

FACING IT

QUARTERLY

A PUBLICATION OF EMPOWER HOPE USA | [EMPOWERHOPE.ORG](https://empowerhope.org) | SUMMER 2024



**EMPOWER
HOPE**
a face for
the invisible

Hello, Friends!

Just as our mid-summer gardens are growing, with fruits and vegetables forming and beginning to take on the color of readiness, the fruits of our labors in Kenya are ripening.

Our EDUCATE4LIFE model is in full swing with young adults receiving holistic education and beginning to show signs of maturity.

In this issue, we are highlighting and celebrating our young adults' growth and achievements in this quarter. Our model is solidifying, young adults are growing and serving, new businesses are launching, and hope is being renewed.

We hope you enjoy sharing in the excitement we see in the faces of the next generation of leaders as you read. Please join us in believing God for the means to continue our programs and to grow. Your support is the fertile soil that allows our nonprofit to bloom and thrive.

So many are ready and ripe for the picking! Together, we can cultivate a brighter future.

Jiana Wynde






Director of Corporate Communications



Our EDUCATE 4 LIFE™ model is an comprehensive program that provides academic education, mentorship, discipleship, life skills and business training to youth living in extreme poverty. Our current focus is in underserved communities in Kenya, Africa, the largest and most advanced economy in East and Central Africa but with a growing youth population who face economic inequality due to insufficient jobs, lack of entrepreneurial training and small business start up capital.

Our sights are set on long-term, sustainable change:
transformed lives and revitalized communities.

-  **Develop purpose, identity, and value through peer group mentorship and discipleship**
-  **Offer a solid educational experience through high school**
-  **Continue higher education, gap year program, Ambassador Certification, skills/vocational/entrepreneurial/leadership training**

Developing the whole person through comprehensive, uninterrupted education

&

harnessing the power of enterprise to create economic opportunity



Ambatana Community Business [ACB] is a community-based cooperative created to provide a platform for our Empower Hope-trained Ambassadors to solve the job crisis for those living in poverty. ACB's various functions that offer entrepreneurial training through integrated programs designed with the community in mind:

- DESIGN- The Lean Business Canvas**
A 14 week ideation workshop where our young entrepreneurs identify problems to solve by creating profitable business solutions
- DEVELOP- The Process Model Canvas**
The next 14 week workshop on the fundamentals of business: a comprehensive blueprint for navigating growth opportunities and fostering sustainable business expansion.
- DEPLOY- Business Mentorship**
Entrepreneurs receive business coaching and mentorship from experienced business mentors to help them grow their startup businesses and keep them on track to success.



VISION

Transformed Lives~
Revitalized Communities

MISSION

Equipping one generation
to empower the next

PURPOSE

A face for the invisible

Empowering HOPE



ELEVATE: Overcoming Obstacles

Meet Dennis Kigoma

My name is Dennis Kigoma. I grew up in the Makao slum. Having no positive role models to look up to and the need to fit in to my peers, I often found myself in trouble. This pattern persisted until I started high school. Once again, I ended up with bad company that introduced me to alcohol and drugs. I lacked direction in life and a sense of purpose, which made my parents keep a close eye on me, convinced I was not ready to make wise choices. After my secondary school education, a friend of mine who had benefited from Empower Hope shared about the program with me and I applied for the next cohort.

“Through the mentorship sessions, I learned crucial skills, including self-awareness, which changed my thinking and significantly impacted my life.”

I attended counseling sessions which helped me to think about my life and future and eventually stopped using drugs. After completing the six-month mentorship program, I became more aware of the decisions I was making so I distanced myself from the negative influences and made new friends who pushed me to improve myself. I was given the chance to pursue higher education and chose a course in Videography and Production. The skills I acquired allows me to edit photos, music, and take high-quality photos, which led to a job at a friend’s studio. Now, I am a responsible young adult.

EQUIP: Traversing Together

Cooperation and Partnership

As an organization, we are aware that without the support of the key stakeholders, the mentorship program cannot be effective. Some of the stakeholders include parents, church leaders and local community leaders. We know that the parents are instrumental to the success of our program so we recently held a meeting where parents/caregivers and the Empower Hope fraternity could interact, discuss and give suggestions on how to enhance the Ambassador’s mentoring experiences, as well as get to know the responsibilities and duties of the organization and those of the parents during the mentoring process and thereafter. We look forward to hosting pastors and community leaders soon.

THE FUTURE OF IMPACT- Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

- Our new Empowerment Center in Githogoro slum puts us in a better position to work with key influential people such as the chairman, community leaders and other policy makers who are the representation of the voices and the needs of our target group.
- With this facility, we are in a better position to offer technical skills and services to those who need it most. This will enable us to reach a wide range of youth who would otherwise be idle or indulge in illicit behaviors.
- The youth population in the slum is massive and many are looking for someone to mentor, encourage and support them. Empower hope stands a greater chance to influence many for Christ by working from within.
- There are a number of organizations working in the community focusing on various dynamics and aspects. With time, we will know what their mission and vision are and see how we can complement each other in our activities.
- The Ambassadors, who are the beneficiaries of our programs are an asset and a powerhouse. They can impact their communities greatly now and in the future.
- We have the potential to rent our conference hall and commercial kitchen as a source of income.

Challenges

- One of the biggest challenges we face in youth ministry is the threat of drugs and alcohol being made available at every corner of our villages. The youth whom we serve are endangered daily.
- The hand-out mentality is ingrained in the minds of the young people and many tend to just wait for relief or aid. Our goal is to change this mindset with the young adults in our programs, motivating them to think of ways they can help their own communities.
- The challenge of teenage pregnancy and early marriages will continue to be a problem to grapple with. We have seen reduction in those we serve but it is still a challenge to the rest of the community.
- Diminishing donor funding can negatively impact the running of the programs, quality, and staff motivation.
- Now that we are working from inside the slum, some community members feel entitled to impose their way on us because we are in their ‘territory’.
- Unemployment is one of the greatest problems that face young adults.

EMPOWER: Community Collaboration

Engagement and Outreach This Quarter

Community outreach plays an integral part in our organization, especially now that we are located inside Githogoro slum. Working from the inside connects and allows us to be involved in what is happening within the community.

Ambassador Community Projects

As part of the mentorship program, Ambassadors are encouraged to adapt a project in their areas of residence to give back to the community as part of their training. Some of our team members went into the community and visited various households to identify their greatest needs. This outreach was welcomed and much-appreciated by the community as there is very little outside aid.



Book Drive

Quality education is a fundamental human right and access to educational tools including books and a library facility, are key to realizing this right. The Ambassadors were challenged to bring 'good' reading material for children, to equip the school in the Huruma slum community with material that will play an important role in the alleviation of illiteracy and aid in developing a reading culture in slum children.

Children's Home Visit

The Ambassadors were challenged to visit a local children's home and to give clothes, shoes, food stuff and any useful household items. The Ambassadors did various projects within the facility and also had an interactive session with the children before they all sat down to eat together. The children were overjoyed at the attention from the young adults and they requested that they come again.. Soon!



WORKING FROM THE INSIDE OUT: The Empowerment Community Center in Githogoro Slum

"We are now able to serve more effectively, because we are in the community."
~ Anthony Mwaura, Team Member

Jane Muthoni, a resident of Githogoro said, "Most of the young people in this village have very low self-esteem, this makes them to be easily manipulated and be lured to bad habits. With this organization in the community, I am certain our young people will be mentored in godly ways."

"We are all now in the community, working for and with the community members to bring about change. I am very happy that we have a facility that can comfortably accommodate all of us as well as having a space where we can train in technical skills. In everything we do, we consider how it will impact the community"

~ John Mwangi, Team Member

"I am happy that we are in the community. The Ambassadors can come in and out of the premises at any time and when called upon because it is near and accessible."

~ Hellen Atitu, Team Member

Going Loco for Locs By Vero

We highlighted Veronica in our last quarterly as we shared about new businesses created through our Ambatana Community Business training. In this edition we interviewed Veronica to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of this program in her life...

Business Owner: Veronica
Company: Locs By Vero

Veronica, a finalist of the Ambatana Community Business (ACB) program, embodies resilience and transformation. Coming from a poor and disadvantaged background, she joined the program with a passion for natural organic haircare and a dream to create products tailored for African women's natural hair. During the first stage of the program which was centered on ideation, based on lean business principles, Veronica developed her business idea, 'Locs by Vero,' which combines her skills as a loctician with her unique haircare formulations dubbed

'Nywele holistic' (Swahili for holistic, natural haircare).

Her journey reached a pivotal moment when she pitched her idea to investors and peers. Despite it being her first time holding a microphone and speaking in front of a large crowd, Veronica's determination shone through. Securing funding was a life-changing event, allowing her to start offering her services by renting space at a popular salon in Nairobi's Central Business District.

This grant means that at the tender age of 23, she is

now able to be a stable source of income for the household of 6 dependents that she supports which includes her mother, four siblings and her niece. She and her family now have the hope of moving out of the slum to better and safer housing as her income grows.

Returning for the second phase of the program, Veronica immersed herself in practical business lessons, continually showing up and overcoming every challenge she faced even when some of her peers fell through, demonstrating her eagerness to change her life. Her perseverance paid off, as she now sees her client base growing and her new business begin to thrive Through the support and mentorship of ACB's business trainers, Veronica overcame numerous challenges, emerging as a shining example of success.

Veronica's journey from a deeply disadvantaged living situation to a growing entrepreneur highlights the transformative power of the ACB program. Her journey has brought her dignity and is a testament to the impact of our work and the potential within every participant.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VERONICA- Locs by Vero

Can you tell us about your initial thoughts and feelings when you first joined the ACB business program?

I thought ACB was just another promise that would be broken in my life. It took me a while before I decided to join the cohort because I wasn't convinced it would be worth my time, and for the first few days after joining the class, I thought it was a waste of time because I thought that I knew a lot about business. That turned out to be wrong.

What inspired you to choose natural organic hair care as your business idea?

Dreadlocks are a unique and expressive hairstyle. I have been passionate about them for years. I used to have them but, unfortunately, I had to cut them off because of the chemical-filled products that were not right for maintaining my natural African hair. I believe there is a need for high-quality, natural dreadlock products that cater to the specific needs of this community and I'm dedicated to helping people have access to and learn to maintain them.

How did the ideation stage of the program help shape and refine your business concept?

The mentorship sessions made me more open-minded and helped me to think outside the box. I now believe that no idea is too small or insignificant as long as you are solving real problems in the marketplace.

What was your experience like pitching your business idea in front of investors and a large crowd ?

It was my first time to present before such a big crowd. It was scary and yet also the best experience. I loved every minute of it because it was my time to showcase my idea, to prove myself, and to shine.

Describe the moment you received funding for your business and what it meant to you.

It was a tremendous source of motivation to receive a financial boost for my business. It fueled my determination to succeed and make the most of this incredible opportunity. I knew I had a responsibility to the investors who believed in me, and to my future clients who deserved exceptional service.

What challenges have you faced since starting your loctician services and how have you overcome them?

Building a clientele can be tough, especially when starting in a new location as the competition in the dreadlock industry consists of already established businesses with a loyal customer base. I have had to educate clients on the importance of proper dreadlock care as lack of proper care can lead to long-term hair damage.

I initially struggled with time management when juggling appointments, consultations, and product sales which is still sometimes overwhelming. I find myself working overtime, going home late, and sometimes going to work very early. I also had to quickly learn marketing and branding to be able to stand out in a crowded marketplace. This has not been easy. However, I take these challenges positively as they are all contributing to my overall growth.

How has the second phase of the program, with it’s practical business lessons, supported your journey as an entrepreneur?

I am grateful for the unlimited mentorship, spiritual support, and being challenged to try something different. This has pushed me out of my comfort zone and I am growing. The second phase of training introduced practical lessons which were a treasure trove of actionable knowledge. We went into topics like market research, financial planning, and legal considerations.

Can you share some successes you’ve had since you began operating?

Building my clientele from zero to eighty clients in a short period of time is such an achievement for me. Seeing happy customers with thriving dreadlocks is also incredibly rewarding. I have two young adults working for me who came out of the slum and now have a marketing manager and a receptionist! I feel proud that I am creating employment opportunities for other youth and putting money in their hands.

How has your life changed since enrolling in the ACB program?

Participating in the ACB business program wasn’t just about acquiring knowledge; it was a turning point in my life. Before ACB, my entrepreneurial dream felt like a distant dream. The program, with its supportive environment and empowering lessons, provided the tools and confidence I needed to turn that dream into a tangible reality.

Any words of wisdom for future participants in the ACB Business Training?

To all those considering joining ACB, I speak from personal experience when I say it is a truly enriching and transformative journey. Knowledge is power, but action is key. Don’t wait for the perfect moment. Use the skills learned in the program to start taking concrete steps towards your business goals.

Identify. Solve. *Launch.*



“I feel proud that I am creating employment opportunities for other youth and putting money in their hands.”



Mentors: Molding Minds



The girls of VUKA form small groups. Here is where their stories are told. Their tears are shared. Their voices heard. Every one of them has faced untold hardship and desperation. They have never before spoken of them in a safe place.

But here, the words come. Haltingly at first, but then spill out in a language we do not understand. Their bodies often bent over, their eyes down. Beside them, or standing behind, is a mentor. Someone who understands the words and emotions pouring forth. For she, too, lives on the mountain. She, too, has experienced horrific acts of violence, abandonment or neglect. But she has seen the ways God has woven His grace into the fabric of her life. With compassion and wisdom, she speaks His truth as she prays over the girls.

LIVES ARE CHANGED IN THIS PLACE.
LIGHT IS DAWNING. DARKNESS CANNOT
THRIVE WHEN DAWN BREAKS.

Salome, the mentor shown sitting here, has a story that needs to be told. And one day it will be shared. But just the fact that she is here is a testimony of grace and transformation and hope. Her impact on the lives of these girls is deep and life-changing.

So thanks to mentors like Salome who are willing to be vulnerable and to walk with these girls on their life journeys.



Supporter Salute: A Shout Out to Our Champions of Change

Maybe it goes without being said, but we could not do what we do without the support of all who have caught the vision with us to ELEVATE, EQUIP, and EMPOWER young adults living in extreme poverty through our EDUCATE4LIFE™ model.

For all who have given, **THANK YOU!** And, to all who are thinking of giving, we truly **NEED YOUR HELP** to continue our programs and increase our reach so no one is left without hope.

HEADS UP!

Our **2023 IMPACT REPORT**
is under construction!
Keep an eye out...

THE POWER OF STORY: An Empower Hope Supporter and Vision Trip Attendee, Karen, shares her personal story with VUKA girls.

Karen sat before 100 girls and shared her story. No one moved. We could have heard the proverbial pin drop. The words spoken were raw, real, and hard to speak. Tears flow as emotions come to the surface. We want to tell the best parts of the story and leave out the dark parts.

This is what happens at the VUKA Rite of Passage Camp. Just ask the nearly 600 girls who have experienced new freedom in Christ!

All glory to God and thanksgiving for those who courageously share their stories with those who need to hear and learn from them.

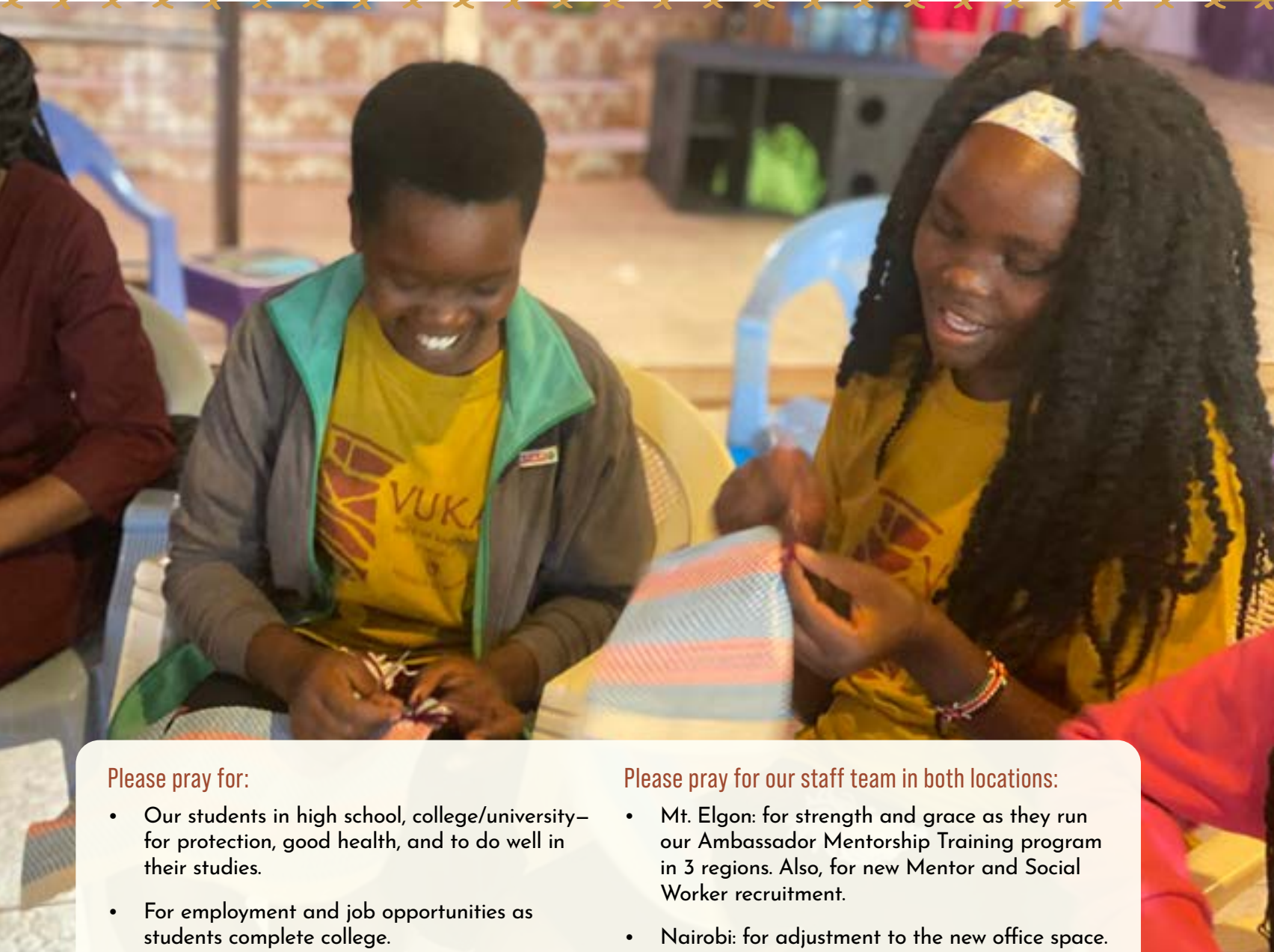
OWNING AND TELLING OUR STORY IS SOMETIMES THE BRAVEST THING WE'LL EVER DO.

But the girls sitting before her understood her words. They have lived them. Worlds apart in geography and age, their experiences were the same. But here sat someone who gave a message of hope. Of redemption. Of restoration. Was it possible that God would do the same for them?

Fear and shame give way to hope when Jesus enters the picture. That is why the girls are here.



PRAY WITH US



Please pray for:

- Our students in high school, college/university—for protection, good health, and to do well in their studies.
- For employment and job opportunities as students complete college.
- For God's continued provision for our huge school fee budget and for the
- Funds to complete the ground outside the Empowerment Center which was damaged in the recent flooding
- Increased funds to grow our ministry.

Please pray for our staff team in both locations:

- Mt. Elgon: for strength and grace as they run our Ambassador Mentorship Training program in 3 regions. Also, for new Mentor and Social Worker recruitment.
- Nairobi: for adjustment to the new office space. For connection with the Githogoro community.

Please pray for the success of new classes:

For our new tailoring and catering classes to be successful and our students to be able to attend and learn the skills they need to succeed.

Highlights & Happenings

Your generous financial support & prayers make these life-changing programs possible!

AMBASSADOR TRAINING:

Nairobi

The training this year began a little later than other years because of moving the offices into the newly built Empowerment Center in Githogoro slum. The staff members have been operating from the new property since March and the training at the center has now begun with Group 7. This new cohort consists of 32 promising Ambassadors.

Mt. Elgon

Ambassador Certification training is ongoing in three locations across the mountain. 71 of our Vuka camp/high school graduates are participating and are graduating late July. Tailoring and Catering classes have been in session since February this year. This graduation also commencing in late July.

ON THE HORIZON:

- Ambassador training in both our locations is ongoing, they will be completing in July.
- Ambassadors graduation in July/August
- School holiday programs - mentorship and follow up with each student.

Empower Hope USA is HIRING!

FT- Director of Strategic Partnerships - wDonor Management

FT- Director of Operations

PT- Administrator

Send resume and letter of interest to:

info@empowerhope.org

Come With Us

Join Us in Kenya summer of 2025 for the Adventure of a Lifetime!

Come experience the impact of lives being transformed and join in on the excitement. Connect with us to learn more about this opportunity and catch the vision!

For more information, visit empowerhope.org/vision-trips/





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FACING IT

QUARTERLY

Your Summer 2024 Update on our work in Kenya



We are grateful for you!

We rely on the generosity of our supporters and sponsors to grow and sustain our ministry to the people of Mt. Elgon and Nairobi, Kenya. Because of you, we can continue to pursue our mission!

Ways to Give



GIVE ONLINE

Visit empowerhope.org for details



MAIL A CHECK

Please make checks payable to Empower Hope USA and mail to:
100 South Queen Street, Ste 222, Lancaster, PA 17603



PLANNED GIVING

Contact us about donor advised funds and other planned giving options



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