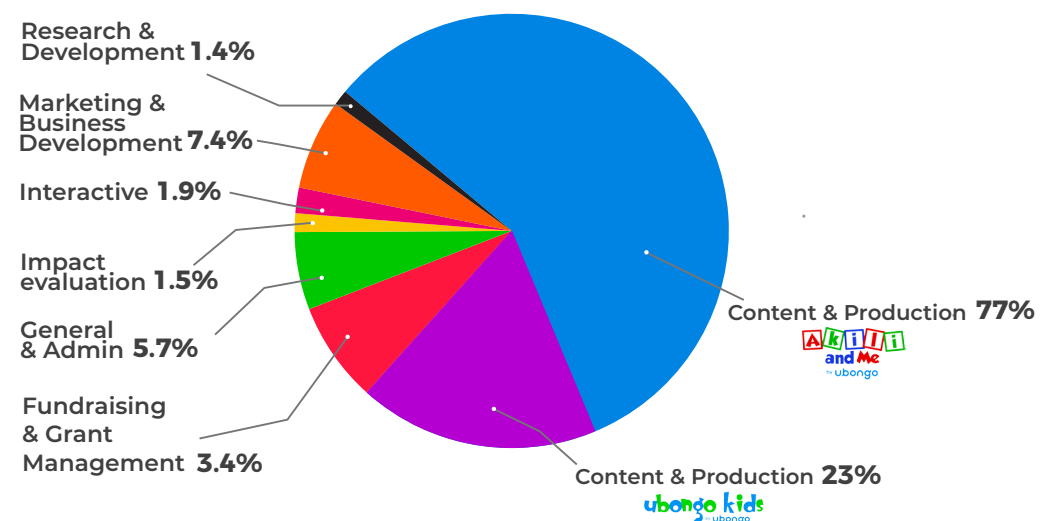
Expenses

Benefits & Staff Welfare	\$ 40,022
Contractors & Consultants	\$ 155,587
Finance & Interests	\$ 21,770
OpEx	\$ 190,511
Personnel	\$ 392,673
CapEx	\$ 11,054
Sales & Marketing	\$ 10,278
Taxes	\$ 665
Total Expenses	\$ 822,559
Deferred Surplus	\$ 503,470

Income Breakdown by Source



Expenses



“When my kid gets out of school she moulds things like dolls and she starts teaching them. She has never done this before but since she started watching Akili and Me she has been learning in a fun way.”

-Maasai Father



I grew up believing great things came from abroad. Nearly all the movies, songs, and stories I loved as a kid came from foreign places, telling foreign narratives. Even though this belief was formed subconsciously, over time, it was damaging. It hurt my confidence and I developed a pessimistic mindset about my potential and that of those around me, which I've had to work hard to overcome.

When I observe Sarah and Andrew (our office kids) dancing or singing to our Ubongo songs, I know they will not have those same struggles that I had. They are experiencing life and learning differently from how my generation did; they can look up to heroes who look like them and watch inspiring stories from their own community. You can't help but wonder how they are re-imagining their own lives and that of their own community for the better!



So we keep investing in them to make sure they have all the tools needed for success. In the next year, we will grow our content library not just for the millions of kids who we reach, but also for their caregivers who play a critical role in their success. We will reach millions more kids in the languages that they best understand by adapting our content into new languages including Hausa, Kikuyu and Twi. It is important we do all this while making sure we are becoming financially sustainable, so we will launch premium products for sale, and collaborate with more partners to co-produce content. To accommodate this growth, we are setting up an office in South Africa, and growing our team of Ubongoers to reach Pan African scale.

This is the African promise we pass on to the next generation, confident that they will go on to create a better Africa for everyone! We hope you join us!

Doreen Kessy
Chief Business Officer

“If you are looking to reach kids and families in Africa Ubongo has the perfect platform and content to achieve your goals. We highly recommend working with Ubongo on your next behavior change communication project.”

-Julie Cege, Malaria No More

Acknowledgements

We Ubongoers are deeply grateful to all of our supporters, partners and incredible users, who have made 2018 an incredible year for us. It's been a year of change and transition, as we've grown our team and broadened our network in preparation for scale.

We'd like to acknowledge our board members, Mbwana Alliy, Leslie Jump, Stephen King, Johnpaul Barretto and Faraja Nyalandu for their guidance and commitment. And of course, we must acknowledge the hard work of all of our Ubongoers, old and new, who pour their hearts into our work and truly "do it for the kids." We'd also like to thank the Omidyar Network, Human Development Innovation Fund, Grand Challenges Canada, Mulago Foundation, Data for Local Innovation Challenge, Development Innovation Ventures, Spring Accelerator, the Lamsam family and all of our contributors for their generous funding to help us grow, so that we can help kids thrive! We'd also like to thank our many Ubongo Impact co-production partners, who have helped us bring exciting new learning and life-changing messaging to kids across Africa! It's been a pleasure working with you all, and we are so excited for more partnerships to come!

We also thank the amazing Ubongo parents and caregivers, who do the heavy lifting to give their kids a better life. We appreciate you inviting our fun learning, characters and music into your homes, lives and hearts.

And of course, last but not least, we have to thank the kids! You are our inspiration and the reason why we do what we do. Your smiles, imagination and thirst for knowledge never cease to brighten our days and push us to be better. We're so excited about the amazing things that you will do in this world and grateful to be a part of your journey!

The Ubongoers





Building Brains. Building Change.

www.ubongo.org