



# Live Again

Family Life Programme

18<sup>th</sup> June 2013

## PROGRESS REPORT

### EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



**Above: ECD pupils have lesson under the tree in the first week of opening**

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## **BACK GROUND- LIVE AGAIN**

Live again is a registered community based organization **with a vision to see empowered families; its mission is to promote an environment suitable for family life.** The organization was started with the aim to heal and empower those who were traumatized as a result of the war in northern Uganda resulting from violence, displacement, loss of loved ones, loss of property and dehumanization but now it embraces objectives that address changes as they come.

The organization seeks to rebuild lives, restore their dignity and rebuild the entire community whose social fabric has been destroyed by the war. It is our hope that the good life of the families will be restored to a better life thus the name Live Again.

## **PROJECTS UNDER LIVE AGAIN**

Live Again is actively implementing four different projects. VIZ: livelihood project, scholarship project psycho social support project and the early childhood development project. The projects are supported by international organizations and friends. Live Again is working with different categories of people amongst which include HIV/AIDS positive livers, child mothers, widows, war returnees, orphans, and children /students from the above background, with the general aim to see families empowered again.

This report covers the ECD project progress from inception to date and identifies gaps and proposed ways forward. It is to help you analyze the progress and make decisions for the project.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Early Childhood Development Project (ECD) supported by TraumAid International (Australia) has been designed to provide an environment that is safe for positive interaction, learning, and the development of children. Primarily it was planned to provide quality day care services to the children with the objective of giving their parents, especially the mothers, enough time to concentrate on their work knowing their children are safe and looked after. But Live Again realized it would be of more value when a child of 3-5 years old is introduced to early education. The project has undergone tremendous progress since its inception.

## **ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED**

### **Identification of project location/Consultative meeting with community.**

The ECD project is located in Oryang Ojuma village, Ojuma Parish, Amida Sub County Kitgum

The ECD project location was identified by Live Again and verified by the sub county authority, community and local leaders through a consultative meeting with the district authority and community of Amida Sub County and Kitgum Matidi Sub County-Lukwo. It was discovered that a number of nursery school aged children were kept at home because there were no nearby center and parents could not afford the cost to the distant centres. It is also common culture to wait for children to turn 6 years old and then send them to primary one. The community embraced the project and promised to work together with Live Again for positive results.

### **Selection of centre management committees and care giver**

The ECD management committees were selected by the community during the consultative meeting. The team is gender balanced. During the same meeting the community also identified four care givers for the centre (all mothers). These care givers look after the pupils from 8:30am to midday.

### **Registration of pupils**

Registration of pupils kicked off immediately after the consultative meeting. The secretary management committee took the responsibility of registering the pupils to benefit from the ECD project. 125 pupils between the ages of 3-5 were registered to benefit from the project.

### **Classroom block construction**

The classroom block construction work started in the month of March. Live Again identified a contractor formally and awarded the contract. Construction of the classroom block, which started on 13th March, completed the first stage of cementing the floor and painting on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2013. The construction work was delayed by inadequate water, delay in buying the access road, no store, and negligence of the first contractor.



Above: **classroom block under construction at the ECD Center.**



Above: **Back view of the completed class room block**

### **Parents meeting**

Parents meeting was held on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at the ECD Centre. The meeting was attended by at least more than 50 parents from the area. The meeting was meant to share with parents the background of the project, progress in the project, the kind of centre to be opened, possible cost to operate the school, parent's contribution as a

sustainability strategy and the little support to be given to the management committee/care givers during term of project.

As an output, the parents were so welcoming for the nursery school that will start from K1/Baby's class. They agreed to give the contribution proposed during the meeting and it will be noted in the admission letter.

However some parents doubted the opening of the school in two weeks time (10<sup>th</sup> June) because of the inconsistency in the work at the building site.



Above: parents in the new building during the parents meeting.

### **Recruitment of nursery teachers**

Two professional teachers have been recruited to provide all the necessary services to the centre. To identify competent Nursery teachers, the position was advertised by displaying a written advertisement at public places including district headquarter, market notice bored, office Live Again and at Kitgum NGO Forum office. The qualified candidate underwent an interview. The successful candidates were given appointment and started work on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

## **ECD opening**

The ECD center was opened on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The center started by engaging the pupils under a tree because the classroom block was not complete.

The pupils also started without uniform and majority of the pupils come to the centre and back home alone (without parents). Currently the school is stable at with an average of 57 pupils. The attendance of the pupils in the first week was as below.



Above: pupils gets lesson under a tree during the first week of opening

The table below shows the pupils turn up in the first week of opening the ECD centre

<b>DAY</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Monday	17
Tuesday	30
Wednesday	36
Thursday	37
Friday	45

## **School fees**

Some committed parents have started paying school fees (15,000UGX) for their children. Parents who can't afford paying fees at once have been allowed to pay by installments. Other school requirements –soap, toilet paper, and sugar are also being submitted.

## **WHAT IS BEING DONE?**

### **Construction work**

Construction work is still in progress. The class room block is completed but needs some teaching aid pictures which are yet to be drawn on the wall.

The toilet and the urinal shelters are about to be painted; however they are already in use.

### **Playing material**

Quotations for playing materials have been collected from different workshops and are yet to be presented to the board for recommendation before contract is awarded to the contractor. We are aware that part of the money was used on construction.

### **Centre Uniform**

The pupils are currently studying without school uniform but the board of directors helped in identifying the uniform color and design. A sample has been made and presented to the board for recommendation.



Above: ECD centre uniform-kapere maroon dress for girls and kapere maroon shirt and maroon pair of short for boys.

An order will be placed for the uniforms based on the number of parents who have paid for them.

### **Support to the school management committees, care givers and teachers.**

The management committee is a group of twenty members. The group is call “Lotino Awaka wa’ goats rearing group. The project shall be located in Oryang Ojuma. The group is yet to produce their constitution and work plan before they are given the support (starting capital). The group shall also be expected to engage in Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA).

## **WHAT HAS NOT BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?**

### **Fencing the compound**

Fencing of the center is not yet accomplished. It needs to be done to prevent the pupils from escaping back home since most of the pupils come from nearby and shall also act as security so that school property will remain in the compound and not be stolen. Local material such as bamboo and tree poles will be used.

### **School Inspection.**

The center is yet to be inspected. There are items in the inspection check list that needs to be addressed, such as a comprehensive first aid box, teachers and caregivers are not yet medically tested, policy documentation, among others. It is very important for the school to be inspected earlier but the inspection team shall only be invited when the checklist is complete.

### **Kitchen not constructed**

The kitchen has not been constructed. This is because it was not part of the bigger building plan. A bill of quantity (BOQ) has been taken and is yet to be presented to the board for approval.

Currently, Porridge is being prepared on open ground. This will not work when the rainy season arrives.



## **CHALLENGES**

### **Age variation**

To ensure quality early learning in a centre, there must be age appropriateness among other factors. This is not the case for Live Again Centre since pupils of different ages are mixed in the same class. This will affect the quality of the pupils produced since there will be big imbalances in their performance. The center has only one class now and that means we can only operate a class with capacity of 50 children.

Live Again has left it to the ECD teachers to come out with a sustainable solution.

### **Payment of school fees.**

Live Again doubt if the parents shall pay school fees in time to cater for the day to day running of the school and the rate at which parents are paying school fees is too slow that it cannot facilitate the school effectively. For example, given the fees paid now, the school cannot add more chairs for the pupils (the centre needs 24 more chairs) nor can it have adequate money to buy items for porridge for the children. Water remains critical. However parents are allowed to pay by installments.

Caregivers are not willing to work at a pay of even 30,000UGX. This may affect the operation of the school from July. However Live Again is working hard to settle the caregivers, for example on the 29<sup>th</sup> one of the board of directors convened a meeting with the management team and caregivers where they were told to work as a group being supported by Live Again. The team promised to hold their meeting and give Live Again feedback within three days.

### **Conclusion/recommendations**

The school progress is encouraging given the number of pupils who turned up to enrol and parents' commitment to the project. The school registered 59 pupils and parents are also helping the school to do small jobs to help, e.g. clearing school compound, erecting the drying stand for kitchen utensils among other things. But the work in progress, unaccomplished work and challenges put across in this report need to be addressed to make the centre effective in its support of the community.