

# FINAL EVALUATION OF UCAA CHILDREN AT RISK (CaR) Program

Implemented for street-connected children in Napak,  
Karamoja and Kampala city by a project consortium funded  
by Kerk-in-Actie

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**The Evaluation was done on behalf of:**

**Lead Partner:**

Uganda Change Agent Association (UCAA); implemented jointly with Institute for International  
Cooperation & Development (C&D) and Dwelling Places (DP)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
C&D	Institute of Cooperation & Development
CaR	Children at Risk
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
COVID-19	Corona virus disease-19
CPCs	Child Protection Committees
CRCs	Child Rights Clubs
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DLG	District Local Government
DP	Dwelling Places
EU	European Union
FAL	Functional Adult Literacy
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector
KCCA	Kampala City Council Authority
KiA	Kerk-in-Active
KIIs	Key Informants Interviews
LC	Local Council
LCV	Local Council Five
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGLSD	Ministry of gender, Labour and Social Development
MIS	Management Information Systems
MPs	Members of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
RDCs	Resident District Commissioner
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SPSS	Statistical Packages of Social Sciences
TC	Town Council
UCAA	Uganda Change Agent Association
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UWESO	Uganda Women's Efforts to Save Orphans
VAC	Violence Against Children
VCAT	Village Change Agent Training
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loans Associations

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the Final Evaluation Report of the Children at Risk (CaR) Program, implemented by three NGO partners. Namely; Dwelling Places (DP), Institute for International Cooperation and Development (C&D) and UCAA, with grant funding from Kerk-in-Actie (KiA). It was commissioned by the UCAA and examined the project the last three year phase from January 2022 to December 2024.

### **Objectives of the Evaluation**

The methodology included both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach included a survey that covered 147 project participants. Under the qualitative approach, the key informant interviews were conducted with District Local Government (DLG) representatives, Community Development Officers (CDOs), Independent community members, Uganda Change Agent Association Staff and CaR partner staff. Case studies were used to document most significant changes based on the perspectives of the beneficiaries.

### **Relevance**

The relevance of the project was examined in regard to the project design, methodology and whether the actions or activities undertaken were appropriate to counter, mitigate, minimise or eliminate child outmigration. The project was designed to and managed to intercept, rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate children, either from the base in Napak or from Kampala. It also drew local and national attention to the plight of the street-children, with the majority originating from Napak in Karamoja. In terms of the approach and methodology, the consortium in itself, was both an effective strategy which provided a broader team suited to the complexity of the task at hand. Lastly both the actions and the actors in themselves were judged to be quite relevant to the process of addressing the complexity of championing efforts to curtail street-connected children exodus from Napak district, Karamoja.

### **Effectiveness**

The project activities that were planned and implemented was assessed and found to be 89% **effective**. The evaluators reviewed the activities carried out and the numbers of targeted participants that the partners had intercepted, rescued, rehabilitated and resettled. It also analyzed the level or extent of engagement of all key stakeholders. Although the project design had placed more emphasis on preventing outmigration rather than working on the symptomatic activities out of homes, there was delay in receiving initial funding. By the time the funds were received by the KiA partners, they were being faced with receiving over 1000 children who had already moved outside Napak. These were rounded up by Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) in Kampala, in the unplanned form of arresting street-children. These had not yet been controlled by the project before leaving Napak. Thus it falls outside the planned phase of outmigration and does not constitute a limitation of the project.

### **Efficiency**

The project objectives were achieved with over 75% efficiency, through delivery of outputs. Moreover, this was remarkable despite several constraints at the onset of implementation. It was highlighted by key informants' respondents that covid-19 was a huge limiting factor and some adjustments in prioritization were necessary to ensure efficiency. In particular, there was an extension of limited time and constraints to properly reach the target beneficiaries which put

pressure on implementers to deliver results within the available means. This did not guarantee efficient priorities at the onset. It was evident that with more prioritization and the human resources readjustments, the objectives were met in a timely and efficient manner.

### **Recommendations**

From the lessons learnt and the above conclusions, the evaluation recommends as follows:

1. The list of activities under evaluation was so long. We recommend reduction in the number of actions to critical ones that directly help to achieve the objectives that are quite strong and relevant to the community’.
2. Although the stakeholder engagement greatly improved as a result of closer coordination and regular community sensitization, there widespread demand to push the Napak leadership to look beyond short-term actions such as rescue and resettlement. This includes the need for families to commit themselves to send their own children back to school.
3. There is need to strengthen the good relations and maintain continuous communication and between CaR partners and the Napak government and local authorities.
4. Child protection requires more reliable data. Thus the need to undertake Gender-based research on numbers, disparities to determine the fresh situation on ground with more up-to-date data on street-related children.
5. To sustainably reduce the rate of out migration the livelihood component should take care of the harsh climatic reality of Karamoja. This means, there is urgent need to strengthen climate change resilience as a project component for sustainability.
6. The project needs more adaptation based on the current experience of all stakeholders whereby partners need to aim at improving service delivery to the community, in general.
7. The rehabilitation component should address issues of mindset change. Project experience demonstrated that children were empowered to freely give positive feedback.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

This Final Evaluation of CaR covers the last three year phase from January 2022 to December 2024. This phase was implemented by UCAA together with two other NGO partners, namely Dwelling Places (DP) and Institute for International Cooperation and Development (C&D) with a grant from the Kerk-in-Active to implement a three year CaR program in Karamoja and Kampala; including other directly project-linked CaR districts especially in Eastern Uganda. The previous phase of this project (2019-2021) was the second phase. By the end of that phase, which was the start of the current phase under evaluation, the number of children rescued from the streets was 983.

In the first phase of the intervention (2016-2018), the project intercepted, rescued and resettled over 1,650 children in the age of 3 and above. The majority were from Iriiri Sub County. However, in the final two years of the first phase, the consortium rescued more children from Lokopo and Lopeei Sub Counties. Meanwhile the number of street-connected children from Iriiri and Matany had very much reduced. This was reportedly because more awareness creation had been done within these communities. Also, Child Protection Committees (CPCs) had been formed which had intercepted, reported and rescued the children.

Thus, CaR has since then, worked with children along the way and has had much experience and has built capacity to rescue, resettle and rehabilitate. Nevertheless, during the period under evaluation, the partners were still faced with the need to engage the community much more on prevention and interception, rather than on the rescue and rehabilitation. To consolidate impact, this phase was still executed by the three partners mentioned above (from six initial partners of 2016-2018); they were still led by UCAA. The project was therefore designed to consolidate the gains and to domesticate the efforts of curbing child outmigration either from within or right at the door-steps of the communities. The target geographical area remained Napak district, Karamoja region which had persisted as a global nexus of child trafficking.

Although the focus of the project during this phase was to prevent and intercept children; just like in the beginning, it still decided to rescue street-connected children and their families from Kampala streets; re-integrate rescued children with their families in Napak district; collaborate with community members in Napak district (sub counties of Matany, Lokopo, Lopeei, Lorengecora and Ngoloriet); integrate village, sub county and district councils; work through community development officers; link with probation and social welfare officers; engage Elders councils, Kraal Leaders, faith-based organizations, religious leaders, community based organizations, the police and Kampala City Council (KCCA). The Ministry of gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) and relevant Members of Parliament (MPs) were also engaged as duty bearers and key national stakeholders.

### **1.2 Overall project objective**

The project objectives were aligned with goal 16 of the SDGs, and the specific targets on ending violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking of children; access to justice for all; reducing

corruption and bribery in all their forms; and developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. The key objective of the project was;

**To protect adolescents, street- connected and other vulnerable children affected by crisis within communities from unsafe outmigration from Napak, Karamoja by December 2024.**

The specific objectives were as follows;

- i). To sustainably protect adolescents, Street-connected and other vulnerable children from unsafe outmigration from Napak District
- ii). To improve livelihoods of families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis in Napak District
- iii). To enhance participation of community members and local leaders in child-protection, GBV mitigation and livelihoods improvement initiatives in Napak District
- iv). To improve communication, lobby and advocacy strategy to eliminate child outmigration from Karamoja
- v). To strengthen CaR Consortium coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems for effective child protection in Karamoja

To fulfill the above objectives, the project implemented a number of strategies and activities throughout the project area and among the target groups.

### **1.3 Objectives, scope and methodology of evaluation**

#### **Purpose of the consultancy**

The main objective of the assignment was to assess the impact of the project in enhancing the resilience of children, women, families and communities in the prevention and mitigation of the unsafe out – migration of children to the urban areas outside Karamoja sub region and the effects of gender based violence.

Specifically, the evaluation concentrated on examining the following parameters;

1. It assessed the extent to which the project had strengthened the capacity of community and local government structures to prevent children's out-migration from Napak district;
2. It examined whether and how the project increased sustainable access to basic social services (including education, health, water and sanitation);
3. It further examined the contribution of the project towards knowledge on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and awareness of women's rights, children, and their families in Napak district;
4. The evaluation investigated the extent to which the project had strengthened sustainable livelihood options that were adaptable to the Karamoja climatic and cultural context; and
5. It assessed the extent to which sustainable livelihood options that were adaptable to the Karamoja climatic and cultural context had been strengthened.



In conducting this assessment, the consultancy was based on the concepts of: project relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, Impact and sustainability. It further drew some lessons and drew pertinent conclusions and provided recommendations.

## **1.4 The scope and strategy of the evaluation**

The **geographic scope** was the key partner district of Napak, in Karamoja.

The **Sector Scope** was livelihoods for vulnerable children, their families and foster families (in selected communities of the target sub-counties). All the five standard key evaluation aspects were examined in detail and to the extent possible. These were: Relevance and appropriateness; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Impact and Sustainability.

## **1.5 Assignment strategy**

The evaluation exercise employed both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods. It was premised on a participatory methodology whereby the work engaged all key stakeholders. These included beneficiaries (boys, girls, women, and community members), key informants, government staff and CaR Partner project staff. The evaluation team collected primary data from the above category of the project stakeholders and also used secondary data.

The evaluation also reviewed project-related documents, including, but not limited to; the project reports, district development reports, OVC MIS reports and partner related reports and documents. This enabled the team to come up with a well-informed evaluation report containing among others; lessons learnt, challenges faced, possible areas of replication, improvement and new areas of intervention intended to inform the next probable and highly recommended project phase.

## **1.6 Logic and Assumptions of the Final Evaluation**

The Final Evaluation had a number of assumptions listed below.

- A. The target project beneficiaries live in an environment open to influence from other development actors. However, due to few development actors focusing on Child trafficking, in the project area, it was assumed that their influence on target group was minimal.
- B. The changes noticed among the women, girls, boys, and men affected by child outmigration included in the survey can be generalized for the target population since the sample size (147 beneficiaries) was statistically representative.
- C. The evaluation assumed that the data on the prevention of child outmigration, child rescue, rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration over the last years provides a general picture of prevention, interception, rescue and reintegration and how their livelihoods have evolved.

## **2.0 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Sampling Procedure**

Sampling was done using a multi-stage sampling procedure that involved selecting sub-counties, parishes, villages and households. From the target host district of Napak, all five project sub counties were randomly purposively selected. From each of the five sub-counties sampled, at least one parish was selected as the focus of study. In this way, a total of 6 parishes were evaluated. At least two villages were selected from each parish. In this way, a total of 28 villages were reached. From each of the villages, households with the beneficiary vulnerable persons were purposively selected. At least 5 households were selected from each of the 24 villages for household interviews. A total of 12 individual direct beneficiary households' representatives were therefore evaluated.

Purposive sampling was used to select key stakeholders of the project including;

- CaR implementing Partners
- District Community Development officers of Kampala and Napak district local government
- NGOs providing care and other forms of support to children at risk and other vulnerable persons
- Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)
- Community Based Organizations

#### *Sample sites*

The respondents were drawn from an overall sample of all the five key project sub-counties. Namely; Ngoloriet, Lokopo, Lopeei, Lorengachora, Matany (including Lorengachora, Matany and Kangole town councils), all in Napak district. From each of these five sub-counties, all the target CaR project beneficiaries' households were sampled. Representatives from local NGOs, CBOs, informal groups, LCs or other local leaders were involved or consulted as needed for confidential information and assurances to respondents. Altogether, 147 interviews/ individual respondents were contacted.

### **2.2 The Evaluation Design**

The cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from sub-samples in the two study districts of Napak and Kampala, to enable a description and explanation of the situation of the children at risk and the services and care they or their caregivers receive. The evaluation exercise employed both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods. It required a participatory methodology whereby the work engaged all key stakeholders, including; beneficiaries (as key informants), community members, local government staff, CaR project staff and partners. The evaluation team collect primary data from direct beneficiaries of the project, from focus group discussions, from other relevant key stakeholders and also used secondary data, as previously mentioned.

## **2.3 Data collection methods**

### **(a) Documentary review**

The evaluation study reviewed documents including but not limited to; the project documents, project reports, district development reports, public reports and partner related reports and documents. The assignment was as participatory to the extent possible and involved all key stakeholders, communities, women and children. This enabled the evaluation team to come up with a well-informed evaluation report containing among others; Effectiveness, Efficiency considerations, lessons learnt, challenges faced, possible areas of replication/improvement and new areas of intervention to inform the next project phase.

Several methods were used to collect data. These were; review of documents and literature on the subject, key-informants' interviews, face to face interviews and focus group discussions as described below.

Relevant documents on services provided to the beneficiaries were reviewed. These included:

- The situation of children at risk and vulnerable groups
- Annual reports on children and vulnerable persons from Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, CSOs and other agencies
- Annual reports of children at risk and vulnerable persons protection agencies,
- Monitoring and evaluation reports of child protection and vulnerable protection agencies, related projects and programmes.

### **(b) Key-informants' interviews (KIIs)**

Using key-informants interviews technique, representatives of the following institutions were purposively sampled and interviewed:

- CaR implementing Partners
- Community Development Officers of Kampala and Napak District Local Government (DLG)
- NGOs providing care and other forms of support to children at risk and other vulnerable persons
- Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

The purpose of the KIIs was to get an overview of child beneficiaries and other vulnerable person in the community, forms of support they got, gaps in the services, adequacy of policies and laws, gaps in the action, policies and possibly local regulations or laws that needed to be addressed.

### **(c) Face-to-face interviews**

Face to face interviews were held with individual beneficiaries or their caregivers using semi-structured interview schedule. The purpose of the face-to-face interviews was to get detailed information on:

- Living conditions of the beneficiary children and other vulnerable groups
- Access to welfare services
- Adequacy of care provided

- Quality of care provided
- Extent to which the project had increased access to services and care
- Gaps on welfare services and care and project impact
- Recommendations to improve access to services and care for the children at risk

**(d) Data analysis, report writing and submission**

Data analysis was undertaken according to the source. Data from literature and documents reviewed, key-informants' interviews, focus group discussions and observation was analysed using the content analysis techniques based on a matrix of issues and response's structure. Data from face-to-face interviews was summarized into frequencies and percentages and tabulated to allow comparisons by gender and age, and where applicable comparison by sub-county and gender was made.

**(e) Ethical considerations**

The following ethical considerations were undertaken during the evaluation:

- i. Informed consent of targeted respondents was sought;
- ii. During data collection, care was taken to ensure that there was no physical or emotional harm caused to the respondents who were taking part in the study. The rights of respondents were respectfully upheld. The data collection team was fluent in the local language and were reminded to respect the cultures and traditions of the respondents.
- iii. Objectivity during the study was emphasized so as to eliminate personal bias and opinions.
- iv. The anonymity of respondents was maintained during the evaluation so as to avoid shyness or any form of stigmatization;
- v. Where the evaluation findings have been quoted verbatim or in text boxes, appropriate attribution has been made.

**(f) Summary of deliverables:**

The following were the key deliverables for the terminal evaluation process;

1. Study tools and agreed upon work schedule,
2. Draft evaluation report,
3. Final acceptable evaluation report (3 hard copies and 1 soft copy),
4. Copies of data collection tools annexed to the report, and
5. End of consultancy report of not more than 25-30 pages, excluding annexes, to include the following: Executive summary, Introduction, Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

**Note:** The Evaluation study team was trained and they effectively contribute to the review and enrich the methodology and study tools. They ably provided field-level support to the consultants to remain focused and achieve the set study objectives.

## **2.4 Supervision of the assignment and duration**

The assignment was effectively supervised by UCAA. UCAA secretariat worked with UCAA members and Project staff based in Napak/Moroto district, Karamoja and Kampala to avail all

the necessary project documentation relevant for the assignment. The overall supervision of the assignment was executed by the Chief Executive Officer of UCAA.

## 2.5 Strength of the Evaluation Methods

The individual survey was useful in generating quantitative data on the indicators of the project. Where possible, this enabled comparison of the indicator values at the time of the final evaluation with the baseline, midterm evaluation and project targets.

The change stories captured provided opportunity for the target categories to share the most significant change that was attributed to the project according to their own perspectives. The change stories also told the stories behind the quantitative changes realized and elaborated what they meant in the lives of the beneficiaries.

## 2.6 Challenges and Limitations of the Evaluation

Mobilization and interpretation at the community level were done by the Project Staff. This could have affected confidentiality and the objectivity of responses. Field interviews were done by independent data collectors and were instructed to strictly interview only respondents who were participating in the project activities in the communities.

## 2.7 Evaluation time frame

This task was executed over a period of 30 working days. It commenced on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024 was concluded Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, as summarized below:

*Figure 1: Evaluation Timeframe*

Activity	Output	Days Executed
Contracted with UCAA management	Confirmed and signed Agreement	0.5
Developed survey instruments	Produced instruments to capture information responding to assessment needs	1.5
Desk review	Reviewed literature in the areas of previous related household assessments, actions implemented by UCAA and partners in the CaR project and examined the conceptual framework for its vulnerability assessment with specific reference to key aspects of child protection.	3
Conduct the survey	Critical stakeholders identified and Interviewed visits to at least 210 project target households respondents for collection of data and group meetings conducted for data collection Collection and collation of information and data	14
Compiled report and submitted draft copy	Analysis of survey findings and preparation of survey report	8
Review and update draft	Additional information incorporated and assessment report revised	2
Presented copy of Final Evaluation Report	Copy of CaR-UCAA Final Socio-economic Household Assessment report incorporating all comments	1
Total No. of days		30 days

## 2.8 Category and profile of respondents

A total of 134 interviews were conducted during the evaluation. Of these 129 were conducted in Napak and seven (7) in Kampala. From the field interviews in Napak 373 persons were reached through individual interviews, KIIs and group discussions, as summarised in Figure 2 below:

*Figure 2: Category, number and gender of beneficiary respondents*

Sub county	Parish	Village	Males	Females
Lokopo	Namugit	Lokopo TC	15	9
		Nakwamoru	6	5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>
Matany	Lokuwas	Matany TC West	1	3
		Matany TC East	21	21
		Locholi	13	7
		Lokwakais	8	11
		Napeipelu	3	5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>
	Namuongora	Natirai	1	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Ngoleriet	Kangole TC	Senior Quarters	5	2
		Nawaikorot	29	43
		Namekui	21	25
		Toekitela	2	3
		Nawokotelei	2	3
		Nasike South	2	3
		Lopiida Cell	6	4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>
	Lopiida Ward	Senior Quarters	1	3
		Lopiida Cell	2	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
	Namugit	Nawaikorot	1	8
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>
	Namuongora	Nawaikorot	12	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>
Lopeei	Lopeei	Logolosimit	7	9
		Nakatiyat	2	4
		Lokarukoi	0	2
		Arengpuwa	0	1
		Lotedee	0	1
		Lokarikoi	3	2
		Lopeei TC	1	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>
	Lokodumo	Kalesa	0	1
		Lotop	1	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Lorengchora	Kokipurat	Kochito	2	4
		Lobok	4	4
		Kalengeriai	3	1
		Sakatan	0	1
		Katikat	1	1
		Nangeret	1	1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
	Lolet	Lolet	1	0
		Kariaitakomol	1	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>181</b>	<b>192</b>

### 3.0 FINDINGS OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

#### Introduction

This section provides findings of the evaluation. It starts with an overview of the characteristics of the respondents, both demographics, and their socio-economic situation to show the context in which the respondents live. The findings are then presented under the main sub sections of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Lessons-learnt and Sustainability.

The evaluation team interviewed 373 beneficiary respondents from the sub counties of Lokopo, Matany, Ngoleriet, Lopeei and Lorengechora. They were from diverse occupational backgrounds, as summarised in Figure 2, hereunder. Out of these 181 were males, while 192 were female. The largest number of respondents were farmers (45%), followed by Casual Labourers (17%), formally employed (15%), Hawkers/ vendors (11%) and 3% said they were professionals. Out of those employed, some were local leaders, community leaders, local government officials, field staff and CaR partner staff and management representatives. This is represented in Figure 3 below:

*Figure 3: Occupation of respondents*

		Occupation					Total
		Farmer	Employed	Professional	Hawker/ Vendor	Casual Labourer	
Respondent	Male	27%	8%	2%	4%	15%	55%
	Female	18%	7%	1%	7%	12%	45%
Total		45%	15%	3%	11%	17%	100%

The evaluation established the age and gender characteristics of respondents to ensure that a more balanced representation of samples was gathered across multiple stakeholders. In this way, a third of children (26%) were reached and consulted. The number of children combined with the youth meant that the evaluation reached at least 57% of younger generation who are the greatest victims of outmigration from Napak. This is summarised in Figure 4 below.

*Figure 4: Age characteristics of respondents*

		Age								Total
		Less than 18 yrs.	19-25 yrs.	25- 33yrs	34-41 yrs.	42- 49yrs	50- 57yrs	58- 65yrs	66+ yrs.	
Respondent	Male	12%	5%	11%	10%	6%	6%	5%	2%	56%
	Female	14%	6%	9%	6%	5%	3%	2%	0%	44%
Total		26%	11%	20%	16%	11%	9%	7%	2%	100%

The above data also reflects the population distribution in Karamoja, where the population is very young, with over 70% of the population falling below 40 years of age. This has placed a big burden on the young generation to fend for themselves as well as the small aged dependants. The project was therefore working to coach the community, through local CBOs to identify

most vulnerable households and children. With grant support from KiA the partners, led by UCAA worked with the community and local partners, to successfully implement a three year project to address outmigration of children from Napak.

The tasks revolved around child protection, positive parenting, sensitisation, awareness-raising on the children's rights, education and welfare of rescued and other children, SGBV, livelihoods security, economic empowerment, etc. This necessitated working closely with the community, government agencies and other child-focused partners such as UNICEF, UWESO, etc. These were mainly in areas of capacity building, information sharing, and participation in the development of the implementation plan at the local level to ensure that there was collaboration between all actors involved for effectiveness and project sustainability. Although as discussed in the various aspects, this was still faced with unavoidable shortcomings.

### 3.1 Relevance

The relevance of the project was examined in regard to the project design, methodology and whether the actions or activities undertaken were appropriate to counter, mitigate, minimise or eliminate child outmigration. The project was designed to and managed to intercept, rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate children, either from the base in Napak or from Kampala. It also drew local and national attention to the plight of the street-children, majority of whom were originating from Napak in Karamoja. In terms of the approach and methodology, the consortium in itself, was both an effective strategy which provided a broader team suited to the complexity of the task at hand. Lastly both the actions and the actors in themselves were judged to be quite relevant to the process of addressing the complexity of championing efforts to curtail street-connected children exodus from Napak district, Karamoja.

The project design and activities that were planned were relevant in relation to achieving the aims outlined in the project plan mainly because the project was rich in design and expectation in consideration to the needs of the target group. However, slightly less activities than conceived were implemented as a result of the emergency situation created by rounding-up of children by KCCA. This emerged during the implementation period and sucked in CaR resources not originally planned for.

*Figure 5: CaR Logical Framework Extract*

<b>IMPACT (Goal/ Broad objective):</b> Adolescents, street- connected and other vulnerable children affected by crisis thrive in communities that protect them from unsafe outmigration from Karamoja by December 2024		<b>Impact Indicator:</b> Empowered communities able to protect and provide for their children and families within Karamoja	
Planned Outcomes	Planned Outputs/Results	Indicators of Success	Relevance to respondents
<b>1. Adolescents, Street-connected and other vulnerable children protected from unsafe outmigration from</b>	1.1. 2,600 children prevented from unsafe outmigration from 10 sub-counties and 3 town councils in Napak (UCAA)	-Number of Children from each of 10 sub-counties and 3 town councils in Napak living contentedly with their families by sex, age and other characteristics	59%
	1.2. 820 street connected children	-Number of targeted children	



<b>Napak District</b>	<p>and adolescents affected by crisis thrive in communities that protect them from all forms of violence (DP)</p> <p>1.3. 150 children in transit intercepted, assessed and referred to partner for reintegration (DP)</p> <p>1.4. 210 rescued children and 150 intercepted cases are reintegrated or resettled in Napak (70 rescued and 50 intercepted cases per year) (C&amp;D)</p> <p>1.5. Improved safety and learning environment of 330 children in 11 clubs (DP)</p>	<p>reunited and in family harmony by age, sex, other characteristics</p> <p>-Number of children in transit intercepted, assessed and referred to partners by sex, age, conditions and partner</p> <p>-Number of Targeted children handled in child-friendly manner and sustainably received by relevant partners</p> <p>Number of children received &amp; reunions with their families</p> <p>- Number of Targeted children and intercepted cases return to live dignified lives &amp; in school in their communities</p>	
<b>2. Improved livelihoods of families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis in Napak District</b>	<p>2.1. 89 new VSLA groups formed and supported with seed capital, on top of existing 54 groups (UCAA)</p> <p>2.2. 150 women and youth Identified and trained in apprenticeship, business and investment skills (UCAA)</p> <p>2.3. 15 local artisans and 5 trades identified for apprenticeship in practical market driven need-based kills for women and youth (UCAA)</p> <p>2.4. 150 tool kits provided to the women and youth that have completed the apprenticeship skills (UCAA)</p> <p>2.5. 780 women and youth, Women and youth trained and facilitated through Functional Adult Education (FAL) Classes (UCAA)</p> <p>2.6. Two Change Agent training (CAT) and 13 Village Change Agent trainings (VCAT) courses conducted for attitude change for Local leaders, youth and women groups (UCAA)</p>	<p>-Number of VSLA groups, performance data &amp; group benefits by age, gender, type of benefits</p> <p>-Number of women/youth trained by sex, age, gender, enterprise</p> <p>-Number of local artisans and trades identified and kinds of skills imparted by gender, age and enterprise</p> <p>-Number, types, quality and purpose of tool kits provided by gender, age and location</p> <p>-Number of women/youth trained and type of facilitation provided in FAL learning experience</p> <p>-Number of CAT &amp; VCAT successfully completed and reported impact of training on beneficiaries and / or community attitudes and practices</p>	72%
<b>3. Enhanced participation of community members and local leaders in child-protection, GBV mitigation and livelihoods improvement initiatives in Napak District</b>	<p>3.1. 1,500 parents and caregivers actively participate in positive parenting orientation sessions (UCAA / C&amp;D)</p> <p>3.2. 1,500 households sensitized on improved Agricultural practices, IGAs, GBV prevention, Savings and Credit skills (UCAA)</p> <p>3.3. 330 Head Teachers, SMC/PTA trained on child protection, gender and safe guarding of children within their schools (C&amp;D / DP /UCAA)</p> <p>3.4. 150 LCs, cultural and religious leaders trained on child protection,</p>	<p>-Number of parents/caregivers who actively participate in positive parenting training and practice by gender</p> <p>-Number of households sensitized and practicing improved agricultural practices and types of businesses/IGAs</p> <p>-Number, category and schools empowered in child protection and cases of safeguarding children reported by sex, age and type</p> <p>-Number of community leaders &amp; Level of improvement in community awareness on child</p>	68%

	reporting, referral and follow up of cases to prevent trafficking and unsafe outmigration of children (UCAA / C&D)	protection, positive parenting, safe guarding & gender by category	
<b>4. Improved communication, lobby and advocacy strategy to eliminate child outmigration from Karamoja</b>	<p>4.1. 1,550 parents attend awareness campaigns conducted for on child protection, positive parenting, gender and safe guarding of children (C&amp;D / DP /UCAA)</p> <p>4.2. 300 children facilitated to participate in 5 National and internationally recognized days (C&amp;D / DP /UCAA)</p> <p>4.3. Quarterly community dialogues conducted for 130 community-based structures (10 per district, each reached once a quarter) (UCAA/ C&amp;D/DP)</p> <p>4.4. 1,000 children actively participate in quarterly school sensitization activities on VAC, child trafficking, FGM/C, Child Marriage (C&amp;D / DP /UCAA)</p> <p>4.5. 1,000 children and adolescents participate in different sporting activities each addressing a specific topic (i.e. child abuse, child marriage, child trafficking,)</p>	<p>-Number or list of positive gender practices &amp; safe guarding of children on prevention, reporting and referral reported</p> <p>-Number and type of child protection reported</p> <p>-Number of targeted children actively engaged in national and international lobby events</p> <p>-Number of Duty bearers, community level leaders and education stake holders reinforced on child protection</p> <p>Number and level of empowerment of duty bearers, community leaders and education stake holders</p> <p>-Number and category of children and adults actively engaged in public events for lobby and advocacy on child protection</p>	85%
<b>5. Results-oriented &amp; impact-driven CaR Consortium coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) systems</b>	<p>5.1. Assorted IEC Visibility materials Development and production</p> <p>5.2. Capacity of CaR partners built in Improved data, management and information systems</p> <p>5.3. Periodic reports (Monthly, quarterly, bi-annual and annual) produced and documented as agreed</p> <p>5.4. At least 6 stakeholders' review meetings successfully conducted at district and national level</p>	<p>- Number of IEC &amp; visibility materials produced &amp; disseminated</p> <p>- Improved communication, lobby and advocacy for community empowerment and equitable development</p> <p>- Frequency and quality of reports disaggregated by gender, age, source, frequency and relevance</p> <p>- Frequency and attendance of stakeholders meetings</p> <p>- Number of resolutions made and implemented</p>	87%

The community perspective that the project relevance was at 59% indicates that they preferred a different mode of project compared to child rescue. This attitude was related to the dependency feeling in Karamoja that they need to be supported and not just look at the flight of children who they regard as a means to look for livelihood outside their hostile environment. This is also a reaction to the unfriendly way in which KCCA arrested their children and took them to the remand and rehabilitation centre in Masulita. Others were taken to court and sent back to Napak for community service.

This sentiment also affected the project relevance. In the beginning the project was designed to control the situation on the ground by addressing factors that promote outmigration. But already some children were in Kampala and others continued moving before the situation could

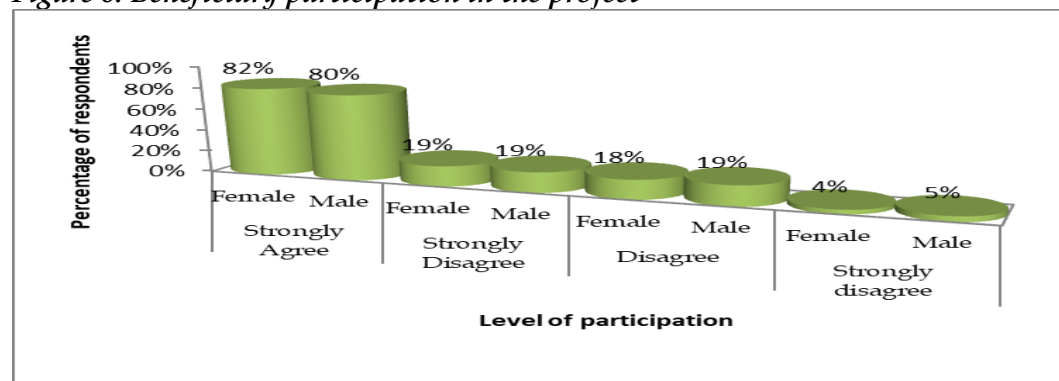
be brought under control. Thus in response to KCCA's decision to send the children picked from the streets to Masulita Children's Village and the decision of the district leadership to repatriate and enrol 425 children in boarding schools without resources, the CaR partners had to divert funds to facilitate rehabilitation and resettlement of the children outside originally planned activities, for instance, feeding more children than originally planned in schools. Between January and February alone DP reported that they fed 1,044 children that was unplanned for. Although this met the objective or rescue and rehabilitation it was outside the original core project design of addressing outmigration

The level of awareness on the dangers, the effects and how to address out migration has increased. Over 90% of the respondents are knowledgeable about CaR. They consider a child at risk to be any child facing any form of abuse. The level of awareness of CaR is highest in Matany Sub-county (96% said they are very knowledgeable) and lowest in the sub-counties of Lopeei (61% respondents) and Lokopo (56%).

### 3.1.1 Level of beneficiary participation

However, despite the fact that the project implementation inclined towards implementing unplanned activities, the core object of stopping out-migration and empowering communities to take charge of the wellbeing of the children was still attained in due course. Stakeholder and community participation in the preventing, monitoring and managing outmigration has greatly improved. Communities are now reporting outmigration incidences, alerting authorities on new trends and routes of outmigration. This was one of the intended outcomes of the project and was rated at 78% success by community members. Individual male and female respondents were asked to rank their participation by stating whether they; strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to have participated in project activities that were obviously known to them. Thus, the evaluation was able to understand that the UCAA project objectives were highly embraced by beneficiaries, as illustrated in **Figure 3** below:

**Figure 6: Beneficiary participation in the project**



From the above response of beneficiaries, the high level of beneficiary participation also implies the extent to which they (even if indirectly) find the project relevant to their felt needs. It demonstrates that the beneficiary respondents were committed towards achieving the stated project objectives. In general, 82% of the respondents reported that they have participated in CaR Actions. The more active activities were; education, sensitisation, monitoring and reporting. Thus non-participation was highest in Lopeei, Lokopo and Matany sub-counties, and participation highest in Ngoleiriet and Lorengechora sub-counties.

### 3.1.2. Project design and implementation strategies

The evaluation sought to establish the extent to which the project as designed and implemented was suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local and national levels. Surveillance structures were strengthened and new ones established where they did not exist. The project was designed to intercept 200 children at risk who are moving out of Napak, annually in search of greener pastures in neighboring districts and in Kampala. A total of 684 were reportedly intercepted by UCAA and DP (101%), beyond planned target; while CaR provided mattresses and resettled at least 300 children in schools back home by the time of evaluation.

In previous project phases, majority of local leaders were collaborating in sending children outside the community. It was a surprise that over 90% of LCs men, women, and girls were particularly quick to learn and adopt new interventions to prevent outmigration and GBV prevention. They have also embraced and adopted VSLA, business practices like starting up businesses for example restaurants and establishing alternative livelihoods (IGAs). At the stage of designing the project, and during the launch project reports indicate that integrating the women, girls, boys, men, youth groups as well as other categories that were involved with or even facilitating outmigration was very critical. Thus a blend of group approach, community, and key individuals targeting has delivered success. Both field and management staff interviewed reported that project teams now see local leaders, women, girls, boys, and men inclusion as part of their work and strive to ensure that they are included as targeted.

As a result of the above, the project was relevant to the objective of improved interception mechanisms for outmigration. The qualified the project to have been implemented in a participatory manner that allowed for the communities, the beneficiaries and the local authorities and duty bearers to embrace it. The project directly addressed more than 70% of the root causes of the out migration of children and in some cases their parents which included poverty and hunger and insecurity.

Most importantly, it was observed that the KiA project inception, approach and methodology included a comprehensive baseline survey, which was highly commendable. In addition to other positive factors, it enhanced the project's relevance and significantly facilitated the assessment of impact of the KiA-funded final evaluation exercise.

## 3.2 Effectiveness

The project activities that were planned and implemented was assessed and found to be 89% **effective**. The evaluators reviewed the activities carried out and the numbers of targeted participants that the partners had intercepted, rescued, rehabilitated and resettled. It also analyzed the level or extent of engagement of all key stakeholders. Although the project design had placed more emphasis on preventing outmigration rather than working on the symptomatic activities out of homes, there was delay in receiving initial funding. By the time the funds were received by the KiA partners, they were being faced with receiving over 1000 children who had already moved outside Napak. These were rounded up by Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) in Kampala, in the unplanned form of arresting street-children. These had not yet been controlled by the project before leaving Napak. Thus it falls outside the planned phase of outmigration and does not constitute a limitation of the project.

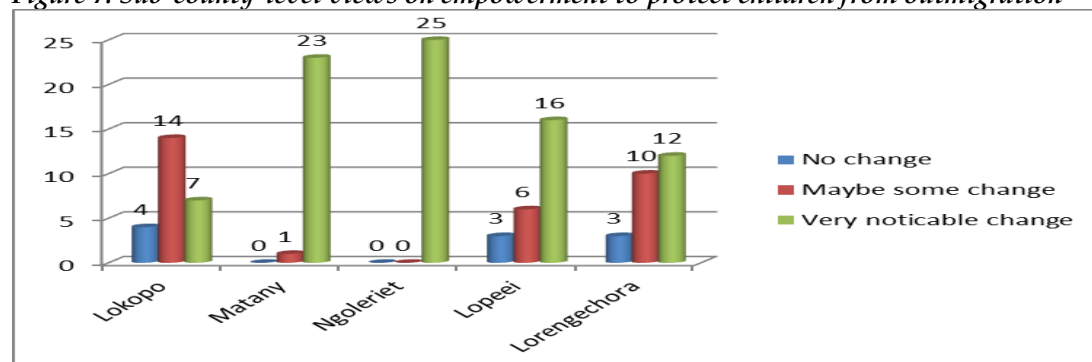
In the design, the project was intended to prevent 2,600 children from unsafe outmigration from 10 sub-counties and 3 town councils in Napak. The plan aimed at having at least 820 street connected children and adolescents affected by crisis thriving in communities that protected them from all forms of violence: DP and UCAA had planned that children in transit would be intercepted, assessed and referred to partner for reintegration. Similarly, C&D designed to have 210 rescued children and 150 intercepted cases to be reintegrated or resettled in Napak. This meant 70 rescued and 50 intercepted cases per year. Thus the design was partly to rescue, rehabilitate and resettle. The evaluation confirmed that at least 570 children were reportedly intercepted by the evaluation time. Hence, this component exceeded planned expectations.

DP planned to achieve improved safety and learning environment of 330 children in 11 clubs and 9 CRCs (81) were realized, and facilitated Moreover previous evaluations had indicated that many children were already in Kampala, either having returned after taking them back. Or older children had recruited younger ones. In this way the rescue was till achieved but in an unplanned manner. Secondly reports indicate that interception continued to be done in Napak, livelihoods activities designed to empower communities were done as planned and follow-up activities in the schools and communities were quite effective in that the community were well versed with and participated in the work of KiA as summarized under the specific outcomes.

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

This was the cornerstone and one of the fundamental outputs of the project. Both the beneficiary community and project staff are fully in agreement that the project was effective in drawing attention and providing a platform to protect children from outmigration. It reportedly achieved 76% in that there was reduced no of children and adolescents migrating alone out of Karamoja. This was according to respondents when they were asked to state whether local communities were empowered to protect their children from outmigration offside Napak. From their views; 8% disagreed that there were changes brought about by the project, while 26% felt that maybe there were some changes. This confirms that there were very noticeable changes. The specific opinion also varied according to sub-counties as shown below:

**Figure 7: Sub-county-level views on empowerment to protect children from outmigration**



From the above it was concluded that the most positive effect was felt in Ngoloriet (100%), followed by Matany. While Lokopo performed least (28%) in terms of changes that were very noticeable. Similarly the community reported that more adolescents, Street-connected and other

vulnerable children were protected from unsafe outmigration from Karamoja compared to previous project phases. The major cause of success was because the project managed to slightly empower local communities to protect and provide for their children and families within Karamoja as a result of increased sensitisation and better livelihoods initiatives.

The effectiveness of the project was rated using stakeholder, especially community and staff perception to be 86%. The intended goal of curbing out-migration was largely realized by the community acting as whistle blowers and the government units were more alert. Also, some perpetrators have been arrested and prosecuted and committed to community service. The evaluators learnt that the “culprits” were not really made to undertake the “community service”, as punishment and a form of deterrence.

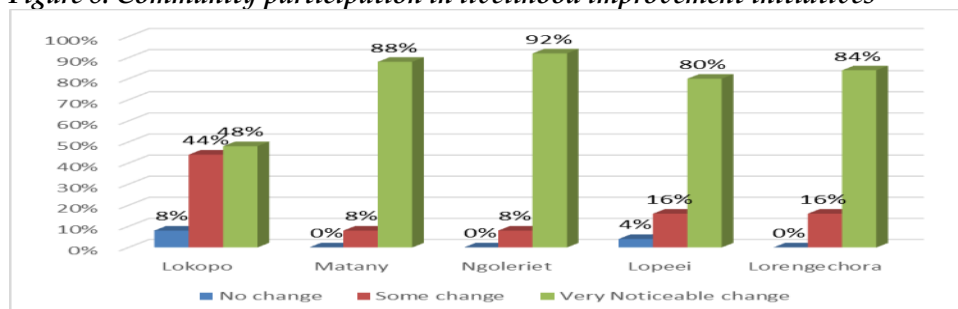
However, the evaluation still confirmed that although planned targets were reached and even exceeded in a few cases, there was continued outmigration of children from Napak. New routes were being used and some children returned to take younger ones away to other districts or Kampala. This means retention in the community was still a challenge. Thus, this parameter for effectiveness and project design may need to be revisited.

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

This section shows the extent to which the project was effective in “reducing extreme poverty” since this was the object of the livelihoods component. It made a comparative analysis of indicator values of poverty indicators at baseline and against the milestones set at the inception of the project. The stated objective was to improve livelihoods of families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis in Napak District. Within this objective, the communities have been empowered on child protection and child welfare as a result of VSLAs, sensitization and income generated such as from the backyard farming, by the communities.

The key indicator was the number of VSLA groups, performance data & group benefits by age, gender, type of benefits and the number of women and youth trained; by sex, age, gender, enterprise. Linked to this, were the types of livelihoods activities by or for families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis. The most prominent achievement was formation and facilitation of VSLAs. participation of community members and local leader’s livelihoods improvement initiatives

**Figure 8: Community participation in livelihood improvement initiatives**



Document review established that by the time of evaluation, 55 new VSLA groups had been formed and supported, comprising of 1,556 members (1,053 female, 503 male). An additional 28

groups were further formed and supported, meaning the component exceeded planned targets by reaching 150%. At baseline, there were 54 VSLA groups that had been established with a membership of 1,175 (474 male and 70 female). However, there were no carry-forward savings by the previous VSLAs, according to both staff and respondents when asked about VSLA. At least there were 109 VSLA groups with a total of 2731 members (1,754 female, 977 male). Although all old groups still existed they were no savings amount mentioned and they were facilitated to continue savings. But all the groups continued to save and were useful as community empowerment points to address outmigration. Due to limited budget, although the number of CAT & VCAT courses that had initially been planned was not fully budgeted for, at least 55 members (41 female and 14 male) attended two VCATs. Though successfully done, there was no reported impact of training on beneficiaries and nor were changes in community attitudes and practices obtained. Understandably because these variables take time to happen.

It had also been initially expected that a number of local artisans and trades would be identified and various kinds of skills would be imparted by gender, age and enterprise as well as the number, types, quality and purpose of tool kits provided by gender, age and location. This was also very theoretically achieved due to the reduction in the original budget. Similarly, the number of women and youth trained and type of facilitation provided in Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) learning experience were not possible to undertake as this remained only in the log frame but not translated into the budget. Thus nearly 40% of planned activities under livelihoods were not funded and therefore not realized on the ground. All funded portions (100%) were however fully and successfully implemented. This component was intended to lead to a reduced number of children in transit intercepted, assessed and referred to partners by sex, age, conditions and partner. It will continue to be a key priority to curb outmigration.

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

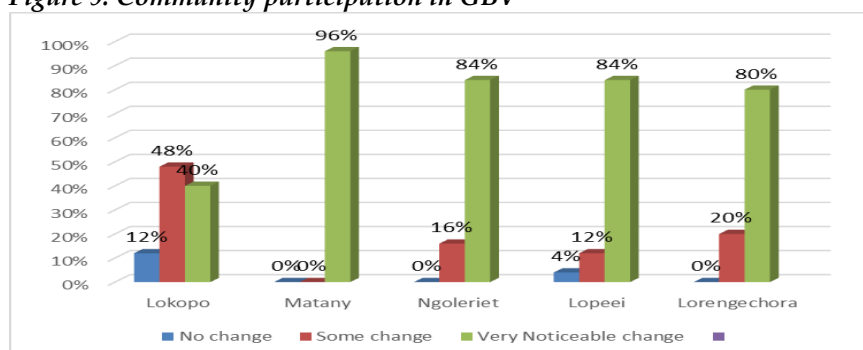
The effectiveness in participation of community members and local leaders in child-protection was established at above 75%. This was majorly because child-protection was becoming a shared responsibility between parents and other stakeholders. At the onset of the project over 80% of parents were reportedly not taking care of their children when they reached the age of 9 years and above. As a result of trainings positive parental practices have been embraced and beneficiaries were quickly starting to own and promote the project. Incidences of GBV were largely reduced and stakeholders engagement had greatly improved.

The child-friendly or child-centred means and methods were not used to undertake the above. Moreover, in the process of interception or rescue, there was expected to be an increased practice in the number of targeted children handled in child-friendly manner and sustainably received by relevant partners. Because the majority (1,000) was rounded up by KCCA, this practice of child-friendliness was less than 50% in practice. This would translate to the number of children received & reunions with their families. At least 308 intercepted children were reportedly rehabilitated by DP, and facilitated back home by all three KiA partners. The documented number and cases of children that returned to live dignified lives in their communities were less than the planned or actual design procedure in the baseline indicators.

The baseline set out to establish 11 child rights clubs (CRCs). The evaluation established that

nine CRCs with a total of 270 boys and girls were formed with equal number of boys and girls. The 9 CRCs realized 80% of the planned target with a total membership of 322 pupils. It was further established that because the girls attended sex education sessions, their confidence and self-esteem had been enhanced and so was their desire to stay in at home and in school. Moreover, the participation of community members and local leaders GBV mitigation was between 80 – 95% in four sub counties with Lokopo lagging behind at 40% as illustrated in figure 9, hereunder.

**Figure 9: Community participation in GBV**



Project records testify that all three partners trained 1,550 parents and caregivers on community awareness on child protection, positive parenting, gender and safe guarding of children. This attracted additional 50 participants beyond the planned targets and with over 60% participants consisting of women. Training and sensitization of 2,760 households (180%) on improved Agricultural practices, IGAs, GBV prevention, Savings and Credit skills were quite effectively achieved. However, the training of Head Teachers, SMC/PTA on child protection, gender and safe guarding of children within their schools was not accorded urgency. Similarly, LCs, cultural and religious leaders were collectively sensitized with the community on child protection, reporting, referral and follow up of cases to prevent trafficking and unsafe outmigration of children. This was due to limited funds and to enforce cost-efficiency by combining local leaders and their subjects on the same training budget. This evidently accounted for the additional 50 participants in the previous community training activity.

The evaluation confirmed that the most common gender issues in the communities were child labor and abuse, child neglect by men and lack of parental care in the household and abuse of women in decision making processes and GBV. The baseline survey which was conducted immediately after the launch of CaR project made a profile of the gaps in child outmigration, lack of parenting, acute poverty, incentives for push- and pull- factors for child outmigration, such as education, negative cultural practices, low education levels, widespread GBV, etc. It reported capacity-building needs on GBV, child-protection, parenting skills, child-rescue; negative cultural practice against women and children was the main future challenge not only in Napak district but the entire Karamoja region.

CaR project successfully interacted and positively intervened in a majority of vulnerable households to address GBV. It was widely acclaimed that men were sharing household workload with the women as a result of the change in mind-set. UCAA and C&D had sensitized stakeholders on SGBV. During community dialogue meetings held on regular basis, stakeholders actively explored strategies for improving existing GBV shelters and opening up



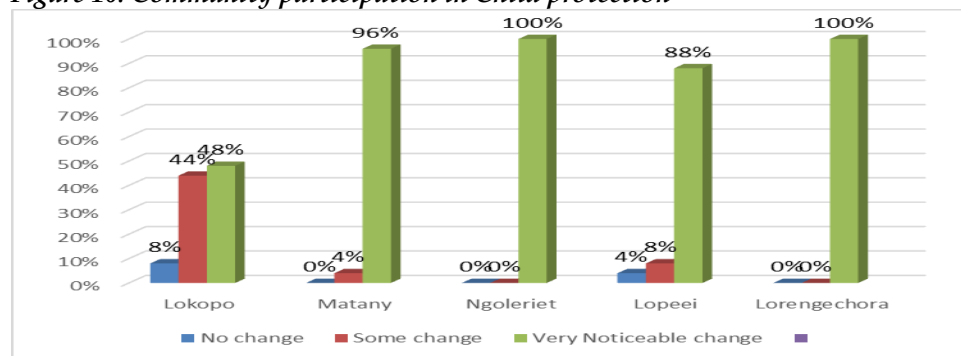
other shelters. These initiatives have further resulted into mindset change in the communities. After several mindset change trainings, group members, CRCs and individuals were motivated to start small income generating activities.

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

The types of successful lobby and advocacy initiatives done to eliminate child outmigration from Karamoja, community leaders and education stakeholder's engagement, the number or list of positive gender practices & safe guarding of children on prevention, reporting and referral reported were the main yardsticks to examine the effectiveness of lobby and advocacy initiatives to eliminate child outmigration from Napak. In this regard, the number of targeted children actively engaged in national and international lobby events was planned at 300 to be engaged in 5 national and internationally recognised days. However by the time of evaluation had more than doubled the target (417 children -236 girls, 181boys and even 60 women as additional bonus). The beneficiary children, women partners had participated in the commemoration of World Food Day, the International Day for Street Connected Children and International Women's Day, among other international events.

It had further been planned jointly by the three partners for 1,550 parents to attend awareness campaigns conducted on child protection, positive parenting, gender and safe guarding of children. From the individual and joint reports at least 210% coverage was achieved. Also the projected quarterly community dialogues earmarked for 130 community-based structures (10 per sub-county per quarter) was achieved in a timely and consistent manner. As a bonus the number of structures had exceeded this target by at least 43 extra groups from the community. Somehow, with a slight deviation this target obtained 100% success also supplemented through the community perception of their participation in child protection in figure 11 below.

**Figure 10: Community participation in Child protection**



The high increase in the level of community participation in child protection, demonstrated that it was a useful proxy indicator under livelihoods. It was designed to retain children from each of 10 sub-counties and 3 town councils in Napak to live contentedly with their families by sex, age and other characteristics were achieved. It's on record that 2,600 children actively participate in quarterly school sensitization activities on VAC, child trafficking, FGM/C, Child Marriage organised by all three partners. This was over 250% compared to the target of 1,000. Similarly at least 1,670 children and adolescents were confirmed have participated in different

sporting activities each addressing a specific topic (i.e. child abuse, child marriage, child trafficking). This was way beyond the planned target of 1,000. Anyhow the average was 150 to 200 interceptions per year. Those that returned have been kept in the schools only visited by parents on a scheduled plan. Also planned was to obtain a number of targeted children reunited and in family harmony by age, sex, and other characteristics. This is the same as above except for the 570 directly intercepted before leaving Karamoja.

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

The key criteria for examining coordination, M&E system that were in-built in the project was the level to which the capacity of CaR partners would be built in improved data, management and information systems. It was confirmed that UCAA coordinates this process. However, all three partners have consistently produced and reported monthly, bi annually and annually, through UCAA to KIA and other partners. The evaluation was also able to confirm the existence of the annual reports for the previous two years and the bi-annual reports for the same years and the year running.

The active Involvement of the community in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of activities was demonstrated through their increased frequency and attendance of stakeholders meetings and their active participation in community dialogues. An assortment of IEC visibility materials were reportedly developed, produced, distributed and used for advocacy purposes. The provision of IEC materials was effectively executed as planned and successfully disseminated or used as advocacy tools during national and international celebrations to advocate for the rights of women, children and especially the girl-child.

A number of coordination meetings were organised and attended by various stakeholders and between KIA implementing partners themselves. One such partner coordination meetings was also attended by the evaluators in which a tentative evaluation findings and recommendations were shared and fruitfully discussed. The coordination meetings facilitated commitment to be made by all partners to work together to coordinate their activities to streamline the work between them and all other stakeholders .This opportunity to interact with their management team, provided clear evidence that there was very constructive working relationships and coordination between the implementing partners. The evaluation can only pray that their professed good relationship need to be extended to other like-minded civil society organisations (CSOs), CBOs, government officials, local leader's community members and all other key stakeholders involved in curbing child outmigration from Karamoja.

### **3.3 Efficiency**

The project objectives were achieved with over 75% efficiency, through delivery of outputs. Moreover, this was remarkable despite several constraints at the onset of implementation. It was highlighted by key informants' respondents that covid-19 was a huge limiting factor and some adjustments in prioritization were necessary to ensure efficiency. In particular, there was an extension of limited time and constraints to properly reach the target beneficiaries which put pressure on implementers to deliver results within the available means. This did not guarantee efficient priorities at the onset. It was evident that with more prioritization and the human resources readjustments, the objectives were met in a timely and efficient manner.

For example, as a result of the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic, efforts to renew fundraising initiatives were either fruitless or suspended. This was because most donor partners withdrew their support. This greatly impacted the activities of childcare institutions resulting into reduced staffing. For example, in DP there was a 50% reduction in staffing on top of challenges with remittance of workers statutory obligations like NSSF and PAYE. To cope with the pressure of maintaining the children already in place, this led to eventual close of one branch in 2023. Eventually “.... *Dwelling Places later move their Offices to Buloba, and turned the girl's home in Mutundwe into an income generating venture*”<sup>i</sup>.

All partners reportedly were compelled to manage the completion of planned activities was extended at no cost, as a result of their passion to work for the street-connected children. Due to such drastic challenges, the planned results of KiA partners were not fully realized as plans changed. Commendably, the cordial relationship between partners and funders ensured that with permission from the donors, the partners had to realign most of their activities to cater for the emergencies that arose out of the decisions of the leadership in Napak, to admit and rehabilitate the repatriated children in schools.

Just like in the previous phases, the project was evidently efficient since the budget was well designed and funding was allocated to priority actions. This had a direct impact on the success of the project. In addition, the balance between the financing of personnel and administration on the one hand and case management of individual child beneficiaries and other activities and outputs of the local government partners such as the police as well as the community projects was equally well managed. At the district level, most of the resources earmarked for community initiatives were redirected at supporting the Local government to keep the children in boarding schools where beddings and food items had to be purchased to ensure the children's welfare are catered for.

### **3.3.1 Financial and human resources**

The partners reportedly had a much more reduced budget than previously anticipated from the donor. This led to readjustments in human and financial resources allocated to the various activities. Some priorities even had to be realigned to meet the most pressing need of interception, rescue and rehabilitation. To this end, the project was judged to be efficient due to 'cost-effectiveness' and 'optimum use of resources', that were immediately adjusted at the onset of the project, reportedly between January and March 2022.

Unfortunately less resources was allocated to three key outputs (livelihoods; provision of adequate reintegration packages and strengthening the capacity of communities including local governance structures). It was reported that financial disbursements were sometimes delayed. In some cases funds were diverted for unplanned activities such as supporting Social Workers in the children's camp. This did not only affect originally planned timelines but also resulted in significant reductions in the number of community outreaches, number and category of trainings and persons trained as well as the number of community dialogues.

However, due to increased collaboration between KiA partners, the reduction of the financial basket was met with local innovativeness. This was less documented and calls for more resources to be allocated for project monitoring and evaluation in order to properly capture and

document all aspects of efficiency. This was largely because the project had a number of initiatives to ensure value for money invested. These include investment in adequate mobilization of target women, girls, boys, men, and other vulnerable groups in the community. These were with awareness creation, livelihoods activities, resettlement activities, resettlement packages and training. These were on; awareness creation, child protection, positive parenting, GBV prevention related activities, livelihoods initiatives, business and VSLA management services. These were all sourced locally, and adhered to an institutionalized process that followed best value for money principles with checks and balances audited annually.

There was a deliberate effort to ensure that women, girl, boys, and men were adequately mobilized to receive life-skills training, participate in outreach activities, formation of child rights clubs Child-rights and GBV awareness creation initiatives. The project followed a transparent criterion that was communicated to the project participants. The core approach of the project was to work through VSLA members, CRCs, parents, foster-family networks, village Child Welfare Committees and in coordination as KiA partners.

The individual and joint Work plans and priorities were in place to guide the project efficiency. Although the work plan was greatly compromised when the KCCA rounded up 1,000 children and imposed them on the KiA partner budget priorities. Although the diversion still persisted to improve the safety of the girls, boys and women already helpless. An element of consultation between partners and donors came into good rewards to ensure the safety, security and human rights as well as strengthening capacities of different groups already “rounded-up” by state authority that had no resources for their upkeep. At least the partners were able to provide the following services which were appropriate and achievable amongst them and within their resources to protect the young women, girls, boys, and men in dire need.

### **3.3.2. Timeliness of achievement of activities**

The project phase under evaluation was launched in January 2022. By the time of evaluation in September 2024, it had achieved 95% implementation of planned activities. Although it had planned to rescue at least 460 children and intercept 240 over the three years, it had already intercepted, rescued and resettled well over the planned targets. In other cases like the case of KCCA children rounded up and handed over to KiA partners that alone were more than 250% of planned rescue from Kampala to be rehabilitated and resettled in Napak.

Commendably, project reports further testify that the partners successfully intercepted more than 100% of planned target, meaning much more beneficiaries as per the design. Despite the challenges faced by the project due to imposition by government departments in Kampala and Napak, the project kept in touch with the project participants and has provided the relevant training to them. Notably, the number of children supported by KiA partners, the rehabilitation support in schools within Napak, the livelihoods activities in the communities, GBV interventions and outreaches conducted. In all, the project reached a total of 1,758 direct beneficiaries (975 females and 783male). Out of these, 594 were pupils (356girls 238 boys) participated.

### 3.4 Impact

The evaluation relied on data presented on indicator values based on the baseline, household assessment survey and the findings of this final project evaluation to determine the extent to which the expected impact of the project has been achieved. It provides highlights of results under the impact indicators that were set to track progress of the project. The interpretation of the stated project impact indicator values provides insight and attempts to quantify impact of the project interventions. The key impact indicators were the following:

- i). Effective and sustainable means and methods used to protect adolescents, street-connected and other vulnerable children from unsafe outmigration from Karamoja
- ii). Types and quality of sustainable livelihoods initiatives to empower families of rescued and other vulnerable children affected by crisis in Napak
- iii). Level of participation of community members and local leaders in child-protection, GBV mitigation and livelihoods improvement initiatives in Napak. This included categories of communication mechanisms established and types of successful lobby and advocacy initiatives done to eliminate child outmigration from Karamoja

#### **3.4.1. Sustainable means and methods used to protect adolescents and address outmigration**

The project made significant contribution towards protecting adolescents, street-connected and other vulnerable children from unsafe outmigration from Karamoja. At community level, there was increased care-giver involvement in community awareness, advocacy, reporting and monitoring. In addition, the families have been more empowered through the VSLAs and the backyard farming from which they can now generate income to cater for the welfare of their children and avoid temptation of going out of their homes in search of livelihoods chances. Thus the evaluation determined that community members were participating in the interception and had developed capacity to advocate for and support child protection, sustainable livelihoods initiatives, as well as GBV interventions.

Some of the rescued and rehabilitated children have formed groups or joined the child rights clubs in schools that are becoming increasingly engaged in awareness creation on the dangers of out migration to the children and their families through drama and music. They have also become peer influencers involved in discouraging the peers from leaving their communities and encouraging those out of the communities to return. Accordingly, the children are supporting their peers through counseling and knowledge sharing e.g. in the case of the child in Lochalet in Lokopo Sub Counties, who returned as a result of this and the child rights clubs are active and know their roles and are knowledgeable about all forms of child abuse.<sup>1</sup>

#### **3.4.2. Types and quality of sustainable livelihoods initiatives to empower families**

Women and men who were VSLAs members are community people who have remained in the community even after the end of the project. The VSLA members were directly involved in the awareness campaigns regarding livelihoods initiatives, GBV as well as outreach activities regarding child-outmigration. These VSLAs will remain even after the end of the project. Thus the project developed the capacity of women in VSLAs, but also individual women, girls, boys, men, youth groups to engage in savings and income generating opportunities. These

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<sup>1</sup> According to a field staff members at Napak

beneficiaries have been equipped with knowledge and skills on, the issues of Gender based violence prevention, access to and utilization of savings and IGAs, business development, savings culture, among others. The evaluation established that all the planned 54 VSLAs (100%) were formed and supported. Thus the number of groups in Napak under support rose to 109 groups with a total of 2731 members (1,754 female, 977 male). The VSLAs were trained mainly on business skills and enterprise selection. This enhanced livelihoods potentials of beneficiaries, especially women and male members. The members were further supported with various IGAs that were initiated by both the participants and the project partners. In future such initiatives need to be owned entirely by the local community according to their own potentials.

Savings and credit initiatives were reported to be one of the changes that will be sustained beyond the closure of the project. The men and women who were mobilised into VSLAs comprised of resource persons who were instrumental in further supporting fellow men, women and girls within their communities in sensitization on Child trafficking, children's rights, and innovative IGAs interventions. The men and women in VSLAs have signed up to the savings and credit initiatives so as to guard against any future shocks. They have developed a culture of consistent saving and adopted a savings culture and local access to credit which has created a social safety net that women can rely on in times of scarcity and crisis.

### **3.4.3. Level of participation of community members and local leaders**

The overall impact was that Community involvement in the care and management of children at risk was greatly increased. The communities have been empowered and have improved on child protection, reduced GBV by embracing the Rights-based channels of reporting. They have reportedly learnt a lot about how to rescue children, their placement and rehabilitation. Likewise, the attitudes of the children and communities are changing away from outmigration. To maintain momentum, the communities engage actively in community dialogues and have created drama groups as interludes to dialogues. These groups periodically prepare and perform relevant dramas to create awareness and to come up with home grown solutions. Despite shortcomings in coordination, resources and local commitment the communities who are more aware have reduced child-trafficking.

At partner level, the collaboration initially established as a result of the partnership has gone beyond the project objectives. "*.....We are now able to support each other with our specialized skills in service delivery*".<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, as members of the consortium, we have learnt that working through collaboration and networking is fruitful as it has helped us to achieve much more than if we had worked in isolation. It was emphasized that: "*....This collaboration has further created a support system that is sustainable resulting into the success of this government initiative*".<sup>3</sup> Because government action to round-up children had no means to take-care the children.

At the district level, there is increased surveillance of acts of out migration, the Police are alert and have thus set up roadblocks on key migration routes. There are police and para-social workers on the lookout for children attempting to migrate.<sup>4</sup> Other duty bearers are alive to the issues of out migration and now monitor and promptly report related acts to the authorities. As a result of these structures and the coordination and security surveillance mechanisms in place,

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<sup>2</sup> A meeting with the management and staff of C&D

<sup>3</sup> A meeting with the management and staff of UCAA

<sup>4</sup> Interview with field staff in Napak.

local community worked closely with KiA field staff and continuously intercepted children before they could go out of Napak. They have been fully supported in this by the office of the RDC, the police and some LCs including LCV who collaborated to integrate the children in the communities.

Overall, the evaluation concluded that beneficiaries are quite appreciative of the project. Their major satisfaction was that before the project, the participation (in particular; of women, children and ordinary community members) in community decision-making, discussions on GBV, leadership roles and participation in public events was quit minimal. If anything, it was just minimal within the family and clan spheres. More importantly, the project allowed women and girls to organize in groups, form and save in VSLAs and have used their group membership to influence children's rights, parenting, economic empowerment and GBV issues.

### **3.5 Sustainability**

The project was designed to take care of sustainability from the very onset. A set of strategies were developed in order to ensure sustainability of the project and provide long term community ownership. These included the consortium approach which has established collaboration and cooperation among KiA partners, local community, local and central government. Community sensitisation has led to community awareness-raising, which in turn has to local knowledge generation and stimulated various community empowerment strategies.

The greatest level of collaboration was at the CaR consortium-partners' level. This collaboration was initially established as a result of local partnerships on child-protection had grown beyond the CaR project objectives. The partners were supporting each other with inbuilt specialized skills in service delivery. As a result by working through collaboration and networking, members of the consortium had created a sustainable structure of mutual support. This continued to be fruitful as it has helped partners to achieve much more than if they had worked in isolation. This collaboration had further created a support system that is sustainable resulting into the success of the emergency government initiative of just rounding up children with no means of their own to handle and provide for the welfare needs of the children taken by force.

Individual government officers have shown string passion towards the sustainability of the project. Both the RDC and LCV chairpersons have placed their weights behind the project. This means that both the central government representative in Napak and the local government departments at the district and sub-counties were energized to integrate child outmigration activities in their budgets. The linkage with the government promised a good future for service delivery and integrating cross-cutting issues into child protection. The evaluation was assured that the district and sub county officers (Education, Community development, JLOS, Health officers) were involved in the project right from inception and were actively engaged. This created a strong linkage between the community, CaR partner staff and the district structures that can promote further awareness, community empowerment and funding opportunities.

Because most parents abandon their children to the programme, there is need to make conditions for local commitment by the community since they are less responsive compared to other regions in the country. Working relationships with families in Karamoja was reportedly cordial although the dependency syndrome was equally significant. CaR believes that

persistence in trying to promote the element of cost-sharing in the spirit of promoting shared responsibility, promoting ownership and community responsibility was key for sustainability.

The sustainability of this project was yet a delicate one given the nature of the community. They were largely recipient, which made their ability to take care of their own development challenges to still be slow due to lack of community ownership. Since this was noted as a sustainability threat of lack of project continuity, the project intensified on community sensitisation and active involvement of local leaders. By virtue of the fact that the communities and the local leadership became more involved in monitoring, reporting and sensitising communities even without a push from the partners this became a key sustainability indicator.

Linked to the above, the project succeeded in establishing a few cases of blooming backyard farmers. The potential for continuity and the sense of local ownership was upheld by these successful farmers who were either parents or foster-parents of reintegrated children. Additionally, the Child Rights Clubs that were formed in the schools picked-up quite fast. Therefore, the vibrancy of the Child Rights Clubs where they existed was also a good indicator that the future generation was being empowered to carry on with the campaign of keeping children at home.

### **3.6 Lessons learnt**

The lessons from the project so far have enabled KiA partners to strengthen their capacity in mainstreaming women and other vulnerable categories in its programming right from design of interventions, implementation, and monitoring. A number of tools such GBV interventions mentorship, VSLAs, IGAs such as backyard gardens, CRCs and collaboration, among others, have been embraced and integrated into their implementation strategies and monitoring processes to have included gender as a tool of analysis. These are summarised below:

1. Individual members of the consortium have learnt that working through collaboration and networking is fruitful as it has helped them to achieve much more than if they had worked in isolation. This collaboration has further created a support system that is sustainable resulting into the success of this government initiative.
2. The need to be flexible in the face of unexpected project twist. UCAA was able to facilitate many discussions and communicated with the donors to adjust or change plans and allow use of funds for unplanned activities in situations of emergency. The donor relationship was also excellent because the leadership was open to adjustments when needed. The donors were very open and willing to listen. This has enabled CaR to work well together.
3. Otherwise the action can motivate other families to send or return their children to the streets as they would be returned to school. Hence not sure if they followed the “DO NO HARM” approach
4. The members of the consortium have learnt that working through collaboration and networking was fruitful as it has helped them to achieve much more than if they had worked in isolation. The collaboration initially established as a result of the partnership has gone beyond the project objectives. The CaR partners were able to support each other with their diverse specialized skills in service delivery.
5. The collaboration with government, though it still has shortcomings, has further created a support system that is sustainable resulting into the success of this government initiative.



6. Although GBV, especially against the girl-child was still happening. The children from the CRCs advocate better against GBV and violence against children because they are empowered, confident and creative. Partners desire to scale the CRCs from the current 9 clubs, as they are creative and can be used to support more children.
7. Some positive parenting and community dialogues have reduced the number children being trafficked as communities are now empowered and are able to monitor and report acts of child trafficking. Protecting children from outmigration is a shared responsibility between duty bearers and parents/community. However, the nomadic nature of the communities makes it slow for them to concentrate in positive parental practices although this has started to be embraced. Some beneficiaries that quickly owned the project proved that sensitization was effective in promoting project ownership, though many communities still lag behind.
8. The use of community dialogues in the smaller communities at the Manyatta level and case-conferencing through key duty bearers at community level has promoted case follow up. It has also encouraged people to report.

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Conclusions

Overall, although the project remained on course to fulfil its objectives and met over 75% of its target, a lot of diversions were reported along the way. It however greatly empowered women, girls, boys and men with skills and opportunities to develop social inclusion, live in harmony and socio-economic resilience and realize their full potential. However, all partners recognised that there was an initial administrative need for timely disbursement of funds to facilitate the timely implementation of planned activities. Fortunately, the central and local government also contributed a lot at policy, conducted rescue and a bit of rehabilitation that created more acceptances than in the past.

Even with limited resources, the partners were able to undertake so much: Hence exhibited high levels of effectiveness and efficiency. Indeed, all the implementing partners felt that “*we are doing our best with the limited funds and the communities were appreciative*” even for example when the target for case management was bigger than the budget allocated (due to insufficient funds). It means whatever little need to be contributed in time. *But not, “Little a bit late”*<sup>5</sup>.

The livelihood enhancement components were found to be very positively adapted by both the children and parents. For example children at the rehabilitation centre, especially in DP, were willing to dig and supplement their meals. They were quickly learning marketable skills/ life skills. Such as; tailoring, hair dressing, soap making, especially liquid soap that can help them settle. All they will need to be linked to markets. The children have also attained literary skills for sustainability such as reading and writing. For the VSLA groups under UCAA in Napak, the women were able to diversify their income sources through creating other income generating activities as well as develop a culture of saving. The social wellbeing for women has greatly improved with some of them opting to enhance their business dealings and also coping e.g., starting up businesses such as restaurants.

Though it was unavoidable to be flexible, in project contexts, the evaluation can conclude that it is still better to be adaptable but stick to design. The evaluators appreciate the decision by partners. Because though was need to consolidate and harmonize plans as actors on child protection, many planned results were not realized as plans changed significantly. The project would have succeed much better, if had considered harmonizing interests of KiA partners with the different government structures, local leaders, the community and how to work together.

The project activities were done as planned were fully to the satisfaction of men, women and children. This was partly as a result of a highly adaptive learning approach that fast-tracked and mainstreamed gender and vulnerable children especially girls and under the good compassion of partners and leadership of UCAA programming and interventions. The project staff learnt that mainstreaming of GBV entails many things, namely; incorporating the needs of both women and men, boys, and girls right from the design of the project for example by identifying key or specific GBV underlying causes, interventions and allocate resources to implement them adequately.

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with management team of C&D

## 4.2 Recommendations

From the lessons learnt and the above conclusions, the evaluation recommends as follows:

8. The list of activities under evaluation was so long. This in itself did not allow for exhaustive handling of nearly half of planned activities. Even though there was additional emergency resettlement activity pushed onto the partners, they already had a very long list. There is need to reduce the number of actions to critical ones that directly help to achieve the objectives that are quite strong and relevant to the community'.
9. Similarly, the core of project implementation should be concentrated in Karamoja with very specific actions outside Napak. This includes Moroto and Kampala. Although the stakeholder engagement has greatly improved as a result of closer coordination and regular community sensitization, there is widespread demand to push the Napak leadership to look beyond short-term actions such as rescue and resettlement. Rather long term vision of supporting families in order to make sustainable solutions. This includes the need for families to commit themselves to send their own children back to school.
10. The need for to strengthen the good relations and maintain continuous communication and between CaR partners and the Napak government and local authorities. This is mainly because during the last phase the approach to work was a bit haphazard but the project strived on the good relationships. Moreover, the consortium partners have the passion for child protection, unlike other partners working on children who have a lot of technical skills but lack the passion.
11. Because there is no reliable data, this presents the need to undertake Gender-based research on numbers, disparities to determine the fresh situation on ground – current situation and where to focus and also to disaggregate data and to establish the causes of the pull and push. Currently partners need more up-to-date data on street-related children. Planners still rely on the data from UNICEF study of 2010, which indicated that there were 10,000 street-children in Uganda. Yet current data from just four districts show there are 15,000 street kids in those districts.
12. Facilitate more livelihood support so the communities don't send their children away to look for livelihoods. This will reduce the rate of outmigration. The livelihood component should take care of the harsh climatic reality of Karamoja. This means, there is urgent need to strengthen climate change resilience as a project component so that families as well as children are able to grow their own food from the kitchen gardens. This should be done both in the school and within the communities. This would help them fend for themselves as well as for community sustainability.
13. The project needs more adaptation based on the current experience of all stakeholders. There is need for each partner to aim at improving service delivery to the community, in general. This means adequate rehabilitation for families, by adopting government initiative to reach more children and take care of younger children (toddlers) and grown-up youth, who cannot fit in the school system. This includes the need to extend child rights clubs to schools and communities in other sub-counties to lobby at district level.
14. Rehabilitation component should address issues of mindset change. This is possible within the rehabilitation stage for empowerment of the children as evidenced at the DP center where they are showing willingness to adapt and are appreciative of the changes and initiatives. The children were freely giving positive feedback.

15. Encourage parents to send their own children to school, encourage parents to send their own children to school since communities don't value education. Thus, the "Catch-up school plan" should get more integrated with the families and government departments. This also means more community interaction through parenting, psychosocial, identifying local possibilities to avoid imposing livelihoods or other activities.
16. Gender mainstreaming remains a key priority. Though much has been done but girls are still disadvantaged. Any new initiative aimed at addressing child-trafficking should support families to make good choices. It should maintain receiving and resettling children by taking them freely to the rehabilitation centers in Kampala and Napak.
17. The new phase should ensure children are willingly relocated. The originally planned child-friendly approach should be maintained in all the rescue, rehabilitation and resettlement processes. Thus, the initiative must address the push factors by tackling the causes and not the symptoms. This means the need to make good choices at each of the intervention stages (rescue, rehabilitation and resettlement).

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<sup>i</sup> Interview with DP project management team