



**World Vision**

UGANDA



**BUYAMBA AREA PROGRAMME  
JOURNEY OF IMPACT**

2003- 2020





## BUYAMBA AREA PROGRAMME JOURNEY OF IMPACT 2003- 2020

As we transition from Buyamba after 17 years of serving vulnerable children, their families and their communities, we both celebrate our achievements and acknowledge the work that is left to be done.

This success storybook captures stories of a few beneficiaries and voices of people we worked with over years in serving the world's most vulnerable populations in Buyamba. We have empowered communities and guided them to set goals and equip themselves so that progress made is sustainable and continued long after we have left. Read on.

### ***We are World Vision***

World Vision's focus is on helping the most vulnerable children, even in the most dangerous places, to overcome poverty and experience fullness of life.

We are driven by our desire to ensure that every boy and girl has what is needed to become all Jesus created them to be.

We started operations in Buyamba sub-county in Rakai in October 2003. We worked with children, their families and communities to address the root causes of poverty, injustice, and violence against children.

Together, we have impacted the lives of more than 36,000 vulnerable children. We humbly acknowledge that without the goodness of God and the generosity of donors around the world, we would not have been able to do what we did. Appreciation also goes Rakai District Local Government, Dwaniro Sub county leadership and other local institutions for the strong partnership exhibited during the implementation of all the projects. We thank all the World vision staff who laid a foundation and added a stone to this cause to ensure children lives are improved.

### ***Our Impact in Buyamba***

Over the years, more than 3600 children were sponsored by generous WorldVision donors through the sponsorship programme.

- Over 1,300 households have adopted appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and 94% of children who were malnourished were supported with PD Hearth programme and made full recovery, helping to improve their health and growth.
- Reached more than 15,000 people with clean water, including children who benefited from more than 250 water sources installed in schools, households

and in catchment centres. A number of households are able to distil water using the water ceramics. (purifiers) water

- Approximately 5,000 women and men joined local savings groups, helping them to become more financially stable.
- Over 2000 farmers who participated in our training groups implemented new agricultural methods, helping them produce more and increase the family food security and income.

- Over 74% equivalent 1,700 primary school children can read, this has been an enabler for children to improve on their performing and at least 94% of Buyamba children complete primary seven with a desirable grade.
- Over 1,500 children have participated in children clubs and child protection groups where they were able to acquire a lot of life skills that build their resilience in protection and prevention of abuse. These have been so influential in supporting their peers to live safe lives.





# CHILD PROTECTION



We believe a world without violence against children is possible. We know that being safe and secure drives children's sense of well-being. Child protection transforms lives.

Working with parents, families and communities in Buyamba Area Programme, we made sure children were safe, to call out violence when it occurs, and worked with survivors to heal and recover. Working with families, faith leaders, schools, and local government as well as the children themselves we have created a lasting change for children.

In Buyamba, World Vision has made progress. We focused on prevention of abuse through positive community attitudes and behaviours. We have worked with communities to change attitudes and beliefs about child marriage, ensured young girls go to school instead. We have reduced child labour in all its forms. We have worked with faith leaders and survivors of violence to reduce stigma and change behaviour, resulting in a decrease in violence.

Our child protection programmes in Buyamba reached over 35,000 children left vulnerable by harmful attitudes, norms, beliefs and practices. We didn't just help children out of dangerous situations, we worked with and among communities to address the root causes of violence such as poverty and social stigma that often lead to abuse, exploitation, child marriage, child sacrifice, and other forms of violence against children.

A total of 25 child protection committees and 25 child protection clubs were established in Buyamba. In addition, we trained 139 faith leaders and community influencers to explore gender unique identities, norms and values from a faith perspective and challenge them to acknowledge and act upon gender injustices in their communities.

In the recent evaluation, over 2000 households reported reduction in a specific harmful practices that violate the protection rights of boys and girls in the past 12 month. And 2100 community members had participated in attitude/behaviour change sessions on child protection issues.

## Joy's story



### Change for the next generation

Thirteen-year-old Joy, who studies in primary six, lives with her parents and nephew. "My father always drank alcohol and got drunk. He always argued with my mother. He sometimes shouted at her, my nephew and I. I could not go to school regularly because they argued," she says.

World Vision has been implementing the Celebrating Families project in Buyamba sub-county in Rakai District, Joy's village is among those covered under the programme.

With strong cooperation with local authorities and Child Protection Committees (CPC), Celebrating Families has been introduced to many, including Joy's parents.

The Celebrating Families project aims to transform attitudes and behaviours of parents/caregivers, faith leaders, and community members through equipping and empowering them to create a protective and nurturing environment for children, especially the most vulnerable, to thrive and foster positive relationships within families.

Joy is now a member of the school child protection clubs and supports training other children on their rights.



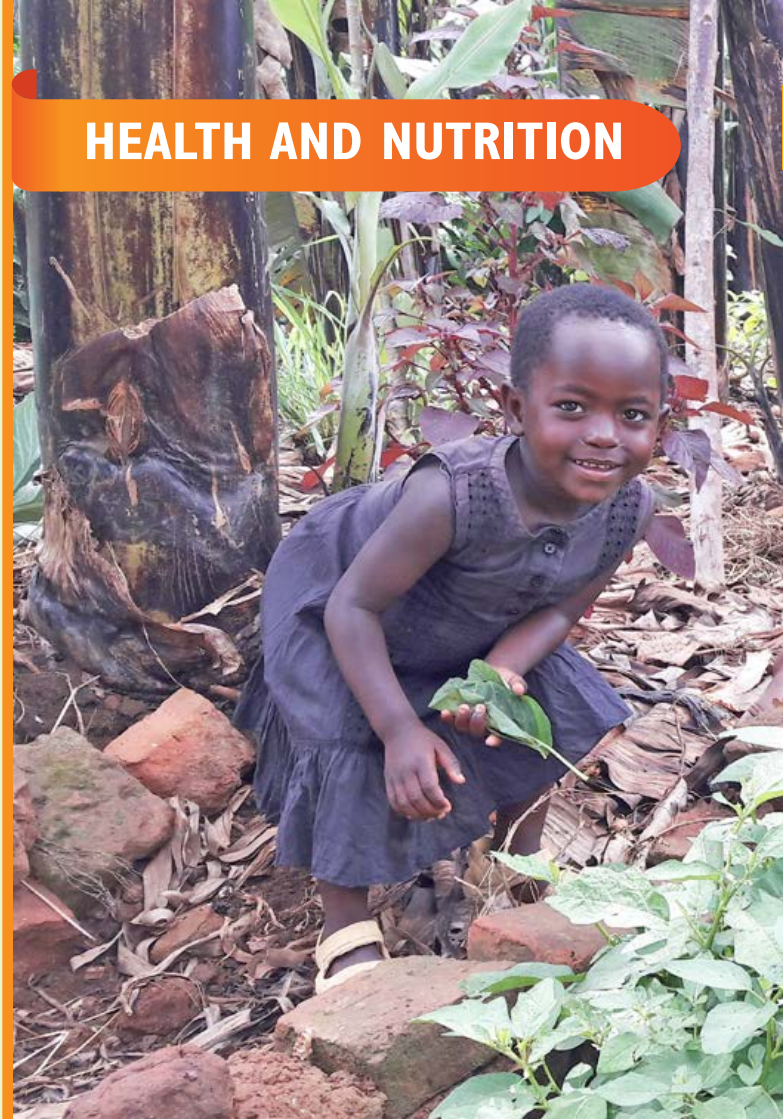
## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

After attending regular training, Joy's father gradually understood the consequences of violence and started correcting his behaviour. Furthermore, he changed the way he communicates with his family.

"I thank World Vision greatly for teaching me to be a good husband. I commit to working hard to support my family and speaking positively to my children," Joy's father shared to workshop participants.

"I'm really happy that my father has stopped arguing with my mother. He no longer shouts at me and has started saying encouraging words to me instead," Joys said with a smile. Prossy Nabugwawo, Child Protection Committee leader and joy's neighbour says: "In the past, they fought almost every day. Now, they do not have any arguments. The children look happy and go to school regularly. I'm glad to see this change."

World Vision works at multiple levels to support the goal that children are cared for in a loving and safe community and family environment.







Good health and nutrition empowers children, families, and communities, spurring them to live fuller, freer lives. Good health is transformative. When we started work in Buyamba, we wanted every child to experience it. Convinced that children, deserve – and have the right to – access to good health and nutrition, we worked with parents, caregivers, community volunteers and influencers to see that there was better access, lasting behavioural change, and connected communities to what works so children and families can survive and thrive.

In Buyamba, we have made progress. We focused on health and nutrition, together with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). We combined efforts in food security, education, and advocacy to enable families to have the means to access the right type of food year-round, provide caregivers with knowledge to improve feeding practices for children, empower communities to protect children from infection and disease, teach health centre staff to identify and treat malnutrition.

We supported the initiatives of the government and strengthened the implementation of national nutrition programmes. This multipronged response was intentionally coordinated to make sure children are well-nourished and thriving.



## Jennifer's story

### From novice to expert mother.

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“I didn't know how to raise children, I didn't know what I should or shouldn't feed them, but when I joined a World Vision cooking demonstration, I learnt about it. I now know how to take care of them and make nutritious food for my babies.”

Jennifer is 23 years old and lives in Ddwaniro in Buyamba subcounty in Rakai District. She has two children; one is 4 years old and the other is 4 months old. She used to work in other people's farms for money, but she decided to stop when she had a second child. Nowadays, she grows her own crops and looks after them. She now has more time to take care of her children.

Being a new mother, Jennifer struggled with taking care of her first child. However, once she participated in a cooking



demonstration every Sunday at her village, she started to understand how important breastfeeding and good nutrition are for her children.

“I didn’t know how to raise children,” Jennifer said.” I didn’t know what I should or shouldn’t feed them, but when I joined a World Vision cooking demonstration, I learnt about it. I now know how to take care of them and make nutritious food for my babies.”

When she had a second child, she practiced what she had learnt. Jennifer said also understands the benefits of breastmilk, and has stopped using baby formula.

“I know it is important to breastfeed my baby during the first six months. I breastfeed every two hours; though he is sleeping I wake him up when it’s time to breastfeed. I feed him eight times per day. I apply the new knowledge to my baby and now he is rarely sick.”



Sarah a mother care leader and VHT in Jennifer’s village says,

**“We choose to carry out food demonstration every after two weeks to allow all mothers learn and provide a balanced diet to their children. We don’t have any malnourished child in our village”.**

World Vision’s nutrition programme is implemented to increase the number of healthy and well-nourished children. The programme benefits pregnant women, new borns, infants and young children, focusing specifically on critical infants under 2 years, and the first 1000 days of life.

## Martha's story

### Improving child and maternal health with the help of community heroes

Martha (not real name) gave birth at the age of 16 and lost her child to diarrhoea two months later. Martha lives in Buyamba, in Rakai District in south western Uganda.

"I was only a young girl who totally lacked experience to raise a baby," said Martha. "So, whatever I was told, I did. But apart from the age, a lot of women more mature than me had issues raising their babies too. We were only following traditional practices."

Now 22, Martha is mother to one-year-old, Jennifer. She believes the Community Health Workers are a blessing to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in her community.

"So many children were dying in this community. Many mothers also were not attending antenatal clinics and had complications while giving birth and died too," says Martha.





## A PAINFUL REALITY

Maternal and infant mortality rates in Uganda are consistently ranked among the highest in the world. Many children don't live to see their fifth birthdays. The lack of proper health facilities, trained health personnel, and the prevalence of nutritional deficiencies, diarrhoeal disease, and pneumonia, as well as poor maternal, infant and young child feeding practices, are some of the key factors responsible for high mortality rates in Uganda.

Rural communities around the world often lack the capacity and know-how to encourage good health for pregnant mothers and for children under two years of age. Buyamba community is no exception to this.

### ***Community heroes restore hope for mothers and babies in Buyamba, and beyond.***

Many developing countries, experience a critical shortage in doctors, nurses, and midwives, especially in remote areas. Uganda is not an exception. To address this challenge,

highly respected women and men are nominated by their neighbours to fill these needs. Those who answer the call to serve their communities receive training on basic health promotion and preventative care techniques and use this knowledge to counsel women on managing their own health needs.

These selfless community heroes volunteer their help every week visiting pregnant women and mothers in their homes and providing them support, guidance and advice at critical times, using World Vision's Timed and Targeted Counselling approach.

Husbands and extended family are encouraged to play their role in ensuring both mother and baby are as safe and healthy as possible. These community health workers who command respect in their communities and often serve as the primary caregivers of children.

Rose Namayanja, 48, is a lead mother in her community of Kasese/Ddwaniro. "I have learned a lot as a community health volunteer," said Rose. "We now know what to tell

our children and all young mothers when they become pregnant and after they have given birth. We pass on training we receive from World Vision.”

### ***The impact of simple, low cost and life-saving approach***

Denis Eceny oversees implementation of the health and nutrition programme in Buyamba. He is convinced that engaging and educating community volunteers can improve maternal child nutrition and health and the well-being of some of the most vulnerable children. “This approach is a game changer,” he said. “There is direct relationship between activities implemented and their outcomes. Healthier babies are being delivered. There is tangible evidence around.”

Results from the endline evaluation of the programme show many positive effects such as greater awareness and nutrition knowledge among grandmothers in intervention communities, and more positive attitudes

towards recommended practices, especially those related to maternal nutrition, than in comparison communities.

Additionally, in communities where the approach was implemented, adequate maternal diet diversity was thirty percentage points higher; and women ate on average one more meal than in comparison areas.

Significantly more children in intervention communities were exclusively breastfed during the first week of life, achieved minimum dietary diversity and minimum acceptable diet at 6–23 months of age, than in control communities.

Most remarkable were the positive impacts on maternal and child health outcomes beyond what the programme had targeted, including early initiation of antenatal care, almost universal delivery at health centres and a higher average birth weight for children born within the last two years in intervention sites than in comparison communities.





◀ Kurusum is married to Hussien and blessed with three children: Hasfah (12), Shafik (7) and Mariam (4). The trio completed their immunisation schedule on time, thanks to relentless effort of community health workers. “We hadn’t put any importance to immunisation,” said Kurusum. “There were a lot of myths and misinformation about it and we just didn’t want to risk our children.”

“We were ignorant. Nobody had told us the truth. We now know and I am happy that my children are not only protected against killer disease, but well nourished, thanks to lead mothers who often visit and advise us on how to take care of our children including feeding them,” agreed Hussein.

There are 10 mother care group in Buyamba, each comprising 15 members known as lead mothers. Over 250 lead mothers and 100 Village Health Team members have been trained since the start of the health programme in Buyamba. And thanks to these selfless heroes, new mothers deliver healthy babies and keep their children safe from life threatening diseases.



**Jennifer taking her child for Immunisation.**

**WASH**



## A new beginning for children in Buyamba

In the developing world, there is a persistent need for better water, sanitation and hygiene. This was especially true in Buyamba subcounty in Rakai District in south western Uganda, where families have continued to experience high levels of salt water, persistent draught, and natural disasters. This made the region a food deficit area where issues of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition were exacerbated. Safe and hygienic sanitation, a basic human necessity, also remained a challenge.

Shortages of clean drinking water had also distressed families and communities in the district. 95% of households in the area walked over 3km to collect water from the salty lake especially during the dry season. More than half of households in the area spent over thirty minutes to collect water, with most of the burden placed on women and children. This exhausting process led many families to use unsafe water sources from the ponds that are even shared by the animals that are closer to home, leading to higher risks of disease.

It is against this premise that World Vision committed to do everything possible to create a new beginning for the vulnerable in Buyamba. Trusting that it was possible to change the situation, World Vision looked forward to a new dawn where every child grows strong in communities with access to water, free of need and full of promise.

In Buyamba, we have supported over fifteen thousand people gain access to clean and safe water by installing new water points and rehabilitating old ones. Over six thousand people have gained access to sanitation and hygiene services, including new and rehabilitated latrines. Together, these interventions have already saved lives and improved health by decreasing incidences of diarrhoea among children under five. Diarrhoea is the second leading cause of death globally in children under five, and accounts for roughly half of all malnutrition.



## Resty's story



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We have safe water for use at home, I am very happy that I no longer go to school late and tired.

## **Access to clean water helping children stay in school**

Resty, like many girls in Buyamba sub-county in Rakai District in central Uganda, is thrilled to have access to clean water at home.

In many developing countries, lack of access to clean water can stand in the way of a girl's right to education and protection because girls are often responsible for finding and collecting water for their families.

The gruelling and lengthy walk for water can expose girls to violence, keep them from attending class and cause physical exhaustion. Furthermore, water is often collected from contaminated sources, exposing the family to life-threatening illnesses like cholera and typhoid. These illnesses put added strain on healthcare systems and keep even more children out of school.

### ***A fountain of hope***

In Uganda, where traditional gender norms often define girls' roles and responsibilities, the struggle to access

clean water means that many girls are held back from reaching their full potential. But now, thanks to World Vision's WASH integrated intervention, new water posts in homes, schools and healthcare clinics are changing lives for many, including nine-year-old Resty.

"We have safe water for use at home," says Resty with a smile. "I am very happy that I no longer go to school late and tired."

Access to clean water helps children have a new beginning full of hope. Like many programmes at World Vision, our work with water sits at the heart of WASH, affecting many aspects of a child's well-being.

Resty is among over fifteen thousand people in Buyamba sub-county with access to clean and safe water. In Buyamba alone, a total of 252 new water points have been installed and rehabilitated old ones. Over six thousand people have gained access to sanitation and hygiene services, including new and rehabilitated latrines.

Together, these interventions have already saved lives and improved health by decreasing incidences of diarrhoea

among children under five. Diarrhoea is the second-leading cause of death globally in children under five, and accounts for roughly half of all malnutrition.

With water just located at her door steps, Resty now has a safe, comfortable environment to use the bathroom at home and practice good hygiene. Her household is among over three thousand with adequate sanitation facilities like latrine equipped with tip-tap for handwashing , rubbish pit and a drying rack.

Resty dreams of becoming a nurse. With World Vision's work in bridging the divide between boys and girls by encouraging the community to work together, as well as by providing training for women and girls, this dream – and the dreams of many other children – might soon become a reality.

“WorldVision teaches us about the rights of children,” says Sam Kakeeto, 39, Resty's father and a resident of Kikabya village in Buyamba, Rakai District. “We must ensure the health and the education of our children and protect them. We learn to view girls' and boys' rights the same. I

now attach more importance to the education of my daughters. We are full of hope.”

### Did you know?

During the time you've been reading this, 140 girls have been married. Girls who should be worried about passing exams, not pregnancy. Girls who should be excited about what their future holds, not terrified.

You can help end this plague by providing clean water in schools and homes. Water access in schools ensures that students and staff have easy access to the water they need for drinking and other school activities. Households nearby will also collect water from these water points.

Change is possible: join our global movement to end violence against children, to ensure girls are talking about raising their hand at school and not giving their hand in marriage. #ittakesaworld.



**Like Resty, Modern (10years) also enjoys access to safe water in her community.**



# EDUCATION





Access to primary education has improved in recent years, but children's knowledge and skills continue to be limited due to challenges in teaching and learning resources, school facilities, teaching methodologies, teacher and learner competencies, and parental engagement.

Low education outcomes prevent children from gaining invaluable knowledge and skills to prepare them for healthy and successful futures.

In Buyamba, World Vision worked with communities, policymakers, and other partners to help lift the quality of children's learning within the present system so they can be equipped with life skills and can read.

Interventions in livelihood, health and nutrition and advocacy complemented the work, assisting families to

have enough money to pay for school expenses, ensure children are well-nourished and were mentally and physically prepared to take full advantage of their learning potential, and that communities work in partnership with their schools and officials to implement the government's education standards.

Over years, we strengthened parents' ability to better fulfil their role as first teachers and first protectors to their infants. We trained teachers to help their children attain basic literacy skills. Working with parents and communities we set up reading centres so children could practice reading outside the classroom, and made thousands of books available in local languages where previously no children's books existed. We worked with churches and communities to remove the cultural barriers that prevented girls from remaining in school.

# Joseph's Story

## Little boy with big dream

“When I first enrolled in Literacy Centre, I wasn’t able to read but in a few months I could read more and more,” said Joseph, a 9-year-old child in Buyamba sub-county, Rakai District.

Joseph has a younger sister. Both spend time every Sunday afternoon doing activities at Literacy Centre located in the neighbourhood. He likes to play football with his friends, sing songs and read books.

Community Literacy Centre has assisted Joseph in spelling and pronouncing words correctly. Joseph now studies in grade 4, and he is one of the most outstanding pupils in the class.

“My grandfather is proud that I can read, that I am smart. He also appreciates the fact that I was first in class.”

Besides learning to read, Joseph has the chance to engage with his peers and build a good relationship with his friends. “Before I was so scared because I did not know anyone here,” Joseph said. “I was smaller than the others and afraid of being hit by them. But now I play with them as normal.” Joseph says: wants to be a doctor in future; though he is a small boy, he has big dreams.

Education is one of World Vision’s priorities. The organisation works at national and sub-national level to increase primary children who can read.



## Olivia's story

### **Trained teachers: A key to unlocking literacy for the most vulnerable children**

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, I travelled to Buyamba Area Programme in Rakai District and met with teachers to understand how World Vision's teacher training had impacted their classroom practice. While there, I was introduced to Olivia Namatovu, a teacher in a rural primary school.

Olivia faces many challenges as a primary school teacher. There are local language issues, very limited resources, students who reach primary four and still cannot read, and Olivia's class has almost 100 pupils. Despite the challenges, Olivia is doing a brilliant job helping his students unlock their literacy skills and develop their future potential.

Olivia's lesson covered a number of the core reading skills. He used a variety of teaching strategies including teacher demonstration, student demonstration and small group

work. In a classroom where there are not many resources (other than a blackboard) it was encouraging to see Olivia use posters and flashcards that he made himself to supplement the lesson.

It was even more encouraging to see the high level of student engagement during the lesson. Pupils were keen to answer questions, read stories and they actively participated in the small group work. Had I walked into any classroom anywhere in the world and observed this lesson I would have rated it demonstrating best practice and excellent teaching quality.

### ***The world needs more Olivias***

When interviewing Olivia later that day, I discovered that she had a Certificate of Teaching and that she was working towards her Diploma certificate and later bachelor's degree while teaching full-time. Anyone who has worked and studied at the same time knows just how challenging this can be.

I assumed that Olivia was ambitious to progress her career, so I asked her about her future plans. Olivia said that she was more interested in staying in the classroom than becoming a head teacher. She explained that she wanted to continue to teach so children could learn to read. Her passion was to continue to work with children.

The world desperately needs more teachers like Olivia, and all I could do was to humbly thank her for her superb and valuable work. Teachers like Olivia are helping us to make progress towards meeting Sustainable Development Goal 4 by providing quality education that promotes lifelong learning for all.





# Joyce's story





## It takes a village to teach children to read

Peruth, 9, is not yet sponsored, but she still gets to attend World Vision's supported Community Literacy Centre, held on weekends. Peruth goes everywhere with a book in her hand.

"My favourite thing is reading," she says. "I like it even more than okwepena (playing dodge ball)."

Joyce Nakawuki, 60, is a World Vision-trained community volunteer trained to teach at literacy centres. Joyce says that in Buyamba, "there has been an outbreak of reading. Children read everything they get their hands on."

That's true of Peruth. As dozens of her friends skip the rope, some run around and others play dodge ball made of plastic bags, Peruth is immersed in a book, oblivious to the happy chaos around her.

A confident reader today, a few months ago Peruth used to struggle to read her own name. This is a common problem in a developing country like Uganda with a

significant difference between the school gross enrolment rate and the school net enrolment rate in the early Grades 1 – 5. This indicates a low pass ratio or a high repetition rate. This means that many children are going to school but are not learning. Most of them do not have enough learning resources.

In Buyamba, there are 20 community literacy centres with a total of 128 World Vision-trained youth volunteers to support reading activities. Reading participation starts in the first grade. "The first grade is the foundation of everything," says Grace Nassali, who oversees education programme in Buyamba. "You can't move forward if you don't know how to read."

Community volunteers unlock children's literacy skills

In Buyamba, children gather in garages, churches, community halls and under trees as well as open fields. Community volunteers facilitate reading sessions. Lessons are interspersed with games.

Posters blow in the soft breeze, hanging from tree limbs with pictures that illustrate words in Luganda, the local language. The children sing their vowels: A, E, I, O, U, becomes A, E, I, O, moo when a cow passes by, drowning out the final vowel.

Like most community volunteers, Joyce is a farmer during the week. On Sundays, however, she teaches children to read. It's all part of Unlock Literacy, which focuses on children ages 7-10, making sure they get the foundational reading skills they need at an early age.

"Any child can go to the reading centre — both sponsored and non-sponsored," said Grace.

We started small and expanded. "We started with five centres," she says. "They would run all year long, not just

throughout the school year. As we progressed in the next year, more were established with the help of parents and communities."

Parents encourage literacy skills at home, even when they can't read themselves

Peruth's mother, Sarah, 31, said her children love World Vision's reading club. She'll do anything to support her children, yet says she faces one challenge: "[My children] want me to approve their homework. But I don't know how to read." Thankfully, this will soon change.

Peruth wants her mother to read like she can. She hopes to become a teacher and a musician one day. "I want to teach and sing for the children the way I am learning at reading club," she said.

## RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOOD





## Building Secure Futures

Poor families face many challenges in their quest to provide a better future for their children. In particular, economic pressure can cause desperate people to resort to solutions that are not in the best interests of their children. These actions sometimes lead to early childhood marriage or other forms of child labour or exploitation.

Poverty is complex. Rural families living just above the poverty line are largely reliant on agriculture for their food and income. As a result, they can easily fall back into poverty in the event of a family misfortune or disaster, which can make them extremely vulnerable. When they cannot earn enough to make ends meet every day, parents are unable to feed their families. A slight downturn in the economy or a failed rainy season, and they can easily slip into extreme hunger and poverty. But it does have to be so, and change is possible.

In Buyamba, World Vision worked with families and communities to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. We graduated the most vulnerable families out of extreme poverty – so that very poor families become economically self-reliant and have the dignity and means to provide for their own children. We also strengthened food production, resilience and access to markets / financial services – so that farmers can produce more, better and more sustainable nutritious food for household consumption and marketing purposes. Finally, we promoted sustainable employment opportunities and market systems – so that communities have access to goods, services and employment opportunities through private sector partnerships.

## Maria's story

### A brighter, sustainable future for Buyamba children

For many years, Maria, a mother of three: Christine (10), Angela (8) and Noah (6), struggled along with her village from Kacumu, Buyamba subcounty in south western Uganda district of Rakai because of their total dependence on rain-fed subsistence farming. Together with her husband John, they used rudimentary tools and farming methods that was a real disservice.

"We hardly harvested enough from our fields and had no other source of income. All the children were not in school as a result." Maria recalled, "We didn't have an alternative source of income. We couldn't even afford to buy a smallest sachet of cooking oil or table salt. Life was really hard."

A few years ago, World Vision began to work within the community to reduce poverty levels by training farmers in agricultural production and business skills, as well as to build new water points.



With her improved farming skills and the availability of adequate water supply throughout the year, Maria now engages in enterprising gardening. She now grows coffee, beans and cassava. She is also involved in vegetables growing for sustained supply of nutritious diet for her young family. She has kitchen garden for several vegetables such as cabbage, onions, tomatoes, eggplants and pumpkins.

“I suffered a lot until World Vision trained and equipped me with farming and business management skills and introduced me to a savings group,” Maria said. “It was only after the training that we realised we could do more with our lives.”

Through improved farming many households including Maria’s are reaping big – making up 92% of households in Buyamba with sufficient nutritious foods throughout the year. This has created a ripple effect benefiting over 15,000 children.

In a single season, for instance, Maria earns about UGX1 million and UGX450,000 from the sale of coffee and beans, giving her a combined income of about UGX1,500,000 (estimated US\$400). Rosemary shares the village with Maria. They are among 1600 farmers practising improved

agricultural methods. For Rosemary, she is involved in goat rearing and piggery. She also makes mats when she is not looking after her goats and pigs. From all these projects, Rosemary earn a monthly average income of UGX750,000 (about US\$200). “I am now in position to send and keep my children at school because I can meet their school requirements, a thing that was not possible. I thank World Vision for the training and opening our eyes to do more,” said Rosemary

Like most resident of Kacumu village, Rosemary, Maria and her husband are all in saving groups. And for Marias they plan to increase their farm acreage as well as diversify into other income-generating activities. “Our plans are clear. We want to expand our farm, go into other businesses for regular income, and continue to inspire others parents to emulate because you can’t go wrong with farming when you do the right things in the right time,” concluded Maria.

Resilience and livelihood is one of World Vision enabling programme. The organisation works with smallholder farmers to ensure households have sufficient, sustainable income to meet their basic needs, sustainable access to sufficient nutritious foods and are resilient to shocks and stresses.









## Savings for Transformation

Inequality of income frequently stops children from attending school due to the high costs of education. This can lead families to sometimes take desperate measures causing children to face child marriage, be forced into child labour, or end up in care institutions where violence is often widespread. According to the World Health Organisation, helping vulnerable families to progressively achieve and sustain income growth can contribute to ending violence against children.

This is what warranted World Vision to start operations in Buyamba subcounty in Rakai District. We encouraged smallholder farmers, especially mothers, to join saving groups to help their children thrive in a stable environment. Today, we have over 5,000 active members in savings groups, 78 percent of whom are women, with a total savings of over UGX 560 million (US\$ 160,000).



## Joyce's story



Joyce with other women in their vegetable garden



## Saving groups egg-cites Buyamba families

Joyce Nakabiito is a razor sharp and hardworking mother of seven. She's been saving and training with World Vision Uganda, and is now working with saving groups – families who once saved nothing but now pocket hundreds of dollars each year. In the last six months, Joyce herself has saved \$500.

She reveals that her secret to success is households in her community working together and looking at farming as a business. "Like most households, I did farming just to have food at my table but it was not even enough," said Joyce, a resident of Kyondo village in Buyamba sub-county in Rakai district. "Now, after coming together and receiving training in agriculture and business, we are approaching farming with all the seriousness it deserves."

Jointly the group hired 15 acres of land and planted different vegetables. They also started a 15 member saving group to accumulate savings and be able access cheap loans to increase their income-generating abilities.

Savings groups members were also trained on how to invest in their own income-generation activities such as poultry and piggery, tap into government services and eventually qualify for microfinance or employment in local businesses.

For Joyce, she picked up poultry as an alternative business venture. In three years, she managed to increase her chicken from 10 to 331 birds. "These are layers," said Joyce adding,



“We pick about nine trays of eggs a day. A tray goes for between UGX 8500 to UGX10,000 providing enough profit to repay a loan and at the same time meet our family needs.”



*Joyce Nakabiito in her poultry*

As a result, farmers like Joyce can now hold onto their crops to sell when prices are high, instead of selling them at low prices for fast cash. The transformation is visible across the village, from the fields full of crops to the new homes with iron roofs and rainwater harvest tanks, life is getting better.

“With our savings we have completely cut off brokers and cheats who used to take advantage of individual farmers. We now do collective marketing of our produce. This has created decent work and economic growth in our lives,” said Nelson Nkalubo, Joyce’s husband who is in a different saving group.

World Vision desires to ignite a sense of hope and self-worth, empowering vulnerable families to change their own future through saving groups. We want to promote equality and inclusiveness. We equip and train farmers to manage money and start saving—some for the first time ever.

By increasing a smoother cash flow, parents and caregivers can afford to buy more and nutritious food for their children as well as meet their children’s education expenses. We have also seen how families can improve their homes to make them safer and warmer for their children. Also, families are now able to cope with household emergencies or crises that arise, which further protects their children’s well-being.

A savings group is member-owned and composed of a small number between 25 and 30 people who save together in a safe, convenient and flexible way. They use a simple, transparent method to accumulate and convert small amounts of cash into savings that can then be lent to members as credit.

### **Ultra-Poor Graduation configuration options**

Living in ultra-poverty has extreme and long-lasting effects on children because they often live in hard-to-reach areas that are marginalised and excluded from community support and traditional development programmes.

If these children survive to school-age, they're less likely to complete their education, often being forced into harmful labour, or child marriage and early parenthood, which starts the cycle again.

In Buyamba, we provided extremely poor households with

a pathway out of poverty by helping families engage in a productive and resilient livelihood. Ultra-poor Graduation programme gradually built household capacity and empowered families to become involved with the local economy and community in productive and positive ways.

As ultra-poor families begin to move out of poverty, their children's lives improve. Parents and caregivers gain the dignity of being able to provide nutritious meals and pay for their children's healthcare and education needs.

Specifically, we helped families to get the support they needed to meet basic needs, deal with crises, and access health and education services. We also helped families to find a way to make a resilient and sustainable income. Interventions included technical and business skills training, linkages to formal employment, and access to markets.

Further, families were trained in financial literacy and encouraged to join saving groups in order to provide support to their new businesses, to continue and improve their livelihoods.



## Shakuru's story

### **From surviving to thriving: Renewing hope and self-image for Buyamba youth**

“Whenever I pass in the village and hear people say that is Shakuru – the young mechanic – I feel so proud that I have a name in the village,” Shakuru, 17, said with a wide smile. For Shakuru, whose childhood dream was to be an engineer; he could not be any happier when the opportunity presented itself, thanks to World Vision's programme that equipped and empowered Buyamba youth to create a positive future.

“I am a skilled and well versed with motorcycle engines although I can also service milling machines and other engines,” said Shakuru. “My services are sought. I don't have a particular garage but I am always on the move fixing engines.”

Growing up was not rosy for Shakuru. Him and his siblings ate a single meal in a day, sometimes water would do. “We



lived a real hard knuckle life," he said recalling the days before with a distant look in his eyes.



Shakuru and Jackline are among 250 beneficiaries of World Vision's programme that aimed to help young people in Buyamba to make a resilient and sustainable income through training in technical and business skills. Of these, 40 youth have already started their own businesses and employing other youth.

Shakuru feels that his life would have taken a south swirling bearing had it not been for World Vision's support. "The training opportunity was a miraculous answer from God to many of my prayers," said Shakuru glancing up in heavens. "I am what I am because of World Vision."

Now, Daniel is dreaming big. He hopes to set up the biggest garage in Rakai town and offer apprenticeship opportunities to other vulnerable children. "I need to give back to my community and the best way to do this is to start my own garage where needy young people can come and learn a skill to thrive."

Jackline, 16, trained in tailoring. She owns four tailoring machines and employs three other girls from her community. "Now, life feels good," said Jackline as she peddled away. "We are no longer surviving, but thriving, thanks to World Vision timely intervention. I don't want to imagine the kind of life we would be leading – so miserable."

Like many beneficiaries, Shakuru and Jackline see the attainment of a skill as the gateway to self-reliance and a better standard of living. The programme turned round their lives and gave them a new bearing of hope in their lives. Now, Shakuru and Jackline have been able to start their own businesses, earning an income and therefore being able to provide for themselves and their family.

## Daniel's story

### House holdclusters transform savings, co-operative groups

Daniel is a member of Lwabanda-Lwakaloolo farmers' cooperative society that was created with the support of World Vision to empower households to farming as a business. The community-focused approach dubbed the Household Empowerment and Accountability Approach is a World Vision Uganda innovation that brings together 10 to 20 households in densely-populated communities and five to 10 in sparsely populated communities.

The approach equips and strengthens families and caregivers to be the first line of protection and care for children. It also promotes different aspects of child wellbeing, including health, education, livelihoods, and child protection at the household level.

Daniel's cooperative is among the five cooperatives in Buyamba with over 900 farmers dealing in various enterprises like beans, maize, bananas, coffee and

Irish potatoes. For Daniel's group, they specialize in commercial banana farming and value addition. "We now even produce wine from our bananas," he said.

Kayonza farmer Cooperatives is another cooperative group dealing in the production of maize, beans, passions fruits and coffee. Nsimbo farmer's cooperative are involved coffee farming and the group has already secured a grant from the Central government and set up a coffee processing factory. "This is what we call changing lives," said Jackson. "From simples farmers who were just surviving by the day to thriving farmers now going into processing and manufacturing."

All the five cooperatives have been linked to markets and input supplier, thanks to World Vision's commitment to transform farming. "Honestly, World Vision is a partner of choice. When given opportunity to recommend a development partners, I can't think of any other organization other than World Vision"



*“This is what we call changing lives”, said Daniel “From simple farmers who were just surviving by the day to thriving farmers now going into processing and manufacturing”. World Vision cares and gets on the ground,” Jackson concluded.*

Moses Kadobera Leneker, Community Engagement and Mobilisation Manager at World Vision in Uganda is responsible for the successful scaling up of this approach across all districts where World Vision has

operations. So far a total of 12,461 household clusters have been formed and active across the country since the launch of the approach in 2017. “This approach has been adopted in all communities where we work because it puts households in the driving seat of their own development agenda,” says Moses. “It empowers individuals and families to discover their value as created in the image of God and use resources within and around them, to become active agents of their own change.”





**Teamwork and saving culture  
has changed our lives.**



Balikuddembe and Teopista are parents of eight children: Catherine (13), Michael (5) and twins of 3 years. Both are members of Tositukiremamu Household Cluster in Buyamba Area Programme. Like other members, their family did not have a source of income to support their children's education and sufficient food for their family. Poor nutrition affected the children's health who often fell sick.

"World Vision taught us to work together and trained mother care groups in proper nutrition plus hygiene and sanitation. By the time I joined the mother care group, I did not know how to prepare nutritious foods for children," said Teopista.

With the skills acquired from World Vision's organised training, Teopista started growing different vegetables in their backyard. "This has proved very valuable. It is our pharmacy keeping our children well-nourished throughout the year," Teopista added. "I encourage other mothers in community to emulate and the results are very impressive. You can hardly find a malnourished child in this community because we are feeding them well."

Her husband, Balikuddembe agreed, "When we were mobilised into a cluster, for the first time, we were able to identify the real issues affecting us at the household level," said Balikuddembe, adding, "Luckily enough, we even came up with solutions to address some of the root causes of poverty, a thing that was not possible before. We thank World Vision for opening our minds and eyes."

After being mobilised to work together, Balikuddembe and other 15 households formed "Tositukirewamu Household Cluster" loosely translated: 'Let us rise together against poverty'. The cluster was supported and trained in improved farming methods, enterprise selection and saving. They were also supported with Irish potato planting materials, coffee and passion fruit seedlings to establish farmer field schools.

In 2015, Tositukirewamu Household Cluster was registered at the district and joined Kayonza Co-operative Society. "Life is good as we are now enjoying advantages of working and marketing our produce together," said Balikuddembe. "We are now in a better position to bargain for better prices. We can keep our produce for longer time to allow prices to improve."



Presently, Kayonza Co-operative Society boasts of 330 members working together. The group has been linked to companies like the SIMLAW Seeds Company that offer competitive prices and quality seeds.

“Our passion fruit project is complementing our income and at the same time providing nutrition to our children,” said Jimmy another member of Kayonza Co-operative.

The group also runs a saving group that has enabled many parents and caregivers to provide and care for their families, including meeting school requirements for their children.

“Amongst us there is no parent with a challenge of meeting education needs of our children,” said Balikuddembe. “Seven families have even installed solar providing lighting for the children to revise and read their books at home.”

With the nearest secondary school located 8 kilometres, Kayonza farmer’s Co-operative now wants to start a secondary school in their community to address the challenge of their children walking long distances to access

secondary education. “With our own secondary school, it would mean that our children will not have to be moving for 16 kilometres to and from school every day,” said Balikuddembe.

In Buyamba, there are 270 household clusters, with an average of 15 households per cluster. These have ensured household food security, income generation, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, education and child protection. The household clustering approach also has the saving component which has enabled members to access loans at cheap interest rates, procure, produce and market jointly.

Margaret, is a mother five and a member of Tusimbudde Household Cluster. She said, “We are moving forward because we now know how to protect our children better than before. For instance, all children, including orphans and those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in our community, go to school. We have volunteers who do monitor health, education and protection aspects to ensure our children are enjoying life to its fullest.”



# Buyamba Voices

We talked to some partners we have been working with for 17 years in serving children, their families and communities to address the root causes of poverty, injustice and violence against children in Buyamba. Here are some of the voices we captured.



“As Rakai district, our partnership with World Vision for the last 17 years has been a blessing particularly we in the department of education. Our children can now read because World Vision put in hard work to train the teachers, distribute reading materials and in some circumstances constructed classrooms and installed water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. This kind of approach that compliments Government work is really unique and great. We shall always cherish and remember you (World Vision) as our beloved partners. God bless you and the communities where you going to serve next.”

– John Baptist Kimbowa  
Rakai, District Education Officer

“For 20 years I have worked as an extension worker, I had never seen such a great co-operation between the community and government workers. There was negative attitudes and perceptions that had created a big gap between communities and the government, but that has changed, thanks to World Vision. World Vision’s approach of engaging with families and communities to come together in household clusters, identify issues and solutions has helped to restore relationships between communities and public servants. Take an example of agricultural extension services.

The ratio of community to the extensional worker was 1:8000 people. This simply meant we could not do much. Now, the ratio has been improved standing at 1:10 because we have trainees of trainers to pass on knowledge. This means we are now able to reach everyone who needs our services. I thank World Vision for closing the gap and complimenting the work of Government. I pray that this continues even where you are relocating nex.”

– Ssalongo Enoch Lwabulanga,  
Agriculture Extension Worker, Rakai District





“Many children in this area were dying from preventable causes such as malnutrition, infection and disease. Today, that is not the case, thanks to World Vision’s health programme. Now, numbers of severely malnourished children or suffering from malaria and other

preventable infection and disease has dramatically reduced because of change in health-seeking behaviour.

Now, all children are immunised and mothers know how to feed their babies on nutritious food and protect them against malaria by sleeping under treated mosquito nets. The number of mothers going for antenatal services averages 77% as compared to 12.5% before. For me, World Vision is not just an organisation like any other. No. You are a family because you care for most vulnerable in the community – the children. The energy and dedication you put in your work is evident wherever you go. Be blessed and continue to bless children of the world.”

– **Mary Nalumansi,**  
**In-charge of Kaleere Health Centre**



“When World Vision came, we greatly rejoiced because we had heard about its great deeds. And today as they end their activities in Buyamba, on behalf of the entire leadership of Dwaniro Sub-County and myself, I boldly say we are not disappointed. What World Vision promised to do is what they have done in the 17 years. We are grateful for the opportunity to have worked with the organisation committed to

transforming lives of the most vulnerable. We have been saved from the chronic problem of water scarcity. We are proud more than 1,000 households have gained access to clean water. Clean water is just one among a host of celebrations in livelihood, education and child protection. World Vision has set for us standard, guided and shown

us the way on how to address the root causes of poverty, injustice and violence against children. God bless you more for your generosity!’

– **Tom Yiga Mulindwa,**  
**Chairperson Ddwaniro Local Council III**

“When we heard that World Vision was coming in Buyamba, we saw a saviour of children. And all our expectations have been meant. Working with parents, families and communities World Vision made sure all children were safe, to call out violence when it occurs, and worked with survivors to heal and recover. Police as part of justice system were trained and equipped on how to handle cases of violence against children. The unique thing about World Vision is that they don’t just help children out of danger, they work with and among communities empowering children and parents as first responders. This has greatly changed attitudes and beliefs hence reducing violence against children. Police records show that on average we used to receive over 80 cases monthly involving violation of children’s rights. Now, we receive about two or none a month. We enjoyed working with you. Please continue collaborating with government and its agencies like police to ensure all children in Uganda enjoy a full sense of well-being.”

– **Debrah Atwebembeire,**  
**Officer in-Charge, Buyamba Police Station**



## APPRECIATION

World Vision Uganda appreciates the efforts of the different stakeholders for the great success registered in Buyamba Area programme. We highly appreciate our New Zealand donors who have shared their heart with the community through their constant funding. We acknowledge the district and sub-county local government for their strong partnership, and World Vision staff for sharing their knowledge of transformation with Buyamba community.

Special thanks goes to the leadership of World Vision Uganda for steering our organisation to go further than we imagined. The Rakai Cluster leadership throughout the 17 year journey, you deserve a special mention. Thank you for being the friendly and open-minded leaders that you are. As for the Regional Programmes Manager, Happy Kenneth, you superbly provide true leadership. Thank you.

We embrace the efforts of Moses Laneker Kadobera and other cluster managers who have shared

their hearts to the community through so many development ideas. Buyamba will always embrace the Household Engagement and Accountability Approach, Empowered World View and so many other models and approaches that have enabled people change their minds and hearts, and to work together to transform the lives of the most vulnerable children.

We also appreciate Buyamba AP Manager, Grace Nassali, for coordinating and gathering stories of transformation shared in this booklet. Fred Ouma, Development Communications Coordinator, thank you for going over the stories with a fine tooth comb to make them read and sound great. Last and not least, we are grateful to Buyamba community members for sharing their stories. Without you we would have no story to show, and this booklet would not have been compiled.

**Mwebale Nnyo!**



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