



About AFARD

The Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (abbreviated as AFARD) is an indigenous voluntary, non-for-profit and non-denominational organisation formed in July 2000, by experienced and committed development professionals, for the purposes of promoting participatory and endogenic development in the West Nile region of Uganda. Legally, AFARD is registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation with the National NGO Board (Registration No S.5914/3753 – now renewed); and with the Registrar of Companies as a Company Limited by Guarantee (Registration No 45170). We are also a registered affiliate member of the Uganda National NGO Forum; Uganda National AIDS Services Organisations (UNASO); Participatory Ecological Land Use and Management (PELUM) – Uganda Chapter; West Nile Private Sector Development Promotion Center; Nebbi District NGO Forum (NDNGOF); and Network of AIDS Services Organisations in Nebbi (NASON).

The motivating forces for the formation of AFARD were: *first*, the west Nile region is the poorest in Uganda with six in ten people living below US\$ 1 a day. *Second*, many development interventions have been ‘external to local context’ and imposed thereby leaving dysfunctional structures but a people hardly changed. *Third*, ‘democratic centralism and machination’ by government makes the people subjects and not citizen of the state. And, *finally*, the regional human resource flight limits new innovations and enthusiasms to work for self development. Thus, without resigning to despair, we believe that the region can, and indeed should, develop at a faster pace; and that any meaningful development should be endogenous and an integral function of both improved well being and people’s empowerment.

From Vision to Strategy

Vision: “A Prosperous, Healthy and Informed People of (north) West Nile Region”.

Mission “to contribute to the molding of a region in which the local people, including those who are marginalized, are able to participate effectively and sustainably and take a lead in the development of the region”.

Broad Objectives

1. *To harness the knowledge, skills and experiences of the development practioners within the region and channel it for the accelerated, equitable and sustainable development of the region.*
2. *To act as a midwife, an interim link between the grass roots and sources of new information, innovations, expertise and funds required for the type of development that places people firmly in the center of all development efforts.*
3. *To avail of our expertise by way of consultancy to other development stakeholders interested in the development the region*

The mainstay of AFARD is **Capacity Development for Sustainable Livelihood** based on Mindset, Leadership, Skills and Tools that promotes *self-reliant development, partnership/joint actions, and community democratization*. These are achievable through an integrated mix of the following strategies:

1. **Skills development:** Covering organizational management and technical training in areas such as sustainable agriculture, microenterprise, microfinance, and primary health care, among others.
2. **Action research:** AFARD’s approach is to make research into local problems as participatory as possible. The findings are the basis for generating locally sensitive interventions and influencing policy decisions.
3. **Information gathering and dissemination:** Information is power. AFARD act as a hub- receiving new information and disseminating it to the grassroots’ communities in forms appropriate for the promotion of knowledge-based growth.
4. **Resources mobilization:** By largely relying on locally available resources, external resources are seen as supplements only to be sourced on a partnership arrangement and for specific non-substitutable purposes.
5. **Networking and linkages:** Is done with other institutions- locally, nationally and globally- to share information, useful experiences, skills and other resources.
6. **Advocacy and lobbying:** We believe that development is a human right. AFARD’s focuses on ‘inclusive politics’ to make development sensitive to the needs of the “voiceless” marginalized people.

Core values

As a signatory to the Generic Code of Conducts for member NGOs in Uganda, AFARD adheres in its operations to the following values:

- *Respecting human dignity, equality, justice and freedom.*
- *The enshrinement of the empowerment approach to development through interactive and flexible approach.*
- *Local ownership by groups of whatever initiatives they are involved in.*

- *Use of participatory methodologies in all activities.*
- *Reliance on local resources including indigenous technology and knowledge, human and physical resources.*
- *Genuine partnership based on mutual trust, respect and honesty.*
- *Transparency and accountability.*

Who we are working with

AFARD works with community based organisation (CBOs). We identify existing committed community groups and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), or cause the formation of new ones. By use of participatory methods we then build them into viable entities capable of benefiting their individual members and their communities.

From 2000 to date, 47 groups with a total of 1,405 people (63% are women) are being worked with. These groups spread through out Nebbi district. It is estimated that by the end of 2006 this number will increase to a total of 57 groups with an estimated 1,518 people and a total catchments of 8,045 people of which indirect beneficiaries' totals 6,527. We also intend to maintain the gender proportion.

All the current groups are undertaking a multi-fold of activities ranging from nursery management and tree planting for sale, crop farming, apiary, produce marketing, poultry rearing, goat rearing, brick making, and pit sawing. They are also engaged in savings and credit and HIV/AIDS. At least each group has a minimum of two activities. Meanwhile, individual groups' members are involved in diversified livelihood activities. Aspects of gender, HIV/AIDS, safe sanitation, and environment conservation are integrated in all the partner groups' activities.

Thematic focus and on-going projects

Community empowerment through organizational development and institutional building

To adequately provide services that would not only fill the gaps provided by other stakeholders but also relevant to the needs of our partners, AFARD conducted a mapping inventory of all NGOs and CBOs operating in Nebbi district, its foothold. This was followed by a capacity self-assessment of selected CBOs. From the capacity self-assessment exercise it was evident that CBOs: are weak organizationally and under-resourced; are incapable of having any impact on political issues and development policies; have poor or no plans and budgets; have inadequate skills required to perform identified tasks; and mainly operate in isolation [from local government and fellow civil society organizations] *or even in competition*. These weaknesses were attributed to (i) the exploitation of CBOs by NGOs as their programme implementation conduits; (ii) the general poverty of group members; and (iii) the neglect by government to develop CBOs into important players in local development. It is even unfortunate that the decentralized structures are encumbered with democratic centralism and bureaucratic machinations that limits space for participation.



The organizational development and institutional building of these groups is thus based on their areas of needs. However, it takes a number of facilitation cycles. Partner groups are identified in a process that involves enlisting group members' willingness for self-reliance and local leaders support. This is followed by a capacity self-assessment where each group assesses its capacity on seven thematic areas. The next stage is thus a facilitation to identify and plan for a group owned project. These projects are implemented independently by each group in view of its goal. Other structural issues related to envisioning of a group are thus conducted within the plan implementation process. Periodic reviews are done to ascertain capacity growth. By using 'proverbs, pictures, and self-score ladders' progress are tracked and remedial actions taken.

To date, this theme is an integral aspect of all our operations. It provides an entry point for all the other themes and is thus treated as part and parcel of the other themes.

The on-going projects under this theme are:

A: Advocacy and lobbying support for Nebbi District Women Council

The neglect of the District Women Council that is an umbrella body for all women in the district to participate and benefit from local governments prompted this initiative. It aims at integrating the women council structures within the local government policy focus through engendering local governments budgets. This is done by building a joiner between women council and women councilors right from the district to the sub county levels; lobbying technical heads of departments and councilors; training of local government staff; and periodic monitoring.

B: Technical support to Nebbi NGO Networks

As an on-going process of nurturing the two district networks that AFARD championed their formation, part of the time commitment of our technical team is to provide technical assistance to these networks so that they can act as effective umbrellas for the various CBOs and NGOs in the district.

The support provided include provision of staff to conduct training needs assessments and design of training materials for on-training of members; facilitating periodic review processes; and back-up support for field based studies.

Food security through sustainable agriculture enhancement

Life in Nebbi depends on the natural resources (soil, water and vegetation). Over 85% of the people depend on farming (crop and livestock). However, farming has failed to improve the livelihood outcomes as many households experience declining food production and income. Reports of death from starvation are not new in the district, and even more deaths are attributed indirectly to severe malnutrition. These conditions are attributed to traditional production practices that persist due to, among others factors, lack of access to improved production technologies. Farmers do not have the money with which to pay for improved technologies. Their reliance on the local indigenous technology and knowledge has also been due to the low outreach of government extension services. Further, the lack of market inhibits increased production. Finally, farmers have been generally sidelined from policy-making processes and technology development yet they are considered the 'customers' of the new technologies and prime compliant of such policies. This tendency has perpetuated disconnection between farmers (practicing traditional farming system), extentionist (with new scientific knowledge) and researchers (who are developing technologies without adequately considering farmer needs and absorption capacity).

AFARD's intrvention aims at 'household food security and increased income of partner group members' in a sustainable, self-reliance and market-oriented manner'. Through promoting sustainable

agriculture and income generation AFARD pursues a solution to food insecurity based on ‘Equitable 4A’s – Availability, Adequacy, Acceptability, and Affordability of quality foods at all times by all household members regardless of social categorisation’. This implies that people should, *always*, be able to either produce or buy the right food needed and share it without discrimination.

The on-going projects under this theme are:

A: Community improved seed/breed on-multiplication centers

As a response to food insecurity, this project, therefore, proposes a new approach to improved seeds/breed multiplication. It pillars on community social bondage as an arena for improved access to better technologies and promoting self- and market-based food supply and demand. Through a community based groups’ multiplication strategy improved seed/breed supply and demand gaps are met. Inciting community hunger for improved seeds/breeds is integrated with the provision of initial start-up inputs and skills. By establishing ‘Small Farmer Forum (SFF)’ for farmers and practitioners in the area, advocacy and lobbying for small farmer friendly policies and resources is strengthened.



The beneficiary community based groups (and their members) receive food security crops and livestock (goats and chicken) that are traditionally valued and have ready markets. These are also varieties with less labour demands and are gender-neutral thereby reducing men’s focus on hijacking their women’s benefits.

The main project activities are: beneficiary community identification, debriefing, and joint planning; group organisational development in areas of self-identified and agreed upon capacity weaknesses; establishing demonstration plots; provision of area-sensitive improved technologies for on-multiplication; technical skills training in agronomy, entrepreneurship, pool marketing, improved nutrition, and energy savings stoves; exchange visits; local IEC material production and dissemination; advocacy and lobbying decentralized government institutions; and routine supervision and period reviews.

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B: Shea nut butter and rangeland conservation

With increasing pressure for survival, enormous pressure is being exerted on the natural environment. Wetland reclamation, rangeland encroachments, and tree felling are a common practice. Some noticeable consequences include the increasing rangeland erosion and bio-diversity extinction.

Shea nut butter tree that is a traditional source for cooking oil and medicine is the worst affected because of its quality

This project



timber and charcoal product. aims to establish community nursery

for the multiplication of shea nut butter seedling and on-planting in community areas that have been degraded. By so doing, the affected community in Kalowang and Madi Okolo will be introduced to community policing, income generation while conserving the environments, energy savings stoves use, and modern apiary practices.

The project is being implemented jointly with local movement environment and forestry office and the UNDP-funded West Nile Private Sector Development Promotion Center Ltd under which West Nile Apiary Association and AFARD are also affiliated.

Increased incomes through community microfinance and microenterprise development

Majority of the people in West Nile have diversified livelihood strategies. They farm and trade. However, the trade is low rewarding because of non-availability and non-affordability of financial services to help transform other livelihood assets for meaningful livelihood outcomes. Access to financial market is limited (cover only 20% of the total households) and the few services available are too stringent in lending terms. Microfinance institutions charge extra-high interest rates (40-48% per annum); are concentrated along the main roads and urban centers; deliver minimal package of services – loans without business skills training; are selective of activities to funds; and are not client responsive. Women are not their prime targets. The few group savings and credit schemes where women are the major players suffer from small capital portfolio for on-lending (normally less than Ushs 250,000 or € 100); and lack skills for loan management. For instance, there are *loan committees* but without clear operational guidelines.



Thus, a group savings and credit schemes with microenterprise development was started as a pilot project. This project was designed to provide the groups access to seed-fund for member IGA; expose groups to savings and credit management; inculcate in members prudent business management skills; but above all to lay a foundation for a future group-owned and controlled sustainable financial institution. Members set the operational guidelines and conditions during a stakeholders' meeting.

Improved health through HIV/AIDS prevention and safe sanitation promotion

The ability of the population to engage in productive activities is in part dependent on their health. However, general health status of the people is poor due to the high disease burden attributable to largely water-borne, water-washed, and water-based vector diseases. This is because of the inadequate knowledge and bad attitudes and practices in regards to preventive health. Safe environmental sanitation is inadequate. Preventive health is also not a priority in government funding.

HIV/AIDS scourge also on the increase both in terms of infection rate and impact on the socio-economic activities. In part such a trend is attributed to the inadequacy of correct information about HIV/AIDS; high exposure to predisposing factors; and underdeveloped capacity to effectively engage in a sustained fight against HIV.

The integration of Voluntary Counseling and Testing services with awareness creation exposed the issues of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). OVCs are socially stigmatized and have failed to integrate in the community well. As early as age 5 they start working like litters on fishing boats for survivals. Majority of them are out of school and none has enrolled in secondary education. Yet, they are paid a peanut in piecemeal manner by boat owners. This has affected negatively on educational cycle completion and effective participation rates those in school.

The on-going projects in this area are:

A: HIV/AIDS Prevention Project

Lakeshore AIDS Initiative Project (LAIP) is a behavioral change communication project being implemented in Dei fishing village on L. Albert. The primary purpose of LAIP is to change the knowledge, attitude and practices about HIV/AIDS in the community. The *primary activities* of the project are: (i) Training and equipping (both the office and field implementers) such as traditional birth attendants, peer educators-cum-counselors, community leaders, and condom distributors; Multi-media behavior change communication through awareness creation seminars, video shows, radio talk shows and spots, drama shows, leaflets, posters, stickers, t-shirts, and role models; peer counseling services such as by trained persons living with AIDS to counsel



fellow persons living with AIDS; and (iii) collaboration with local governments in the aspects of condom distributions and voluntary counseling and testing services.

B: Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Support Project

This is a pilot project in Dei fishing village. It stands out to support in a sustainable way OVCs socio-economic life. Its aim is, '*reduced risk exposure of the orphans and vulnerable children to the spread and effect of HIV/AIDS in Dei Fishing Village*'. The project activities covers awareness creation, life skills education and counseling support to OVC; establishing a 9-person group each for 9- fishing boat income generating project; provision of educational materials to OVCs in school; training out of school OVCs in income generating skills; and community education on care and support for OVC.



C: Improved sanitation promotion

In line with the 1997 Kampala Declaration on improved sanitation, we have mainstreamed improved sanitation aspects in all our community work. Interventions focus at increasing safe sanitation coverage, strengthening community attitude and practice, and improving on the awareness and exemplary leadership role. Sanitation education, home improvement campaign, and community policing are the core activities. Personal hygiene in schools is also emphasized.



Consultancy services

With a dedicated professional and experienced technical team, we offer a wide range of consultancy services to other organisations on a fee-for-service basis. These services include training, needs assessment, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, research, management information system design, and publishing. Our core areas of competence include: public policy, agribusiness, institutional development, microfinance, small and medium scale business development, gender and environment issues, and primary health care.

The funds generated from this service are the basis for funding our partner group's activities as well as building AFARD's sustainability. For instances, our office was constructed using such funding just like most of our equipments and tools procured.

As a learning organization

AFARD's commitment to capacity building recognizes the fact that this is a long-term endeavor with forward and backward linkages. The growth of capacity is different for different organizations at any one moment and this creates different demands. Accordingly, from 2002 we adopted a responsive approach of learning and growing with these organizations. In this way, AFARD's flexibility, acceptability, relevance and sustainability are interwebbed.

Funding

AFARD's main sources of funds are local. Over the years, there has been a steady growth in income increasing from Ushs 1.3 million in 2000 to Ushs 160 million in 2004. Grants have especially been fluctuating both in real terms and as a share of total income. This is because we prefer grants directed towards specific projects rather than organizational existence. This scenario has, however, been made possible because AFARD personnel do not get salaries but performance related allowance.

Summary of financial statements

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<i>Income total (Ushs)</i>	1,346,000	90,827,575	129,684,428	98,366,311	160,679,587
<i>Percent share of total Income:</i>					
Grants and Donation	0%	43%	24%	22%	50%
Consultancy	0%	28%	44%	53%	27%
Local Contributions	56%	26%	5%	2%	4%
Secretarial services	44%	3%	2%	3%	4%
Revolving Savings and Credit scheme	0%	0%	25%	20%	15%

Publications and resource materials

(Create links to the various documents in the folder)

Our funding partners to date





Over the years, AFARD has developed cordial partnership with a number of development organisation both within Uganda and in the Diaspora. Through these partners we have been able to source a number of complementary supports towards our development commitment in the region. Below is a list of some of those who provided support.

Partner	Core area	Value of support (in million Ushs)	Duration
Development Cooperation Ireland	HIV/AIDS	198	2 years (started June 2004)
Global Fund Uganda	HIV/AIDS	120	2 years (started August 2004)
Canadian Fund for Local Initiative	HIV/AIDS	25	1 year (started April 2005)
Human Rights Networks of Uganda	Community empowerment	35	1 year (to start June 2005)
Tudor Trust (UK)	Food security	128	2 years (to start June 2005)
Action Aid Uganda	Food security	-	3 years (started 2004)
Overall Stichting	Environment conservation	6.5	1 year (started Feb. 2005)
Mariastroot Fonds	Income generation	22	1 year (started April 2005)
Gorta- Ireland	Community empowerment, Organizational learning, income generation	-	Started 2001 and weaned off. Now on a new partnership arrangement.
Regina Fonds	Income generation, organizational learning	-	Weaned off
ETWA – The Hague	Income generation	-	Weaned off
Little Sisters of Providence	Income generation	-	Weaned off
R.C Maagdenhuis	Income generation/HIV	-	Weaned off
GERED Stichting	Vocational equipments	-	Weaned off

Managers of AFARD

AFARD is managed by a Board of Directors (at the policy level) and a technical team composed of qualified professional who have lived and worked in the region for a minimum of 10 years (at the programme level) assisted by experienced community facilitators and volunteers (at the utility level).

The Board of Directors

 <p>Rev. Fr. Geoffrey Ocamgiu (Chairperson: MA Development Studies)</p>	 <p>Mr. Kura Vasco (Vice Chairperson: MA Human Resource Management)</p>	 <p>His Eminence Henry Luke Orombi (Member: MA Theology/Philosophy)</p>
 <p>Mr. Ogenrwoth Sam (Member: Post-graduate Diploma in Public Administration and Administrative Law).</p>	<p>Ms. Alarango Florence (Member: MA Gender and Development)</p>	 <p>Mike B. Okecha (Legal Representative: MA LLB)</p>

The Technical Team

(b) Technical Team in AFARD



Dr. Sam Orochi Orach
Fellow, Health Policy and Management (USA); MPHIC (Management) Primary Health Care (Italy); Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (Uganda).



Cwinyaai Wilfred
M.Sc. Agriculture, Rural Development (Ireland); B.Sc. Agriculture (Uganda); Certificate, Project Planning and Management (The Netherlands).



Drs. Alfred Lakwo
PhD Student (The Netherlands); M.A. Development Studies (Uganda); B.A (Uganda); Diploma Project Planning and Management (Uganda).



Uyirwoth Norbert
*Higher Diploma in Marketing
 (Uganda).*



Janey Watango
*Diploma in Journalism and
 Communication Studies
 (Uganda).*



Biwinjire Gladies
*Uganda Certificate of
 Education (Uganda).*

Volunteers/Community Facilitators

Atona Ellyson Alex (Diploma in Agriculture)	Mrs. Anyolitho Angela (Diploma in PRA and Teacher Education)	Orach Kennedy (Diploma in Business Studies)	Conga Franklyn (Diploma in Community Health)
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Guestbook

Contacts and Disclaimer

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