



Hear International (HI) Annual Report 2015

FUNDED AND SUPPORTED BY:



Aga Khan Foundation



Transforming Precious Lives for Sustainable Development in Uganda

WORD FROM HI BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Dear friends, it is yet another year when we come to you with our annual report. For Hear International (HI), preparing and sharing the annual report is an exciting moment. We have managed to implement project activities in pursuance of our mission of contributing to strengthening of vulnerable communities through influencing socio-economic transformation for Sustainable Development. As we share this report therefore it is our hope as HI Board that you will celebrate with us as we document the successes, challenges, lessons learnt and overall impact that we have achieved from our work. We would like to thank all our colleagues, donors, development partners and friends for the tireless support, council and mentor that we have received.

I want to recognize and congratulate my fellow Board members, the staff and volunteers at the secretariat through which activities are implemented for ending the year on a high note. At the same time I would like to thank everybody for tireless work and energy they put in throughout the year 2015. Hear International (HI) has continued to implement its activities under the four strategic sectors; Sustainable Agriculture, Natural Resources Management, Health (HIV/AIDS & WASH) and Education. We in Hear International (HI) are still convinced that if all the four focus areas are addressed, we will certainly improve the lives of people in Uganda.

We pledge our commitment to all our constituencies for dedicated service in 2016.

DRANIA Silvano



Chairperson, HI Board of Directors

Transforming Precious Lives for Sustainable Development in Uganda

WORD FROM THE COORDINATOR

It is my pleasure to present to you Hear International's annual report for 2015. It provides an overview of the work done with our partners to find and implement sustainable solutions to transforming precious lives in Uganda. We work hand-in-hand with local communities to create enabling environments that promote lasting solutions to their challenges. Our technical approaches are in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) and Ugandan policies and are tailored for specific communities in Uganda.

Our annual report presents indicators that demonstrate the success of our development approach in 2015. We are proud that our programme touched many lives from the communities struggling to overcome poverty, ignorance, hunger, HIV/AIDS, Environmental degradation and members searching for more knowledge and skills. Importantly, our development partner (Aga Khan Foundation-Uganda) generously funded the budget and ensured that HI remained a strong player in Uganda's development process. The achievements within 2015 are a clear testimony to the fact that with modest funding and support from our funders, it was possible for HI to contribute to improving livelihoods and quality of education as tools for sustainable development. Finally, I would like to thank the Board, staff, donors, Government of Uganda and other development partners that have worked closely with us in 2015 to effect transforming lives in Uganda, and I look forward to another successful year of collaboration in 2016.

Sincerely,



ABABO Stephen
Coordinator, Hear International (HI)

Transforming Precious Lives for Sustainable Development in Uganda

1.0 Background

Hear International (HI) is a Local NGO based in Arua District, West Nile Region in Uganda, and has developed over the years into a formidable well-respected community focused Organization. It formerly transformed from Action for Community Transformation (ACT) that began as a small Community Based Organization (CBO) founded in 2003 with program coverage in Ajia Sub County only. Over the last 10 years, the organization has immensely transitioned to a fully-fledged NGO legally known as Hear International (HI), operating in Arua District, Uganda. The mandate of the organization is to ensure that the poor and vulnerable are able to meet their basic needs to enhance sustainable development in Uganda. The organization's programme focuses on its four (4) strategic sectors namely; Livelihood (Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources Management), Health (including HIV& AIDS and WASH), Education and Research.

1.1 Our Vision

Our vision is a prosperous community that is Food Secure, Healthy and Literate for Holistic Sustainable Development in Uganda.

1.2 Our Mission

HI works with vulnerable groups in West Nile (Arua) to contribute to strengthening of vulnerable communities through influencing socio-economic transformation for Sustainable Development.

1.3 Our Core Values

i) Team work and responsibility

We shall work as a team and undertake activities collectively while recognizing our diversities and differences. We will collaborate, network, and respect each other at all times; resist divisions among our members; and resolve our problems amicably. We shall make proper use of HI resources including assets, funds and documents.

ii) Upholding social justice and Equity

We shall be gender sensitive, and include both men and women not only as beneficiaries but also as decision makers.

iii) We value people (Diversity)

We value diversity, not only about who we serve but also who we recruit to our board, staff or volunteers. We shall ensure that our training materials shall be appropriate to the culture of specific group that we train. We shall respect other cultures, not just ours.

iv) We are partners (Empowering poor people to improve their own lives)

We will work with, not for, the poor people to improve their situation. We will train and empower project beneficiaries to take initiatives and to sustain activities.

v) Honesty and transparency

We shall be open to each other and in our dealings with target/host communities. We shall be accountable to beneficiaries and donors in all our operations and in utilization of funds. We agree not to abuse our office values for individual gain. We shall be open about our work, making information about our activities, resources and plans available to relevant stakeholders, management team, beneficiaries, and partners among others.

2.0 Strengthening Education System in East Africa (SESEA) Project

Strengthening Education System in East Africa (SESEA) is a five year project which started in 2013 funded by Aga Khan Foundation (AKF). The SESEA project has three components designed to strengthen, over time, the performance of the overall education system in the target areas and beyond. These include:

- 1) Developing skilled and competent teachers at the pre-primary and primary levels through accredited professional development programmes;
- 2) Strengthening education support systems and institutions by building accountable leadership, management and technical capacity within the education systems;
- 3) Sharing evidence based knowledge and learning, which will allow policymakers and civil society organizations to make better-informed decisions about education reforms and interventions to improve educational outcomes.

While SESEA has incorporated strengthening gender responsiveness within education systems, it was recognized that more advanced and intensive support was required in the West Nile region in Uganda. SESEA project activities has been enhanced under component two to comprehensively integrate gender mainstreaming in all operations of existing school structures. Strengthening

gender focus through the civil society activities will contribute towards the achievement of SESEA learning and teaching results in literacy and numeracy for both boys and girls with the following outcomes:

- i) Strengthened teacher education and support systems by CSOs to improve and sustain learning outcomes for girls.
- ii) Improved capacity of selected CSOs to mainstream gender in internal operations and education interventions.

Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) recognizes that sustainable improvements in education depends on the involvement of civil society to mainstream gender in schools and classrooms to ensure that boys and girls have equal access to and participation in education. Education-centric CSOs have an important and unique role to play in improving the status of education, specifically in reducing barriers to girls' education. Institutions such as CSOs, School Management Committees (SMCs), and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) can mobilize communities, school authorities, government and other stakeholders to address the gender norms that impact girls' education. Hence, SESEA relies on strong partnerships with these stakeholders to ensure impactful, sustainable outcomes, particularly through the selection of Lead Civil Society Organizations (LCSOs) to provide leadership in this area. A Lead Civil Society Organization (LCSO) is an organization that has been selected through detailed assessment and evaluation and has been recognized as a leader in their district. **It was on this account that Hear International (HI) was selected through detailed assessment and evaluation to be the Lead Civil Society Organization (LCSO) to implement SESEA project in Arua District, West Nile region in Uganda.** As part of the SESEA project, Hear International (HI) has been entrusted with responsibilities to provide leadership, mentorship and support to School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and Head Teacher Associations (HTAs) in 50 primary schools (approximately 35,000 pupils) in Arua District to streamline gender mainstreaming in the education system while simultaneously increasing organizational capacity. The purpose of the participation of Hear International (HI) is to not only build capacity and strengthen its own internal processes, but also to impart skills and knowledge in gender

mainstreaming, community mobilization and policy engagement to strengthen education systems as a whole in Arua District, West Nile region in Uganda.

2.1 Highlights and Achievements, 2015

2.1.1 Priority I: Strengthening gender responsiveness within education systems

✚ Hear International (HI) trained 10 (Male=06; Female=04) Head Teacher Association executive members, 260 (Male=177; Female=43) School Management Committees/Parents Teachers Associations , Senior man teachers and Senior woman teachers from 50 selected primary schools in Arua District in Gender mainstreaming in School Development Planning and Gender Equality Review. Hear International (HI) supported 50 primary schools to develop and implement gender-responsive School Development Plans (SDPs) to enable PTAs/SMCs, the community plus other stakeholders to mobilize resources and support for the gender activities and particularly in support of girl's education. This training aimed to contribute to addressing the gender gap and improve broader system strengthening to sustainably increase gender equality in education and generate a critical mass of support for addressing the gender issues that impact girls' education in Arua District. 45 out of 50 primary schools have already developed gender sensitive School Development Plans and are implementing them in the District.



*The District Inspector of Schools-Arua District opening training session for Head Teacher Associations (HTAs) executive members at Arua Hill Primary School Coordinating Centre. **Photo@HI2015.***



*Gender Officer training SMCs, PTAs, Head teachers, Senior woman teachers and Senior man teachers at Owaffa Coordinating Centre. **Photo@HI2015.***

✚ Hear International (HI) promoted and demonstrated re-usable sanitary pads in 50 primary schools in Arua District. Lack of sanitary facilities (wash rooms and sanitary pads), long distances covered to school coupled with the burden of gender roles that relegate the girl child into performing most of the care work within the household are just a tip of an ice berg of the factors that greatly affect performance of girls eventually translating into drop out thus reduction in completion rates. Many girls have been left with no option other than to stay home during the time they are experiencing their menstruation periods due to lack of sanitary pads which translates into irregular attendance thus negatively impacting on the results attained eventually leading to drop out from school. This prompted Hear International (HI) to promote re-usable pads in the 50 primary schools where SESEA project is being implemented.

“There are high rates of drop out, low completion rates and poor performance among learners in our primary schools but statistics for Girls and boys vary. Girls suffer during their menstruation periods, they need pads and failure to provide, the girls do not attend school til end of the menstrual flow. In some schools in Arua District, boys and girls share sanitary facilities including latrines and urinals. Several schools do not have wash rooms for girls and the necessary items like emergence pads and pain killer for menstruating girls. In 2014, 468 pupils in P.7 in Arua District dropped out of school before sitting PLE.”

(Chairperson Social Services Committee, Arua District Local Government)



Photo@HI2015: Gender Officer demonstrating to participants how to use reusable sanitary pads at Owaffa Primary School Coordinating Centre (CC).

✚ Hear International with authority from Arua District Local Government carried out Citizens Report Card (CRC) cascading training in 20 Primary Schools in Arua District. Stakeholders who attended the Citizen Report Card (CRC) sessions were able to identify gaps that they did not notice before Citizen Report Card (CRC) was implemented hence they pledged to support their schools now that they were enlightened. Citizen Report Card (CRC) aimed to strengthen education support systems and institutions by building accountable leadership, management and technical capacity within the education systems.

2.1.2 Priority II: Environmental Protection and Conservation awareness

Hear International (HI) conducted Environmental Protection and Conservation awareness in all the 50 primary schools selected under SESEA project in Arua District. HI was able to sensitize 1,370 (Male=751; Female=619) parents, teachers and pupils from the 50 primary schools. The ultimate purpose of this Environmental awareness creation was to strengthen the abilities of the communities to innovatively, creatively and

sustainably manage their natural resources and develop income earning activities including reserves and assets to offset risk, ease shocks and meet contingencies. The awareness creation aimed to create and institutionalize community development process which will facilitate better decision making regarding resource mobilization, conservation and management. On-farm forest management was also promoted to enhance household income and Environmental conservation in Arua District.

2.1.3 Priority III: Livelihood and HIV/AIDS

Reducing stigma and discrimination of HIV/AIDS victims' project was implemented in Ajia Sub County, Arua District. The project focused on providing nutritional education & counseling, vocational and modern farming skills for caregivers, People Living with HIV/AIDS and Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC), especially those from the extremely low income families because most people of Ajia sub county in Arua District actually live in a vicious cycle of poverty. The project achieved the following:

- ✚ HI supported 200 direct beneficiaries consisting of 90 (40males: 50females) Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC), 20 (9males: 11females) People Living with HIV/AIDS and 90 (48males: 42females) caregivers in nutritional education & counseling, vocational and modern farming skills and VSLA scheme.
- ✚ 8 farmer groups composed of 25 members in each group were formed and trained in nutritional education & counseling, vocational and modern farming skills, VSLA skills, and modern bee keeping. The 8 farmer groups were supported with assorted crop seeds, farm tools and modern bee hives & local bee hives. The farmer groups engaged themselves in bulk production which enhanced food security as well as household income.
- ✚ The 8 farmer groups were trained in modern bee keeping and supported with 200 modern KTB Hives, 120 local bee Hives and assorted materials for honey production for income generation at household level. 90% of the bee hives distributed to the 8 farmer groups have colonized and are producing honey. HI has linked the 8 farmer groups to a company called Honey Pride-Arua for other technical support and marketing purposes.

- ✚ 65 volunteer peer educators trained for 7 days in counseling skills, family nutrition, modern bee keeping, enterprise planning & management, business planning & management, Climate Change adaptation and Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs). This was intended to strengthen extension services at grass root level.
- ✚ 185 (104males: 81females) were trained in Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) skills. This was intended to have access to local financial services thus seriously increasing their productivity, investment ability, and resulting in improved living standards. All the 8 farmer groups formed and supported are still running very strong VSLA schemes hence enhancing their saving culture.



A staff from American Embassy for project Monitoring and Evaluation in Ngulunyaku village, Olevu Parish, Ajia Sub County, Arua District. [Photo@HI.Stephen2015](#).



Members of Alio Atrizu farmer group harvesting egg plants from their garden for sale in Ngulunyaku village, Olevu Parish, Ajia Sub County, Arua District. [Photo@HI.Stephen2015](#).

2.1.4 Priority IV: Monitoring and Evaluation

Hear International (HI) ensured participatory Monitoring and Evaluation to track outcomes and impact of the work we have so far done. Monitoring of this project was conducted on a quarterly basis. Reports (activity reports, monthly reports, quarterly reports, biannual reports and annual reports) helped to monitor how inputs were being made and how outputs were being achieved. The project was evaluated using both operational and performance indicators. Evaluation of the project took place after six months and finally at the end of the project from which decisive decisions and corrective actions were taken. This helped to improve interfacing and cross-learning between CSOs, Government and school authorities to improve collaboration and coordination between Local Government, School authorities and other CSOs and improve support for girl's education in Arua District.

3.0 Governance for Empowerment

Hear International (HI) strengthened governance and management systems to effectively guide the success of the project. HI Annual General Meeting (AGM) was conducted once in 2015, Board meetings were conducted quarterly and staff meetings were conducted once every end of the month. HI worked hard to strengthen issues of Governance at service delivery level. Hear International (HI) was entrusted with responsibilities to provide leadership, mentorship and support to School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and Head Teacher Associations (HTAs) in 50 primary schools (approximately 35,000 pupils) in Arua District to streamline gender mainstreaming in the education system while simultaneously increasing organizational capacity.

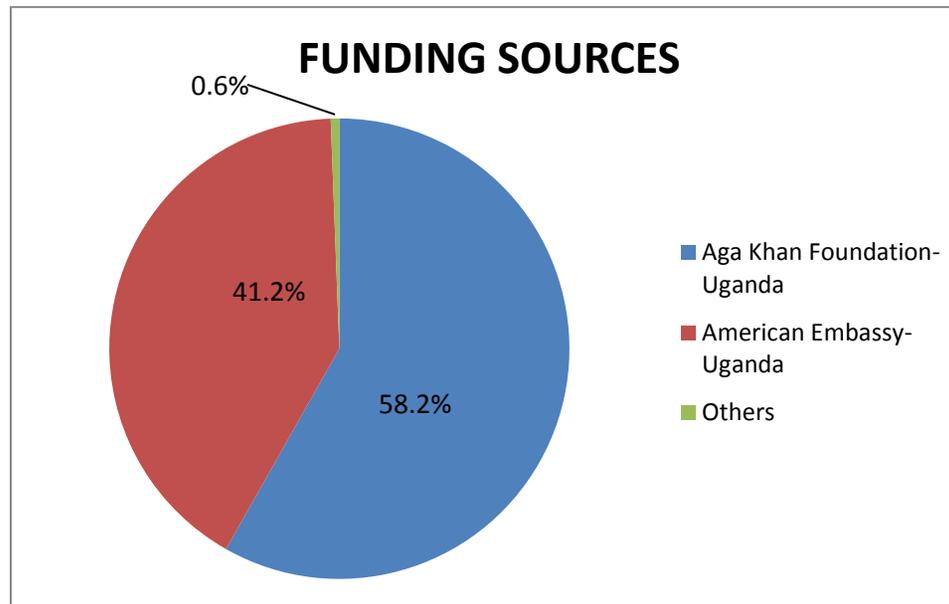
4.0 Lessons Learnt and Challenges

Hear International (HI) was able to identify key lessons and challenges during the course of implementation of project activities:

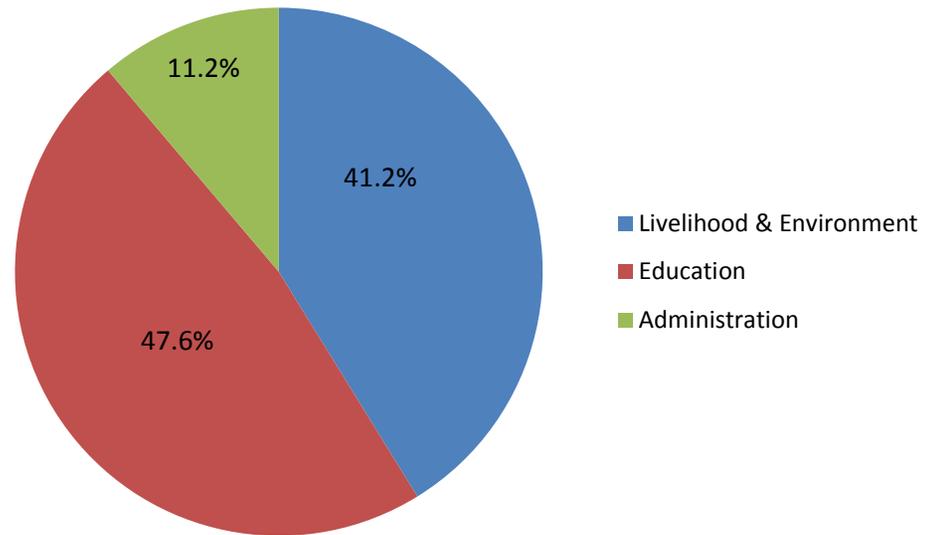
- ✚ It has been observed that more targeted interventions are required to address the gender gap and improve broader system strengthening to sustainably increase gender equality in education. More advanced and intensive support is required at the community and school levels to generate a critical mass of support for addressing the gender issues that impact girls' education in Arua District.
- ✚ HI was able to learn that with appropriate approaches used, one is likely to succeed in community development even when there are no hand-outs to be given to communities.
- ✚ HI was able to learn that to change mind set of people is a very gradual process and therefore nobody should rush communities in community development.
- ✚ That community involvement in project identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is very important in achieving project sustainability.
- ✚ That communities can actual mobilize and raise resources for their own development with minimum external support if properly guided.

Hear International (HI) 2015 Financial Report

In 2015, our operational budget was Ugx. 89,702,000/= which covered project expenditure including contributions to 8 staff members. The main funders of Hear International (HI) were Aga Khan Foundation-Uganda (Ugx.52, 202,000) and American Embassy-Uganda (Ugx. 37,000,000). We also had our own Funding to the tune of Ugx. 500,000.



HI EXPENDITURE PER SECTOR



Hear International (HI) Team 2015

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CHANDINI Peace Immaculate, [Gender Officer](#)

ADULE O. Kefa, [Monitoring & Evaluation Officer](#)

OKUTI Stephen, [Training Officer](#)

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MUNDURU Stella, [Finance Administrator](#)

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