



# Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda (SCOEN)



**SHARE CHILD  
OPPORTUNITY  
EASTERN AND  
NORTHERN  
UGANDA**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015**



## Acronyms

SCOEN	Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loans Associations
GBV	Gender Based Violence
NGO	Non Governmental Organization

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## Message from the Director

**S**hare Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda (SCOEN) celebrated its first birthday this year, we reflected on our humble beginnings and the inspiring journey full of growth and learning the organization has been on since her registration as an NGO in 2015. In the pursuit of growth and expansion, organizations can lose sight of the basic principles and values which gave motivation to their cause in the first place. Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda has shown that as we grow, staying true to our mission and values is what matters most of all.

We believe that unity, sustainability, integrity, personal and community growth, relationship building and a holistic approach to all things we do will help guide us on our mission to achieve transformation through self help initiatives, relief, giving all necessary assistance to orphans, needy children & widows in a holistic manner towards improvement in the quality of life through interventions that reduce vulnerability to illiteracy, ignorance poverty, disease, hunger and gross abuse of human rights.

It has not been without the support of our dear friends and generous individual donors that we have been able to development 100 VSLAs and profile 110 orphans and unsupported children.

As this milestone anniversary passes, we embark on a new chapter. After a year of passionate commitment to Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda founder members agreed Ms. Ijangolet HELLEN Florence to be the Director. It is with great admiration and respect that we thank all the founder members, volunteers for their inspiring vision and selfless service

We look forward to your continued support in 2016!

**Ijangolet .H. Florence**  
Executive Director

## Vote Of Thanks

### Thank You, from the Field

**M**y initial reaction to Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern has been one of respect and awe for all the work being done -between the households, Care giver's Income Generating Group in the form of VLSAs, and the Community Garden Project. On behalf of Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda I thank you for your continued support and encouragement in our efforts to build a safe and positive environment to honour women and Children.

**Obwakori Abraham**

Program Support Manager

## Our Contributors

Thank you to all of our donors, including those who have chosen to remain anonymous, for your ongoing commitment to Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda. Our gratitude also goes to those who have supported the organization and our *Care Giver's Income Generating Group* by making a purchase.

Thank you to our entire major Contributors, monthly individual donors, one time donors, gift in kind donors. We could not do this work without you, and for your loyal support we are immensely grateful. Thank you our founder members who generously donated monthly to support SCOEN.

## International

Dave Bonner and Cathie UK

We are grateful to the various District authorities and Government departments for their cooperation, moral and technical support in addressing the problem of vulnerable children.

We thank all the different volunteers and interns who visited the organization and worked with us.

Your interaction with us brought in new insights and energy in our work.

We thank all the children, staff and the Board of Directors for their commitment to the work of restoring the lives of children and single mothers.

**Finally, we thank God who provided for us throughout this year.**

## SCOEN Vision:

SCOEN visualized a society-healthy, prosperous and well learned child community. The end result is to raise reliable responsible, resourceful and productive citizens through providing and facilitating the education, instruction, training and equipping skills to the children in a high-standard life values set up.

## SCOEN Mission:

SCOEN is working to achieve transformation through self help initiatives, relief, giving all necessary assistance to orphans, needy children & widows in a holistic manner towards improvement in the quality of life through interventions that reduce vulnerability to illiteracy, ignorance poverty, disease, hunger and gross abuse of human rights.

## SCOEN Core values:

**Service excellence:** We are committed to excellence of the highest standards of quality and professionalism in our service delivery, and we strive to continually improve all aspects of our operations

**Trust:** We value the child and women community to us and to commit to delivering services in a safe and trustworthy environment through respectful, nurturing relationships that promote healing.

**Respect:** We respect each family's knowledge, values, ideas and beliefs and give them partnership role in their services and support based on trust and respect.

**Hope:** We believe in the potential of every child, family and community and champion a bright vision for their future through our service and compassion

**Integrity:** We are professionals who nurture relationships and hold ourselves and our programs accountable to highest ethical and performance standards. We have our own internal accountability safeguards.

**Innovation:** We actively strive to bring new ideas and creative approaches in our service delivery to identify and address the challenges of today's communities.

## The SCOEN primary areas of focuses are

- ☞ Promoting early grade learning and vocational skills development.
- ☞ Community Livelihood and economic empowerment
- ☞ Child wellbeing and development
- ☞ Community based advocacy
- ☞ Sexual reproductive health and HIV/AIDS

## ACTIONS IN 2015

The main actions of SCOEN in 2015 were;

- ☞ Identification of children from the streets, households.
- ☞ Peer Education.
- ☞ Community sensitization and training programs
- ☞ Community and family empowerment through VSLA development.
- ☞ Advocacy and Lobby activities.
- ☞ Networking and Public relations.
- ☞ Capacity building for staff and Board.

## INTRODUCTION

The aftermath of Northern and Eastern long running conflicts have destroyed the region's Asset including infrastructures, and engulfed many lives while displacements still to continue due to the periodically sliding conflicts and the rapidly political changes which the country let to become host mass destruction of public and private sectors, chaotic, weak administration and weak rule of law and without effective implementation.

These prolonged civil conflicts in Teso Sub Region have fostered a lost generation who has no experience of a kind of effective Government and poor access to basic social services particularly education and employment opportunities.

The most victims of the war, cattle rustling amongst youth, women and children Therefore, to enable all Teso community to make choices about the way that they want their region to be governed and lead prosperous future

So in response to this, the Leadership of Share Child Opportunity Eastern and Northern Uganda, together with the well wishers came up with an idea of supporting the women and children whose parents were victims of war, HIV/AIDS, Cattle rustling and drought in Teso region to engage protection on human rights, humanitarian issues, developments and Capacity Buildings with action research which based on participatory approach by all the levels of the community on their priorities for the future through SCOEN.

## CORE PROGRAMS

### **Laying the foundation for child development and learning**

We shall seek to foster/develop collaborative working with communities while strengthening their capacity and enlisting their commitment of being social safety nets, so as to promote holistic child development and care. Community child care action plans will be developed and periodically monitored and reviewed with a spectrum of targeted stakeholders.

Social workers go to the streets and around the community to profile the orphans, street children and unsupported children.

### **Boosting on farm productivity and fostering market linkage.**

We shall work with farming families to enhance on farm productivity whilst fostering appropriate viable market opportunities for their produce. We established partnership engagement with War On Want Northern Ireland on Global issues such as deepening poverty, food insecurity and HIV and AIDS cannot be fully addressed without full and active participation of affected populations and communities, and in particular, children and women. This is particularly the case in the context of humanitarian crises.

### **Livelihoods interventions to be undertaken**

- a) Supporting/influencing formal and informal policy and legal frameworks
- b) Increasing agricultural productivity
- c) Securing access to and control of the means of production
- d) Enhancing income-generating activities and economic opportunities
- e) Promoting social reconstruction and reintegration
- f) Capacity building, skills development and training
- g) Information and gender awareness raising

### **Peer education**

Peer education is an important program in which SCOEN uses peer educators to reach other children. This is because children understand each other and communicate to each other better. The Volunteers meet monthly to plan their activities and meet weekly to review on their weakness and strengths. They carry out trainings and outreaches for other children and youth in schools and in the community. The

Volunteers talk about Sexual Reproductive Health and rights, Behavior change, Life skills, Child Rights and Responsibilities HIV/AIDS, Child Participation, Child Savings, and, Discipline. The children also provide

counseling services to each other and provide support to children who faced difficult situations.

### **Promoting VSLA and fostering their financial linkages**

We shall promote VSLA as engines for household economic development and investment whilst linking them to appropriate formal banking sector products.



Since 2010, SCOEN has mobilized Caregivers of children to form VSLAs or SHGs among themselves.

The groups comprise of 15 to 30 members who have a common vision and purpose. They meet weekly to make savings and to borrow money which they invest in small businesses and pay back with a profit. The members are engaged in small businesses such as vegetable selling, charcoal, hawking various merchandize, and farming. VSLAs and SHGs have enabled households to access small and manageable loans to

establish their businesses.

The members learn about record keeping, savings, and how to manage businesses. The members also share out their lives and are a support to each other. They also gain knowledge and skills on issues like environment management, sanitation, personal hygiene, parental responsibilities among other issues

Through Village Savings and Loan Associations, a lot of families have benefited in the past.



## **Protection from Violence**

### Monitoring and Evaluating Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Mitigation Programs

#### ***Program Goals and Objectives***

- To expand the knowledge base of children, youth, and married adults on gender-based violence (GBV) and provide them with peaceful, non-violent solutions through theater and counseling services.
- To promote awareness and community participation in anti-female genital cutting (FGC)/GBV campaigns and HIV-AIDS prevention efforts among the refugees and local populations of the district.
- To strengthen community-managed systems of protection to reduce the incidence of GBV and mitigate its impacts among young men and women in four districts in two counties.
- To meet the protection, health, psychosocial and justice needs of survivors of GBV and empower communities to lead efforts that challenge beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that perpetuate or condone GBV.
- To reduce the incidents of GBV amongst Eritrean refugees in the camp through an effective prevention and appropriate multi-sectoral response
- To increase awareness of and strive to prevent domestic and sexual violence.
- To conduct policy advocacy and grassroots sensitization to enhance women's ability to access, protect, and promote their rights.
- To support regional, provincial, national and international initiatives in the field of gender-based violence and encourage the establishment of relevant structures and networks.
- To encourage and promote the training and sensitization of service providers and the public, regarding issues of gender-based violence.
- To develop training initiatives and educating member organizations, relevant government departments/agencies, as well as the public.
- Development of local policy measures to protect of women and children against violence.
- Influence positive attitude and behavior change in our society.

## **Wash in Schools**

WASH in Schools aims to improve the health and learning performance of school-aged children – and, by extension, that of their families – by reducing the incidence of water- and sanitation-related diseases. Every child friendly school requires appropriate WASH initiatives that keep the school environment clean and free of smells and inhibit the transmission of harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites.

WASH in Schools also focuses on the development of life skills and the mobilization and involvement of parents, communities, governments and institutions to work together to improve hygiene, water and sanitation conditions.

While there are many approaches based on differing cultural insights and environmental and social realities, any WASH in Schools intervention should include:

- Sustainable, safe water supply points, hand-washing stands and sanitation facilities;
- Fully integrated life skills education, focusing on key hygiene behaviours for schoolchildren and using participatory teaching techniques;
- Outreach to families and the wider community.

An efficiently and effectively implemented WASH in Schools programme will lead to students who:

- Are healthier; ☿ Perform better in school;
- Positively influence hygiene practices in their homes, among family members and in the wider community;
- Learn to observe, communicate, cooperate, listen and carry out decisions about hygienic conditions and practices for themselves, their friends and younger siblings whose hygiene they may care for (skills they may apply in other aspects of life);
- Change their current hygiene behaviour and continue better hygiene practices in the future; ☿ Learn about menstrual hygiene and physical and emotional changes during puberty (learning to avoid menstrual odour, discomfort and urinary or vaginal infections will encourage girls to come to school during menstruation); ☿ Practice gender-neutral division of hygiene-related tasks such as cleaning toilets, fetching and boiling water and taking care of the sick

## Staff and Board Composition

SNo	Name	Title
1.	Okwalinga Grace	Chairperson Board
2.	Ijangolet Hellen Florence	Secretary/Director
3.	Robert Odicha,	Treasurer
4.	Pr. Job Eliru,	Vice Chairperson
5.	Akello Tabitha,	Member Board
6.	Joyce Arono	Member Board
7.	Eyabu John	Member Board/Community Development Officer, Northern Division
8.	Lucas .H. Akol,	Partner Relations Officer
9.	Obwakori Abraham	Area Manager
10.	Asio Grace Ongorok	Child Development Officer
11.	Anyait Judith	Child Development Officer
12.	Acom Immaculate	Finance Officer

## Challenges

- ☞ Some community have negative attitude towards helping vulnerable children.
- ☞ Increasing ill health among caregivers in the community led to drop out of some children from school. 5 caregivers died in the year due to AIDS and other sicknesses
- ☞ There was limited funding to support children's tuition fees, VSLA development support and organization costs.
- ☞ Some of the caregivers could not pay tuition fees for the children, and hence they dropped.
- ☞ The high inflation in the country led to increased costs of all commodities thus affecting every aspect of the project activities. SCOEN cut down on expenditures of certain items.
- ☞ The numbers of very young vulnerable children increased.
- ☞ VSLA members have higher expectations

## Lessons learnt

- ☞ Vulnerable Children need to be understood as individuals and not as groups. This helps staff to make the right decision in solving each child's problem.
- ☞ Allowing children to play and also participate in different activities contributed to their social, emotional and cognitive development.
- ☞ Support groups offer opportunities to exchange views and experiences and break the isolation that accompanies poverty.
- ☞ It is important to interact with children, families and the community in a respectful manner.
- ☞ This helps to build a sense of dignity which in turn leads to a sense of wellbeing
- ☞ It is important to take the services to the community. The people feel valued and are eager to participate because the service is near to them.
- ☞ HIV / AIDS is a cross - cutting issue. One comes across it in any work that is done with the people. Addressing HIV /AIDS requires supporting the people affected and infected. It therefore adds another constraint to the organization, since most children we work with are either infected or affected with HIV /AIDS.
- ☞ Need for increased advocacy on the rights of children has created awareness among many people in the community and can be built on to enhance long-term protection of children from abuse.
- ☞ Advocating for the rights of vulnerable children is a joint effort. All stakeholders need to speak with one voice to be able to influence the policy makers.
- ☞ The poorest of the poor who have joined Self Help groups/VSLAs have a testimony about their improved livelihood, which is a good indication that Self Help Groups approach can bring about a transformation in the lives of the people.
- ☞ Child protection committees in the community play a significant role in reducing cases of child abuse. People respect the committees and they fear to be apprehended in case they are found abusing children.
- ☞ Children Peer Educators if well facilitated play a vital role in reaching out to other children with information and behavioral change.
- ☞ Most caregivers are still ignorant of their roles and responsibility in bringing up children. They need to be provided with knowledge on good parenting skills.

## Proposals written

### Proposal Status

S/No	To	Response
1.	Mama Cash	Did not go through
2.	Allen foundation	Waiting for response from donor
3.	Elton John AIDS Foundation	Waiting for response from donor
4.	Child Fund	Waiting for response from donor
5.	War On Want Northern Ireland	Partnerships engagement

## Board Activities

During 2015, the board continued to provide policy direction and support to SCOEN management. This was particularly enabled by its composition which brings together a top notch and experienced team whose diverse experience cover Policy making, NGO management, Community development, Monitoring and Evaluation and Advocacy.

To strengthen policy and practice, a joint board and staff retreat was held June 2015. The retreat was conducted with the aim of reviewing 2015 implementation and planning for 2016 programme implementation. During the retreat, the strategic plan was also reviewed and aligned with the recommendations made from the external evaluation report.

Some of the recommendations are mentioned below;

- ☞ The new strategic plan should be broader to allow for better cascading of new projects and programme growth.
- ☞ Scale up the engagement with duty bearers (especially live departments) and advocate for policy change at district and national level through more effective participation in appropriate networks.
- ☞ The need to improve on the retention of the girls in schools, GBV, SCOEN should consider including in the new plan a strong sexual and reproductive / HIV/AIDs component to create behavioral change.
- ☞ Quarterly board meetings and board sub - committee meetings were held in the course of the year. Through the meetings, the board is given a

status report on which they base their recommendations and support to the management.

- ☞ Monitoring visits to project and programme sites were conducted by the chairman board.



*Dave and Cathie visiting mothers after labour*



*Dave and Administrator training care givers on honey product value addition*



*Cathie and Administrator pose for a photo after handing donation of mattress and beds to the health Centre – Dave and Cathie donated*



*A mother counting money during their weekly savings activity - VSLAs*



*SCOEN's routine sharing with the VSLA member on VSLA Development*



## CONTACT US:

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