



PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

of the

ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN SUPPORT PROJECT - NEBBI
(2005/06)

PROJECT PARTNERS

AGENCY FOR ACCELERATED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(AFARD), CARITAS- Nebbi,
and

UNICEF – Government of Uganda

Dr. Odaga John
Mr. Ocokdhogu Bright

FINAL REPORT

AUGUST 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

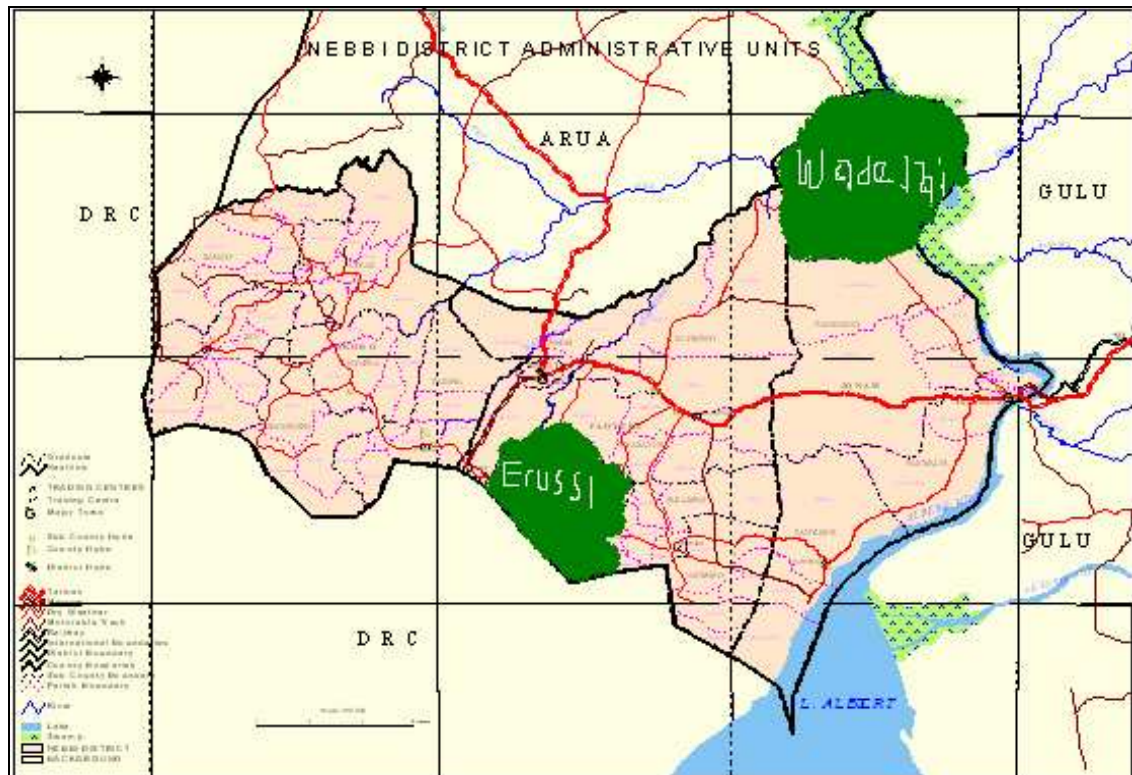
ACRONYMS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	7
1 INTRODUCTION	11
1.1 The Burden of OVCs in Uganda	11
1.2 The situation in Nebbi district	11
1.3 Responses to the OVC Crisis and the Global Strategic Framework (GSF)	11
1.4 The Uganda National OVCs Policy	12
1.5 The OVC Support Project - Nebbi	13
1.6 Purpose and Scope of Evaluation	14
1.7 The scope or TOR of the evaluation	14
2 METHODOLOGY	15
2.1 Study design	15
2.2 Variables and measurement	15
2.3 Methods of data collection	15
3 EVALUATION FINDINGS	16
3.1 Relevance of Project, Theory of Action (Intervention Logic), and Internal Consistency (ToR 1, 2 and 6).....	16
3.1.1 <i>Technical aspect of the plan (theory of action/ intervention logic.....</i>	16
3.1.2 <i>The target groups and needs assessment (definition of vulnerability)</i>	17
3.1.3 <i>Participation in and Satisfaction with the plan</i>	18
3.1.4 <i>Conclusion</i>	18
3.2 Effectiveness and Impact of the Plan (ToR 2, 5)	19
3.2.1 <i>Achievements</i>	19
3.2.2 <i>Effects or outcome</i>	20
3.2.3 <i>Impacts and Unintended Outcomes</i>	29
3.3 Efficiency of implementation (ToR 3)	30
3.3.1 <i>Financial prudence.....</i>	30
3.3.2 <i>Cost per beneficiary</i>	32
3.3.3 <i>Project activity completion rate</i>	34
3.4 Sustainability of the Project (ToR 4)	34
3.4.1 <i>Establishment and functioning of the community management structures</i>	35
3.4.2 <i>Establishment and performance of the Grinding mill schemes and the management committees</i>	36

4	LESSONS LEARNT FOR REPLICATION AND CAUTION & THE WAY FORWARD	40
5	CONCLUSION.....	41
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	42
	APPENDICES	43
	Appendix 1: Scope of work, key performance measure questions, and indicators	43
	Appendix 2: List of activities planned for implementation.....	45
	Appendix 2: Achievement of Targets [related activities have been combined]	47
	Appendix 3: List of People Met at the Project Sites	50
	Appendix 4: List of Key Informants	51
	Appendix 5: Participants for the Feedback workshop	51

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1:	Summary of the GSF Strategies and Principles	12
Table 2:	National and International Frameworks to which Uganda is part	13
Table 3:	Methods of data collection and the sources of information	15
Table 4:	Indicators of Relevance and key issues	16
Table 5:	Common selection criteria.....	18
Table 6:	Indicators of achievements, and key issues	19
Table 7:	Project goal, Objectives and Expected Outputs.....	21
Table 8:	Resource Allocation Pattern	31
Table 9:	Resource allocation Pattern disaggregated by OVC types	32
Table 10:	Cost per OVC Type after stepping-down Higher-level costs	34
Table 11:	Guideline on how income from the Grinding mills should be used	36
Table 12:	Financial performance of the grinding mills	37
Table 13:	Balance Sheet during the Best Performing Month	39
Figure 1:	Map of OVC support project – Nebbi sites	4
Figure 2:	Male OVCs at different stages of workshop establishment	26
Figure 3:	Female OVCs at different stages of workshop establishment	27
Figure 4:	The Effect of drought on the crops that were planted	29
Figure 5:	Trends in net savings at four sites that had operated for at least 2 months	38

Figure 1: Map of OVC support project – Nebbi sites



ACRONYMS

AFARD	=	Agency for Accelerated Regional development
FORUDES	=	Foundation for Rural Development through Skills
GoU	=	Government of Uganda
IEC	=	Information, Education and Communication
HIV/AIDS	=	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
NOP	=	National OVCs Policy
OVC	=	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEC	=	Peer Educators-cum-Councilors
PLC	=	Parish Level Committee
UNAIDS	=	United Nations program for AIDS/HIV
UNICEF	=	United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds
USAID	=	United States Aids for International Development
ToR	=	Terms of Reference

AKNOWLEDGEMENT

The study team wishes to express its gratitude to several people, too many to mention by name here, who played a part in bringing the evaluation exercise to a successful end.

We owe the project staff for the provision of materials and their time, and for organizing appointments and all aspects of the review. In particular, we wish to thank the Project Officer Drs. Lakwo Alfred, and the two field officers, Mr. Okecha Emmanuel and Rev. Fr. Ayela, and all the Chairpersons of the Parish Development Committees for enabling us comprehend the project; an initiative that enabled us to accomplish the assignment in-depth.

The team alone takes responsibility for any shortcomings that the reader will find in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Agency for Accelerated Rural Development (AFARD), and CARITAS – Nebbi, have been implementing a joint one year “*Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Support Project*” in Nebbi district.¹ Implementation of the first phase of the project started in September 2005, and comes to an end in August 2006. The project was funded by UNICEF-GoU. The Project Implementation Agencies (PIA) and the funders commissioned this study with two main aims:

- *To know how the project has performed thus far.*
- *To draw lessons of what worked (and what failed) in order to inform the up-scaling drive.*

The scope or TOR of the evaluation

The consultants received seven ToR from the PIA to assess the performance of the project, here under summarised:

1. *Relevance:* Measuring the ability of the project to fit within broader needs of its stakeholders.
2. *Effectiveness:* Assessing the extent to which the project was fulfilling its objective in view of achievement of targets and outputs.
3. *Efficiency:* Measuring resource utilization prudence with respect to resource targeting and activities completion rates
4. *Sustainability:* Establishment of the project and the local structures, and ability to continue to deliver services to the community on their own.
5. *Impact:* observable changes in the beneficiaries’ knowledge, attitudes and practices in regards to OVC well-being. Other unintended changes (positive or negative)
6. *Consistency:* assessing the causal linkages between the strategies and the outcomes, and the logical linkages between the inputs, outputs and outcome
7. *Lessons learned:* challenges related to the achievement of objectives, impact, sustainability of the project, operational issues as well as the societal consequences of the project.

Methodology

The evaluation study undertaken was a cross-sectional survey, descriptive in nature. Methods of data collection included Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with in-school OVCs, their teachers and the PLCs combined with the PECs. In-depth discussions or interviews were held with key informants, including selected OOS OVCs, the Project Officer of AFARD, the Coordinator Caritas, the Senior District Community Development Officer, and heads of the vocational training schools. In addition, we reviewed relevant documents, notably audited accounts, PLCs financial reports, PLCs expenditure guidelines, the Project Proposal, the Project

¹ Both AFARD and CARITAS-Nebbi are NGOs operating in Nebbi district in the areas of HIV/AIDS, food security, and good governance. The only difference between these organizations is their philosophy where the former is driven by the need for an endogenic and beneficiary controlled development approach and the latter is driven by the Christian principles of integrating social development with evangelization.

progress Reports (Phase I & II). In most cases the support family members were individually interviewed, except at one site where a FGD was held with them. Finally, we made on-site observations to make assess the status of various projects.

Evaluation Findings

Relevance of Project, Theory of Action (Intervention Logic), and Internal Consistency (ToR 1, 2 and 6)

The OVC support project, implemented by AFARD/CARITAS, was found to be relevant to all stakeholders. The project encouraged a lot of meaningful participation of the community members in crucial decision-making processes. The theory of action, the selected activities, and the implementation approaches were found to be aligned with the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. They are also well aligned with contemporary paradigms and policies.

Achievements, Effects and Impacts (ToR 2 and 5)

There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that all the planned activities were implemented as planned: they were well targeted, implemented on schedule, and in many instances, targets were exceeded. Delays were notably unavoidable (either due to weather conditions or delays in procurement and delivery of supplies by UNICEF, the funding agency)

Many short term outputs have been achieved, the most notable ones being the establishment of a system for identification and monitoring of OVCs and families, complete with a user-friendly database. Others, and critical ones, include the training and equipping of out-of-school (OOS) OVCs, provision of scholastic materials for the in-school OVCs, and the establishment of a grinding mill scheme in each parish.

The vocational skills training for the OOS OVCs, though widely considered short by the graduates, seemed generally adequate for the scales of ventures the graduates were expected to undertake. All the male OOS OVCs, and most of the female counterparts, have set up their own ventures. However, most of them were struggling, mainly because of lack of start up capital.

The Irish potatoes seeds and cassava stalks, provided as a strategy to strengthen family support capability, either failed to germinate, or were destroyed by the adverse weather. It follows that the expected capabilities of the families to provide for the basic needs of the OVCs has not (yet) been realized or strengthened. This, coupled with the operational difficulties facing the grinding mills thus far (summarized below), means that the medium term support for the in-school OVCs is not in the balance.

Nevertheless, there were positive reports regarding the OVCs generally. The in-school OVCs were reported to be attending classes more regularly, with heightened morale. Their participation in class has also improved. Despite the challenges, most of the OOS OVCs were earning some personal income which, though meager, has certainly improved their social and economic standings. The impression in the community is that the OOS OVCs are now leading a more responsible life, using their time more productively, and planning prudently.

The decentralization of management and decision-making to the PLCs has led to strong feelings of self-worth and a sense of community. The provision for regular meetings in the community has set in motion a number of ideas and initiatives for wider community development.

Efficiency of implementation (ToR 3)

A review of the audited financial records show that the project funds were targeted in favor of the beneficiaries: 84.7% of the funds were spent on *direct project* activities as opposed to 15.3% spent on *indirect project* activities (overhead, operational and supportive activities). UNICEF can tolerate up to 25% of expenditures on indirect activities. The project staff made savings from virtually all indirect activities; these were re-directed to fund the former group of (*direct project*) activities. The estimated costs by OVC types were as follows: 1,214,543/= for female OOS OVCs; 1,520,238/= for male OOS OVCs; and 465, 215/= for in-school OVCs

Sustainability of the Project (ToR 4)

All the evidence reveals that the PLCs and PECs (community management and technical structures) are well established. They were trained and aware of their roles. The beneficiaries were unanimously satisfied with their work. At some sites we observed that the esteem with which the PLCs were recognized stretched beyond the immediate beneficiaries, to the wider society.

All the grinding mills have been installed, are operational and have been handed over to the PLCs to manage. Although a number of them got off to an encouraging start, the financial performances have been poorer than expected, particularly in terms of savings. The main reasons for this are the high operational costs (mainly due to high fuel prices) coupled with scarcity of foodstuffs due to the prevailing drought. At the time of the evaluation, most of the schemes were operationally stable. Therefore, savings are expected to improve once foodstuffs become more available.

Lessons learnt and the Way Forward (ToR 7)

1. Community definition of 'vulnerability' enhances the identification process and of the right beneficiaries thereby reducing the usual community leaders' and project self-styled 'smuggled relatives, friends and in-laws' as beneficiaries.
2. The success of project implementation is based on how effective a community is mobilized. But leaving mobilization in the hand of men promotes women's exclusion and as the men dominates on committees let alone pushing for their own interests.
3. Apprenticeship is crucial in enabling the OOS OVCs perfect their skills, build confidence, and advertise themselves. While this needs replication, it requires to be well planned and monitored.
4. Without any start-up capital, the immense potentials of economic independence from vocational skills training and equipping of the OVCs are eroded. Subsequent projects

could consider the provision of start-up capital. Or a revolving fund, as part and parcel of OVCs' and community-level strategies for financial self-reliance.

5. The beneficiaries' and other community members' faith in this project has dispelled their skepticisms about the uselessness of many projects; instead it has led to increased sense of cooperation for mutual support. This underlines the importance of active and meaningful community participation in decision making; not to mention the efficiency with which funds are used.

Conclusion

By and large, this has been an appropriate, well implemented and widely appreciated project. The short term objectives have all been met. It promises to be a cost-effective project particularly if the challenges are attended to, and the elements of family support is scaled up or diversified.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Burden of OVCs in Uganda

The situation of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in Uganda is one of the largest in the world. With a population of 24.7 million people, Uganda has an estimated 2.3 million orphans. 25 percent of all households are reported to be looking after at least one child orphaned by either HIV/AIDS or war. By 2004, at least 14 percent of children less than 18 years of age were reported to be orphans, with 20% of those aged between 6 – 17 years being orphans (GoU, 2004). The HIV pandemic and war have contributed the massive burden of OVCs in Uganda. Some children are infected with HIV themselves although they are not orphans and vice versa.

Unlike other children, OVCs are likely to suffer a number of vicious livelihood insecurity ranging from psychosocial effects of parental illness and death and frequent stigma and discrimination to exploitation, abuse, and often to contracting the HIV/AIDS or dropping out of school. In families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS, household income may fall as a result of parental illness and death; primary livelihoods are lost and OVCs cope by assuming "adult" roles. Yet, they have less time and money to get health, education, and social welfare services. Communities are then expected to care for them. Given that more sick people, orphans and OVCs are emerging, this strains the traditional safety nets and social support systems.

1.2 The situation in Nebbi district

The OVC constitute a significant proportion (55%) of children in the district. The major cause of vulnerability to children is the incapacitation of their families to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Part of the causes emanate from HIV/AIDS related illness and death of a parent and more so the death of both parents. As a result, a number of children and families/host families suffer livelihood insecurity. Many are unable to meet their daily basic needs requirement of food, security, and protection. Consequently, several of the children are opting out of school just like those trying with unrewarding livelihood adaptive activities are trapped in a spiral exposure to HIV/AIDS infections and social stigmatization. Two sub counties Erussi and Wedelai that are the most affected with 65% of children being OVCs are thus selected for this project.

1.3 Responses to the OVC Crisis and the Global Strategic Framework (GSF)

In the Ugandan community, and in most African contexts, the traditional response is to absorb orphans within the extended family system. However, many of these care-givers normally lack the economic capacity to provide for the basic needs of the OVCs. This is especially true where the children are orphaned by HIV/AIDS. In many of such circumstances, the care-givers are grand mothers who are impoverished themselves.

Many people and organisations have stepped in to provide different types of support. The responses have taken different shapes, ranging from providing information to basic education;

from counselling to vocational skills training; from medical care to micro-credit schemes; orphanages and other forms of institutional responses, to family and community responses (UNICEF et al 2004; GoU, 2004).

In light of this, in 2004, a number of organisations including UNICEF, UNAIDS and USAIDS agreed on a *Global Strategic Framework* (GSF) to guide responses to issues facing OVCs with emphasis on the importance of organisations focusing on initiatives that support family and community efforts. The framework consists of 5 key strategies and 7 elements as shown in the box below (UNICEF et al., 2004).

Table 1: Summary of the GSF Strategies and Principles

GSF, OVC support strategies	GSF, OVC services delivery principles
<p>a) Strengthen the capacity of families to protect and care for the OVCs by prolonging the lives of parents and providing economic, psychosocial, and other support.</p> <p>b) Mobilizing and supporting community-based responses.</p> <p>c) Ensuring access for OVCs to basic services, including healthcare, education, nutritional services and others.</p> <p>d) Ensuring that governments protect the most vulnerable children, for example through improved policies and legislation, and by channeling resources to the communities.</p> <p>d) Raising awareness to create a supportive environment for the OVCs.</p>	<p>a) Focusing on all vulnerable, not only children orphaned by AIDS.</p> <p>b) Definition of vulnerability and identification of OVCs should be community-specific.</p> <p>c) Involvement of children and young people as active participants in all the activities which affect them.</p> <p>d) Insuring that there is no discrimination on the basis of age and gender.</p> <p>e) Strengthening partnerships or collaborative action by working with other organizations interested in or providing services to OVCs.</p> <p>f) Linking health-related HIV/AIDS activities (e.g. prevention and care) to development activities to avoid discrimination and stigma.</p> <p>g) Use of external support to strengthen, rather than to undermine or replace, existing community initiatives.</p>

Source: UNICEF (GSF) AIDS www.unicef.org/aids/files/Framework-english.pdf (15th August 2006)

1.4 The Uganda National OVCs Policy

The commitment of the GoU to the welfare of OVCs is expressed through a number of legal and policy instruments, both national and international in origin.

Table 2: National and International Frameworks to which Uganda is part

International instruments ratified by Uganda	National Legal Framework
a) The UN Convention on the rights of the child (1990)	a) The Constituion of the Republic of Uganda (1995]
b) The OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare f the Child (1990)	b) The Children’s act (2003)
c) The Convention on the elimination of all forms Discrimination against Women (1979)	c) The National for Children statute (1996)
d) The ILO Convention No. 138 (minimum age for employment) and No. 182 (prohibition of the worst forms of child labour) [1999]	d) The National Youth council youth Act (2003)

Source: the National OVCs Policy (NOP)

The National OVCs Policy [NOP] (2004) spells out the guiding principles to the responses to OVCs. Essentiasll the NOP emphasises the same principles and elements enshrined in the *GSF* (2004)

1.5 The OVC Support Project - Nebbi

On the 5th September 2005, AFARD, CARITAS – Nebbi and UNICEF-GoU Country Programme signed a one-year (September 2005 – August 2006) Memorandum of Understanding to implement a joint Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Support Project in Nebbi district.² The project is presently running in the 2 sub counties of Wadelai and Erussi, covering a total of 10 parishes.

From the project proposal, the choice of the two sub counties were based on a number of factors such as, (i) their isolations from many of the district HIV/AIDS programmes. In both cases, only one organisation is involved in HIV/AIDS awareness creation and concentrated in the trading center vicinity. None of these targets OVCs. Yet, with a high refugee and internally displaced persons from the Democratic Republic of Congo for Erussi and Gulu district in Wadelai the challenges of OVCs has increased; (ii) both sub counties have the lowest education performance in the district. Enrolment, retention, and participation are all below 60% compared to other sub counties in the district. A school mapping exercise done with the support of Action Aid – Nebbi Initiative indicated that children, especially orphans, are used as farm laborers and vermin controllers; and (iii) these sub counties have the lowest local government revenue averaging a per head total of under Ushs 12,000. This implies inadequacy of public services provision and inability to pay for services by households even when they are available. In such instances, OVCs who are distant in intra-household priorities receive the worst of neglects.

² Both AFARD and CARITAS-Nebbi are NGOs operating in Nebbi district in the areas of HIV/AIDS, food security, and good governance. The only difference between these organizations is their philosophy where the former is driven by the need for an endogenic and beneficiary controlled development approach and the latter is driven by the Christian principles of integrating social development with evangelization.

1.6 Purpose and Scope of Evaluation

The project has been running on a pilot basis, and comes to an end in August 2006. At the time of the evaluation, the implementing agencies and funders were discussing the possibility of expansion and sustainability of the project and therefore wished to:

- a) *Know how the project has performed thus far.*
- b) *Draw lessons of what worked (and what failed) in order to inform the up-scaling drive.*

1.7 The scope or TOR of the evaluation

The consultants were given five ToR, which were essentially assessing the performance of the project by way of five variables outlined below

1. *Relevance:* Measure the ability of the project to fit within broader needs of its stakeholders.³ This included stakeholders' needs, satisfaction, participation, and support.
2. *Effectiveness:* Assess the extent to which the project is fulfilling its objective in view of achievement of targets vis-à-vis planned activities and outputs.
3. *Efficiency:* Measure resource utilization prudence and cost minimization with emphasis to direct project versus management cost and activity budget management prudence.
4. *Sustainability:* Explore how the project and the local structures established would ably continue to deliver services to the community on their own.
5. *Impact:* Explore beneficiary reactions to project outputs as evidenced by observable changes in their knowledge, attitudes and practices in regards to OVC well-being.

Two additional parameters were included in the table of “*scope of work, measures and indicators*” (appendix 1). They are:

6. *Consistency:* basically assessing the causal linkages between the strategies and the outcomes, and the logical linkages between the inputs, outputs and outcome
7. *Lessons learned:* in terms of the challenges related to the achievement of objectives, impact, sustainability of the project, operational issues as well as the societal consequences of the project.

³ Stakeholders herein include beneficiaries, funders, peer organizations engaged in similar activity, local government with supervisory functions, and management team whose interests and expectations all differ.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study design

The evaluation study undertaken was descriptive in nature and used a cross-sectional survey (snapshot assessment of performance).

2.2 Variables and measurement

The variables and indicators are explicitly summarised in the ToR (section 1.6), and detailed in the table outlining the Scope of work, measures and indicators in Appendix 1

2.3 Methods of data collection

Qualitative data collection methods were applied to assess virtually all the parameters in the ToR. Quantitative methods were also used, but mainly to assess efficiency and sustainability parameters. The methods of data collection are summarized hereunder, and in appendix 1

Table 3: Methods of data collection and the sources of information

Documentary review	The following materials were reviewed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Global Strategic Framework 2. National OVCc Policy (NOP) 3. OVC Support Project proposal (AFARD) 4. Activity and Progress reports 5. Financial reports (from project office and project sites)
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	We held separate FGDs with the in-school OVCs (as the primary project beneficiaries). From each Parish one school with the largest population of OVCs was selected. We, in addition, had separate discussions with their class teachers (including female teachers where there was any). Further more, we held combined FGDs with the PLCs and the PECs (as the on-the ground project implementers). In Abongo Parish, we ran a FGD for support family members because they had been mobilised and assembled in one place.
In-depth individual discussions	We, in addition, held in-depth discussions with selected out-of-school OVCs (another category of primary project beneficiaries). In Pachaka and Mutir Parishes, we had in-depth discussions with support family heads at their respective gardens. The choice of the members was conveniently made.
Key informant interviews (KIIs)	This was conducted for Project Officer, The Coordinator Caritas, the two Field Officers, The District Community Development Officer, and a sub-county Chief. Attention was paid to management issues such as project implementation, and collaboration, among others.
Observations	On-site assessment of individual and community-level projects was made to ascertain the status of their performance
Brain-storming during a feed back workshop	Opportunities were given to relevant district officials, all PLC chairpersons, and subcounty chiefs to comment on the findings and make additional contributions regarding issues in the ToR

3 EVALUATION FINDINGS

The evaluation findings are presented according to the ToR, some of which have been combined because of similarity of the issues.

3.1 Relevance of Project, Theory of Action (Intervention Logic), and Internal Consistency (ToR 1, 2 and 6)

The relevance of the project was assessed against 6 indicators. The technical aspect of the plan was assessed to judge the extent to which it aligns with the 5 strategies and the 7 elements of the GSF and the NOP. The indicators are summarised below:

Table 4: Indicators of Relevance and key issues

Indicators	Key questions/issues
Technical aspect of plan (intervention logic)	Extent to which plan aligns with the 5 strategies and 7 elements of the GSF
Target group	Who, where, selection criteria for location and beneficiaries
Needs	Formal or informal needs assessment, what priorities, whose needs, criteria, by whom?
Rationale/objectives	Written goals, objectives, outputs, what the program was designed to accomplish, relation with priority needs, underlying assumptions, how activities fit stated goals and objectives
Participation in plans	Which activities, who, how, how often?
Satisfaction with plans	Implemented as expected? By whom, why?

3.1.1 Technical aspect of the plan (theory of action/intervention logic)

In order to appreciate the project theory of action and the logic (appropriateness) of the interventions, we reviewed the project proposal and the progress reports, and had discussions with the project officer and the District Community Development Officer. We further reviewed literatures on the contemporary approaches to OVC support.

Although the project aim is “to contribute to the reduction in vulnerability of OVCs”, the primary focus is the long term ability of the support families to provide for the livelihood needs of OVCs in a sustainable manner. In other words, the project emphasizes the philosophy of enabling the support families as the best way to provide for the livelihoods of the OVCs over the long term. Normally this is by way of keeping them alive, and by providing them with socio-economic and psycho-social support (GSF, 2004; GoU, 2004).

In this project, we identified a number of *critical activities* (referred to as *direct project activities* in the project documents) that were proposed and implemented in the context of reducing OVCs’ vulnerability and are described below:

a) Activities oriented towards promoting long-term self-reliance of out-of-school OVCs

These entailed vocational skills training and equipping of the OVCs to enable them set up and manage their own business ventures

b) *Short-term activities oriented towards catering for the immediate and very essential needs of the in-school OVCs*

These consisted of the supply of the very basic scholastic materials, to a level that does not put the OVCs to a level that is obviously above the average pupil in a particular context. The major emphasis was on primary school children.

c) *Activities aimed at increasing and strengthening the capacity of families to provide for the essential needs of the in-school OVCs over the long term*

The major focus here was ensuring food security for the family by providing improved planting materials

d) *Community-level projects to provide for the long-term support of (especially the in-school) OVCs*

Example includes the installation of grinding mills at each parish

e) *Activities oriented towards creating a supportive environment to the OVCs where they are treated with respect.*

This set of activities consisted of:

- counseling and peer-education of OVCs to live a more positive life
- counseling of parents and sensitization of the community about children's rights
- linkages with the key stakeholders, particularly the relevant district departments, to support and streamline OVCs' support projects into their development plans.

The detailed breakdown of the activities is found in appendix 2.

Suffice it to say that our analysis revealed that the project concept, the selected activities and implementation approach satisfy virtually all the aspects of the GSF and the NOP. According to the District Community Development Officer, Nebbi, "*what AFARD/CARITAS are doing is what the Government is supposed to be doing, as the Government of Uganda policy also advocates for the family-focused*", emphasizing that institutional management of OVCs (such as orphanages) is now as outdated as they are stigmatizing.

3.1.2 The target groups and needs assessment (definition of vulnerability)

The project has been implemented in 2 sub counties of Wadelai and Erussi, spanning a total of 10 parishes (3 in Wadelai and 7 in Erussi). The database shows that there are a total of 400 in-school OVCs, 70 out-of-school OVCs (40 girls and 30 boys), and 300 families, equally drawn from each parish. Thus the beneficiaries in each parish consists of 40 in-school OVCs, 7 out-of-school OVCs (4 girls, 3 boys), and 30 families.

The selection of the project sites was based on a comprehensive and rational assessment of the prevailing statistics, which revealed that these sites had the highest number of OVCs, the remotest and lacking in key services.

The community members were responsible for the selection of the OVCs (and the support families), as well as the prioritizations of needs (definition and ranking of vulnerability). These were based on community-specific criteria (Table 4 below), under the guidance of the project staff.

Table 5: Common selection criteria

Families	In-school OVCs	Out-of-school OVCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households headed by PLWA Child household head Terminally sick headed household Elderly household head Female household head Disabled and unable headed household 	<p>Belong (by birth or residence) to the identified family but is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled in school An Orphan without support A child who is a PLWAs A child with disabilities 	<p>Include all the criteria for family selection or is an OVC but is out of school</p>

Members of the community management structures were also selected by the community members themselves. They are the people they trust and had respected credentials to deliver for them.

3.1.3 Participation in and Satisfaction with the plan

Further more, all the major activities were decided in consultation with elected representatives of the communities in a rational and comprehensive manner which allowed some activities to be substituted or expanded depending on what the community representatives felt were most appropriate. For example, in Wadelai, the proposed fishing boats and nets were substituted with grinding mills because it was observed that fishing was no longer productive.

By and large, the project staff simply played a facilitating role with most decisions resting with the community structures, or at least based on a consensus with them, particularly in relation to needs determination and the choice and implementation of activities. As one of them stated, *“the LCs were the entry point. AFARD simply explained the project ideas, and what kind of support they could provide. The different project options were chosen rationally by us, after thorough assessment of the risks and benefits. The short comings we are facing [especially with the improved seeds] can neither be blamed on us nor on AFARD. May be only God is to blame”*

Overall, all the respondents expressed unreserved satisfaction with the project, particularly with the approach and degree of achievement so far. The community members, the beneficiaries and the participants in the feedback workshop unanimously praised the process, describing it variously as being responsive, systematic, participatory, democratic and transparent.

Lesson learnt: In an effort to simplify management, particularly in the face of serious time (and other resource) constraints, the business options selected for the out-of-school OVCs were only sex specific, but not age sensitive. As elaborated in section 2.2, the age of the OOS OVCs seemed to have been crucial in determining their appreciation of the vocational skills training and interest in the chosen business options generally.

3.1.4 Conclusion

In a nutshell, this project departs from traditional approaches to OVC support such as the secluded orphanages and/or providing support only to an isolatedly identified orphan. The theory of action, the selected activities, and the implementation approaches are all congruent

with the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. They are well aligned with contemporary paradigms and policies as were stated in table 1. To this extent, we can conclude that the OVC support project as implemented by AFARD/CARITAS is very relevant.

3.2 Effectiveness and Impact of the Plan (ToR 2, 5)

The overall project purpose is already stated. To achieve this, 4 objectives, 7 strategies (outputs) and numerous (24) activities and tasks were defined (see appendix 2). We, therefore, looked at effectiveness along two parameters, namely, the extent of implementation of planned activities (referred to as *achievements*) and the realization of the intended outcomes or outputs (Referred to as *effects*).

3.2.1 Achievements

Achievements were assessed along 5 key parameters outlined and defined in the table below.

Table 6: Indicators of achievements, and key issues

Progress	activities implemented c.f. plan, timeframe, frequency, location, project material/facilities and their use, shortcomings, why, any variation (planned or unplanned?)
Completeness (quantity)	have all planned activities been implemented; are they implemented at the same frequency as planned? have some new activities been included, have some been substituted, why?
Quality	Existence and compliance with set standards, procedures
Reach	Number of beneficiaries targeted, those reached, who are they
Timeliness of activities	Were activities implemented within the planned time-frame

A review of the project progress reports and the discussions at the project sites and during the feedback workshop, suggest that all the planned activities have been largely achieved.

- About 24 activities directly linked with the running of the project were planned and impressively all the activities were achieved.
- One activity was substituted (fishing with grinding mills, hence raising the number of grinding mills from 7 to 10)
- A number of supplementary activities (especially training related to grinding mill operations and seeds/crops management) were conducted. In this regard, a rice hurler was also installed in Wadelai because of the rice production sub component of the project. These activities did not appear in the initial proposal but were deemed vital during the process of implementation.
- All the activities that were carried out were implemented fully (to the set target). The remaining mosquito nets and the two sewing machines for the OSS OVC girls were also distributed at the time of the evaluation.
- Nearly all activities were generally implemented on schedule. On a number of occasions, targets (in terms of number, timeframe and frequency of activities) were exceeded. The first three weeks of the project life, in particular, was characterized by a high intensity of activities, indicating a high degree of responsiveness and commitment on the part of the implementing agencies.

- There were a few notable delays such as with the distribution of the mosquito nets because of the delays on the part of the funding organization to procure and submit the nets timely. The delay in the distribution of rice seeds was unavoidable because of weather conditions.
- A number of support families were to receive groundnuts seeds. Because of the severe drought, this activity was left out. The funds were instead used to buy extra cassava cuttings for them
- All activities were carried out transparently and participatorily, with deliberate efforts to encourage local ownership and gender balance
- All intended beneficiaries have been reached.

3.2.2 Effects or outcome

Effects or outcome of the achievements described above was judged by the extent to which the objectives have been realized. There were 4 objectives. Each of them had a set of expected outputs, which are the expected tangible results by which success (achievement of the objectives) was to be judged. They are outlined in Table 6 below.

Table 7: Project goal, Objectives and Expected Outputs

<p>Distal</p>	<p>Overall goal: Vulnerability of orphans and vulnerable children in Wadelai and Erussi sub counties reduced</p> <p>Project goal: <i>To contribute to the reduction of vulnerability of boys and girls through strengthening family capacity to provide for the basic social services and community support in two sub counties of Wadelai and Erussi.</i></p>
<p>Proximal</p>	<p>Objective 1: <i>A system for identification and follow-up of 400 OVCs and 300 families strengthened/ established.</i></p> <p><i>Output 1.1: A system (committees) at parish level in place</i> <i>Output 1.2: 400 hundred OVC (at least half girls) and 300 families identified</i></p>
<p>Proximal</p>	<p>Objective 2: <i>Increased capacity of the OVCs and families to provide basic social services.</i></p> <p><i>Output 2.1: 400 OVCs regularly attending school with decrease in absenteeism</i></p>
<p>Proximal/Intermediate</p>	<p><i>Output 2.2: 70 OVCs out of school trained in vocational skills, and running own business, generating income</i></p>
<p>Intermediate</p>	<p><i>Output 2.3: 300 Families engaged in income generating activities for provision of basic social services to the children.</i></p>
<p>Intermediate/Distal</p>	<p>Objective 3: <i>Increased community support, care and protection of the Rights of OVCs</i></p> <p><i>Output: 3.1 Social acceptability of and support to OVCs increased</i></p>
<p>Proximal</p>	<p>Objective 4: <i>Enhanced capacity of CARITAS and AFARD in documentation, reporting and monitoring and evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>Output 4.1: computers and accessories</i> <i>Output 4.2: Quarterly reporting to UNICEF and District Local Government</i></p>

Considering that project outcomes or effects are normally realized at different points in time, and that some are contingent on others, we characterized the objectives (but especially the expected outputs) into three categories; namely, proximal (lower order), intermediate, and distal (upper order) outputs, depending on their feasibility of being achieved in the short, medium and long run respectively.

Proximal outputs were those considered realistically achievable within the project life of one year. Intermediate outputs were those we felt could be achieved in two years time but only if the project life was sustained for that period of time. Lastly, distal outputs were those we considered achievable in the long term; in any case not within 2 years after the start of the project. They relate mainly to the project goal. They are contingent on both the lower order and intermediate objectives. In other words, the achievement of the upper order objectives is only possible if the lower order critical components have been achieved, and the intermediate components *sustained* for a minimum of two years.

a) *Output 1.1: A system for identification of OVCs in place*

The progress report (phase I) outlines the process of identification of OVCs and families. This information was cross-checked by independently interviewing or discussing with various stakeholders in the field. The categories interviewed or discussed with included OVCs in school, and those out-of school, the class teachers, the PLCs and the PECs, support families and one subcounty chief. In each case they were asked to describe the process of identification and verification, detailing the people responsible, the process and level of satisfaction with the process.

It can be said from the outset that the system for identifying the OVCs and families is not only transparent and consultative, but also very explicit and well entrenched. The system consists of four steps: identification, verification, establishment of a database, and monitoring.

Identification

OVCs and families were identified from every village at the project sites. The identification was done by members of the village themselves against specific criteria that allowed members to rank their relative vulnerability (Table 5). Only those perceived to be the worst-of were selected to fill the agreed village quotas. The size of the quota was decided before hand by the project implementing agencies (PIAs) basing on the project resource constraint. The list of those identified was then compiled and passed over to the PIAs. In a nutshell, the process of identification is community-owned and community-managed. The PLCs simply coordinated and facilitated it. There was no evidence that any members of the communities came up to contest the process. On the contrary, there was sufficient evidence that the community members highly appreciated the process as “it enabled us to appreciate each others difficulties, and support one another”.

Verification

Community-based OVCs identification was followed by verification visits during which the project staff evaluated the criteria applied in the identification process. They assessed the extent of adherence to procedures, participation and satisfaction of the community. This was also done transparently in the presence, not only of the PLCs and the identified beneficiaries, but also of the other parish community members.

Database establishment

Following the verification of the OVCs, the project staff moved to establish a database containing the important personal profiles of the OVCs. The database is stationed at the project office and allows also the project staff to easily trace the OVCs. It is also an independent way of guarding against corruption and ensuring that benefits reach the intended targets.

Monitoring

Further more, the PLCs and the PECs regularly follow up and monitor the progress of the OVCs, either at home, business premises or at school. They also monitor the implementation of the project; .e.g. they ensure that project inputs such as mosquito nets go to the right beneficiaries, and that they are put to good use.

b) Output 1.2: 400 hundred OVC (at least half girls) and 300 families identified

Through the process described above, 400 school-going and 70 out-of-school OVCs and 300 families were identified, verified and their profiles established in a database located at the project office. Information about the beneficiaries and the support families was also available, and easily retrievable, from the PLCs. In this way, it was easy to track the OVCs and the support families at every site.

c) Output 2.1; 400 OVCs regularly attending school with decrease in absenteeism

We visited three primary schools to assess the performance and attendance of the pupils. We had separate focus group discussions with the pupils and their class teachers. We also discussed the pupils' attendance and performance with the PLCs and PECs.

At all the sites we visited, the OVCs present on those particular days ranged between 80 to 90 percent. A few were absent for unexplained reasons. However, anecdotal evidence from the pupils, the class teachers and the PLCs indicate that attendance has remarkably improved since the OVCs received the scholastics materials. It was reported that a few OVCs occasionally miss classes for various reasons, unrelated to shortage or lack of materials, e.g. to provide help at home. This is a matter that affects all the pupils in general. Luckily, in the case of OVCs, the PECs are often available to counsel the guardians about the rights of the children. A couple of guardians talked to testified to this fact, admitting that *"we used to think it was teaching them to be responsible by asking them to stay at home to provide a hand to the domestic chores. After being told by the PECs that it is wrong and a violation of the children's rights, we no longer do so"*.

In addition to improved attendance, there was a strong indication of performance improvement in terms of participation in class on the part of the pupils. One teacher from Pumit Primary School observed that the morale of the OVCs in his class has shot up remarkably.

"Previously they would sit in class to attend the lessons, but sit outside the class rooms during exercises because they did not have the materials (exercise books and pens/pencils). They are even happier, partly because they are able to keep and maintain the scholastic materials better than other pupils because they have school bags. They seem to like to come to school, partly also because they now feel very smart and confident, as they are admired by other pupils".

However, there was no evidence to show that the improved attendance and heightened morale is translating in improved academic performance. It would be very ambitious to do so, given the timeframe of implementation so far.

Challenge: At one site, the class teachers gave an impression of lack of awareness of who the exact beneficiary OVCs were, and thus had not been able to monitor them closely. Yet, the PLCs in the same area reported having submitted the list of the beneficiary OVC pupils to the headmaster, and to have been regularly following them up while at school. This exceptional case seemed to have been a site-specific communication problem.

Recommendation: Build a closer linkage during follow-up of the pupils with the class teachers as well as a closer liaison between the teachers and the PECs and PLCs.

d) *Output 2.2: 70 OVCs out of school trained in vocational skills, running personal business and earning own income*

In the case of the OVCs that are out of school, the project idea was that once provided with vocational and business skills and given the necessary equipment, they would start some income generating activities, and improve their socio-economic status over the medium and long term.

Consequently, a 3-month vocational hands-on training was provided for the female and male OVCs respectively. 40 girls underwent training in tailoring while 30 boys were trained in carpentry and joinery. The girls were subsequently provided with a “Singer” sewing machine each and the boys with a tool box each, containing the essential tools for making the common furniture.

The potential outcome of any intervention is contingent on the relevance and adequacy of the interventions. For this reason, the team visited the training sites to assess the curriculum of the training, their relevance and adequacy by interviewing the trainers.

Training in design and tailoring for female OOS OVCs

The girls were trained at *Unique Attractions*, a firm with about 25 years track record in tailoring and design, and a training component. The proprietors have worked in various parts of the country and dealt with people of various backgrounds.

The training in tailoring covered all the basic skills that a tailor in the contexts from which the girls originated would require. The duration was judged to be adequate by the trainers. For more advanced skills such as making “gomesis”, an additional one month would have been required. It was deemed (by the trainers) that these ‘advanced’ skills could still be acquired over a period of time. The training also included basic maintenance skills and entrepreneurship.

Overall about 75% (30/40) of the trainee girls were judged by the trainers to have sufficiently understood the basic knowledge and skills provided during the course. This judgement was made by weighing the quality of products produced during the training.

However, many of the girls talked to, did not feel competent enough to run own businesses. Collateral information revealed that nearly all the girls came out from the training feeling too raw to start their own businesses. As such nearly all of them were annexed to experienced tailors for the purpose of further skills acquisition. According to one OVC from Pumit “... *it normally takes about 2 ½ years training for some one to acquire adequate skills in tailoring. Therefore 3 months training simply provided basic exposure, hence the importance of further apprenticeship*”.

Shortcomings/Lessons learnt: Our general impression is that the more mature girls (e.g. 16 years or above) seemed to have appreciated the course much better than the younger ones. This is probably a reflection of level of personal tastes which is a function of exposure. It was observed [by the trainers and a few OVCs] that the older girls were normally more keen and aware of the changing fashions than the young ones and hence had more conceptual abilities and interests than the young ones.

Training of the male OVCs in Carpentry and Joinery

The boys were trained at FORUDES, a not-for-profit organisation which has been operational since 2001. It receives financial support from GTZ.

The three months of training was judged (by the trainers) a basic but essential start-up that can be built on by exposure given that competency in carpentry and joinery requires a 3 years course for an award of a Junior Certificate of Education by the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB). This was because the course covered 8 of the usual 12 modules. The use and maintenance of tools were included in the training. Entrepreneurial skills and education about HIV/AIDS were also provided.

After the training, the graduates were provided with tool kits containing standard tools, which were inspected by the experts at FORUDES, and judged to be of good quality.

Overall the level of understanding was rated to be high. About 26 out of the 30 boys had very good understanding of the course. One boy with an exceptional performance was retained by the school to continue with his studies up to the junior certificate level.

Lessons learnt: The FORUDES trainers made a couple of suggestions we found very valid. Firstly, they felt that the course should have been preceded by career guidance. This would have given the trainees opportunities to choose between different options that appeal to their individual interests. Secondly, a start-up capital (or a revolving fund) should have been provided at the end of the training; 150,000/= was judged to be adequate to start a workshop. During the course, the trainers were advised to form an ‘alumni association’, and preferably establish joint workshops at the beginning. This could enable FORUDES staff to provide them with support supervision and it could be easier for them to link the alumni to funding opportunities.

Establishment and operations of IGAs

Provision of vocational skills and start-up tools to out-of-schools OVCs were not ends in themselves. It was expected that after acquisition of the basic skills and essential equipment/tools, the OVCs would set up and engage in businesses that would improve their income, social status and make them self-reliant.

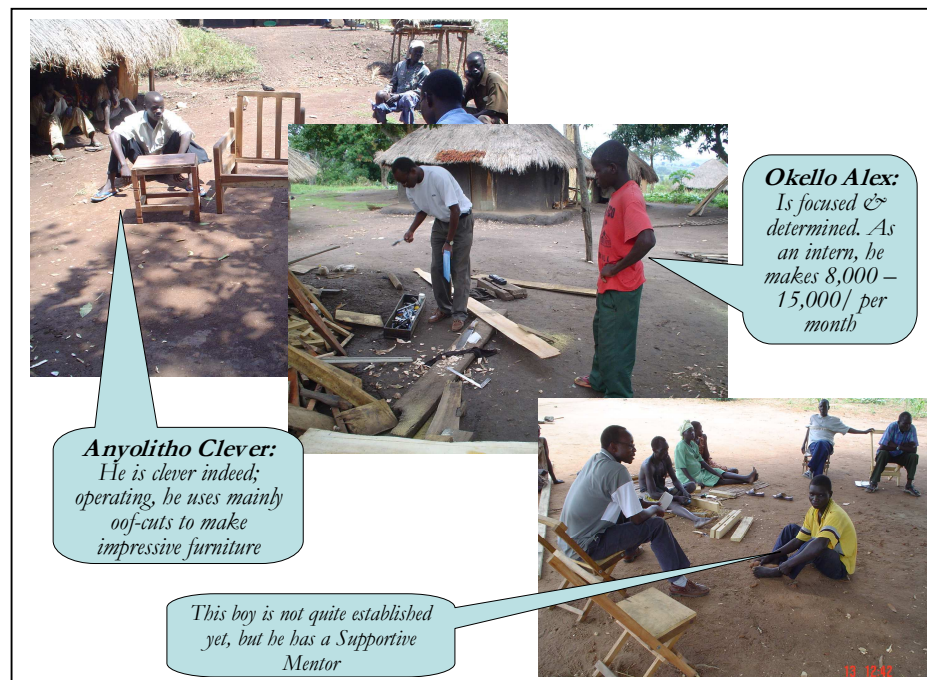
We physically tracked about 5 boys (2 in Pachaka, 2 in Abongo and 1 in Pumit) and 6 girls (4 in Pachaka, 1 in Abongo and 1 in Pumit) to assess if their businesses were up and operating. The selection of the subjects was based on the ease of accessibility vis-à-vis the field visit itinerary. In addition, anecdotal evidence was gathered regarding the OVCs we could not physically visit. This collateral information was obtained from the PLCs and the visited OVCs. The PLCs are in regular contact with the OVCs and have good knowledge of their progress. Further more, it was apparent that the OVCs themselves often meet to share experience and are familiar with the progress of one another.

The findings reveal the followings:

- *Status of the carpentry workshops:* All the boys had established their workshops (benches under trees). However, most of the OVCs did not feel confident working alone. As such

most of them had annexed themselves to existing experienced carpenters [called their ‘field trainers’] in their localities. According to these ‘field trainers’, the vocational training provided the OVCs with only basic knowledge about carpentry but not the skills and confidence to take off independently. Thus, this annexure arrangement provided the OVCs with confidence, exposure as well as more skills. They were also able to access some of the tools that were not part of the tool box provided. Further, although orders are normally given to the more experienced colleagues, work was done as a team and the proceeds shared. In this way, Okello Alex (17 years) from Pachaka parish was able to raise between US\$ 8,000 – 15,000 in good months. He has bought a goat and is able to support his mother, besides catering for his personal need.

Figure 2: Male OVCs at different stages of workshop establishment



In some cases like in Abongo, however, the OVCs are operating on their own, although they seek advice from time to time from experienced carpenters in the areas. A one Anyolitho Clever is doing just this. He uses off-cuts timber to make a number of stools with ready market and has saved some money, bought 2 hens and is able to attend to personal needs. During our visit, he pointed that he has one major order of a sofa set to complete and that the community around is beginning to trust his competencies.

- *Status of the Tailoring business:* As the boys, most of the female graduates are also working as apprentices with experienced tailors in their vicinity. An added merit from this approach to the girls is that it also serves to advertise them as prospective interns and serves to dispel the belief that they are incompetent, just because they are new in the market and have nothing of their own to show.

There was an observed stark difference between the more mature girls and the much younger ones. The more mature girls seemed more motivated and upward looking than the young ones who were struggling to cope. Whereas the older girls were making some quality products, it seems that most of the younger ones are still struggling with the basics.

Figure 3: Female OVCs at different stages of workshop establishment



Challenges:

- Virtually all the workshops (shared or solo) visited were struggling to run, the main challenge being the lack of start-up capital. As such, the boys could not make furniture to display to show their competencies; neither could they meet demands for the few orders they secure. Equally, the girls lack these funds with which to procure materials to practice with. This has limited their activities to minor repairs that do not bring in sufficient returns.
- Further more, the quality of the products made by these junior carpenters (as some of the potential community market buyers call them) does not merit high prices generally.
- Besides, some of the tools, particularly the 'G-cram' are getting spoilt (bent). This was reported by both OVCs at Pachaka.
- The annexure arrangement has in some cases also yielded 'taking advantage over the OVCs'. In Pachaka parish, one OVC running a joint workshop with his own guardian, has not been able to really take off, because the guardian does not want to see him

progress, fearing he could 'break off' from him. He has decided to possess his tools, and receives all the orders and income. Nevertheless, he receives about 2000 to 3000/= per month, far better than was he was earning before this project.

Conclusion: Innovation, personal drive, courage and self belief are key to the success of the OVCs' business initiatives. These qualities seem to be age and context-sensitive. However, working alongside experienced and supportive mentors seem to help the OVCs acquire them. By and large, the training should have been followed by monitored apprenticeship.

Recommendations: The training should have included more options, accompanied with career guidance, although this could have been more difficult for practical reasons (the tailoring school offers training in tailoring only). Apprenticeship could be made a necessary component of the OVC training, where a formal contract is entered into with the trainers and progress monitored by the PLCs and Field Officers.

e) *Output 2.3: 300 Families engaged in income generating activities for provision of basic social services to the children*

In order to achieve this objective, all the identified families were provided with:

(i) Entrepreneurship skills training geared at enhancing their livelihood diversification processes. A private firm, West Nile Private Sector Development Promotion Centre, was hired to conduct the training using an adapted module that integrates the usual income generation selection, planning, and management with a broader livelihood approach.

(ii) Improved planting materials. While all families received cassava cuttings, the geographical difference between Erussi and Wadelai prompted the provision of *Victoria* Irish potato seeds and ground nuts in Erussi, and upland rice in Wadelai. However, the distribution of rice seeds was halted because of the dry spell. The groundnuts have been substituted with mre cassava cuttings.

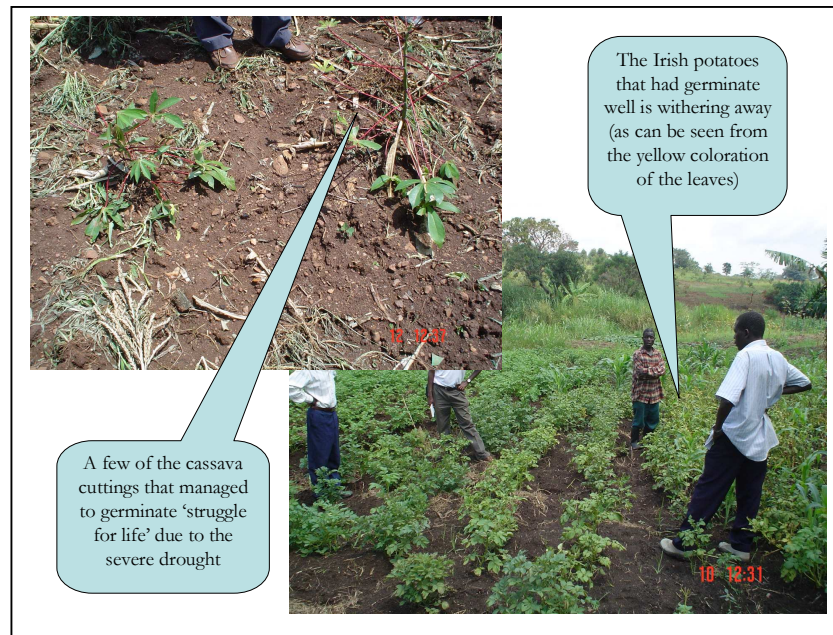
(iii) On top of the supplies of improved planting materials, some basic agronomic trainings were provided so that the farm-households could rightly plant and control field pest and diseases.

Performance of the crops and livelihood diversification drive

In all the areas visited, it was observed that only a few of the able households were using the IGA management skills. Equally, only a few of the seeds provided, although fully planted, were severely affected (literally burnt) by the harsh weather. It was only in exceptional cases where the families used wetland valleys that some of the seeds (especially Irish potatoes) were available.

From this finding, it is evident that the ability to put skills into use for IGA is largely dependent on capital given that the labor and market exists in the local areas. Without any start-up or booster funds, many trainees find it hard to adopt such business practices.

Figure 4: The Effect of drought on the crops that were planted



Besides, even if the weather were to be favourable, a seasons' production alone is too inadequate to increase the potentials of those households substantially to provide for the basic needs of the OVCs during this project phase; at least not in the short run. It would have only set the impetus for increased production which could have only been sufficient to provide more seeds/stalks for further planting on a larger scale during the subsequent season(s). It is only then that the respective households would have been reasonably expected to start earning some cash from the crops. This means that continued (emergency) support to the in-school OVCs should have been maintained until the crops and the grinding mill schemes take off.

f) *Output 4.1: computers and accessories*

These were delivered by UNICEF to the project implementation agencies (PIA), although late.

g) *Output 4.2: quarterly reports to UNICEF and the District Local Government*

The PIA, at the time of the evaluation, had completed two periodic reports developed from the various activity reports for the period. These reports were also widely circulated among the different stakeholders in the district.

3.2.3 *Impacts and Unintended Outcomes*

The impact of a project is normally the most distal outcome, often realized long after the project has closed. In this particular case, it relates to the project purpose and goal. Thus, ideally, impact of this project must, in the long run, be judged by the level of reduction in the vulnerability of the OVCs, and by the ability of the support families to provide for the basic needs of the OVCs.

It is too early to make conclusive statements about this level of outcome. The degrees of achievements of the immediate and intermediate outputs described above indicate how probable it is that the project will have the desired impact. From the foregoing, all the indications are that

the out-of-school OVCs are generally much better off now. Though they are struggling, they are earning some income, able to provide for some of their basic needs, and some of them are planning better for their future (planning to go back to school, etc). If the suggestion to provide this group of OVCs with start-up capital (or revolving fund) is provided, then the future looks more assured for them.

It is the future of the in-school OVCs that depend a lot on the performance of the grinding mills (explained) and the future capacities of the support families to provide for them. Basing on what has been described so far, the possibility of achieving this outcome is very far fetched; except if the community-based projects are diversified and the food security aspects of family support is sustained for a while (say another year) or diversified.

We also identified some proxy indicators of impact related to personal growth or attitude and behaviour of the OVCs. A number of the OVCs are reported to have adopted a more 'positive living'; that is they are spending much more time on their businesses instead of being idle and disorderly. They are thinking more and more about the future and using their income prudently.

As elaborated in section 3.4 (on sustainability), the creation of the PLCs and PECs have also led to a high degree of community development (the importance of organising for mutual support or development). The members of the committee have been able to identify their own potentials, and the amount of social capital that exists if people organize. These unintended outcomes are likely to be vital in the sustainability of the OVC support.

There is also a high degree of awareness about children's rights. That in itself may determine how the OVCs are treated in the long run.

The grinding mill scheme has lessened the burdens of the women in the villages who in the past pounded cassava in wooden mortars and grounded millet/sorghum on stones besides walking >5km in search for a milling service.

The community members have developed linkages with other organisations, e.g. NUSAF, that they may be exploited in future for other purposes

3.3 Efficiency of implementation (ToR 3)

3.3.1 Financial prudence

Projects are often despised because, among other things (such as lack of sustainability), very miserable amounts of the project funds trickle down to the beneficiaries. All too often, the bulk of the resources are used to 'follow' the little funds allocated for the beneficiaries. Thus, one of the key questions to answer was whether financial resources were used optimally in favor of beneficiaries.

To answer the question, we compared the proportion of the allocation that went into activities that directly benefited the OVCs, the support families and the community structures⁴, vis-à-vis

⁴ Community structures are an integral part of long term OVC support

the proportion used to administer the activities. The project documents refer to the former activities is called “*Direct Project Activities*”. We therefore called the latter group of activities “*Indirect Project Activities*”.

Various organisations/funders often have their own guidelines regarding optimality of resource allocation. In the absence of such a guideline from the funders, we assumed that optimality was implied in the amount of funds disbursed for various activities⁵. We therefore construed financial prudence by the extent to which the implementing agencies adhered to these implied votes.

We also applied “Pareto Principle” so as to have an independent impression of how far the the budget allocations/expenditures favour the beneficiaries. Pareto principle or Pareto rule is a *rule of thumb* that can be applied to any situation to test for allocative efficiency, in the absence of a hard-and-fast guideline or rule.

According to Pareto principle, an efficient project is one where a small amount of the project resources (typically 20% maximum) would be used to deliver a large amount (typically 80%) of outputs or activities. Applied to resource allocation in this project, this principle would suggest that a maximum of 20% of the resources should have been used for administration, operation, support services, monitoring and evaluation. It follows that at least 80% should have gone into direct project activities.

The table below shows how the funding organisation (UNICEF) disbursed funds for various activities, and how the money was spent by AFARD/CARIRAS, the implementing agencies.

Table 8: Resource Allocation Pattern

	Activity	Disbursement		Actual expenses		Variance (savings)	
		UGX	%	UGX	%	UGX	%
1	Total Over Head (Indirect) Cost	12,174,520	4.4%	10,971,827	3.9%	1,202,693	9.9%
2	Total Programme Support Cost	20,200,000	7.2%	14,610,000	5.2%	5,590,000	27.7%
3	Total Programme Operational Cost	6,360,000	2.3%	3,930,000	1.4%	2,430,000	38.2%
4	Total Direct Project Expenditures	223,925,700	80.1%	237,463,200	84.7%	-13,537,500	-6.0%
5	Total Monitoring Cost	6,800,000	2.4%	3,300,000	1.2%	3,500,000	51.5%
6	Evaluation	10,000,000	3.6%	10,000,000	3.6%	0	0.0%
	GRAND TOTAL	279,460,220	100.0%	280,275,027	100.0%	-814807	-0.3%

Source: Project Financial Records and Progress Reports. The total spent exceeded the amount disbursed amount, the difference being the project’s own contribution

If we apply the 80:20 rule of Pareto optimality, one would argue that the project proposal was approved, and funds disbursed, with allocative efficiency (Pareto optimality) in mind. About 80% of the funds was meant to go into direct project activities. These are activities with direct benefits to the primary beneficiaries, or the support families or the community structures. Less than 20% was meant to cover the cost of administration (internet, phone bills, etc), support

⁵ we later established that UNICEF can tolerate up to 25% as expenditure on ‘indirect project activities’

activities (project staff), operations (maintenance, transport) and monitoring and evaluation (including monthly meetings).

A look at how the funds were spent is also impressive, not only in terms of adherence to the proposed budget, but also the level of ‘sacrifice’ made out of the resources meant for the “*indirect project activities*”. A review of the audited accounts show that significant savings were made in virtually all these latter group of activities and redirected into the ‘*direct project activities*’. Yet, impressively, all activities were implemented as planned (section 3.2.1).

However, it must be noted that this analysis reflects only how the project money was allocated. It is not a reflection of the full cost of the project. The true cost of the project would have captured the value of other resources that the implementing agencies (AFARD/CARITAS) used in implementing the project (staff salaries, equipment use, buildings, etc). Thus, this impressive picture has been possible because the organisations were simply used as conduits for channeling resources. If the implementing agencies were born specifically for the purpose of this project, the overhead, intermediate, and ancillary costs would have been considerably higher. Therefore, it was good policy on the part of the funders to use organisations that were already established.

3.3.2 Cost per beneficiary

Items 5 – 9 in the table below give the breakdown of how the direct project expenditures were allocated⁶

Table 9: Resource allocation Pattern disaggregated by OVC types

	Activity		Actual expenses	
1	Overhead (Indirect) Cost		10,971,827	3.9%
2	Programme (Admin support) Support Cost		14,610,000	5.2%
3	Monitoring and Evaluation Cost		13,300,000	4.7%
4	Operational Cost		3,930,000	1.4%
5	Direct Project Expenditures - Community level		156,520,700	55.8%
6	Direct Project Expenditures - Beneficiaries level			
7	OOS OVCs (girls)		27,840,000	9.9%
	Sewing Machines	6,600,000		
	Training	21,240,000		
8	OOS OVCs (boys)		28,650,000	10.2%
	Carpentry Tools	12,720,000		
	Training	15,930,000		
9	IS OVCs		24,452,500	8.7%
	Scholastic materials	20,870,000		
	Training (life skills)	3,582,500		
	GRAND TOTAL		280,275,027	
	TOTAL DIRECT PROJECT LEVEL		237,463,200	84.7%
	DIR OVC level		80,942,500	

⁶ The cost of training OOS OVCs was an aggregate amount. We allocated that amount between the female and male groups proportionally basing on the number of OVCs in each sex group

Of the funds that went directly into project activities, the biggest chunk (55.8%) went into developing and the running of community and family level infrastructures (PLCs, PECs, grinding mills, rice huller, improved crop seeds). As explained earlier, these structures are the lifeline of the project, definitely now and probably in future. About 28.9% went into kick-starting services that directly benefit the primary beneficiaries (OVCs).

To further appreciate the cost per beneficiary, the direct project expenditures were further divided into 2 parts; namely, expenditures at the community/family levels, and expenditures made directly on OVCs. Direct expenditures on OVCs were further disaggregated by OVC types. Thus, all expenditures fall into three major areas (referred to as *cost centers*) as summarised below:

Group A: *“Indirect project expenditures*, consisting of overhead, supportive services, operations, monitoring and evaluation

Group B: *Direct Project Expenditures at **community level*** (PLCs, PECs, grinding mill schemes, etc)

Group C: *Direct Project Expenditures at **OVC levels***. This were further disaggregated into three types

- Out-of-school (OOS) OVC—girls
- Out-of-school (OOS) OVC—boys
- In-school (IS) OVCs

Disaggregating OVC level of expenditures by OVC types was deemed necessary because they varied in amounts by OVC types. Therefore, it would be misleading to simply average the total cost of the project by the total number of OVCs. Simple averages like these do not tell any body how well the resources have been targeted. Neither are they useful for future planning. Further more, by identifying the different expenditure levels (cost centers) and categorizing the final beneficiaries, costs incurred at higher levels (A and B) can be appropriately apportioned to the beneficiary groups.

Therefore, costs incurred at the higher cost centers (Groups A and B) were allocated down to the final beneficiaries via a two-step allocation method. Firstly, costs from the indirect project activities were allocated to the direct project activities, at both the community/family-level and the OVCs levels. This is because the indirect project expenditures were incurred to provide services at both the community/family levels as well as to the OVCs directly. The allocation statistic used was the relative amount of expenditures at each cost level. Secondly, the total costs incurred at the community levels (direct and allocated) were further allocated to the primary beneficiaries using the proportionate number of OVCs in each category.

Table 10 below gives a summary of the costs after allocation of costs from A and B to the different OVC categories

Table 10: Cost per OVC Type after stepping-down Higher-level costs

Cost Center	Direct Cost*	Allocated Costs		Revised Total	Allocated Costs		Revised Total	Total per OVC
		statistic	amount		statistic	amount		
Group A Expenditures	42,811,827	---	---					
Group B Expenditures	156,520,700	0.66	28,218,845	184,739,545	---	---		
OOS OVCs (girls)	27,840,00	0.12	5,019,225	32,859,225	0.09	15,722,514	48,581,740	1,214,543
OOS OVCs (boys)	28,650,000	0.12	5,165,259	33,815,259	0.06	11,791,886	45,607,144	1,520,238
In-school OVCs	24,452,500	0.10	4,408,499	28,860,999	0.85	157,225,145	186,086,143	465,215
TOTAL	280,275,027	1.00	42,811,827	280,275,027	1.00	184,739,545	280,275,027	

* Direct Cost = Cost incurred (expenditures made) at that particular cost center or activity group; OOS = out-of-school;

The values of investments in each category of OOS OVCs (males vs. females) are comparable (not much difference). The expenditures on the in-school OVCs seems much less, but is supposed to be recurrent.

Without any International standards, it is difficult to comment on the appropriateness of targeting basing on these figures alone. However, these figures are useful for future planning if this project was to be replicated elsewhere. It enables one to quickly come out with rough budget estimates for different mixes of OVC types.

3.3.3 Project activity completion rate

Another indicator assessed as a measure of efficiency was whether activities were executed in time. As already mentioned in section 3.2.1, most activities were executed within the planned timeframe, and in a number of cases, time targets were exceeded, particularly during the first one month of the project life. The few notable exceptions with the mosquito nets and rice seeds were also pointed to have emanated from delays from the funding organization and the bad weather respectively. However, the case for the rice huller was attributed to need to have the huller customized for upland rice given that it was designed for a wetland rice species (and the process is on-going).

Therefore, the project staffs were very efficient in service deliveries, to the extent that all activities within their control were completed within the planned time frame.

3.4 Sustainability of the Project (ToR 4)

Sustainability, in the context of the evaluation, referred to the ability of the community and the established structures to continue to deliver services on their own. The main indicators identified for this assessment included

- The establishment and functioning of community management structures (PLCs and PECs).

- b) The financial and technical performance of the capital investments (the grinding mills and the rice huller).

3.4.1 Establishment and functioning of the community management structures

As already explained, all the parishes visited had well organised PLCs and PECs who were working hand in hand. The membership of these structures was democratically elected by the community basing on the level of trust they hold in them. Both the PLCs and PECs were aware of their roles, and have been carrying them out to reasonable standards. They expressed willingness to continue with these responsibilities even if the project ended.

In Pachaka Parish, the membership of the PLC consisted of people who had already organised themselves around a number of development agenda, e.g. tree planting, aimed at providing mutual support. They had already worked with AFARD on a similar project (food security). Therefore, the introduction of the OVC support project is viewed as an opportunity for furthering a cause that is consistent with the general objective of their community and the integration of the OVC support project into their on-going agenda seems feasible and natural.

In other Parishes, these community support structures were created specifically for the purpose of managing the OVCs Support Project. Nevertheless, in both Abongo and Pumit, the PLCs and PECs were as organised and functional as the one at Pachaka Parish.

There is an established forum where ideas are discussed and decisions are made. At all the sites visited, the PLCs and PECs had weekly review meetings and sometimes other impromptu ones depending on the needs. This has enabled the community to brainstorm on ways of promoting development in different ways in their community. They have also considered various ways of continuing with OVC support, on a larger scale. For example, all the committees have written and presented project proposals to NUSAF, and are awaiting their decisions. Others have also considered ways of diversifying the savings from the grinding mill schemes (e.g. having community gardens of improved variety of crops [in Abongo], investing in Agro-forestry [Pachaka])

The PLCs have received adequate training and have established simple financial records and documentation system that allow internal auditing.

There is a strong “sense of community” and morale amongst the members, and the families talked to. So strong is the appreciation of the existence of the PLCs (and PECs) that, in Abongo, their leadership is already being sought in other social matters which (officially) fall outside their jurisdiction (e.g. funeral arrangements). In some instances, members of the community are beginning to assign matters that were normally the responsibilities of the LCs to the PLCs. Obviously these are strong indications that these structures are getting wide social approval as a means of mutual support. Acceptability of a social structure is crucial in its effectiveness in delivering social goods. This is mainly because of the obvious benefits of the project and the substantial say they have in the management of the programs.

The regular meetings have been an eye opener for the community structures who seem to have realised their own potentials in helping the OVCs.

Lessons learnt and recommendations: Owing to the effectiveness and wide acceptability of the PLCs, the general view at the feedback workshop (especially of the district officials) was that they should be used as a vehicle for future delivery of OVC support projects, be they from Government or other Civil Society organisations. It was recommended that modalities be established to mainstream the activities of the PLCs and PECs into the subcounty and district development activities. The entry point of the integration was thought to be at the level of the Parish Development Committees (PDCs). In this regard, the PLCs were advised to be proactive, and have their plans ready before the planning cycles begin. The PIAs could assist the guide the PLCs in planning or proposal writing. A presentation regarding the success of this project, the vital roles of the community structures, could be made to all subcounty chiefs, again, on a separate day.

Conclusion: Overall, the community structures are well established, entrenched and functioning. Ways of continuing with OVC support have been identified, and look feasible. Establishment of the PLCs and PECc has resulted into a sense of community (amongst those who were not yet organised for mutual support) and community development (or strengthening) amongst those already organised for mutual support.

3.4.2 Establishment and performance of the Grinding mill schemes and the management committees

The grinding mills have all been installed, and operational. Most mills became operational between March and April; 2 of them (Padolo & Pajur) became operational in May, 2006.

All of them were reported to have experienced frequent breakdowns at the beginning. Although the breakdowns were partly attributed to installation errors and damage caused during transportation, a major reason was the recruitment of people without the basic knowledge of maintenance, as operators of the machines. The project hired some technicians to fix the problems and also provided some technical advice to the machine operators. By and large, all the mills were up and running at the time of the evaluation.

The mills are managed by the PLCs, who have been provided some basic training on financial management. There is a clear guideline on how the proceeds from the grinding mills should be shared (see Table 7 below). The committee members have been taught how to keep their records that are often audited (either informally by the field officers, or formally by the project auditors).

According to the financial accounting guidelines given to the PLCs, the proceeds from the grinding mills are supposed to be used as follows:

Table 11: Guideline on how income from the Grinding mills should be used

Expenditure priorities	Percent
Beneficiaries	45
Machine maintenance	15
Security (depreciation/replacement cost)	5
Operation (including fuel, operators' and PLC members' allowances)	35

It was estimated that the average net monthly savings from the grinding mills would be between 50,000/= to 60,000/=. This is the amount corresponding to the 45% for the beneficiaries. It

follows that, the average monthly returns from each grinding mill was expected to be between 110,000/= to 135,000/=.

▪ *Financial Performance of the Grinding Mills*

A review of the early financial returns (soon after installation) from the sites is shown in the table below.

Table 12: Financial performance of the grinding mills

Site	Financial Details	March	April	May	Average
Ragem	<i>Income</i>	107,250	63,250	108,550	93,017
	<i>Expenditure</i>	81,500	53,700	102,450	79,217
	<i>Balance saved</i>	25,750	9,550	6,100	13,800
Pakwinyo	<i>Income</i>	131,600	257,550	204,800	197,983
	<i>Expenditure</i>	83,300	217,650	216,150	172,367
	<i>Balance saved</i>	48,300	39,900	11,300	33,167
Mutir	<i>Income</i>	-	80,000	17,650	48,825
	<i>Expenditure</i>	-	40,000	8,300	24,150
	<i>Balance saved</i>	-	40,000	9,350	24,675
Oweko	<i>Income</i>	-	23,700	146,950	85,325
	<i>Expenditure</i>		8,950	107,650	58,300
	<i>Balance saved</i>		14,750	39,300	27,025
Abongo	<i>Income</i>			72,650	72,650
	<i>Expenditure</i>			50,050	50,050
	<i>Balance saved</i>			22,600	22,600
Padolo	<i>Income</i>			12,000	12,000
	<i>Expenditure</i>			9,100	9,100
	<i>Balance saved</i>			2,900	2,900
Payera	<i>Income</i>			113,550	113,550
	<i>Expenditure</i>			87,950	87,950
	<i>Balance saved</i>			25,600	25,600
Pachaka	<i>Income</i>			120,500	120,500
	<i>Expenditure</i>			75,500	75,500
	<i>Balance saved</i>			45,000	45,000

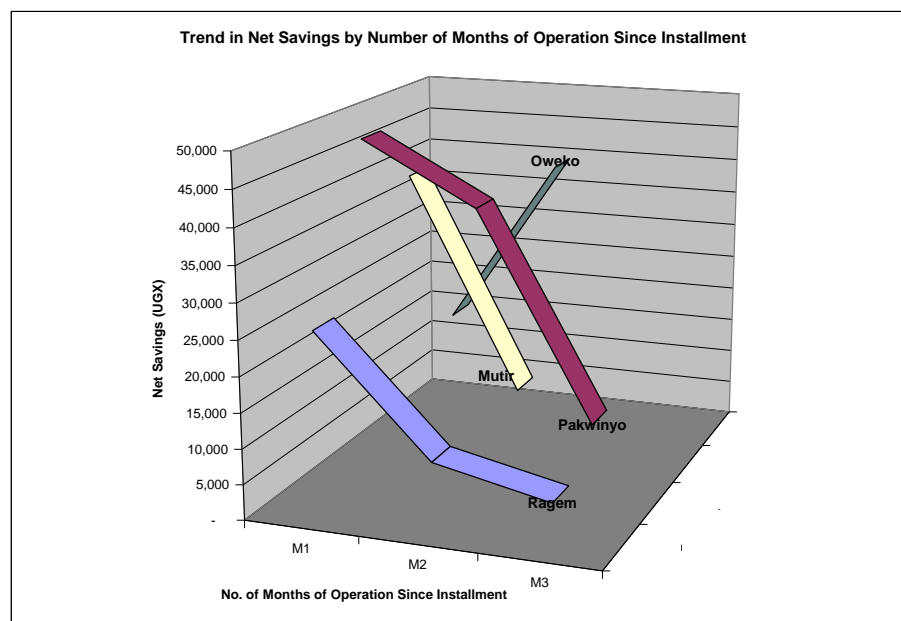
Source: Monthly MC Reports

We excluded financial returns for the month of June since they were partial (only up to mid June, 2006). Therefore, schemes with financial returns for June only (Abar and Abongo) do not appear in this summary.

The following key observations are apparent from the table (an related graph below):

- The schemes generally performed better in Wadelai Subcounty than in Erussi subcounty (save for Pachaka & Oweko). This was attributed to the fact that Wadelai is predominantly a grains growing area; hence there is higher demand for the mills there than there is in Erussi .
- A look at the trend of gross monthly income shows that at least half of schemes (Ragem, Pakwinyo, Oweko, Payera, and Pachaka) got off to a promising start. At each of these stations, the monthly gross income either exceeded, or came close, to the minimum monthly estimate (50,000/=) on at least one occasion.
- Unfortunately the monthly expenditures also closely measured up to the income, forcing the schemes to make meagre savings. For example, the Pakwinyo scheme that has shown very remarkable financial returns (gross income) could only manage a meagre 33, 176/= , as the average net saving over three months (about 17% of the average income). This is far below the expected monthly minimum saving of 50,000/=
- It is also notable that, at most sites, expenditures kept growing over the months at a faster rate than income (if they grew at all).This meant that the meagre monthly savings kept dwindling with time, as shown in Graph 1 below

Figure 5: Trends in net savings at four sites that had operated for at least 2 months



- The high expenditures were attributed to very high operational costs, mainly due to the high (and increasing) fuel prices. Unfortunately, this situation is not expected to improve. In addition, most schemes spent considerably on spares because of the frequent breakdowns explained earlier.
- More over, the prevailing drought and shortage of foodstuff is already considerably affecting service uptake. This could further raise the average cost of production over the coming months.

A Caveat: It has to be pointed out that the number of months reviewed here are too few for any reliable average to be computed. As such we can not comfortably predict the future financial performance of the mills from the figures presented here alone. If we assume the best case scenario (such as in Table 8) where the machines are operating without the frequent breakdowns experienced thus far, and the demand of the services improve (as foodstuffs become more available), then we expect a reasonable performance.

The table below summarises the financial returns of the schemes during the months when they performed the best (in terms of savings).

Table 13: Balance Sheet during the Best Performing Month

Mill Site	Best Financial Returns (UGX)			% saving
	Income	Exp	Saving	
Pakwinyo	131,600	83,300	48,300	36.7%
Pachaka	120,500	75,500	45,000	37.3%
Mutir	80,000	40,000	40,000	50.0%
Oweko	146,950	107,650	39,300	26.7%
Ragem	107,250	81,500	25,750	24.0%
Payera	113,550	87,950	25,600	22.5%
Abongo	72,650	50,050	22,600	31.1%
Padolo	38,400	23,000	15,400	40.1%
Average	101,363	68,619	32,744	32.3%

The net savings during those months ranged from about 40,000/= to 50,000/= despite the high fuel prices. Yet at some centres (e.g Ragem and Pakwinyo), these were not necessarily the months with the highest income. With the machines fixed, and improved harvests, it is possible for a number of schemes to exceed the estimated minimum saving of 50,000/= per mill.

- *Can this level of saving provides for the basic needs of the in-school OVCs?*

In light of the current performance of the mills, a number of questions immediately emerge at the horizon for consideration:

- *Can the schemes sustain the current level of support for the in-school OVCs?*
- *Should the level of support be scaled down?*
- *To what level should it be scaled down?*
- *What should be dropped out or scaled down?*

Can the schemes sustain the current level of support for the in-school OVCs?

A review of the expenditures on scholastics materials for the in-school OVCs revealed that the project spent a total of 20,970,000/= on all the 400 OVCs in school. This is equivalent to a paltry 52,175/= per in-school OVC per year, including transport hire and allowances for PLCs.

However, at a monthly saving of 50,000/= or 60,000/=, the annual amount available for each OVC still falls considerably short (15,000/= or 18,000/= respectively). To sustain the in-school OVC support at the current level, the average net monthly saving at each site needs to be 173,917/= (at least three times more). At the present rate, this could be possible if the best performing mills were spending only as much as they are saving now. This is practically impossible given the high operational costs (largely due to high fuel prices).

Should the level of support be scaled down?

The cost of scholastic materials cited above is partly due to tender prices, transport hire and allowances to PLCs (now covered in the operational costs of the schemes). If these items are bought from the local markets, the total costs should be lower. Even then the short fall might still be high, thus some degree of sacrifice seems inevitable. The PLCs need to consider some hard decisions. For example, of the items provided to the OVCs (from pencils to uniforms) is there any that can, or should, be dropped, or provided less frequently (say 2 yearly?). Should the expenditure framework be revised in favour of savings rather than, say, operation? Should PLCs' allowances be paid at whatever income levels?

4 LESSONS LEARNT FOR REPLICATION AND CAUTION & THE WAY FORWARD

The following are some of the points we consider worthy of note, particularly if the project has to be continued or replicated elsewhere:

1. Community definition of 'vulnerability' enhances the identification process and of the right beneficiaries thereby reducing the usual community leaders' and project self-styled 'smuggled relatives, friends and in-laws' as beneficiaries.
2. The success of project implementation is based on how effective a community is mobilized. But leaving mobilization in the hand of men promotes women's exclusion and as the men dominates on committees let alone pushing for their own interests.
3. Apprenticeship is crucial in enabling the OOS OVCs perfect their skills, build confidence, and advertise themselves. While this needs replication, it requires to be well planned and monitored because in isolated cases it proved otherwise, with OVCs being taken advantage of and their growth opportunities suppressed by those supervising them. If feasible, a formal contract could be entered into with the 'field supervisors/trainers'. In this light, continuance of support supervision by the trainers could also be considered.
4. Vocational training, the equipping of OVCs with tools/machines, and the provision of community-based grinding mills are all worthwhile and well thought out initiatives. However, without any start-up capital, the immense potentials of economic

independence from these supports are eroded. Subsequent projects could consider the provision of start-up capital. Or a revolving fund, as part and parcel of OVCs' and community-level strategies for financial self-reliance.

5. The business options offered to the OOS OVCs were only sex-specific; that is, no options were given to the individuals in the group. Yet age and individual contexts seemed to have had a profound influence on the extent to which individuals appreciated the vocational skills courses; and on their abilities to set up and run successful enterprises. Future entrepreneurship building strategies needs to be age-sensitive, and could include individual needs assessment, career guidance and a wider (but limited) business options, conditional on the resource constraints.
6. The beneficiaries' and other community members' faith in this project has dispelled their skepticisms about the uselessness of many projects; instead it has led to increased sense of cooperation for mutual support. This underlines the importance of active and meaningful community participation in decision making; not to mention the efficiency with which funds are used.
7. Owing to the effectiveness and wide acceptability of the PLCs they should be used as a vehicle for future delivery of OVC support projects, be they from Government or other Civil Society organisations. Modalities needs be established at the earliest opportunity to mainstream the activities of the PLCs and PECs into the subcounty and district development activities. The entry point of the integration could be at the level of the Parish Development Committees (PDCs). However, a wider sensitisation of the subcounty and district leaders (political and civil), regarding the success of this project and the effectiveness of the PLCs need to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity

5 CONCLUSION

The evidences reviewed overwhelmingly suggest that all the planned activities have been largely achieved and in many cases targets exceeded. Delays were notably unavoidable (due to bad weather or delays in procurement and delivery of supplies by the funding agency)

Many short term outputs have been realized, particularly establishment of a system for identification of OVCs and families, training and equipping of OVCs, provision of scholastic materials for the in-school OVCs, and the establishment of the grinding mills. All the male OVCs, and most of the female counterparts, have set up personal businesses. However, most of them were found struggling, mainly because of lack of start up capital. The grinding mills had all been installed, were operational and handed over to the PLCs to manage.

However, the financial returns in terms of savings have so far been below par. The main reasons for this were the high operational costs (mainly due to high fuel prices) coupled with scarcity of foodstuffs due to the prevailing drought.

To sustain the current level of support to the in-school OVCs, the net monthly savings from the grinding mills need to reach at least 150,000/=. Therefore, even if the schemes were to meet the monthly targets of 50,000/= to 60,000/= in terms of net savings, this amount would be considerably short. In addition to diversifying the community-level IGAs, the PLCs may need to revise the expenditure guidelines in favour of the OVCs, and scale down the level of support to the OVCs.

The performances of the grinding mill schemes were expected to improve since most of them were operationally stable at the evaluation time, and harvests were expected to improve in future. Until then we do not envisage that the current level of savings are sufficient to provide for the needs of the OVCs, except if some sacrifice is made.

The strategy to strengthen family support capability (by way of improved crop varieties), though prudent, was unavoidably undermined by adverse weather. Given the potential benefit of this strategy, the activities could be repeated, subject to resource constraints.

Following from the foregoing, continued support for the in-school OVCs, at least for the next six months, could be considered.

The project funds were prudently used as the funds largely ‘followed’ the beneficiaries. The project staff were fully committed, and completed most activities in record time.

By and large, this is a project that has been unanimously embraced by all the key stakeholders, particularly the communities and the beneficiaries in the project areas. Where the planned activities were implemented, the effects have been profound on the beneficiaries, except for the challenges already highlighted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GoU (2004); *National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children Policy*; Ministry of Gender and, Labour and Social Development

AFARD & CARITAS (2006); OVCs Support Project, Progress Reports (Phase 1 & 2)

UNICEF et al, 2004. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in a world with HIV/AIDS www.unicef.org/aids/files/Framework-english.pdf (15th August 2006)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Scope of work, key performance measure questions, and indicators

Performance focus	Scope of work	Key questions	Indicators	Source of information, method and tools
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project rationale and context right from its inception in view of beneficiary, national, district, and sub county needs; donor priorities. Relevance of project intervention strategies with due attention to beneficiary participation in and satisfaction with intervention strategies and results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project fit within the entire stakeholders' diverse needs? What is the stakeholder perception of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project juxtafitting within stakeholders' needs and strategies. Stakeholder satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews (UNICEF, CDO, PLCs, etc) Separate FGD for OVCs and families, one FDG per parish Document reviews; proposal vs. key principles (e.g. the GSF)
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and utilization of resources vide budget and plan. Time management in project progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project meeting its set down targets? Have the plan been achieved? Is the intervention logic correct? Why or why not? Is what is done the best way? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients targeted vis-à-vis reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews (UNICEF, CDO, PLCs, etc) Separate FGD for OVCs and families, one FDG per parish Document reviews; proposal, financial documents
Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project result chain (causal relationship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the strategies set cognizant of the expected outcomes? What relational links exists between inputs, outputs, and outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results link chain between inputs to outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews particularly with project initiators Document reviews; proposal vs. key principles (e.g. the GSF)

Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress and realization of set objectives in view of planned activities for the period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are financial resources used optimally in favor of beneficiaries? What is the comparative ratio of costs and outputs? Are services provided in time both in terms of project execution? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size of development verses recurrent budget Cost per client served Project activity completion rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial document reviews Key informant interviews with project managers
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the project is/will become sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the locally established structures able to operate on their own in the short, medium and long run? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational and financial viability of local structures especially PECs, PLCs, grinding mills, and improved varieties of crops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KI interviews FGDs with families of OVCs
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The foreseen and unforeseen changes in the lives of project beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the observable changes (positive and negative, and intended and unintended) in the beneficiaries regarding OVC well-being? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in KAP of beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KI (PLC and PEC) interviews FDGs with OVC care takers
Lessons learnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges affecting project objectives, impact and sustainability.⁷ Operational lessons related to the project itself. Developmental lessons related to societal consequences of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews Documentary reviews Focus group discussions

⁷ This should cover community, programme, administrative, and external-related factors.

Appendix 2: List of activities planned for implementation

Code	Activity	Time (in months)												Actor
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1	A system for identification and follow-up of 400 OVCs and 300 families strengthened/established.													
1.1	Hold preparatory meeting	X												Coordinator Caritas
1.2	Formation of Parish level committees	X												Coordinator Caritas
1.3	Identification of OVCs	X												Coordinator Caritas
1.4	Visit & verification	X												PO AFARD
1.5	Establishment of the OVC database	X												PO AFARD
2	Increased capacity of the OVCs and families to provide basic social services.													
2.1	Provision of termly scholastic materials to 400 OVC attending school.		X				X				X			Coordinator Caritas
2.2	Training of 70 OVCs in vocational skills		X	X	X									Coordinator Caritas
2.3	Provision of tools for 70 trainee graduates				X									Coordinator Caritas
2.4	Provision of fishing nets to 30 families		X	X										PO AFARD
2.5	Provision of Hybrid seeds to 70 families		X											PO AFARD
2.6	Install 7 grinding machines with trained management committees				X									PO AFARD
2.7	Install 3 fishing boats with trained management committees				X									PO AFARD
2.8	Provision of 200 families with 3 mosquito nets each				X	X								Coordinator Caritas
2.9	Training of 100 family heads and OVCs in entrepreneur skills							X	X					PO AFARD
2.10	Carryout monthly meetings – PLC levels	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Coordinator Caritas
2.11	Monitoring & Documentation of OVC/Family projects									X	X			PO AFARD
3	Increased community support, care and protection of the Rights of OVCs													
3.1	Train 20 Peer educator-cum-counselors			X										PO AFARD

3.2	Hold 10 awareness seminars for 500 community members				X									PO AFARD
3.3	Hold 2 advocacy and lobbying workshops for 100 local government staff					X								PO AFARD
3.4	Produce local IECs				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	PO AFARD
3.5	Provide psychosocial counseling to 360 OVCs				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	PO AFARD
3.6	Train 100 OVCs in life skills					X								Coordinator Caritas
4	Management support													
4.1	Equipping and tooling	X												PO AFARD
4.2	Periodic review meetings			X			X			X				Coordinator Caritas
4.3	Evaluation												X	PO AFARD

Appendix 2: Achievement of Targets *[related activities have been combined]*

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
Objective 1: <i>A system for identification and follow-up of 400 OVC and 300 families strengthened/ established</i>			
1.1 Hold preparatory meeting	10 preparatory meetings targeting 600 participants to identify and form . 20 PECs (2 for each parish) . 10 PLCs with 9 members each	10 preparatory meetings held in which: - 603 people (29.2% women) participated. - 20 PECs (50% women) identified - 90 PLCs (44.4% women) identified	- Communities know about and are supportive of the project - PECs and PLCs established as village volunteers and are effective contact points for the project
1.2 Training of Parish level committees.	90 PLC trained	10 PLCs (with 90 members – of whom 44.4% are women) were trained	- Project contact with community strengthened - PLCs aware of and effectively performing their roles
1.3 Identification of project beneficiaries.	-400 in school OVC -79 support families -70 out of school OVC identified.	Project beneficiaries were identified: 79 support families (60.8% Female-headed households); 400 in-school (50% girls) and 70 out-of schools (57% girls) OVC.	-Project targeted at the right OVCs -Project's other activities able to proceed as planned
1.4 Visit & verification (BDR database)	-10 visits (1 in each parish)	10 visits made and 549 beneficiaries (52.9% women) verified as truly needy	- PLC identified OVCs are those the communities consider needy and 'forged beneficiaries' were disqualified
1.5 Establishment of the OVC database	1 database to be established	1 database established with identified beneficiary digital photos and biodata.	- User friendly database of OVCs in place with clear traceability - Manipulations of project beneficiaries eliminated
Objective 2: <i>Increased capacity of the OVC and families to provide basic social services.</i>			
2.1 Provision of scholastic materials to 400 OVC.	400 OVC provided with scholastic materials	400 school bags; 400 mathematical sets, 3210 pencils, 3200 pens, and 16000 books (96 pages), 400 pairs of school uniforms distributed	- OVC regularly attending schools - Improved academic performance - Increased positive self esteem - Parental support to education expressed - student determination to work hard increased - pride in the project shown
2.2 Training 70 OVC (50% girls) in	70 OVC ((40 girls) trained	70 OVC trained vocational skills. 40 girls in tailoring skills and 30 boys in	- OVC able to fend for themselves in a sustainable way - Value of education instilled in OVCs

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
vocational skills.		carpentry skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pride in skills for self reliance expressed, - Idleness and disorderliness done away with -self esteem and confidence built -diversified savings energized
2.4 Training family heads and OVC in entrepreneur skills.	343 families heads	343 family heads and OVC (43.7% women) as well as 24 members of PLCs trained in entrepreneurial skills targeting business selection, planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to set profitable IGA - Knowledge of better business management skills - Using knowledge to access NUSAF funds - Households started savings in banks
2.5 Carrying out monthly meetings at parish level with PLCs	120 meetings	84 meetings held, 18 spot visits held, 2 technical visits conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Project is on track -Diagnostic study conducted and responses were timely
2.6 Establishment of grinding mill scheme	7 grinding mill machines installed	10 grinding mill machines established, 1 in each parish and earning at least UGX 40,000 per month 1 rice hurler procured for Wadelai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funds being locally raised to continue provision of scholastic materials for OVC in school after the phase out of the project -Women access to labor and time saving devices -Job opportunity created in the community -Community zeal to support OVC inspired
Objective 3: Increased community support, care and protection of the Rights of OVC			
3.1 Train Peer educators cum counselors	20 PECS trained	20 PECS(50% women) trained and awarded certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local services providers established in the community - PECs providing psychological support to OVC and communities
3.2 Hold awareness seminars	10 workshops held	10 workshops held for 500 people (48.8% women)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community members aware of the plight of OVC and community responsibilities to OVC rights - Different duty bearers agreed to enhance their support for OVC
3.3. Hold advocacy and lobbying workshops	No deliberate effort to mainstream OVC in local government plans 2 workshops for 100 people	2 workshops held for 100 people (25% Women)	Local government staff made commitment to mainstream OVC in plans and budget

Planned Activities	Planned Output	Actual Output	Effects
3.4 Produce local IEC materials	500 posters, 1000 stickers and 4 radio talk shows	600 posters, 1000 stickers, and 4 radio programmes produced	Increased awareness on OVC
3.5 Provide psychosocial counseling	360 OVCs counseled	Upto May 2006 already 12,025 were educated (53% females) and 2446 counseled (47% females)	- Self- stigmatization reduced - Parenting skills improved -Increased demand for VCT services -Enhanced community awareness of HIV/AIDS and public testimonies
3.6 Train OVC in life skills	100 OVC (50% girls)	100 OVC (50% girls) trained in life skills	OVC can assertively integrate in society by withstanding peer pressure and avoiding adult exploitation
3.7 Provision of OVC households with treated mosquito nets	479 households given 3 treated mosquito nets each	900 mosquito nets distributed	-Reduced morbidity in household
3.8 Provision of OVC households with hybrid seeds variety	150 families to be given rice seed, 479 to be given cassava cuttings, 188 to be given groundnuts seeds	479 families given cassava cuttings, 1 bag each, 141 given Irish potatoes, 188 to be given groundnuts seeds	-Due to bad weather, the yields attained were marginal

Appendix 3: List of People Met at the Project Sites

A) SCHOOL-GOING OVCs, ABONGO

N	Name	Age (years)	Sex	Class
1	Jaryekonga Collins	9	M	P.1
2	Atimango Emmanuela	7	F	P.1
3	Adegitho Innocent	9	M	P.2
4	Ocanda Jorgine	8	M	P.2
5	Ngamita Codoline	12	M	P.3
6	Fuambe Anvante	10	F	P.3
7	Kalokombe Francis	13	M	P.4
8	Agenonga Richard	13	M	P.4
9	Kiturach Maurine	14	F	P.4
10	Ozelle Sangtal	14	M	P.5
11	Okello Anjelo	13	M	P.5
12	Kayenyparwoth Grace	14	F	P.6
13	Berocan Michelina	13	F	P.6

B) HEADS OF SUPPORT FAMILIES, ABONGO

N	NAME	SEX
1	Oyeki Isabela	F
2	Angeyango Leotisia	F
3	Anewa Furasuaza	F
4	Ayerango Makulata	F
5	Akumu Veronica	F
6	Anyolith Vicensi	M
7	Ojiga Joseph	M
8	Odaga Valente	M

C) PLCs & PECs, ABONGO

N	NAME	SEX	TITTLE
1	Oronya Emmanuel	M	Chairman, PLC
2	Muber Stephen	M	Secretary, PLC
3	Lonyowegi Fathuma	F	Treasurer, PLC
4	Angeyonga Grace	F	Member, PLC
5	Odaga Jeres	F	“
6	Onegi Gerald	M	“
7	Acaye Sophia	F	“
8	Ozelle Francis	F	“
9	Okumu Michael	M	“
10	Berocan Lily	F	PEC

D) TEACHERS

N	NAME	TITTLE
1	Cwinya-ai Jackson	Deputy Head Master

Appendix 4: List of Key Informants

NAME	TITLE
1. Drs Lakwo Alfred	Project Officer, AFARD
2. Rev. Fr. Ocamgiu Geoffrey	Director, Caritas
3. Mr. Okecha Emmanuel	Field Officer, OVC Support Project
4. Rev. Fr. Ayela Jovenal	Field Officer OVC Support Project
5. Mr. Oyirwoth O. Norbert	Accountant, AFARD
6. Mr. Amule Julius	Senior Community Development Officer
7. Ms Onegiu Christine	Proprietor, Unique Attractions
8. Mr. Ocul Geoffrey	Principle, FORUDES

Appendix 5: Participants for the Feedback workshop

S/N	Name	Sex	Designation
1	Olama A. John	M	LC III C/man
2	Oronya Emmanuel	M	C/Man PLC, Abongo
3	Javuru Justino	M	C/Man PLC, Ragem
4	Rev. Fr. Ocamgiu	M	Director, Caritas
5	Rev. Fr. John Otwikende	M	Wadelai Parish
6	Oyenyboth Agness Topista	F	C/person PLC, Mutir
7	Athube Blania	M	C/person PLC, Pakwinyo
8	Ocanda Wilfred Jatho	M	Probation Officer, Nebbi Distric
9	Oyirwoth O. Norbert	M	Accountant, AFARD
10	Ogur J. Robert Theodore	M	Rep. Parish Priest Erussi
11	Urombi Emmanuel	M	C/man LC III, Erussi SC
12	Cikawun Hudson	M	Community Dev't Asst. Erussi
13	Othuba Ovuru Amos	M	C/man PLC, Abar
14	Kakura Michael	M	C/man PLC, Pajur
15	Ayei Ronald	M	C/man PLC, Padolo
16	Okumu Jasinto	M	C/man PLC, Payera
17	Ogen Stanislaus	M	District Education Officer, Nebbi
18	Cwinyai Wilfred	M	Project Officer, AFARD
19	Fuachan Hilda	F	Community Dev't Asst. Wadelai
20	Amule Julius	M	Community Development Officer
21	Anecho Chombe	M	C/man PLC, Pachaka
22	Opio Denis	M	C/man PLC
23	Hon Yoacel Joseph	M	Secretary for Social Services
24	Ogwang Thomas	M	Community Dev't Asst, Wadelai
25	Dr. Adubango Julius	M	Subcounty Chief Wadelai
26	Pithua Peter	M	Production Officer