



# UGANDA CHANGE AGENT ASSOCIATION (UCAA)

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ANNUAL REPORT 2024



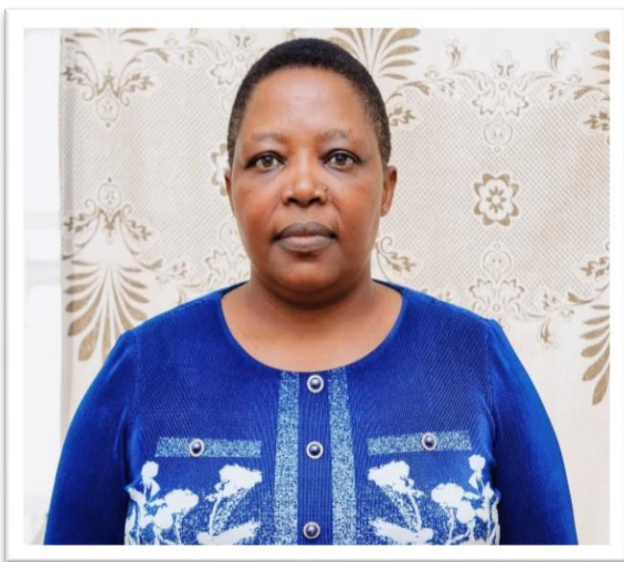
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## **Acronyms**

BOD Board of Directors  
C&D Institute for International Cooperation and Development  
CAAPs Climate Action adaptation plans  
CaR Children at Risk  
CBT Community based Training  
CFPU Child Family police unit  
CFs Community Facilitators  
CLAs Cluster level Associations  
CLIRK Climate innovation Resilience in Karamoja and Kyangwali  
CRECs Children Rights Environmental Clubs  
CSOs Civil Society Organizations  
DRMC Disaster Risk Management Committees  
ECD Early childhood development  
FAL Functional Adult Learning  
FAM Feedback Accountability Mechanism  
FAO Food and Agricultural Organization  
FMNR Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration  
GBV Gender based Violence  
IEC Information Education and Communication  
IGAs Income generating Activities  
KCCA Kampala Capital City Authority  
KiA Kerk in Actie  
KNH Kinder not Hilfe  
M&E Monitoring and evaluation  
MEL Monitoring Evaluation and Learning  
MP, Member of Parliament  
NCO National Coordination Office  
PDM Parish Development Model  
POs Project Officer  
RDC Residential district Commissioner  
RMM Role Model Men  
SHGA Self Help Group Approach  
UCAA Uganda Change Agent Association  
VAC Violence against Children  
VSLA Voluntary saving loans Association  
WFP World food program  
WLiE and EMB Women led in Emergency and Engaging Men and Boys  
WMC Water management Committees



## Message from the chairperson Board of Directors

It is with great honour and pride that I present to you the Uganda Change Agent Association (UCAA) Annual Report for 2024. This report reflects the dedication, resilience, and collective efforts of our team, partners, and stakeholders in contributing towards UCAA's mission of empowering marginalized communities for sustainable development.

Over the past year, UCAA has remained dedicated in promoting community resilience, economic empowerment for sustainable social economic development. Through our 2023-2027 strategic plan, we have expanded our impact across various thematic areas, including livelihoods, child protection, youth empowerment, education, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), and ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG). These efforts have not only transformed lives but have also strengthened the foundation for long-term sustainable development since all activities focus and promote participation of marginalized communities in the decision-making.

While we celebrate our achievements, we also recognize the challenges we have encountered along the way. However, through strong leadership, unwavering commitment, and the support of our dedicated staff, partners, donors, and government agencies, we have continued to overcome obstacles and create meaningful change in the communities we serve. As we look ahead, UCAA remains committed to fostering innovation, collaboration, and sustainability in all our interventions. We will continue to advocate for the rights and participation of marginalized communities in decision-making processes, ensuring that no one is left behind in our pursuit of a just and self-reliant society.

I extend my deepest gratitude to UCAA staff, Board of Directors, partners, donors, and all stakeholders for your invaluable contributions. Your dedication and support have been instrumental in driving our mission forward. Let us remain united and focused as we work towards a more inclusive, empowered, and sustainable Uganda.

With Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Miriam Tworekirwe'. The signature is stylized with a large 'M' and a long horizontal stroke.

Miriam Tworekirwe



## Executive summary

The Uganda Change Agent Association (UCAA) Annual Report for 2024 highlights a year of remarkable progress, resilience, and impactful interventions in empowering marginalized communities across Uganda. As UCAA continues to implement its 2023-2027 strategic plan, we remain committed to promoting sustainable livelihoods, human rights, education, youth empowerment, and gender equality, among other key areas.

Throughout the year, UCAA made significant strides in strengthening community resilience, improving economic opportunities, and enhancing advocacy and lobbying capabilities among vulnerable communities for improved provision and access to essential services. Our programs focused on:

- **Economic Empowerment & Livelihoods:** Supporting self-help groups, expanding vocational training, and promoting entrepreneurship for sustainable income generation.
- **Child Protection, Education & Life Skills Development:** Advocating for children's rights, enhancing access to quality education, and providing life skills training.
- **Human Rights & Gender Equality:** Advancing awareness and advocacy on climate change, education, gender transformation, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), gender-based violence prevention, and social inclusion.
- **Youth Employment & Skilling:** Providing technical and vocational skills to increase employability and economic independence among young people.
- **Humanitarian Aid & Community Development:** contributing to the uptake of innovation solutions to improve food production and income generation in land poor communities as well as utilization of valley dams of host and refugee communities, ensuring access to critical resources and social support systems.
- **Institutional Development & Governance:** Strengthening UCAA's capacity through effective governance, transparent financial management, capacity development and stakeholder collaboration.

Despite challenges such as economic constraints, climate change effects, and resource limitations, UCAA has leveraged strong partnerships, innovative solutions, and community-driven approaches to achieve its objectives. The success of our programs is attributed to effective leadership, collaborative engagement with donors and stakeholders, strategic fundraising, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

As we move forward, UCAA remains dedicated to expanding its reach, creating networks and partnerships for enhancing program sustainability, and deepening its impact in the communities we serve. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the stakeholders we collaborated with in the year 2024, the unwavering support technically and financially. Together, we will continue transforming lives, fostering resilience, and driving sustainable development in Uganda.



## Message from the executive Director

It is with great pleasure that I present the Uganda Change Agent Association (UCAA) Annual Report for 2024, highlighting our achievements, challenges, and the impact of our work over the past year. This report is a testament to the dedication and collective efforts of our staff, Board of Directors, partners, donors, and stakeholders, who have worked tirelessly in implementing the 2023-2027 strategic plan focusing on our key thematic areas.

Our work has brought tangible transformation to the communities we serve. From enhancing livelihoods and increasing youth employment opportunities to advocating for human rights and strengthening community resilience, we have witnessed incredible progress. However, we recognize that challenges persist, including economic constraints, climate change, and resource limitations. Despite these hurdles, our resilience, adaptability, and unwavering commitment have allowed us to stay focused with impactful solutions.

UCAA remains committed to expanding its reach, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing program effectiveness. As we continue to empower communities to advocate for social justice, and promote self-reliance, we invite all stakeholders to join us in creating lasting change in the marginalized groups.

As we close the previous and start a new year, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the compilation of this report; a summarized version will be produced and disseminated among all our partners and stakeholders as well as the UCAA website: [www.ucaa.or.ug](http://www.ucaa.or.ug).

Our success is dedicated to staff, the Board of Directors, government agencies, donors, and community we serve. Your support is invaluable, and together we continue to envision and build a more inclusive, resilient and self-sustaining Uganda from our lessons learnt and opportunities we encounter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Akello Lucy Ayena'.

Akello Lucy Ayena.

## UCAA Programme Overview

In 2024, UCAA successfully implemented projects aligned with its thematic focus areas. These initiatives aimed to enhance the well-being of vulnerable communities through sustainable solutions.

The key projects included: Self-Help Group Approach in Agago District

This ongoing project focuses on improving the lives of vulnerable women, youth and their households by promoting savings and loan schemes. The initiative enhances financial stability, ultimately improving the welfare of children in these households.



*Some of the resettled Children of Lokodiokodio primary school in Napak district visited at school after being rescued and taken in school.*

Children at Risk Program in Napak District, Karamoja: This project's aim was to protect adolescents, street-connected children, and other vulnerable children affected by crises within the community from unsafe outmigration. The approach involved working closely with caregivers, local leaders, and other partners in the region. This project also gave rise to the Water for Karamoja Projects, which was designed to expand the access and use of clean and safe water to enhance agricultural productivity and resilient livelihoods opportunities in the communities of dry land areas of Napak. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration also implemented in Napak District to Improved food-security and climate resilience in smallholder farming systems of households and agro-forestry activities.

Climate Innovations for Resilience in Karamoja & Kyangwali project, focused on advocating for the adoption of innovative solutions for food production and income generation. It targeted both host and refugee communities in Kyangwali, as well as communities in Kotido and Karenga Districts in Karamoja. The project ended its first year of implementation in September 2024.

Alongside these projects, UCAA has been conducting change agent trainings and in 2023 a total of 100 change agents graduated from districts of Yumbe, Kumi and Mayuge districts. In 2024 UCAA conducted 3 Village Change agent training courses (VCAT) in Bushenyi and Kibale districts with a total



of 155 participants plus 30 participants for the Change agent Training (CAT) course in Ntungamo district. These all started in 2024 and were planned to graduate in 2025 as change agents.

UCAA also carried out institutional strengthening activities, including governance and administrative, Board of Directors (BOD) meetings, review meetings, and National Delegates Assembly (NDA) engagements among others. These activities were supported by UCAA staff, BOD members, and stakeholders.

UCAA's achievements in 2024 were driven by: Effective governance, administration, and accountability ensuring transparency among staff, alignment of set objectives across all projects for maximum impact, strengthened networks and fundraising systems for long-term sustainability, community engagement strategies fostering local ownership of initiatives, efficient communication, documentation, monitoring, and evaluation to track progress. And board of Directors quarterly meetings for strategic guidance of the association throughout the year. These combined efforts contributed to the successful implementation and impact of UCAA's work in 2024.



*A photo of some of the trained role model men/youth and women leaders in advocacy to support the project activities and innovations in Kyangwali refugee settlement Kikuube district, Bunyoro region.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

UCAA was founded in 1992 as a member-based voluntary Association of trained rural development workers (Change Agents) by Quaker Service Norway (QSN) and was formally registered by the Uganda National NGO's Board in 1993, Registration Number S5914/646; also incorporated by the registrar of companies a non-profit limited liability company under the companies Act.

With a mission to promote the participation of vulnerable communities in decision making, control and protection of their livelihoods for sustainable development, a number of activities that directly involves the participation of the local people at the grassroots are being implemented.

### **National Delegates Assembly formally Annual General Meeting**

The National delegates' assembly was conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at Kyoto Spiritual resort Namugongo. During the regional assembly, the 2023 annual reports, budget and work plans were reviewed and approved, the Constitution of UCAA was discussed and some clauses amended. New Board of Directors was elected to oversee the association for the next 3 years (2024-2027).

New Board of Directors was appointed to run for the next 3 years (2024-2027). In attendance were the change agent delegates from the 9 regions of the Country, invited Guests including the UCAA Patron Dr.Maggie Kigozi and UCAA staff.

### **Board of Directors Quarterly meeting**

4 Quarterly meeting were organized for the BOD, among these was the handover of the outgoing BOD to the New BOD. The BOD meetings and discussions guided the UCAA operations during the year 2024.

Some key discussed issues in the BOD meetings included improved fund raising and resource mobilization, continuous networking and collaboration with other partners for improved service delivery, Strengthening memberships through change agents training, planning for CAT Courses to strengthen the membership of the Association for the propagation of the self-Reliant participatory development initiatives in Uganda. As well as suggestions that the self-help groups, SACCOs, CBOs members and local leaders get the training of CAT or VCAT courses and need for project extension to other vulnerable communities in Uganda.

### **Institutional strengthening**

Under organization capacity assessments, one of the UCAA partners: Kinder not Hilfe (KNH) conducted an organization capacity assessment (OCA) for UCAA and it received assessments which covered programmes, financial management, organization staffing, accounting Policies and Procedures, Reporting and Monitoring and KNH Financial Guidelines among others, during the exercise some gaps were identified from which recommendations were proposed to improve on the institution.

Based on the OCA report, UCAA was offered an opportunity to work with KNH in a direct partnership from April 2025 onwards. In addition, UCAA received a proposal to enter a new site and expand the implementation of the Self-Help Group Approach project.

UCAA attended a number of online Webinars as part of UN Women-Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) global learning, some included Advocacy Design for Advancing WPS and Gender responsive Humanitarian Action, Strategic Planning for CSOs Working in Conflict and Crisis Affected Contexts, rights in conflict and crisis affected settings. This capacity strengthening was part of the WPHF learning hub designed to support the resilience of civil society organization partners.

### **Performance and monitoring review meetings with Partners and project evaluations**

Review meetings were conducted to discuss the status of the projects implemented by all the UCAA partners.

Some key issues reviewed included: re-aligning the project activities under the CLIRK project with CARE International in Uganda, planning for the newly rescued high number of children by KCCA under the CAR project with the Consortium partners and ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development. And under the SHGA discussions for the formation of a federation, transfer of roles from the project officer to the community facilitators and cluster level Association for proper management of the people's institutions during phase out.



*The photo shows the CaR consortium directors during the planning and review meeting on the visit to the children at Masulita UWESO February 2024*

### **Capacity building**

UCAA participated in the Gender trainings, Monitoring Evaluation and Learning and Feedback Accountability and Management Training, Partnership work shop where presentations on localization were discussed by USAID Uganda program and CARE International in Uganda, joint fund raising, safe guarding, knowledge management advocacy and power influence, compliance habits in organizations by CARE international in Uganda and other partners. Monitoring and Evaluation Trainings, organized by NCO

UCAA entered an agreement and signed a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Ministry Gender, Labour and Social Development, where some objectives were documented for example: To propagate the self-reliant



participatory development methodology in Uganda among development workers and development agencies in particular and among the public in general.

To provide professional support and networking among the change agents in order to assist each other to exchange ideas to solve problems, to encourage continued work, and to provide mutual encouragement.

### **Fund raising and Networking**

The fund raising committee wrote proposals and applied to various Calls for proposals within the year, some projects were successfully acquired by the end of the year and a contract was to be signed in 2025. In addition was the feedback received from KNH upon UCAA's admission to becoming a direct partner and that a new proposal for this agreement would be prepared and submitted to KNH during the year 2025. Negotiations with KNH still resulted into an extension of the current SHGA being implemented in Agago district for the next three years from April 2025 to March 2028. A proposal for this was submitted waiting to be implemented in 2025.

UCAA staff and BOD was involved in various connections with different service providers from the Government of Uganda, International and local partner organizations, Private sector Organizations, Religious institutions, Academic institutions among others.

### **General staff meetings**

UCAA secretariat organized four general staff meeting in 2024 both virtual and physical which were attended by field staff to review quarterly activities as planned. All the POs were given the opportunity to present updates on what has transpired from the respective regions in terms of achievements, challenges and recommendations. UCAA management updated staff on developmental issues such as new projects, project proposal development and continuously built staff capacity in managing different projects being implemented across the regions.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, UCAA organized for staff End of year team building. All the staffs from all the regions were invited for the team building session in Kampala. This activity began with a meeting where staff presented the project updates in terms of achievements and some challenges depending on the project attached to and way forward for future improvement.



*UCAA Staff at UCAA head office during the mid-year Program/project performance review meetings 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024.*

## Our Projects in 2024

### Program: UCAA Karamoja Children at Risk (CAR)

#### Program overview

The CaR program being implemented by a consortium of 3 partners that is: Dwelling places, Institute for International Cooperation and Development (C&D) with UCAA being the lead partner in Napak and Kampala city districts. The project has been operational over a number of years and implemented in phases of 3 years per phase. The phase in the reporting period was from 2022 to 2024 where the project was being implemented in the 5 sub counties of Ngoloriet, Lokopo, Lopeei, Lorengecora, Matany (including Lorengachora, Matany and Kangole town councils).

Napak district is one of the nine districts that make up Karamoja sub region in a semi-arid area. The region experiences one rainy season in a year and long periods of drought, which generally affected food production, causing severe hunger conditions and more poverty in the region, hence more unsafe out migration of both the adults and children to look for better alternative livelihoods (food and income) in different regions and big town areas. The region is still experiencing insecurity caused by cattle raiders, which has led to displacement of families internally increasing the numbers of vulnerable households, destruction of property, hence keeping the region in poverty.



*Some of the rescued children at the Industrial Hub for technical vocational skilling after rehabilitation at Dwelling Places, being offered some of their requirements in Napak district Sept 2024.*

The consortium employed different social mobilization strategies to raise awareness on the different forms of violence against children (VAC)/trafficking, Rescued, Rehabilitated, Resettled and Reintegrated (the 4R approach). The trafficked cases and migrant children were taken back to their home district schools and communities, trained parent groups in Alternative positive parenting using the Key Family care practice messaging and others, Life skill empowerment for adolescent girls and boys through in and after school activities, Sports for VAC/trafficking abandonment, community engagement and economic empowerment, and continued support to Local government for child protection system strengthening.



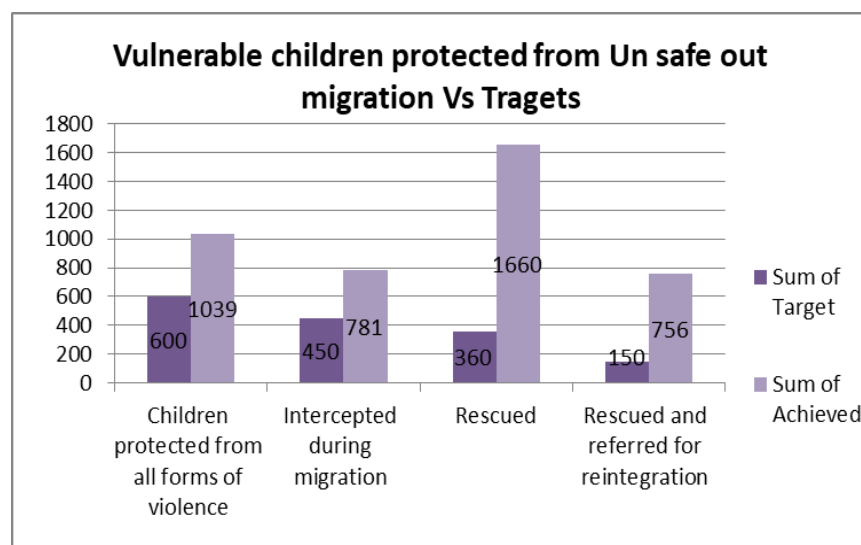
In the reporting period, the government of Uganda hosted the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), G77 and China summit meetings. In Preparation for this summit, KCCA in collaboration with the CaR Consortium rescued over 1056 (85M 971F) children, youth and adults from the streets of Kampala. This influenced an alteration of the consortium's effort to support the rescued population from all the rehabilitation centers that they were taken and the CaR consortium project interventions aimed at retaining the resettled children in schools, and home for those in the non-school going ages.

The CaR main aim was to 'To protect adolescents, street connected children and other vulnerable children, affected by crisis within community from unsafe outmigration from Napak District by 2024'.

### Key activities implemented during the reporting period.

Activities implemented in the reporting period, were contributing to the following outcomes and illustrated below.

#### 1.0. Outcome 1. Adolescents, Street-connected and other vulnerable children protected from unsafe outmigration from Napak District



Under this outcome, vulnerable children at risk of migrating were identified in communities and counseled along with their parents, among other services provided like backyard gardening for food production, VSLA formation and support, FAL classes, and case management.

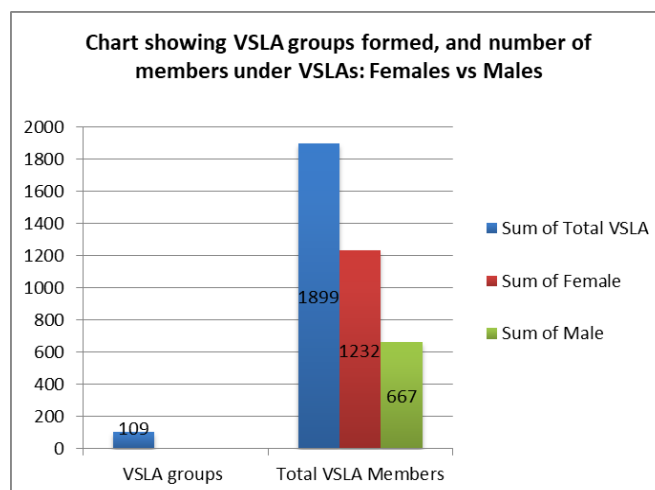
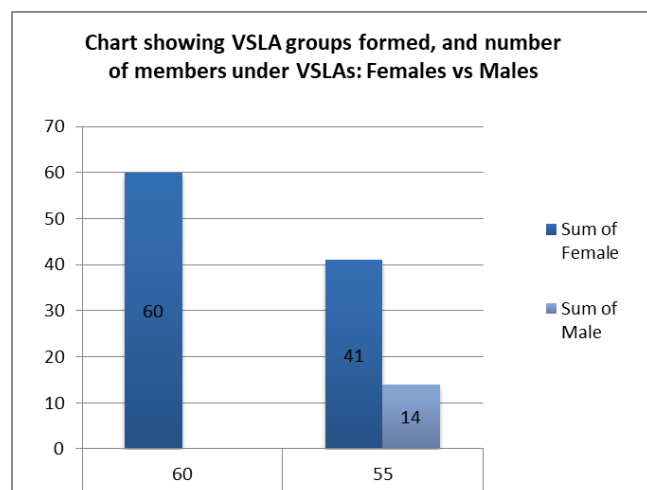
The rescued children were resettled into schools, and back home. For example primary school, vocational institutes and they all received rehabilitation within the school or at the rehabilitation centers.



*Above photos show the intercepted children in Katakwi district from the bus on their way to Kampala city and later transported back to Napak police station in the second photo, where they were counseled by the UCAA GBV officer on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2024.*

## 2.0. Outcome 2. Improved livelihoods of families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis in Napak District

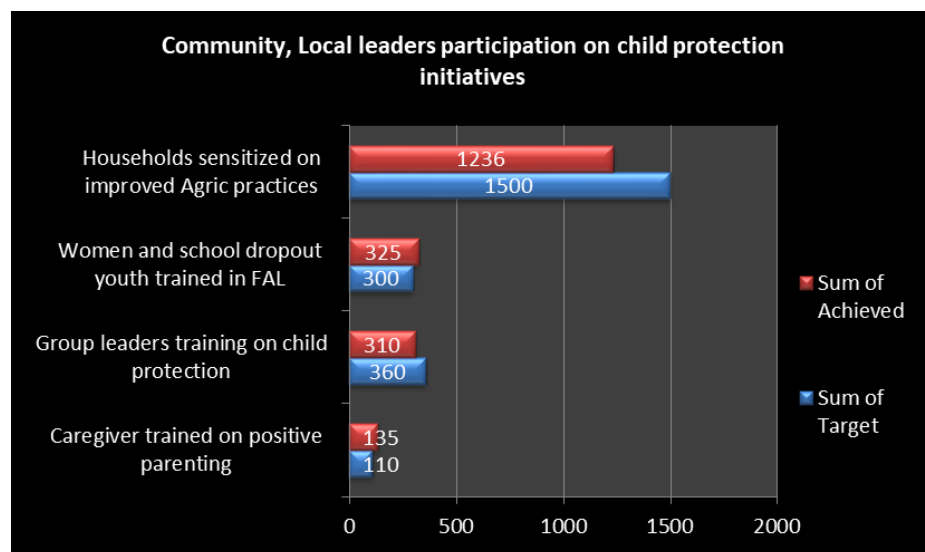
Vulnerable families were targeted to join VSLA groups, youth and women to join FAL classes, as well as improved agricultural practices: this aimed at boosting their living conditions to be able to provide for their households (food production and income generation) as well as take children to school to prevent unsafe out migration.



*The picture shows a VSLA group chairperson encouraging the members to continue meeting and saving irrespective of those that have migrated to improve on their group weaknesses.*



### 3.0. Outcome 3. Enhanced participation of community members and local leaders in child-protection, GBV mitigation and livelihoods improvement initiatives in Napak District



Households caregivers, Group leaders and local leaders were sensitized on improved Agricultural practices, child safeguarding, positive parenting all to promote child protection and prevent unsafe child out migration.

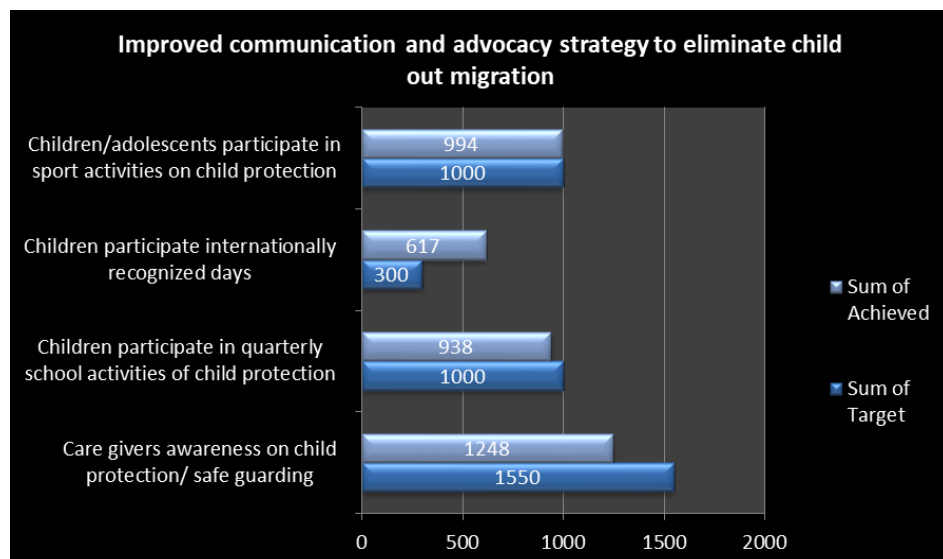


*The photo shows GBV Officer during sensitizations of household members on the improved agricultural practices sessions at Acholchol parish, September, 2024.*



*Photo on the left Shows 3rd Division Commander UPDF General William Nabasa addressing Lopeei Community on child trafficking and unsafe migration at Lopeei sub-county, on the right are Members of Lopeei Community listening to proceedings of the meeting.*

#### 4.0. Outcome 4. Improved communication, lobby and advocacy strategy to eliminate child outmigration from Karamoja



Children and adolescents participated in school and community quarterly child protection activities, these focused on child marriages, child trafficking, child abuse among others.

The sensitization reached both the target populations and the other children in the communities hence the over achieved numbers.

The unachieved targets were due to the repetitive activities conducted with the

same rescued and resettled children in the schools to ensure proper settling into the schools and homes. Community dialogues were attended by 665 participants, 40 community dialogues were expected to be organized



*Above photos show the different dialogue meetings conducted to celebrate international women's Day at Lokopo and Lopeii sub counties on 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2024.*



*Photo showing the resettled street connected children during a walk to create awareness on child protection within Jinja City, CFPU officer of Jinja division convey her speech during the celebration in Jinja April 2024.*



## **5.0 Outcome 5. Results-oriented and impact-driven CaR Consortium coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems**

Eight (8) Stakeholder review meetings were conducted during the year. These were mainly held in reviewing the project status and progress to achieve set targets and during the preparation for the reception of the rescued children in Napak.

### ***Director's review and planning meetings***

The CAR consortium Directors of UCAA, C&D and Dwelling places conducted meetings with purposes to: Discuss new strategy project implementation for the 1044 children that were undergoing rehabilitation at UWESO after KCCA rescued them, As a result, they agreed on the following deliverables; Dwelling places to rehabilitate 60 female children for three-six months and refer to C&D for reintegration. C&D to enroll 50 female youth in skilling, the field staff to offer psycho-social and follow up of children upon enrollment in school at Napak district. And UCAA to assess families of the children enrolled in school and the women that will be reintegrated for livelihood support.



*A photo of the CaR consortium Directors during the review and planning meeting in February 2024*

### ***Resettlement meetings at district level***

The resettlement meeting were always done as the partners and the district duty bearers received the street connected children, while in Napak district and the strategies were drawn on wellbeing of the children, a total of 37 girls were received in september; 7 girls were put in schools and 30 were taken for skilling at industrial hub of Napak district, the children have always been followed up to ensure their wellbeing and settlement within the hub, psychosocial counseling and emotional support was also given where there was need.





*Photos below show the deputy RDC and on the right is the LC v Napak district during the resettlement meeting of the children from the rehabilitation and the photo was taken by Julius Imuko September, 2024*



*Review meeting on the status of the Children at risk program in Napak district, involving CAR consortium Partners, Napak district officials and Kerk in Actie representatives.*

The meeting entailed leaders of Napak district together with the CAR partners and the donor who had visited from the Netherlands, where the progress on the project was discussed, the district appreciated the partners and the work they are doing with the children in preventing and reducing un-safe out migration.

The CaR partners received both internal and external capacity building to improve on their reporting and capturing project impacts and contributions in the district. Most of the capacity was provided depending on need. With this the project has been producing monthly and quarterly reports that have guided the project progress towards achieving set targets. Bi-annual and annual reports were presented periodically.

IEC Visibility Materials were developed, these included T shirts, calendars, banners that also supported the children and community members during campaigns on child protection in the communities.

### **Our Impact Results in the CaR program:**

Improved partnerships and collaborations among various ministries with the CaR Consortium partners for example Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), Uganda Police, Uganda People's defense force, MGLSD, RDC, LC5, members of parliament and other CSOs conducted a joint city wide outreach on the streets of Kampala, partners still came together to receive and prepare the schools and reception areas of children in Karamoja with the support of the consortium.



*Above photo Shows Street connected children while at school of Lotome girls, second photo in Buloba rehabilitation home during co-curriculum activities with children playing in teams happily compared to the previous isolation/fighting behaviors photos were taken in the month of June, 2024.*

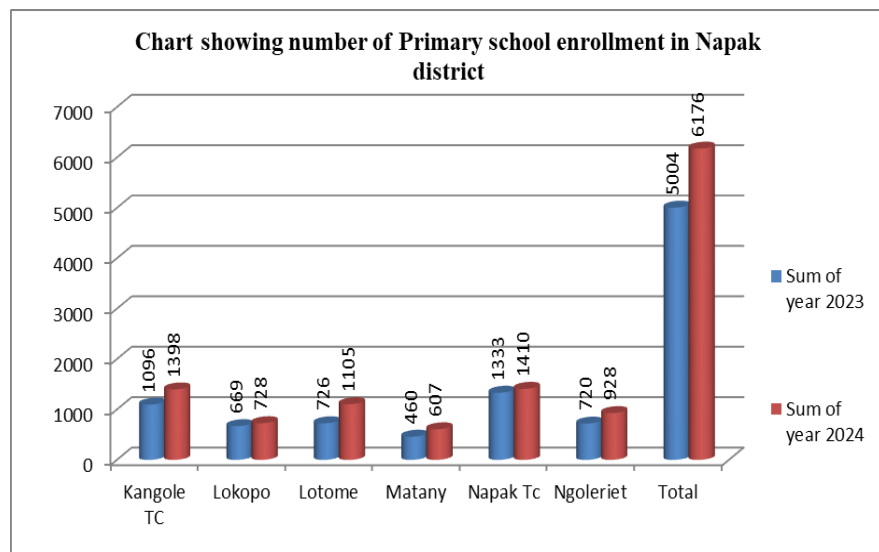
Among the children that were resettled in schools and rehabilitation centers, currently there has been noticeable adoption of healthy living behaviors, respective communication, setting boundaries with others as well as in their families and the neighboring homes. The children during the whole process of counseling, have become more interactive, and relate with the social workers, their care givers and other children, the children in schools have been provided a conducive learning environment to interact, share experiences which has built their self-esteem and confidence, the different recreational activities have kept them occupied hence concentration in school with limited or no thoughts of going back to the streets.

In the subsequent follow ups, UCAA got information about some rescued children and adolescents that had been supported, and started growing vegetables, while others joined school. The girls communicated that the vegetables are for home consumption and sale to enable them get income to provide basic needs for their siblings and in the homes.

The female pupils of Lokodiokodioi primary school and Lotome girls' school started making their own re-usable sanitary pads, after the acquired knowledge and skills in managing menstrual hygiene practices and making re-useable sanitary pads, with the locally available resources after receiving training from UCAA. And during a follow up it was learnt that after the training the pupils had managed to pass the same knowledge and skills to other fellow girls both in schools and at home in their communities.

Children enrollment has been improved in the district, with continued sensitizations and awareness creation on the value of education, every term of school opening parents have endeavored to take the children back to school, although hunger and other challenges affect the children within the term causing

drop outs. It has been a noticeable process in mind set change, the parenting styles improving and reporting cases of child marriages, responsible consumption of alcohol/ not from morning and giving time to their children.



Data collected from some sub counties and schools indicated a general improvement in the number of school age going children enrolling and attending school compared to previous years when children were leaving the district to the streets of urban areas, this has been noticed in the Car Consortium operation sub counties and beyond. The parents are also trying to support their children's education due to the continuous

sensitizations

Establishment of vegetable gardens helped boost/improve the nutrition levels of pupils, the schools expenditure has reduced because of availability of vegetables, the vegetables were also dried and preserved for future consumptions during the extreme dry weather conditions, the pupils' improved farming/agricultural knowledge will also be continued in their homes and communities during holidays.

**The pictures below are some of the Households members in their vegetable gardens, *First is Aguma Maria doing watering at her garden of Tomatoes with some of the yield, second is Nakiru Lisa at her backyard garden and below is Logiel Simon, in his established garden and finally is Anyakun paul, doing transplanting in his established garden.***







Achievement: Home visits were done to the households of the children attending at the industrial hub, vocational studies, resettled and other vulnerable children plus sensitizing them, resulted into the parents visiting their children while contributing some basic needs and materials like soap, sugar some clothes.

Households established income generating activities (IGAs) like selling vegetables, silver fish, brewing local beverages (Angabutia/non-alcoholic), chicken rearing and the saving groups continued to exist without too much challenges among the members and the surrounding environment. 50 members formed farmer groups for easy marketing and easy access of information and services by any provider than being individually, the leadership skills on proper identification of group leaders and developing of rules and regulations for the group have been developed, creating better group management for sustainability.



*Above photos show some members with their income generating activities due to saving and accessed loans in the VSLA groups on the left picture is a member with her sorghum as the raw material used for making local beverages (Angabutia/non-alcoholic), the right is a member with a G-nut paste business and the photos were taken by the community members within their respective areas in December, 2024*

Saving and loan associations (VSLAs) at Lokopo sub county, Napak district were linked to Centenary bank to encourage them open bank accounts and access other services like loans for individual and as well for the group.

Sensitizations of 30 households on improved agricultural practices influence 10 more un-targeted households in the neighborhood, currently 40 households in the locality established backyard gardens.

The households are able to cultivate throughout the year because the back yard gardens which need mini-watering only and this has provided vegetables to the households and improved the nutrition levels of the children and lactating mothers, as well as income generating activities to increase the income levels at household to enable caretakers provide basic needs for their children. The girls in schools were trained on how to make re-usable sanitary pads using local materials, hence reducing on costs in their homes as well as their attendance in schools.



*The photo above on the left is GBV officer briefing the pupils about the training and showing the type of materials needed and on the Centre is the senior woman teacher Mrs. Lomok Catherine doubling as the trainer showing the process of cutting the different pieces during training of adolescents on making re-usable sanitary pads at Lotome girls P/s on 3/11/2024.*

There is continued dissemination of child protection messages, within the communities during social times and within the settlement area through music dance and drama, this has increased the cases reported on child abuse violation and action is being taken on these cases at district and sub-county level since they have been sensitized as well.

The gender sensitization induced restructuring of gender roles based on efficiency and has helped realize higher productivity of men and women at household and outside work through rational and effective use of resources including available time, and it has increased sensitivity of people at large towards women. Now the men are able to do things their cultures could not allow, like taking care of children, washing clothes, setting fire for cooking, carrying fire wood and the women can now make contributions during any gathering to raise issues concerning them, elected to different leadership positions, which was not the case for the cultural norms of Karamoja region.

During the follow up the VSLA members were able to: share and express their thoughts better after the learning visit, which provided a good experience outside their everyday activities within their groups,



members gained confidence among each other and in the community over time, this has created a better working relationship, promoting partnership and social cohesion, in that it enabled the members to practically share their stories and personal experiences that has motivated others to work hard for the better of their households.

Functional adult literacy (FAL) classes covered learning how to read and write, counting in their local language. Improve on their interpersonal relations, they gained leadership skills, Role plays in drama classes. FAL classes have created knowledge and implementation abilities (reading and writing), built self-esteem and social capital of illiterate adults, communication skills to demand from duty bearers and monitor public service delivery. The learners have now helped the saving groups in taking records of their weekly savings, internalize their children's report cards and help children with their school homework. The FAL class youth have also been supported with agricultural skills, they established a demonstration garden, started with a nursery bed garden, which they irrigated throughout the dry seasons, and controlled the sunshine and pests.



*Above photos show the UCAA Executive Director and partner staff during the monitoring activity of the Functional Adult Literacy training class, first photo is a student demonstrating the writing skills he had gained, the second picture is the director watering the FAL class established nursery beds at Lobok parish 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2024.*

UCAA empowered the child wellbeing committees to be able to provide protection to children from these predatory criminals. They can now do detections, recording and reporting, the conditions that put children at risk are clearly stated; including methods of handling GBV cases at household level, plus understanding the referral path when reporting the GBV cases that are now very specific, which has led to less cases being reported at CFPU offices because they have been managed at grass root level, following the GBV principles by having the respect for survivals choice, wishes, rights, and dignity in all actions.

2 GBV structures established consisting of female and male individuals plus local leaders for sustainability, the local leaders shared a tremendous improvement in household management especially for the participants who attended the GBV trainings and sensitizations; the structures and groups in the village are also able to counsel their members and other community members facing GBV challenges without involving authorities.

5 advocacy forums were conducted in Ngoleriet, Lokopo, Matany, Lopeii and Lorengecora sub counties, and community members developed the forums, this has currently enhanced members in the forums to prepare for participation in Sub County and council meetings, which they originally ignored, considered not being of their concern. The development forums have enhanced partnerships and social cohesion at sub county level; from these initiatives by the CAR consortium it has created a better working relationship among the community and the sub county officials. It has encouraged participating in policy, planning and budgeting process, and raising the profile of sub county development issues, concerns, economic, opportunities and challenges at local level. There has been an inclusive debate on strategies, policies and programs that have led to realization of the rights of the local people to improve on their wellbeing, in the areas of access to clean water, security, educational for all, better health services, agricultural inputs, and improved infrastructure.



***Standing in a white shirt ,second right photo is the LC V Napak district as the main facilitator champion and on the right standing is the chief guest the fourth division commander UPDF Moroto, the photos were taken by Julius Imuko, on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 at Lopeii sub county.***

It the community dialogues conducted in the 4 sub-counties of Matany, Ngoleriet, Lopeii and Lokopo in Napak. There were action points and Ways forward discussed to resolve out migration, GBV and education for the children in the sub counties: among those include School support to children to be delivered by parents and those sponsoring children on a timely basis, Positive parenting care to be jointly owned by both parents to monitor children's characters, Positive GBV case management approach by cultural, church, and public leaders. Traffickers to be handled by courts of law when found guilty, Cultural leaders to include good moral teachings on good cultural practices to avoid forced marriages and its negative effects. Need for government to provide emergency food reliefs in cases where hunger is too much. More schools to be set up nearer to the communities for easy accessibility for children in villages. Need for government to attach education to all her programs that benefit directly or indirectly the communities. With these key local and district leaders promised to address these cases in case they arise at any point in the district.

The Napak district Ordinance was approved due to the supported and guidance of the CaR partners, the district Speaker, RDC, LC5 and other Officials in Napak, always received support and evidence in reports on the CaR project from UCAA to make follow up on the Napak district Ordinance with the Solicitor General in Kampala.

## CaR Success stories

### 1. I am a change agent (Earn big through Piggery rearing)

John Tubo is a 40 year old man married to one wife with 5 children (1 girl and 4 boys) staying at Matany sub county. In his communication, he said I have trained and learnt a lot from UCAA activities, I received trainings in enterprise selection, functional adult literacy training, VCAT, group dynamics and with all these I was elected as the group leader always and then later I joined a saving group.

I managed to get a loan of UGX 250,000/= in 2022 after experiencing a serious challenges during COVID 19 pandemic in supporting the family among other responsibilities. I decided to venture into pig rearing and I started with three pigs (2 female and 1 male), that have over the years given him piglets and he sells them for sustainability of his household. The money has helped me to pay school fees for the children.

He said, unless you look back and see how you started and how far you have gone. You can't see the importance in joining a saving group and accessing a loan. As I speak I currently have 11 big pigs and over 15 piglets, making his net worth at UGX 4,700,000/= and more as by December 2024, he has been able to build an iron sheet roofed house for himself and planning to build semi-permanent rentals for more cash flow, he appreciates the initiatives of UCAA for the people of Karamoja and specifically towards the empowerment of children as the future leaders of tomorrow that will create security in the region as well, they God bless all.



*Above photo shows Tubo John a committed person pose for a photo with his pigs and the photo was taken by Julius Imuko on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2024*

### 2. The mixed change agent Saving group

The mixed change agent saving group found in Lopeii sub county at the trade centre, has a composition of 30 members (9 female and 21 Male), started in 2020 registered at the sub county up to date. In 2024 the group was involved in group farming where they grow and harvested 12 bags of sorghum that earned them UGX 1,701,000/=, 3 bags of sunflower that earned them UGX 588,000/= and sim-sim that earned them UGX 68,000.

The members managed to save up to UGX 2,524,300/= from individual savings and from borrowing the group realized an interest of UGX 6,658,000/=, in total by December, 2024 the group had UGX 11,539,300/= as their income to be shared among the members and 30% from that income will be put aside for group plans of buying a grinding mill where the group will be able to earn more income and support their children through education as seen below are the group members during the sharing moments and everyone was very excited with what they have earned from their efforts during that year.



And as seen the bags in the center photo below are the preserved seeds for the next season of cultivation that could officially start around the month of March, 2025, the members have acquired iron sheets, started small businesses, gotten into cattle buying and selling, planned for the children school fees and able to pay medical bills and now having two meals a day which used to be a big challenge for these members before joining the saving group.



***Above are the photos of mixed change agent saving group, pose for a photo after sharing their savings and the photo was taken by Julius imuko on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2024***

### **Case stories of some successful cases**

#### **3. Ngolereit Sub-County, Lomaliga Village.**

Kale Anna age 10 years Female, from Lomaliga village, was taken to Iriiri to go and help the sister and dropped out of school, from the services, counseling and support she had been getting from C&D while in school and having realized the benefits of being in school, she decided to come back home on foot after realizing she wasn't going to attend school the other side, when the father saw her, in his communication he said "I was very happy and I don't want my girl to go anywhere again unless it is school, because of the bad stories I have been hearing of children who go to Kampala". She joined school again but because she was absent for a certain period, she missed her school requirements but only got case management support that was the time the father informed the team of what had happened.

Anna's father was glad that at that age, his daughter already knew the importance of being in school and her rights as a girl child, despite living in a remote community in Karamoja.



**Photo taken on the 22/3/2024 by Loumo Rebecca, during home visit and during case management support**

#### **4. Vocational skills training making a difference in our community.**

Apio Dengel and Acheng Daizy are twins, born by Munyes Marita and Lochikiri Micheal, from Napeipelu village, Matany town council. The twins were intercepted by police on the 23/6/2021 from Matany town council, with aim of using the bus to reach Nairobi, through the influence of their friend called Longok Anges, who had been to Nairobi doing casual work. The twins' desire was to search for work due to that fact that the parents were not able to provide them with basic needs. Following the interception, the twins received counseling from C&D and UCAA and they were encouraged to enroll for skilling at Kobulin youth training center where they pursued a course in tailoring and accordingly received startups after 6 months course.

They then linked up with Sharon Nangiro (32) a survivor of GBV and had pursued the same course a year earlier. Today the three are renting space together where they are doing their tailoring. The space is currently one of the main tailoring shop for members of their community, this has earned them respect in the community, they are able to earn money and take care of their parents while Sharon's husband sought her apology and are married in church living in harmony.



*Apio and Achen welcomed CAR partners and shared their experience in the business and how it's helping the community as well as their livelihoods on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2024 and the photos were taken by Mary Lilly*



**Achievements**

The above beneficiaries have started their saving group making weekly savings, and encouraging other community youth to join them.

The have daily record keeping experience from the vocational skilling that they were taught in entrepreneurship that the little you get from the business it is important to save, and they share these with the members that have not attained the training, this is a sustainability approach, where the community memebbers are able to trained and mentor each other in the absence of the partners. While Acheng Daizy is the role model that repairs the sewing machines for both her team and other people who are offering the same service in her village, also another service added in the community.

# Project: Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR)

## Project overview

The FMNR project was a link to the CAR Project that is implemented in 5 sub counties of Napak, FMNR is however being implemented in Lorengechora sub-county, it is relatively rich in savanna birds' species recorded, many tree and shrub species. It is locally and nationally known that the sub-region hosts a range of other important wild tree species of potential economic value, including sheanut, tamarind, gum Arabica and Aloevera. Local people collect a wide range of local plant species for fuel wood, charcoal, medicinal use, which could also have potential economic benefits for the community if sustainably harvested.



*The photo shows some community members during survey of the land at Cholichol village selecting trees to be regenerated on 27<sup>th</sup> /11/2024.*

The project has been implemented for 3 months now (October to December 2024), and this report entails what has been done and the progress so far.

The project targets to work with: local community leaders. CAR project existing Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) groups, Child Rights Environmental Clubs (CRECs), existing Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) youth groups.

The FMNR project aimed at achieving 2 objectives that are: 200 out of 600 farmers and local leaders who directly participate in the FMNR project have started to implement FMNR methods in natural resource management on at least one plot (about an acre) of their family land. And creating an increased area of land under tree cover, managed with restoration methods including FMNR, backyard agro-forestry activities and unity-level gender responsive by-laws

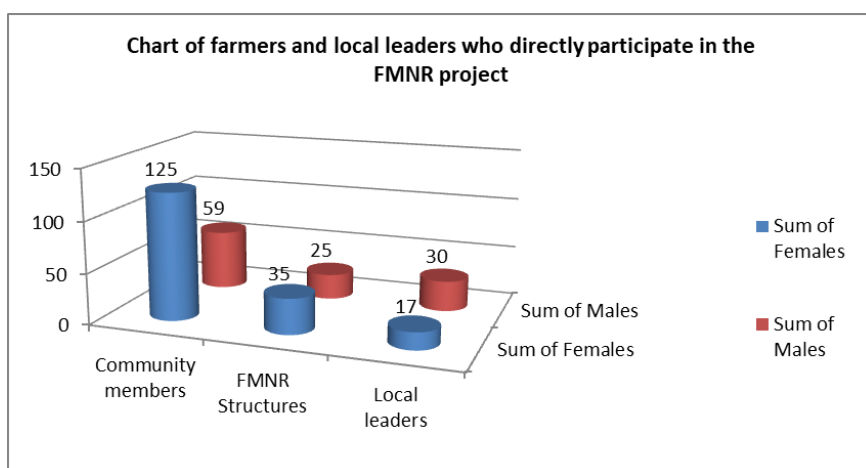
## Key activities implemented during the reporting period.

The results are presented under the 2 outcomes the project intended to achieve and below were the successfully implemented activities, although outcomes were not captured as yet since the project had commenced for a few months.

Outcome 1: 200 out of 600 farmers and local leaders who directly participate in the FMNR project have started to implement FMNR methods in natural resource management on at least one plot (about an acre) of their family land.

During the initiation for project awareness, Inception meetings targeting duty bearers and community members were conducted in Lobok, Kochito and Cholichol villages in the 3 sub-county of the districts. During these, they were enlightened on the FMNR projects, its benefits to the community and climate change as well as the community and leaders' contribution to the success of the project.

A total of 291 individuals in the sub county have already been sensitized on the FMNR project and its practices in the first quarter, as illustrated in the figure below.



FMNR training and follow-up structures were established to guide and support the rest of the community in the implementation of the FMNR activities.

Community structures were mobilized and trained including local leaders in two different points at Cholichol and Kochito villages holding the FMNR demonstration sites. Presentations and discussions on specific areas about land user rights were made, and it was also participatory, which helped to enhance the learning process.



*The above photos on left shows Longoli Achilla one of the elders giving opening remarks during community led negotiation meetings at Lobok village on 4<sup>th</sup> /10/2024, As Ngorok Domenic LC1 Cholichol on right gives opening remarks at Cholichol village on 15<sup>th</sup> /10/2024.*



14 VSLA groups, 2 child rights environment clubs in two schools, and 2 FAL youth groups were mobilized and sensitized in Lorengecora Sub County. With this there was a total reach of 200 (123 Female and 77 Male) participants, that is pupils of 2 schools (KOKIPURAT and CHOLICHO) primary schools in Lorengechora Sub County sensitized to participate in the FMNR project.



*Above photos show the program officer Julius Imuko briefing the two schools on FMNR at Cholichol Primary school on the left and at Kokipurat Primary school on the right Dec 2024.*

Land surveys for sprouting stumps and identification of what species still existed within the farms for regeneration in Cholichol and Kochito villages were conducted with the project participants. Where 13 indigenous tree species were identified and documented, together with their purpose.

### **FMNR monitoring and support activities**

The UCAA directors conducted a field visit after the groups had cleared and established the FMNR sites and identifying the indigenous tree species they would focus on regeneration, the groups informed the team that bush burning was rampant in the time and they had to dig around the site to protect it from any fires that could damage the site, they also had started sensitizing the communities of the dangers of un-necessary bush burning.

The FMNR groups, community and the committee members had cleared sites, and secured to prevent it from wild fire destruction.



*The picture shows one of the FMNR sites that the community and the committee members had cleared to prevent it from wild fire destruction. In the picture they vow to commit to the regeneration of the trees in Choli choli village in lorengechora Sub County for improved food security and livelihood. December 2024.*

## Project: UCAA Water for Karamoja



***UCAA directors with the water user committee of Tokitela village in Ngoleriet sub county visiting the only available water source used by the community for domestic use and for their animals to drink. The committee chairperson said “as dirty as this water is, it is all we have around, however it also dries out during extreme dry seasons and we are left to move long distances to look for water” Dec 2024***

### **Project overview**

The Water for Karamoja project is directly linked to the CaR program resilience and livelihoods actions.

There is an acute shortage of water in Karamoja. All the five sub-counties under CaR-KiA program have the challenge of water shortage which renders them to low economic, social and environmental resilience. Similarly the acute shortage of clean water hampers the livelihoods of the community and increases the hardships of communities, in which CaR partners operate.

Following the Moroto and Napak visit of KiA Staff to Karamoja in the month of November 2024, from the discussions feedback KiA decided to fund the construction of 3 boreholes, which were then installed in December 2024 in Lorengechora, Matany and Ngoleriet Sub-counties in Napak district.

The Water for Karamoja project was designed to expand the access and use of clean and safe water and increase the resilience and livelihoods opportunities of the communities in dry land areas of Napak, where UCAA and partners implement the CaR program, so as to improve access and utilization of water for social and economic empowerment of women and girls in Napak district.

Therefore the project was implemented to achieve the following objectives: Improved gender responsiveness in the water sector service delivery, utilization and management and improved capacity of women to exploit and benefit from available economic opportunities.



## **Project activities implemented, and the results of the different outcomes based on the activities implemented:**

UCAA identified and conducted the training of the water user committees for the 3 villages of Chelele, Toekitela and Kochito Lokona.

The training targeted 10 water user committee members with a total of 30(18F, 12M), and their role was to: lead in the management of the community water and sanitation infrastructure with the aims of: Ownership and sustainability of the water source. They discussed about the importance of safe water from the protected water source to avoid related diseases.

During the trainings, The LC1s of all the villages gave the welcoming remarks, thanked UCAA for keeping the promise of bringing water in their communities, they promised to work together to keep and protect their water points.



*The photo shows the Lochap Philip the LC1 Kochito village giving opening remarks during the water user committee training On 10/12/2024 at Kochito village*



*The photo above shows Lemukol Raphael the facilitator (CDO) Lorengechora sub-county during the training of the water user committee members in Kochito village 10<sup>th</sup> /12/2024.*



**Topics covered during the training:** Overview of Administration and governance of the water, roles and responsibilities of the committee, establishment of rotational leadership in the committee with stipulated roles like the chair person, the vice chairperson, treasurer and the secretary among others. And in the administration of the committee, sanitation and personal hygiene around the water source, they ensure to have a woman representative and a representative of people with disabilities. The facilitators also emphasized water wastage, they advised the community to utilize every drop of water, if it can't be used for human consumption, it can be given to animals for drinking, and watering the vegetables around their homes.

**The different villages came up with various action plans:** Formulation of bi-laws, Regular community meetings to discuss and agree on management of the boreholes, clearing around the borehole, digging holes for trees and Committee agreed on monthly contributions for maintenance.



*The photo above show on the left boreholes at Toekitela village with the committee and the right is the drilled borehole with the user committee members in Chelele village on 9<sup>th</sup> /12/2024 photo by Lilly*



*The photos above show on the left is CDO handing over the vegetable seedlings to the committee members at Kochito village 10<sup>th</sup> /12/2024 .And the left photo shows Chelele water user committee with their tree seedlings in a group photo on 11<sup>th</sup> /12/2024*

After the trainings, UCAA provided the committee with seeds to start demo farms around the boreholes for the production of food. This was to serve as an example to the community members to take advantage of the waters and soils around water sources.

### ***Survey and drilling of the boreholes***

Drilling of the 3 boreholes happened in the targeted villages of Chelele village in Lokupoi parish Matany sub-county, Toekitela village in Nawoikorot parosh Ngolegriet sub-county and Kochito Lokona village in kikipurat parish under Lorengechora sub-county.

Survey activities were conducted in search of the appropriate sites where to drill the boreholes, where 3 locations were established with guidance of the community members as the user committee and 3 boreholes were successfully drilled.



***Photos showing hydrogeological activities taken during surveys for the borehole sites in Kochito Lokona village Lorengechora***

**Achievement:** The borehole in Kochito A village in Lorengechora sub-county, is serving communities of Nageret, Kwapo, Kochito Lokona B villages. The Borehole in Tookitela village in Ngoleriet sub-county is serving communities of Nawaikorot village, the technical institute and the neighboring Health center in the village. The borehole in Chelele village is being utilized by the community members as well as the nearby UPDF barracks. The presence of these water sources has positively impacted the livelihoods of more populations compared to the targeted individuals.

### **Monitoring of the water user committee progress with work**

UCAA directors conducted a monitoring visit to the 3 identified sites in the 3 sub counties where the boreholes were being drilled to assess progress on the work, and capture feedback form the community members an well as meet the water user committees and re-emphasize their roles and during the visit below are the activities accomplished:

#### ***Meeting with the Water user committee at the 3 Sub Counties***

UCAA gave remarks in the meetings and communicated on: the purpose of water in the community, it was funded by Kerk in Actie under the CaR Project. UCAA got the money from KiA and contracted C&D, which is currently doing the borehole drilling. Use the water well for the purposes of serving and providing for the children very well, to prevent them from leaving the home and migrating out of the district to the streets.



UCAA Executive Director (ED) in her communication said: the main reason for this water is child protection. For the years UCAA has been here, whenever we interacted with the community, the problem has always been water, so apart from waiting for rainfall, we could also use this water for growing food, vegetables around the borehole to support our families.

The team visited the water drilling process in Chelele village, where the engineer updated them that the place had a lot of water, and the selected site was from the community members' interest.

During the visit to the water drilling site, the community had started collecting the water, and UCAA had some interactions with some women and children who said *"we are very happy and we appreciate the water project in our village, now we can plant lots of vegetables for the families and use this water for variety of developments since it is near our homes compared to where we have been going and sometimes the water there would dry out"*.



*The picture above shows the committee with UCAA directors where the village has been getting water for domestic use as well as the source of water for their livestock too in Kochito lokona Village, Dec 2024.*



*UCAA directors during the visit at Chelele village, where the borehole drilling was on-going in Matany Sub County: photo taken on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024.*





*The photo shows the committee promising to respond to their roles as the governing team of the water source in Toekitela village. Photo taken on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024*

## **Project: Self Help Group Approach (SHGA)**

### **Project overview**

Uganda Change Agent Association started working with Kinder not Hilfe (KNH) in 2017 and is currently implementing Self Help Group Approach in Adilang Sub County, Agago district in Acholi Sub-region Northern Uganda. UCAA is implementing the last year of the current action which will phase out in March 2025. UCAA and KNH National coordination office (NCO) are working together implementing the project ending in 2025, targeting 3,000-4,000 Women as direct beneficiaries, plus 12,000-16,000 Children as either direct or indirect beneficiaries.

During the first three years of project implementation, Adilang Sub County had seven mother parishes namely Ligi Ligi, Orina, Kulaka, Labwa, Lalal, Lapyem, and Nge Kidi but with creation of new Administrative units, there are currently 12 parishes/wards in the 3 administrative units where SHG approach is being implemented.



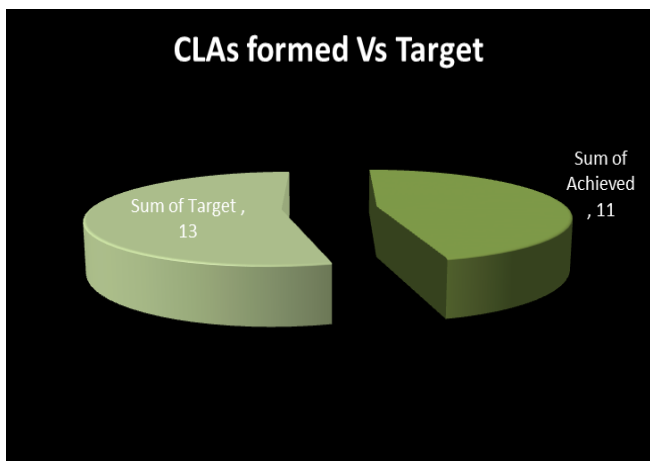
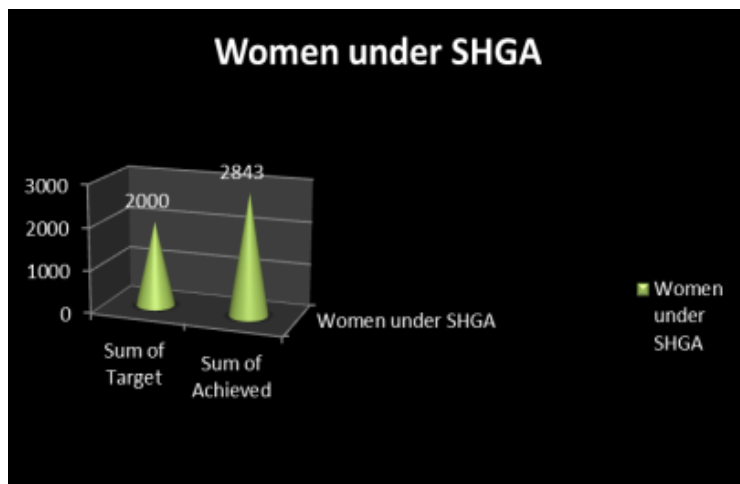
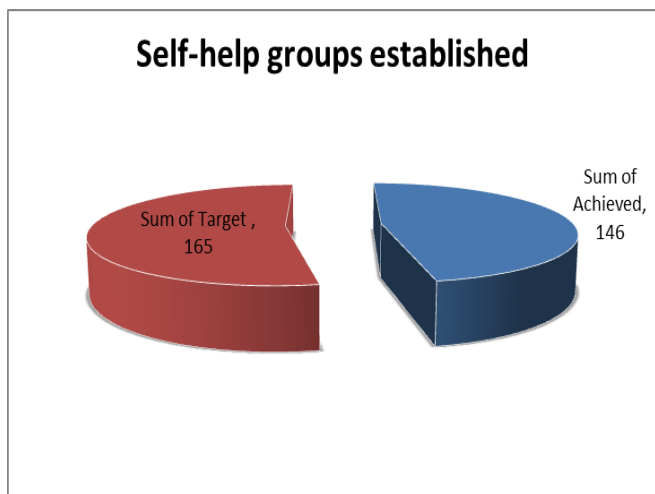
***Adaarii Cluster Level Association (CLA) group having a reflection meeting and sharing the progress of their work in achieving the CLA goals and work plan during a monthly meeting in Agago district 2024***

UCAA established 146 SHGs which meet weekly to carry out group activities like savings, loans, meetings, training, social support and advocacy work etc. By the end of 2024 we had established ten Cluster level Associations (CLAs) in the eight parishes of Ligi Ligi, Orina, Ngekidi, Nam, Lumule, Labwa, Alaa and Kulaka, these CLAs meet once in a month to discuss reports from the constituent SHGs and issues within their communities.

The project had planned to establish a federation by 2024, however from the various challenges Covid 19, the federation formation was extended to be established in August 2025, which is one of the key focus areas for the extension of the project period in UCAA.

### **Project activities implemented, and the results of the different outcomes based on the activities implemented:**

#### **OUT COME 1: 2000 women in greater Adilang Agago district have improved livelihoods by 2025**



One (1) federation was to be formed within the reporting period, this was however not achieved due to the interference caused during the Covid 19 lock down, and was extended to be formed in the year 2025.

The Empowered groups to advocate for the community are in the eleven (11) formed cluster level associations (CLAs), which are composed of 208 women.

Improved saving within established group members: Total savings of all the women under the self-help approach included UGX: 237,976,600

Improved Social support: all the 2,843 women meet regularly and discuss social, economic and political issues in their community, hence improving their social support and capital. The groups also support each other during times of need and difficult in the community.

Members well equipped with competent leadership skills: 976 women under the SHGA are holding various leadership positions.



## **OUT COME 2: 300 youth in Agago with profitable personal IGA or employment opportunities by 2025**

In the year 2024, 109(63 males, 46 females) CBT youth were enrolled into the current CBT program. 130 (M=74, F=56) youth have ever been enrolled for skills, such as BCP, hairdressing, tailoring, carpentry and joinery (wood work), motorcycle repair, black smith, bar soap and jelly making and vegetable growing. Youth have acquired the technical, business and life skills to improve wellbeing in the community. As a result, they have access to small income for personal and family use, improved behaviors of youth in the community.



*The above picture is showing CBT youth trainees in a garage undergoing training in motorcycle repair and the second picture are youth who have started practicing and are earning income February 2024, Agago district.*

## **OUT COME 3: 12,000 school age going children are in school by 2025**

The women under the SHGA have an Accumulated capital of UGX: 403,796,300. Loans taken at 608,616,300 with a ratio of 1:2.5, meaning every woman in the group has on average taken a loan twice, with a repayment rate of 544,845,600.

Approximately 2,325 women have established Viable Income Generating activities; these include both individual and group businesses: this outcome is aimed to improve the welfare of the women in their households which then impacts the welfare of their children, in terms of feeding, attending school, and getting professional health care when needed.

Improved wellbeing of children within the community: 15,654 (M=7,061 F=8,151) children are under the care and provision of the self-help groups.

## **Our Impact Results in the SHGA project:**

### **Enhanced saving culture among women in Agago**

The SHG approach has promoted saving culture among the community members in Adilang community for both men and women. All together the women in the SHGs have saved an average of UGX: 237,976,600 in the past 7 years. The vulnerable women who are members of SHGs are practicing the saving culture, which is not shared at the end of the year; this has increased the group capital to UGX: 403,796,300, which make money available for members to access loans to start, or expand their businesses and make investments throughout the year.



*Picture above is showing Community Facilitators with PO undergoing a capacity building on record keeping and CLA modules during a monthly review meeting in Agago, January 2024*

### **Easy access to income by rural women**

2,658 vulnerable poor women who had been neglected within the communities and who never belonged to any social group now have sustainable access to income and they are able to meet the basic needs of the family such as food, clothing, shelter, and health care. They are also able to provide education needs of their children.

### **Strong social capital and social support among women in the community**

Due to SHGA interventions in Adilang, women belonged to different self-help groups and these have helped in building strong social capital among the SHG member households and to the general community of Adilang in Agago district. Women in SHGs now freely offer support to one another both in times of joy and sorrows in terms of economic activities such as joint farming, livestock among other social activities, thus promoting unity and corporation amongst the community members. The

relationships at household level have also improved due to SHG focus on me and my family, whereby husbands willingly support their spouses through indirect participation in SHG activities.

### **Business development and mind-set change on self –reliance**

About 2,325 women have engaged themselves into different businesses because of business skills and goal setting trainings which they have received from the SHGA intervention. SHG women are business focused minded individuals and they are practicing the skills, which is helping them to generate income and grow their businesses. Businesses like grocery, produce, chicken rearing, piggery and goat rearing, selling of food stuff and farming among others. The business initiative has increased on household livelihood and food security.



*A photo some of the SHG women with their established business to improve on their livelihood, self-reliance and contribution to their savings in the groups*

**Improved leadership skills and participation in governance issues, a total of 976 women are holding various leadership positions.**

Through a number of training offered to the community, women have been socially, economically and politically empowered. Approximately 976 women have joined various leadership positions in their communities such as LCs, women councilors, women representatives, members of Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), School Management Committee (SMC) members, Village Health Team (VHT),



church committee etc. This has given women opportunity to participate in local governance issues and also influence decision making within their society.



*A Self-help group of women taking votes on who would contest on the council position in their village to present their social issues in the community and represent them, taken in Adilang sub county Agago district.*

### **Increased school enrolment and high retention among children**

The SHG households have understood the benefits of education and members advocate for quality education in their community. Most children now have access to education and parents are playing their roles and responsibilities of paying school requirements, provision of scholastic materials and participating in school meetings. At least 17 in every 20 SHG members send their children to school.

### **Access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) services by 327 children in SHG households**

For the past four years since the introduction of SHGA in Ligi ligi community 2018, children of age bracket 3-6 had no choice of education than to wait when they reach 7-8 years and enroll straight for primary education. CLAs performed their roles and such roles like meeting materials and infrastructural needs of the community. The CLA lobbied for ECD centers which educate children in the community.

### **Access to clean and safe water for the community (44 boreholes have been worked on)**

Since 2022 to date, the CLAs have worked towards repairing all the broken boreholes within their communities to ensure that their community has access to clean and safe water. The CLAs have

continued to work with the local leaders and water user committees and have all boreholes functioning. A total of 44 boreholes have been worked on since then.

**Access to government programmes as a result of high level advocacy (1,722 SHG members received PDM).**

About 1,722 SHG members benefited from the ongoing Parish Development Model which has helped in boosting household income and their participation in the SHG activities. Women who receive the PDM money have bought cows, goats, and others have used the money for farming activities.

**High level of Linkages and networking with stakeholders**

Access to good road network as three main and six access roads have been worked on: The CLAs and SHGs have continuously created linkages with individuals, lower local government, and other NGOs who are also providing related capacity building inputs to the constituent SHGs. Through proper networking, there is improved relationship between the People's Institutions and local leaders. To date, the CLAs have created linkages with NGOs like Joint Efforts to save the Environment, ADRA Uganda, and TASO Uganda. As a result of linkages, SHGs and member households have been trained on environmental protection, nutrition and received health promotion packages and IGA training from TASO Uganda under their DREAMS project which is currently being implemented in Agago.

**Increased youth employment through CBT program (59 youth with self-employment)**

CBT program has helped in shaping the behaviors and restored hope of vulnerable youth in the community. These youth are equipped with different skills such as hairdressing, bakery, motorcycle repair and brick laying and concrete practice, black smith, vegetable growing. CBT has provided employment and increased income level and social welfare of the youth within the community. Cumulatively we have enrolled 130 youth into the program and 59 have their own businesses.



*New enrolled youth actively engaged in carpentry and joinery or wood work skill in Agago district*

## **Access to 2-3 meals a day by children in 2,281 SHG households**

The SHG Approach has helped 2,281 households with access to 2-3 meals a day where children are growing healthy and able to participate in different household, community and school activities because of food.

### **Human interest stories form SHGA project interventions:**

#### **1. Betty Aciro**

#### **Location: Ligiligi East, Ligiligi, Adilang Sub County in Agago district**

Uganda Change Agent Association has been implementing SHG approach in Agago since 2017 up to date and introduced Community Based Training (CBT) in Adilang community in 2022 and Betty Aciro was enrolled among the 21 youth who are pioneers of CBT. To date, we have enrolled up to 130 youth into the CBT program whereby Aciro Betty was among the first four CBT youth trained in hairdressing by Ribbe kcel kelo kuc CLA. Betty Aciro is from a child headed household in Ligiligi community whose mother died in 2016 and left her and the siblings with irresponsible father who rarely provides family basic needs. Since 2016 Betty has been taking care of her younger sister whom she paid for a six month tailoring course and successfully graduated in October 2024.

After the successful completion of the hair dressing training, she started practicing the skill in her community while operating from a nearby saloon in 2023 and she was able to support herself, son and the only little sister. Later she started her own saloon under an orange tree in her compound and customers could still follow her for the same hairdressing services. At the beginning of 2024 she set herself a goal of establishing a saloon in a rental house within Ligiligi trading centre after harvest in August 2024. Today her dream has come true, Betty Aciro has established her saloon business which is located within the trading centre and plans to develop and maintain it. She earns an estimate of UGX 100,000 monthly from her saloon services and with this she's meeting family demands. Betty's future plan is to expand her saloon business and educate her three year old son and expand the saloon into a training centre for the youth in her community.

Betty Aciro has continued to receive closed monitoring support from the CBT committee and project officer after the training and she is provided support in terms of guidance and advertising her



hairdressing services. Betty Aciro was from a non SHG household and lives in Ligiligi East where Wamare SHG is located.



*CBT youth Aciro Betty sharing her experience and how business in attracting customers even in the salon under the tree, in Adilung sub county Agago district*

## **2. The power of social capital at SHG**

Sabina Akot is a 46 year old married mother of 6 children (4 Girls and 2 Boys). She is living in Awalkok village, Ngekidi in Agago district. Sabina Akot was a typical peasant farmer and was a casual labourer in order to provide for the family together with the husband.

During the wealth ranking exercise (a process for selecting project beneficiaries) in August 2022, she was identified among the poorest households in the community and she joined Konye Keni SHG whereby she started saving UGX 1,500 per week which gave her access to small loans of between UGX 20,000 to 120,000. She started a business of rearing chicken (started with 4 chickens) and food stuff (onions, tomatoes and cooking oil) in her community. Sabina Akot's profit was at an estimate of UGX 30,000 to UGX 45,000 per month in the beginning. For the last 14 months she is supplying chicken to the community and middle men buy from her to supply the neighboring markets within and outside Agago district, she raises approximately 130,000 per month currently.

With this initiative, Sabina Akot is able to participate in SHG weekly activities, recently she bought two piglets in October 2023, the pigs multiplied and she sold the piglets worth UGX 650,000 in August 2024

which is helping her to pay school fees for her children in primary and secondary schools and provide other basic necessities for the Household.

Sabina Akot has set several individual short term goals such as constructing a latrine, acquiring kitchen utensils and beddings, 2 goats, 4 chickens which she has achieved over 95%. In July 2024, she set a long term individual goal to acquire a permanent house by March 2026 to add on the five beautiful grass thatch houses in her compound (home beautification).

During a family visit, this is what she said during the interaction with the UCAA ***“I am so happy to be part of Konye Keni SHG and I’m so proud of the members because of their commitments and support to its members”.***

## **Project: Climate Innovations for Resilience in Karamoja and Kyangwali (CLIRK)**

### **Project overview**

The CLIRK Project was implemented in Kotido and Karenga districts in Karamoja and Kyangwali (Host and Refugee communities) in Kikuube district Bunyoro sub-region.

In Karamoja, the region is a predominantly pastoralist area with the main source of livelihood being livestock and seasonal crop production. Like the rest of the world's experience in global warming, Karamoja has experienced a growing trend of prolonged droughts resulting in acute scarcity of water, food and pasture.



***Water management committee members together with other community members near the valley dam after opening of access road to Itanya loyoro valley dam in Karenga district June 2024***

According to the project baseline study conducted by CARE International in Uganda, in 2022, decrease in food yield, failed harvests and death of livestock were mentioned as the three most experienced climate shocks in the last five years within the districts of Kotido, and Karenga with women/girls, youth and children being the most affected populations in the crisis, hence being the project target population.

Along with disasters of climate change, Karamoja has suffered with internal and external insecurities, despite the government initiatives that have been put in place, the region still remains insecure for economic development as a result of increase in incidences of livestock raiding.

The program in Karamoja therefore was targeted to address the key challenge of drought, which continued to negatively impact food security at household level, health of livestock, and consequently income security and peace in Karamoja region.

The approach to building drought resilience is a two-fold; the program developed, is testing and later intends to scale innovative solutions for effective and sustainable utilization of valley dams in Karamoja, as a means for strengthening drought resilience of water dependent communities. In doing so, the program developed and intended to scale a model for inclusive and sustainable water landscapes in dry land areas, which could be adapted, replicated, and scaled in other dry land areas. The program intended to catalyze local climate adaptation actions through facilitation and implementation of Climate Adaptations Action Plans in selected parishes of



Rutom, Kalimon and Maaru, and Kapedo sub counties of targeted districts of Kotido and Karenga. Impact of these interventions would be multiplied through documentation, packaging and dissemination of lessons, and good practices, promoting local participation in sub national, national, regional, and global climate discourses, and using evidence from local actions to influence policy, legislation and strategies at all these levels.

In Kyangwali, Kikuube district like any other districts of Uganda is being affected by extreme variation of weather/climatic conditions. These extreme climatic conditions are mainly affecting farmers who are the majority with over 80% of the population engaged in Agriculture. Climate change is affecting farmers in the following ways: they experience delayed start of the rain season, in-season droughts, prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, leading to reduced/low crop yields, poor nutritional quality of crop produce due to poor growth, in some places flooding and increased incidence of pests and diseases for both crops and livestock.

Therefore Climate Innovations and Resilience Project in Kyangwali sub-county, Kikuube District is being implemented to contribute to improved food and nutritional security for land poor and climate vulnerable communities in Kyangwali. The program in Kyangwali responds to the emerging need of building self-reliance of refugees amidst cuts in humanitarian aid in Uganda. The program tackles two key barriers to food production that is, limited access to land and climate change.



*UCAA Programme director (PD) during a monitoring visit to one of the Vertical micro gardens in Kyeya community Kyangwali refugee settlement*

In response, the program develops, test and roll out innovative Agri-based solutions which optimize space and land productivity to support multiple enterprises. The project is being implemented together with other partners that include; Vertical and Micro-gardening limited, Obuntu bwa Kasalina and the Bug Picture.

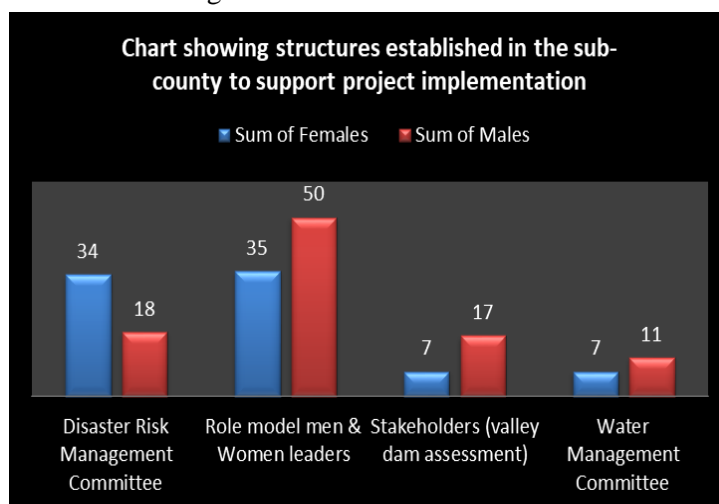
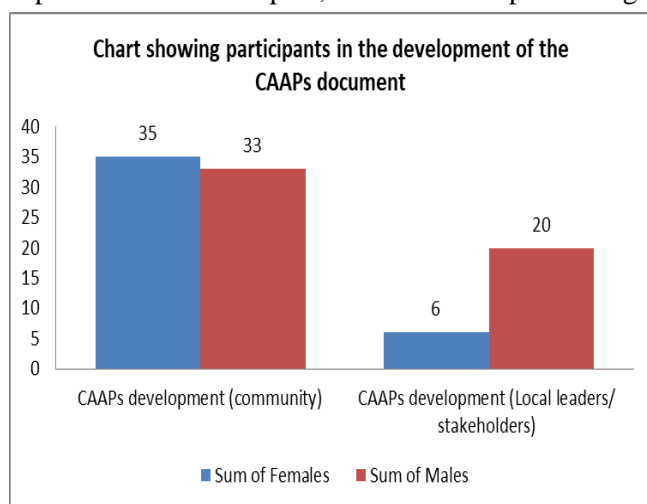
User groups and community change agents were supported to identify and implement local adaptation actions based on a clear understanding of climate change trends in the area and the resultant localized shocks and hazards.

The program intended to multiply the impact of the interventions in Kyangwali by linking them to national, regional and global discourses, policy processes, and actions. Additionally, impact was to be multiplied through

empowerment of community change agents, and end user groups to lobby for increased support towards implementation of local climate adaptation actions which was supported by Uganda change agent association.

### Project activities implemented, and the results of the different outcomes based on the activities implemented:

In Karamoja, the implemented activities were aimed to address Outcome 1: Capacity of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists to anticipate, absorb and adapt to drought related shocks strengthened.



There were development of CAAPs with support from local leaders, like-minded ministries and the community, this was to act as a working document in the district and sub counties to improve on the resilience and adaptation of the communities to climate shocks, the CAAPs document was developed in Kotido district.

Community structures like Water user committees, Disaster management committees, and role model men and women leaders were established. Together with the District Local Governments Their capacity in disaster preparedness was enhanced on, disaster risk mitigation, water governance and valley dam assessment issues, gender and advocacy. The approach was to involve these community structures to be change agents in the community, to continue with their roles and responsibilities even in the absence of the project staff.

The user groups (Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists) capacity on early warning system was also strengthened, where key representatives were identified and mapped to amplify voices and strengthen advocacy in the communities.

The structures were further facilitated to a cross learning visit and exhibition to learn and explore other karamojong communities and how they were utilizing and maintaining the valley dam, this was to promote advocacy on valley dam utilization back in their communities depending on the knowledge they had learnt.





*The treasurer of the Water user committee asking question to the facilitator about challenges she normally faces while executing her role. (Photo taken on 25<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024)*

OUTCOME 2: was aimed at increased support and response by relevant actors in addressing the needs of valley dam user groups.

Through capacity building of key actors to amplify the voices of valley dam user groups particularly women and girls strengthened. Building the capacity of Community change agents, local government and responsible ministries/CSOs on advocacy skills and Documentation and dissemination of good practices and lessons learnt. Plus Local Governments and responsible ministries, departments and agencies prioritise and increase support for improving effectiveness and multiple use of valley dams.

These activities under outcome 2 were however not accomplished in Karamoja due to the limited time that was brought about by the paused activities, in response to CARE's request to wait for the innovation partners to start their implementation. So that the partners could work jointly, which was also not achieved since different partners had different contract timelines.



*In the photo below left are Agro pastoralists attentively participating in the advocacy training while on the right is the committee after the training in July 2024*



## ***Kyangwali***

### **Outcome 1: Adoption of innovative climate adaptation solutions by land poor communities increased.**

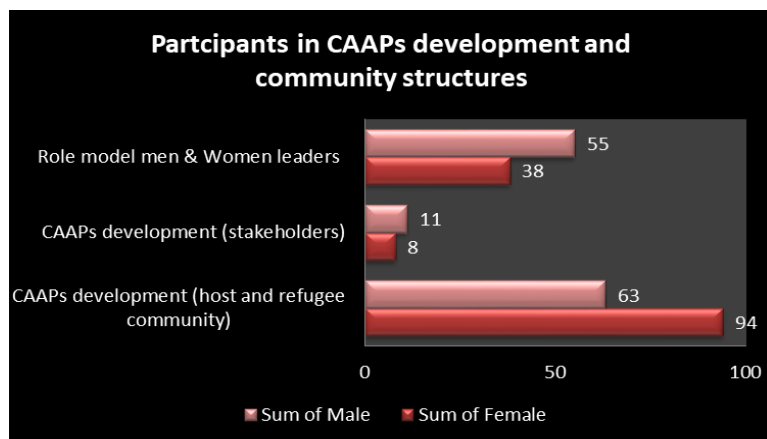
UCAA contributed to Output 1.1. Capacity of communities to anticipate and respond to climate shocks enhanced

The role model men and women leaders received Gender training and advocacy, this was to sensitize the communities against unsafe / unfair gender norms, stream line household activities to be shared among partners and uptake of the innovation solution to improve resilience.



*Some of the women leaders and role model men in Kyeya host communities Kyangwali refugee settlement.*

Under this CAAPs were developed in Kyangwali to support the resilience and adaptation of both the refugees in kyangwali and host communities in Kyeya. With the support of local leaders, role model men, women leader and community leaders the document was developed and disseminated to the district, sub county and like-minded ministries.



### **Outcome 2: Enhanced support and response to the needs of climate vulnerable communities by duty bearers**

UCAA contributed to the Output 2.1. Communities and the district are supported to participate in various climate change and Agri-based platforms at local, regional, national and global level to promote cross learning and peer to peer support.

The project beneficiaries under different innovations shared their success stories to be documented and disseminated in various spaces and media for uptake of the solutions in other regions, a video documentary of the innovation officer, local leaders and beneficiaries was also captured and shared. Alongside this the project beneficiaries had a cross learning visit to learn other climate resilience techniques they could employ back in their communities and sensitize other communities about them.

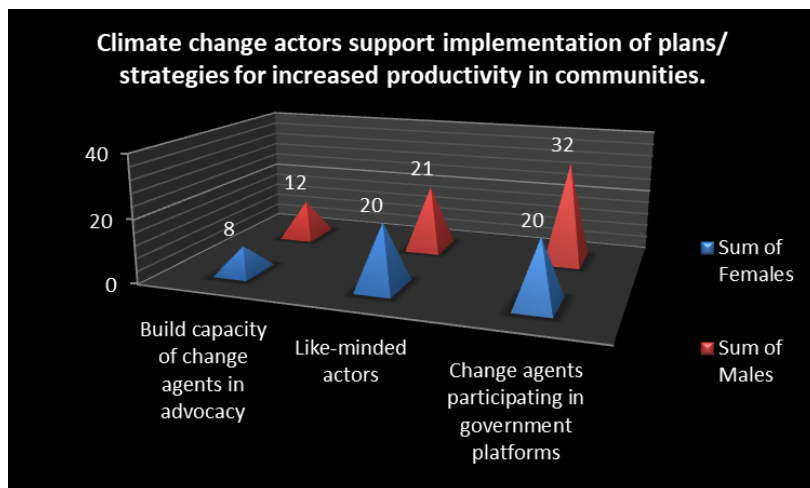


*UCAA Executive director with the Black soldier fly (BSF) beneficiary as she shares her success with the innovation and showing the progress to the BSF project officer*

Out put	Female	Male	Comments/Results
Document good practices	6	7	Six (6) Success stories were documented from the beneficiaries of the food innovations, two stories from each of the solution partner.
Conduct video documentary	5	4	The video documentary consisted of: 3 solution partners, 1 councilor of the project area, UCAA, local government representative and CARE also presenting about the CLIRK project approaches, achievements.
Cross learning visit to promote advocacy	11	14	Facilitated cross learning events and exhibitions to promote advocacy at local level. the cross learning visit at Kuliika farm and KSAM farm in Gobero and Bwikwe respectively. Members from the innovation partners and UCAA benefited from this event.

Output 2.2: Agri-based and climate change actors support implementation of plans, strategies and policies which support increased productivity in communities.

The change agents, like-minded ministries received advocacy training to follow up on policies and plans on existing offers, Change agents were also facilitated to participate in government platforms, where they represented in the budget conference and council meetings on the water issues in their community that affected domestic use as well as uptake of the innovation solutions to enhance food production.



## Our Impact Results in the CLIRK project:

### *Karamoja region*

The implementation of the above action/activities (1 and 2) has positively impacted on the lives of user groups/communities (the village/parish/sub county disaster management committee, women/girls leaders, role module men/youth, water management committee and other community members who are not directly targeted by the project

However, all the changes can be observed on ground but notably is by what the various user groups have done i.e in terms of increased levels of knowledge of lobbying/advocacy skills exhibited.

There was uptake of the solutions shown by the increased number of people participating in the project

There has been a reduction of GBV cases/improvement of hygiene and sanitation in communities

Increased number of children who initially dropped out of school reported back in the third term of 2024

Increased levels of confidence in the women in terms amplifying their issues before other stakeholders and performance of roles and responsibilities assigned to each and every user groups as observed during the monitoring, evaluation, assessment of the performance of groups.



***The Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO) Kapedo Town Council, Mrs. Akello Betty undertaking gender and Community Advocacy training to the selected Women leaders of Kalimon Parish, Kapedo Town Council, Karenga district. Dated: 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024 respectively.***

The political and local stakeholder structures like the village councils, councilors, environment/disaster management committees at Sub County level, and parish development committees among others at the different levels have been very crucial for endorsement of innovative solutions, but also prioritizing the solutions and supporting community-based adaptation actions particularly the key and main findings elaborated in the climate adaptation action plans (CAAPs) hence tackling climate change since they control public resources and service delivery.



In addition, the strong humanitarian network of actors in Karamoja region who are already implementing actions such as early warning systems, contingency planning, climate change adaptation for the agriculture sectors and delivery of humanitarian assistance to people affected by shocks and disasters like the UN agencies such as World Food program (WFP), Food and agriculture organization (FAO) and Civil Society Organizations such as Nakere Rural Women Association, Mercy Corps, World Vision, GARD, Warrior Squad among others made building synergies with the partners easy since they integrated gender, environmental and climate issues in their interventions

### ***Kyangwali Region***

The role model men and women leaders have improved on their agency and they are able to participate/communicate in written and verbally on the platforms and advocate for the successes they have achieved in the innovation solutions.



*Photo of the model men from Kyeya making a submission during the training and preparations to attend the budget cycle conference*  
*Photo taken 24<sup>th</sup>/05/2024*



*A role model man Mr. Masereka Leo participating actively during a budget conference meeting for Kasonga Parish Kyangwali*  
*September 2024*

The climate change agents participated in the budget conference for Kasonga parish Kyangwali Sub County as it was recommended as a resolution in the previous council attended council meeting. From the budget conference meeting the key resolution was to take infrastructure development for Kyeya community especially on access to water is taken as the first priority to be considered in the budget cycle for the coming financial year. Action Point; was agreed that the issue will further be discussed with the sub county leadership during the technical planning meeting that was due in October 2024 and the issue be presented by the parish chief of Kasonga.

It enabled the councilors and the village chairpersons together with the change agents to work together towards improving social, economic, and environmental viability and sustainability for the benefit of their district as well as promoting quality of life for the people who reside in their communities especially Kyeya the host community with the water issue.

There is improvement in the involvement of women in decision making in their homes, in the community it is evidenced that women can influence their husbands to make decisions in regards to land use and uptake of the innovation solutions for example making a decision on the food innovation (Vertical farm, food forest or the Bug picture solution) that is suitable and favorable for their home, the women leaders also participate in community sensitizations and decision making for example speaking against sexual gender based violence in community gatherings of saving groups, church among others.



*Active participation among the women leaders during the follow up meeting while sharing their reports form follow up in the communities, Photo taken on 10<sup>th</sup>/9/2024.*

The climate adaptation action plans have been developed and this is used as an advocacy tool as well as a fundraising tool. The actions should be implemented by other stakeholders for the development of the community.



This was been successful through the effort and partnerships of the change agents, community members and other relevant stakeholders including the leadership of Kikuube district local government.

Establishment of Role model men, women leaders' structures, capacity building to improve their agency, training on advocacy, supporting the groups to attend council meetings has contributed to advocacy by the community members to stakeholders at local government level and other likeminded partners/ministries. The advocacy win will contribute to resolution of water issues in Kyeya as well as increasing the uptake of the innovation solutions in Kyangwali to improve on the beneficiaries' livelihoods, food security evidenced by field success stories from the beneficiaries.

Empowerment of women and youth as agents of change facilitated social inclusion for them to contribute to the solution for a sustainable future development. Equal voice and active participation is key to adapt and transform in the new climate reality therefore women are able to make decisions in relation to uptake of the innovation solutions and participation on the available platforms to influence change for their community for example, they advocated for the inclusion of the issue of water in Kyeya to be intended on the order paper of Kyagwali sub. Issues like advocating for water in Kyeya village through community meetings, local government platforms etc. Women and men make joined decisions about innovation solutions and other alternative food and income generating activities away from traditional charcoal making to reduce pressure on the ecosystem.



***Trained women leaders of Kilima village in action planning in their group discussion of the settlement, their actions will be followed up by UCAA. Photo taken 11<sup>th</sup>/09/2024***



Women have equal say in decisions related to selection of crop varieties to be planted in the food forest and other innovation solutions. Paid and unpaid household and productive work is equitably shared between adults and finally women and men have equal access to and control over productive resources, services and markets, and both participate across the whole value chain, strengthening their coping mechanisms to deal with climate shocks and stresses.

### **CLIRK Project Success stories**

1. Empowering Women/Communities for Gender Equality and advocacy in Kapedo Town council Karenga District.

Through targeted capacity-building efforts, significant strides have been made in promoting gender equality, reducing gender-based violence (GBV), and fostering sustainable development in Kalimon Ward and surrounding villages near the Itanya-Loyoro Valley Dam. A total of 299 community members (140 men and 159 women) from 9 villages were mobilized, and key representatives, including 50 Role Model Men (RMM) and 35 women leaders, were identified and empowered to lead these transformative efforts.

*Women Leaders Taking on Advocacy Roles:* Women leaders as agro-pastoralist user group representatives have been instrumental in amplifying key messages on hygiene, education, and GBV. Their advocacy has significantly reduced GBV cases in the community. According to local police, GBV cases in Kalimon Ward have decreased notably. The women leaders have also been actively campaigning against rampant alcoholism, environmental degradation, and discrimination, leading to a 60% reduction in these issues across the ward.

The training and advocacy work have also boosted the confidence of women leaders. Out of 30 women advocates, 25 have expressed interest in running for leadership positions such as Local Council (LC) and councilor roles in the 2026 elections. Their vice chairperson shared that the skills gained from the advocacy training have equipped many women with the confidence and determination to lead and represent their communities.

In conclusion: the collective efforts of Role Model Men, women leaders, and community members in Kapedo have led to a transformative impact on gender equality, education, sanitation, and sustainable development. Their advocacy and mobilization have resulted in tangible improvements, from increased school enrollment to a significant reduction in GBV and other community challenges. As the community continues to foster shared gender roles, uptake and promotion of the innovative solutions, with more targeted initiatives in the town council the future looks bright for Kalimon Ward/ Kapedo town council and its surrounding villages in climate resilience and food production.



*The photo shows Agro-pastoralists women and girls (leaders) showcasing their skills of MDD practiced after training in advocacy during the official launch/handover of the valley dam to CLIRK partners (Photo taken in August 2024).*

**2. I started integrated farming and all is well, from all approaches I stand as a role model man in my community.**

Masereka Leo (60 years), from Kyeya village, Kasonga parish, Kyangwali Sub County Kikuube district, he has a family 8 members. Mr. Masereka was recruited by UCAA and trained him as a role model man into advocacy issues , critical thinking , Poverty analysis among others including exposure visits that sharpened his thinking, analyzing and understanding of issues around him and the community. Food used not to be enough for his family after them being relocated to Kyeya from Bukinda village. The land was poor and less fertile, the family especially the children started suffering from mal-nutritional disorders due to lack of enough nutritious food in the home.

With the CLIRK project, he trained as a role model man, became a beneficiary of the food forest an innovation of the obuntu bwakasalina and he shares his experience and change within a year of these innovations.

I own 2 acres of land where I put the food forest innovation; i planted a variety of crops that enable me to continue harvesting throughout the seasons and where loss in one crop can be substituted with the other crop. I have created good contact with fellow farmers and input dealers, facilitating a healthy exchange of information and business.

The beauty of the food forest farming system is that most of the food for consumption is from my own farm, and the solution innovation generates more income for the household. “He is one of the farmers in the village who took up to more than 10 different crops on a small plot of land. He said that farming can be successful when one takes the right decision at the right time and puts in considerable hard work”.

He says that he gets about Ugx 2000= on a daily basis by selling leafy vegetables in his own village and to avoid losses due to middlemen, he travels from village to village to sell vegetables and other harvests from his farm. He says farming gives him self-confidence and an opportunity to be a role model man in his community and a considerable income to run his family and maintain a comfortable living standard.

He is confident that if he has access to proper electricity and irrigation water during the dry season, he would be able to increase his income considerably.

“UCAA engaged some of us as direct beneficiaries of the project, we had trainings, engagements, interaction and meetings within the community, and we all have roles and duties as role model men in our community, among others is to preach with evidence to the rest of the community members about the innovations. Among other challenges in every week I receive 1-3 individuals asking about my food forest or looking to buy or access some seeds in my garden, and as a role model man, I am able to train, illustrate to those farmers how am doing it, and I

give out free seeds in most cases, where I even follow up in their home to see how far they have taken up the innovation, I am aware that this is a start for the change in our community and I do it with passion and pride, since it contributes to our general well-being as the people of Kyeya”.

He appreciates UCAA for the exchange learning visit to other farmers, he replicated some of the best practices that was learnt during the learning visit, he is happy that he has applied some of the shrubs in his gardens that are nutritious to the soil and scare away some harmful pests and produces flowers that attracts insects pollination of the crops for more yields. He believes farming is remunerative and that it is correlated to socio-economic events of everyday life.

In future, Mr. Masereka plans to start commercial goat, poultry and fish farming in order to increase his net income. He relates farming to interest and zeal rather than literacy and believes that one needs to take calculated risks in order to make profits by increasing production and productivity.



***Mr. Masereka Leo and the project officer at his food forest farm at his home in Kyeya Village.***



## **CONCLUSION**

Our appreciation as UCAA goes to all our Donors, stakeholders and partners: the Government of Uganda at the local, district and national levels, Ministry of Gender labor and social development, Kampala Capital City Authority: as well as the Kerk in Actie and partners Dwelling places with Institute for International Cooperation and Development in supporting the children protection activities in Karamoja and Kampala. We also take this opportunity to congratulate and appreciate the climate change actors and innovations, including the donor CARE International in Uganda and the partners in the regions of Karamoja and Kyangwali for the effort made in enhancing food production and income earnings in our communities. And finally kinder not Hilfe for supporting the women under the self-help group approach in Agago district.

We sincerely appreciate your unwavering dedication, guidance, support, financial contributions, and capacity-building efforts, all of which were instrumental in driving the success of our work in 2024. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, navigated challenges, and built a strong, collaborative partnership. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to work alongside you and remain excited about the potential for continued collaboration. With our shared commitment to excellence and innovation, we are confident that even greater accomplishments await us in the future.

## **Empowering communities for self-reliance**

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