



Report to Jersey Overseas Aid



Agency: Sense International
Project: Improving Vocational Skills and Social Protection for Deafblind People in Uganda
Country: Uganda
Grant Amount: £61,045
Year of Grant: 1st April 2015- 31st July 2016 (timeframe includes a 4 month no-cost extension approved by JOA)

Introduction

Deafblindness is a combination of sight and hearing loss which affects a child's ability to communicate, get about and interpret their environment. Many have sight or hearing loss with additional disabilities which leaves them vulnerable and often excluded from family and community life.

Families with members with disabilities face even greater financial challenges, leaving them in difficult conditions and quite often in extreme poverty (WHO, 2011; Groce et.al, 2011). People with disabilities have fewer opportunities to work and people with deafblindness are often discriminated and considered not able to engage in activities that promote self-sufficiency, which brings economic benefits and has also the potential to contribute to their own feeling of belonging to the community.

This project tackled economic and social exclusion of people with deafblindness and their families to increase household income at an individual and household level. On the one hand, it equipped beneficiaries with practical and soft skills through training parents on how to access available social protection schemes and supporting young people with deafblindness to engage in livelihood activities that generate income. On the other hand, we made available tools with practical guidance for teachers to better support students with deafblindness.

Over the last year, the project promoted inclusion of people with deafblindness and their families in community life, through skills development and increased economic participation which boosts confidence. Overall, by tackling forms of exclusion experienced by people with deafblindness the project has effectively contributed towards achieving the "Leave No One Behind" principle in development. This aims to ensure that the most marginalised and vulnerable groups are reached and benefit from developmental initiatives.

Benefits and Outcomes

The project benefited the following groups of beneficiaries:

- 345 parents received training on accessing social protection schemes to increase income. Their children with deafblindness will also benefit from increased economic security.
- 5 young adults with deafblindness acquired vocational skills.
- 15 teachers were trained on how to better support learners with deafblindness
- 71 members of the National Association of Deafblind People in Uganda (NADBU), including 33 members with deafblindness.

A national vocational syllabus for learners who are deafblind is available for the first time in Uganda, which can benefit the estimated 14,000 population of people with deafblindness in the country.

By the end of the project (July 2016) we have achieved the following:

1) 291 members of the deafblind people’s and parent’s associations in Uganda are able to advocate for the economic empowerment of disabled people including accessing the social services they are entitled to.

In order to strengthen the capacities of the Uganda Parents of Deafblind Children’s Association (UPDBCA) and NADBU, a National Coordinator (NC) was recruited to support the successful implementation of the project.

From April 2015 to July 2016, a total of 35 meetings were held with several branches from the UPDBCA and the NADBU. The purpose of these meetings was to provide information to its members on the existing government social protection schemes available to them within each of the branch’s respective district, while providing training on the procedures to access those grants.

A total of 345 parents were reached through the UPDBCA. 71 people who are members of the NADBU, including 33 people with deafblindness benefited from the branch meetings organised.

UPDBCA	Total of 19 meetings: 12 branch meetings were held and facilitated by various Community Development Officers, Probation Officers and Inspectors of schools in charge of special needs units. In addition, 7 follow up meetings were held, in which parents were also trained in basic income generating skills.
NADBU	Total of 16 meetings: 8 branch meetings were held as an opportunity to guide the groups and link them up with the Community Development Officers to access existing social protection schemes. Follow up meetings were held in 8 branches .

As a result of the last year’s efforts to increase the understanding of parents and people with deafblindness on how to access social protection grants, by the end of the project 4 branches were already able to apply to these schemes while the remaining branches are positively moving towards meeting all the eligibility requirements.

Building fundraising, advocacy, organisational and financial capacity of UPDBCA and NADBU

Fundraising capacity: One of the main responsibilities of the newly recruited NC within the scope of this project was to develop a fundraising strategy. In light of this, a fundraising workshop was held out of which a fundraising concept was drafted and finalised to submit to future potential donors. It adds an element of future sustainability in supporting the work done so far by the associations.

Capacity to effectively advocate: To strengthen the associations’ understanding on how to effectively advocate for the rights and needs of people with deafblindness, we held a training on advocacy planning for the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the UPDBCA and NADBU. It involved the participation of 11 members. This training was followed by 2 other meetings to develop and approve the association’s new advocacy plan, including the identification of key advocacy activities at both national and branch levels. These included participation in a total of 8 radio talk shows including a national radio programme and visits to 10 DPOs. These advocacy activities contributed to raise awareness on deafblindness at both national and local levels and to strengthen UPDBCA’s networking and partnership initiatives.

As a result, 345 parents including those who are members of the UPDBCA were reached out through the progress and efforts of the association in supporting people with deafblindness and their families. In addition, it is estimated that 2 million people were reached through UPDBCA’s advocacy and networking activities, particularly due to its participation in several radio talk shows and engagement with national Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs).

Organisational and financial capacity: a two-days training on financial management was held for 14 participants – representatives from the 12 UPDBCA branches, the NC and the Treasurer. The training was conducted as a means to improve management systems; ensure efficient financial management and organisational administration; share information on leverage existing grant opportunities at the district level; and, build capacity in planning to achieve financial sustainability. On-going mentorship and support to the National Coordinators was also carried out by SI Uganda Finance Administration Officer (FAO).

A strategic plan for the period 2016-2019 was developed with three main strategic goals: 1) to promote early intervention through identifying, assessing and preventing deafblindness; 2) to advocate for the inclusion of people with deafblindness and their families in development programmes extended by the government and other development partners; and, 3) to strengthen UPDBCA's institutional capacity to develop, mobilise resources for, implement, monitor and evaluate programmes for people with deafblindness. Having a clear direction and a strategic plan is key for the future successes of the associations.

Overall, by the end of the project period, the UPDBCA and NABU have been supported with trainings on fundraising, advocacy and financial management as the basis for increased sustainability, better network with other organisations and donors and more effectively advocating for the needs and rights of children with deafblindness/MSI.

In terms of monitoring the progress of the project, 3 monitoring visits were conducted by the SI Uganda Country Representative, FAO and the NC of the UPDBCA. These visits proved successful in guiding the members on how to progress with accessing the grants, engaging with district officials in various activities relating to disability, networking and providing further guidance on care for children with deafblindness.

2) 5 people with deafblindness have acquired vocational skills at educational centres

The Uganda Society for the deaf was identified as the vocational training school to work with in building its capacity to support learning for people with deafblindness. As a result, 5 students (2 male; 3 female) enrolled at the Uganda Society for the deaf vocational school – Nantume Hadijja (18 years old), Ikanza Brian (18 years old), Ssemondo Ivan (23 years old), Nakasiye Fiona (23 years old) and Mbeiza Martha (18 years old). These 5 young adults received ongoing vocational training on knitting, bakery and carpentry. (Please see Annex A to learn more about life stories of the beneficiaries).

To support the vocational training provided to the 5 young adults with deafblindness, assorted equipment was purchased based on individual needs and interests identified: 1 baking oven, 1 carpentry machine and 4 knitting machines (including 2 knitting machines for parents). One of the young adults with deafblindness is still continuing her vocational training for longer. In parallel, 7 parents underwent training to support in vocational skills, enabling them to better guide and support the livelihood activities of their children with deafblindness.

As part of SI's holistic approach of working with people with deafblindness, their families and also the teachers and society at large to better support the needs of people with deafblindness, 15 teachers from five vocational training institutes participated in the three-day training on deafblindness facilitated by the Community Based Education Officer from SI Uganda. A trainees' graduation was held in May 2016. The teachers that received training are now equipped with increased knowledge and skills to support learners with deafblindness.

3) Up to 14,000 people with deafblindness will benefit through the development of a national vocational training curriculum for people with deafblindness and multi-sensory impairments.

One initial meeting was held with the Vocational Department of the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to discuss the best strategy to develop the certificate modules that will be used by trainers at different vocational institutions. The final product was the development and approval of syllabuses for 7 vocational skills training and corresponding certificates. The modules cover diverse themes as Beverage and Snacks preparation, Ceramics, Jewellery, Basketry and Weaving, Crop production, Animal and Poultry rearing and Crocheting.



SKILLS CERTIFICATE IN **LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY** KEEPING

Syllabus for Learners who are Deafblind



Example of one of the 7 skills certificates developed in the project funded by JOA.

Retrieved from the Livestock and Poultry keeping module, by Grace K. Baquma – Director of the NCDC

Acknowledgement

National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) would like to express its gratitude and appreciation to all those who, in one way or another, contributed and worked tirelessly towards the development of this Syllabus. Special thanks go to Sense International - Uganda (SIU) for their guidance and financial support in overseeing and taking timely decisions whenever necessary during the development and production of this Syllabus. We also appreciate Deafblind people, partners and colleagues from NCDC for their professional guidance and technical assistance. Appreciation is also extended to the teachers and parents of deafblind children who shared their experiences and provided advice during the development of this Syllabus.

As a follow up, 6 joint workshops were held to adjust and edit the 7 vocational skills certificates to the Uganda context (based on the curriculum previously developed in Kenya) and also to incorporate feedback from the NCDC quality assurance committee.

To ensure sustainability and impact of this new tool, the dissemination of curriculum includes sharing the modules with three traditional schools that have units for learners with deafblindness, fundraising efforts to support wider dissemination and arranging meetings with selected vocational training institutes (public and private) to showcase and promote the understanding and benefits of using the curriculum.

No-Cost Extension Grant: a 3 month (approved 11th February) plus 1 month (approved 8th July) no-cost extensions were requested to Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) in order to have extra time to ensure approval of the vocational curriculum by the NCDC, which was taking longer than originally anticipated. Considering that material development is a phased process and it needed to be owned by the Uganda Government, close collaboration with the NCDC was crucial. However, SI Uganda had little control in the timing of these operations and procedures resulting in a delay of approving and printing the curriculum. The elections during February 2016 meant that Government officials were pre-occupied during this time.

We are very grateful for the no-cost extension granted by JOA which enabled the successful approval and printing of the vocational curriculum to be further disseminated country-wide. In addition, the approval enabled 3 more branches of UPDBCA to meet and benefit from capacity-building activities, reaching more people in the extension period. This was made possible by the extra time and at no extra cost to JOA.

Sustainability

The project and its approach have generated different elements of sustainability. It was a means to equip young adults with deafblindness and parents with the skills to become more economically active and more capable of advocating for the rights and needs of people with deafblindness. The development of a vocational curriculum made available a tool that has the potential to reach out to an increased number of people in the country with benefits that last beyond the timeframe of this project.

Regarding capacity building of the associations, the UPDBCA and NADBU have now strengthened organisational and financial structures. Their members have increased knowledge about available social protection schemes and advocacy techniques to more effectively advocate for the rights of people with deafblindness. With strengthened systems and improved understanding, parents of people with deafblindness in Uganda are in a better position to demand for improved services which contributes to improved quality of life for their families now and in the future.

In the vocational training, 5 young adults with deafblindness were trained on vocational skills and provided with business start-up kits on their activities to promote economic independence. This is an important next step in people with deafblindness transitioning from vocational skills training to develop business plans and start activities to generate income which will increase household income. Furthermore, skills development also improves confidence and a sense of participation and belonging in the community, providing lasting benefits for people with deafblindness and their families.

In the teacher training, vocational teachers have been trained and are now more capable of understanding the needs of and supporting people with deafblindness through the use of specific skills, such as how to follow the new vocational curriculum, how to transition a graduate of the programme to start up their small business and how to communicate effectively with students with deafblindness, which presents both short and long-term benefits.

In developing tools that can be used country-wide and beyond the one-year project, the national vocational training curriculum has 7 syllabuses skills certificates that are now available to trainers teaching in vocational institutions. It is estimated that up to 14,000 people with deafblindness and MSI in Uganda can benefit from the dissemination of this curriculum over time as more information and techniques are made available to many more teachers and wider audience. Lastly, the

development of the vocational training curriculum in Uganda has also the potential to be scaled up and adapted to similar projects in neighbouring countries. This will help to inform Sense International's future plans in improving livelihoods for people with deafblindness and multiple-disability, as well as their families.

Lessons Learned – Challenges and Successes

The general elections in Uganda for Parliament and Presidency were held in February 2016, which caused some delays in terms of processes needed for continuing certain activities and due to pending actions and decisions.

The fact that both UPDBCA and NADBU are still developing their capacity to independently attract long-term funding can be seen as a challenge. However, joint work to strengthen the associations' capacity has registered progress, including the development of a fundraising strategy and strategic plan which provides a much needed clearer direction.

As we were responsible for developing the vocational training curriculum in collaboration with the NCDC, we learned that phased processes as the development of learning materials require the allocation of many resources and time to ensure that the final product is delivered to a high standard like the new curriculum. The time needed to develop the curriculum was tight to be achieved in one year project. Although, thanks to the JOA approval of the no-cost extension grant, we were able to have the curriculum approved and printed.

Through the parents meetings, there was an opportunity to identify and discuss the key achievements, challenges and gaps as perceived by parents and/or family members of people with deafblindness. For reference, please see Annex B. In addition, the parents wrote a letter of appreciation to SI Uganda for its on-going guidance, which would have not been possible without the support provided by JOA. The letter is attached as Annex C.

One of the key achievements is the revision and improvement of the UPDBCA's strategic plan, which enables the association to operate with a clear focus and mandate to stand for the rights of people with deafblindness and their families. A second highlight includes the successful meetings conducted with the District/Community Development Officers to facilitate access of parents to special grants (entitled for persons with disabilities) as well as other grants.

With the implementation of this project it was clear that with the adequate support, young people with deafblindness are able to learn relevant skills that promote self-sufficiency and inclusion as full members of the society.

We would like to give a big thank you to Jersey Overseas Aid for the valuable support to improve the life of young adults with deafblindness and their families in Uganda.

Financial Report – Expenditure against Approved budget (1st April 2015 – 31st July 2016)
Improving Vocational Skills and Social Protection for Deafblind People in Uganda

	Budget (£)	Spend (£)	Variance (£)	Variance (%)	Variance Notes
1. Improved advocacy for members of the deafblind people's and parents' associations in Uganda.					
<u>1.1 Co-ordination and Fundraising</u>					
Coordinators Salary	3,887	3,072	816		
Stipend for NADBU Coordinator	1,218	643	575		
Travel and Equipment	3,784	3,895	(112)		
1.2 Awareness Raising	11,131	14,782	(3,651)		
1.3 Advocacy Planning	2,789	3,323	(533)		
1.4 Advocacy Activities	1,094	1,293	(199)		
1.5 Capacity Building	1,354	2,043	(689)		
Sub-total	25,257	29,051	(3,794)	(15%)	1
2. Deafblind people acquiring vocational skills at educational centres.					
2.2 Establish Vocational Training	680	987	(308)		
2.3 Training for Teachers	596	473	123		
2.4 Purchase of vocational equipment	1,398	1,205	193		
2.5 Training for Parents	335	583	(248)		
2.6 Monitoring of Vocational Training	1,019	262	757		
Sub-total	4,027	3,510	518	13%	2
3. Development of Vocational Curriculum					
3.1 Developing the Context	2,244	477	1,767		
3.2 Editing	1,423	3,599	(2,177)		
3.3 Review	1,423	1,272	150		
3.4 Trial testing	2,293	-	2,293		
3.5 Finalisation	2,238	2,523	(286)		
3.6 Fine Tuning	1,423	1,220	202		
3.7 Printing the curriculum	3,000	5,261	(2,261)		
Sub-total	14,042	14,352	(310)	(2%)	3
4. Project Delivery Monitoring and Visibility					
0.2 FTE Country Rep	2,751	2,165	586		
0.2 CBE Officer	2,061	1,622	439		
0.2 Fundraising and Admin Officer	1,011	796	215		
0.2 Driver	561	441	119		
4.2 Start up and annual review	1,944	3,629	(1,686)		
4.3 Monitoring Visit	1,428	490	938		
4.4 Project Office	6,784	7,214	(430)		
4.5 Grant Management	1,178	1,178	0		
Sub-total	17,717	17,536	182	1%	
TOTAL	61,045	64,449	(3,405)	(6%)	4

Notes on significant budget variances:

1: The overspend of 15% is due to the additional branch meetings (awareness raising) to reach more parents and the opportunity to renew the UPDBCA strategic plan in the extension period

2: Some monitoring visits under '2.6 Monitoring of Vocational Training' and '4.3 Monitoring Visit' were able to be combined enabling a saving on monitoring visits.

3: There was a saving on '3.4 Trial Testing' due to the limited time to complete all stages of the curriculum development and some testing was done during the editing and review stages.

4: The overall overspend amounted to £3,405, which was covered using other funds at no extra cost to JOA.

ANNEX A: Life story

Name: Ikanza Brian

Age: 18 years old

Benefited from vocational training from September 2015 – May 2016

Professional Specialization: Carpentry

Ikanza Brian is 18 years old and was born in Bulanga village in eastern Uganda. He has five siblings – 2 brothers and 3 sisters, all aged between 10 and 25 years old. The family depends on food crops that grow in the small piece of land they own.

Batega, Brian's mother noticed that her child had problems in his eyes immediately after birth, when she noticed the white spots in his eyes. Batega took her son to the hospital for a check-up and it was confirmed that Brian had cataracts which needed surgery when he reached the age of 3. Later on, when Brian was 9 months, his mother realised that Brian could not hear well. He was not able to respond to any sound. At that point, Batega did not take Brian to the hospital because the elderly women of the village had locally assessed him as being deaf. Batega says: *'I was grieved when I noticed my boy was deaf. I asked God why he made my son deaf as he was already blind. I just remained with one prayer to God, to take his life because I would not imagine my boy suffering with both disabilities'*.

In 2005, Brian was referred to the Buckley high school, where he was assessed by a Special Needs Education (SNE) teacher who confirmed that he was deafblind. The SNE teachers advised Brian's family to enrol him at Buckley high school for increased support.



Brian receiving carpentry start-up kit from UPDBCA's chairperson

Sense International Uganda (SIU) found Brian at the Buckley high school and enabled the operation to his cataracts. In 2005, at the age of 8, Brian regained his sight after the surgery, though partial. Since then, Brian and his family have been supported by the school and the Uganda Parents with Deafblind Children Association (UPDBCA) to pay school fees until he joined the vocational institute in September 2015.

At Buckley high school, Brian learned sign language, self-expression, neatness and carefulness among others. Through the project funded by JOA, SIU was able to purchase equipment and material for Brian's 6 month carpentry course, pay the tuition and buy a start-up kit for him. Brian's elder brother, Emmanuel, was also trained for one month in the same school and same job.

Emmanuel said, *'Thank you so much for this training, my eyes have been opened because there are a lot of new things I have learned besides what I know and I'm going to use the knowledge I have acquired to help out my brother'*.

According to the mother, Brian's father, Mutyabule, who was reluctant at taking him to school at first, is now excited that his son was enrolled in a vocational school and is willing to construct a carpentry studio for him. Every parent would want their children to be independent and able to sustain themselves in the future. This is where Brian is heading to, especially with the help of Emmanuel, his brother who also received the training to better support Brian in the years to come.

Name: Nantume Hadijja

Age: 18 years old

Benefited from vocational training from September 2015 – May 2016

Professional Specialization: Knitting

Nantume Hadijja is 18 years old and is from Luuka village, Kiyunga County, eastern Uganda. Hadijja has siblings aged 16 to 31 and since they lost their father at a very young age they are cared for by Nangobi Fazirah alone, their mother. As a family, their economic situation is poor and dependent on agriculture from a small piece of land that they own.

Hadijja is a medium sized girl with scarred fingers. However, this has not stopped her from helping with household chores and other activities. Hadijja was born deafblind. Fazirah, her mother sought medical support when she learned that the condition was irreversible. She enrolled her daughter in the deaf unit of the Buckley High School and it was in 2010 that SIU Uganda (SIU) identified Hadijja as a child with deafblindness through a Special Needs Teacher working in the school. SIU started supporting Hadijja since then. She was assessed by doctors who went to the school under the support of SIU and was found to be partially deafblind. This qualified her to join the specific unit for people with deafblindness at Buckley High school.

Ever since then, Hadijja has been supported through primary level at Buckley high school where she learned sign language, self-expression, reading and writing among others skills. SIU supported her in vocational studies. It was through the vocational training programme facilitated by SIU that Hadijja specialised in Knitting. Hadijja was provided with adequate equipment, materials and a start-up kit by SIU to develop her own business and become more economically independent while contributing to household income.

Fazirah, Hadijja's mother happily said:

'I lack better words to use. I cannot thank SIU enough for what it has done to my daughter. Nantume Hadijjah is Sense's daughter because it was SIU that made her who she is today'.



Hadijja greeting Ivan who is also deafblind and a colleague in the vocational skills training course supported by Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA)

ANNEX B: Consultation with Parents through the associations

After one year of working closely with the parents' associations, insightful information and reflection was provided by the parents during group sessions. The participants identified achievements, challenges and still existing gaps to be addressed for further support.

Lessons Learned	Challenges/ Gaps
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Importance of networking and maintaining good relationships with various organisations- Relevance of having appropriate and strong fundraising and resource mobilisation skills- Relevance of strong financial management skills- Team working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- More training in capacity building is needed, e.g. financial management, business skills, advocacy, among others.- Early intervention is crucial when considering a disability such as deafblindness.- Benefits of a Community Based Trainers programme.- Absence of an education programme from the government for children with deafblindness who are not able to attend school.- In the communities, parents live within a considerable distance from each other resulting in difficulties to reach some children with deafblindness.- Poor nutrition of deafblind children. Most of them are malnourished.

These key points will be used by SI Uganda to inform other initiatives in the future.

Annex C: Letter of support from parents' association, Mbarara branch

UGANDA PARENTS WITH DEAFBLIND CHILDREN
ASSOCIATION (UPDBCA) MBARARA BRANCH.

The Sense International
Country representative
Uganda.

Thru:
The Co-ordinator (National)
UPDBCA.

Dear Sir / Madam;

RE: APPRECIATION LETTER:

This is from the entire parents of deafblind children in Mbarara branch; we would like to take this honour to thank the SENSE INT-UGANDA for everything that ~~have~~ ^{been} provided to us.

In the first instance, we would like to thank you for the support and guidance rendered to us all the time. More still we are grateful for the financial support given to us for registration at Division level, transport refund for our parents meeting in April 16th this year. And more so, the Radio talk show we held at one of the local radios in Mbarara i.e Vision Radio where the District C/Person with of Disabled Union and C.D.O Municipality plus the National C/Person and two parents were involved in the talk show, and on Workshop held on 26/5/16 for Advocacy.

We pray that God gives us energy to continue to be the voice of our voiceless children.

We promise to work hard for the betterment of our branch. Wish you well.

Compiled by Muhimbura Olwici.
Branch Treasurer. 07725514989