

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH UGANDA (A4CY-U)



ANNUAL REPORT 2023!

EMPOWERING THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO
EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am honored to present to you the Alliance for Children and Youth Uganda 2022/23 Annual Report. This year of 2023 is building on the many key achievements and strides realized in the previous years demonstrated as a great strides towards achieving our vision and mission in the community. Throughout the year, we reached out mainly to adolescent girls and young women to have equal access to quality and affordable SRH services and resources, we have reached out to both in and out of school adolescent, vulnerable child mothers and their families to attain second chance education and marketable vocational skills training.

Globally, approximately 14 million girls are subjected to child marriage. In Uganda it's estimated that more than 24% of pregnancies are of teenage parents. Marriage & pregnancy usually means the end of education to the child; with no education, the future of the child is uncertain and undermines numerous development opportunities and priorities, hindering progress towards a more equal, healthy and prosperous world.

Uganda is one of the countries with a very young population, with nearly half (47%) of its people under 15 years old. The choices that these young people and their parents make affects the country's future for decades to come. Delaying marriage and pregnancy equates to major benefits to both the girls and the society such as improved health of children and faster economic growth.

As demonstrated within this annual report, we have continued the fight against teenage pregnancy and child marriage through our mainstream programs aimed at promoting equal and quality education opportunities for both girls & boys, enabling access to age appropriate comprehensive sexual & reproductive health information & services, provision of direct services to at-risk girls and young women and ensuring social and economic empowerment of vulnerable households with a focus on child mothers. We have been in position to implement activities under these programs through the generous support of the Girls First Fund, Baylor Uganda, Founder/Board Members, for which we are always grateful.

I would also wish to thank the Local Leaders especially Kasese District Local Government that closely worked with us across the different events and activities we are all celebrating in the report. I would wish to thank the staff, associates and community champions who have continued to commit to the fight against teenage pregnancy and child marriage with limited or even no pay. Let this report show that with the right attitude and commitment we shall most definitely create an environment where every child will have an equal opportunity to quality education and develops to full potential without the impact of teenage pregnancy & child marriage; we will indeed see a community where adolescent girls and young women have equal access to services and resources.

KABUGHO JOVIAH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH UGANDA

A4CY-U OVERVIEW

Alliance for children and youth Uganda is Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that started in 2012 with a commitment of empowering communities affected by Poverty to meet their needs. We envision a society where all Children and Youth live to their full potential and their rights and aspirations are fulfilled. Our services are delivered through a community and family-oriented intervention model.

VISION

A society where all Children and Youth live to their full potential and their rights and aspirations are fulfilled

MISSION

To support Children, Youth and their caregivers to participate in socio-economic initiatives for improve livelihoods and sustainable development.

OUR BOARD

It comprises of 9 (5 females and 4 males) members drawn from different walks of life. The Board is responsible strategic direction and decision making of the organisation.

LIST OF A4CY-U BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

S/N	NAME	GENDER	TITLE/POSITION
1.	MR. KITANYWA SOWED	MALE	CHAIRPERON BOARD
2.	MR. MUZIGITI JIMMY	MALE	BOARD MEMBER
3.	MR. KIMUGHA DENITH	MALE	BOARD MEMBER
4.	MRS. MASIKA EVELYEEN	FEMALE	BOARD MEMBER
5.	MRS. KABANYORO REBECCA	FEMALE	TREASURER
6.	MRS. ELLEN ITHUNGU	FEMALE	BOARD MEMBER
7.	MRS. RUTH MASIKA	FEMALE	VICE CHAIRPERSON
8.	ORD. ANNA BWABU	FEMALE	BOARD MEMBER
9.	MR. MUTORO JULIUS	MALE	BOARD MEMBER

ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To strengthen the capacity of families, caregivers and other service providers to protect and care for their children and youth.
2. To expand the provision of essential services for the children and youth and their households.

3. To increase access to protection and legal services to Orphans and Other Vulnerable children.
4. To protect the Child survival and development through provision of improved Reproductive Health Services

ORGANISATIONAL THEMATIC AREAS

- 1) Child Protection and Youth Care
- 2) Social economic empowerment for the youth and caregivers
- 3) Sexual Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Services and women Rights Promotion.
- 4) Environmental Protection, climatic Change and Adoption
- 5) Water, Hygiene and Sanitation
- 6) Capacity building, Research and Institutional Development

LIST OF STAFF MEMBERS AND POSITIONS

NAME	GENDER	POSITION
KABUGHO JOVIAH	FEMALE	TEAM LEADER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NANVUMA SHAMILA	FEMALE	FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICER
ISEMUSOBYA AMOS	MALE	PROGRAMME OFFICER – GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS
MUHINDO ONIZ	MALE	DATA CLERK
MBAMBU JOLLY	FEMALE	FIELD ASSISTANT
MUHIWA JOVIA	FEMALE	ADOLESCENT SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE NURSE
NAGAWA SAUDA	FEMALE	ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
SUNDAY YOWERI	MALE	SECURITY GAURD
TUMUHAIRWE JAMES	MALE	SECURITY GAURD
KANANURA EMMANUEL	MALE	GARDENER

For more information, visit: www.a4cyuganda.org

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN 2023

PROJECT ONE: BAYLOR SUPPORTED ACE FORT PROJECT

Main aim/goal of the Project: Accelerated Epidemic control in the Fort Region. To Strengthen community engagement towards achievement of the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets and ensuring delivery of quality HIV/TB and psychosocial services along the continuum of care”.

Target sub counties and beneficiaries: Hiima Town Council, Kitswamba, Bugoye and Rukoki sub counties in Kasese district. A4CY-U has been in this project since 2018 and our contract ended September 2023. Our target beneficiaries are mainly the HIV positive OVC’s and their caregivers who are on care. Secondary beneficiaries are the other people living in the households of the supported beneficiaries, the men and general community members.

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Below is a list (details) activities conducted in this project between Jan to September 2023;

1. Support to the already established VSLA groups in the 4 target sub counties. We are supporting 9 groups with a membership of 225 active members. From the group records the share out capital in these groups has risen from 11, 546.780 in 2022 to 14,330,160 by end of 2023. This is good progress looking at the economic status of the people in the savings group the weekly share value and interest rates (loaning capacity). We used these VSLA groups as a mobilization tool to pass other project and community development programs. 3 out of the 9 groups are now registered at sub county level with the sub county Community Development Office and can now benefit from other government programs, A4CY-U intend to continue building the capacity of these groups to help them grow and be sustainable.
2. Supported Kitchen gardening initiative among caregivers for promotion of balanced diet and household income generation. We worked with the sub county agricultural extension workers to pass good agronomic activities to our caregivers by doing home to home support and reaching them in their groups. A4CY-U provided free seeds/plants from our office based nursery bed and gave them out to the farmers to plant and maintain a household kitchen garden. Records from the health facilities in our catchment show reduced cases of malnutrition and diseases caused by poor eating habits. This activity was coupled by training on good food preparation and good sanitation and hygiene, to reduce cases of food poisoning and better handling methods.
3. Provided health education sessions to both OVCs and their caregivers. This was done together with the health personnel to avoid reinfection and infecting other people the beneficiaries live with. Health education is a comprehensive package that we did continuously thought the project both at school and in the community. We discussed issues of drug adherence, viral load testing, balanced diet taking, avoiding risky behaviors, drug and alcohol addiction and proper body hygiene and sanitation.
4. Facilitated child protection sessions among OVC’s and the caregivers, A4CY-U hired trained facilitators to deliver these trainings during VSLA sittings and at school level. We are proud to say that child abuse cases reported have slightly reduced especially the sub

county CDO's office. The type of cases reported these days are not so critical and detrimental to the lives of the child like child neglect, child labor and abandonment. These have been handled effectively.

5. Supported school going OVC'S with scholastic materials like books, pens, pencils and mathematical sets. Bearing in mind that our project was coming to an end in September, Baylor stopped giving the school fees support to beneficiaries, though this was not an abrupt process, it left some OVC's stranded and at the verge of dropping out of school. As staff, we started the A4CY-U piggy bank where we dropped coins and monies and requested visitors and well-wishers to donate whatever they voluntarily felt like giving in. third term 2023 we supported 5 critically vulnerable OVC's, 4 were in primary seven, 1 in senior 2 and 1 in primary 6. In the same spirit. We hope for more support to sustain the impact and demand for services created in the community.
6. In 2023, we graduated a total number of 9 households from vulnerability and many other households moved from critically to slightly vulnerable. There's need for increased caregiver involvement in economic strengthening activities and mindset change such that they use the little resources and opportunities they have to uplift themselves, their households and the community as a whole.
7. Promoted good household hygiene and sanitation practices and behaviors among our beneficiaries and the community, in some sub counties we encouraged homes to have animal shelters to avoid dirtiness and bad smell in their homes. We supplied drinking containers for storage of safe drinking water in the beneficiary households. Tippy tap trainings have been done to promote hand washing after using the latrine and before eating. Latrine coverage has improved in our project catchment area from 41% in 2019 to 89% in 2023 (district health, demographics and sanitation report 2023).
8. Provision of targeted health services has been implemented together with health workers in our project catchment areas. This includes targeted HIV testing, enrolled on ART (new clients), adherence counselling, viral load monitoring and testing, follow up and tracking on lost clients. This has helped to reduce on cases of reinfection, lack of adherence, psychosocial counselling and support, and fewer deaths due to AIDS.
9. Our relationship with health service providers and stakeholders in our project catchment area has improved. This has led to effective case management, referral and feedback on violence (abuse) and no adherence cases.

In conclusion, A total number of 577 OVC and Caregivers were served in the quarters of Jan to September 2023. Out of these 442 (76.6 %) were OVC (main/primary target) and 135 (23.4 %) were Caregivers (secondary beneficiaries). We hope to continue following up the beneficiaries and structures, sustaining the already created impact/ result in the community now that the project has come to the end.

PROJECT TWO: ELIMINATING CHILD MARRIAGE AND TEENAGE PREGNANCIES IN BWESUMBU SUB COUNTY, KASESE DISTRICT.

Project Goal: : To contribute to the reduction of child marriage in Bwesumbu sub county in Kasese District through Economic empowerment and increased access to quality Sexual Reproductive services.

Target Area and beneficiaries: Girls, Parents and/or Family Members, Leadership (i.e. community elders, health system workers, government officials, and religious leaders).

Project Objectives: We are contributing to the following key objectives

- a) Advancing girls' leadership by working directly with girls through mentorship programs for both in-school and out of school adolescents.
- b) Economic Empowerment that will include provision of skills to girls and young women to start up small enterprises that are marketable in their communities, direct payment of fees for girls and young women who dropped out of school at S.4 during COVID-19 Pandemic due to pregnancy and are willing to go back to school and complete Uganda Certificate of Education.
- c) Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) approach that will include: provision of comprehensive sexual reproductive health service including Post abortion care and family planning for Young women and health camps to offer a wide range of services like: Psychosocial support, Counselling, screening and treatment of STIs, Immunization against Cervical cancer for girls, family planning and advice on delayed debut for girls and boys.
- d) Advocating for effective implementation of laws and policies to prevent and respond to child marriage and early unions through: Village based dialogue meetings, supporting sub county Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Coordination committees (SOVCC) and supporting Community Development Officer (CDO) & Child and Family Protection Unit of Police (CFPU) to investigate, follow-up, prosecute and conclude reported cases of child marriage and teenage pregnancy.

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

- 1) Supported adolescents to access quality and free Sexual Reproductive Health Services at Bwesumbu Health Center III. Services accessed include HIV testing, adolescent counselling, accessing to long and short term family planning methods and contraceptives, body changes and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM).
- 2) Supported the sub county to hold quarterly extended Sub county OVC (SOVC) coordination committees aimed at tracking indicators and providing feedback for each village in attaining child marriage free status. During 2023 we conducted 4 meetings and conferenced many issues affected children and youth in the sub county. Action points from these meetings have been followed up jointly by stakeholders hence improving coordination, vigilance, reporting and urgent response to child rights violations in the sub county.
- 3) Support and facilitated the CDO to follow up, investigate and Conclude reported child marriage, teenage pregnancies and defilement cases. In the whole year, 37 cases of child

abuse were reported and recorded by the Community Development Officer, A4CY-U supported the follow up of 13 cases to conclusion and these included, girls forced into marriage (9 cases), school dropout (with and without parents influence (3 cases), defilement (1 case). Due to limited resources and nature of cases, other were referred to other stakeholders like Police (CFPU and CID), other CSO partners (justice centers, international Justice Mission (FAWE), Women Human Rights Defenders Network, UGANET, Women Destiny Changers Initiative (WDCI) and FAWE.

- 4) Facilitated the 48 Girl Mentors to conduct door to door mentorship of girls on SRH and referral of girls in need of SRH and other related services to the established Youth friendly corner at Bwesumbu HCIII. These have created demand for SRH services and are partly the reason for the big numbers of adolescents served at our adolescent corner at Bwesumbu health center III. They have also instrumental in grass root mobilization for project activities and follow up of child right abuses and violations. However, there's need for a refresher trainings to continue building their capacity to perform effectively, reporting, follow up etc.
- 5) Conduct selection of 50 Girls affected and at risk of child marriage to benefit from direct economic empowerment and second chance education for girls and Young women. A4CY-U together with community stakeholders identified and selected 50 girls affected and at risk of child marriage to benefit directly from the projects initiatives, using involvement methods where beneficiaries were involved in choosing the trade of their choice, 36 trainees are doing hair dressing and 14 trainees are doing craft shoe making.
- 6) Provide second chance education for 7 girls who dropped out of school in S.4 due to pregnancy during COVID-19 Pandemic to complete the Uganda Certificate of Education. A4CYU identified and selected 7 girls between 16 to 24 years who were involved in child marriage but are currently staying in their father's houses, and have since been taken back to secondary school to complete Uganda certificate of Education.
- 7) Provided start up toolkits to trained adolescent girls (in clusters of 6-8) to start up and practice the skills taught for job creation, self-reliance and not involving in risky behaviors. By December 2023, the clustered girls were already working and saving from their earnings to ensure sustainability and growth of their businesses and skills. The beneficiary girls have also formed and other joined VSLA groups to help improve their savings and loaning capacity, A4CY-U intends to support these groups to register at sub county level such that they are able to benefit from other government programs.
- 8) Conducted school health education days among boys and girls in primary and secondary schools in Bwesumbu and other schools in Bugoye, Maliba, Kitswamba, Buhuhira and Kyabarungira sub counties. Topics/messages passed or tackled are age appropriate on body changes, Menstruation, life skills (assertiveness, setting of goals and life ambitions), seeking help and concentration on education. We have also identified role model girls/ women who go and share their experience to encourage them stay in school and complete school.
- 9) Conducted wellness and mental health sessions for both staff, volunteers and board members to help them relax, reflect and improve their resilience at work and sanity in the community.

- 10) Provided and facilitated menstrual hygiene management trainings to girls in Bwesumbu Peas high school and Ndugutu standard academy secondary schools in Bwesumbu and Bugoye sub counties. We went to few schools because we are limited by resources to facilitate such activities
- 11) Conducted 2 adolescent youth camps for provision of sexual reproductive health services in hard to reach areas. One was staged in Mahasa village for two days and the other at Ruharo trading center in Kasangali parish. These are one of the last villages next to Mt. Rwenzori National Park. This increased adolescent access to SRH, family planning and other health services and information.

OTHER ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES THAT TOOK PLACE IN 2023

- i. Commemoration of days: A4CY-U joined the rest of the world in commemoration of the Women's day, International Youth day, the Day of the African Child, and the Menstrual Hygiene Day at Kasese district level. We were able to show case our work and also interact with various stakeholders who are doing similar work as us.
- ii. Refresher trainings sessions for both staff and board members in Monitoring and Evaluation, Governance and Resource mobilization, child protection and rights was conducted. This helped the team to get acquainted with new strategies and methods in reaching out and mobilizing communities for action.
- iii. Follow up visits on the already trained and benefiting girls and adolescents in all our current and previous projects to ensure sustaining of impact and ensuring the fire keeps burning. We reached out the 112 youths who benefited in the SDF- Enabel supported project, the 20 child mothers who were trained and given tool kits by Baylor Uganda and the women action and advocacy groups under the Her Right Her Choice project by the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET).

SUMMARY FINANCE REPORT 2023

Name of Donor	Amount	Comment
Girls First Fund	143,987,300	This grant is ending June 2024
Baylor Uganda	20,431,700	This support ended September 2023

CHALLENGES

1. Our work in the community is mainly aimed at changing attitudes, perceptions and advocacy, which takes a long time and resources to be realized, therefore there's need for continuous flow of resources to ensure that change/impact happens and is sustained.
2. Limited finances to implement the organizational approach/ strategy, the family oriented model to community development. At A4CY-U we recognize the fact that everybody is born and natured in a family, therefore a great need to target the foundations of the family if meaningful change is to happen in the world. As an organization, we still lack finances to roll out this approach to the whole Kasese district.
3. Overwhelming numbers of children, youth and caregivers who are vulnerable and need our services. We serve limited targets as per donor requirements and available resources. This leaves many helpless community members with no options. We have presence in Busongora North constituency in Kasese District leaving 80% of Kasese without our services, yet the same challenges are happening in the other places as well. There's need for more resource mobilization to be able to reach further than the population we are currently serving.
4. With the ending of the Baylor support, we are facing challenges in maintain the impact that the project had created, so many children were on school fees support and are at the verge of dropping out of school since their parents are not yet economically secure. In the GFF supported project, we supported 7 girls withdrawn from child marriage to complete senior 4 level of education. They do not have any hopes of furthering their education, this calls for more support and effort on fundraising.
5. Limited popularization of national laws, district ordinances, cultural pronouncements and Sub County based by-laws. Uganda is party to articulate and well-designed policies and laws at all administrative levels but most of these have remained on paper. This has proved a challenge that limits our work, yet as an institution has impacted on our work that laws are not known and followed.
6. Limited civic space and slim chance to win donor funding despite the overwhelming need for support in the communities. We are still dealing with the aftermath of the effects of COVID 19 yet our operating budget has increased, but we don't have partners supporting its implementation.
7. Need a GBV survivor's shelter in the district to allow the violated have a temporary safe home before being reintegrated in their communities and homes. At times A4CY-U gets stranded with the survivors because we do not have accommodation and food for them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Kasese District Local Government should solicit resources for the construction of a GBV shelter to temporarily house the GBV survivors, victims and women Human Rights Defenders until they are safe to go back to their communities and homes.
- Government agencies should come up strongly to implement the passed laws, policies and strategic plans if quality service delivery is to be achieved. Many laws and policies are kept on paper leading to unbalanced development especially for people living in hard to reach areas.
- Popularization of government laws and policies should be emphasized. Duty bearers and stakeholders should be facilitated by government to understand and popularize the available laws. That's when they will be able to translate and implement them well. Most at times the police department is not well facilitated financially, that without money some cases of violation die off before reaching court.
- Continuous fundraising by A4CY-U to connect with partners who can help support the most vulnerable children and youth in Kasese and Rwenzori region as a whole.
- Creating safe spaces for children and youth to participate fully and live dignifying lives. Today, even the homes our children live and stay in are no longer safe, it's a duty of parent, leaders, duty bearers and stakeholders to ensure children and Youth stay in safe and comfortable environments.
- It's equally our duty to create awareness about the misconceptions about different gender and Human rights issues around children and youth. These include child marriage vocational skills training and girl child education. The belief that vocational skills training is for academic failures is a wrong one, girls have equal right to education just as boys and not to be looked at as a source of bride price, this is the new way to go, we need to correct such myths and misconceptions among the parents and community members.

Photos

Below is stakeholder engagement meetings with caregiver beneficiaries



Above are A4CY-U Trained adolescent mentors after a monthly monitoring visit



Below are beneficiary girls learning hairdressing and shoe making in Bwesumbu training centers





Below are the action points during one of the SOVYC meetings conducted in Bwesumbu S/C

ACTION PLAN AND WAY FORWARD			
ISSUE	ACTION TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS	TIME FRAME
1 Children attending disco halls & bars closing at night	- Meeting Parents - Arresting Bar operators.	- Police, All stake holders	On going
2 Community following up defilement, rape, child abuse marriage cases. (Defending)	- Calling for meetings - Sensitisation - Reporting - Arrests	- All Stake holders, Police	On going
3 Children attending Vigil - clothing Markets at night - Child neglect - Not reporting - Ignorance of parents.	- Discontinue meetings at Mbatia Kithumbuwe, Kawathaung Kalole	- Alliance - Representative from the mentioned areas.	Before Sept.

FORWARD		
ISSUE	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS	TIME FRAME
4 School drop out	- Police, All stake holders	On going
5 Drug abuse Regulation	- All Stake holders, Police	on going
	- Alliance - Representative from the mentioned areas.	Before Sept.

FORWARD			
ISSUE	ACTION TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS	TIME FRAME
4 School drop out	- Operation in Markets - Sensitisation	- Police LCs All Stake holders	On going
5 Drug abuse Regulation	- By laws by sub-county council - Regulating by-law act LCIs	- Vice c/person Till LCIs	Sept.

Below are the 7 beneficiary girls of the second chance education program in Bwesumbu. They have completed their senior 4 exams and are awaiting their results



Below is the handover event for the startup tools in hair dressing and shoe making among 50 beneficiary girls





Our sincere appreciation goes to; our community members and beneficiaries who have shown to us that change of attitudes and behaviors is possible. The sub county and district leadership who have given technical support towards realization of desired result. Our donors: Girls First Fund and Baylor Uganda, thanks for the finance and technical support, it's because of you that we have gone this far! Continue supporting us because it's still much needed.

Prepared by

Approved By

Kabugho Joviah

Kitanywa Sowed

Executive Director

Chairperson

A4CY-U