

Compact

September 2021

Dear friends,

It has been ten years since we at Nehemiah Gateway began to expand our radius of action - far beyond Albania. Diverse and stable partnerships with international organizations and institutions play an important role in this.

This year we celebrate 30 years of NG, and during all this time there have always been two goals that have driven us: sustainability and helping people to help themselves. We are glad that this is being recognized by official bodies as well. The award of the prestigious One World Medal of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to Arnold Geiger is a good example.

Read also reports about our worldwide activities, about the international scholarship program and get to know some of our partner organizations. Enjoy reading!

Arlinda Merdani, M.A.
Head of Global Operations



Teamwork - Arnold Geiger loves cooperation, also in very practical ways.

Nehemiah Gateway's Global Operations

Nehemiah Gateway's Global Operations reaches out to projects and initiatives in many countries - with emphasis on sustainability and self-help

What do a Tel Aviv based enterprise that up-cycles used kites, an orphan mission in Tanzania, and a Berlin-based youth mentorship program have in common with Amaro Tan School in Pogradec? Nehemiah Gateway, of course. Often, when we talk about NG, we are talking about Albania. Since 1991, the programs founded there by Arnold Geiger have changed tens of thousands of lives. Since 2010, the reach of the organization has grown beyond Albania's borders.



NGU graduate Sandra Akoli with Arlinda Merdani, Head of Global Operations at NG



NGU student Coletha helped at T.O.M. orphanage during one of her practical terms.

And why is that? As Arlinda Merdani, Head of Global Operations at NG, recently explained, the Nehemia Nidda NGO, which sent Arnold Geiger to Albania in the 1990s, supports many international mission projects worldwide. In addition to this connection, Arnold got to know other programs through the extraordinary networks of members of NG's Advisory Board, and himself served on the boards of several of them. In visiting projects over the years, he saw recurring patterns of needs and areas of potential partnership.

The area Arnold points to first is leadership. Many humanitarian programs originate in wealthy countries like Germany, and first-generation leadership typically comes from the outside. But is that sustainable? And is it best for the communities served? "It would be almost a colonial mindset," Arnold observes, "to think that leadership of community programs should continue coming from outside the community as programs mature. Local leadership can be both more sustainable, and more in touch with the needs of the community."

That was the inspiration behind the launch of the international scholarship program at Nehemiah Gateway University. The three-year bachelor's program is designed specifically to train local leaders to international standards, so that second-generation transitions to local leadership become more common, and more successful, in international NGOs. Today, international NGU alumni are building careers in a range of fields—and some of them are already leading nonprofits in their home countries.

Many of NG's open partnership agreements, such as those in Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, and Guatemala, are centered around this leadership development program at NGU, but a handful of others have other components as well. Partnerships with organizations like Glowbal Act/Kite Pride (Switzerland/Israel), D1:8 (Ghana), and Tanzania Orphan Mission (TOM), profiled on pp. 6-7, represent specific opportunities team members saw to support like-minded organizations and broaden the reach of a shared mission. Others reflect opportunities, again identified by team members, to provide a crucial element of support to fledgling entrepreneurs and small/medium sized enterprises in areas where NG works. Each arrangement is different, with some relationships open-ended and others more project-specific. None are run by Nehemiah Gateway, and NG is typically not the only or primary source of support. In almost all cases, they come through people a team member already knows.

These partnerships reflect NG's larger culture of helping others when presented with good opportunities to do so. Thirty years of humanitarian/educational work created teams in Albania, Germany, Switzerland, and the US with an array of friends doing worthwhile things in the world. Many of them are working on projects that help and empower people to shape and determine their lives in dignity and independence. NG has been happy to join with others doing similar work when the opportunity has been appropriate—and will continue to do so.



Peter Makiriyado, Rector of NG University, and his wife Ellen.

“How About a Chicken Farm?”

Nehemiah Gateway University is looking for ways to teach students skills they’ll need to succeed.

Peter Makiriyado is a big fan of practical education. “I believe in bringing education into the lives of my students. School should prepare a student for life,” he says, “and not just to pass their exams.” As Rector of Nehemiah Gateway University (NGU) since 2018, he has managed that school’s mix of classroom and practical training for three years. The program, based on the German dual-study model, offers students the opportunity to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom through internships and projects. Dr. Makiriyado is eager to continue refining the program to fit well in the Albanian context.

Originally from Zimbabwe, Dr. Makiriyado earned a PhD in workforce education from Southern Illinois University in 2012. While living in the US with his wife Ellen and their five children, he launched Active Ministry, a seminary program focused on starting churches in underserved areas of Zimbabwe. The third year of that model featured practical education, with students practicing their skills full-time in new churches. The classroom time included business education, so that pastors could operate independently in their communities, and emerge from the experience with useful skills even if they decided the ministry is not for them. Dr. Makiriyado came to NG through Dr. Roy Atwood (Professor of Humanities at NGU) in 2018, moving his entire family from Illinois to Albania that summer. He has

been amazed by the warmth, hospitality, and kindness of the Albanian people. “When we first came here, people would follow us into stores to see if they could help us somehow,” he recalls. The Makiriyado family has made friends through work and through their church, while their children have also maintained robust relationships with their friends back in the US via technology.

He finds the work at NGU uniquely fulfilling because the impact is obvious and immediate. While some students in wealthier countries come to college to fulfil requirements and earn a degree, students at NGU have a much greater need of the knowledge and mentorship NG’s tiny university provides. “Here, you are really teaching somebody who needs it,” he says, and notes that NGU students show an amazing degree of improvement in skills during the program. The international students, from countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Guatemala, arrive with a high baseline of knowledge and attack their studies with incredible energy and enthusiasm.

The “dual study” model at NGU was particularly attractive to Dr. Makiriyado when he accepted the job. When you talk to him, you can see that he thinks a lot about the best way to meld practical and theoretical learning. He notes that the German dual study model took a long time to take root there—and that it works because the strong business environment in Germany creates many opportunities to combine work and learning. Pogradec is more challenging. The local business community is dominated by small “mom and pop” type businesses with limited need for dedicated accountants, human resources specialists,



Scientists from Uganda held seminars for NGU students in Albania.

marketing, and materials management. The most consistent source of internships in Albania is NG itself—and there are only a handful of spots at a time. The Lindenhof Hotel in Hubmersberg, Germany (www.hubmersberg.de) offers an additional opportunity for a few students to work in a business environment. Dr. Makiriyado feels that adding another NG-owned business in Albania could finally address the shortage of appropriate work opportunities for students.

Like what? How about a chicken farm in one of the mountain villages near Pogradec? The farm could serve as a model business, along the model of many colleges in the US (which have teaching hospitals, school farms, and teaching restaurants). Students would cycle through management roles on the farm. A labor force already exists in the villages as very few employers remain there today. NG's food service operation in Buçimas, and restaurants in nearby Pogradec and Korçe, would be excellent markets for the products. Because many of NGU's international students are interested in owning agricultural businesses (pig and chicken farms are particularly popular) when they return home, this enterprise would prepare them for work they are interested in pursuing.

Nehemiah Gateway University is a young school. Adapting a program that was initially designed to train young professionals in a German context so that it meets the needs of Albanians and future leaders from NGOs in Africa and Latin America is an ongoing process. Dr. Makiriyado's thoughtful efforts are helping to steer that evolution, so that all NGU graduates have the skills they need to succeed, and to strengthen their communities.



As a student, Brenda showed hands-on involvement during practical terms.

My Motivation? Empowering Others!

NGU graduate Doreen Brenda Birabwa has her hands full helping others. She works as an administrator for a saving and credit initiative for Cornerstone Development Africa in Uganda. Brenda also helps recruit applicants for the NGU scholarship program and supports them until they start school, even helping them find internship placements.

For the latest point on Brenda's to-do list, experience and contacts from studying in Europe can be very useful. She is part of a team implementing an EU project co-funded by the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The project is titled 'Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace'. She is helping to implement the project in the countries of Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Brenda is excited: "I am so optimistic to learn and also share my knowledge and ideas about peace building and leadership."

Asked about the time right after graduation, she recalls: "Honestly, it was complicated to get a foothold in the job market in the first few months, but later I took a volunteer position with my sending organization, Cornerstone, before I was hired." Many of the NGU alumni from Africa had similar experiences. But in the end, they all had the chance to make the most of their acquired knowledge and recognized degrees.

Brenda sums up her mission in one powerful statement, **"All my work is aimed at empowering others, helping them make better decisions, and ultimately shaping them into better leaders of tomorrow."**



At NG's Hotel Lindenhof, alumni and students Enock, Riksen, Evi and Susana presented theme rooms.

Three Continents - Four Home Countries



» [Check our booklet
on the theme rooms](#)

**A journey around the globe
with students of NG University,
presenting theme rooms at Hotel Lindenhof**

“This is a typical Kagera.” Enock Kasimbazi proudly presents the cheerfully colored fabric, which serves as a tablecloth here, but in Tanzania is used for all kinds of purposes. The 29-year-old comes from Tanzania. He is pleased that his home continent is represented here in the so-called Africa Room at the German Hotel Lindenhof. There are 54 countries in Africa, he tells us. In his opinion, youth is the key to the continent’s positive future. „We need to invest in the education of young people - because in Africa, more than 65 percent of the people are under 25. Only if we can do that will the continent be able to create a better future on its own.” He himself lives this conviction - and is an example of how education can open the door to a self-determined future. Enock Kasimbazi studied at Nehemiah Gateway University in Albania and is now in the middle of his master’s degree in international development economics in Berlin. He plans to remain committed to this in the future.

The four themed rooms in the Hotel Lindenhof, which belongs to the Nehemiah Gateway Team, want to make it concrete for guests what NG stands for: Values, internationality, education and development. That is why NG supports social and educational projects in countries in Africa, Latin America and Southeastern Europe.

The artworks, photos and sculptures in these special rooms allow guests to taste a little of the atmosphere that can be felt in the respective countries. The staircase shows the composition of power lines and poles, which look like a chaotic but coherent work of art, designed by a young Albanian artist.

During the official presentation of the rooms in July, the guests are guided through the rooms in small groups. Among them is County Commissioner Armin Kroder: „To build up such an international development cooperation in 30 years and to keep an organization alive over such a long period of time is an impressive achievement,” he says.

Not only Africa, the youthful continent with its ancient tradition, can be seen, touched and tasted with African-inspired food and cocktails on this evening at the Lindenhof. Israel and Albania will also be introduced to the guests by Evi Memoci and Riksen Topuzi, other students of NG University. „Israel has the most start-ups compared to its population - and we have produced the most Nobel Prize winners,” reports 36-year-old Evi.

For impressions from Cuba, there is 24-year-old Susana Rodriguez Castillo. She lives in Havana, also a former student at NG University in Albania. „We Cubans, because of our recent history, know how to solve problems independently of other countries - so if you want to deal with something on your own and need an original solution, ask a Cuban,” she says with a wink.

NG has reliable partners in many countries of the world. Get to know several of them here:

NG PARTNERSHIP



glowbalact
AKTIV GEGEN MENSCHENHANDEL

GLOWBALACT & HOPE CENTER with KitePride

Location: Switzerland/Tel Aviv, Israel

Mission: To put an end to exploitation and to create employment for survivors of prostitution.

Major project: GlowbalAct was founded to address the rampant issue of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation in Switzerland and globally. GlowbalAct expanded its work to Israel and established the Israeli non-profit organization Hope Center to further the cause. A social business with the fashion label KitePride in Tel Aviv and Amsterdam, offers victims of forced prostitution, forced labor or human trafficking an education, a job and reintegration into the free labor market. In 2020 Hope Center formed a joint-venture with the Israel Government in order to better solve the issue and increase people impact.

Partner support: NG enables GlowbalAct/Hope Center to employ a social worker and helps to process donations in Germany.

Learn more: www.kitepride.com
www.glowbalact.com/en/about-us



**.way
pointer.**
meet · discover · walk on!

WAYPOINTER

Location: Berlin, Germany

Mission: To provide guidance for young people and support them in their search for orientation.

Major project: Waypointer is still a young organization and the youngest of the NG partners. The core of their work is seminar weekends where young people (starting at the age of 16) come into dialogue with renowned experts from the whole range of social fields. Orientation, challenge and the exchange of ideas encourage them to take responsibility and thus work for a better tomorrow.

Partner support: NG's hotel Lindenhof hosts Waypointer seminars and NG inspires and connects experts to get involved.

Learn more: www.way-pointer.de



DANIEL 1:8 (D1:8)

Location: Sunyani, Ghana

Mission: To mentor young people from every background so that they develop into vibrant, capable adults with Godly principles

Major projects: In four locations in the city of Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana, Daniel 1:8 offers club meetings for about 80 young people; a discipleship program that has mentored over 100 young people; and workshops, and vocational training that have reached over 300 children. They are currently fundraising to build a free community library in Nsuta to address limited availability of quality reading and educational materials in the community. Daniel 1:8 believes in empowering people through education. Their values-based programming aligns with NG's Core Values Implementation program area.

Partner support: NG USA provides oversight and communications support as well as processing of US donations.

Learn more:
www.d1eight.org



TANZANIA ORPHANS MISSION (T.O.M.)

Location: Galijembe, Tanzania

Mission: The holistic care of under-age orphans with the goal to enable them to lead independent and self-determined lives in adulthood.

Major project: T.O.M. Orphanage hosts more than 80 children aged 5 to 18, orphans of both parents. In addition to the basic provision of food, housing and clothing, T.O.M. enables the orphans to receive a sound school education and medical care - even in cases of serious health problems, such as HIV/AIDS. Younger children visit the primary and medium school on site, later they receive scholarships for high school or vocational training. There is an agricultural project for self-supply where the children also learn how to grow crops, raise animals and care for and handle machinery.

Partner support: NG donates secondary school scholarships and facilitated German public funding for a student dormitory and agricultural training.

Learn more:
www.tom.org.gr



PROJECT 2-5 (P2-5)

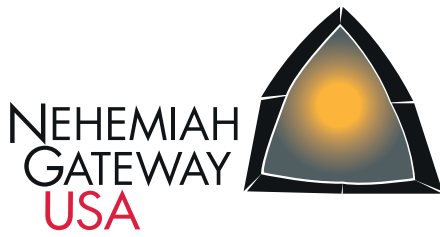
Locations: Arua, Serere and Rhino Refugee Camp in Uganda

Mission: To empower people to live their lives with determination, self-confidence and dignity, to alleviate hardship, improve living conditions and help people bring out their undiscovered skills and potential.

Major project: P2-5 trains young adults from Uganda as well as refugees, especially from South Sudan, in two vocational schools in Uganda. Annually, at least, 800 people benefit from their work.

Partner support: P2-5 administrator Naphtali Gideon Peter from South Sudan, received a NGU scholarship and graduated in September 2021 with a Bachelor's degree in Economy and Businesses. During his studies he continued to work for P2-5 as a manager for cooperation projects with funders and donors from Germany. Now he is returning to Uganda to go on working with P2-5 on site.

Learn more:
project-twofive.org



At a Glance



ONE WORLD MEDAL

Arnold Geiger, founder of NG, will be awarded the ONE WORLD Medal of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development for his longstanding and outstanding commitment to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, helping people, regardless of their social background or religious affiliation. This award confirms NG’s mission and commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goals No. 3, 4, 5, and 17 through the realization and implementation of a wide range of projects and cooperations.



EASY ACCESS TO SERVICES IN RWANDA

Anitha Kirezi just graduated with a NGU bachelor’s degree in September and is already working on an ambitious project for her home country Rwanda: Together with a friend, she is developing a comprehensive online platform that offers digital solutions and provides easy access to services in Rwanda. We’ll keep you informed. This platform will be an important contribution to the further development of her country. We wish her much success and all the best!



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