

Friends of ACET Newsletter

Steady..!

Welcome to this edition!

The work continues to flourish and the support from our partners abroad has not floundered. We are grateful to God and the partners for this – in a time of hard financial times when people are making many difficult decisions!

Editor

ACET KITGUM, PADER and GULU

ACET Kitgum supports 5,100 orphans in a community based model. The project continues to grow and is being sustained by the introduction of saving and loans intervention working with 1,800 households. This project has continued to thrive even in the midst of families that are relocating. The savings from many of these families is used to support Orphans especially from the families that are benefiting from this project. The team is now undertaking a rigorous review to ascertain the extent to which the program is affecting the lives of the families that are being reached.

The team in Pader has also been beefed up with a new “catch”, one Amos Awira as a Program Officer for Pader. Amos joins ACET from World Vision. We are looking forward to tapping into the vast experience and skills that Amos brings from years of working on a development program and especially on supporting children that have been left very vulnerable.

At ACET Gulu Moses, one of our staff who was involved in a motor accident is back on the road and stronger than ever. We all could not wait to have the strong cheerful and diligent Moses back.

Bbika School PROJECT UPDATE....

The Bbika school project is a partnership between ACET and Rianna’s Fund to assist a school – 45 kms west of Kampala in an impoverished community.

The school initiative was started as an Early Child Development Centre (ECDC) where young children could go and attend – a *pre-school* of sorts. In this area, the schools are so few and so children had to walk large distances (4-8kms) to get to school. The community way of coping was therefore to keep children home till they were old enough to walk to school.

Action for Children filled in a big gap by providing education at affordable rates (some was free). The school had a few buildings and also used some trees as a learning area. ACET Uganda took a team of decision makers from Rianna’s fund to visit the school seeking financial support to help the school. The school was fortunate to be considered and a total of £18,000 was raised for the project. These funds were to build 3 classrooms. The parents were excited about this gesture and offered to make the bricks and participate in the construction project in as far as was feasible. -**Picture below**

In the same breath FoAU have embarked on the modification of part of the dining area for Nakulabye Junior School. This shall provide space for an Administration block and a resource centre. The construction and furnishing of the resource centre work is due to end within the next quarter.



Credit Crunch hits Mbale..

There was an initial assumption that the credit crunch would not hit Uganda as badly since we, as a country are not necessarily linked into the international markets. We see the impact of the crunch in some of our project areas. The gravity of the matter is that it is **directly affecting the poor disproportionately**, one may add.

Send a Cow Uganda Partnership!

ACET Mbale office had big plans to incorporate an income generation project partnership for beneficiaries in Mbale. Viable partners were considered and Send a Cow Uganda (SaCU) was finally selected. We wondered why the partnership was taking long to “take-off” when we had the resources and they had the expertise. It was only after a series of consultations that we realised that the partnership would not materialise and that ACET would have to go back to the drawing board – consultations with the community and then a second solicitation phase! This cost us many months delay of programme implementation.

Joint Clinical Research Centre (JCRC) scales down partnership in Mbale

The Counselling and Testing services in the ACET Mbale catchment area also hit a snag as the services were largely carried out in partnership with JCRC. The team is wondering how to sustain the delivery of these services through expanding its partnerships, while at the back of their minds also considering a Plan B.

ACET News Snippets:

Jolien gets Married!

Jolien Glashouwer, a former programme officer with Tear Holland got married to a Dutch man and finds herself in Uganda again! We were glad to grace the reception in Uganda and believe it or not we (the ACET team) were her family here! If we had known we were the only people she really knew here, we would have made our presence felt more (drums and all – the Ugandan way). Well, it was a nice occasion and we were glad to be a part of it.

Lifeskills in *Luganda* ... !

ACET is keen to be the key point of contact for lifeskills education in the country and it seems we are on track. The Uganda Youth Forum, seeking to develop a high calibre resource team based in the villages called upon ACET to ‘do the honours’. Ever tried translating **concepts** and **paradigms** in a local language? Well.. Paul and Daudi did just that. The community was so excited. They felt honoured that trainers from Kampala would be willing to train in the local language and on top of that NOT look down (undervalue) on the participants!

NakJus gets a Donation from International School in Uganda (ISU):

Nakjus profile got a boost when the leading international school in Uganda gave the proceeds from the school fun run to the school! The link between the two schools was facilitated by Friends of ACET UK, a kind of “*my uncles, friends, daughter*” as we’d say in the community. This relationship is of course stronger than that and shall see NakJus standards rise as it interacts with schools on the cutting edge of education. Thanks to Robert Mortimer and his Executive and their connections.

NakJus .. Phase #2?

Yes, there is more activity buzzing at the Nakulabye Junior School – thanks to the Friends of ACET! The work this time is focussing on getting more space for the kids – a reading room and some privacy from the community folk that come to use the well. The absence of a fence meant that children come right up to the school fence, or other community members come and stare as the schoolchildren are doing sports.

To protect the school children from kidnapping, to give and create a more conducive learning environment, the changes are being taken gradually all dependent on the availability of funds. The school continues to grow into a model school intervention.

Child Issues in Mbale cause a stir

Namataala - The most recent research in Mbale shows that the area most affected (highest prevalence figures) is the residential quarter of Namataala. What compounds the situation is that the area has a large refugee population (Karamajong) –that are so poor and spend their time on the streets – begging and a few doing odd jobs. This community also suffers from a high degree of social stigma from the inhabitants in Mbale and so the chance of people growing out of these circumstances is hard. It is as if they are trapped. ACET Mbale is designing an innovative programme to see what it could do under these circumstances – bearing in mind the social context. It will call for wisdom.

Training for Compassion International

The Compassion International, (CIU) chapter in Uganda supports over 60,000 children in Uganda. They recognised a phenomenon that revealed that many of their children are increasingly susceptible to HIV and other STDs. They asked ACET to provide training and some piece of advice on the nature of interventions that should be conducted. ACET conducted eight (8) five-day training events involving 229 children from 43 Child Development Centres. The training involved young children from the age of 10 to 17 years in the rural Districts of Uganda. It was a busy but worthwhile experience for the ACET teams in Mbale and Kampala

Partnership Box

St James Exposure Visit:

ACET was graced with a visit from *St James Team of 5*. This was held in May 2009 and saw the team visit many projects in the Eastern part of the country. ACET looks forward to supporting /conducting many such visits as it’s used of God to partner with St James in their quest to do more in Africa.

Karl Hughes, Vianney Musisi and Sara Okware, from Christian Aid Uganda office made a couple of visits to the projects in Kitgum and to the central office in Kampala.

David Kabiswa has been involved in a series of meetings with the Ecumenical HIV & AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) and the Pan African AIDS Network (PACANet) where he serves as a board member.