

Aim of the Project

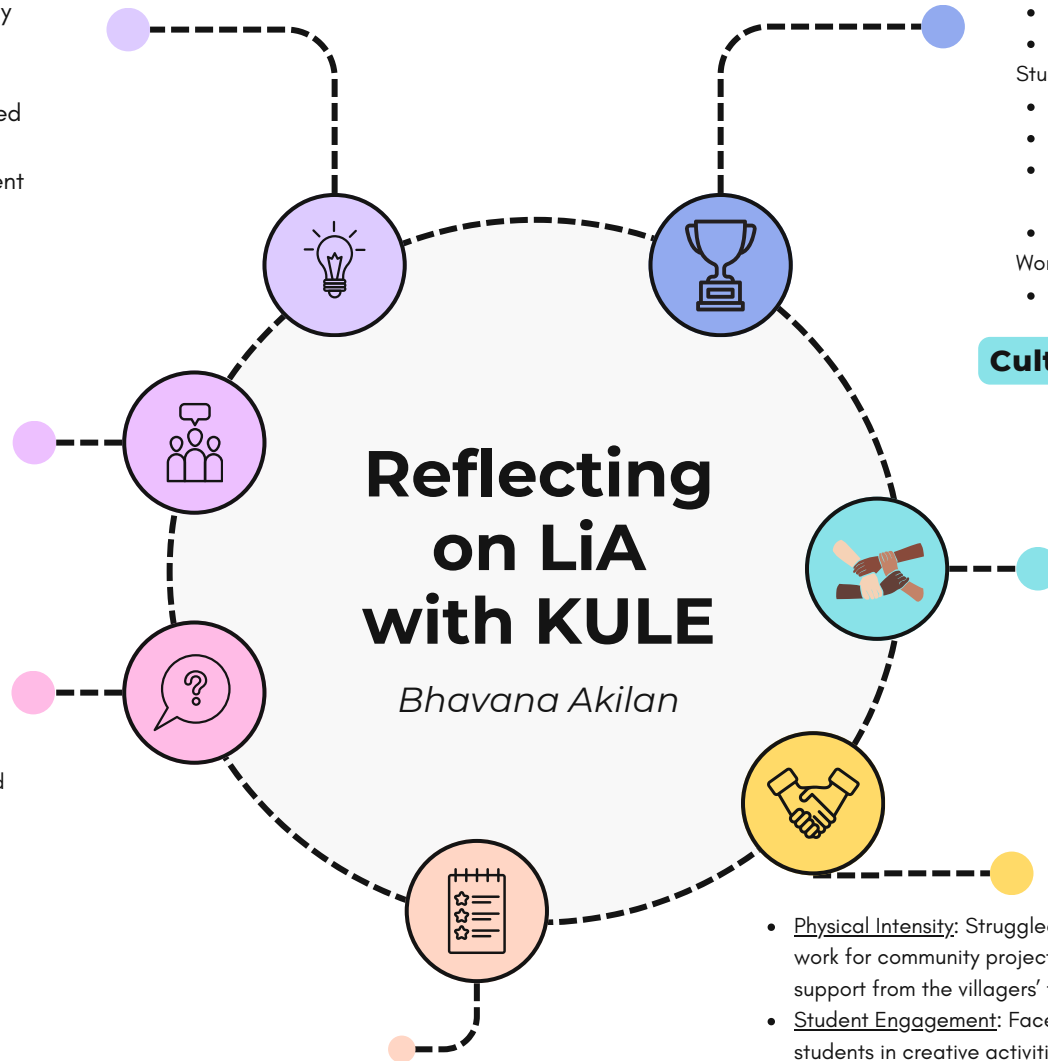
This LiA project aimed to contribute to community-based health practices by examining social factors that affect the wellness of the locals by collaboratively engaging in arts-based interventions that foster strong interpersonal relations and transparent conversations.

Collaborators & Stakeholders

- KULE Foundation International
- Roko 20 Academy
- Mukangu Secondary School
- Mukangu Primary School
- Shalom Academy Kahuhia
- People of Mukangu & Kambirwa

SMART Goals

- To work with the people of Mukangu village for two weeks to learn basic Swahili and Kikuyu, build community connections, understand issues faced by them and co-create tangible solutions to address these issues
- To work with schools in Mukangu village and Kambirwa village for two weeks to build a sense of community among students and work alongside teachers to incorporate arts-based methodologies into their curricula
- To interact with women in Mukangu village and Kambirwa village to understand the aspect of health that needs more awareness and tailor an outreach initiative that sparks conversation and breaks stereotypes



Laidlaw Scholar Values

- Curious
- Brave
- Determined
- Good

Milestones

With People of Mukangu

- Bus Stop
 - Primary School
- Students in Mukangu and Kambirwa
- Photovoice Narratives
 - Dance and Music Cultural Exchange
 - Emotional Intelligence and Career Counseling
 - Mural Art
- Women
- Women's Collective

Cultural Learnings

- Language as a Connector: Learning basic phrases in Swahili and Kikuyu helped me connect with locals, demonstrating the power of language in building relationships
- Food as Cultural Exchange: Sharing and learning about local foods became a way to transcend cultural barriers and engage in meaningful exchanges about our different backgrounds
- Respecting Community Practices: Observing local events and traditions, I learned to approach cultural differences with respect and an open mind, recognizing the importance of community values in shaping everyday life

Challenges

- Physical Intensity: Struggled with the physical demands of construction work for community projects; overcame it by drawing inspiration and support from the villagers' teamwork.
- Student Engagement: Faced language barriers and difficulty engaging students in creative activities; improved engagement by using structured rubrics, storytelling examples, and positive reinforcement.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Encountered challenges in discussing mental health with local women; addressed this by working with local translators, adjusting protocols, and building rapport through shared experiences.
- Navigating Positionality: Concerned about being perceived as an outsider; focused on building genuine connections, co-creating solutions, and emphasizing the women's voices to foster a sense of community.