



Context

Uganda's capital, Kampala has a population of about 1.7 million, of which between 55-65% reside in slum areas. As a result of rural urban migration, the population of Kampala City is growing at an annual average rate of 4.1%.

According to an analysis of ACF (Action Contre la Faim) published in 2012, vulnerabilities of the slum population of Kampala include land tenure issues, malnutrition, the risk of persistent flooding, unhygienic and unsanitary practices, lack of urban agriculture, and lack of credit. About 67% of children living in slums do not attend school.

Strategy

Joy for Children Uganda (JFCU) is a non-governmental organization that advocates for the rights of children in Uganda.

The Slum Women Development Project which started in 2010 is based on community outreach carried out in four slum areas in Kampala: Mulago, Bukoto, Bwaise, and Makerere Kivuku. In order to achieve the overall goal of improving the living conditions of vulnerable children, the project applies a multidimensional approach consisting of the following four components:

1. Women Groups:

In each of the four slum areas women groups were formed which meet weekly. The meetings are a platform for discussions and trainings. A savings and credit scheme was introduced providing women with the opportunity to save at each

meeting. Trainings were conducted in income generating activities like making of hand crafts (bead, hand bags, and baskets), soap making,



book binding, and candle making; also in financial literacy, and in English. Additionally, topics like health, self-confidence, nutrition, and gender based violence among others were discussed.

2. Children activities:

During the weekly women group meetings, various activities for children take place: Children are taught in counting and reading, they're also encouraged to write short stories. To the younger children, stories from different children's books are read which helps them to get used to English.



Furthermore, children are taught their rights like right of education, right to play, and right of non-violence education. Certainly, playing is most important for children in order to develop their minds, that's why several games were introduced like bowling, grid skipping, and rope skipping. Besides, painting is an activity where children can develop creativity.

3. Children with disabilities:

Parents of children with different disabilities like hydrocephalus, Spin bifida, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome are sensitized and trained with the aim of increasing their knowledge about disabilities. Parents usually thought that the disability was a result of witch craft; they didn't know how



to properly feed their children and how to play with them. A social support system was created: five neighbors of each family with disabled children were also sensitized on disability. In partnership with the Mulago National

Referral Hospital wheelchairs were provided, which enable the children to leave the house or even attend school. Furthermore, JFCU provides children with sensory toys that improve their coordination skills and strengthen their muscles. The children who were able to read or write are taught English and Math, because public schools don't have the necessary infrastructure or special needs teachers. In quarterly meetings, parents of children with disabilities are trained and are given the opportunity to exchange their experiences.

4. Child Sponsorship:

The child sponsorship program supports children with school fees, books, and school uniform which enable them to attend school.

Results

- About 160 women are organized in groups and have attended trainings.
- About 60% of women organized in women groups have started small scale businesses with the help of the savings and credit scheme.
- About 70-90 children attend the weekly children activities.
- Parents of 50 disabled children were sensitized and trained on disability, additionally 20 neighbors.
- 7 wheelchairs were provided.
- About 100 children are supported through the child sponsorship program.

Impact

Training in income generating activities, financial literacy and the savings and credit scheme helped women to start small scale businesses which allow them to become independent from their husband's income, paying school fees and medical treatment if necessary. In addition, the children benefit from the weekly activities not only because they improve their writing and reading skills, but most of all their self-confidence is increased as the children worker is interested in their wellbeing, taking their concerns seriously. Furthermore, awareness on disabilities has increased; disabled children are no longer discriminated in their families.

Our partners

- Joy for Children UK
- Sponsors from Finland and UK
- Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda
- Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC)
- Kampala Slum Community