



Advantage Africa and the Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission

Sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable people in Kirondo, Uganda
Reference 100981

Final Report, May 2017

1. Introduction

In its 2016 funding allocation, the Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission awarded a grant of £36,860 to Advantage Africa to support sustainable livelihoods for the most vulnerable individuals and families in Kirondo, Uganda. The first tranche of £18,430 was received in late March and the second in November 2016. Activities to meet the communities' urgent need for safe water were implemented in the first half of the project. With the completion of the water project, 110 families received training and livestock-rearing resources to enable them to improve their nutrition and earn a sustainable income. During this time, plans and assessments were also made for support to the most vulnerable disabled and elderly community members. In the second half of the project, activities to prevent malaria, distribute health kits and train families in memory work have been successfully completed. Activities to support the most vulnerable to improve their mobility and independence have also been underway with all funds allocated. HIV testing and counselling activities will be complete by the end of May.

2. Summary of Project Impact

The project has brought about a profound change in people's well-being and outlook in Kirondo including those affected by disability, health and addiction, of which the community has a disproportionate number. The challenges remaining in Kirondo are being approached with a new sense of unity, confidence and optimism.

2.1 Safe water supply

The new borehole was completed in May 2016 to provide safe water for all in the Kirondo community and help reduce pressure on water supplies further afield. Access to the borehole in a central location has had a positive impact on people's health, safety and daily lives. For example, children have been able to collect water after school rather than having to walk deep into the forest to collect from an unsafe source. Unfortunately, the drought in Uganda throughout 2016 has had a detrimental effect on water table levels across the country and in late January 2017 the borehole stopped working temporarily. SPAU and the community's water committee took steps to rectify the problem to ensure safe water was still available.

2.2 Gaining practical skills in livestock rearing to earn an income

110 single parent families have learnt new skills and received livestock rearing resources. 40 parents and carers are rearing poultry and 70 are rearing pigs. Approximately 750 children and adults are benefiting from improved nutrition and increased income to meet their basic needs.

2.3 Protection from life-threatening malaria

In November 2016, following malaria prevention training, 720 treated nets (3 per household) were distributed to 240 vulnerable families in Kirondo. This activity has ensured that 1,700 children and adults are protected from malaria and that 1,000+ people in the wider community are benefiting from reduced mosquito numbers.

2.4 HIV & AIDS prevention and care

In February 2017, 30 single parents in Kirondo were trained in memory work and provided with resources to help them support their fellow community members in coping with the psychological and practical impact of HIV. By the end of May 2017, HIV & AIDS counselling and testing sessions will have been held to reach as many community members as possible.

2.5 Supporting the most vulnerable children and adults affected by disability and old age

Given the high numbers of vulnerable individuals in the community, in early January 2017 full or partial health kits, including bedding and dental care items, were distributed to 200 children and adults. Building on our partnership with Motivation, which has developed as a result of this project, detailed assessments were made of the mobility and independence needs of all disabled people in the community. Appropriately fitted wheelchairs and mobility aids have so far been distributed to 24 children and adults. Two community representatives attended a week-long training course on caring for children with cerebral palsy, the most common disability in the community. Repairs to the homes of elderly and disabled community members, including the complete reconstruction of the home of a very vulnerable man, will be complete by the end of May.

3. Safe Water Supply

With the first tranche of funds received from the Commission, work began on drilling the borehole in the centre of Kirondo. This continued throughout April and the borehole was officially opened in early May 2016. For the first two weeks, water was distributed free as 'a gift of welcome' and from June the fee of 100/- (2p) per 20 litre jerry can was introduced to ensure the borehole's long-term maintenance. The single parents' group has a water committee to oversee the activities, headed by Lillian the group's chairperson. Maria is the water committee's treasurer, Justine the secretary and Julius the borehole's caretaker.



Maria shows SPAU project officer Sarah where the monthly water payments are kept.

Maria takes detailed records of water fee income and keeps funds temporarily in a secure pot (pictured). At the end of each month, about one third of the money collected is given to the caretaker as a small salary and the rest is invested in the new village savings bank, overseen by another single parent, ready for any future maintenance needs.

From June 2016 to January 2017, given the prolonged drought demand for water was very high. 90+ families per day were visiting the borehole and all was working efficiently. In early January, with the water production sluggish, an engineer was called to inspect the borehole and confirmed that the drought had caused the water table to go down. Urgent plans were made to help ensure people didn't have to revert to their previous polluted water sources. SPAU was able to pass on a

small water tank given by the community of Katente (previously supported by the Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission in the 2014 allocation) as they have now managed to procure a bigger tank for their needs. The small tank has afforded a temporary solution to ensure that water can be collected and stored for distribution by Julius. The engineer also advised that with the risk of future droughts it would be prudent to install an electric pump to increase the efficacy of the borehole. The borehole in Katente is working successfully with an electric pump and the Kirondo water committee members are planning to visit their counterparts in that community to learn and share ideas to ensure a sustainable water supply.

4. Gaining Practical Skills in Livestock Rearing to Earn an Income

In April/May 2016, 110 parents and carers prepared housing for their livestock. In June they undertook training in small livestock rearing. Following this, 40 parents received 40 chicks each. 70 parents received 2 piglets each and the pig-rearing group received two boars. Meticulous records were made of each recipient to ensure accountability and effective follow-up. The poultry and pig rearers also received the resources, feed and inoculations necessary for their animals to thrive.

Improving the socio-economic livelihoods of single parents at Kirondo village Mukono District through piggery rearing

Project funded by Guernsey overseas states in partnership with Advantage Africa - UK and SPAU

Date: 28-06-2016

Name of beneficiaries: Namande Robbins Signature: Namande

Contact: 0779527823

Number of pigs: 02 - 1 ~~boar~~ female & Male

30 of the poultry recipients were women and 10 men. 35 out of the 40 have had great success in rearing their poultry despite challenges including the prolonged drought which has significantly affected the quality and cost of feed. 5 of the single parents have struggled to make their stock thrive as they failed to build sturdy poultry houses or neglected their birds' hygiene. These 5 parents have been encouraged and supported by the other parents and the committee to make changes and there have been some improvements. Since early 2017 the poultry have been laying well and the families have a ready market for their eggs. They're able to sell one egg for 400/- (about 9 pence) and a large tray of 30 eggs for up to 12,000/- (£2.75).



Single mother Rose, who cares for children with disabilities, shows her young piglets.

Pig rearing was initially planned for 60 families but, with the demand and need so great, and through prudent bargaining with piggery merchants, 70 vulnerable families benefited. 20 received one mature pig aged 4 to 5 months and 50 received 2 piglets aged up to 3 months. The pigs started to conceive at about 9 months and have since been producing healthy litters of four to ten healthy piglets. Parents have been able to sell some of their piglets for between 130,000/- and 140,000/- (£29 to £32) generating invaluable income to help meet their families' basic needs.

Learning to care for livestock together has played a major role in uniting the community and some families have joined with others to help overcome challenges and enjoy success together. The single parent families have improved their own nutrition and have started to earn a sustainable income. They are also now able to hand on new-born livestock or trays of eggs to other vulnerable families in the community to ensure the revolving and lasting benefits of the project. The single parents' group chairperson noted that there have been signs within the community of a reduction in alcohol dependency as people have found new motivation in caring for their animals.

5. Protection from Life-threatening Malaria

240 vulnerable families received 720 treated nets in November following comprehensive malaria prevention training. 1,700 children and adults now have protection from malaria and more than 1,000 people in the wider community are benefiting from the improved environment and reduced mosquito numbers.

Training took place in Kirondo's church which doubles as a community meeting place and was led by experienced practitioners in malaria prevention. Myths and misconceptions surrounding malaria were dispelled including that malaria is not an airborne or sexually-transmitted disease and cannot be spread by sleeping near another person.



At Advantage Africa's meeting with SPAU and the Kirondo community in January 2017, this was the response when asked 'Who now sleeps under a mosquito net?'

The trainers highlighted the fact that malaria is the most frequent cause of debilitating illness and fever in Uganda and that infants below 5 years old, pregnant women and people living with HIV or sickle cell anaemia were particularly vulnerable to the disease.

The 240 families attending the training were strongly encouraged to ensure that every member of their home slept under their treated net every night and kept their skin covered if outside between evening and dawn. They were also taught how to improve the environment around their homes and throughout their community including clearing bushes, covering any water-filled pits and draining stagnant water, all of which act as mosquito breeding grounds.

Elderly grandmother Sikolo shows her mosquito net placed carefully over her new mattress. She has fragile health with significant thyroid problems but has to care single-handedly for her orphaned grandchildren. The treated nets have made an immense difference in their lives as they are no longer sick from malaria.



6. HIV & AIDS Prevention and Care

Memory work training was undertaken in February 2017 and was very well received by the participants. 30 single parents and carers were trained and provided with resources in order to become trainers in memory work themselves. SPAU estimates that their onward training of their fellow community members will reach approximately 300 people.

The participants expressed particular interest in the importance of making a will as this was something they had never considered or had chance to learn about before. Given the frequency of property grabbing by unscrupulous distant relatives, they were reassured to learn that they could legally ensure their home and belongings would pass to their intended beneficiaries in the event of their death.



One of the Memory Work trainers gives advice on making a will.

Support in how to disclose their HIV status was another topic appreciated by the participants. Fear and stigma surrounding the disease is still common and the trainees were equipped to address these issues and encourage open, supportive discussion. HIV counselling and testing sessions are due to take place by the end of May and will be the first ever held in the community.



Participants were also trained in how to nurture children and meet their needs in their different stages of development (0-2, 3-12 and 13-18 years). This photo (left) shows a role play about 'bad parenting' in which the father (acted by the man far left) is constantly angry with his children and blames them for all that's wrong in his life.



The trainees listen and participate enthusiastically.



Group photo after 5 days of Memory Work training. The participants have built strong friendships with their fellow trainees and are ready to train others within the Kironde community.

7. Supporting Most Vulnerable Children & Adults Affected by Disability & Old Age

7.1 Health kits

Given the high proportion of extremely vulnerable people in Kirondo, there was an even greater demand for health kits than initially anticipated. SPAU met with the single parents' group and other community leaders to decide how best to distribute support. Through careful consideration and negotiation with providers, SPAU Director Paul Lwanga said they 'managed to keep to the budget and support many people.'



The arrival of mattresses is greeted with great excitement by the families in Kirondo.



In January 2017, 200 disabled and elderly people were supported with full or partial health kits, rather than the 80 beneficiaries originally anticipated. The breakdown is as follows:

39 children and adults with disabilities received a full health kit (mattress, blankets, bed sheets, toothpaste and toothbrush).

26 elderly men and women received full kits.

30 vulnerable children and adults received a blanket or mattress, toothpaste and toothbrush

105 vulnerable children and adults received bed sheets, toothpaste and toothbrush.



Christine (above) who has Down's syndrome, Nakato (left) who has cerebral palsy and Sarah (right), who is blind, receive their health kits.



7.2 Supporting the most vulnerable children and adults affected by disability

From 6th to 10th February 2017, two single mothers from the Kirondo SPAU group attended cerebral palsy training provided by Motivation. Since then, the two women have been visiting families in the community, helping them to understand cerebral palsy and ensure that children affected by the condition thrive. They also offered counselling and as Chairperson Lillian, said, 'Some parents were already tired of these children, felt like leaving them to die.' Now these parents, previously so isolated, realised they were not alone. They realised many more were in the same position, that help was available and they could support their children to become resilient and independent.

Later in February, 50 children and adults with disabilities were assessed by Motivation physiotherapists and technicians in Kirondo. Many people were affected by cerebral palsy or epilepsy and most had mobility or speech impairments. Some of the parents had previously thought their disabled child was cursed through witchcraft, but the physiotherapists were able to dispel such myths. Initially 4 children were provided with sturdy wheelchairs suitable for Kirondo's rough terrain, but through our growing partnership with Motivation, mobility aids including crutches, special shoes and further wheelchairs have been provided to 20 further people.



Richard changes his old wooden crutches for properly fitted, aluminium ones.



Yuda (above) is lifted into his new wheelchair by his father



Sabire, who is blind, learns how to use a white cane

The support of the Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission has provided vital leverage to enable us to develop a partnership with Motivation Uganda and ensure significant positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities and their families. Despite the limited project budget to support the high numbers of people with disabilities in Kirondo, this project has provided the basis for further support and gifts in kind to ensure that all the children and adults assessed receive practical help in improving their independence. Many have already received mobility aids they need and more people are due to receive appropriate devices and interventions in May and June. We have also established a positive relationship with CORSU (Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services in Uganda) who provide free surgery for children with disabilities.



(left) Teoposita has plaster casts taken of her feet and (centre) sketches made for her special shoes. (Right) she wears her completed, orthopaedic shoes to improve her balance and walking .

Advantage Africa and SPAU wish to build on and ensure the sustainability of this tremendous start by encouraging Kirondo families affected by disability to set up a disabled people's organisation (DPO) within the community. This will ensure that peer support and advice are available and no family affected by disability need feel alone or anxious. Developing a DPO will also provide scope for further support from relevant organisations in Uganda and will help to dispel myths and prejudice surrounding disability.

7.3 Supporting the most vulnerable adults affected by old age

The Kirondo single parents' group have worked with SPAU to agree where house repairs are most urgently needed to help older people feel safer and more comfortable.

An elderly man called Musisi was top of their priority list. He had to have his leg amputated after falling from a truck and since then has led a life of extreme hardship. The drought in Uganda has significantly impacted his health and he has been living on mangoes and relying on the kindness of others in the community.

At the end of April work began to rebuild Musisi's home, previously made from grass and sticks, with bricks. Community members have come together to contribute lake and river sand towards the reconstruction and he is expected to have a safe, sturdy home by the end of May.

Musisi is one of many community members with a reliance on cheap alcohol, but these positive changes are already having an impact on his general outlook. He is drinking less and determined to become self-reliant again. Working with SPAU and the community, we are keen to help Musisi and other elderly disabled people (such as Sikolo featured on page 4) to earn a regular income to meet their daily needs through enterprises such as selling silver fish.



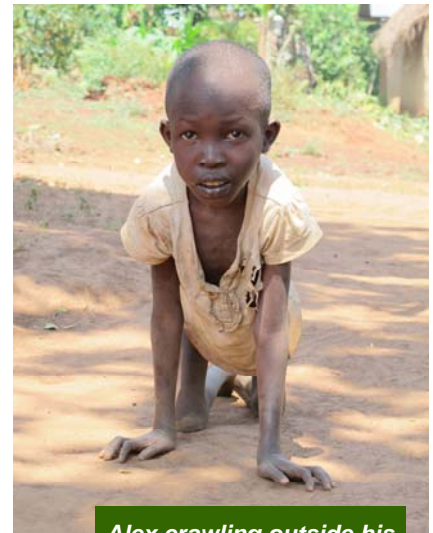
Left: Musisi outside his old home with Single Parents Group Chairperson Lillian and SPAU outreach worker Sarah Nakazi. Right: Outside his new home as it takes shape.



8. Alex's story - an Example of how the Commission has Transformed Lives in Kirondo

Alex is seventeen but no bigger than a two-year old. When he stopped growing and displayed problems with speech and mobility his mother left him with his paternal grandmother and never came back. His grandmother 'Jaja' has brought him up with love and care but their life, with no regular income, has been very hard. Alex felt isolated and lacked confidence to play with other children. He used to do nothing all day but crawl listlessly around his home.

Since Jaja has been part of the Kirondo single parents' group and received support through the Commission, their lives have changed beyond recognition. Their pig (which they have named Spau!) has recently produced many healthy piglets and Jaja has become a competent livestock farmer. Alex and Jaja have immaculately kept mattresses and bedding covered by mosquito nets. They are no longer affected by malaria or water-related diseases, thanks to the borehole.



Alex crawling outside his home early in 2016.



Alex with SPAU director Paul Lwanga, January 2017.

Jaja with Sarah.



More case studies available on request.

Perhaps best of all for Alex, he now has a sturdy wheelchair which can negotiate rough terrain. He can propel himself around Kirondo and feels properly included in village life for the first time.

9. Financial Report

Activity	Budget £	Total spend	Remaining funds
Safe water supply	5,090	5,136	-46
Poultry rearing for 40 single parent families (1)	4,274	3,589	685
Pig rearing for 60 single parent families	8,238	8,039	199
Malaria prevention (2)	6,194	6,821	-627
HIV prevention and care	1,245	1,358	-113
Most vulnerable benefiting from sustainable development	7,058	7,455	-397
SPAU implementation and monitoring	2,875	2,963	-88
Transport to implement and monitor project	1,108	934	174
Local communications	200	143	57
Project administration	578	461	117
Total Expenditure (3)	36,860	36,898	-38

1: Costs have been unpredictable, particularly in relation to the quality and availability of animal feed in the prolonged drought.

2: The planned number of beneficiaries was adhered to given people's urgent need for protection. Costs were above budget due to unfavourable exchange rates and the weakness of Sterling.

3: Despite the challenging economic and climatic environment, the project's aims have been exceeded within budget through careful negotiations to make savings wherever possible.

10. Learning from Challenges and Successes and Recommendations for Future Work

10.1 Challenges

While there are clear signs of reduction of alcohol abuse amongst the single parent families involved in the project, there remain concerns across the Kirondo community about drug and alcohol dependency, mostly amongst young, unemployed men. Small plastic sachets containing 100ml of strong spirits are readily available and cheap. (One sachet costs 500/ which is about 11 pence. See example below right, of the aptly named Challenger Vodka).

Single Parents Group Chairperson Lillian says they are very concerned about the destructive behaviour of some young, disaffected people under the influence of alcohol. There have been thefts and rapes in the wider community and the many children and women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to assault and abuse. Advantage Africa is working with SPAU and the Kirondo Single Parents' Group committee to organise drug and alcohol counselling for the community, expected to take place in July 2017.

With the enhancement of the health and welfare of hundreds of vulnerable families supported by the Commission through this project, wider community morale and economic well-being is improving. However, there remain critical issues of youth unemployment, teenage pregnancy and school drop outs. SPAU will continue to support the Single Parents' Group, which has grown in its community leadership role, to advocate with local government for improved economic opportunities and support for young people across Kirondo.



The six month long drought in Uganda in the latter half of 2016 and early 2017 has also caused many challenges in Kirondo. The failure of maize crops across eastern Uganda has had a significant impact on the quality and availability of livestock feed. This, along with the temporary closure of the borehole, has meant that people have had to work hard in co-operation with each other to ensure their poultry and pigs had sufficient food and water to thrive.

10.2 Successes

Up to 3,000 people across the Kirondo community have improved access to safe water and protection from malaria. About 750 vulnerable children and adults have had their lives and prospects turned around by this project. They are able to meet their basic needs, keep safe from disease, and many are able to sleep in comfort for the first time. Some have new-found independence and confidence through improved mobility.

This project has also provided insights and leverage for further activities needed for long-term positive change across Kirondo and will enable us to:

- Build on our partnership with Motivation and CORSU to support the mobility and independence needs of all Kirondo community members with disabilities and support the formation of a disabled people's group.
- Support the community with drug and alcohol counselling and development of peer support groups, working alongside trusted local organisations.
- Support young people with sexual health training and advocate with local government for improved vocational and economic opportunities.

This project has had an immense positive impact on helping some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in Uganda to become self-reliant. Families have overcome challenges together, formed friendships and improved the resilience and prospects of all around them.

The Kirondo community, SPAU and Advantage Africa are so grateful to the Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission for your support and partnership which has enabled this project to take place.