

AFARD

STRATEGY 2020-2025

Building Thriving and Peaceful Families



FOREWORD



We are delighted to introduce to you AFARD Strategy 2020 – 2025. In July 2020, AFARD will mark 20 years of dedicated stewardship of pursuing its vision of “a prosperous, healthy, and informed people of West Nile” through innovative capacity building for sustainable livelihoods in West Nile region. By working in collaboration with local governments, religious and cultural institutions, academia, and the private sector, AFARD has positively impacted the lives of over one million people and strengthened its credibility, legitimacy, partnerships, expertise and accountability.

Aware that the region lags behind in all major human development indicators and it will need more than 30 years to catch up with the national economic development levels, the vision of AFARD is still relevant now as before. The region continues to face glaring but solvable challenges of food insecurity, low household income, and high youth unemployment and child poverty. Yet there are dismal public sector per capita investments, few NGOs to complement government service delivery, and a young private sector to stir change. These call for scalable systematic change of what works in the socio-economic transformation, knowledge-driven and results-oriented management under a bold leadership with bridge building skills able to break barriers – negative mind-set and norms.

This plan, worth UGX 42 billion, is anchored on the dire need to Inspire people for self-development, Empower them with relevant capacities, and Account for real time change. The plan theme – Thriving and Peaceful Families - sets a direction that will guide AFARD’s commitment to ‘reduce hunger and extreme poverty in **20,000** peaceful families’ with **138,500**



Nutrition-sensitive agriculture for more production and consumption of diversified foods



Inclusive market participation for decent employment in strategic agribusiness and vocational labor markets



Voice and accountability for responsive and people-centered decentralized local governance.

people (70% nationals and **30%** refugees; **60%** females, **25%** youth, and **15%** men). To do so, three major strategic pillars will be pursued:

Together, the plan will positively impact in the targeted families as: 65% will be hunger free; 50% exit extreme poverty; 65% of women and youth are empowered; and 35% of children exit child poverty. These gains align to Sustainable Development Goals (1,2,5,8,13) and the National Development Plan III (especially S01 agro-industrialization/youth employment, and S03 skills development/social protection). To achieve this ambition, AFARD will be guided by the following principles: Family centered approach that “leaves no one behind;” Promoting nutrition-sensitive and climate smart agriculture; Pursuing sustainable agricultural intensification using agricultural value-chain development; Harnessing strategic partnership; and Mainstreaming of: Social inclusion; Financial inclusion; Environment Conservation; Good governance; Sanitation and hygiene; Family planning and HIV/AIDS.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Ocan Sabino Odoki
(Chair, Board of Directors)

Dr. Samuel Orochi Orach
(Rep. Founder Members)

Dr. Alfred Lakwo
(Executive Director)



ABOUT AFARD



The Agency For Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) is a registered local, not-for-profit, non-denominational, non-governmental organization (NGO - Reg. No. S.5914/3753) formed in July 2000. AFARD's vision is "a prosperous, healthy and informed people of West Nile region." Currently, AFARD operates in eight of the 11 districts of West Nile region (Pakwach, Nebbi, Zombo, Arua, Yumbe, Moyo, Obongi, and Adjumani). It is also a member of national and district NGO networks e.g., Uganda National NGO Forum, Participatory Ecological Land Use and Management (PELUM), Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET), and Uganda National AIDS Services Organization (UNASO), among others. Over the years, AFARD has accumulated vast knowledge, experience and expertise in the areas of sustainable agriculture, enterprise development, youth skilling, preventive community health, and community-led advocacy and has successfully implemented several projects with funding from European Union, Danida, Austrian Development Agency, FAO, UNICEF, Irish Aid, Gorta/Self Help Africa, Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Cord Aid, HORIZONT3000, Civil Society Fund, AWO – International; Kindernothilfe (KNH), Manos Unidas, Sall Family Foundation, Total Bv, and the Embassies of Canada, Ireland, and Netherlands, among others.

Key lessons learned

In the last 5 years (2015-19), AFARD implemented 18 projects worth UGX 22 billion. These projects worked with 1,646 community groups, 101,244 households and served a total of 514,066 people (158,544 or 13% of whom were South Sudanese refugees). As at the end of 2018, 88% were food secure, 52% exited extreme/asset poverty with average net worth of UGX 17.3 million. Meanwhile at the organizational level AFARD diversified its donor base, increased its portfolio of projects and funding; and improved its corporate governance. This Strategic Plan therefore builds on the gains made and lessons learned from past engagements and the recommendations from various independent evaluations. Notable here are:

- Agricultural productivity in the region has persistently remained very low due to: a) The production of low value crops (e.g., simsim, sunflower, soybeans, beans, tobacco, cotton, etc.) that sold raw without value addition only enslaves smallholder farmers to middlemen and processors. Our analysis shows that at the current one season production cycle per

year and market price, no amount of increased yield will make many of these crops alone enable smallholder households to exit extreme poverty. For instance, a farmer needs 89 acres of simsim, 64 acres of sunflower, 59 acres of soybeans, 26 acres of beans, 21 acres of cotton, etc. to earn an income that can afford the USD 1.90 poverty line threshold; b) High population growth that is negatively impacting on land sizes available for agricultural production. Family land sizes have reduced tremendously to 2 acres (e.g., in Erussi/Jangokoro and) or less. Data also shows that smallholder farmers productivity decline with age, hence rising level of vulnerability among elderly persons; and c) High dependent on international market forces – big buyers, volatile prices, changing quality demands, etc.

To change this situation will require addressing family planning head on for instance in collaboration with the Inter Religious Council of Uganda. There is need to increase production per unit of land, searching for fair price and income diversification. Upscaling animal traction technology will save menial labour especially among women and elderly farmers. Targeting high impact commodities – local poultry, vegetables, cocoa, vanilla, coffee, banana, etc. for agribusiness together with collective marketing/cooperative formation to ensure economies of scope to reduce transaction cost for output buyers will improve income. Families also need to adopt agricultural intensification approach that integrates perennial and seasonal crops with small animals. Finally, it is time to pilot value addition options targeting the growing local urban markets e.g., simsim pasted, roasted pumpkin seeds, and hibiscus powder processing using simple machines, packaging, branding, and market promotions. Lead farmers approach as peer educators should be replicated for effective adoption of good agricultural and climate smart practices.

- Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) is a critical platform upon which rural socio-economic transformation and gender equality can be anchored. It provides the poor “spaces for identity, voice, and economic action.”

However, because it mainly promotes income for consumption smoothening rather than being an investment vehicle, there is needs for the approach that target VSLA to investment besides the provision of critical complementary skills for income generation and financial literacy.

- Refugees have both small land sizes (30*30 meters) their inclusion in farming as a business calls for agricultural intensification of high-impact crops (horticulture) and small livestock (poultry) planting. Land dialogue should also be part of peaceful co-existence.
- The labour market for youth employment is often dynamic (in terms of emerging markets and trade returns-for-efforts). This requires periodic labour market scan with profitability analysis and strategic decision to promote only those trades that provide decent employment opportunities.
- Market linkages of smallholder farmers and youth graduates with factor market actors (insurance, finance, business services) alone is insufficient to ensure effective market participation. Nascent enterprises have limited niches and market shares. They need business development services including deliberate marketing of beneficiary products as their firms grow to self-manage their business-to-business relationships.
- Many community groups are not sustainable. The VSLA they rely on benefit members and after share-out these groups have no fallback position to keep members together. To the contrary, sustainable groups are those with member-owned assets (fund, land, forests, coffee plants, etc.). It is therefore important to promote group-and-member financial growth strategy.
- Local governments have the mandate and willingness to develop their areas and support CSO activities. However, they lack the funds to do so because 99% of their budgets come from central government with strings-attached. It is vital to allocate budget for their effective participation in project management.



WEST NILE REGION AT A GLANCE

Table 1: Key development indicators

The D-STEP analytical approach used by BPSS Netherlands was used in preparing this strategic plan because it provides a better framework for a micro-macro understanding of the demographic, social, technological, economic, and political factors that influence organizations business. From the analysis see table 1 it is evident that nationally Uganda has made very impressive economic development in the last three decades. Poverty headcount declined from 56% in 1992 to 21% in 2018ⁱ and 33% of the total population by 2012 was middle class.ⁱⁱ Yet, West Nile region is one of the very poorest regions. Although it has 7.9% of Uganda's population, its GDP share is only 2.7%. In 2014, the region's GDP per capita of \$184ⁱⁱⁱ was far below the middle-income status of \$1,000 aspired by the NDP II and about four times less than the \$703 nationally. The region's poverty levels (35% at \$1.25 or over 67% at \$1.90 international poverty line) are higher than those of Uganda (21%). At this rate, the region's economic growth will need to grow at 10% a year for 30 years in order to close the income gap with the rest of Uganda.^{iv} Interestingly, politically West Nile region has 11 decentralized districts, namely; Pakwach, Nebbi, Zombo, Madi Okollo, Arua, Maracha, Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, Obongi, and Adjumani. It is peaceful and hosting refugees from South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo. It is also strategically located as a potential business hub of these neighboring countries and Acholi and Bunyoro sub-regions. Demographically, there are 3.1 million nationals and 704,902 refugees. Majority of the national population (85%) resides in rural

Key indicators	West Nile	Uganda
Total nationals' population (Number, 2019)	3,103,500	40,308,000
Number of refugees' population (Number, 2019)	704,902	1,205,913
Poverty head count (%)	35	21
Average monthly consumption (UGX)	294,000	416,000
Food poor households (%)	38	37
Household with non-farm enterprises (%)	52	37
Literacy rates (%)	66	74
Life expectancy (years)	52	63
Households dependent on agriculture (%)	95	80
Access to grid electricity (%)	3	22
People 15-49 years owning a mobile phone (%)	43	60
Households with access to safe water (%)	83	80
Households with toilets with hand washing facility (%)	61	59
Households using firewood for cooking (%)	78	64
Women median age at first sex (Years)	17	17
Women median age at first marriage (Years)	18	19
Women median age at first birth (Years)	19	19
Average family size	6	5
Women not using any family planning method (%)	78	49
Unmet need for family planning (%)	30	20
Child status		
Average exclusive breastfeeding (month)	4	5
Minimum dietary diversity (of 6-23 month) (%)	34	41
Under 5 years with anaemia (%)	56	53
Under 5 years who are stunted (%)	34	29
Under 5 years who are wasted (%)	4	4

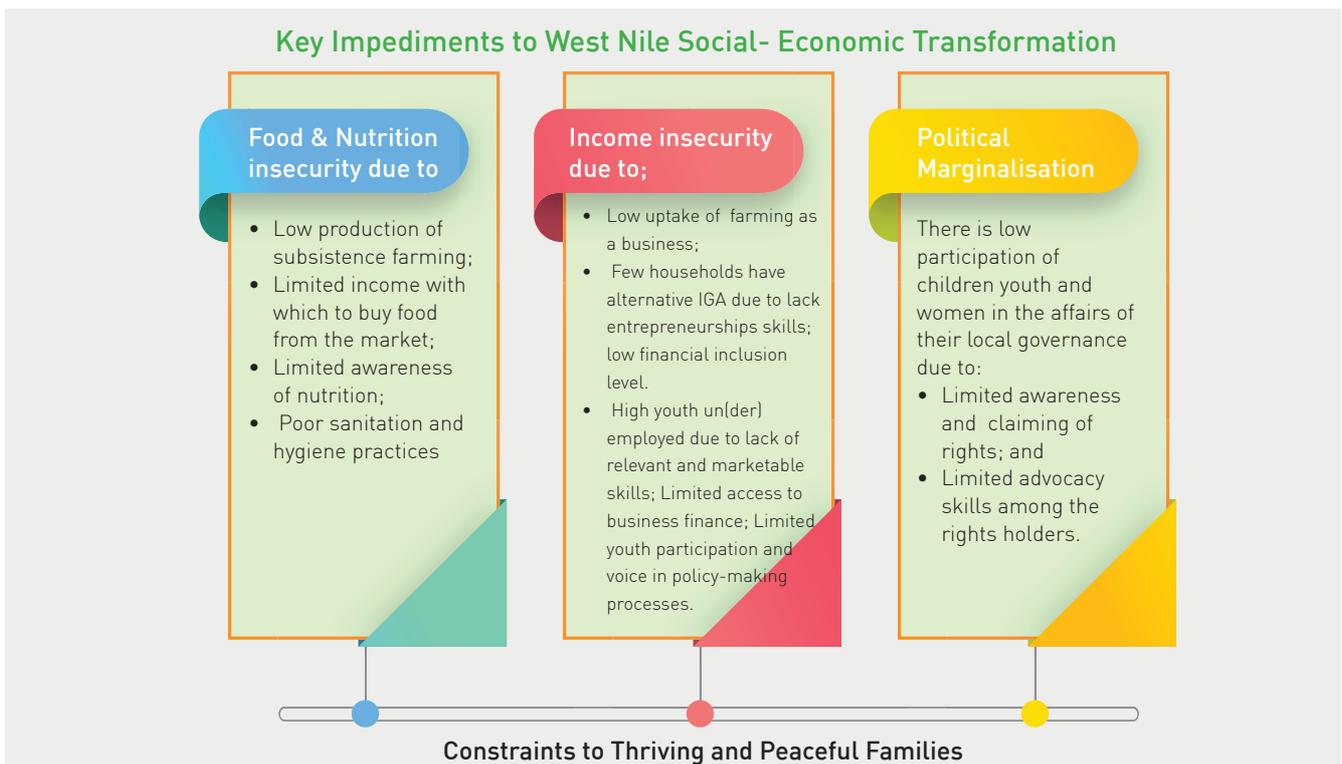
areas and women head 31% of households. But social services need improvement. Few of the population have access to socio-economic services (e.g. health facility within 5 km radius (30%), piped water (6%), borehole (57%), formal financial institutions (15%), mobile phone (23%), toilet facilities (24%).

The above snapshot shows the slow economic recovery of the region from the devastating 1979-2006 military unrests that made many people in the region refugees and left a generation without formal education for formal labour market participation or commercial agriculture.



The multi-stakeholder consultations conducted in 2019 with Board of Directors, government leaders, refugees and host communities, smallholder farmer group members, private sector (input and output markets, and financial service providers), unemployed and employed youth, women in self-help groups, and children agreed that the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 should address only the three high-risk challenges to West Nile economic transformation, namely: 1) the persistent food and nutrition insecurity; 2) high household income insecurity; and 3) the political marginalization of grassroots communities in decentralized governance. Table 1 below presents a snapshot of how West Nile lags behind the rest of Uganda. Figure 1 shows the core drivers of this situation. These issues set AFARD’s aspirations and intervention pillars in contributing towards enhancing the region’s catchup with the impressive national economic development.

Figure 1: Key drivers of West Nile economic stagnation



1. Food and nutrition insecurity



Six in every 10 households eat two non-nutritious meals a day.^{vii} The mean monthly household consumption per capita is a dismal \$0.04 per person per day.^{viii} While 48% of children in the region are deprived of food;^{ix} 16% of children in refugee hosting districts eat less than two meals daily.^x Refugees mainly depend on World Food Programme (WFP) food ratio that is insufficient in both quantity and quality for healthy living^{xi} because only 25% of refugees have acceptable food consumption score^{xii} as they mainly eat 3-5 food types^{xiii} especially cereals, pulses, and oil/fats.^{xiv} This deplorable situation is primarily attributed to:

- (i) low production of subsistence farming. The region relies on rainfed subsistence agriculture characterized by use of family labour and indigenous technology, small land sizes (0.5-2 acres), growing mainly staple food crops with limited intensification (e.g. small livestock, perennial crops), and very low use of improved inputs and climate smart practices. Yield gaps average 65% and post-harvest losses is estimated at over 35%. This agricultural livelihood is also highly exposed to climate change that in the last 5-years has manifested in the forms of erratic rainfall, floods, prolonged drought, hailstorm, and strong winds with inevitably decreased yields. The result is low yields, inadequate food supplies and minimal surplus of produce for sales;
- (ii) Limited income with which to buy food from the market due to lack of sufficient surplus harvest to sell for income and lack of alternative sources of income. Without adequate incomes, many households are unable to diversify their diet hence they eat the local staple foods.
- (iii) Limited awareness of nutrition. Women reiterated during the consultations that they hardly diversify family diet because they don't know how to differentiate between what foods children, teenagers, adult, the sick or pregnant mothers should eat. Hardly could they link the 4Ps (production, planning, processing, and preservation) concept of safe nutrition. In addition, negative cultural feeding norms discriminate against women and girls from accessing some nutritious foods. Households don't share food equitably as men eat first with their sons and women and their daughter eat last. More so, many men resist eating of green vegetables arguing, "we are not goats or cows to eat grass.
- (iv) Poor sanitation and hygiene practices. 31% of households practice open defecation. Children reported that most of them defecate in the bush or along road paths. Many homes lack safe sanitation facilities (e.g., toilet with handwashing facilities). This situation emanates from: (i) Limited knowledge of preventive health; and (ii) Lack of supportive local policies or by-law that both promote owning and using safe sanitation and hygiene practices. The LC 1 Chairman in Pacego parish retorted, "Without any bye-law what

can I do to a family head that doesn't have sanitation facilities? My hands are tied.”

- (v) Increased environmental degradation. Population pressure with declining farm yields continues to trigger massive demand for scarce natural resources. Trees are depleted, including by bush burning, for more arable land, shelter construction and wood fuel for cooking. The District Forest Office of Moyo estimates that annually 1,000 refugee households consume wood fuel equivalent to 60 acres of land. Few families use energy saving stoves, briquettes, or solar due to limited knowledge and high cost of the technologies. Communities also have insufficient knowledge on the risks of environmental degradation. As such, now 65% of women and girls trek long distance (over one hour) to fetch firewood.
- (vi) High population growth rates. A typical household in West Nile region has 7 people. This is because of cultural practices that support early marriage, and having many children. Family planning is rarely used due to prejudice and misunderstanding, cultural and religious limitations, weak male participation or lack of access to family planning services. The result is that there are many mouths to feed than the household economic capacity can support.

The end result is that poor smallholder families are trapped in intergenerational hunger and poverty. They hardly have enough yield to neither secure adequate food supply nor any surplus to earn sufficient income for a decent living. By growing only staple crops, they hardly eat diversified foods for healthy living nor do they have diversified income streams. Without safe sanitation and hygiene practices, they are exposed to high incidence of water-related diseases that cause loss of income and many productive labour days to medical care. These situations, in the face of climate change and volatile markets, make families (especially female- and elderly-headed households) increasingly vulnerable to livelihood shocks and trapped in chronic poverty.

2. High income insecurity



Low family income was attributed to two key factors: low uptake of farming as a business and high youth under/unemployment. These are analyzed below.

a) Low uptake of farming as a business

Many families grow traditional low value crops (e.g. simsim, beans, tobacco, cotton) that without value addition only enslaves them to middlemen and processors. Yet reliance on subsistence agriculture has failed to promote an effective value chain development that can synergistically attract private sector investments and stir household commodity specialization for increased incomes and better well-being. No wonder, northern Uganda only represents 4.5% of Uganda's exports.^{xv} These failures of agribusiness are compounded by: low use of improved inputs. Only about 8% of farmers use fertilizer (4 kgs per hectare)^{xvi} and only 10% use improved seeds^{xvii} due to high prices and high level of adulteration/fake inputs^{xviii} given the poor government

inspection systems^{xxix} and an ineffective National Seed Certification Service (NSCS).^{xx} Post-harvest losses are too high (about 20%-40%)^{xxi} coupled with poor cleaning, drying and storage systems; skills shortage as government extension service is heavily underfunded and mismanaged. Only 3.5% and 3.6% of the households in West Nile region have access to agricultural and veterinary extension services respectively. Risks are also too many.^{xxiii} Finally, farmers are not organized in producer groups or cooperatives, which would allow them to produce goods together, benefit from bulk purchasing, learn new agricultural and climate-friendly practices, adhere to market standards, add value to their products, and sell them in larger quantities.

Apart from the above, few households practice agricultural intensification (crops, livestock, and fruits/trees) to increase their income portfolios. More so, few (52%) have alternative income generating activities. Apart from lack of finance that 23% point to as curtailing their ability to start or expand their non-farm enterprises,^{xxiv} many also lack entrepreneurship skills and access to complementary business development services. There is also generally a low level of financial literacy given the high financial mismanagement practices households and individuals indulge in. This situation is worsened by the low financial inclusion level in the region. About 87% of the population live more than 5 km from a commercial bank^{xxv} and commercial interest rates are exorbitantly high (around 30% per annum). While 13%, 4% and 1% adult Ugandans save, access credit, and access insurance services from formal institutions respectively,^{xxvi} in West Nile, instead only 0.5% of households have access to formal loans. Majority of the people (55%) save at home, 17% in VSLA, and only 10% in formal financial institutions.^{xxvii} SACCOs' that were promoted by government are also very exclusive of poor people (due to high share value and rural elite capture). Many are mismanaged, delinked from economic activities (other than finance) and formal financial institutions, and lack compliance to true cooperative principles.^{xxviii}

b) High youth un(der)employed

The youth have largely not benefited from the jobless economic growth in Uganda. There are few employment opportunities for young people, who enter in thousands into the labour market every year. While in the last decades the labour force grew annually with 390,000 new job seekers, only 8,120 jobs were created each year.^{xxix} Two-thirds of all jobs created in 2001-2011 were confined to only six districts and mainly in central Uganda.^{xxx} Rural areas contribute 96% to national poverty. This has resulted into a steady increase in unemployment rates from 1.9% in 2009 to 9.4% in 2016.^{xxxi} The majority (64%) of unemployed people is the youth^{xxxii} and especially female youth.^{xxxiii} A recent market assessment^{xxxiv} indicates only 2% of refugees are employed in the formal sector and 70% of youth are unemployed. It is worrying, that at the current population growth rate and public-private sector absorption capacity, it will likely take one generation before the majority of the labour force has a non-farm salary job.^{xxxv} Filmer and Fox, et al (2014) estimates that over the next 10 years only one in four of Sub-Saharan Africa youth will find a wage job, and only a small fraction of those jobs will be "formal jobs" in modern enterprises.^{xxxvi} This situation emanates from:

- (i) Lack of relevant and marketable skills due in part to the low education status and the mismatch between formal education and the 21st century job requirements. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) has an exceptionally high (44%) dropout rate. Equally, Business, Technical, and Vocational Education and Trainings (BTVETs) are hardly accessed by rural youth given that these training institutions are urban based, and charge high fees. More so, the current vocational skills provision is too theory-based, supply driven, with outdated programmes (mostly organized around traditional trades and skills) compared to the labor market needs, with a low-quality practice, and weak work-based learning components. etc. Many youth (70%) are therefore seeking employment;
- (ii) Limited access to business finance due to rigid conditions of formal financial institutions and politicized government programmes. Only 4% of youth have access to credit from banks and other formal institutions because they are not considered as credit worthy given that many of them lack collateral, credit history or steady employment. Government programmes such as the Youth Venture Capital Fund that are disbursed by commercial banks have equally failed to reach out to rural youth. Youth also lack business and financial management skills necessary for self-employment.
- (iii) Limited youth participation and voice in policy-making processes: Youth acknowledged that they do not engage in policy-making

processes that allocate government resources. Many pointed out that, “we do not understand how government budgets and projects are allocated”. This youth unawareness is attributed to their limited knowledge of their rights to decentralized development and low civic engagement skills. As a result, many youth do not benefit from local government development and youth projects.

3. High political marginalization



The consultations also pointed out that there is generally very low participation of children, youth and women in the affairs of their local governance. This situation was attributed to: a) limited awareness and claiming of rights. Although the 1995 Uganda Constitution upholds the rights, duties and responsibilities of children, youth and women, both the rights holders (children, youth and women) and duty bearers (parents, community and some local government leaders) are not aware of these rights. Leaders echoed that they had neither been sensitized about nor have they even seen copies of the policy frameworks for children, youth and women. Yet, without the correct and adequate knowledge of these rights, these social groups will continue to suffer in the hands of those who should protect them with impunity. With many (inter)national laws and policies unknown to local leaders as well as having no copies of the laws, “at times we sit and see abuses going on because our hands are tied from acting” argues one lower local government leader. In addition, b) there is limited advocacy skills among the rights holders in order for them to productively engage with their leaders both to press demand and hold accountable their leaders.

For children, youth, and women that AFARD strategically works with, the situation is that of gloom. Children are disempowered; youth are underemployed; and women are discriminated against. Although these social categories represent the majority of the population, they live in impoverished conditions without dignified lives able to provide individual family members with the opportunity to achieve their full potentials. Social norms and poverty continue to condition lifestyles towards a scarcity mindset. Without hope families live “survival livelihoods.” These are explained below.



**at times we sit and see abuses going on
because our hands are tied from acting**





Children are disempowered

In traditional agro-economy, children are expected to provide labour on family farm even at the cost of their education and growth. Child labour stands at 15%. Discussions with children revealed that they face a lot of deprivations that perpetuate child poverty especially in area if food security, education, water and sanitation, and protection. Children narrated many compelling stories of inadequate food, inability to enroll in and complete schooling. Girl children pointed out that they trekked extra-long distances (at times 6 km) to fetch water and firewood. It was visible that many children lacked decent clothes. Stories of always being beaten at home for minor offenses and some of the punishments causing bodily harm were narrated. Families were noted as “living a hand-to-mouth life because all that is produced is unable to feed the family and leave surplus for income to meet other basic needs.” Such insecure livelihoods directly impact negatively on the rights of children to live a good quality of life. There are also rampant and socially accepted practices of child marriage. The median age at first sex (17 years) and first marriage (18 years) makes inevitably low median age at first birth (19 years). The key drivers of these negative practices include:

- (i) Inadequate awareness among children, parents and community leaders about the dangers of child marriage;
- (ii) Embedded social norms that promote child marriage;
- (iii) High poverty rates that gives bride price a valued economic space in household survival strategies; and
- (iv) Weak political engagement among community, religious, and political leaders against child marriage. As a result, many girls (and often boys) are pulled out of school early and are forced into marriage. Sooner, they become teen parents with many children to look after. Yet without adequate education and marketable skills, they are trapped in subsistence farming. In these “families of children,” the child mothers suffer gender-based violence and marital instabilities. And their children face the brunt of intergenerational poverty.

living a hand-to-mouth life because all that is produced is unable to feed the family and leave surplus for income to meet other basic needs.



Youths are underemployed

Although youth are the majority of the total population (76% are under 30 years) in West Nile, due to the above, majority of them (92%) are confined in vulnerable employment in the informal low-risk low return activities and especially in trade and services sector that provide a favorable labour market for self-employment because the sector has low entry barriers, low capital requirement, and short gestation period. With only 38% of the labour force in paid employment, 62% of Ugandan workforce work for free mostly as family labour. It is also common sight finding many youths roaming in the villages without any productive activity.

Already at 9 AM one finds many youth drunk or simply gathered playing cards or “umweso.” In rural areas, youth are mainly self-employed in agriculture and a few non-farm enterprises that earn dismal monthly incomes (less than UGX 45,000). Few have productive assets (e.g. only 40% had livestock) and 97% were extremely poor (living under US \$ 1.90 per person per day). Many rural out-of-school youths also marry early. These teen parents suffer from poor parenting, failed marriages, drug abuse (alcohol, marijuana, khat, etc.), and gender-based violence primarily out of frustration about their economic inability to support themselves and their families. With weak political capability, these youth also hardly participate in local government policy processes.

In addition, there is a 46 months transition period from training and education into stable employment. Such prolonged period of “waithood” or delayed

transition to adulthood reinforces increased youth dependency on parents and forces youth to make a living by creating “youthscapes” - new spaces and mechanisms for survival and operating in subcultures outside hegemonic structures that often subvert authority, namely drug abuse (alcohol, marijuana, khat, etc.) and gender-based violence. For refugees, this is a trigger to migrate to other parts of Uganda and or other countries including in Europe. More so, reports from UNHCR also indicates that some youth out of redundancy have been lured to go back to fight in South Sudan (regardless of the fighting sides they take).

Women are disadvantaged

Roles within agricultural production are highly gendered. Typically, women produce subsistence crops and men, cash crop. Women tilt the land they hardly own. Yet, they have limited decision-making power on what to farm, the kinds of inputs to use, access to credit and market as well as the control over produce harvested and income earned therefrom. The District Development Plans for Yumbe shows that socially, gender inequality is a norm in both refugee and host communities.

Few girls (only 5%) are enrolled in lower primary education and their retention rates are very low (40%) compared to boys (60%). The involvement of men in family planning and ante natal care is also low as 85% of clients are female and 95% of the children are escorted to access services by women. Child preference and spacing is a no-go topic for women to discuss regardless of the negative maternal health effects. Meanwhile, over 90% of domestic chores are done by women and girls. Without adequate and good food and decent clothing for the family women face psychological stress (apart from domestic violence from their partners) and community shame that affects their social integration.

These situations call for urgent intervention for West Nile region to catch up with the rest of Uganda. With the National Development Plan III focused on industrialization for wealth creation, this urgency requires an accelerated “family-based economic transformation” anchored on agricultural sector given its local knowledge and known high potential to reduce poverty especially among women and youth.

Tackling hunger, malnutrition and poverty while ensuring environmental protection and rights-based inclusion of the marginalized groups requires a shift in both mindset and practice from subsistence-based production of low value commodities that are sold without value-addition into agribusiness-driven, sustainable agricultural intensification (with climate smart agricultural practices) together with household livelihood diversification especially by youth employment in high return sectors of the agro-economy (e.g., animal traction, food processing, etc.).

This will make smallholder farmers to farm commercially, earn better yields and income, as well as diversify their household income into non-farm opportunities. Meanwhile youth will enter into decent employment that will earn them income above survival livelihoods. Together, they will have adequate nutritious foods, build asset wealth, and live in peaceful families free from rights abuse.

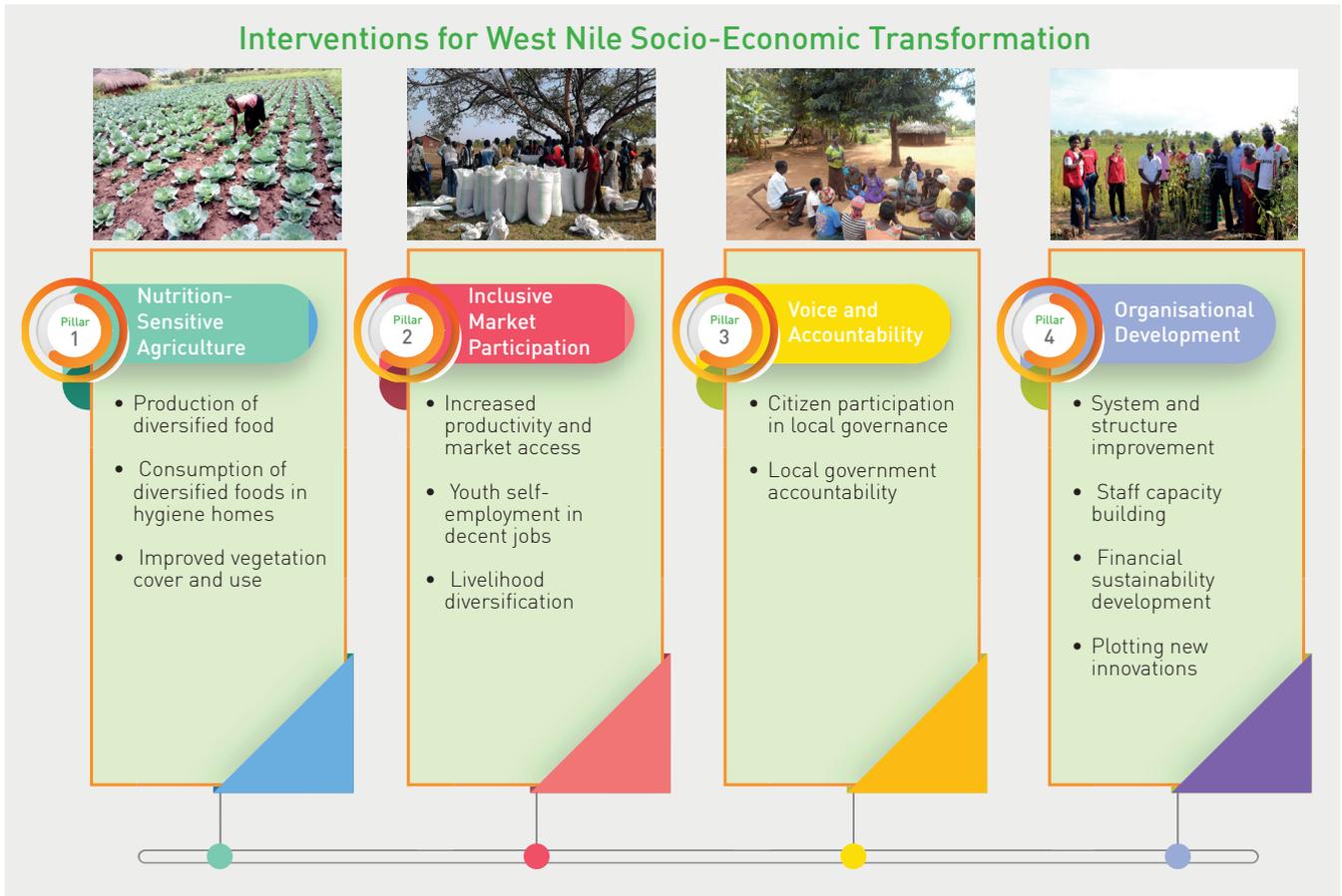


Our commitment

AFARD's vision is a "prosperous, healthy, and informed people of West Nile." This vision is still relevant as it was 20 years ago. Low financial net worth continues to inhibit dignified lives in West Nile region. Majority of the people still suffer from otherwise preventable diseases and hardly do they shape how they are governed. In this plan, AFARD will intervene in three strategic areas (see figure 2 – pillars 1-3). We are committed to contribute to a scalable socio-economic transformation of 500 million people in West Nile with our "Inspire - Empower - Account" approach. While the current global economic development is praiseworthy, our people live hand-to-mouth without any hope of a better future. Families have many children and dependants without any plan of how to improve their quality of life. Wealth is still considered good luck and a preserve of the few, rich. We strive to change such scarcity mindset that perpetuates intergenerational poverty so that poor families thrive. Poor people need to dream; dream big. Using their

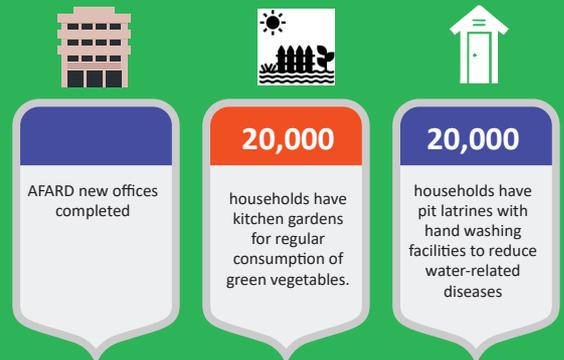
abundant God-given gifts (strategic geographical location, fertile land and water bodies, and energetic family members) with the right mindset, technologies and hard work they will be able start the journey out of hunger and extreme poverty. AFARD will build aspirations using family economic development plan approach. With clear goals, families will know where they are headed and why they need to commit to hard work and take control of their future. To translate their dreams into actions, AFARD will empower beneficiary households through capacity building with the right knowledge and skills, technologies and connections that boast labour productivity. Finally, to track progress and change therein, we will anchor transparency and accountability systems at all levels. Families, groups, and AFARD will need to openly and honestly show how and what is changing. Participatory and digitalized monitoring and evaluation and documentation system will be instituted and results will be shared with key stakeholders.

Figure 2: Key Intervention Pillars



The 10 Aspirations

By 2025, AFARD would like to deepen its impact in the region through the overall objective of: Reduced hunger and extreme poverty in peaceful families. This focus aims at reaching out to 138,500 people (70% nationals and 30% refugees; 60% females; and 25% youth) from 20,000 households (and 800 groups) and ensuring that out of these households: 65% are hunger free; 50% exit extreme poverty; and 65% of women and youth are empowered. To achieve this ambition, the following will be delivered:



Guiding policy frameworks

In pursuing the above aspirations, AFARD's strategic plan will contribute to the below policies:

- a) The International Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) namely: Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; and Goal 13: Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- b) The various Uganda's development agenda especially:
 - Uganda Vision 2040 whose mission is to realize "a Transformed Uganda Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous country within 30 years;
 - National Development Plan (NDP III 2020-25) that strives for increased household income and improved well-being;
 - National Youth Policy 2001 that promotes productive employment for effective youth participation in national economic growth and development;
 - National Gender Policy 1997 whose goal is to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral part of Uganda's socio-economic development;
 - Agriculture Development Strategy 2015-2020 that targets increased agricultural production, productivity, profitability and competitiveness;
 - BTVET Strategic Plan (2011-2020) or Skilling Uganda that focuses on productivity enhancing and equitable access to skilling opportunities.
 - Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017 that seeks to facilitate access to financial assets and knowledge among rural populations;
 - National Strategy for Private Sector Development 2017-22 that focuses on boosting enterprise development and industrialization;
 - GoU and UNICEF (June 2015) National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy 2014-2020 that envisages human capital development and a dignified life.
 - The remodeled Refugee Act (2006) and Refugee Regulations (2010) that among other things allow refugees the right to work and own a business and property, and Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHOPE) Strategic Framework 2017 that seeks to expand economic opportunities for sustainable livelihoods through increased productivity and linkages to markets.

The Intervention Framework

Our intervention will be implemented through a beneficiary entry-to-exit journey with actions-to-outcomes focus. In the 6 years, 20,000 vulnerable families (with 138,500 people) will be participatorily selected using community-owned vulnerability criteria and organized and trained to develop functional and registered group or cooperatives through which the three pillars – Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture; Inclusive market participation; and Voice and Accountability – and cross-cutting issues for building thriving families will be delivered.

The Building Blocks to Our Goal

Goal: Reduce hunger and extreme poverty in peaceful families			
SDG Focus Goal 1: End poverty Goal 2: End hunger Goal 5: Achieve gender equality Goal 8: Promote productive employment Goal 13: Combat climate change			
NDP III Focus: P5: Community mobilization and mindset change; P1: Agro-industrialization; p2: Skills development; p4: Environment and climate change			
Intervention pillars	Pillar 1: Nutritious-sensitive agriculture	Pillar 2: Inclusive Market Participation	Pillar 3: Voice and Accountability
Strategic objectives	S01: Increased production and consumption of diversified foods in hygienic homes and community environments	S02: Increased income from decent employment opportunities in diversified on-farm and non-farm labour markets	S03: Improved responsiveness and accountability of local governments and peaceful co-existence for refugees and host communities.
Results	1.1: Increased consumption of diversified foods	2.1: Increased agricultural productivity and market access	3.1: Increased participation of citizens in local government planning processes
	1.2: Increased consumption of diversified foods in hygienic homes	2.2: Increased youth self-employment in decent jobs	3.2: Increased local government accountability to its constituency
	1.3: Improved vegetation cover	2.3: Increased access to business finance	
		2.4: Increased diversification into non-farm enterprises	
Cross cutting issues	Group dynamics; Foundation skills; VSLA; Gender; Sanitation & hygiene; Family planning; Environment		

Nutrition-sensitive Agriculture



Specific objective 1: Increased production and consumption of diversified foods in hygienic homes

To address the high food and nutrition insecurity in the region, AFARD will use climate smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture practices and community led total sanitation (CLTS) approach. A study will be conducted to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding nutrition and WASH practices and family planning to guide interventions. AFARD will increase the knowledge and skills of its extension staff so that they are able to integrate nutrition in extension services. This will enable them to support families to ably: 1) plan what to food produce well aware of the nutritional values; 2) integrate local poultry, fruits and green vegetables through kitchen gardening; 3) operationalize on the strong linkage between healthy diets and safe sanitation and hygiene practices through ensuring open defecation free communities; and 4) promote green villages through tree planting, apiary production, and use

of energy saving technologies. Peer trainers (Lead Farmers, Poultry paravets, and community health frontline advisors) will be trained and supported to disseminate sustainable and climate-smart crop and livestock production practices as well as safe sanitation practices. High yielding, drought resistant, non-GMO and biofortified crops (foods, fruits and green vegetables) and small animals (poultry) will be provided. Valuable aspects of conservation and organic farming e.g., pest and disease control, soil and water conservation, organic fertilizers, kitchen gardening and tree planting will be integrated. Linkages will be built with local health facilities to conduct community-based nutrition, family planning and child care trainings and awareness raising and distribution of micronutrient supplementation and deworming.

Key Activities

Result 1.1: Increased agricultural production of diversified foods

- Develop/adapt training materials for crop agronomy, local poultry management, kitchen gardening for training and use by Lead Farmers, and poultry paravets.
- Form and register farmer groups, support them to train and equip Lead Farmers in crop agronomy and small animal paravets and to develop production calendars.
- Set demonstration plots and train in good agricultural and climate smart practices (with a focus on mulching, inter cropping, crop rotation, soil and water conservation, and agroforestry). Digital weather forecasting using free smartphone Apps will also be introduced.
- Provide start-up agro-inputs (tools, local poultry, and seeds including biofortified varieties of potato, cassava and beans)

Result 1.2: Increased consumption of diversified foods in hygienic homes

- Develop/adapt behavior change communication materials for preventive community health training and use by CHFAs, sanitation champions, family planning champions.
- Train extension staff in kitchen gardening, provide kitchen gardening kit and solar driers for home-based food processing and training in kitchen gardening
- Conduct nutrition awareness and education to farmer groups in collaboration with health departments
- Provide nutrition supplements for children and pregnant mothers
- Select and train sanitation champions and support them to conduct sanitation and hygiene awareness and education together with community-based surveillance and reprimand
- Select role models and train them as family planning champions and support them to conduct community awareness and education and linkages to health facilities

Result 1.3: Improved vegetation cover and use

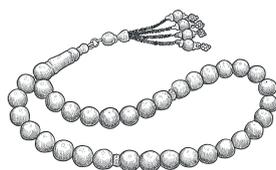
- Form local environment conservation committees (LECs) and support them to develop and implement their environment action plans
- Provide fruit, firewood and timber tree seedlings and train in tree planting and management
- Conduct environment conservation awareness and education
- Train extension staff as trainers in energy saving stove and briquettes making technology and upscale training
- Link groups to solar & biogas companies

Indicators of change:

The above will enable the targeted families to increase their acreage under production with high adoption of climate smart agronomic and better livestock management practices; have and use safe sanitation facilities; and gain increased awareness of family planning. These improvements will results into:



Food security through eating at least three meals daily, eating at least 7 of 12 food types weekly, and sharing food equitably among men and boys women and girls as a family



Increased use at least any one family planning method



Plant 50 (firewood, fruit and timber) trees per family

Inclusive Market Participation



Specific objective 2: Increased income from decent employment opportunities in diversified on-farm and non-farm labour markets

To increase family income and net worth, AFARD will promote market-led income diversification strategies through climate smart agribusiness and youth skilling. Enterprise viability and labour market assessments will be conducted. Strategic commodities and labour markets will be prioritized and supported with technical trainings, value addition, insurance, and cooperative development. Partnerships with private sector enterprises (PSEs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions will be secured. Lead Farmers will be retrained in the extension needs of selected enterprises. Likewise, youth will be trained in non-formal vocational skills linked to the agribusinesses but certified by the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT). Business start-up inputs will be provided. Appropriate value

addition will be identified and promoted. Business development services (especially Grow Your Business support targeting market linkages to input, finance, and output markets as well as the marketing of beneficiary products through branding, packaging, promotion, and market information) will be provided. Mindset change will be addressed by skills training (in group dynamics, entrepreneurship, life skills, financial literacy, and literacy and numeracy). Meanwhile to increase access to business capital, business-oriented VSLA and linkage banking models will be promoted so that producer group or cooperative members collectively save, take loans, and share out at the end of the saving cycle together with dividends.

Key Activities

Result 2.1: Increased agricultural productivity and market access

- Form and strengthen producer groups/commodity-based cooperatives Support members to develop Personal/Family Development Plans
- Develop training materials for selected crop agronomy, livestock management, VSLA & income generating activities (IGA) management; Cooperatives & Farming as a business.
- Retrain Lead Framers in selected commodities and farming as a business; and Cooperative Executive members on governance and management, business planning, financial management, collective group marketing, and risks management.
- Provide start-up inputs and set demonstration plots and train in good agricultural and climate smart practices
- Support cooperatives to develop business and marketing plans and support with product marketing (including branding, packaging, advertising, and contracting), market information and market linkages to input suppliers, produce traders and finance.
- Organize seasonal agro-input fairs for input-market actors to avail quality inputs
- Conduct appropriate value additions study and select viable options for support such as value addition infrastructures, training in value addition (including quality control, and policies)
- Train Producer Group members in collective marketing including market standards (i.e. storage, packaging, handling techniques, food safety and quality).
- Conduct exchange learning visits including participation in national - agricultural shows in Jinja and the districts; environment day; refugee day
- Conduct annual multi-stakeholder's platform dialogue on relevant agribusiness.
- Conduct business mentoring and coaching through agribusiness Farmers Clinics to strengthen farmers' market penetration.

Result 2.2: Increased youth self-employment in decent jobs

- Form and register youth groups and support youth to develop Personal/Family Development Plans
- Train youth in foundation and transferable skills – entrepreneurship, life skills, financial literacy, and basic literacy and numeracy
- Conduct vocational aspiration assessment followed by career guidance and counselling for youth to select vocational careers
- Assess and select suitable TVETs, PSEs, incubators and artisans with capacity to deliver quality hands-on and market-sensitive skills training in selected vocations
- Place youth for a 3-6-month skills training using a mix of residential TVET incubators or apprenticeship with PSE/artisan options. Place youth from TVETs for 1-month internship in suitable PSEs and conduct DIT certification for Practically Acquired Skills (Worker's PAS).
- Provide basic business start-up kits
- Conduct business mentorship and coaching including exchange/learning visits and support marketing of youth products
- Hold land access dialogue with parents, guardians, spouse, and local leaders for youth in agribusiness

Result 2.3: increased access to business finance

- Select and train VSLA mentors in VSLA and IGA
- Train producer group/cooperative members in VSLA methodology and provide VSLA kits
- Link group members and youth to markets – finance and insurance markets

Result 2.4: increased diversification into non-farm enterprises

- Train in foundation and transferable skills – gender, life skills, and basic literacy and numeracy skills
- Train members in IGA selection, planning and management
- Train members in financial literacy (financial planning and personal finance management)
- Link group members and youth to markets (input-output markets)

Indicators of change:

In this way, beneficiaries will increase their access to business loans, start own-account enterprises where they will be decently self-employed (and employ others besides working optimal time), adopt good business management practices, improve their product quality, and increase their sales volume and income. Increased income will trigger better reinvestment to grow their businesses and improve food and nutrition security and family well-being. In addition, these gains will lead to:



Increased average family financial net worth



Reduction in asset poverty rates (at US\$1.90 poverty line)



Increased women and youth empowerment



Specific objective 3: Improved responsiveness and accountability of local governments and peaceful co-existence for refugees and host communities.

To increase family income and net worth, AFARD will promote market-led income diversification strategies through climate smart agribusiness and youth skilling. Enterprise viability and labour market assessments will be conducted. Strategic commodities and labour markets will be prioritized and supported with technical trainings, value addition, insurance, and cooperative development. Partnerships with private sector enterprises (PSEs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions will be secured. Lead Farmers will be retrained in the extension needs of selected enterprises. Likewise, youth will be trained in non-formal vocational skills linked to the agribusinesses but certified by the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT). Business

start-up inputs will be provided. Appropriate value addition will be identified and promoted. Business development services (especially Grow Your Business support targeting market linkages to input, finance, and output markets as well as the marketing of beneficiary products through branding, packaging, promotion, and market information) will be provided. Mindset change will be addressed by skills training (in group dynamics, entrepreneurship, life skills, financial literacy, and literacy and numeracy). Meanwhile to increase access to business capital, business-oriented VSLA and linkage banking models will be promoted so that producer group or cooperative members collectively save, take loans, and share out at the end of the saving cycle together with dividends.

Key Activities

Result 3.1: Increased participation of citizens in local government planning processes

- Develop training materials (Community-based Advocacy; Participatory budgeting; Budget Monitoring; and Public Baraza)
- Conduct rights awareness and education among producer group/cooperative members
- Train in participatory planning and budgeting skills as well as local government budget cycle
- Train in advocacy and monitoring skills
- Facilitate cooperative leaders to participate in and follow-up local government planning and budgeting processes

Result 3.2: Improved local government accountability to its constituency

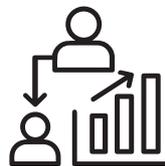
- Conduct children, women, and youth rights awareness and education using drama, radio talk shows, and workshops
- Train political leaders on participatory planning and budgeting
- Set-up a district multi-stakeholder platform and conduct bi-annual dialogue meetings on local development issues (access to public resources, service delivery, peaceful co-existence, markets, etc.)
- Participate in national events – Day of the African Child, Women’s Day, and Youth Day – as advocacy and accountability days

Indicators of change:

Through these interventions, grassroots communities will gain increase knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. These will trigger increased participation in public policy processes as well as awareness of local government plans. Leaders will also know their roles and responsibilities. that will in turn ensure:



Many farmer/youth groups secure project financing from local governments



Increased local government accountability to its constituency



Reduction in conflict between refugees and host communities

Pillar 4

AFARD's Organizational development



Specific objective 4: AFARD's capacity to partner, manage, account and learn is improved.

To ensure that AFARD is organizationally fit for purpose, investments will be made in strengthening the organizational and institutional capacity in areas of Board oversight functions and technical team management competency, as well as capital investments (logistics, software, office space, etc.). Below are the critical priorities:

- Strengthening Board capacity in corporate governance and functionality through routine board and management retreats, board and board committee meetings.
- Conducting integrated staff training in nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, VSLA methodology, transformative gender approach, child rights, financial literacy, M+E, documentation, rights based programming, energy saving stove and biogas techniques, value chain analysis, participatory market development approach, and product development.

- Strengthening infrastructure base for effective operation by: a) completing AFARD offices (Yumbe annex and Nebbi HQ with solar power installations and furniture); b) securing a multi-user licensed accounting software (SAGE 200) and creating a digital M&E system and platforms; and c) procuring adequate logistics (means of transport, ICT equipment)
- Establishing a research and knowledge management unit
- Strengthening West Nile Holdings Ltd – the social enterprise wing for financial sustainability
- Piloting new strategies to gain deeper knowledge, competence, and policy compliance through the upcoming projects:
 - Child rights programming with funding and technical support from KNH. Atyak CDP started with the training of technical staff in and their conduct of Child Rights Situation Analysis (CRSA). Gradually this support is expanding to developing a 6-year pilot project.
 - Basic income grant: With funding support of INclusion, Nebbi Inclusive Development Programme (NIDP) will be started in 2020 in Well village, Atego Sub county with 400 people who will be provided a daily unconditional cash grant of EUR 0.50 for 7 years. Outreach village will be expanded as funds become available. The project is being conducted in collaboration with the Department of Economics, Econometrics & Finance, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen, the Netherlands as the research partner.
 - Pension scheme for smallholder farmers: Through the funding from Sall Family Foundation, in 2019 BPPS, Netherlands was commissioned and it conducted a study on informal pension scheme for smallholder farmers. Discussions are initiated with NSSF to diversify its product options so that farmer’s vulnerability in old age is secured.
 - ICT for development: The rapid change in technology calls on AFARD to start exploring the integration of ICT in its main areas of operation. During the plan period, efforts will be made to explore the use of ICT in weather information management, strengthening extension outreach, VSLA digitalization as an option to linkage banking, evidence-based M+E for progress tracking and real time accounting, and dissemination of market information.

Indicators of change:

In this way, AFARD will have skilled Board and management staff, effective evidence-based programming and accounting systems, and improved visibility, office space, and networking that together will:



Diversify revenue base through increased partnership with NGOs, private sector and government agencies



Develop and share scalable models of rural development

Cross-cutting issues

Rural communities lead holistic lives. As a family strives to secure food on the table for all its family members (inclusion and gender equality), it needs money with which to access what it cannot produce (financial inclusion), steady supply of wood fuel to cook the food (environment conservation), and clean cooking and serving utensils in which to serve the food (safe sanitation and hygiene). This process also needs consideration of the number of mouth a family can adequately feed if it is to thrive and ensure quality life for all the household population (family planning) as well as group and community voice (advocacy) so that belonging to a group or political jurisdiction has meanings for their lives. These fundamentals of life will guide our mainstreaming approach as is summarized below. To achieve these, AFARD will undertake Mindset Change of the group members (and where possible family members).

Cross-cutting issues	Strategies
Inclusion and Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use participatory vulnerability assessment so that persons with special needs (PSN) - child-headed households, elderly, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS, youth and women are selected to benefit from our work. • Integrate social inclusion and gender awareness raising in community sensitizations and use participatory approaches to encourage PSN and women's active participation in activities. • Ensure staffing including lead farmers and mentors have adequate number of females. • Ensure 60% of beneficiaries are female and at least 40% of group leadership positions are filled by women to enhance women decision-making power. • Involve men in targeted activities like nutrition, family planning, sanitation and hygiene, collective marketing and VSLA to position women in family life changes.
Financial inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support families to develop their SMART economic development plans • Train and mentor in VSLA methodology and IGA -SPM and link VSLAs to banks • Train in financial literacy for better financial management practices
Environment conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainable agricultural intensification and agro-ecology with climate smart non-GMO crops, poultry, and livelihood diversification. • Promote green villages through tree planting, wetland and biodiversity conservation, use of energy saving technologies (stove, briquette, solar and biogas)
Sanitation and hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct behaviors change awareness and education • Train and support sanitation entrepreneurs • Facilitate the development and enforcement of community sanitation bye-laws
Family Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct awareness and education for beneficiaries and their spouses. • Develop referral linkages to health facilities
Rights and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Do No Harm approach in refugee settings. • Conduct awareness and education on rights of children, youth and women • Train grassroots communities in advocacy skills and support advocacy initiatives

Note: Staff trainings in all these areas of mainstreaming focus will be critical for the effective implementation of Pillars 1-3.



» RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Risk	Assessment		Risk management
	Likelihood	Impact	
Government policies			
NDPIII seeks to marshal NGO programmes to government development priorities	High	Low	Projects and reports will be aligned to specific sectors and NDPIII pillars
The 2021 election will usher in new leaders with limited knowledge & different perceptions of our work	High	High	Inductions of new leaders will be conducted to level expectations and open communication will be maintained.
AFARD internal system			
Low Board engagement in resource mobilization will limit access to private sector financing	Medium	High	The Board will be skilled and engaged in strategic private sector-based financing options
Handout by other CSOs in child sponsorship may affect buy-in of our child ambassador approach where benefits target entire community	Medium	Low	Continuous community awareness creation about child ambassador approach will be conducted
Development partners			
Rigidity on budgeting for local government involvement by some donors will affect implementation of some activities that need LG technical competence	Medium	Medium	Emphasis will be made to promote donor – LG interface to harmonize perception of roles and funding of LGs.
Beneficiary groups			
Reluctance of parents, guardians and spouses to support youth entrepreneurship	Low	Medium	Community awareness creation, dialogue and counseling and guidance will be conducted to encourage family support.
Lack of participatory governance practices by group leaders	High	High	Open communication with (including periodic reporting to) local governments will curb impunity.
Fraud of VSLA funds may build mistrust and deter effective participation	Low	Low	Regular self-monitoring will be promoted VSLAs will be registered with local governments and cases of abuse will be reported for reprimand.
Market/economy-wide			
Middlemen competition may undercut premium prices	Medium	Medium	Periodic market research and collective marketing will promote direct trading with private sector actors
High inflation rate may increase cost of service delivery	High	High	Budgeting will use inflation adjusted-costing approach
Environment			
Weather variability may cause drought, flooding, and deleterious pests and diseases including poultry epidemic that will grossly affect the profitability of agribusiness	High	High	Drought-resistant, disease resistant, high yielding and quick maturing varieties will be promoted together with training in good agricultural and climate- smart agriculture to ensure climate risk management. The government co-financed multi-peril agricultural insurance scheme will be promoted alongside the VSLA agro-inputs savings. And Paravets will be trained, equipped and supported to set up operate community vaccination systems.
Lack of access to suitable land for Agribusiness especially for youth and refugees	Medium	Medium	Community land dialogue will be conducted together with UNHCR/OPM and local leaders to facilitate access to more land.



The Strategic Plan will ensure sustainable impacts through the following:

Institutional sustainability:

Participatory project design, implementation and monitoring with the involvement of local governments, beneficiary communities and other stakeholders. The formation, registration, and strengthening of farmers/ youth groups will ensure that the established social structures are organized, operate according to their constitutions, and have high cohesion. With trained Lead Farmers, they will have access to peer-to-peer extension services based in their communities.

The involvement of local governments will strengthen synergies for improved service delivery. Strengthening of business-to-business relationship with private sector actors will build a lasting win-win gain for both targeted groups and the private sector enterprises. Community dialogues will also promote cooperation and sharing of resources among refugees and nationals.

Financial sustainability:

To be able to meet both current and future financial needs, the VSLA platform for financial inclusion will provide opportunity for members to save, take loans, and build relationship that they will continue to use. The promotion of agro-input savings will guarantee ready funds for agribusiness investment. The provision of market-oriented capacity building will spur continued production for improved livelihood. Enterprise diversification will ensure that households have many revenue streams to smoothen their consumptions and resilience to risks. Bank linkages will also diversify sources of access to finance.

Environmental sustainability:

This will be pursued through: the promotion of sustainable and climate smart agricultural practices using low-cost farming systems, for conservation agriculture and agroecology principles. Farmers will be trained on improved natural resource management practices. The use of proven local seed varieties and drought tolerant varieties of crops will build resilience to weather related shocks. Controlling bush fires and conserving fragile ecosystems will promote biomass growth and reduce land degradation.

The planting of woodlots and training in energy saving stoves will reduce pressure on natural forest, increase the use of own-planted trees thereby enabling the ecosystem to regenerate for increased availability, affordability and consumption of locally grown nutrient-rich commodities will trigger environment conservation awareness.



FINANCE AND FINANCING MECHANISM

The implementation of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is estimated to cost UGX 42.4 billion. Of this total, UGX 16 billion has already been secured. The funding gap of UGX 26 billion will be mobilized by a multi-pronged resource mobilization strategy that will target the beneficiaries, public and private sectors based on improved communication strategy that will market AFARD's impact on vulnerable people and communities to donor, private sector, and government stakeholders.

Cost centers	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	% share
Direct project costs	12,831,056,714	2,991,345,559	3,079,776,237	7,620,332,067	2,785,038,819	2,796,141,770	32,103,691,167	76%
Operations	1,565,816,712	1,551,854,238	1,581,467,941	1,637,694,241	1,644,387,867	1,778,726,636	9,759,947,635	23%
Capital Development	394,250,000	169,500,000	12,600,000	-	-	-	576,350,000	1%
Total	14,791,123,426	4,712,699,797	4,673,844,179	9,258,026,308	4,429,426,686	4,574,868,406	42,439,988,802	100%

Below are the strategies:

Strengthening West Nile Holdin Ltd:

1

AFARD established a social enterprise in 2018 to generate significant profits for financing its social development agenda. This business arm will be capitalized and supported to develop a robust business strategy and management able to compete in the emerging regional market.

Donor diversification:

2

AFARD will expand its current donor landscape to include partnership with in-country embassies, (inter) national NGOs, and national networks to diversify its revenue streams. Resource mobilization consultants will be hired to support specific grant sourcing.

Community co-financing:

3

AFARD will ensure that targeted communities finance at least 10 - 30% of start-up investment costs under inclusive market participation pillars in order to build local financing and ownership mechanisms.

Engagement with government programmes:

4

AFARD will position itself as a fit for purpose agency for the implementation of on-going government-funded community development project. In addition, AFARD will leverage financing from government towards specific projects such as youth/women entrepreneurship programmes.

Private sector engagement:

5

AFARD will also target the corporate social responsibility arms of private sector organizations to secure direct financial support towards community development projects

Reserve fund:

6

During the course of executing the Strategic Plan, AFARD targets to build and sustain a reserve fund valued at UGX 500 million in order to secure future project continuity.



AFARD will improve the current functional information and data management system and structure that flow from the individual families via group members to the project desk. These structures will allow for participatory and timely data collection, analysis and reporting. Functionally,

- A digital integrated MIS will be developed in collaboration with a reputable IT firm;
- A database of all beneficiary families will be developed and updated annually;
- Baseline studies will be conducted to benchmark all project indicators
- Standard training materials will be developed for quality controls;
- Weekly staff meetings will ensure that outputs are planned timely and progress reported to management routinely;
- Monthly VSLA review meetings will ensure effective update of SAVIX System and reflection on experiences, progress, challenges, and lessons;
- Monthly Project Managers' meeting will review progress, reconcile accountability and draw lessons and best practices;
- Quarterly Lead Farmers review meetings will harmonize growth of each group;
- Quarterly management field visits and review meetings will ensure that on-spot progress is tracked and remedial actions taken timely;
- Bi-annual group meetings will map out progress and challenges;
- Annual local government, OPM/UNHCR monitoring and feedback meetings will account for change and draw lessons for improvement.
- Quarterly committee and bi-annual and annual general) board meetings will provide oversights
- Annual risk assessment will sterilize operation.
- Annual financial audits and reporting to the Board of Directors (BoDs) and donors will ensure effective learning and accountability will keep stakeholder aware of our work.
- Periodic project and organizational reports;
- District project close-out meetings will be conducted to ensure effective exit; and
- End of project and strategic plan evaluation will provide evidence of impacts and lessons for replication

ENDNOTES:

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