

PCV Giver uses peer educators to co-facilitate building self-esteem, leadership, and empowering the girls to take ownership of their lives

Giver is a Youth Development Volunteer serving in Uganda, partnered with the secondary and vocational school Pader Girls Academy, PGA, in Northern Uganda. 250 young women ages 13-33 with various pasts are striving for a common goal of successful living. Every week, Giver teaches 5 Life Skills classes with 50 students each where lessons are specifically designed for women who have lived through the traumas of a 21+ year insurgency. Giver uses peer educators to co-facilitate building self-esteem, leadership, and empowering the girls to take ownership of their lives. To transition away from the dependency created by a donor society, Giver is working with the tailoring department to create items that will help the school to become self-sufficient and market items to international visitors as well as local community members.



Giver found it amusing when the Geography teacher asked if she was from New York where there were so many guns and drugs.... which lead Giver to ask what movies the teacher had been watching. From that conversation forward, their friendship has grown as they talk about the reality of American life, the complexity of living in Uganda and sharing photos from around the globe, which are always viewed in amazement, to students using Giver's laptop. Because of high levels of International NGO's and expats working, volunteering, or doing research in the area, Giver is faced with the challenge of overcoming the stereotype of being a rich "muzungu" who is here for 2 months or 2 days to fund a project. Being able to explain the mission of Peace Corps, converse with individuals and build trusting relationships is a highlight of Giver's PCV experience. Giver is thankful for the opportunity to work in a post-conflict area where the challenges are great yet the relationships and community make it worth it. Giver hopes to inspire others to take on the challenge of being involved in serving others in their own communities wherever that might be. Giver is grateful for her involvement with both Pader Girls Academy, the only school of its kind in Uganda, and the Peace Corps, the only organization of its kind in the world.