

Focus on **Christian Commitments**
Stories from Uganda

World Vision®



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Design and Layout:
FinelImages (anguad@gmail.com)

Photos:
Courtesy of World Vision Uganda

Printed by
World Vision Uganda- Christian Commitments Unit

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Foreword

I am glad to present to you our first edition of the Christian Commitments Newsletter. This Newsletter shows our work as a Christian organization as we seek to fulfill our mandate to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed, to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.

World Vision Uganda integrates faith and development in all its work. This is because people's perception of poverty is greatly influenced by their beliefs. In addition the faith groups are our channels of Hope for the wellbeing of children.

Our Christian Commitments focuses on a number of mandates namely reinforcing our Christian identity, supporting staff to live and work as Christians, partnerships with churches, staff spiritual nurture, spiritual nurture of children, prayer, and interfaith cooperation. The stories in this edition are testimony of our witness as we do our work.

I hope that you will enjoy reading the stories so that they will encourage you to become our partner as we witness for Christ.

May the Lord continually bless you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gilbert Kamanga', followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Gilbert Kamanga
National Director - World Vision Uganda

How can our Christian Commitments be seen in what we do?

By Martin Othieno Radool (Program Manager for Christian Commitments & Church Partnerships)

Often I am confronted with the question of how to integrate out Christian commitments into our work. As a Christian organization our mission and vision mirror the Great Commission that Christ handed to His followers. There is often a temptation to do business as a secular organization if we do not remind ourselves of our calling as a Christian organization. So as an organization how can our Christian Commitments be seen in what we do?

We cannot give what we don't have

One of the most important things we need to realize whenever we attempt to do something with or for another is that we cannot give what we do not have. A corollary is we give what we have regardless of what our mind thinks we may be giving. We must first become and/or have what we desire to give.

The statement, “we cannot give what we don’t have,” is obviously often associated with material things. You cannot give money if you have none and you cannot give food if you have none. However, we fail to understand that this statement applies at every level of our being. It is probably clear; we know a tree by its fruits. An apple tree gives apples. An orange tree gives oranges. You can’t get apples from an orange tree. The apples and oranges come from the essence of the tree and the essence of each tree is different. So too with our being and what we experience in life. We can only give from our essence and what is in our essence.

As an organization our essence is that we are Christian. We uphold values that are synonymous with being Christian. As staff therefore it is incumbent on us to live and work as Christians. World Vision Uganda can only be as Christian as its staff. Living as Christians calls for producing the fruit of the spirit seen in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, truth and righteousness (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9).

When we live God’s way, He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates

things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. These are the basic principles of living and working as a Christian. If these are seen of us then the organization will be seen beaming the light of Christ in the communities.

Birds of the same feather flock together

This idiom is said of people who have similar characters or interests, especially ones of which you disapprove. It is true. People of similar character, background, or taste tend to congregate or associate with one another. This applies to organizations too. In the earlier discussion I alluded to the fact that our essence is we are Christian. As a Christian organization we need to identify with organizations that have characters and interests like in the fulfillment of the great commission like us. In our Area Development Programs such organizations include the Church, Christian NGOs, and Christian Networks. This can be done a number of ways:

- Promoting, supporting and nurturing sustainable relationships with churches, Christian NGOs, Christian networks, to contribute to spiritual and social transformation of communities.
- Building and consolidating partnerships with local churches and Christian NGOs to enhance the holistic well-being of children, families and communities.
- Facilitating and integrating prayer in our partnership with churches and Christian NGOs.
- Collaborating on research with research institutions around issues of faith and Child Well Being.

Intentional focus on the Spiritual Nurture of Children

The second chapter of the Gospel of Luke shows us that although Jesus was unique, he had a normal childhood and adolescence. In terms of development he went through the same progression as we do. He grew physically, mentally; he related to other people and was loved by God. He had a full human life that was balanced.

Thus as it was important to Jesus, it should be important to all children to develop fully and harmoniously in each of these key areas; physical, mental, spiritual and social. Jesus' holistic development was attributed to a family and community that taught, socialized, instructed and cared for him.

Spiritual nurture is the fostering of children's spiritual development throughout their life cycle stages, in the context of their whole being. Spiritual Nurture of Children should be geared towards developing a child's character by instilling good values, and life skills.

In our Area Development Programs we need to play a supportive role in building the capacity of structures that surround the child namely the family, church and the school to support the children's spiritual development. We can do this through building the capacity of church children workers to conduct spiritual nurture programs for children,

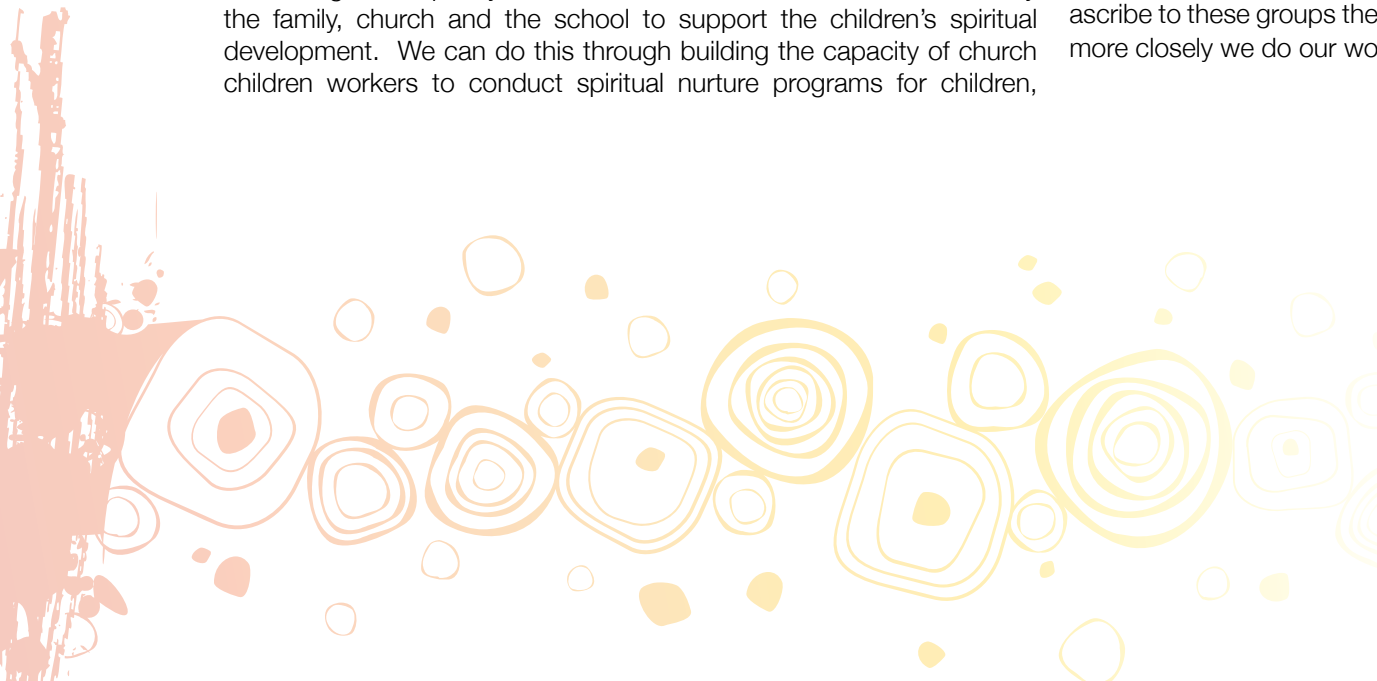
supporting spiritual nurture clubs in schools and closely working with Christian networks that support spiritual growth of children to support churches in Christian formation of children in Sunday and Sabbath schools.

Prayer and Discernment

Prayer and discernment are important attributes of a Christian. Our search for solutions in our work has to hinge on wisdom from the Holy Spirit. Mobilizing ourselves and communities to pray in search of answers and breakthroughs in our programs is vital.

Transformational development carries a spiritual dimension with it. As staff being able to make a distinction between what needs physical intervention and spiritual intervention is important in our work. It enables us to make appropriate interventions in our programming. We need to work with the church in the communities we operate in to strengthen prayer for the community needs.

As Christian staff we need to strengthen the habit of praying as individuals and as a group. Small group prayer and intercessions that exist in our ADPs are a good example of our Christian commitments. As many as ascribe to these groups the stronger our discernment becomes, and the more closely we do our work with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



Celebrating Families Models Restores happiness in a couple

By: Irene Nakasiita



Falling in love with someone you truly love is the best experience in marriage.

Falling in love with someone you truly love is the best experience in marriage. That is why many people say, it is better to marry your best friend. The friend in them will forever be the best reflection in your mirror, the bright light amid darkness, that smiling visage that brings you joy, and no matter any deformities around your spouse, you'll always appreciate them the way they are!

People embrace others and express love in different ways; hugging is one them! It is also true that depending on the circumstances under which the hug is given, different meaning is drawn and cultivated. For 29 year old Annet Nabwire, her first hug in life was from her husband, in a process of resolving a conflict in a marriage that she has been in for 10 years.

Annet, a mother of six children has been married to Richard Bwire (aged 34) for 10 years. They live in Daha A village in Lunyo Area Development Programme, Busia district in Eastern Uganda. Together they have seven children, including one Richard had from a previous marriage. Their marriage journey has had steep courses that she laments over.

She got married to Bwire who at the time had a six-year- old son Stephen Sanya (now 16 years) and it took her a year without conceiving. Life was tough because her in-laws were impatient; they insulted her with sharp words of “maybe she is barren, cursed, with a bad omen” and many more other words that caused pain to her heart. Annet who is Christian, prayed to God and behold, God gave her a daughter. Her first born child Sarah Nandala is 9 years old and without any family planning knowledge, she has had five other children, one after another; Vincent Okuku (eight), Kevin Mugeni (seven), Edrine Bogere (five), Stella Nabwire (four) and Cirus Wandera (three).

Her husband was a drunkard, and would beat her most of the time when under the influence of alcohol. For years she was patient, hoping her husband would change but time came she could not bear the suffering. “I chose to abandon my children because I was fed-up. I didn’t want to leave them behind yet I didn’t have enough money to transport all of them with me”, Annet painfully recalls.

After staying alone for two years and drinking himself silly, Bwire became frustrated. He had no friends, the children were sickly, didn’t have food, and were not going to school. He was so helpless that he even tried committing suicide. It is at this time that a man of God came into his life and shared the need for him to change his life. Mr. Sikenyi is a church leader who was trained

by World Vision on the celebrating families' curriculum that seeks to promote positive parenting in communities through positive relationships. "When he met me, I was desperate and he spoke to me about having a non-violent and alcohol free life." These words didn't mean anything to him at first. After some time, the same words rang in Bwire's mind and caused him unrest. He then went looking to Sikenyi and asked him to lead him to Christ. "I looked for Sikenyi myself, and confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior of my life on 13th October, 2013. Since then, my life has changed", Bwire confesses.

He was encouraged to go and apologize to his wife so that she could come back to him. He was scared and didn't know how to start. Mr. Sikenyi and other friends escorted him, she accepted his apology and they were reunited. Bwire vowed never to hit her again and promised that he would work at becoming a better person each day. "I used to beat her and the children, but now I have stopped, I was brutal, but now I am a reformed husband. I pray I will keep improving each day". During their reconciliation, the husband hugged his wife for the first time in 10 years of their marriage.

This re-union has brought so much joy that Annet testifies to getting the first hug in her life. "The day I came back home, my husband hugged me in the presence of people. This was the first time in 10 years of our marriage."

Bwire's wife and the children also testify to the great change they see at home. They now pray as a family and the children now go to school. "When mom came back home, we started school and dad also bought us clothes", remarked Stephen, the oldest child at home.

Annet and Bwire now feel happy and have embarked on a joint family development project. They bought three cows which will produce milk for sale to keep the children in school. Bwire appreciates World Vision for training people like Mr. Sikenyi who are agents of change in their communities. "If it weren't for people like Sikenyi, I don't know if life would be meaningful.

Annet 29, a mother of six has been married to Richard Bwire (aged 34) for 10 years. They live in Daha A village in Lunyo Area Development Programme, Busia district in Eastern Uganda



Living Positively-Faith in Action

Re-written by Davinah Nabirye and Allen Amanya

The HIV pandemic in Uganda continues to leave its destructive mark on the population of the country according to the 2012 joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS. One million and six hundred thousand people are living with HIV. Of these; 790,000 are women aged 15 and above who are living with HIV and 190,000 children aged 0-14 years. Annually 63,000 deaths as a result of AIDS are reported and 1,000,000 children orphaned.

Through the Channels of Hope for HIV and AIDS model, World Vision Uganda prepares and equips faith leaders to respond to HIV and AIDS in a comprehensive manner. It challenges participants' existing beliefs regarding HIV and AIDS, reduces stigma and discrimination surrounding these topics and encourages faith leaders to show compassion for people affected by and living with HIV / AIDS.

Faith leaders are uniquely placed to protect the rights and meet the needs of the most vulnerable in their communities.

They have profoundly deep trusted relationships and links with their communities and often dictate which behaviors are prescribed or prohibited. Faith leaders are not automatically equipped to follow the cause of the most vulnerable in their communities but with the correct training tools they can become the change agents that their communities require in order to raise their children adequately.

In the Bundibugyo Area Development Programme (ADP) in Western Uganda, World Vision Uganda under its church partnership for child well-being project trained Vincent Bbale in the Channels of Hope for HIV and AIDS model. Vincent works as a catechist in Ntandi Roman Catholic church in Bundibugyo. After the training, Vincent mobilized leaders from other faiths and together they formed a community- based organization

known as the greater Kasitu Congregation Union (KACU). Through KACU, Vincent identified a widow in his community named Elizabeth who was living with HIV.

"When Channels of Hope came in, I went around sensitizing communities. I even did it in our churches where I met Elizabeth and sensitized her on channels of hope and also she accepted to be helped. When she told me her problems, I counseled her and told her to go for testing, results showed that she was infected. Now she takes medicine to prolong her life."

World Vision Uganda helped Elizabeth to set up a small business that generated income for her and her family and helped construct a house for the family. As a result of this intervention, Elizabeth and her family's living conditions have improved tremendously.

At the nearby Bundimasoli Christian Fellowship Church led by Pastor Bagonza, World Vision helped to change the lives of two young men through the Channels of Hope training. Twenty two- year-old Robert is a Sunday school teacher at the church. He lives with his cousin Ronald who is 15 years.



Before the training Robert had noticed that Ronald was always isolated and never mixed or played with other teenagers at the church. He did not think much of it at first. After undergoing the Channels of Hope training, he realized that there must be something wrong with his cousin. Using skills acquired from the training, Robert sat down his cousin and they had a heart to heart. Ronald opened up and shared with Robert how he was always falling

sick and had started skipping school but he had no one to share his fears with. Ronald encouraged him to go for testing. His results confirmed that he was infected with HIV.

“After going in those World Vision meetings, then I went to the hospital with Robert to have a test. Then after testing I was positive,” says Ronald.

Although they were both devastated by the news, they were determined to make the most out of the situation. Ronald was put on treatment that has

improved his health. Today Ronald is an active member of the church choir and the Sunday school team. He plays drums for the church, teaches the young children in Sunday school and is much more sociable than he was before. With Robert's moral and physical support, Ronald's life has changed dramatically.

Thanks to the Channels of Hope training by World Vision Uganda, Ronald is looking to the future with hope and he has his goal set on becoming a pastor when he completes his education.

Hope teams renew perspectives on living with HIV

By: Rachel Kanyoro and Davinah Nabirye

Deep in a remote village of Lwamagga in Rakai district lives Faruku Tumwiine, a 13- year-old boy suffering from HIV. Faruku lives with his stepmother who is also infected with the virus. They are part of 32 families that are being assisted by a Hope Team that was started with support from the Church Partnership project.

The Hope team is headed by Cate Tindyebwa who is one of the many church leaders that have received training under the model of Channels of Hope that teaches church leaders to help their communities on several aspects regarding their everyday life such as; health, gender and child protection.

Abibu Rwaheru is 17 years old; he has no recollection of his parents who died when he was barely old enough to understand what the world was about. His younger sibling too passed away. He says that as a child he always fell ill and in 2005 when he turned 13 years old, he developed a mysterious rash on his body. His older brother took him to the health centre and it was discovered that he had the HIV virus, the same that had wiped out his parents and younger siblings.

On meeting him, Abibu acts like any other 'normal' boy his age. He is shy and is cautious about talking to strangers. Cate asks to talk to him before we have a chance to interact with him. She wants to make sure that Abubi is ready to talk to us.

After the brief exchange we start to talk to him and he slowly begins to open up. He says that he has become close friends with Cate who has since taken him under her wing; constantly checking up on him and giving him encouragement through the different church activities she holds for the children in the community.

Belonging to a different religion (Islam) has not hindered Abibu and his brother from attending meetings held by the Hope team. From the meetings, the boys have learnt and applied scriptures and messages that have changed their outlook on life. Abibu and Faruku have been receiving help through World Vision Uganda. They received three goats which Abibu sold and used the money to

travel to the health centre in town to get his ARV drugs. "We teach these boys and other infected individuals that in the community that being HIV positive is not the end of the world, but rather it is important to take care of their body as the bible says the body is the temple of the Lord so it should be well cared for," Cate says.

She adds that through the meetings, they have been able to advise their members on the kinds of food they should eat in order to keep their bodies healthy and to also follow their drug regimen and not engage in sexual promiscuity but rather guard their lives and the lives of those around them.

Bible scriptures like Job 28:28 "Behold the fear of the Lord is wisdom and to turn away from evil is understanding," she says are a basis of her teachings for young people and other members of the community not to engage in acts of sexual immorality and that way they keep themselves from contracting the virus or spreading it.

Abibu says that these teachings have helped him learn to live positively and the encouragement and support he has received has helped him continue with his dreams of living a full life and getting a family of his own some day.



An example of COH training

All this has been made possible through the Channels of Hope Model. Channels of Hope is one of World Vision's community mobilization and education models that was developed to help faith communities to be able to respond to issues of gender, child protection, HIV and AIDS and maternal and child health in their communities. This model targets church leaders and is used to mobilize or catalyze faith leaders in communities based on the needs of the community. Selection of community needs takes a participatory approach where a diverse team of representatives of the community and World Vision staff hold meetings to identify issues and cost-effective solutions.



Cate on one of her community education rounds

What is a channel of hope all about?

Reverend Dancan Mugume, a staff with World Vision says that through the model, they call upon the church to take up their role as a channel through which it can be involved in solving concerns of development and health within the community.

Channels of Hope is a fairly new model that is designed so that the church is involved in addressing problems which have direct influence on the lives of the people either on health of mothers and/or children's wellbeing.

"We target faith leaders and equip them with the right attitude, right skills and knowledge to be competent enough to deal with the different development matters within the community," Reverend Mugume says. He adds that some of the things that are happening in our communities are not because people do not know but because of the wrong attitude people have towards situations for example the stigmatization of people suffering from HIV/AIDS.

"Through this knowledge we give the people knowledge for example knowledge what one needs to know about HIV/AIDS," he adds. "At the end of the day we want the church leaders to become advocates when it comes to these issues."

How do you use the bible to preach the gospel and relate it to the issues that affect the lives of the people?

Reverend Dancan explains that; when a church leader has acquired this knowledge, they go back to their churches and form committees of people who will be taught to view things the way he views them. These committee members are also trained with the hope that they too will be able to work as a bigger team to assist their communities.

For example the church is one of the biggest causes of stigma, where they stigmatize people suffering from HIV by saying that it is because of their sin that they got HIV. Some denominations discourage prevention methods like condom use that are helpful in the curbing of the spread of HIV. With this training through Channels of Hope they are able to address some of these negative attitudes.

After they deal with the stigma, then they can ably help them to identify service providers like health centers where people can be advised to get Antiretroviral drugs (ARVS). The model aims to make the church a channel through which individuals can access services such HIV testing and counseling.

Why the church is most suitable in the implementation of this model in the community

Reverend Dancan says. “It is because the church is a voice of authority in the community that people can readily accept, and because the church has resources like schools, health centers and buildings which can be used to

extend these services to the people. Even in the remotest of places where there are no health facilities, there will be a church and some of the people that will be interested in doing community health outreach programs will go through the church. Therefore, it is easier to reach out to the church leaders in order to reach out to children in need like Abibu and Faruk

A church led intervention stimulates creation of a by-law that protects girls from early pregnancy

Re-written by Davinah Nabirye and Allen Amanya

World Vision is a Christian, relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice through its holistic child development model.

This is a programme methodology that motivates and builds capacity in faith communities, to address harmful traditional practices towards children, to support and advocate for children’s rights, to become better child protectors and to ultimately strengthen the local child protection system.

World Vision believes that many child protection issues are the product of deeply entrenched long lasting beliefs, values and cultures. Faith leaders and their communities can play a vital role in child protection but many are inactive or even contribute to the harm of children. Only by training them adequately in the area of child protection can they become agents of change for their communities.

One of churches trained, Kingdom Gospel centre church is located in the village of Buyanga in WU’s Butaleja ADP about 220km from the capital city, Kampala. The church is located in an area that had been crumbling with a high prevalence of teenage pregnancies for a long time and no one seemed to have a solution.

Moses Biyinzika an assistant pastor of the church says, “A time came when World Vision organized training on Theological Education by Extension and

we also supported the idea of tackling the problem of teenage pregnancies. After the training, we wondered how to help our children concerning the prevalence teenage pregnancies. We discovered that the parents themselves are to blame because they send their girl children to the borehole as late as 7pm to 9pm.”

Moses mobilized other community leaders and they met to discuss the matter. It was during the meeting that they discovered the source of the problem, a nearby borehole.

“Young girls would come to fetch water from the borehole late into the night without supervision and this is where the trouble began.”

The elected community committee that was formed in the process of finding a solution enacted a by-law where a curfew of 6:00pm for all young girls fetching water from the borehole was set. The results were immediate. According to Pastor Biyinzika, because of the strict measures placed on the use of the borehole, no single teenage pregnancy was reported in the area that year (2014).

Rose Mary one of the girls living in the community confirms that, “A girl is not allowed to come to the borehole beyond 5:00pm. Therefore most girls have changed their discipline and their behavior of coming here at night.

Child mother goes back to school

By Irene Nakasiita



Sedress and her grandmother

“My dream of being a nurse got shuttered when I got pregnant and dropped out of school,” seventeen year-old-Sedress Mbambu recalls. At fifteen years, Sedress was in class seven of primary school and living with her parents and siblings.

Being the first born girl, she used to run all the house errands in the morning and evening before and after school. School holidays were a time for Sedress and her siblings to visit relatives away from home. During her second term holiday in 2012, she went to visit her maternal auntie in Kasese District, western Uganda. While in Kasese, Sedress got involved in a casual relationship with a young man who worked as a porter at a construction site near her auntie’s home. Unfortunately, the relationship ended as soon as she discovered she was pregnant. The man disappeared from his job and left Sedress in despair.

“I didn’t know I was pregnant until my aunt noticed a change in behavior. She took me to hospital and the news was broken to us. I feared and almost collapsed”.

Sedress was encouraged to remain at her aunt’s place until she gave birth. The baby is named Precious Asiimwe. She is a precious child and Asiimwe means “Praise”. Nursing the baby that year was tough and challenging. Being young and a single mother was a double tragedy for helpless Sedress. Her parents were disappointed because they expected a lot from her as the eldest child.

World Vision trained many faith leaders under ‘Channels of Hope’ model towards ensuring the well-being of children by tackling issues around health and child protection. “We learnt about how we can identify children with problems, support them and also counsel them about sexuality and HIV/ AIDS related issues,” says Robert Sande, a 22-year-old trained Sunday school teacher and member of the Hope team in Kasitu Area Development Programme in Bundibugyo district.



Many adolescents are sensitized by the hope team and learnt to enjoy life in a healthy way. They are empowered with life skills that help them reduce the incidences of HIV, sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies among others. They also reach out to desperate people with the word of God in order to revive their hope. Consequently, many people especially youths are able to invite God in their hearts and make positive decisions that change their lives.

Sedress had dropped out of school at an early stage because she had given birth. The hope team identified her as a child in need and visited her home. They spoke to her family and convinced them about supporting her to go back to school. Efforts were fruitful and she accepted to change schools and residence to avoid social stigma.

She now lives with her grandmother Isa Ithungu (56 years) in Kasitu, Bundibugyo District, Western Uganda. Her baby was taken to live with Sedress' parents. Sedress now goes to Kasitu primary school in primary seven and hopes to pass her primary leaving examinations at the end of the year.

"I live near a World Vision office at Kasitu (Kasitu Area Development Programme). I went there with my grandmother and they gave me books, a school bag and I am back in school. I am so happy. I want to become a nurse" Sedress proudly speaks with a smile.

Her grandmother Isa is excited seeing Sedress back in school. She keeps encouraging her to focus and think positive about her future.

Sedress now advises other girls who have given birth not to give up on life. She encourages them to go back to school in order to attain their life's dreams.

Filling the Leadership gap in faith communities; the theological education by extension experience

By: Rachel Kanyoro

"The main purpose of TEE is to train leaders on basic theological knowledge. TEE started after discovering that many of the church leaders are semi illiterate and therefore the ways they do their leadership and management work in church is through try and error with no basis on which they do their pastoral work," he explains.

World Vision Uganda organization is implementing a ministry-oriented model of church leadership called Theological Education by Extension (TEE), a programme whose primary purpose is to provide training for church leaders in their home location thus eliminating the need for them to spend months or years in school away from their churches.

TEE is a five-year project that focuses on helping the church leaders to effectively manage their congregation, church and other related units in the church. In doing so the programme focuses on building capacity for church leaders in different church units for example, people responsible for nurturing children in the church and the general spiritual nurture of the congregation. Reverend Dancan Mugume, World Vision's coordinator for the TEE

programme says that the church is very essential in the development work that World Vision does and is a key stakeholder in fulfilling the objectives of the organization.

It was realized that the church leaders needed to be equipped with leadership skills to be able to serve the community as well as their churches. Reverend Dancan says that with the introduction of this programme they have witnessed more initiative and structures introduced within the church as a result of church leaders being able to manage their finances better. Sermons are more informed and organized and the children within the church are not left out but are also given spiritual nurturing that is needed.



participants in TEE training

The training is done with the use of self study materials which church leaders read and after they are tested on what they have learnt. Village study groups for students are formed through which they help one another to study and interact with each other making it easy for all of them to understand and learn.

He says that already the participants in the programme have changed and have a different perspective on leadership. They have started initiatives like self help projects such as money saving, groups to help the orphans and the vulnerable in the community and participate in outreach programs. They also visit one another's churches and preach in them hence uniting the followers.

Through interactive study the participants are able to learn about the different issues that affect communities and how leaders in the church are able to use their positions to solve these issues.

Evangelist Alex Tumusiime from Rakai Seventh Day Adventists Church in Kooki Area Development Programme says through TEE training, as an individual he has become accepting of all other denominations and it has helped stopped the rivalry in the churches as they have all come to a realization that all people need to be brought to God.

He says that not only has his spiritual life improved but the programme has left him open minded. His spiritual understanding has grown and the church values have been strengthened. "Helping the church to grow involves many aspects that involve teaching the church members things like managing

finances, and giving tithe and offering to help build and do Gods work," he adds.

With books like 'Caring for Gods Things', one of the books that they studied, he says that they learnt that everything on earth belongs to God so this has helped in his understanding that not only human beings are worth protecting but the environment and the animals too need to be looked after. "As leaders we are supposed to care for the flock of God and to look closely at the issues that hinder God's work," he points out.

"The TEE programme has brought back different churches on the right track and helped them to spread the word of God and put the values taught in the bible in the way we lead the congregation and deal with the issues that affect the daily life of the people within our community," Alex adds.

Oliver Bukenya, a lay leader at Kibaale Church of Uganda has a similar testimony about the programme. She says that the training she has received through the TEE programme has not only opened her eyes to what she as a church leader needed to change in her beliefs about what she thought was the right way of doing things in the church.

"I realized that one church cannot do it all and we all need to work together to bring the gospel to the people with proper interpretation of the scriptures," she says. She adds that this programme has helped the different church leaders to be open minded about other denominations with the teachings they have learnt from training books like 'The Shepherd And His Work' which has enabled the leaders to be accepting of other denominations and made it possible for them to visit one another's churches to share the gospel and experience. "We no longer segregate the denominations and realize that the Lord is one regardless of the denominations".

How TEE has helped faith leaders improve their communities.

Alex Tumusiime says that after the training he got through the TEE programme, he realized that church ministry and values cut across many factors like; caring for the children and the vulnerable in the community and learning to conserve the environment, teaching the community members starting with those in the congregation about better health habits through sensitization about HIV and AIDS and the immunization of children.



Oliver and Alex during TEE training

“On Sunday at my church we provide lunch for the people in the community and we do not see it as incurring expenses but we see it a responsibility of the church to look after the flock of God,” he says.

He adds that they have now put more attention to the children’s ministry and identified child-headed households that they are supporting.

In Oliver Bukenya’s case she says that when she was transferred to a new parish in Kibaale she found the church in dire conditions. Members of the church would only come to church on Sunday and no one was taking care of the church, it was filthy and untidy. When she joined, she organised the church members into small groups with different responsibilities on management and maintenance of the church. She says that there was land near the church on which they grow crops which they harvested and sold to raise money to support the disadvantaged in the community.

Reverend helps Julius quit alcohol

By: Irene Nakasiita

Before World Uganda trained religious leaders on celebrating families (dealing with violence in homes, alcoholism, child protection issues), many people in society including authoritative leaders like Julius Kyomya, a school head teacher were abusers of alcohol. They would form drinking groups from which they adopted habits such as involving in extra marital affairs, domestic violence (fighting with spouses and other people in society). Consequently many of the men contracted HIV/AIDs and died leaving many orphaned children and needy families.

Fortunately for Julius, he is an intelligent man who always performed well as a head teacher despite his vice. “I would drink, but also managed to deliver at school. However, alcohol made me a nuisance. Whatever I did while drunk is regrettable!” Julius recalls.

Julius is talked of as a very bright man, who has lifted the face of education at primary school level in Hoima district. Wherever he was posted as a head teacher, he would leave a record of improved school performance. Even where he is now (Kiryabutuzi Primary school), the school used to be

the 32nd in performance at sub-county level, but last year when Julius was posted there as head teacher, the school was in eighth position. Ranking of schools is determined by the number of children who attain first and second grades from the national Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE). Reverend Father Andrea Kaahwa, one of the church leaders who was trained by World Vision Uganda on ‘celebrating families’ played a significant role in helping Julius give-up abuse of alcohol. The priest realised that Julius had a gift of influencing children and schools to improve their academic performance.

“Looking at Julius made me see a good man whom God had sent here to make a difference. It was just alcohol that destructed him but I chose to look at him in a different angle.” Rev.Andrea narrates. Using the knowledge he acquired from the trainings, he was able to minister to Julius through counselling until he gave up alcohol. Today, Julius is more disciplined and responsible. He attends to the school during the day and spends time with his family in the evenings as opposed to joining the drinking clubs. He is also a more responsible husband and father.



In his pastoral work, Rev Father Andrea is using Julius' testimony to cause transformation in other people's lives in different communities. Julius volunteers to share his testimony since he is a person of authority in society. Many people listen to him and change their ways of behaviour for the good of their lives, family and whole community.

Rev. Father Andrea is also venturing into community child protection where he rescues children out of school and reinstates them. He heads

Kiryabutuzi Primary School, a church-founded school where he has introduced a boarding section to accommodate the most vulnerable children. He attributes all his works to the support he receives from World Vision. "I thank World Vision in Kyabigambire Area Development Programme for equipping me with this knowledge which has empowered me to do so much. I would never have done all this on my own. I pray that God will continue using me to touch many lives and transform his people for expansion of his kingdom," says a grateful Rev. Father Andrea.

Julius' wife says, "I thank God for changing my husband through the work of our church leader Rev. Father Andrea. I now have a reformed husband and calm home."

How working with faith institutions contributes to ensuring sustainability of interventions

By Rolland Nasasira

In most parts of Uganda where the church is not considered as an institution of development or not placed and included at the forefront to lead meaningful and long-lasting community transformation, change takes long. The story is different in Buliisa district.

When WVU's Buliisa Area Development (ADP) started operations in the district it sought not to work in isolation, but partner with relevant stakeholders to improve child well-being in the area. One of the key partners is the church.

William Kiiza, the ADP programme manager explains that, "The church and development are inseparable. When church leaders speak, community members listen and adhere to what their leaders say, compared to other people, irrespective of their position in the community. Therefore, we (World Vision Uganda), partner with the church leaders to reach out to the majority in the community."

When World Vision Uganda approached the Catholic Church in Buliisa, which owns up to 75% of the land with school and church institutions in the district, it sought to carry out a number of activities in the district including among others constructing classroom blocks and teacher's quarters at different schools. After the partnership that was agreed on in 2012, Biiso Catholic Parish donated the land on which the ADP offices were constructed. When WVU is leaving the district after her operations, she will hand over the offices to the catholic parish.

The main reasons for this partnership were mainly for WVU to reach out the love of God to vulnerable and needy people in the community like orphans and widows not only through spiritual means by praying for them but also by providing material items like books, pens and clothes to school



Children praying in school

going children. It also aimed at uniting the church because in the past, there were no instances of Pentecostals, Anglicans or Catholics working together to promote unity as one church. The partnership was also aimed at enabling churches take part in planning, implementing and monitoring of WVU Buliisa ADP activities.

In its spiritual activities, the ADP, through church partnerships focused on strengthening spiritual nurturing of children in areas where it carried out its interventions. In this, the ADP carried out capacity building of Sunday school teachers. As a result, 43 Sunday school classes were established and 43 in 43 churches.

Currently, there is a strong work relationship between WVU Buliisa ADP and the church because church leaders irrespective of their Christian

denominations like Pentecostals, Anglicans, Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists, are all at the forefront of promotion of education and child protection as major issues affecting the community of Buliisa since they all serve the same God.

One of the on-going activities is construction of a classroom block at Nyamasoga Primary School in Buliisa where the community members are taking the lead role. This is a result of the effort by catholic priests who asked the locals to participate in making of bricks so that the WVU Buliisa ADP could begin the construction process. Community members including men and women willingly gather at the school every thursday of the week to make the bricks that will be used in construction of the school block. This act of community work has set the bar for community members living in wattle-built houses to start projects of building more long-lasting house structures using bricks.

Magdalena Mbihya Namutebi, a Sunday school teacher at Kalengejja Miracle Church in Buliisa says that due to a need to raise God fearing children in the community, she encourages all Christians to unite irrespective of

religious denominations. She says, unity is built through church outreaches organised by different church denominations. The last Sunday after every three months, Magdalena says children from her church take a turn to preach, praise and worship to the elders in the main church.

She explains that before the trainings on children and spiritual nurture, she didn't know how to prepare sermons and preach to children. During the trainings, she developed the passion to minister to children from the guidelines she, together with her colleagues received. She also understood the importance of grouping of children by age so that they grasp age appropriate messages and enjoy play time.

Father Ponsiano Kitembo of St Mary's Biiso Catholic Parish says that; "Every week, we expect a congregation. What we tell them, they abide by and respect and put it into practice." This he says has eased the work of WVU Buliisa ADP to do its activities with the help and support of the community members been at the forefront of mobilising local resources to support projects implemented by the Area Development Program.

Women equally participate in communal work
by fetching water used in brick laying



Prayer; the oil to our essence as an organization

By: Vincent Langaniti

Prayer for our work has always been a vital part of World Vision administration and ministry life. World Vision records reveal that prayer has always been a major agenda item for all leadership meetings and Board of Director meetings.

The first official “Day of Prayer” as we know it was held on 1st October 1981- so this financial year we celebrated the 33rd anniversary of the Day of Prayer. This day is set aside by staff in order to spend concentrated time in prayer. It is a strong statement that as an organization we recognize that we are dependent on God for any impact from our work.

The tradition in WVU is to celebrate the day in the different regions. Staff in a particular region gather at a specific venue. This financial year, Northern region staff gathered in Lira, Karamoja staff gathered in Kotido, Eastern region staff gathered in Mbale, Western region staff gathered in Fortportal and National office were in Munyonyo.

The activities for the day were uniform throughout the different celebration points and included a time of enthusiastic praise and worship in song, a message on the financial year 2015 theme “Restored Relationships”, a word of welcome from the WVI President – Kevin Jenkins via video, a live streamed message from the National Director and a time of corporate prayer. The focus of our prayer time was;

- The Financial Crisis that World Vision as an organization is experiencing.
- Strong and smooth transition across the organization.
- Restored relationships.
- Good health for staff and their families.
- The new hires for FY15
- Dedication of our resources to God
- For peace in our country.
- Breakthroughs in the lives of our staff.
- Thanksgiving for the blessings upon our lives in financial year 2014.
- Praying for the different WV offices around the partnership.

n region commented, Rev. Stephen Gelenga’s vibrant emphasis on the need to keep Christ at the Center, based on Philippians 4:10-13 caused my mind to race to a number of instances, where Christ had maintained his rightful place and those where I had slipped to self created solutions like friends, systems, structures etc. My reflection evidently proved that where Christ had maintained His place, there was better wisdom, peace, even through storms, resilience, greater achievements. My perspective is totally refreshed and I am energized, with the assurance that as long as I make use of the opportunity of partnership with Christ, He will use me as vehicle of change, with the change beginning with me!



About World Vision Uganda

World Vision Uganda is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and their communities countrywide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision has been working in Uganda since 1986. The organisation is registered as World Vision Uganda, a development agency with a governing board.

Our Mission

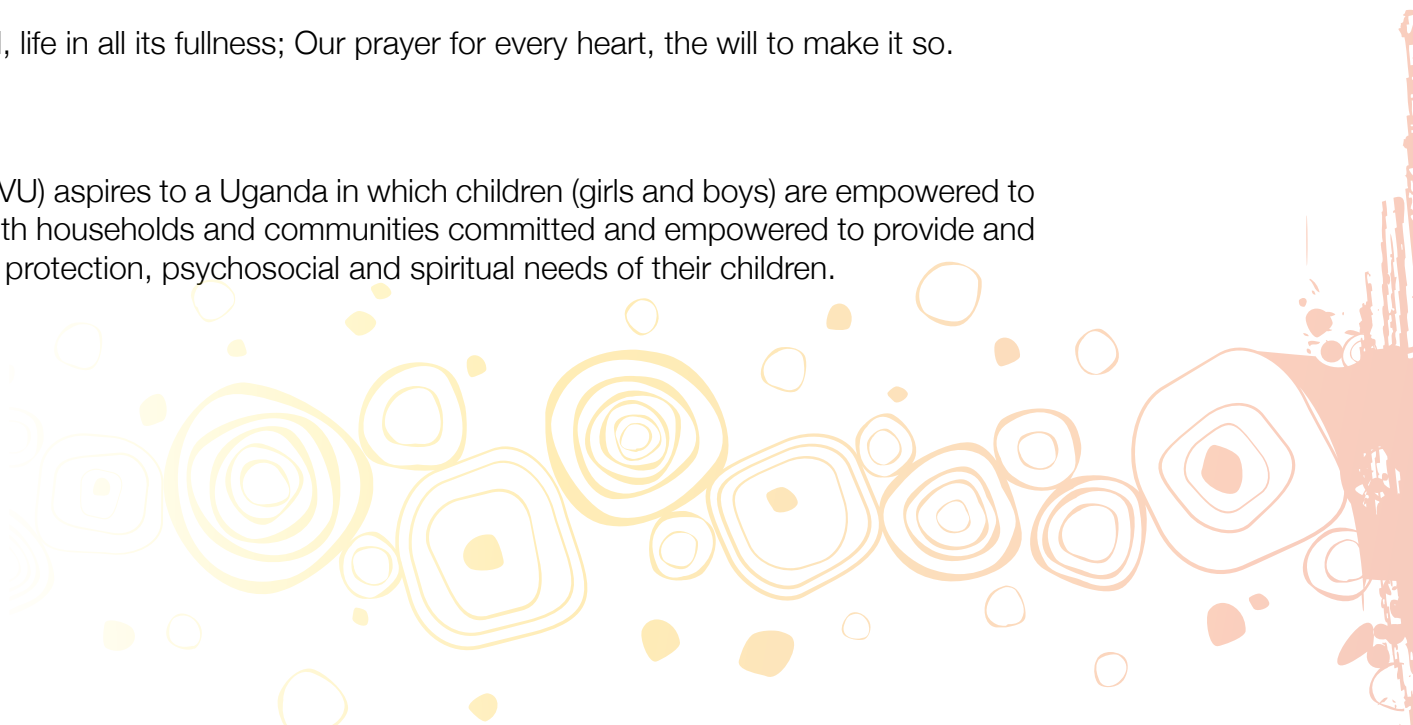
To follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Our Vision

Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness; Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so.

Call and Aspiration

World Vision Uganda (WVU) aspires to a Uganda in which children (girls and boys) are empowered to enjoy their well-being; with households and communities committed and empowered to provide and demand for the physical protection, psychosocial and spiritual needs of their children.





As followers of Jesus, World Vision Uganda is dedicated to working with the country's most vulnerable people. World Vision serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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