



guba mu ngenda ya kumi
kekele kaka bitunaa
nosi:

ALEF

Annual report 2023



ADULT
LEARNING AND
EMPOWERMENT
FACILITATORS

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Annual report for the financial year 2023.01.01 – 2023.12.31

ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators

Organization number 802452-4681

www.alef.org

Introduction

Quality AND quantity

Which is more important, quality or quantity? It is as impossible to answer as the question of which comes first, the chicken or the egg.

When it comes to development aid for education, quantity has often been emphasized. A few years ago, under the motto "Education for all", massive efforts were made to ensure that all children in poor countries could start school. In purely statistical terms it was a great success. But the result could be 200 children in the same classroom with a single teacher. Learning outcomes dropped like a rock.

*For ALEF, quantity is important. In **chapter 4** of this annual report, **Future development**, we write about scaling up the number of participants, focusing on larger projects and new partnerships with organizations with the capacity to enroll large numbers of participants. With over 770 million not given the chance to become literate, the quantitative challenge is enormous. We want to give as many people as possible a second chance.*

But unless quantity is matched with quality, it is meaningless. The very reason why ALEF exists is that we saw the need to create a method that increases the quality of educational programs for young people and adults who lack primary school education.

*A suitable heading for the business year 2023 would be **Quality Enhancement**. In **chapter 2.1 Capacity-building activities**, we report how we worked to increase the educational capacity of our partners. In section **2.2.2 Impact** we describe how we have developed tools to better capture participants' own stories to assess the impact of our training programs.*

The fact that the percentage of those who can afford to pay school fees for all their children rose from 33% to 58% in Uganda for those who completed the program, or that 74% of participants in South Kivu in DRC are engaged in an income-generating activity after course 3 compared to 36% when they started course 1 – these figures speak to the quality of ALEF's approach to education and empowerment.

The woman in Kakenge who now sells her goods for a profit; the study group in Kalole who built a chicken coop; the group in Konge who are raising money to buy a field, and the group in Katabi who are selling fish, all thanks to their new skills in counting, writing and reading and the togetherness and trust they have developed in the group - these are the people who demonstrate the quality of the ALEF approach.

A warm thank you to all of you who contribute in various ways to make this work possible! All donors, board, staff and volunteers. And our fantastic partner organizations in the field! Without all of you this would not have been possible!



Hélène Boëthius, founder and chairperson

Vällingby 2024-04-24

1 | About the organization

The board of directors for ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators, a Swedish, non-profit association with organization number 802452-4681, based in Vällingby, hereby issue an annual report for the period 2023-01-01 – 2023-12-31, the association's fourteenth financial year.

1.1 Purpose and objectives

ALEF's statutes contain the following statement about our vision and purpose:

§ 3 Vision

ALEF's vision is to empower young people and adults with skills and knowledge so that they themselves can:

- improve their living conditions
- understand and claim their rights
- gain access to decision-making processes, community services and common arenas
- act to change the mechanisms behind oppression, discrimination and poverty

§ 4. Purpose

ALEF's purpose is to support in various ways work that includes basic education (literacy) for adults and young people, often called Adult basic learning, mainly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Primarily, ALEF supports local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to plan and implement projects of mother-tongue based study circles offering basic education to young people and adults, and to produce teaching materials for them.

The organizations activities consist of:

- **Expert support and training of staff**, through feasibility studies, planning, material preparation, follow-up, evaluations and organizational development as well as further training of project personnel.
- **Advocacy work** targeting authorities, organizations and international institutions and NGOs.
- **Financing of projects**, teaching materials and courses, etc.
- **Follow-up projects** or sub-projects leading directly to the application of ALEF's basic training methodology, e.g. production of reading materials, local libraries, cooperatives, vocational training, micro-credit, agricultural and environmental projects.
- For these purposes, ALEF will carry out **fundraising activities** aimed at the public, as well as seeking contributions from other institutions and actors.



"ALEF's vision is to empower young people and adults with skills and knowledge so that they themselves can improve their living conditions, understand and assert their rights [...] and act to change the mechanisms underlying oppression, discrimination and poverty."

1.2 Board, employees and members

During the year, the board consisted of:

Hélène Boëthius *Executive Chair, Head of Operations*

Lena Insulander *Vice-Chair*

Lars-Åke Davidsson *Member, secretary*

Inge Pierre *Member*

Elisabeth Sandlund *Member*

Karin Tenelius *Member*

Bertil Forsberg *Alternate*

Adam Stuijbergen Sidambah *Alternate*

Isa-Lei Moberg *Alternate*

Nomination Committee: **Suzanne Fritz**, **Anna Vinehav**

Board meetings were held on the following occasions during the year: 23/01/2023, 20/03/2023, 15/05/2023, 18/10/2023, and 13/11/2023. On 29th August, the Board and all staff attended a strategy day to discuss and deliberate on the direction of the organisation. The annual general meeting was held on 29/04/2023.

Employees

Hélène Boëthius, Head of Operations and Executive Chair, was employed on a 65% basis throughout the year.

Ebba Mörk, Project Administrator and Project Finance Officer, worked 80% for the first half of the year, and then moved up to full-time. Ebba handles all contacts with the partner organizations in the field, and is responsible for applications for project grants from foundations and funds, as well as the relationship with ForumCiv.

Adam Bott had a full-time position as Education Coordinator throughout 2023. He is responsible for the development of new learning materials, training of partner staff and contacts with researchers and other professional networks.

Annica Levenrot, accountant at Ekeskog Konsult AB is employed on an hourly basis for the association's financial management.

Annette Melin was hired in September on an hourly basis, approx. 6 hours a week

to handle the donor register and other administrative tasks.

Emelie Efraimsson continued her work as an outreach ambassador in January 2023, when she gave another talk about ALEF at the Lions Club in Tuve.

Isa-Lei Moberg worked as an hourly employee during the fall of 2023, mainly networking and helping to identify new potential funders and writing applications.

Silje Overvåg has worked as a volunteer for ALEF during the autumn. She has compiled a database of participants' stories recorded during the coaches' follow-up visits. This database will be used both for communication purposes and as material for research and statistical compilations of data. Adam Bott has acted as supervisor.

Advisory board

Katy Newell-Jones, consultant in global education and development cooperation. PhD Ecology and Development, University of East Anglia. National Teaching Fellowship, UK Higher Education Academy. Former chairman of the British Association for Literacy in Development, BALID.

Carol Benson, education expert specializing in multilingualism and minority languages. PhD in Social Work and Comparative Education, University of California, Los Angeles.

Barbara Trudell, Director SIL Africa Learning & Development. PhD International Education, University of Edinburgh.

Members

At the end of the year, ALEF had 225 members (243 at the end of 2022). The majority of these are members through giving regular monthly donations via direct debit or bank transfer.

1.3 The ALEF method

ALEF's raison d'être lies in our method for education and empowerment of young people and adults without primary schooling. Over the years, this approach has proven to be a cost-effective way to give people living in extreme poverty the tools to start changing their lives. It helps them take control of their finances, assert their rights, give their children a good education and find ways to earn a living. There are very few similar programs that focus on both empowerment and providing literacy and numeracy skills. ALEF has developed an approach that reaches the most marginalized and leaves a lasting impact on people's lives.

A fundamental principle of the ALEF method is to always design learning materials and curricula in partnership with local organizations. The local organization is the expert on the language and culture. They know the living conditions of the

potential participants; the socio-economic, political, environmental and cultural challenges.

In a seminar format, a thorough inventory of these living conditions is made, and based on this, possible topics for discussions and texts in the course are identified. The partner organization then formulates the texts in the mother tongue. In this way, the partner organization becomes a co-owner of the content and design of the courses. ALEF functions as a mentor and facilitator in relation to the partner organization, in the same way that the partner organization then in turn becomes a mentor and facilitator, for the groups of adult learners out in the villages and neighborhoods where the empowerment groups meet.

The program consists of groups of 20-25 participants aged 15-45, who meet in their



“It is the partner organization that formulates the texts in the mother tongue. In this way, they become co-owners of the content and design of the courses. ALEF acts as supervisor and facilitator.”

“Mothers can support their children’s education, receive maternity care and ensure that the children are vaccinated. Farmers learn to plan their work and to try out new methods. Many small changes lead to better lives and higher living standards.”



local neighbourhood. They learn reading, writing and arithmetic using short texts which describe typical situations from the participants' own lives. They discuss what they have read and then create their own texts based on their discussions. At the same time, they make decisions about how they can change their lives and what they can do to lift themselves out of poverty, solve problems and stand up for their rights.

The courses are run by local organizations whose staff are well versed in the language and culture. The full program consists of three courses of 6-8 months each. Study groups meet two or three times a week for a couple of hours each time. Each group is led by a trained facilitator, and receives regular visits from a coach employed by the implementing organization.

In the first course, participants learn to read and write in their mother tongue. The second course focuses on basic math for everyday needs. The third course introduces second language literacy and prepares the group to transform into a cooperative or association.

In total, some 40,000 people have now participated in ALEF groups, not counting the up to 3 million who have participated in the Oromia Education Bureau's program in Ethiopia. The majority (80-90%) are girls and women.

For many, the course has been the starting point for earning their own income, asserting their rights, and standing up against abuse of power and corruption. Mothers can support their children's education, access prenatal care and make sure their children are vaccinated. Farmers learn to plan their work and to try out new methods. Many small changes lead to better lives and higher living standards. This approach to empowering people to lift themselves out of poverty and exclusion is both cost-effective and respectful of local cultures and people's dignity.

ALEF's vision is to make the courses available to more people. Over the next few years, we hope to both scale up current projects and launch new projects in new languages for many more of the 773 million young people and adults who have not yet had the chance to learn to read and write ■

2 | Significant events during the financial year

2.1 Capacity-building

A crucial part of ALEF's work in 2023 has been increasing our partners' capacity. We have worked to strengthen local partner organizations by training their staff, increasing ongoing support for both administrative and pedagogical work, improving facilitator manuals and implementing new monitoring tools. The aim is to enable partner organizations to both increase the number of participants and improve the quality of projects.

“A crucial part of ALEF's work is increasing our partners' capacity. The aim is to enable partner organizations to both increase the number of participants and improve the quality of their projects.”

Oromia – ALEF on a large scale

Oromia is Ethiopia's largest state, with approximately 40 million inhabitants. More than half of the adult population lacks literacy skills. This is a high priority for the region's education authority, OEB (Oromia Education Bureau), who engaged ALEF in 2019 to lead the development of a curriculum using ALEF methodology, with interactive lessons based on the participants' everyday life and needs. The OEB reports that 2.8 million people in the Oromo region have so far participated in courses based on the ALEF method.

In April, ALEF traveled to Ethiopia together with journalist Anders Bolling to visit OEB's programme. There we met enthusiastic facilitators and hundreds of motivated participants. It was clear that the participants are learning to read and write. However, there were some gaps in the facilitators' understanding of the methodology.

When ALEF presented a report to the OEB at the end of the visit, we were invited to

return to provide further training to their staff.

In August, we held a week's training in the ALEF method in the town of Bishoftu, a few miles outside Addis Ababa, for about sixty OEB officials. The goal was to improve bureau personnel's understanding of the method's principles and prepare them to train and support the tens of thousands of facilitators.

The workshop included conversations about what makes literacy learning relevant and engaging for adults living in poverty, and exercises in leading interactive discussions and creating texts in groups.

The head of the OEB, Dr. Tolla Berisso Geda, says:

“The ALEF method has been well received by facilitators and participants alike. We hope to expand the program and reach millions more people in the future.”



Anders Bolling writes in his report:

“The challenges are great, but the initiative started in Oromia has great potential to significantly increase literacy. 1.1 million people participated in the first cycle. 1.7 million participated in the second cycle in 2022-2023. [...] Research shows that combatting illiteracy unleashes creativity and productivity, reduces poverty and ultimately lifts up entire nations. Educating girls and mothers is one of the most effective ways to lift a country out of poverty.”

“Research shows that combatting illiteracy unleashes creativity and productivity, reduces poverty and ultimately lifts up entire nations. Educating girls and mothers is one of the most effective ways to lift a country out of poverty.”

Coaches - ALEF's backbone

Coaches are the cornerstone of a successful ALEF program. They are the ones who are responsible for training facilitators, following and support their work, and ensuring through their regular field visits that the course maintains high quality and achieves the desired results. Developing coaches' skills and equipping them with the right tools is therefore one of ALEF's key tasks.

This year we introduced a new certification programme for coaches in all partner organizations. A person who has participated in ALEF's training courses, has a good grasp of the ALEF methodology and has applied it at all 3 levels, and has demonstrated skill and commitment in their work, can become a certified ALEF coach. The idea is that certified coaches will not only lead educational development

in their own organizations, but also be able to transfer skills and knowledge to other actors who wish to implement ALEF programs in the same language. The certification program is an important step in enabling the dissemination of the

method while ensuring the quality of ALEF programs.

In 2023, four coaches were certified in DRC and in January 2024 another five in Uganda.

New challenges, new solutions

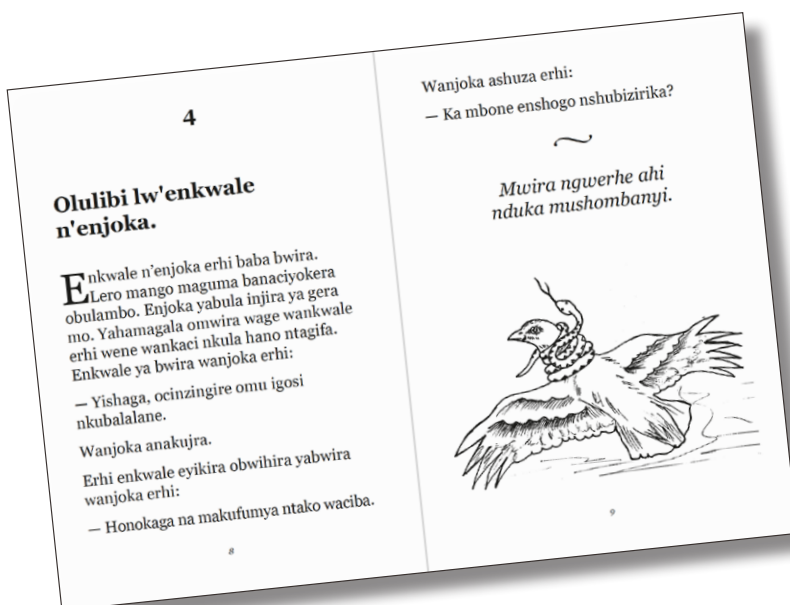
Participants in ACDC's program in South Kivu, DRC face major challenges in their daily lives. Many years of armed conflict, corruption and abuse of power have led to heightened insecurity and weakened social trust. This insecurity in combination with the poor state of infrastructure contributes to high food prices while incomes remain low due to underdeveloped agriculture.

In January, ALEF held a seminar for ACDC's coaches. They practiced the method, revised learning materials, and discussed what can be done to improve outcomes. During the seminar, strategies were discussed to prevent dropouts and help as many participants as possible complete

the programme. A new introductory book for the first weeks of Level 1 was created, with simple exercises in recognizing letter shapes and practicing the fine motor skills needed to use a pencil.

One challenge is that, since Mashi is not well established as a written language, there is a lack of material for participants to read on their own. During the seminar, the coaches created three easy-to-read books in Mashi containing proverbs, folktales and stories. These will be distributed to participants. In the coming years, ACDC will produce more books that, like with our partners in Uganda and Togo, can be lent out via "mini-libraries".

“The coaches have written three easy-to-read books in the Mashi language containing proverbs, folktales and stories.”



Digitalization

The ACDC coaches were also the first to test ALEF's new monitoring system. The coaches each received a tablet and were trained in the use of digital reporting tools for their follow-up visits. The aim of this system is to enable the local project management to follow work in the field in real time and make it easier to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project while reducing paperwork.

Coaches' observations from each visit are compiled in the online portal, together with data on attendance and dropouts. One can read the texts written by the groups based on their discussions and see pictures from the lessons. The digital reporting pilot initiative has been received with great enthusiasm by ACDC staff, and the system will be rolled out in Uganda and Guinea in 2024, and in Togo in 2025.

Learning from one another

ALEF wants our partner organizations, who are the real experts in the method, to be able to learn directly from each other. In July, ACDC from DRC made a study visit to our partner CACI in Uganda, to see how the ALEF method is used in the Luganda language. They visited several study groups and were able to discuss similarities and differences. Both CACI and ACDC greatly appreciated this exchange.

In October, a digital meeting was held with our three funded partner organizations. This was the first time CACI from Uganda, ACDC from DRC and Acatbli from Togo met. Since the coronavirus pandemic, video conferences have become part of everyday life, making this type of meeting possible.

The organizations were grateful for the opportunity to discuss successes as well as challenges. As the local conditions differ, there is some variation in how the method is applied to the different mother tongues. They concluded that there is much to learn from each other.



“Coaches’ observations from each visit are compiled in the online portal, together with data on attendance and dropouts. One can read texts created by study groups and see pictures from the lessons.”

Improved learning materials

A fundamental principle of the ALEF approach is that curriculum content is always based on the local context - on participants' experiences, hopes, needs and concerns. In practice, this means that an ALEF coursebook must constantly evolve as life changes.

In 2023, a systematic review and update of learning materials in all projects was started. This is carried out in close cooperation with the partner organization, who have direct insight into the needs and situation of the participants. Thanks to new technology, this work can increasingly be carried out remotely, keeping costs and emissions down. In 2023, course

materials for South Kivu in DRC and for Guinea were revised.

In the fall of 2023, the very first study groups in Guinea with ALEF teaching materials in Maninka completed level 1. In October, ALEF held a three-week workshop with EADG to create course material for level 2, where the focus is on practical arithmetic. Each story in the textbook contains a math problem that the participants solve with the help of the facilitator. EADG's project in Guinea is implemented in cooperation with the Huskvarna Pentecostal congregation. ALEF acts as a consultant and educational advisor.

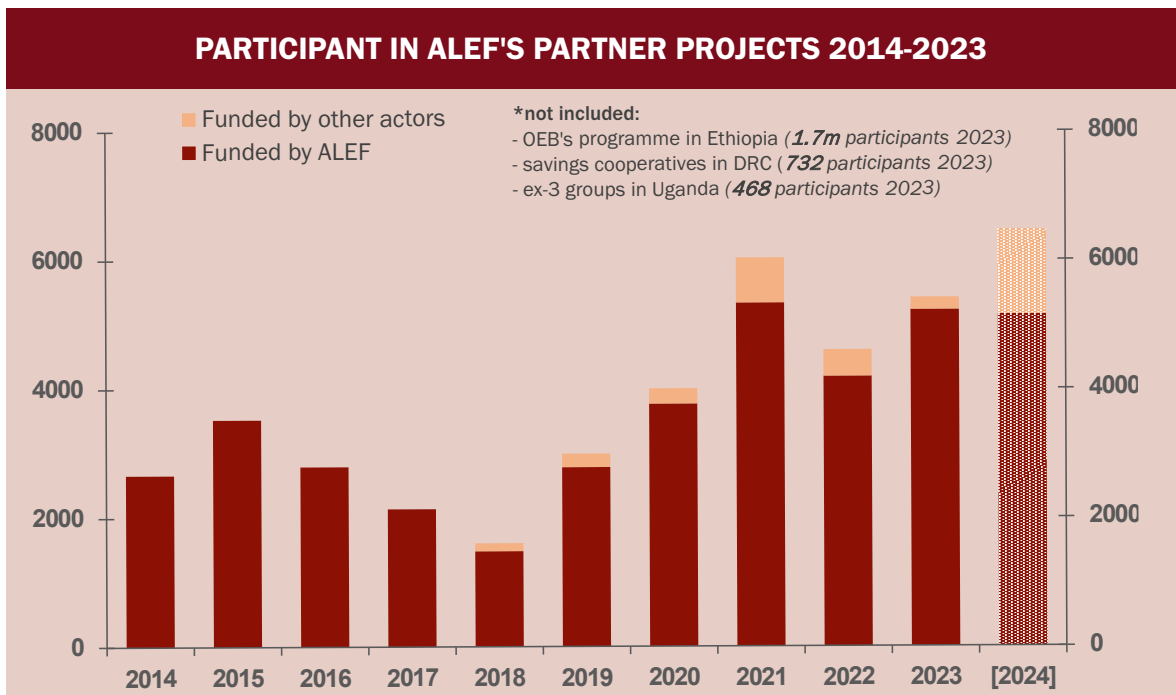
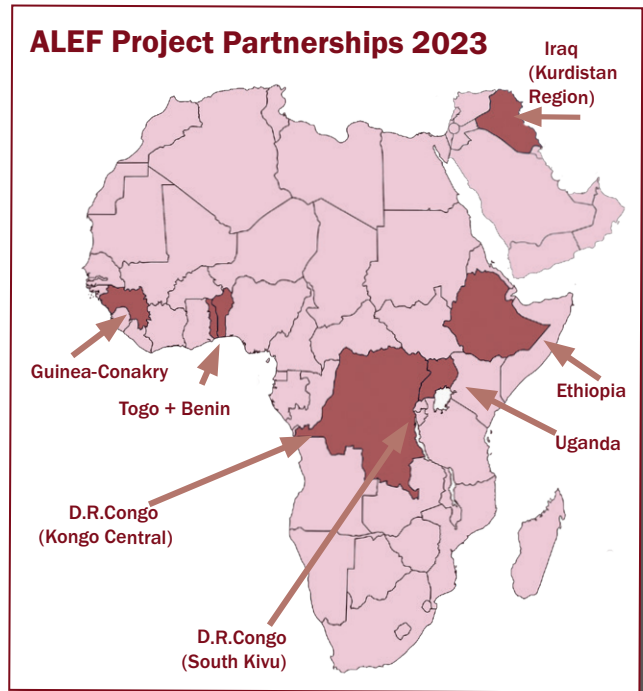
2.2 Outcomes and impacts

2.2.1 Project outcomes

Learning materials based on the ALEF method are now available in seven languages:

- **Ife** in Togo and Benin
- **Luganda** in Uganda
- **Mashi** in South-Kivu, DRC
- **Kikongo** in Kongo Central, DRC
- **Kurmanji** in Iraq
- **Oromo** in Ethiopia
- **Maninka** in Guinea

Since 2012, a total of approximately 40,000 participants aged 15–45 have taken part in ALEF courses, not counting roughly 3 million reported by Oromia Education Bureau in Ethiopia. Three project partnerships are funded by ALEF: luganda, mashi and ife. In 2023, around 5,200 people participated in study groups in these projects, an increase of 24% since 2022 when the number was 4,200. The share of female participants in 2023 was 87%.



Uganda (CACI)

Partner profile

Language:	Luganda
Partner organization:	CACI, Change African Child International
Partnership since:	2013
Funder:	ALEF
Subpartners:	Action for Liberty and Economic Development (ALED) Kakiri Women Development Group Bellins Consulting and skilling Center Institute for Social Transformation, IST
Other projects:	Vocational training in sewing and crafts for young people Counseling and support for people living with HIV/AIDS Support for at-risk children
Study groups 2023:	83
Participants 2023:	1,875 of which 90% passed the final exam
Percentage women:	82%

Change African Child International (CACI) operates in and around Kampala and Entebbe in Uganda. They run study groups for adult speakers of Luganda, which has six million native speakers and is spoken as a second language by millions more.

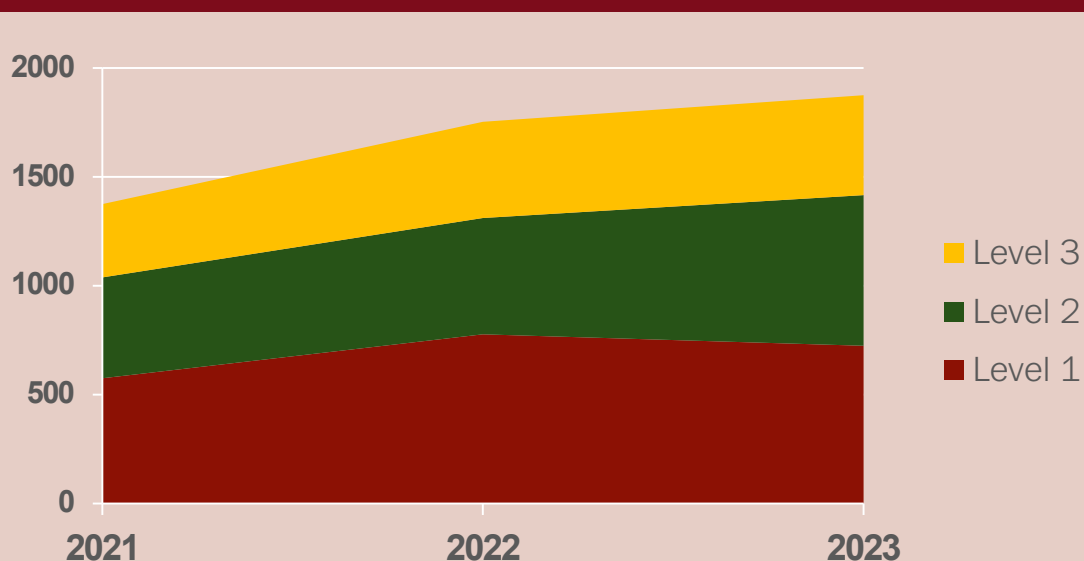
In recent years, CACI's program has grown. To give more people the opportunity to participate, CACI collaborates with three local organizations, who in 2023 administered 9 groups out of the 83 reported above. ALEF, via CACI, contributes facilitator training, teaching materials and manuals as well as some follow-up, and

the local sub-partner is responsible for the implementation of the study groups without funding from ALEF.

CACI also has a number of groups that have completed level 3 and continue as reading clubs or as economic associations. These groups function largely autonomously.

New for 2023 was that ALEF, in collaboration with CACI and our partner in DRC, launched a new survey to measure long-term impact. In July, CACI received a visit from ALEF's Congolese partner organization ACDC.

PARTICIPANTS IN UGANDA 2021-2023



2

Democratic Republic of Congo, South Kivu Province (ACDC)

Partner profile

Language:	Mashi
Partner organization:	ACDC (Association Congolaise pour le Développement Communautaire)
Partnership since:	2013
Funder:	ALEF (parts of the project were financed with the help of a grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency via ForumCiv)
Subpartners	ISF, CODDIMIR, ADESH, CEST and CADE
Other projects	Accelerated Elementary School; Small-scale agricultural projects
Study groups 2023:	96 (+47 savings cooperatives)
Participants 2023:	2,084 of which 68% passed the final exam (+720 in savings cooperatives)
Percentage women:	97%

Association Congolaise pour le Développement Communautaire (ACDC) has been working for many years in the conflict-affected South Kivu province in the eastern part of DRC. The native Mashi language is spoken by over a million people.

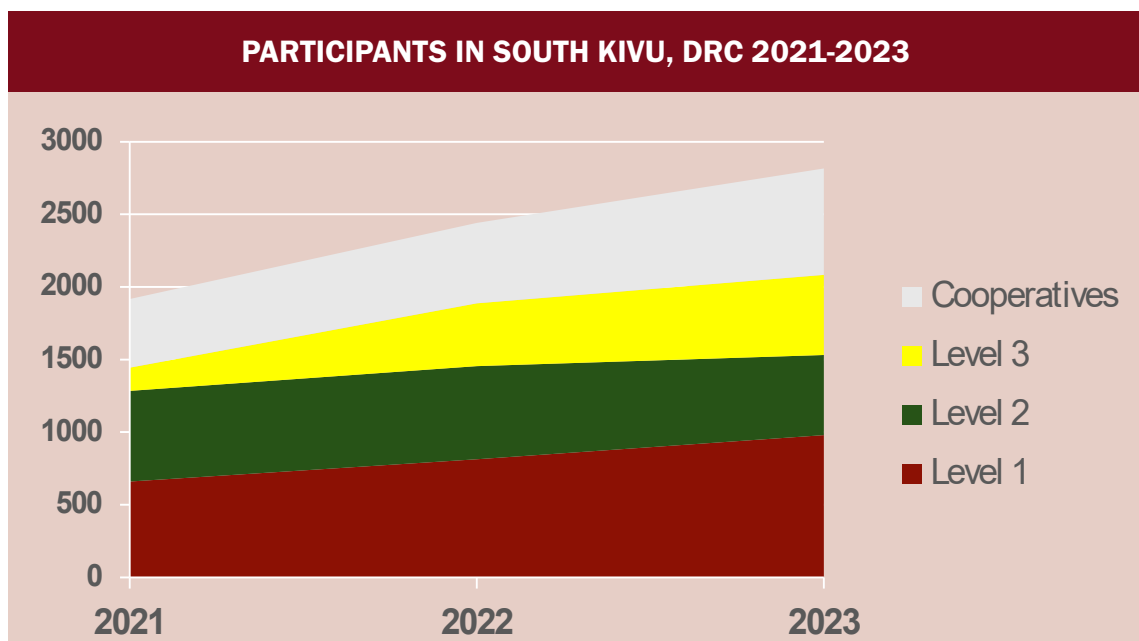
Of 2023's 96 study groups, 41 were conducted by ACDC's five local partner organisations. Facilitators and coaches from these associations were trained at the beginning of the year by ACDC staff, and then conducted the study groups on their own. ACDC was responsible for some follow-up during the year. Facilitator training and course materials were paid for by ALEF.

After three years, ACDC's study groups are transformed into so-called "Musos",

mutuelles de solidarité. Musos are savings cooperatives, where all members contribute small amounts every month. The groups write their own bylaws, elect a board, and learn bookkeeping. They carry out joint projects. The Musos groups are supported by a coach employed in the project. There are 47 active Musos groups with around 720 participants.

In January, ALEF organized a training session for the project coaches. During the seminar, a new digital monitoring and reporting system was also presented.

As the project has expanded in recent years, a project manager was hired in early 2023 to support the coordinator Marc Kashera. The project manager's English skills facilitated the exchange trip to Uganda.



Togo (Acatbli)

Partner profile

Language:	Ife
Partner organization:	Acatbli (Association Chrétienne pour l'Alphabétisation et la Traduction Biblique en Langue Ife)
Partnership since:	2010
Funder:	ALEF
Other projects:	Agricultural project in groups that completed the three levels Bible translation Literacy for church members Volleyball project for youth
Study groups 2023:	60
Participants 2023:	1,264 of which 93% passed the final exam
Percentage women:	76%

Acatbli (Association Chrétienne pour l'Alphabétisation et la Traduction Biblique en Langue Ife) is headquartered in Atakpamé, Togo but also operates in neighboring Benin. Acatbli works in the Ife language, which is spoken by about 500,000 people in both Togo and Benin.

Acatbli previously had a split financial year, from November to October. From 2023, Acatbli has changed its financial year

to the calendar year. The 2023 project period therefore ran from Nov 2022 to Dec 2023. During this period there were 60 study groups. Of these, 40 groups took an agriculture course as a continuation of the third level. In 2023, Acatbli had 267 participants in level 1, 208 participants in level 2, and 789 participants in level 3.

In April 2023, ALEF staff made a follow-up visit to Togo. This was the first visit



since before the corona pandemic. The focus of the visit was on capacity-building measures and diversified financing. One result of the visit was a decision to

create completely new teaching materials according to the ALEF method for the first level, and to revise the teaching materials for levels 2 and 3.

2

Ethiopia (Oromia Education Bureau)

Partner profile

Language:	Oromo
Partner organization:	Oromia Education Bureau (Education Authority of the Oromia Region)
Partnership since:	2019
Funder:	Oromia Education Bureau
Other projects:	The OEB is responsible for all education in the region: preschool, primary school, high school and university
Participants 2023:	approx. 1.7 million

In 2019-2020, ALEF worked with the Oromia Education Bureau (OEB), a government agency, to develop learning materials in the Oromo language, which is Ethiopia's most common mother tongue spoken by around 40 million people. A revised version of the curriculum materials

was printed in 2021. OEB reports that it has been used by around 3 million learners so far.

See section 2.1 for more information on ALEF's capacity development work in this programme.



"In 2019-2020, ALEF collaborated with the government agency Oromia Education Bureau to develop learning materials in the Oromo language. OEB reports that it has been used by about 3 million learners so far."

D.R.Congo, Kongo Central Province (CEC/BCPAD)

Partner profile

Language:	Kikongo
Partner organization:	BCPAD, development organization for the CEC church, Communauté évangélique du Congo
Partnership since	2017
Funder:	The Eumenia Church in Sweden with Sida funding via the Swedish Mission Council
Other projects:	Agricultural development, vaccination, healthcare, human rights
Participants 2023:	61 of which 93% completed the course (uncertain data)
Percentage women:	90 %

During the period 2018-2021, ALEF collaborated with a group of parishes within the Eumenia Church and their Congolese partner CEC to produce learning materials in Kikongo. Materials for three levels were prepared, and a program with six groups at each level was started in Wombo district. Since 2022, the project has been financed by Sida as part of Eumenia's collaboration with BCPAD, the CEC church's development organization.

In early 2023, we received a request from BCPAD to use the ALEF materials to expand the project to 1,000 participants a year starting in 2024. This upscaling is made possible by a three-year Sida grant via the Swedish Mission Council. ALEF signed an agreement to hold a one-week training for BCPAD's 20 new coaches, which was carried out in Kimpese in February 2024.



Guinea-Conakry (EADG)

Partner profile

Language:	Maninka
Partner organization:	EADG, Église Assemblées de Dieu de Guinée
Partnership since:	2022
Funder:	Huskvarna Pentecostal congregation
Other projects:	EADG operates, among other things, a school and some health clinics
Study groups 2023:	3
Participants 2023:	51 of which 57% passed the final exam
Percentage women:	56 %

In autumn 2022 ALEF prepared course materials for the Maninka language in the province of Kankan in eastern Guinea, for a program run by EADG in collaboration with Huskvarna congregation. The language is spoken by over three million people in Guinea and Mali.

In 2023, the first seven pilot groups started with 132 participants. Three groups completed the entire course. 84% of the participants in these groups completed the course and 57% passed the final exam.

An evaluation of the pilot groups showed

that participants appreciated the course but that better follow-up and support for facilitators is needed to improve results.

ALEF returned to Guinea in the fall of 2023 and led a three-week workshop to prepare Level 2 materials and train project leaders. Work then continued remotely.

For 2024, the team has been reinforced with a new project coordinator and new coaches. They will use ALEF's new digital monitoring tool to track the groups' progress. 15 new study groups will complete level 1 in 2024.



Iraqi Kurdistan (Imprint of Hope)

Partner profile

Language:	Kurdish (Kurmanji)
Organisation:	Imprint of Hope for Humanitarian Aid (formerly Joint Help)
Partnership since:	2020
Other Projects:	Healthcare; psychosocial activities for women and young people
Study groups 2023:	0 (project paused)

From autumn 2021 to summer 2022, the Swedish-Kurdish aid organization Joint Help piloted a Level 1 ALEF course at the Bajed Kandala IDP camp. Participants belong to the Yezidi ethnic group, a Kurdish-speaking religious minority that has been subjected to ethnic cleansing and genocide by ISIS.

This was the first time that the ALEF method was used in a refugee camp and also the first time that ALEF teaching materials were produced in a language with a non-Latin script.

In follow-up interviews in the fall of 2023, former participants said that they benefited greatly from their new knowledge in everyday life, felt greater self-confidence

and felt that they had become more independent.

The last two years have been a transition period. Joint Help closed in the summer of 2023, but their local staff in Iraqi Kurdistan, decided, given the scale and urgency of the needs of the Yezidi population, to continue operations. They have formed a new NGO, Imprint of Hope for Humanitarian Aid, which is now taking over Joint Help's projects at Bajed Kandala. IOH hopes to resume collaboration with ALEF in 2024–25, with the intention of starting new Level 1 groups and creating learning materials for Levels 2 and 3.

2

2.2.2 Project Impact

Measuring change

The figures in the previous section show the number of people participating in ALEF study groups. It is worth noting the low dropout rates and high test scores reported by our partners.

However, ALEF's mission is not just to promote literacy and numeracy, but to give people the tools to truly transform their lives: to empower our participants — through literacy and numeracy skills, renewed confidence, and a deeper understanding of their situation — to lift themselves out of poverty and challenge injustice in their communities.

How do we know that our work is actually achieving the desired results? The truth is that it is very difficult to measure the long-term effects of social interventions. For ALEF's future development, it is

important to be able to ascertain to what extent study groups lead to real change in people's lives, and how outcomes vary in relation to different local cultures and conditions.

In 2023 ALEF began a long-term initiative to achieve a more comprehensive and scientific picture of the method's impact. This has three main parts.

1. Quantitative data:

In dialogue with our partner organizations, we have developed a new standardized participant survey with questions on living standards, health, family, employment, self-confidence and use of literacy in everyday life. Data from this survey can give us a clearer picture of our participants' living conditions, changes over time, and how project outcomes differ

depending on the context. Coaches have been trained to conduct the survey using digital tools. The survey was used for the first time in Uganda and DRC in 2023 and will also be implemented in Togo from 2024. Participants who take part in the survey at the beginning of level 1 will be interviewed again at the end of each level.

2. Qualitative data

Every month, study groups are visited by a coach who talks to the participants about their experience of the course and offers them the chance to talk about changes that have taken place in their lives. In the autumn of 2023, an ALEF intern began organizing these stories in a database where each story is categorized by theme. Thanks to the new digital monitoring system, we receive hundreds of stories. We also have access to all the texts that groups create together during lessons. These tools enable participants themselves to have a voice in any future evaluation of the projects.

1. Improving living conditions and reducing poverty

Increased income

In level 2, participants learn basic math, and practice using shopping lists, receipts, and keeping a simple cash book. These skills make it easier to plan household finances and to carry out income-generating activities.

A woman in the village of Kakenge in DRC explains how her new skills have enabled her small shop to turn a profit. She often had to sell on credit, but since she could not read and write it was difficult to keep track of the debts. When customers refused to pay, there was no written evidence to refer to. Now she carefully notes all debts in her cash book.

In Uganda, many participants are housewives with no income of their own when they start the course, but after one or two years, thanks to new skills and increased self-confidence, they can start earning money through e.g. a market stall, restaurant or textile business.

3. Cooperation with the research community

We are working to strengthen cooperation and knowledge exchange with researchers in the fields of education, development and literacy. In 2023, ALEF led a workshop at the NorDev Nordic Development Conference in Uppsala and a webinar organized by Balid (British Association for Literacy and Development) – see section 2.3 for more information. In March 2024, a team from MLE international, led by Prof. Carol Benson from Columbia University, USA, began a qualitative study of participants' experiences of ALEF groups based on the testimonial database. Robin Hermansson, studying global health at the University of Gothenburg, will write his master's thesis on the effects of the ALEF method in spring 2024, using quantitative data from the participant survey in Uganda.



Cooperation and entrepreneurship

In Congo, many study groups start saving together in their first year and use the money for joint income-generating activities. Many invest in animal husbandry.

The Level 1 group in Kalole built a chicken coop and bought a rooster and some hens.



They plan to sell the eggs to generate an extra income for the group participants and their families. The study group in Lusrirwe has built a rabbit house and bought six rabbits. The group in Izege has joined together to buy guinea pigs, to be cared for by an experienced group member.

Other groups invest in communal farming. The Level 2 group in the village of Konge wants to buy a field for joint cultivation. They plan to finance this through sales of cassava, with each member contributing 10 kg per month from their own harvest. Another group has saved up money to rent a field where they will grow beans.

Many study groups in Uganda continue to meet after completing the full ALEF program. These groups are independent, but receive regular follow-up and advice from CACI. Many start entrepreneurial activities together.

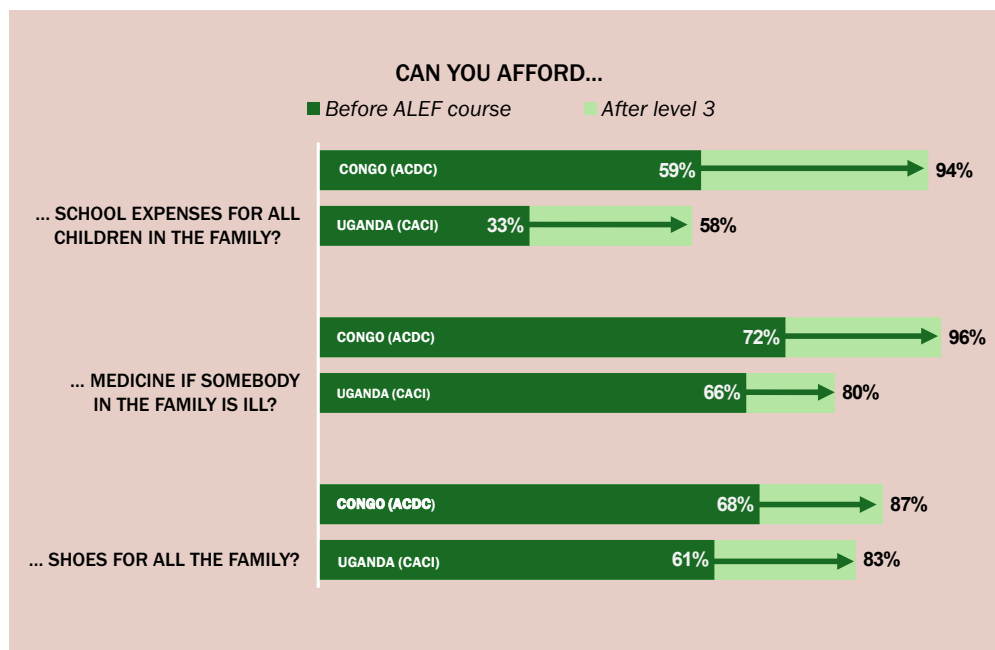
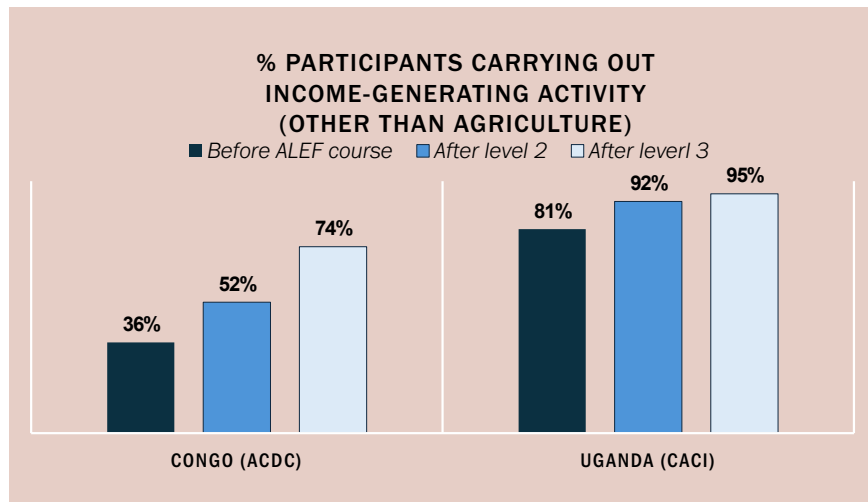
A group in Katabi started selling fish. Their business grew quickly and they now deliver fish daily to several local hotels. They have registered as a cooperative and managed to obtain a business loan through a government development program. Other groups have started making and selling products such as pastries, charcoal, soap and candles. A group in Kibiri has used their savings to buy tableware which they rent out for parties and weddings.

A group in Lwanjaba, on the shores of Lake Victoria, was scattered when their fishing village was demolished and the participants moved to different locations. CACI managed to locate the facilitator and about ten former participants who have now started meeting again and saving money together. The community has helped them face the challenges of starting a new life in another fishing village.

Agriculture

The last module of Level 3 in Togo is focused on sustainable agriculture and animal husbandry. Participants read texts together and receive hands-on training and demonstrations from experts.

Among other things, they learn poultry farming, use of organic fertilizer and soil improvement techniques. Improved agriculture provides both better access to food in families and better economy by selling the surplus. A member of a group in the village of Adokame tells how the increased the profit from his harvest thanks to the use of chicken manure, since he saved a lot of money that he previously had to spend on the purchase of large quantities of artificial fertilizers.



2

The literacy and numeracy skills that participants acquire in the study groups help them to better plan cultivation and manage the sale of agricultural produce. Many of the lesson texts encourage discussion on these topics, and the accompanying math exercises teach participants how to calculate expenses and income. A study group in Kaziba, Congo, wrote the following text on the importance of staying informed about price levels:

"We will make sure to keep a close eye on the prices of our agricultural products. We must buy at affordable prices to sell without problems and respect the rules. Let each of us know how to identify the markets where there is a strong demand for our products. We will know well how to calculate the loss or profit when selling in the market and paying the state tax."

Education

The education of the next generation is crucial for society's development and families' future livelihood. Lack of money is one of the main reasons why many project participants in Togo and DRC have children of school age who do not go to school. We receive many stories of participants who can now afford to send their children to school thanks to new income-generating activities. A woman in the village of Mogo in Congo tells how she got help from her fellow students when she could not afford school fees for all her children herself.

Sometimes it is patriarchal norms that stand in the way of girls' schooling. ALEF learning materials often include lesson texts on the right to education. Many participants report that their views on education have changed since joining a study group and that they also have managed to persuade their spouse, so now they send all their children, girls as well as boys, to school and even help them with their schoolwork.

"I grew up in a village where educating a girl was considered a waste of resources, so I was denied the chance to go to school. I joined the ALEF group with high expectations and I am grateful that I have not been disappointed so far. From learning to hold a pencil, to learning sounds and how to write them, slowly but surely I have learned to write my own name, and have learned to socialize through group meetings. I was inspired to start a small restaurant business where I cook lunch meals for my clients. I am not completely dependent on my husband anymore. But most of all I am grateful that I can sit down and do homework with my daughter, something I never could before, and my daughter is happy that I can help her so she does not have to go to the neighbors for help. I am so grateful for the ALEF group and hope to learn more in the future."

- participant in study group in
Kimwanyi, Uganda

2. Claiming human rights

Women's rights

Education promotes women's economic independence. Women who are literate and numerate are more likely to have both an independent income and a stronger voice within the family. We receive many reports from ACDC in Congo and Acatbli in Togo about participants whose family owns a small business or market stall. In the past, the man handled everything to do with money. But when he sees that his wife's new math skills are getting the books in order and making the business profitable, he allows her to take on an increasing role in decision-making.

For many, it is in the ALEF group that they first learn about laws and international conventions that guarantee women's equal rights. A key objective of the ALEF approach is to equip women to stand up to oppressive norms, and drive change in their families and communities. This is not only a matter of learning about legal rights, but also about women gaining new confidence as they discuss and analyze gender equality issues, share their experiences, and find concrete solutions.



Participants give each other strength, helping and encouraging fellow students to stand up for their rights.

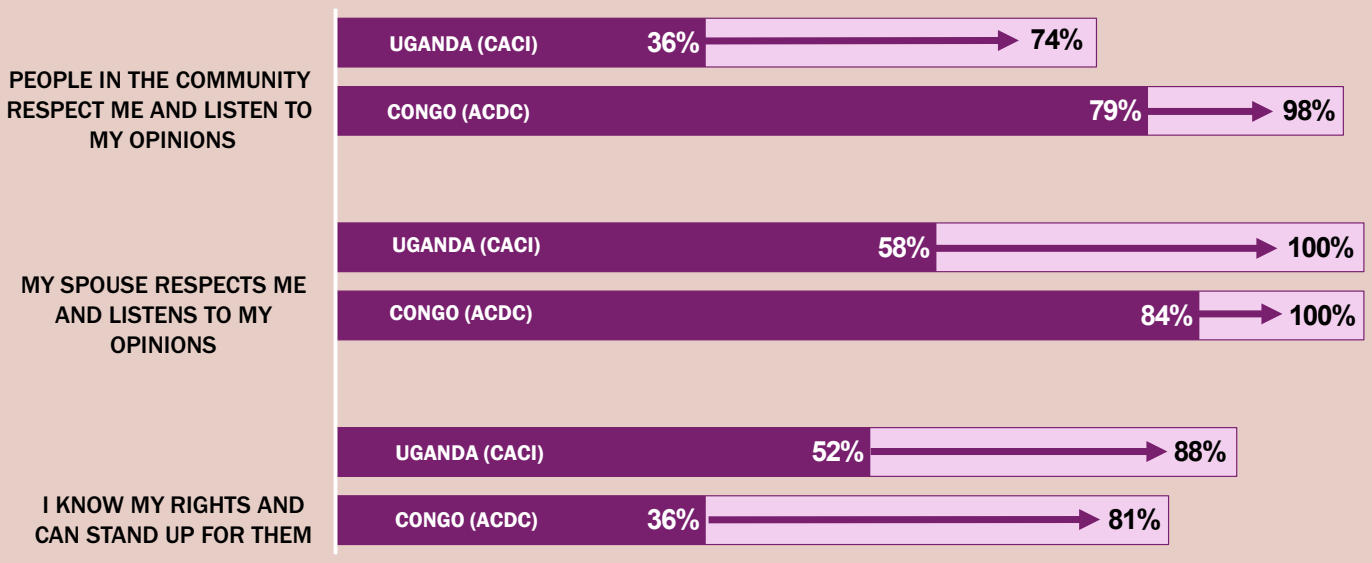
A woman in Matugga, Uganda, told how, after her husband's death, her in-laws wanted to throw her out of the family home and take back "their son's house". She brought a group of friends from the ALEF group, along with the facilitator, who took the woman's side in front of the elders and explained that the law entitled her and the children to their share of the inheritance.

A participant in Congo told us that her daughter had become pregnant and the



% PARTICIPANTS WHO AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

■ Before ALEF course □ After level 3



boyfriend had refused to acknowledge paternity. With the support of the group, she went to the authorities and eventually the father was forced to pay for the birth and child support.

Challenging patriarchal norms is also about giving men new perspectives. For men who participate in the ALEF groups, this is often the first time they have sat and listened while women lead the conversation on social issues and talk about the injustices they have endured. Many female participants report that their marriages have changed since they started talking to their husbands about topics discussed in the group. In Uganda, 100% of surveyed participants at the end of Level 3 agree with the statement that “my spouse respects me and listens to my opinions”, compared to only 58% of Level 1 starters.

Corruption and abuse of power

Many of the communities where our partner organizations operate are plagued by serious corruption. Schools and health services sometimes charge for services that are legally free. Officials invent non-existent taxes and fees, employers cheat employees on wages. There are police officers who abuse their power to extort money from law-abiding citizens, but let

real criminals go if they can afford to pay. People who cannot read and write are particularly vulnerable, both because they can be more easily deceived and because they rarely dare to speak up.

Corruption is therefore a recurring theme in the lesson texts. We receive many reports from our partner organizations about participants who have been inspired by group discussions and started to stand up for their rights.

A woman in Kimwani, Uganda, told us that before she joined the study group, she used to always agree to pay to see the doctor when she was in hospital. She didn't know, until the group read a Level 1 text about corruption in the healthcare system, that what she was paying was an illegal bribe to get what she was entitled to for free.

We also hear about groups that have acted together to challenge rights violations in the area, e.g. the study group in a village where the local landowner, a priest, tried to force the population into more and more unpaid labour. Together, the group wrote an open letter outlining their grievances, and sent it to the authorities and local civil society. They succeeded in putting an end to the landowner's abuse of power.

3. Strengthening civil society and democratic development

Confidence and participation

At the heart of each ALEF lesson is a structured discussion where participants themselves analyze a pressing topic based on their own experience and knowledge. Regularly discussing important and even sensitive topics in the group helps participants learn public speaking and to see themselves as citizens whose voice counts.

Our partners report that, thanks to ALEF study groups, many participants who once were reluctant to speak in public now have the courage to express their opinions and participate actively in civil society and local decision-making. Those who join our study groups are often among those with lowest status in their communities – poor women with little or no education – but already after the first year, many have taken on roles of responsibility in savings groups, cooperatives or the church. A facilitator in the EADG pilot project in Guinea tells the story of a woman who never went to school but after only a few months in the ALEF group can write fluently and has been elected secretary of a civil society organization.

The idea of the ALEF approach is that the discussions that start in the group should



not stop there, but should influence public discourse. Some of the texts that the participants write together are printed and posted on notice boards in visible places where they can attract the attention of passers-by. It is not uncommon for ideas from the empowerment group to later be raised in village meetings where all residents can participate.

Cooperation that drives change

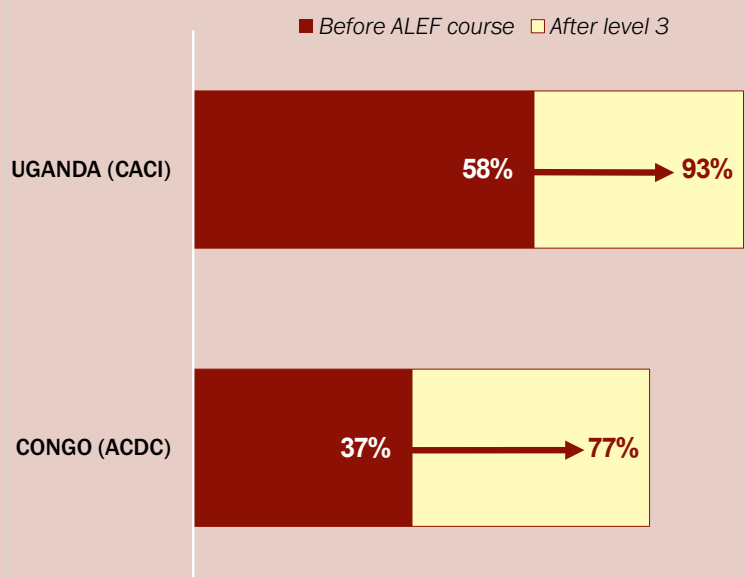
We receive many reports of participants acting together to drive change and development in their communities. In Luhungu, the study group wrote a letter to the authorities to demand stricter regulations on the sale and abuse of alcohol. Five women from the study group in Luhumbu, South Kivu, went to a local authority to complain that they had to walk several kilometers every day to fetch water. Eventually, they managed to get a meeting with the traditional leader, the 'mwami'. A new well has been installed and everyone

2

“All the problems here are due to the laws not being respected. The poor do not get justice because our leaders demand money to file a complaint. We will tell local authorities to respect rules and standards. Let the leaders know that they too can be punished according to the law.”

- from a text written by the study group in Karhendezzi, DRC

% WHO BELONG TO AN ORGANISATION



in the village has access to clean water, thanks to the community involvement of the ALEF group.

Civil society organizations

An ALEF study group is also a course in democratic collaboration. The participants debate, make decisions, and formulate texts together. At level 3, they learn about the practical work of forming and running their own organization. The work to help the participants organize themselves and participate in civil society is directly linked to our operational goals. This is also crucial for the project's sustainability — meetings and conversations should not stop as soon as the course is over.

Most of the study groups in the Congo continue as independent Musos ("mutuelles de solidarité" — savings cooperatives) after the end of the course. They are not just economic organizations but often get involved in local social issues. In Uganda, many groups who have completed level 3 meet to continue

practicing their reading and to carry out activities together. Some form cooperatives or register as civil society organizations. Others are more informal, like the market women from the study group in Kalerwe who formed a reading circle that meets weekly to read books and newspapers in Luganda.

Democracy

2023 was an election year in Congo. Corruption and electoral fraud of various kinds are common. Illiterate people are particularly vulnerable to manipulation by those offering to "help" them vote correctly. In the study groups, the participants discuss democracy, secret ballot, and how to hold politicians accountable. Many Muso groups have been visited by local politicians and given the chance to express their views and ask questions of the candidates. Several participants report that they were able to vote in an election for the first time ever.

4. Health and environment

Hygiene and health

We hear from all our partners that, thanks to the group discussions, more participants vaccinate their children, sleep under mosquito nets to prevent malaria, wash their hands after using the toilet, and boil their drinking water. 80% of participants at the end of level 3 report that all children in the household sleep under mosquito nets compared to 55% at the beginning of the ALEF course. Participants in Kawoko in Uganda came together to buy and distribute mosquito nets to everyone in the group.

ACDC in Congo reports that many participants changed their eating habits after discussions about the importance of serving food hot and freshly cooked to avoid bacterial infections. They also mention that many participants who were previously influenced by superstitions and conspiracy theories about medicines and vaccines have now realized the



importance of vaccinating their children and attending check-ups during pregnancy. Thanks to literacy and numeracy skills, participants are better able to keep track of correct dosage and expiry dates for drugs.

Breaking taboos

The safety and camaraderie of the study group makes it possible to address taboo issues such as STIs. In Uganda, short plays and skits are also sometimes used to make sensitive subjects more accessible. Acatbli in Togo reports that participants have started talking about menstruation with their daughters. Traditionally, it has been a taboo subject linked to shame and "uncleanness".

ACDC in Congo tell us that discussions about the negative consequences of alcohol abuse led to many groups acting against this problem in their local communities and that participants began to confront their spouses who drink and helped them escape the addiction that had long affected the whole family.

Water and environment

Acatbli in Togo reports that after the sustainable agriculture course, participants have started to reduce their use of environmentally harmful pesticides and fertilizers. They use chicken manure from the hen houses and compost from household waste. The groups in Togo have learned to build chicken coops and vaccinate their hens, which improves their health and contributes to higher family incomes.

Participants often take inspiration from study group discussions and start taking action to improve infrastructure and protect the local environment. The Muso group in Madaka in DRC has been working to repair a well. The group in Mbogwe has built a new road to improve accessibility to the village. After lessons on waterborne infections, the Level 1 group in Kibiri, Uganda, realized that the latrine recently built just a few meters from the well was a health hazard that needed to be moved.



2.3 Communication and fundraising

2

22% of 2023's income, SEK 772 000, consisted of gifts from private individuals. The same figure in 2022 was SEK 718 000, or 23% of total revenues.

It is gratifying that gifts from private individuals continue to increase. Here is a breakdown by type of donation (figures for 2022 in brackets):

FUNDRAISING 2023 (thousand SEK)	
Direct debit*	387 (388)
Swish, bankgiro and plusgiro	311 (253)
Gift cards	44 (19)
Crowdfunding, e.g. facebook	22 (29)
Sales, events	6 (26)
Membership fees	2 (1)
TOTAL	772 (718)

* Direct debit for December 2023 received in January 2024 due to holidays at the end of December.

For a breakdown of all types of income during the year, see Chapter 3, Financial Results and Position.

90 account

ALEF has a "90-account", which means that both operations and accounts are audited annually by Swedish Fundraising Control. The requirement to keep the 90 account is that at least 75% of revenue goes to programme expenses, and a maximum of 25% to administration and fundraising. For 2023, 12% of revenue was used for admin and fundraising costs (12% 2022), and 95% went to programme costs (86% 2022). The fact that the percentages do not always add up to 100% is because we start and end each year with a balance.



During the past year, a variety of channels were used to raise awareness of ALEF among the public and to collect donations:

Social media

Our most important platform for reaching out to the general public is ALEF's Facebook page, facebook.com/adultlearning. We are also on Instagram as alef_sweden. By paying for promoted posts, we can reach thousands of people. In May, we carried out a successful fundraising campaign on Facebook for donations to our partner project in Uganda.

Newsletters and printed letters

Each month, an email newsletter is sent out to approximately 1,200 people. In addition to this, a printed Christmas letter was sent to approx. 800 people in our donor register in December.

Literacy Day 8 September

Every year on September 8, the UN celebrates International Literacy Day. On Literacy Day 2023, ALEF held a well-attended webinar with the theme "Literacy – a question of survival!" We also held a lecture in connection with literacy day for staff at the Liber publishing house.

Järva week 2-3 June

During Järvaveckan at Spånga IP, ALEF received a free exhibition tent, which was manned by the board members. There were many interesting meetings with people who were hearing about ALEF for the first time.

Hässelby Castle Christmas market

Thanks to our membership in the Vällingby-Hässelby-Vinsta business association, we had a free stand at Hässelby Castle's Christmas market, where our volunteers sold handicrafts and other goods for SEK 5,000 and provided information about ALEF.

2.4 Professional networks

BALID

ALEF has been a member of BALID, the British Association for Literacy in Development, for several years. BALID organizes an ongoing series of seminars called "Informal Literacy Discussions". In November 2023, ALEF together with Imprint of Hope held a seminar on the theme of measuring impact in adult education.

Nordic Development Conference – NorDev

In August, ALEF participated in the Nordic Development Conference (NorDev) in Uppsala, which brings together leading development researchers, policy makers and civil society organizations to exchange ideas and discuss challenges in international development cooperation. ALEF held a workshop on the global goals and non-formal adult education, where we discussed different ways to measure



and evaluate interventions such as ALEF study groups. As a growing organization, it is important for us to connect with the research community, spread knowledge and generate interest in the ALEF method.

2.5 Significant events after the end of the financial year

Changes in Sida grants

On February 29th 2024, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, was commissioned by the government to investigate the consequences if Sida were to become a direct intermediary of aid to civil society organizations. Given the situation, Sida chose to terminate all agreements with the so-called Strategic Partner Organizations that receive and pass on Sida contributions by the end of the year 2024/2025. These include ForumCiv, which transmits Sida contributions to ALEF. ForumCiv then informed its partner organizations that

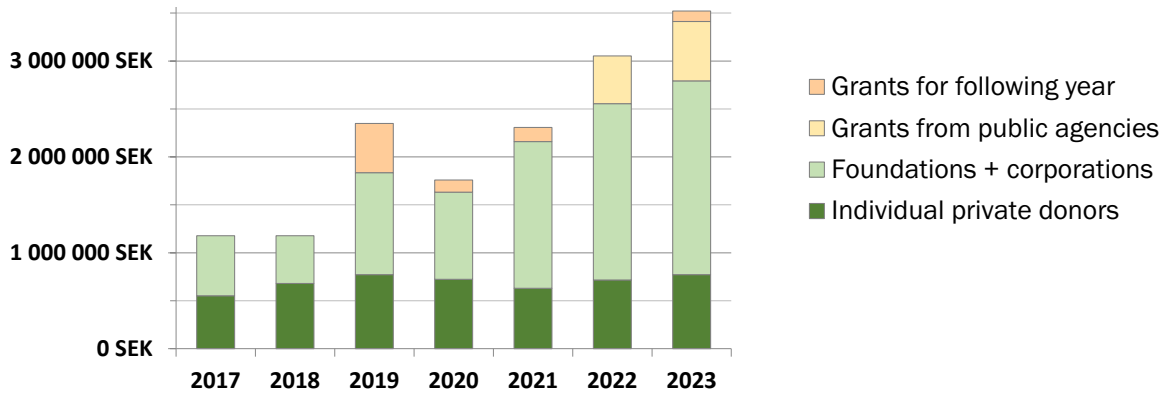
they cannot apply for ForumCiv funding for 2025.

At present, it is unclear what the future will look like and what decisions will be taken by the government and Sida.

For ALEF, this means that in 2024 we will receive the grant that has been approved, SEK 620,000 for the project in collaboration with ACDC in DRC. However, we will not be able to apply for funds from ForumCiv for 2025. This means that from 2025 we need to finance all our activities without Sida grants. ■

3 | Financial results and position

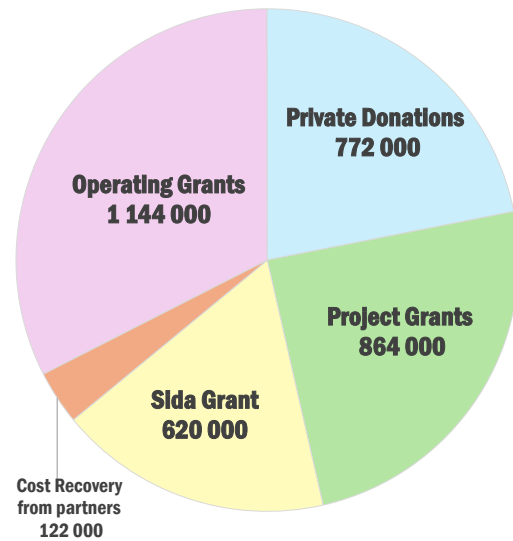
Revenue 2017-2023



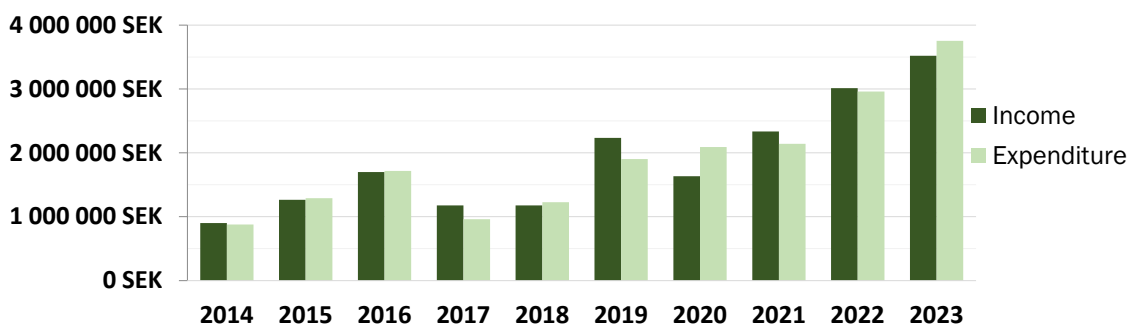
The diagram above shows ALEF's revenue during the years 2017-2023. The form of income that has increased the most is grants from foundations and corporations, of which the Irstadska foundation's generous grant of SEK 1 million makes up a large part. No grants were received from corporations in 2023. Grants can be divided into three categories:

- **Operating grants**, where the donor allows ALEF to dispose of funds based on need according to the budget.
- **Project grants**, where the donor specifies the project for which the funds will be used.
- **Cost recovery from partners** that are the main funder in a collaboration.

Breakdown of revenue in 2023



Evolution of income and expenditure for the last 10 years



Last 5 years in figures (in thousands SEK)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Operating income	2 235	1 633	2 335	3 054	3 521
Operating expenses	1 902	2 090	2 141	3 000	3 754

Costs for self-financed projects (thousands SEK, 2022 in brackets)

Project	Cost	
Togo *	227 (423)	* The amount for 2022 includes a transfer of SEK 301,000 for the academic year 2023. ** SEK 380,000 self-raised by ALEF, SEK 570,000 Side-financed via ForumCiv.
DRC, South Kivu **	950 (730)	
Uganda	810 (640)	

Gifts from foundations and organizations 2023 (thousands SEK)

Foundation	Amount	Purpose
Barn i Hjärtat, Scania	40	Uganda
Bokhjälpen	30	Uganda, learning materials, mini libraries
Bromma Baptist Church	7	Operating grants
Börjesson's foundation	100	Uganda
The Dahlström Foundation	50	Uganda
DEAR Foundation	54	Togo
Equmenia church in Mariestad	137	Operating grants
E & H Gabrielsson's foundation	70	Uganda
Heléne Hjärpes stiftelse HEAL	40	DRC South Kivu
Huskvarna Pentecostal congregation	122	Production of learning materials, Guinea
Irstadska stiftelsen	1 000	Operating contribution
Markus Edlunds Stiftelse Toscana	140	Uganda
MOC Hjälpverksamhet	25	Uganda
Olga Åhlund's foundation	20	Uganda
Sara & Herbert Larsson's foundation	20	Uganda
Stiftelsen Sackaios	30	Uganda
Sevholts hjälpfond	60	Uganda
Sigurd & Elsa Goljes minne (Lindhés)	15	Uganda, closing ceremony
Volvo employees' Development Assistance	60	Uganda
TOTAL 2023	2 020	
In 2023, the following three contributions were received for 2024		
Heléne Hjärpes stiftelse HEAL	40	DRC South Kivu
Olga Åhlund's foundation	20	Uganda
Swedish Salvation Army	50	Togo
TOTAL	110	

4 | Future development



ALEF's raison d'être lies in our unique and successful approach to empowering young people and adults who have not received a primary education. UNESCO estimated that this was about 773 million people in 2023. 87% of the world's population is now literate. That's fantastic! But it increases the marginalization of the 13% who cannot read. That's why ALEF exists, to give more people a chance.

In 2023, the ALEF Board and staff have continued the process of defining a clear and sustainable strategy for the

organization's future development. On August 29, the board and staff held a one-day conference on the Åland Sea. There were intense discussions about our identity, vision and future direction.

A major change in the fall of 2024 is that our founder Hélène Boëthius is handing over responsibility to a new General Secretary. With this, we are taking another step from a small, passion-driven organization to an established and well-functioning player in the world.

ALEF's strategy 2024-2030

Self-funded partnerships

ALEF has already taken a number of decisions about the organization's direction and strategy for project partnerships where ALEF is the main funder:

- We only work in the mother tongue, in languages that already have a written form.
- We focus on communities with at least 1 million speakers.

- We work primarily in communities with at least 35% illiteracy among youth and adults.
- We will continue the collaboration for at least seven years.

To this we have now added the following policy decisions:

- We intend to enable our three current partners (Uganda, Togo/Benin and

South Kivu, DRC) to scale up their projects to at least 5,000 participants each per year.

- We will support these partners in diversifying the funding of the programs, so that ALEF funds a smaller and smaller share of their budget.
- We will start new partnerships in new languages only with partners who have the capacity to increase the number of participants to 10,000 per year.
- We will start 1–2 new such partnerships in the period 2025–2030.

Partnerships with another main funder

ALEF currently has three partnerships where we have assisted the implementing organization in developing learning materials and training staff, but where we do not fund the project activities:

- BCPAD in DRC in the province of Kongo Central (Kikongo language)
- EADG in Guinea-Conakry (maninka)
- Joint Help in Iraq (kurmanji)

ALEF will continue to strengthen the capacity of these actors to use the methodology and continue to develop and revise the learning materials. Where we can identify other actors who want to use our existing learning materials in these

languages, we want to help train them in using the material.

We also hope to start more similar partnerships in other language communities, at least 2–4 by 2030. ALEF will support the development of materials and training of the local organization, but does not finance the actual implementation.

Cooperation with government agencies

Working with the Oromia Education Bureau, we have seen the huge potential to reach many participants in such collaborations, but also how important it is to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the method and how it is applied. In a partnership with a major player, it is not enough to create learning materials and train a few people during a series of seminars. ALEF needs to provide training for more people, and create materials that can be used to train thousands of facilitators.

We see this as the biggest opportunity for ALEF to scale up the use of the method. In 2023, we started contacts with the Somali region in Ethiopia. In 2024, we hope to be able to conduct a feasibility study there to see if and how a collaboration would be possible to implement.

4

“ALEF needs to provide training for more people, and create materials that can be used to train thousands of facilitators. We see this as the biggest opportunity to scale up the use of the method.”



Developing ALEF's organizational capacity

A prerequisite for ALEF to be able to handle more and larger collaborations is that we strengthen the organization. The following points have been identified:

1. Manuals and digital tools

A basic manual for the method must be written and published, together with digital tools. This work began in November 2023 and will continue in 2024. Manuals for the production of learning materials in the field will also be developed.

2. More process leaders

In the period 2024–2030, we want to train 3-5 process leaders with the capacity to independently create ALEF materials and train local organizations in the method. Three people outside ALEF's staff already have parts of this competence.

3. Policies and guidelines

Clear basic documents, policy documents and core values documents must be prepared. In the spring of 2024, the statutes will be revised.

4. Certification processes

Certification processes for partners, coaches, process managers, etc. will be created and implemented.

5. Research, evaluation and publication of articles

Thanks to a grant from the Tornspiran Foundation, in 2024 we will be able to commission a team from the research and evaluation firm MLE international led by Carol Benson of Columbia University in the United States to conduct two investigations: a smaller study of participants' life changes based on the story database and a larger field study evaluating the effectiveness of the method. Robin Hermansson, who studies global health at the University of Gothenburg, will write his master's thesis on ALEF's partner project in Uganda based on the 2023 participant survey.

Financing

In 2023, ALEF's income was distributed as follows:

- Grants from foundations and organizations 56%
- Gifts from the public 22%
- Sida grants 18%
- Cost coverage from partners 4%

The ambition for the period 2024–2030 is to:

- Increase the share of larger operating grants of SEK 0.5–2 million/year, preferably multiannual.
- Identify a couple of funders who will contribute at least SEK 2 million per year for several years.
- Increase the number of individuals donating to the organization, in particular monthly donors.
- Increase reimbursements for cost coverage in partnerships with other actors.

We want to increase revenue by SEK 2-4 million annually so that turnover in 2030 is SEK 20–25 million.

In March 2024, the Swedish government announced a reorganization of aid to civil society. This led Sida to terminate all agreements with so-called Strategic Partner Organisations, including ForumCiv, which mediates Sida contributions to ALEF. At present, it is unlikely that ALEF will be able to apply for any Sida grant for 2025. Our ambition is therefore to find alternative funding for the project in DRC which is currently funded by Sida.

In the first quarter of 2024, we have already seen an increase in the size of several of the grants we seek from various foundations, and in gifts from the public. At the time of writing, the forecast is that we will be able to implement all the activities budgeted for 2024, at a cost of approximately SEK 4.8 million ■

5 | Income statement

Functional income statement

	Note	2023-01-01 - 2023-12-31	2022-01-01 - 2022-12-31
Operating income	1		
Donations and grants		2 901 528	2 580 246
Grants from government agencies		619 704	498 500
Total operating income		3 521 232	3 078 746
Operating expenses			
Purpose-related costs		2 178 632	1 902 038
Staff costs (purpose-related)	2	1 168 017	725 429
Administration costs		149 561	118 955
Fundraising costs		105 892	94 408
Staff costs (administration and fundraising)	2	151 755	158 830
Total operating costs		3 753 857	2 999 660
Operating profit/loss		- 232 925	79 086
Financial items			
Interest income		2 565	22
Interest costs		0	0
Profit after financial items		- 230 360	79 108
NET INCOME		- 230 360	79 108

6 | Balance sheet

Assets

	Note	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Current assets	3		
Receivables			
Other receivables		166	40 317
Prepayments and accrued income		24 900	13 494
Total current receivables		25 066	53 811
Cash and bank balances		313 682	402 612
Total current assets		338 748	456 423
TOTAL ASSETS		338 748	456 423

Equity and liabilities

	Note	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Own funds	4		
Earmarked funds			
Retained earnings		117 442	347 802
Total own funds		117 442	347 802
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable		0	0
Other debts		45 625	40 286
Accrued expenses and prepaid income	5	175 681	68 335
Total short-term liabilities		221 306	108 621
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		338 748	456 423

Notes

Note 1. Accounting and valuation principles

The Association's accounting and valuation principles comply with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, BFNAR 2012:10 Annual Accounts and Consolidated Accounts (K3). Assets, liabilities and provisions are valued at cost unless otherwise stated below.

Income Statement

Operating Income

Only the inflow of economic benefits that ALEF has received or will receive on its own account is recognised as revenue. Revenue is measured at the fair value of what has been or will be received, unless specifically stated below.

Operating revenue is categorised into the following functions: *Donations and grants* and *Grants from government agencies*.

A transaction in which ALEF receives an asset or service that has value without returning the equivalent value in exchange is a donation or grant received.

Donations och grants

As a rule, gifts are recognised as revenue when they are received. If the asset or service is received because ALEF has fulfilled or will fulfil certain conditions and ALEF has an obligation to repay the counterparty if the conditions are not fulfilled, it is a grant received. Such funds received with an obligation to repay include earmarked grants from foundations. 8 % of all earmarked donations and grants above SEK 1 000 from foundations, companies and associations have been recorded under cost centre 11, 'Purpose, non-country specific', except where the donor has specified that the entire donation/grant is to be used for the project in question. This expenditure category is mainly used for project management costs, as well as for project audits and travel insurance.

Grants from government agencies

Funds received with a repayment obligation from public authorities because ALEF has fulfilled or will fulfil certain conditions and where ALEF has an obligation to repay the counterpart if the conditions are not fulfilled include e.g. Sida or Radiohjälpen. In 2023, ALEF received a grant from Sida of SEK 619 704, mediated by ForumCiv. Of this grant, 8% was an administrative grant, which was recognised under cost centre 11.

Operating Expenses

Operating expenses are broken down into the following functions: purpose-related costs, fundraising costs and administrative costs, as well as salary costs for programmes and salary costs for administration and fundraising.

Purpose-related costs

Purpose-related costs consist of costs that can be attributed to the organisation's mission as defined in its Statutes:

- Funding of projects, educational materials and training programmes;
- Expert support to partners in the field;
- Advocacy aimed at authorities, organisations, international institutions and NGOs.

Purpose-related costs can be broken down into the following sub-categories::

Notes

	2023	2022
Project costs	2 137 296	1 849 370
Other purpose-related costs	41 336	21 418
Costs for applications for institutional funding	0	31 250
	2 178 632	1 902 038

Project costs refer to transfers to co-operation partners for joint projects and costs for follow-up field visits. Each project's costs are recorded under a separate cost centre. Other purpose-related costs (cost centre 11) relate to expenses such as project audits and travel insurance.

Costs for applications for institutional funding refer to costs for consultancy fees or salaries related to application processes for grants from public authorities.

Staff costs (purpose-related)

consists of salary costs for purpose-related work performed by ALEF staff such as project monitoring, materials development, advocacy.

Administrative costs

consist of costs such as rent, office supplies, equipment, internet, telephone, bank charges, audit, 90 account fee.

Fundraising costs

consist of costs incurred by the organisation to collect donations, such as printing information material, advertising in newspapers and on Facebook, printing and distribution of greeting cards/Christmas cards (gift certificates), sending thank you letters to donors.

Staff costs (administration and fundraising)

consists of salary costs for administrative and fundraising work carried out by ALEF staff.

Remuneration of Employees

Current employee benefits in the form of salaries and social security contributions are expensed as the employees render services, and under the respective cost category and cost centre (purpose, fundraising, administration).

NOTES TO THE INCOME STATEMENT

Note 2. Average number of employees, staff costs

The average number of staff in 2023 was 2.5 (2.25 in 2022), of whom 1 was male (1 in 2022).

The proportion of women on the board was 66% (66% in 2022))

Salaries, other remuneration and social security costs

	2023	2022
Board and Executive Chairperson	187 281	290 088
Other employees	817 183	409 15r
Total salaries and remuneration	1 004 464	699 245
Social security costs	292 569	157 264
(of which pension costs exc. payroll tax)	15 120	0
Total	1 297 033	856 509

Voluntary work

During the year, 1 person worked voluntarily on the compilation of a database. The value of these voluntary contributions has not been included in the income statement.

NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET

Note 3. Current Assets

Current assets comprise bank balances, prepaid expenses and accrued income and other current receivables.

Note 4. Own funds

Statement of changes in own funds

	Retained earnings	Profit for the year	Total own funds
Opening balance	347 802	-	347 802
Utilised			
Profit for the year	-	- 230 360	- 230 360
Closing balance	347 802	230 360	117 442

Note 5. Accrued expenses and deferred income

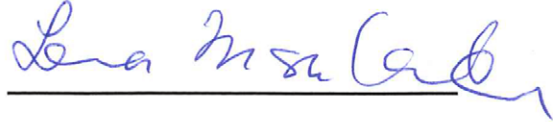
	2023	2022
Fees for accounting services	3 000	3 000
Audit fees	20 000	0
Accrued project costs	110 000	0
Audit fees Togo/Benin	0	13 000
Audit fees Uganda	0	1 500
Membership fees paid in advance	0	300
Accrued holiday pay liability	33 925	40 304
Accrued payroll tax on holiday pay liability	8 756	10 231
Total	175 681	68 335

SIGNATURES

Stockholm, 24th april 2024



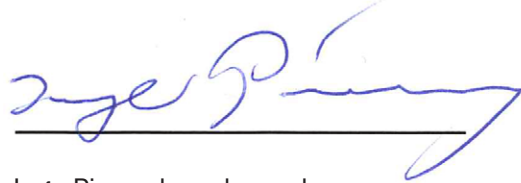
Hélène Boëthius, chairperson



Lena Insulander, vice chairperson



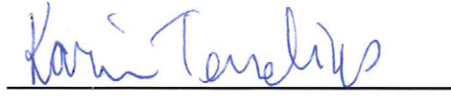
Lars-Åke Davidsson, board member



Inge Pierre, board member

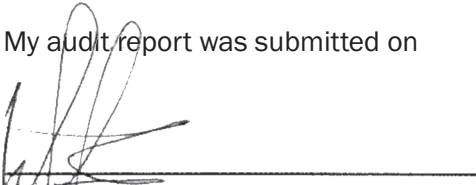


Elisabeth Sandlund, board member



Karin Tenelius, board member

My audit report was submitted on



Leif Göransson

Certified Auditor

Högländets Revisionsbyrå AB

8 maj 2024

AUDIT REPORT

1 (3)



Revisionsberättelse

Till årsmötet i ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators
Org.nr 802452-4681

Rapport om årsredovisningen

Uttalande

Jag har utfört en revision av årsredovisningen för ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators för räkenskapsåret 2023.

Enligt min uppfattning har årsredovisningen upprättats i enlighet med årsredovisningslagen och ger en i alla väsentliga avseenden rättvisande bild av ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators:s finansiella ställning per den 2023-12-31 och av dess finansiella resultat för året enligt årsredovisningslagen. Förvaltningsberättelsen är förenlig med årsredovisningens övriga delar.

Grund för uttalande

Jag har utfört revisionen enligt International Standards on Auditing (ISA) och god revisionssed i Sverige. Mitt ansvar enligt dessa standarder beskrivs närmare i avsnittet *Revisorns ansvar*. Jag är oberoende i förhållande till föreningen enligt god revisorssed i Sverige och har i övrigt fullgjort mitt yrkesetiska ansvar enligt dessa krav.

Jag anser att de revisionsbevis jag har inhämtat är tillräckliga och ändamålsenliga som grund för mitt uttalande.

Styrelsen och exekutiv ordförandens ansvar

Det är styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande som har ansvaret för att årsredovisningen upprättas och att den ger en rättvisande bild enligt årsredovisningslagen. Styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande ansvarar även för den interna kontroll som den bedömer är nödvändig för att upprätta en årsredovisning som inte innehåller några väsentliga felaktigheter, vare sig dessa beror på oegentligheter eller misstag.

Vid upprättandet av årsredovisningen ansvarar styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande för bedömningen av föreningens förmåga att fortsätta verksamheten. De upplyser, när så är tillämpligt, om förhållanden som kan påverka förmågan att fortsätta verksamheten och att använda antagandet om fortsatt drift. Antagandet om fortsatt drift tillämpas dock inte om styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande avser att upplösa ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators, upphöra med verksamheten eller inte har något realistiskt alternativ till att göra något av detta.

Revisorns ansvar

Mina mål är att uppnå en rimlig grad av säkerhet om huruvida årsredovisningen som helhet inte innehåller några väsentliga felaktigheter, vare sig dessa beror på oegentligheter eller misstag, och att lämna en revisionsberättelse som innehåller mina uttalanden. Rimlig säkerhet är en hög grad av säkerhet, men är ingen garanti för att en revision som utförs enligt ISA och god revisionssed i Sverige alltid kommer att upptäcka en väsentlig felaktighet om en sådan finns. Felaktigheter kan uppstå på grund av oegentligheter eller misstag och anses vara väsentliga om de enskilt eller tillsammans rimligen kan förväntas påverka de ekonomiska beslut som användare fattar med grund i årsredovisningen.

Som del av en revision enligt ISA använder jag professionellt omdöme och har en professionellt skeptisk inställning under hela revisionen. Dessutom:



- identifierar och bedömer jag riskerna för väsentliga felaktigheter i årsredovisningen, vare sig dessa beror på oegentligheter eller misstag, utformar och utför granskningsåtgärder bland annat utifrån dessa risker och inhämtar revisionsbevis som är tillräckliga och ändamålsenliga för att utgöra en grund för mina uttalanden. Risken för att inte upptäcka en väsentlig felaktighet till följd av oegentligheter är högre än för en väsentlig felaktighet som beror på misstag, eftersom oegentligheter kan innefatta agerande i maskopi, förfalskning, avsiktliga utelämnanden, felaktig information eller åsidosättande av intern kontroll.

- skaffar jag mig en förståelse av den del av ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators:s interna kontroll som har betydelse för min revision för att utforma granskningsåtgärder som är lämpliga med hänsyn till omständigheterna, men inte för att uttala mig om effektiviteten i den interna kontrollen.

- utvärderar jag lämpligheten i de redovisningsprinciper som används och rimligheten i styrelsens och exekutiv ordförandens uppskattningar i redovisningen och tillhörande upplysningar.

- drar jag en slutsats om lämpligheten i att styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande använder antagandet om fortsatt drift vid upprättandet av årsredovisningen. Jag drar också en slutsats, med grund i de inhämtade revisionsbevisen, om huruvida det finns någon väsentlig osäkerhetsfaktor som avser sådana händelser eller förhållanden som kan leda till betydande tvivel om föreningens förmåga att fortsätta verksamheten. Om jag drar slutsatsen att det finns en väsentlig osäkerhetsfaktor, måste jag i revisionsberättelsen fästa uppmärksamheten på upplysningarna i årsredovisningen om den väsentliga osäkerhetsfaktorn eller, om sådana upplysningar är otillräckliga, modifiera uttalandet om årsredovisningen. Mina slutsatser baseras på de revisionsbevis som inhämtas fram till datumet för revisionsberättelsen. Dock kan framtida händelser eller förhållanden göra att en förening inte längre kan fortsätta verksamheten.

- utvärderar jag den övergripande presentationen, strukturen och innehållet i årsredovisningen, däribland upplysningarna, och om årsredovisningen återger de underliggande transaktionerna och händelserna på ett sätt som ger en rättvisande bild.

Jag måste informera styrelsen och exekutiv ordförande om bland annat revisionens planerade omfattning och inriktning samt tidpunkten för den. Jag måste också informera om betydelsefulla iakttagelser under revisionen, däribland de eventuella betydande brister i den interna kontrollen som jag identifierat.

Rapport om andra krav enligt lagar och andra författningar

Uttalande

Utöver min revision av årsredovisningen har jag även utfört en revision av styrelsens förvaltning för ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators för räkenskapsåret 2023.

Jag tillstyrker att årsmötet beviljar styrelsens ledamöter ansvarsfrihet för räkenskapsåret.

Grund för uttalande

Jag har utfört revisionen enligt god revisionsred i Sverige. Mitt ansvar enligt denna beskrivs närmare i avsnittet *Revisorns ansvar*. Jag är oberoende i förhållande till ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators enligt god revisorsred i Sverige och har i övrigt fullgjort mitt yrkesetiska ansvar enligt dessa krav.

Jag anser att de revisionsbevis jag har inhämtat är tillräckliga och ändamålsenliga som grund för mitt uttalande.

Styrelsens ansvar

Det är styrelsen som har ansvaret för förvaltningen.

**Revisorns ansvar**

Mitt mål beträffande revisionen av förvaltningen, och därmed mitt uttalande om ansvarsfrihet, är att inhämta revisionsbevis för att med en rimlig grad av säkerhet kunna bedöma om någon styrelseledamot i något väsentligt avseende företagit någon åtgärd eller gjort sig skyldig till någon försummelse som kan föranleda ersättningsskyldighet mot föreningen.

Rimlig säkerhet är en hög grad av säkerhet, men ingen garanti för att en revision som utförs enligt god revisionssed i Sverige alltid kommer att upptäcka åtgärder eller försummelser som kan föranleda ersättningsskyldighet mot ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators.

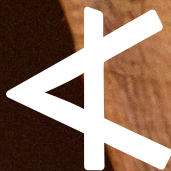
Som en del av en revision enligt god revisionssed i Sverige använder jag professionellt omdöme och har en professionellt skeptisk inställning under hela revisionen. Granskningen av förvaltningen grundar sig främst på revisionen av räkenskaperna. Vilka tillkommande granskningsåtgärder som utförs baseras på min professionella bedömning med utgångspunkt i risk och väsentlighet. Det innebär att jag fokuserar granskningen på sådana åtgärder, områden och förhållanden som är väsentliga för verksamheten och där avsteg och överträdelser skulle ha särskild betydelse för ALEF, Adult Learning and Empowerment Facilitators:s situation. Jag går igenom och prövar fattade beslut, beslutsunderlag, vidtagna åtgärder och andra förhållanden som är relevanta för mitt uttalande om ansvarsfrihet.

Vetlanda den 8 maj 2024

Leif Göransson
Auktoriserad revisor
Höglandets Revisionsbyrå AB

Mama Mina wakuna
ye zole, kansi wayon
ka kuna nsaku yin

nsa



ADULT
LEARNING AND
EMPOWERMENT
FACILITATORS

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