

ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN SUPPORT PROJECT NEBBI-2005-06

End of Project Report



AFARD and CARITAS-Nebbi
Nebbi District, Uganda

August 2006

Map of Nebbi district showing the project areas



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	4
ACRONYMS.....	5
2.0 PROJECT PERFORMANCE REVIEW	6
2.1 Introduction.....	6
2.2 The project review process	7
3.0 The project synopsis.....	8
3.1 Implementation preparation	8
3.2 Community debriefing meetings.....	8
3.3 Sub county based training of PLCs.....	8
3.4 Community based OVC identification	8
3.5 Beneficiary verification visits	9
3.6 OVC database establishment	9
3.7 Training of Peer Educators-cum-Counselors (PECs).....	9
3.8 Educational support.....	9
3.9 Life skills training	10
3.10 Vocational skills training for out-of-school OVCs.....	10
3.11 Entrepreneurship skills training.....	11
2.12 Provision of farm inputs for support families.....	11
2.13 The grinding mill scheme	12
2.14 Psychosocial support.....	12
3.15 Supplies of mosquito nets	12
3.16 Parish-based community dialogue meetings.....	12
3.17 Local government advocacy and lobbying workshops.....	12
3.18 Routine monitoring	13
4.0 PROJECT PERFORMANCE: ACHIEVEMENT OF TARGETS	14
5.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY.....	17
6.0 SYNERGY BUILDING	18
7.0 CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	18
8.0 LESSONS LEARNT	19
9.0 THE WAY FORWARD.....	20
Annex 1: Key data on PLCs and PECs	21
Annex 2: Percent distribution of OVCs in-schools by age-group.....	22

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Common selection criteria.....	9
Table 2:	Financial performance.....	17

ACRONYMS

AFARD	=	Agency For Accelerated Regional Development
FO	=	Field Officer
IGA	=	Income Generating Activity
CD	=	Community Dialogue
PIA	=	Project Implementation Agencies
PLC	=	Parish Level Committee
PLWA	=	Persons Living with HIV/AIDS
LC	=	Local Council
NGO	=	Non Governmental Organization
OVC	=	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEC	=	Peer Educator-cum-Counselor
UGX	=	Ugandan shillings

1.0 SUMMARY DATA

Title of Report	End of Project Report
Implementing agency:	Agency For Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) and CARITAS-Nebbi
Physical address:	Butime Road, Nebbi Town Council, Opp. Local Government Administration Building.
Postal address:	P.O. Box 80, Nebbi.
Telephone:	077 – 437175/589733
E-mail:	afard@afard.net or carinebb@utlonline.co.ug
Web address:	www.afard.net
Contact persons:	Drs. Alfred Lakwo (AFARD)/Fr. Geoffrey Ocamgiu (CARITAS)
Project name:	Orphans and Vulnerable Children Support Project – Nebbi
Project location:	Wadelai and Erussi sub counties, Nebbi District, Uganda.
Project duration:	12 months (September 2005/ August 2006)
Reporting Period Cost	UGX 279,459,920
Reporting Date	September 20, 2006

2.0 PROJECT PERFORMANCE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) and CARITAS – Nebbi in partnership with UNICEF-GoU Country Programme implemented a joint Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Support Project in Nebbi district in line with the Memorandum of Understanding signed on September 5, 2005. This pilot project ran for one-year (September 2005- August 2006). It was family focused and livelihood sustainability oriented; covering all the 10 parishes in Wadelai and Erussi Sub counties. The project purpose was, ‘to contribute to the reduction of vulnerability of boys and girls through strengthening family capacity and community support to provide basic social services.’

In line with the OVC Policy and building on the experiences learnt from other child support projects, the project focused on ensuring the social protection of OVCs through: (i) engaging children to pursue a purposeful future; (ii) enabling families and communities take responsibilities for their children; (iii) promoting local ownership;

and (iv) ensuring equality between males and females and among children to ensure that the vulnerable ones too reach where other children are.

This end of project report, therefore, presents an overview of the project performance by spelling out the processes used during implementation, achievements registered, challenges faced, lessons learnt and recommends a way forward for similar future interventions.

2.2 The project review process

At the start of this project, the relationship between the project activities and the anticipated outputs and outcomes were clarified. Indicators for tracking such progress were developed and used to collect data on progress and effects during implementation.

Within the last month of the project, an internal review was conducted to ascertain the performance of the project in terms of outputs and immediate outcomes. The review stopped at those two levels because: (i) it was too early to look at impacts given that it was hardly a month after activity implementation were completed; and (ii) an expansion project was already being implemented, after which a formal impact evaluation will be conducted.

Information required for the review were derived from:

- project proposal document;
- Activity implementation reports (field activity, progress and monitoring and supervision);
- Field visits to interact with project beneficiaries- OVC in schools, OVC and the out-of school OVC together with their support families; and
- a joint review meeting held with management stakeholders (AFARD and CARITAS staff and PLCs).

3.0 The project synopsis

3.1 Implementation preparation

Before the commencement of the project as well as during implementation, a number of planning and review meetings were held both at the PIA level and at the parish level committee (PLC) levels. The project was also publicized to the district and beneficiary local governments. Equally, community leaders were engaged to ensure that mobilization was multifaceted.

3.2 Community debriefing meetings

Community debriefing meetings were conducted at the parish levels with youth leaders, women leaders, local council executives, parish development committees, religious leaders, opinion leaders and other ordinary community members. The purpose was to brief them about what the project was all about and the roles the different stakeholders were expected to play. It was also in those meetings that PLCs and PECs were elected.

Box 1: The menace of selective mobilization

During the first contact with the community, the parish chiefs who are the administrative heads of the parishes and the parish priest/catechist were delegated to mobilize the community for the parish level awareness meetings. It was noted during the meeting that men far outnumbered the women.

This raised a question of ‘who actually takes care of these children most?’ and the obvious answer was, ‘women’. Then when the underlying reason why there were fewer women was pursued, a woman said, ‘the men only mobilized their fellow men simply because the facilitation money that would be provided would better be shared among them [men] since they drink together and the women would instead take their money for home use.’

An affirmative action was, therefore, decided upon so that the representation of women on PLCs increased. After all, do women not outnumber men all over the district?

3.3 Sub county based training of PLCs

Following the election of the 9-member PLCs, they were trained in order to gain in-depth knowledge of the project, know and internalize their roles and responsibilities in the project. Due emphasis was also placed on the fair selection of OVC- a task they were charged with.

3.4 Community based OVC identification

The trained PLCs together with the Local councils, opinion leaders, religious leaders, and the entire community members in their parishes convened a meeting in which they identified the most needy families and children. The most common criteria used for the identifications of the various beneficiaries are as summarized below.

Table 1: Common selection criteria

Families	In-school OVCs	Out-of-school OVCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child headed household• Female headed household• The aged headed household• Terminally sick headed household• Disabled and unable headed household• PLWA headed Households (even if they may not be in terminal stage)	<p>Belong (by birth or residence) to the identified family but is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolled in school• An Orphan without support• A child with disabilities• A child living with AIDS (where it is known).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include all the criteria for family selection or is an OVC out of school

Source: Briefing by PLCs and Community meetings during verification exercise

3.5 Beneficiary verification visits

To confirm whether the beneficiaries identified by the PLCs were those who qualified for support, a verification exercise was carried out by the PIA teams. The aim of the verification process was to confirm before members of the community whether the identified OVCs were really the neediest ones in the community, and whether the community approved of their selection to benefit from the project. Where there were contentious cases, decisions were taken by the community and the real needy were taken on board.

3.6 OVC database establishment

To ensure consistency in the delivery of project benefits to its intended beneficiaries and to avoid manipulation often reported in other projects, a digital database was established for all the identified beneficiaries.

3.7 Training of Peer Educators-cum-Counselors (PECs)

The training of PECs was designed to give them capacity to give support to OVC in their various village environments. It was premised on the challenges – material and immaterial – that the OVCs face in the community and as they look towards the future. Giving psychosocial support to OVC and coping with the threat of HIV/AIDS constituted parts of the training.

3.8 Educational support

The OVCs who were in schools were provided with basic education materials they needed in order to promote their effective school participation, increased retention and ultimately improved performance in exams. A one-off provision of school uniforms, bags, and geometrical sets were made. Exercise books, pens, and pencils were however offered termly.

Box 2: I can now stay in school (Okello Louis)

Education is all I want in my life. I see many big people (successful people) as those who are educated. But, I'm not sure whether or not I will finish my studies. My father died long ago. And my mother is too old and sickly now.

Much as I like to come to school daily, it is not possible. I don't have uniform and enough books. Many times the teachers chase me away from school because I'm not in uniform. The same also applies to some of my class teachers who can not allow me in their class because I did not do their class-work due to lack of books. Because of all these, I used to miss school alot. I would go to fish to get some money to buy books. At the landing site, the askari often refused to allow me go fishing saying it was school time.

I am so happy that you gave me uniform, a bag, and books. Now I never miss classes. I also do not miss my class-work. The askari at the landing site also asked me a few days ago why I no longer go to the landing site frequently.

My promise to you is that come at the end of the term my result will be among the first 5 best in my class. Those who thought I was dull will be ashamed. You can even look at my class work. I rarely fail any number.

3.9 Life skills training

Besides the education support, the OVCs in-school were given life skills training. This is because, young and vulnerable as they are, they are more susceptible to sexual exploitation through generational and transactional sex hence are highly exposed to HIV/AIDS infection. There is also considerable peer pressure and lack of parental guidance that leave them open to sexual encounters. Beyond this, social stigma affects them a lot. This training exposed them to building self esteem and assertive living.

3.10 Vocational skills training for out-of-school OVCs

For the out-of-school OVCs, a 3-month vocational skills training was conducted in carpentry for boys and tailoring for girls by the Foundation for Rural Development through Skills (FORUDES) and Unique Attractions and Fashion Designers respectively. The training contents were developed, revised, and customized to include aspects of business management, facts about HIV/AIDS and life skills.

Thereafter, the trainers were graduated in a colorful ceremony officiated by the Chairperson District Women Council and the District Education Officer. On that day, they also received basic start-up kits with which they could start practicing their newly learned trade. A boy who excelled in carpentry was offered a scholarship by FORUDES to continue with his studies.

Box 3: Even the despised can blossom (Ms. Acaye Christine)

Life was very hard. When my father passed away it was not easy to live anymore. My sick mother was unable to maintain me at school. She spent more days in the health unit than at home. Being the eldest child, I had to fall out of school in order to take care of her. When she somehow improved, it was too late for me to go back to school. Three years had passed.

That is why I had to opt for any kind of jobs. I tried babysitting. I also thought my uncles would take me to school but 'wapi!' (a swahili work for 'where?').

But, I am grateful that the community was seeing my plight. When I was selected to benefit from this project, I kept on wondering, what on earth could become of me. Yet, I knew that given a chance, I would make it because I needed any opportunity that could enable me build my self independence.

When we went for training in Nebbi, I was the happiest girl among all the others. I worked very hard and kept on going to ask the teachers on what I did not know. In that way, I was able to learn many things beyond what were offered during class hours.

When we graduated and I was offered my sewing machine, only God knew the kind of prayers I had inside me. I set my mind as the scout and girl guides say, 'to do all my best'. Immediately, I secured this place for making my cloth. I started making kids wear and also mending some clothes for adults.

With my neat work, many mothers are now coming to me. I've created a job of my own which earns me money. I'm also saving some although I use most of it to buy household needs for our family and also some body oil for myself. I feel happy that I who was initially despised as a 'useless nobody' am now able to fend for my family and have money of my own. I can assure you I now walk in the trading centre with my head high because I will no longer beg from anybody.

3.11 Entrepreneurship skills training

For the support families to ably provide the basic needs to the children, it was important that their capacity to do so was enhanced. One way was by providing them with entrepreneurship skills so that they could diversify their livelihoods outside farming or fishing. Thus, together with other adult OVCs and some PLCs, support families received skills to select, plan, and manage enterprises with a profit motive. The West Nile Private Sector Development Promotion Center Ltd, facilitated the training.

Box 4: Money management skills

I used to take it for granted that all monies were the same. I would hardly separate my business money from other activities. In the end, I spent the money interchangeably. I could not later tell whether the business was growing or not. As long as I still had stock and was restocking I was satisfied.

However, with this training, I now know that there is need to monitor closely how my business is growing. By separating the money, I can then know at the end of the week/month whether there is good sales; whether I have saved; and I can be able to invest into what I can tell is specifically as the outcome of my business.

2.12 Provision of farm inputs for support families

The other way to strengthen the capacity of support families was by making their subsistence farming productive. In this regard, they were supplied with the latest

varieties of improved beans, ground nuts, Irish potato seeds and cassava cuttings. These inputs were backed with training on the agronomy of the crops. Rice was also procured and distributed later when the rain came.

2.13 The grinding mill scheme

Beyond the individual children and their support families, the project also invested in setting up community managed income generating activities. Although it was initially planned that fishing would be the better option for Wadelai area along river Nile while grinding mill would be appropriate for Erussi highland areas, later both areas settled on grinding mills. The mills were procured, installed, serviced, and handed over to the PLCs after their training for its day-to-day management. A rice hurler was also procured for Wadelai sub county.

2.14 Psychosocial support

To strengthen community support for OVCs, the trained PECs also continued providing peer education and counseling services to the community. While they focused at home based care and support to OVCs, their support families, and the community, using a one-to-one and one-to-many approach, they also received a refresher orientation especially in reporting, relationship building with PLCs, and monitoring of OVCs and community support to OVCs.

3.15 Supplies of mosquito nets

In a bid to reduce the morbidity rate in the OVC families, provision of mosquito nets was considered a viable strategy. Accordingly, mosquito nets were distributed to every support family and the in-school and out-of school OVCs.

3.16 Parish-based community dialogue meetings

Aware that many more OVC were left out by the project and that they too needed support, parish-based community dialogue meetings were conducted to increase awareness about their plight and to solicit for community-led actions that promote children's welfare.

3.17 Local government advocacy and lobbying workshops

A step beyond the grassroot (parish level) was at the sub county where local government resources are mobilised and allocated for 'supposedly equitable' development. Targeting Sub county Local Governments (SCLGs), this workshop used a result-driven advocacy approach to solicit local government budgetary support for OVCs. Sub county leaders were debriefed about the project (goal and accomplishments) then the possible roles SCLG can play in child care and support were explored before asking what they themselves were doing (and would do) in

regard to the children. The reawakening approach led to commitments for the FY2006/07.

Box 5: Budgetary exclusion is the norm (The Extension staff of Wadelai)

The usual talk of exclusion was not clear cut to me before the advocacy workshop. Often, many agencies simply come with their 'blah..blah..blah' of inclusion and assigning priority to the marginalized. The question they would always not answer was, 'what have you on offer to support those you claim to speak for?' This project did not only come to ask for the marginalized but to compare notes with us on what you are doing that we as a government should be doing, as our legitimate roles and challenging us about our share of the services delivery.

I feel we will have to open up our annual planning and budgeting processes. We always used the politicians and technical heads of departments to decide on what to offer for the communities. Going to the villages were simply a window dressing to show that the 'communities were involved yet they were not consulted but merely informed'. For instance, few if any woman or even the OVC would participate in such processes.

At least for my sector, it will be more important to ensure that we have funds going to the most disadvantaged than the already able ones who can do with less government services. We will have to change the ways we provide improved seeds and technical skills to the farmers so that OVC support families receive the highest share of support.

3.18 Routine monitoring

A participatory and multi-stakeholder approach to monitoring and routine reviewing of the project was adopted. Periodic meetings were held with PLC and PECs. Selected visits to OVCs and their support families were also conducted. Technical support visits were made. And joint visits and meetings in the field together with local government staffs were also employed in order to widen mobilization for the project by government personnel on the one hand and to broaden accountability to them on the other hand.

Box 6: The Secretary for Health and Community Services LC V

You people [referring to organizations!] are serious and focussed. The project fund is going to the right people, through the right and committed channels and is producing impacts. Guardians are happy of the kind of support their children have received at just the start of the project. Children are gaining the hopes they had lost. Politicians are not meddling into the affairs of the communities. Besides, you are transparent about both the activities and fund something many organisations fear to do because they know we shall follow them. Please, keep up the spirit and scale up if possible.

4.0 PROJECT PERFORMANCE: ACHIEVEMENT OF TARGETS

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
Objective 1:: A system for identification and follow-up of 400 OVC and 300 families strengthened/established			
1.1 Hold preparatory meeting	10 preparatory meetings targeting 600 participants to identify and form . 20 PECs (2 for each parish) . 10 PLCs with 9 members each	10 preparatory meetings held in which: - 603 people (29.2% women) participated. - 20 PECs (50% women) identified - 90 PLCs (44.4% women) identified	- Communities know about and are supportive of the project - PECs and PLCs established as village volunteers and are effective contact points for the project
1.2 Training of Parish level committees.	90 PLC trained	10 PLCs (with 90 members – of whom 44.4% are women) were trained	- Project contact with community strengthened - PLCs aware of and effectively performing their roles
1.3 Identification of project beneficiaries.	-400 in school OVC -79 support families -70 out of school OVC identified.	Project beneficiaries were identified: 79 support families (60.8% Female-headed households); 400 in-school (50% girls) and 70 out-of schools (57% girls) OVC.	-Project targeted at the right OVCs -Project's other activities able to proceed as planned
1.4 Visit & verification (BDR database)	-10 visits (1 in each parish)	10 visits made and 549 beneficiaries (52.9% women) verified as truly needy	- PLC identified OVCs are those the communities consider needy and 'forged beneficiaries' were disqualified
1.5 Establishment of the OVC database	1 database to be established	1 database established with identified beneficiary digital photos and biodata.	- User friendly database of OVCs in place with clear traceability - Manipulations of project beneficiaries eliminated
Objective 2: Increased capacity of the OVC and families to provide basic social services.			
2.1 Provision of scholastic materials to 400 OVC.	400 OVC provided with scholastic materials	400 school bags; 400 mathematical sets, 3210 pencils, 3200 pens, and 16000 books (96 pages), 400 pairs of school uniforms distributed	- OVC regularly attending schools - Improved academic performance - Increased positive self esteem - Parental support to education expressed - student determination to work hard increased - pride in the project shown
2.2 Training 70 OVC (50% girls) in vocational skills.	70 OVC (40 girls) trained	70 OVC trained in vocational skills. 40 girls in tailoring skills and 30 boys in carpentry skills	- OVC able to fend for themselves in a sustainable way - Value of education instilled in OVCs - Pride in skills for self reliance expressed, - Idleness and disorderliness done away with -self esteem and confidence built -diversified savings energized

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
2.4 Training family heads and OVC in entrepreneur skills.	343 family heads and OVCs trained	343 family heads and OVC (43.7% women) as well as 24 members of PLCs trained in entrepreneurial skills targeting business selection, planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to set profitable IGA - Knowledge of better business management skills - Using knowledge to access NUSAF funds - Households started savings in banks
2.5 Carrying out monthly meetings at parish level with PLCs	120 meetings	84 meetings held, 18 spot visits held, 2 technical visits conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Project is on track -Diagnostic study conducted and responses were timely
2.6 Establishment of grinding mill scheme	7 grinding mill machines installed	10 grinding mill machines established, 1 in each parish and earning at least UGX 53,426 per month. Overall, UGX 3,205,559 earned but 77% spent on fuel & maintenance 1 rice hurler procured for Wadelai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funds being locally raised to continue provision of scholastic materials for OVC in school after the phase out of the project -Women access to labor and time saving devices -Job opportunity created in the community -Community zeal to support OVC inspired
Objective 3: Increased community support, care and protection of the Rights of OVC			
3.1 Train Peer educators cum counselors	20 PECS trained	20 PECS(50% women) trained and awarded certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local services providers established in the community - PECs providing psychological support to OVC and communities
3.2 Hold awareness seminars	10 workshops held	10 workshops held for 500 people (48.8% women)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community members aware of the plight of OVC and community responsibilities to OVC rights - Different duty bearers agreed to enhance their support for OVC
3.3. Hold advocacy and lobbying workshops	2 workshops for 100 people	2 workshops held for 100 people (25% Women)	Local government staff made commitment to mainstream OVC in plans and budget
3.4 Produce local IEC materials	500 posters, 1000 stickers and 4 radio talk shows	600 posters, 1000 stickers, and 4 radio programmes produced	Increased awareness on OVC
3.5 Provide psychosocial counseling	360 OVCs counseled	19,148 (52% males) were reached of which 84% were educated (52% males) and 14% counseled (52% females)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self- stigmatization reduced - Parenting skills improved -Increased demand for VCT services -Enhanced community awareness of HIV/AIDS and public testimonies
3.6 Train OVC in life skills	100 OVC (50% girls)	100 OVC (50% girls) trained in life skills	OVC can assertively integrate in society by withstanding peer pressure and avoiding adult exploitation

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
3.7 Provision of OVC households with treated mosquito nets	479 households given 3 treated mosquito nets each	900 mosquito nets distributed	-Reduced morbidity in household
3.8 Provision of OVC households with hybrid seeds variety	150 families to be given rice seed, 479 to be given cassava cuttings, 188 to be given groundnuts seeds	479 families given cassava cuttings, 1 bag each, 141 given Irish potatoes, 188 to be given groundnuts seeds. Rice seeds were distributed to all support families in Wadelai.	-Due to bad weather, this has not yielded any result

5.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Table 2 below presents the financial summary for the period.

Table 2: Financial performance

Activity	Budget	Actual	Variance
Personnel			
Project Managers	5,400,000	3,700,000	1,700,000
Programme Accountant	1,200,000	1,200,000	-
Field Officers	9,600,000	6,800,000	2,800,000
Safari Allowance	4,000,000	2,430,000	1,570,000
Sub Total	20,200,000	14,130,000	6,070,000
Direct Programme Supplies/Equipments			
Communications(Airtime, internet)	1,560,000	1,230,000	330,000
Operations and Maintenance of Motorcycle	4,800,000	3,380,000	1,420,000
Sub Total	6,360,000	4,610,000	1,750,000
Capacity Building /Trainings			
Hold Preparatory Meeting	4,900,000	4,900,000	-
Training and Formation of PLC	2,936,000	2,936,000	-
Identification of OVCs and families	1,990,000	1,990,000	-
Visits and verification	2,750,000	2,750,000	-
OVC database establishment	4,070,000	4,070,000	-
Sub Total	16,646,000	16,646,000	-
Increased Capacity of OVCs and families			
Training OVC in Vocational Skills	37,170,000	37,170,000	-
Training OVCs in Entrepreneurial skills	8,346,000	8,346,000	-
Sub Total	45,516,000	45,516,000	-
Increased community support, care and protection of the rights of OVCs			
Training of Peer Educators	12,396,400	12,396,400	-
Awareness raising workshops	2,807,000	2,807,000	-
Production of IEC materials	3,300,000	3,300,000	-
Advocacy Meetings	14,850,000	14,850,000	-
Psychosocial support to PECs	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
Training OVCs in Life Skills	3,582,500	3,582,500	-
Sub Total	39,935,900	39,935,900	-
Management, Monitoring and Evaluation			
Monthly/Quarterly Meetings	13,200,000	11,540,000	1,660,000
Monitoring and documentation	3,500,000	-	3,500,000
Evaluation	10,000,000	10,000,000	-
Sub Total	26,700,000	21,540,000	5,160,000
Procurement			
Scholastic materials	19,920,000	19,920,000	-
OVC Grinding Mill Scheme	45,000,000	55,918,000	- 10,918,000
OVC Family Support	34,287,500	31,197,000	3,090,500
Carpentry Tools	12,720,000	12,720,000	-
Sewing Machines	-	6,600,000	- 6,600,000
Sub Total	111,927,500	126,355,000	- 14,427,500

Indirect Cost	12,174,520	10,761,564	1,412,956
Sub Total	12,174,520	10,761,564	1,412,956
Grand Total	279,459,920	279,494,464	- 34,544

6.0 SYNERGY BUILDING

The project also benefited from a number of externalities, namely:

- Linkage with other duty bearers in the district who directly and indirectly supported it. Examples included the District NGO Forum, District AIDS Services Organization Network, Church leaders, Local Council structures, representatives of Youth and Women Council, and Community development workers.
- Support families in Erussi were linked to AFARD's food security project that was implementing an improved Irish potato farming. Similarly, through CARITAS it was expected that over 300 OVC were likely to benefit from a school programme funded by CARITAS Prague (Czech Republic and Inter Religious Council of Uganda and Uganda Catholic Secretariat).
- As a result of the advocacy two sub counties made concrete commitments to support the project. They provided stores for the rice seeds and allocated funds to train the identified support families in agronomic practices required to maximize yields.
- Two PLCs in Wadelai were facilitated by AFARD to apply for NUSAF funds to support other OVC.
- The district and lower local governments remained involved in this project by way of consultation, joint monitoring, sharing of reports.
- Inter-organizational linkages were also widened, for instance between AFARD and CARITAS, West Nile Private Sector Development Promotion Centre Ltd, CREAM, FORUDES and Unique Attractions.

7.0 CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project experienced the following challenges.

- Many village Local Council executives demanded for cash payments in order to participate in the project. This prevented them from learning more about the plight of OVC. Given that all local government plans are supposed to originate from such village local councils, OVC issues stood the risk of being excluded from government plans and budgetary allocations.
- PLCs lacked advocacy and lobbying skills that would enable them sustain the impacts of the project, for instance following up on promises made by local governments.
- Many more needy OVCs in the project area remained unattended to given the amount of funding available.
- Many OVC who passed well in Primary Leaving Examination have failed to proceed to secondary schools due to lack of school fees.

- The ability of OVC support families and the trained OVC to generate income was hampered by lack of funds they could invest in ventures they felt could yield profits.
- High operational cost for the grinding mills due to the high and ever increasing fuel prices.
- Prolonged drought dried up most crops that had germinated and prevented the timely planting of rice. This was a great set back for support families.
- The PECs lacked means of transport with which to effectively cover the parishes of their assignments. Having homes in those parishes was however a small consolation.
- The girls with vocational skills lack sufficient customers as people prefer to buy 'second hand cloths' and were not yet sure of the proficiency of the girls who had just trained for 3 months).
- Some guardians/parents are claiming ownership over the OVC tools claiming that according to Alur culture, children have to "obey" their superiors without question. This greatly discouraged the affected OVC.
- While people were willing to undergo Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) services as a result of the messages given out by the PECs in relation to HIV/AIDS prevention, the long distances to testing points was a great hinderance. For instance, Erussi to Nebbi is over 30Km for those at the far end and Wadelai to Pakwach is 40Km.

8.0 LESSONS LEARNT

- Harmful community politics that seem inevitable in any project can best be minimized by adopting a more participatory and transparent process in which the entire community has a voice.
- Community review meetings are good avenues for giving project accountability, horizontally and vertically, to multiple stakeholders.
- Sector based planning approach that guides government services as is practiced in its current form by the Ministry of Finance and Planning and mediated through IPFs (Indicative Planning Figures) is not responsive to needs that are generated at the grassroots and without an affirmative action, the system cannot respond to the needs of the marginalized groups such as OVC.
- Leaving mobilisation in the hands of men creates gender imbalance in attendance and representation. Men prefer to invite fellow men.
- The provision of scholastic materials to the OVC together with psychosocial support improves their love for education and social integration.
- Providing skills and tools alone to poor people is not enough as they also need the seed capital with which to complete the circuit of using such foundations.
- Given ample capacity and empowerment, community managed income generating scheme can succeed. The PLCs after an agreed guideline are managing the installed grinding machines at the parish levels well.

9.0 THE WAY FORWARD

To make a vibrant impact, the OVC Support Project needs to:

- Widen channels of mobilization to include women as agents.
- Monitoring and documentation of the project best practices should be made routine in order to allow continuous learning.
- Continuously engage local governments to ensure that they adopt an OVC sensitive budgeting and also take responsibility for sustaining project impact.
- Lobby higher governments to hasten universal secondary education so that OVCs who pass their PLEs can join and retain their education enthusiasms into secondary education level.
- Provide seed funds to trainees so that they can optimally apply the skills and tools acquired.
- Negotiate with the health sub-district coordinators for a mobile VCT services to increase access to the service in remote areas.

Annex 1: Key data on PLCs and PECs

Categorization	Variables	Parish level committee			Peer educators-cum-counselors		
		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Age-group	20-24	3.3%	4.4%	7.8%	-	15.0%	15.0%
	25-29	4.4%	2.2%	6.7%	5.0%	10.0%	15.0%
	30-34	6.7%	6.7%	13.3%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%
	35-39	8.9%	6.7%	15.6%	-	10.0%	10.0%
	40-44	13.3%	5.6%	18.9%	15.0%	-	15.0%
	45-49	11.1%	4.4%	15.6%	15.0%	5.0%	20.0%
	50-54	3.3%	7.8%	11.1%	-	-	-
	55 and over	5.6%	5.6%	11.1%	5.0%	-	5.0%
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Educational attainment	None	-	6.7%	6.7%	-	-	-
	Primary	23.3%	25.6%	48.9%	-	10.0%	10.0%
	Secondary	32.2%	10.0%	42.2%	40.0%	35.0%	75.0%
	Post secondary	-	1.1%	1.1%	10.0%	5.0%	15.0%
	FAL	1.1%	-	1.1%	-	-	-
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Marital status	Single	4.4%	5.6%	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%
	Married	51.1%	36.7%	87.8%	45.0%	45.0%	90.0%
	Widow	1.1%	1.1%	2.2%	-	-	-
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Household size	1 person	-	-	-	-	5.0%	5.0%
	2-5 people	13.3%	4.4%	17.8%	10.0%	25.0%	35.0%
	6-10 people	28.9%	30.0%	58.9%	20.0%	20.0%	40.0%
	>10 people	14.4%	8.9%	23.3%	20.0%	-	20.0%
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Household breadwinner	Self	13.3%	6.7%	20.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%
	Husband	33.3%	16.7%	50.0%	35.0%	45.0%	80.0%
	Wife	7.8%	20.0%	27.8%	10.0%	-	10.0%
	Mother/Father	2.2%	-	2.2%	-	-	-
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Income generating activity engaged in	Farming	55.6%	41.1%	96.7%	40.0%	30.0%	70.0%
	Petty trade	1.1%	2.2%	3.3%	5.0%	20.0%	25.0%
	Salary	-	-	-	5.0%	-	5.0%
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Other community roles	Care givers	2.2%	2.2%	4.4%	-	-	-
	Development Worker	14.4%	6.7%	21.1%	15.0%	10.0%	25.0%
	Local council	16.7%	8.9%	25.6%	5.0%	15.0%	20.0%
	None	4.4%	13.3%	17.8%	-	15.0%	15.0%
	Opinion leader	-	1.1%	1.1%	-	5.0%	5.0%
	Religious work	12.2%	2.2%	14.4%	10.0%	-	10.0%
	School management	3.3%	4.4%	7.8%	10.0%	5.0%	15.0%
	Youth/Women Representative	3.3%	4.4%	7.8%	10.0%	-	10.0%
	Total	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Source: Bio-data sheet of PLCs and PECs

Annex 2: Percent distribution of OVCs in-schools by age-group

Age	Class	Male	Female	Total
0-4 years	P1-P3	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
5-9 years	Nursery	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
	P1-P3	32.1%	39.7%	71.8%
	P4-P7	12.8%	11.5%	24.4%
	S1-S4	2.6%		2.6%
	Total	47.4%	52.6%	100.0%
10-14 years	P1-P3	22.8%	22.8%	45.6%
	P4-P7	28.8%	23.3%	52.1%
	S1-S4	0.9%	1.4%	2.3%
	Total	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
15-19 years	P1-P3	9.5%	11.4%	21.0%
	P4-P7	35.2%	25.7%	61.0%
	S1-S4	11.4%	6.7%	18.1%
	Total	56.2%	43.8%	100.0%