

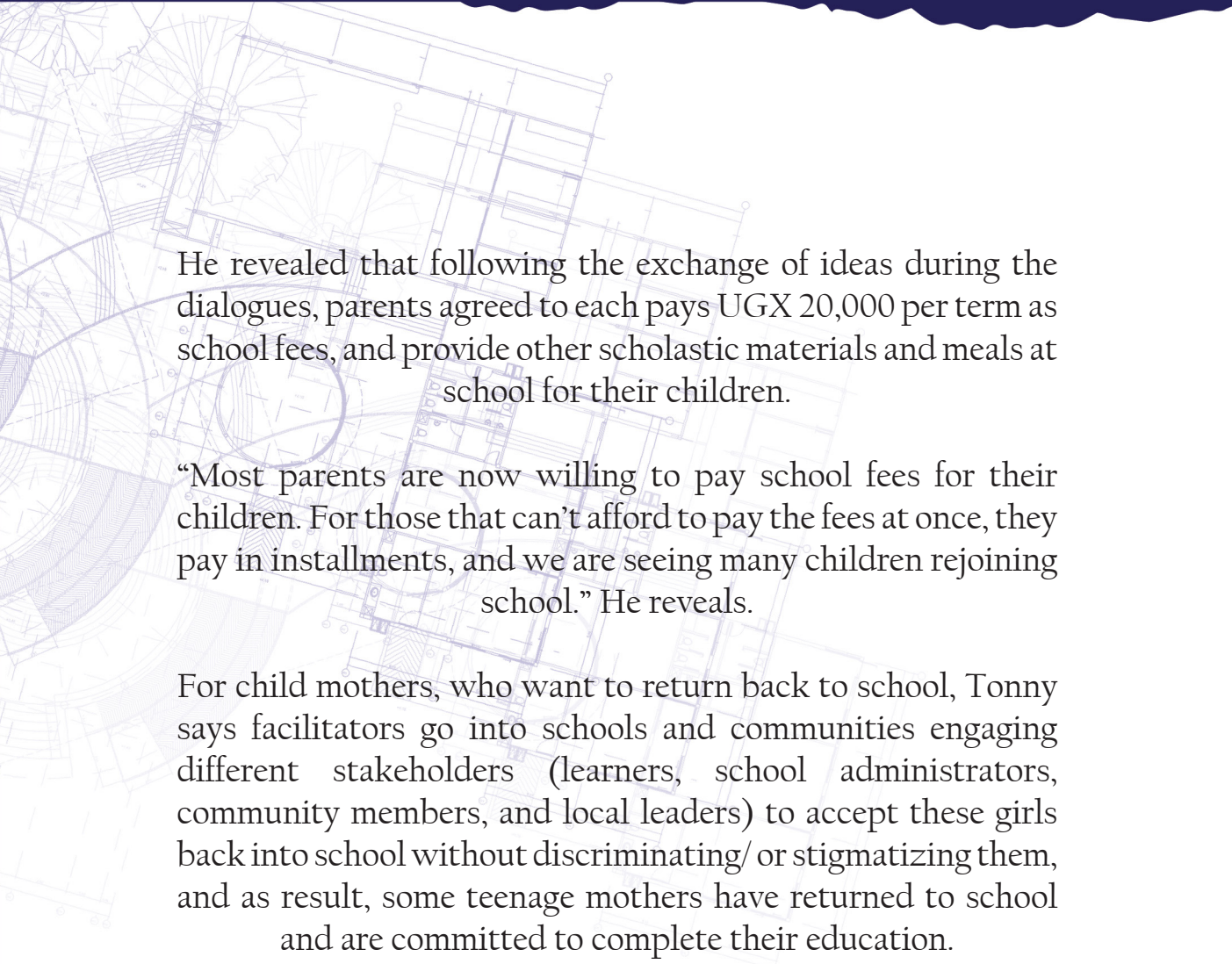


LOCAL LEADERS SUPPORT COMMUNITY GIVING TOWARDS EDUCATION

Tonny Oola, is a community facilitator under the Philanthropy for Development programme working with Lango Civil Society Network (LCSN), Lira district. He says their activities under the programme focused on improving education in the district after noticing that the COVID-19 lockdown had led to many children dropping out of school due to teenage pregnancies, forced marriages, and lack of support from parents/guardians who believed that educating their children was a government's responsibility, among other reasons.

“Fellow facilitators and I mapped out Ayamo Primary School, and Abunga Primary School. We held meetings with head teachers, teaching staff, and local leaders (LC1, 2, 3), and sensitized them about Giving for change. They understood and appreciated the concept. When we told them about meeting parents to discuss the same, they were on board. They supported us in mobilizing parents to come for dialogues to devise ways of improving education in our district. The local leaders now appreciate their role in contributing towards community development.” says Tonny





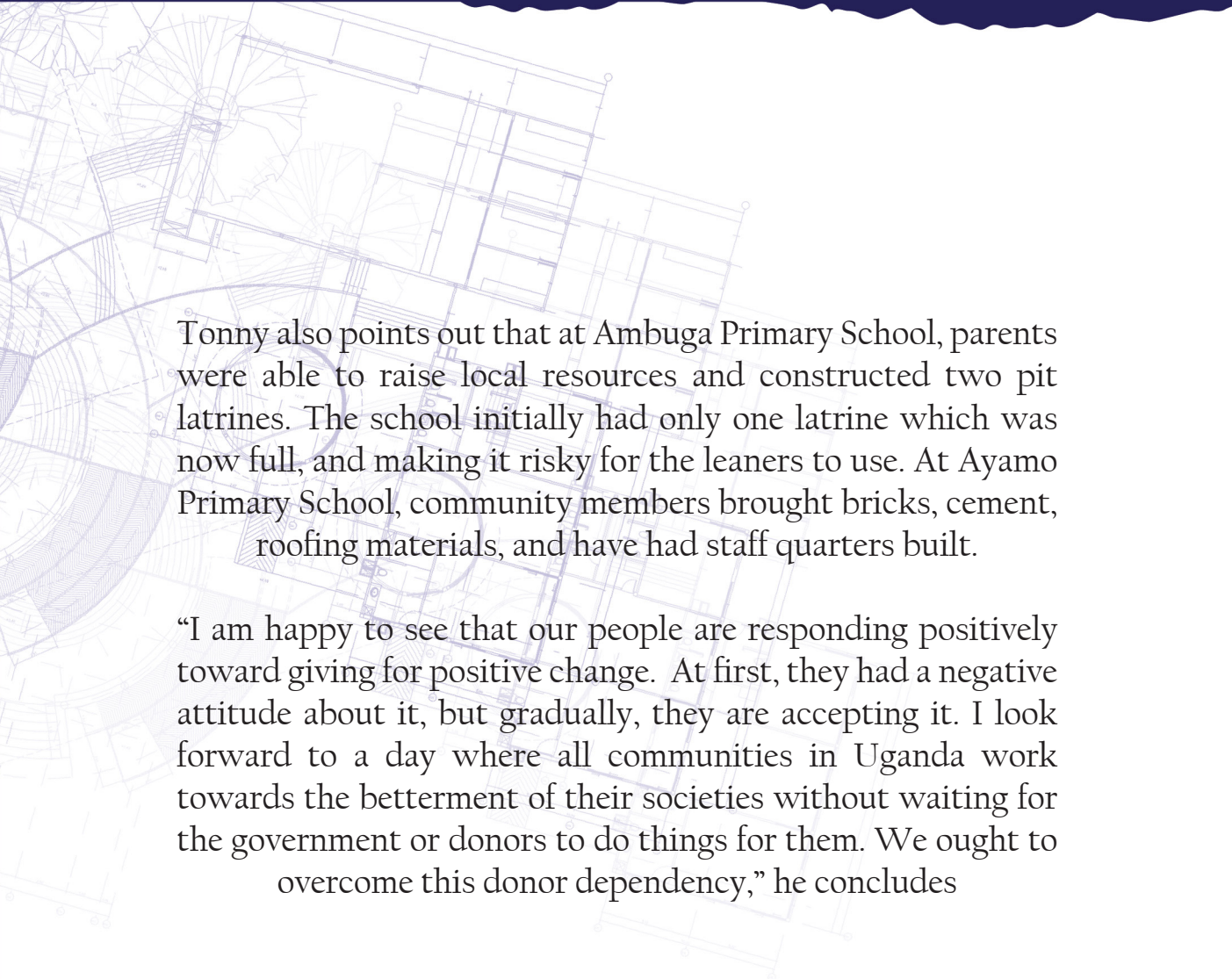
He revealed that following the exchange of ideas during the dialogues, parents agreed to each pay UGX 20,000 per term as school fees, and provide other scholastic materials and meals at school for their children.

“Most parents are now willing to pay school fees for their children. For those that can’t afford to pay the fees at once, they pay in installments, and we are seeing many children rejoining school.” He reveals.

For child mothers, who want to return back to school, Tonny says facilitators go into schools and communities engaging different stakeholders (learners, school administrators, community members, and local leaders) to accept these girls back into school without discriminating/ or stigmatizing them, and as result, some teenage mothers have returned to school and are committed to complete their education.

“The district local leaders also put by-laws. In these regulations, any child of school-going age found loitering during school hours is arrested. After arresting the child, the leaders also look for, and arrest the children’s parents. This policy has seen many children back into school,” he asserts.





Tonny also points out that at Ambuga Primary School, parents were able to raise local resources and constructed two pit latrines. The school initially had only one latrine which was now full, and making it risky for the leaners to use. At Ayamo Primary School, community members brought bricks, cement, roofing materials, and have had staff quarters built.

“I am happy to see that our people are responding positively toward giving for positive change. At first, they had a negative attitude about it, but gradually, they are accepting it. I look forward to a day where all communities in Uganda work towards the betterment of their societies without waiting for the government or donors to do things for them. We ought to overcome this donor dependency,” he concludes

