



VITAL SIGNS REPORT

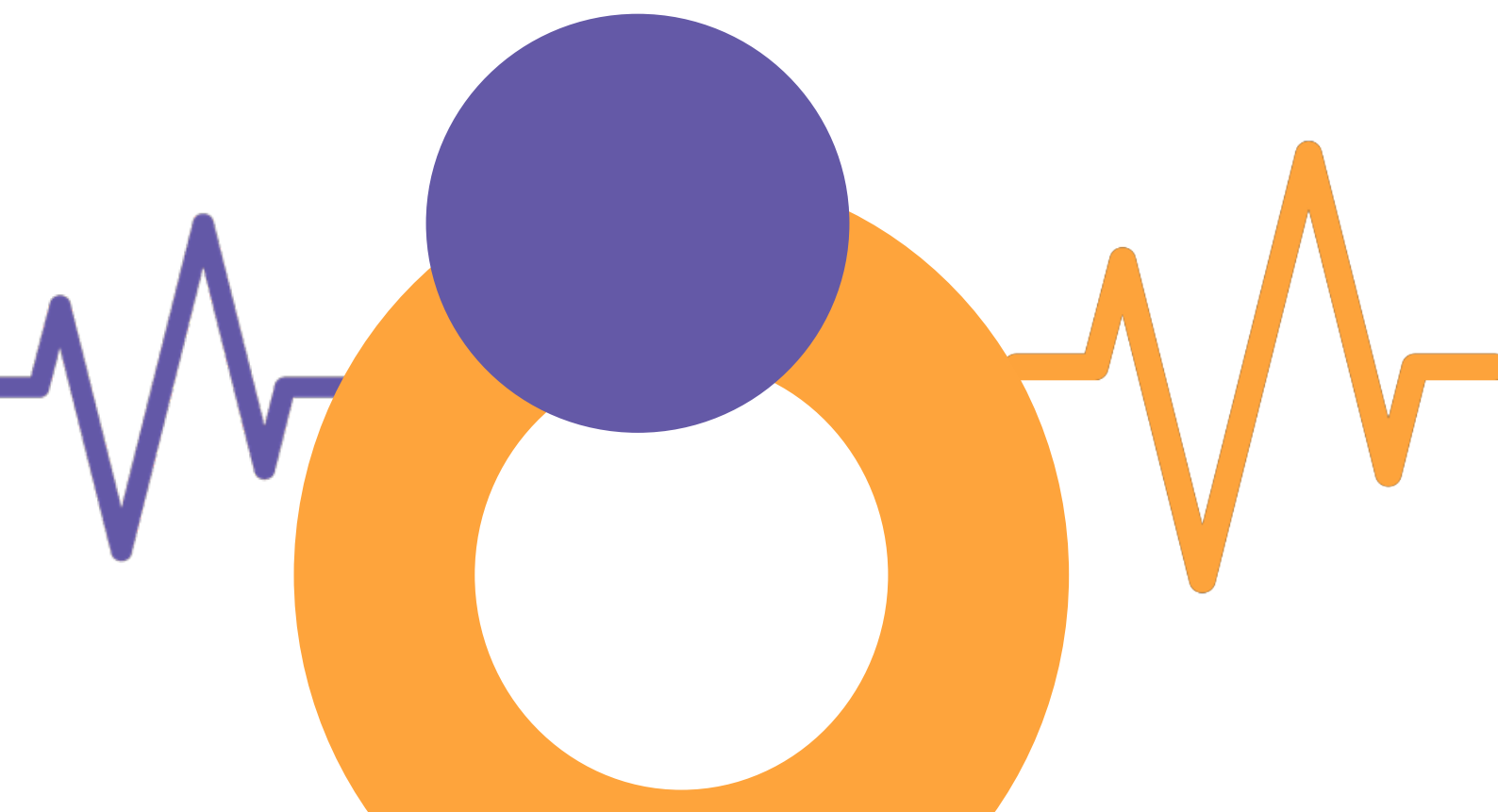
3RD QUARTER:

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Brief Overview

The Vital Sign Report is a CivSource Africa quarterly check-in on the Leaders' Experience Retreat participants to reveal the wellness of leaders and their organizations. Because the retreat methodology treats the body as the lens through which leaders examine themselves and their organization. Every quarter, CivSource Africa checks in with the leaders who attend its Leaders' Experience Retreats. The outcome of these check-ins is the Vital Signs Report that performs a 'full body scan' of the individual, emulating the human's state of health to evaluate the wellness of our leaders, their organizations, and the communities they serve.

But, of course, the person best placed to assess wellness is the individual themselves, and so Vital Signs relies on the leader to dig deep and evaluate their state of wellness, together with that of their spheres of influence. This Vital Sign report documents testimonies of change the Retreats have had on the participants of 2020 and 2021 February retreats across four critical areas:

1. **The Individual:** Assesses the program's effects on the individual's body, mind, and soul.
2. **The Organization:** Assesses the program's effects on the organization since the leader's wellbeing directly affects the wellness of the organization and those they work with.
3. **The Collective:** Assesses the synergy and collaboration created within a retreat cohort. This could be as a whole or within smaller groups.
4. **The Society:** Because leaders do not live or work in isolation, the wellness of the leader affects the wellness of the community they belong to. The report assesses how the change in the leader has benefited the community.

CivSource Africa, through the Vital Sign report, also seeks to monitor and evaluate how the program has changed the leader. In addition, it examines whether each individual is staying true to the commitments they made to themselves and their accountability partners to improve their leadership journey.

The Individual



“ I have learnt over the last few months to let go of things I have no control over, to keep my sanity. As a result, I use my time more productively. For example, I walk more as part of my grounding these days (at least twice a week). In addition, I keep a to-do list that keeps me focused and gives me a sense of satisfaction in the end when I accomplish stuff.

“ I have learned to appreciate my strength and tap into it whenever I feel low; I have learned to rest, be grateful for life and family as I ground in my strength and abilities. I have learnt to take a day at a time because life is precious, and I have to live it to the fullest.

“ Meditation, a practice that I learnt and adopted from the retreat, has become a part of my life and has been extremely helpful.

“ My voice has gotten stronger since the retreat. I can share what I want, my desires, and what I feel. I am not scared to communicate and air out my opinion.

“ I am Well, fine, happier since the retreat. I reworked the space where I spend the most time (my home, which also acts as an office courtesy of the experience retreat.) I am on a journey to create a space that has my personality. I added photo frames that were still wrapped up for the last five years. I am happy to announce that they went up onto the wall this year to signify that I am alive. I have greatly improved using my voice/throat chakra, especially when it comes to my work. I am a better negotiator and know my self-worth. I have learnt to celebrate wins; for example, last year in 2020, I was shortlisted in the Uganda Photo Press Awards, where I emerged with an honourable mention (Nze Eva Shots.)

“ I've become grounded and found my identity in my work (baking) because previously, I was scattered between accounting and baking. I have also begun making cake accessories. I'm settled and happy. I step on the floor while working just to keep grounded, a practice I picked from the Experience Retreat. I am conscious of the steps, actions, and decisions I make now. I take time to enjoy the silence amidst this chaos of life. I literally go through the goals I set during the retreat and the notes I made to accomplish the goals I set for myself. I am now more confident to take bold decisions.

“ I have found ground to take care of myself. My business and career are experiencing growth because I have been able to align goals since the retreat.

“ My mind, body and soul are better. I have cultivated better relationships with healthier boundaries. I read a lot more as well. The retreat enabled me to heal and allow myself to be loved. This is the commitment I made to myself while I was at the retreat.



“ The retreat was a moment of quiet and stillness for me to hear myself, to identify better with my voice and who I am. At that moment, especially when doing the bedtime reflections and walks in the forest, I became more familiar with my soul and the things that feed me. I made many promises and resolutions to be true to myself, to commit to self-leadership and meaningful and empowering leadership.

For example, from the retreat, I have been consistent with my stretching, breathing and smiling. On many days when my body tells me otherwise, my (WHY) pushes me to get up, breathe, stretch, and smile. I have also found a new love for Ugandan film and comedy since the retreat. Laughter energizes me, and now I know so. I have embarked on the commitments in my passport (a document we created to reflect the new us with clear goals). This has been a great direction to my desired vision of the future that I must be present to every day.

“ I have found my voice since the retreat, and because of that, I can share and speak my truth with no limitation or hesitation. I use my voice to speak up for others.

“ I speak my mind and opinion on issues or things that affect me and those around me. I am bold and confident as I found the power that sits within after a self-discovery at the retreat. I speak up in spaces that I used to shy away from. I am composed and able to present myself among audiences. Again, I found myself after the retreat. I am a better leader as I recently conducted a leadership self-assessment which turned out great.

“ I feel more grounded, I stop and connect with the things that make me feel better. I connect with nature more to get grounded, I am open-minded to new things and new ways of things, and I am more creative than how I was before the retreat.

“ Before the retreat, I was not good at discussing work-related issues. I especially feared confrontation, which disempowered my ability to engage on a professional level. As a result, I buried myself in work, and it became my resting place. The retreat helped me improve my skills in handling work-related issues, learn to rest, give myself space, and create healthy boundaries.

“ I now know myself, love, and appreciate myself more. I have eliminated any form of abuse or being taken for granted. This has caused unhealthy boundaries in the past. As a result, I am more organized and energized to do things that enhance my wellness.



“ I have built a healthy relationship with my family. The retreat provided me with an opportunity for a fresh start and a new beginning both personally, emotionally, and professionally. I have set principles that are paying off. I am happy and very energized because I reclaimed myself.

“ I take care of myself more since the retreat. I hydrate, take walks, take each day as it comes, read more than before and try to learn as much as I can. I journal more than I used to, and I am on a journey of writing more books. I keep a gratitude jar and worry jar. At the end of the week, I burn my worries (a practice I learnt from the retreat.)

“ I practice grounding by doing the things I love; I exercise more, and I am more deliberate with the things I do.

“ My body was renewed, my mind restored, and my soul resurrected.

“



❖ I speak objectively and give people a platform to air out their views. As a result, I am happier and have more room for patience towards others



The organization

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❖ Overall wellness means that I trust others to grow and learn with no suspicions. It also means I created spaces in which our finances prioritize my team's health and wellbeing. For example, some of our finances went to paying a fitness instructor for my team to exercise. This was very timely given the COVID_19 lockdowns and stress.

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❖ I have check-ins with my work colleagues regularly since the retreat.

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❖ We have developed and adopted healthy work boundaries that have contributed to the growth of the organization.

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❖ I am now more open-minded and mindful of my team members and their well-being versus their work responsibilities.

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❖ The retreat improved my awareness, and I am more attuned to how my interactions can affect others and the quality of work. As a leader, I am now less judgmental and usually go out of my way to be patient with those I lead. Additionally, I now hold myself at a higher standard, pushing myself to be better, learn more to be relevant.

“

❖ I encouraged my team and business partner to practice putting work on hold, especially when things are not going in the direction they should be. Pausing allowed us and the team to reflect and strategize the ethos of the business. As a result, we are now in a better mental space, and the business is better organized.



The Collective



““ The spirit of sisterhood. I find strength in my colleagues, especially those that check in constantly to encourage me and keep me grounded. The love and support from the collective team continue to build strength on me as an individual. My accountability partner is an inspiration and support mechanism to keep me grounded. I am overwhelmed by the love and care from my cohort colleagues.

““ I have been able to collaborate with one of the alumni and accountability partners (Ms Kecho). As a result, we were able to carry out an event in Kamwenge, and she did a great job in pointing out what was healthy for us to adapt as an organization in terms of learning points. I have also had 5 months of mentorship and consultancy with my cohort colleague (Ms Barbara); we have done over 20 organizational policies and strategies. In addition, I have been coached in legal compliance and how to handle national and sub-national challenges. Together we have strengthened the internal and external systems of the organization and talked extensively on how to improve donor relations.

““ The physical and zoom meetings we have had with fellow cohort alumni have created an opportunity to be accountable. In addition, my colleagues' progress against their passports have been a motivation that keeps me moving as I work on the several things I committed myself to do.

““ Grateful for the sisterhood. It opens doors and opportunities. My life has changed for the best since the retreat.

““ Because of the retreat, I have connected with sisters (Kabalaza team) who support me. We reach out to each other for work opportunities, networks and connections and emotional support. New people, new chances, new opportunities!

““ Grateful for teams that learn, cry, and grow together. The cohort alumni have been a support mechanism toward my growth as an individual and the organization. The monthly and quarterly collective talks ignite positive change at either level. As a cohort, we rely on each other strengths and abilities for growth and change.

““ Knowing that there are honest people to do life with and pour into their lives is very calming and empowering.

““ Random check-ins from colleagues make me alive; they make me feel supported and remind me that I am not alone. We have connected on a deeper level, and that keeps us going. There is significant power in friends and networks.



The Society / Community

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❖ The community benefits from better programming and a deeper understanding of self-care. This has been incorporated into all our activities. We have started a training culture that uses candles and mats, an overall relaxed environment with reaffirming quotes. We were scared it would be urban, but it has been loved and embraced by the community. This new practice and way of doing things have caused deeper conversations during our gatherings and meetings.

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❖ I am slowly infusing some of the retreat lessons into my work and my community engagements. The community of leaders I work with are also slowly picking up and adapting to my new ways of living and engaging.

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❖ I am not afraid of trying to help and providing support to others that require my support. As a result, I have supported my community to improve and change for the better. I have since the retreat run campaigns that raise money to support the most vulnerable.



Testimony

Grace: I cannot explain how helpful the tools obtained from the retreat sessions have been to me this past year. Amazingly, tricky situations have presented themselves, and I've had to apply tactics of war. Yet, as my ground shook, I held onto the tools and spoke to one of the alumni who offered invaluable support. As a result, I am affirming myself every day, and my self-image is looking bright.

Delphine: Reading is the secret to being an ever and all evolving and growing person. And once that part of you dies, you lose touch with the world around you. I recently joined a book club, and we read one book per month. So far, I have completed 3 books since the year began; Die empty; Unleash your best work every day by Todd Henry, Just the way you are a girl; understanding your femininity and sexuality by Grace Nyamahunge, 3-2-1 GO!!; Be a better you by Hellen Basemera and now reading Straight Forward Financial Growth by Moses Mukisa.

Joan: It's been a year. I had discovered that religion didn't work for me. But then again, I knew I needed a deeper connection to supernatural, so I sought a spiritual connection. As a result, I have become more spiritual. I am more in a freestyle flow with my rituals and am always searching for the wellness of my soul and my temple. I have achieved 80% of what I set myself to do, discover, learn, relearn and learn. The journey to self-discovery is tough with thorny roses and mad everywhere, but I have managed to keep my eyes on the prize (that is, working to understanding myself.) My task has been to connect who I am—discovering myself to what I do in terms of passion, aspirations, career, self-development, and leadership growth journey.

Winnie: I budget all my expenditures and stick to the budget to avoid being ungrounded. I have learned to set boundaries which have helped me create a balance in my relationship circles. I invest more in friendships that reignite my fire than those that extinguish it. I have managed to capitalize on my social networks and expanded my income sources to offer financial support to my immediate community. I was empowered to take on new managerial roles in a new work field thanks to one of the retreat alumni. I am more mindful and compassionate when dealing with changes in people's behaviour and character in my workspace. I understand that everyone gets ungrounded sometimes and could use support rather than shunning. I communicate better knowing that for me to be understood, I need to intentionally listen to others to understand rather than quick respond less I contribute to their ungroundedness.



Florence Retreat 2 June



A master piece! A summary of the Beautiful MOPANE experience. Unlocking hearts and locking them again...differently!

23:24

Educate a woman and educate a nation. That's what the Mopane' Leaders' Experience Retreat did for me.

— “Kemi”



”

Don't let the things you have no control over take over your mental space to occupy your heart and mind. Be you. — “Yvonne”





Contributors

Retreat Cohort Contributors

THE LAWYERS COHORT

THE FIERLY TRIBE COHORT

THE BLOOMERS COHORT

THE HEART COHORT

Alumni Contributors

SARAH NAKAME

KEKIMURI DENISE

MUTONI WINNIE JESSICA

NAMATA TENDO

JULIET PRISSILLA NAMPIIMA

NZE EVA EVALINE

HARRIET ADONG

DIANAH DESIRE MUSHABE

GRACE KABATANGARE

DELPHINE MUGISHA

JOAN AMEK

SHIFFAH MATOVU

DIANA KASABIITI

ISABEL AGOL

GLORIA KEMIGISHA

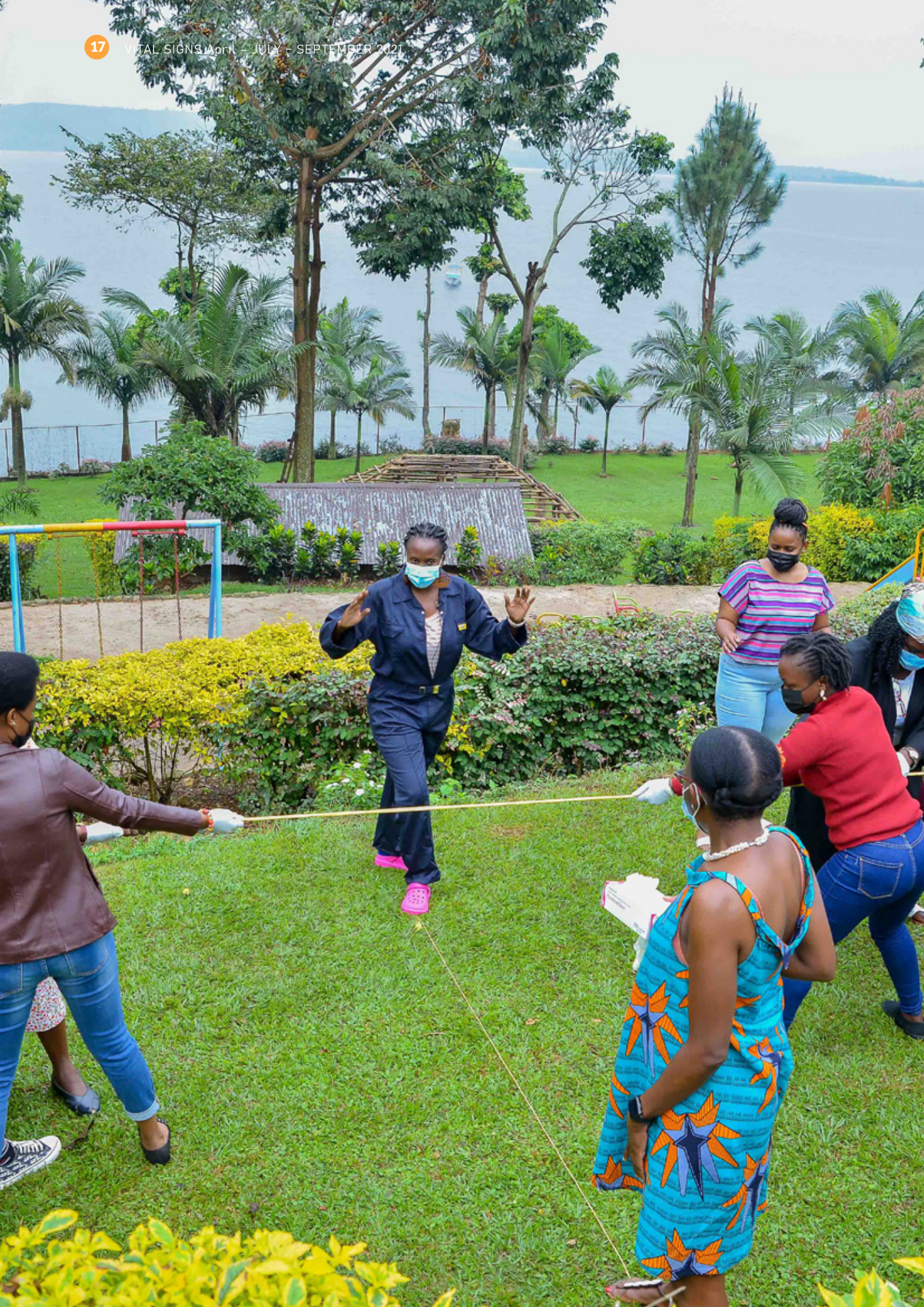
FRIDAH MUTESI

CLARE BAGIRANA

WINFRED MUGABWA

YVONNE LAMWAKA







GET IN TOUCH

Plot 18, Balikuddembe Road, Naguru Kampala, Uganda
P.O Box 4310 Tel: +256 393 224 056 www.kuonyesha.com
civsourceafrica.com