

Rwenzori Information Centres Network (RIC-NET)

SKILLING 200 CONFLICT AFFECTED GIRLS IN RWENZORI REGION , WESTERN UGANDA



10th /09/2014

Facilitate education, skilling and apprenticeship to conflict affected girls; support psycho social, reproductive health, and livelihood support for school-going and out-of-school youth especially girls who are struggling to recover from conflict situations; support the use of ICT, social media, and community theater to break down barriers such as poverty and stigmatization, and enable abused and traumatized girls to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential.

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS	2
The underlying Problem	2
Justification for this Project	3
Our Action towards the problem.....	3
3. Description of the children/youth project	4
Overall objective	4
Specific objective	4
Description of Activities	4
4. Project Implementation strategies.....	7
Why you should support RIC-NET on this project	8
5. BUDGET	9
6. ABOUT RIC-NET.....	11
Our Core Values.....	11
Our approach	12
Our Programmes areas	12
RIC-NET Organizational Chart.....	13

1. Introduction

Fort Portal and Kasese are municipal towns in Rwenzori region-Western Uganda. Inhabitants of this region have been affected in several ways by the over two-decade Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) civil war. This resulted in numerous atrocities, mass violence, and forced migration of most of the population to the towns where there is better security. High exposure to traumatic experiences has been particularly prominent in this area. The period of the war brought hardships to a number of people in the region most of whom were subjected to raids and abuse by the rebels, including sexual violence and physical abuse. This situation affected a number of girls and children who were abducted to be either soldiers or “wives” of the rebels. Most young people lost their lives, families, and future and now live in abject poverty.

Rwenzori Information Centres Network (RIC-NET) is a community based initiated and owned NGO that enables and support the conflict affected girls to access education, remain in school or to attain specific skills for those who are unable to get back to school.

2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Rwenzori region had an estimated population of 2.5 million in 2010; the estimates for the Districts affected most by conflicts are: Kasese 650,000, Ntoroko 79,900 and 217,500 Bundibugyo. The inhabitants are marginalised and minority tribes: the Batwa, Bayabindi and Basongora. The Area is remote and inhospitable with mountainous terrain, impenetrable rainforest and flood plains that are highly vulnerable to severe and persistent poverty. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CesNYVs3lpo>

The region has a high population growth rate and big numbers of Orphans, IDP and Refugees because of ADF rebel insurgency since 1996, high HIV/AIDs prevalence and poor service delivery.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7EVmJaVmTM>

The communities have a high male dominated culture. Differential socialization of Girls and boys implies that Girls grow up with little confidence and limited ability to compete with boys in leadership positions, to negotiate or assert their rights within marriage, the household and the community.

The underlying Problem

Over 27,500 girls were affected by Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) civil war in Rwenzori. Most of these girls were subjected to raids and abuse by the rebels, including sexual violence, physical abuse and high exposure to traumatic experiences. These girls have been left in the community unattended to and with nobody taking care of the personal development into responsible citizens. Among the major visible vulnerabilities are young women (and their children) who are out of school or born in captivity, living in slums and with no education or skills, unemployed and with no income. Most of them are forced into prostitutions or early

marriages leading to unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, STDs, HIV/AIDS. Use of contraceptives is low among the youth. The rate of contracting AIDS is six times higher among Girls (15-19 years old) than their male counterparts. <http://savethechildren.ug/publications/brief-write-ups>

Justification for this Project

Girls from conflict affected areas of Rwenzori and Northern Uganda are twice vulnerable than those from other part of Uganda which did not experience the civil wars. Yet, 17 million youths by 2009 or 65% of the youth in the total population of Uganda were vulnerable due to poverty, insecurity, diseases and conflicts and 80% of the cases of child abuse reported by media and annual Police crime report are of sexual assault by nature, mostly defilement.

(http://www.ubos.org/UNHS0910/chapter4_%20time%20use.html).

The Rwenzori region, where RIC-NET implements this project has gender-specific and gender-intensified beliefs and customs that tend to deepen the vulnerability of girls and young women.

"Adolescents who get pregnant are seen as outcasts, which in many cases, causes family breakdown. The girl gets displaced; she is isolated at home, at school and from her spouse".

Our Action towards the problem

RIC-NET focuses on offering a wide range of capacity development services or tailor-made training especially for young women in and out of school. We facilitate conflict affected girls with education, skilling and apprenticeship; provide regular mentorship, entrepreneurship skills development, reproductive health education and livelihood support for school-going and out-of-school youth, especially girls who are struggling to recover from conflict situations; we use ICT platforms, radios, social media and Community Theater to break down barriers such as cultural beliefs and practices, and stigmatization; and Conduct psychosocial support to enable abused and traumatized girls to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential. We train Teachers to help address some of the challenges of the abused and traumatized girls face in school. The organization supports young women with babies by enrolling their children in a nursery program, while helping the mothers to either go back to school or attain a skill.

3. Description of the children/youth project

RIC-NET focuses on facilitating 200 vulnerable girls aged 15-30 with formal education, a wide range of capacity development services or tailor-made vocational skills development and entrepreneurship for school dropouts.

Overall objective

Our goal is to enable and facilitate conflict affected vulnerable girls to access school, ensure they complete school, and empower them to become future leaders and productive members of society.

Specific objective

- ✓ To enable and facilitate 120 girls (aged 15-22) affected by ADF civil war in Rwenzori region with psychological, social and economical support to attain at least college education and build their lives afresh.
- ✓ To build capacity of 80 vulnerable, conflict affected girls who are single mothers, orphans and out of schools with vocational, entrepreneurship, and leadership and life skills necessary for employment or create self employment or startup personal business.
- ✓ To sensitize the community on barriers and cultural practices that cyclically keeps girls in poverty that exacerbates their vulnerability and prevents them from realizing their full potentials to create wealth.

Description of Activities

Support Conflict affected Girls in School

We facilitate enrollment of poor girls affected and traumatized by the war to continue with education. Community leaders and social workers identify girls from the community who are orphans due to civil war or former abductees or became a single mother during the war and we enable them to enroll again in school, support them to remain in school and complete school. RIC-NET contributes to school fees and scholastic materials. <http://www.africaoffline.org/blog/interviews-with-victims-of.html>

Mentorship and psychosocial support

Facilitate social workers, staff of NGOs and counselors to visit schools once every two weeks for psycho social support and mentoring meetings with the conflict affected girls. We organize motivational speakers, successful women such as Doctors, Judges, CEOs, Members of Parliament and women Ministers to speak to the girls and encourage them to focus on better careers in their lives. As a sustainability measure, we train some female teachers per school for one week every six months to help address some of the challenges the traumatized girls face in school

and help them with customized reproductive health education and timely personalized psychosocial support.

Skilling School dropouts- Girls

RIC-NET supports training and skilling of conflicted affected girls above 18 years old, out of schools, slum dwellers, sexual workers and single mothers to acquire employable and vocational skills. These vulnerable girls who dropped out of schools, not ready to continue with formal studies are supported to train for 3-6 months hands on skills such as computer literacy, secretarial practices, equipment maintenance, art & crafts production from local materials, tailoring and cloth design, and hair dressing skills.

<http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2014/05/empowering-citizens.html>

Uganda Association of Private Vocational Institutions (GPRIVI) will provide workers pass as proof of such skills.



Youth business clinics and business incubation camps

RIC-NET facilitates girls to attain practical business and entrepreneurial skills. We conduct business clinics, entrepreneurship camps, and business development guidance targeting both in school and out-of-school youth. The focus is enabling the youth attain capacity to identify and spot, simple and small business opportunities, turn them into viable enterprises

and investments. This promotes youths' critical thinking, innovativeness and restores self-confidence.

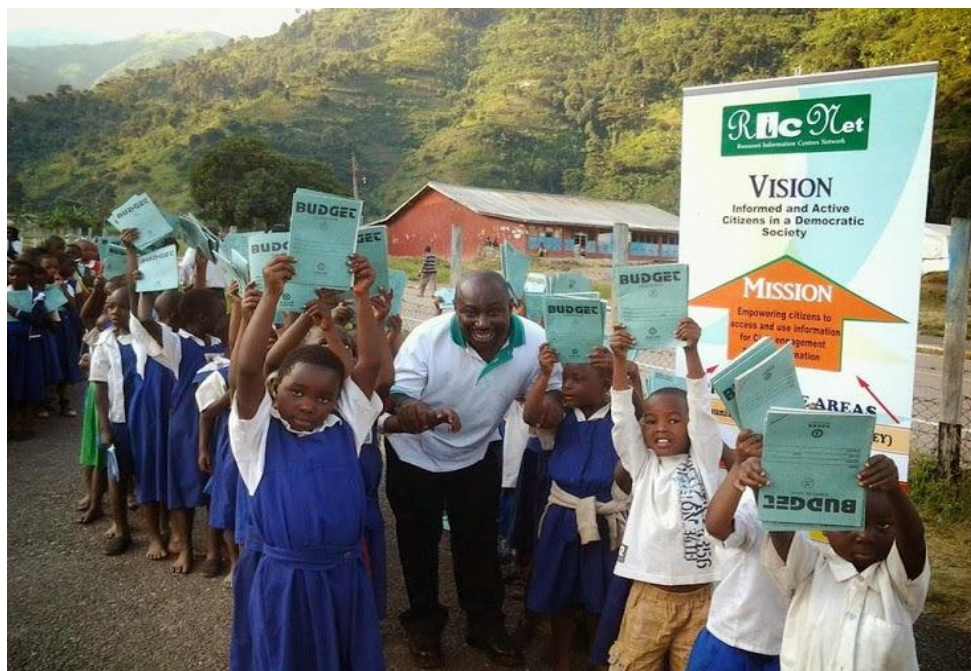
http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2014/08/ric-net-carries-out-entrepreneurship_36.html

In-school youth empowerment initiatives

RIC-NET supports schools with initiatives that target children (boys and girls) while in school to promote a positive attitude towards agriculture, ICT and vocational skills to equip and prepare them for out-of-school income generating opportunities.

Supporting children of vulnerable girls

We enrol children of the conflict affected girls in nursery or primary schools and support them with scholastic materials while their mothers either go back to school or attain vocational skills or ICT skills from the e-society centres. This enables the vulnerable young woman gain time to continue with skills training and career development without worrying.



Agribusiness related skills

Value addition, access to inputs, marketing requires specific skills. In the region, specific value chains demand for skills and competencies is high. Thus, we map and train youth in skills and competences required in the value chains with the highest economic and food security potential.

Advocacy and community sensitization

We carry out community sensitization through Radios, Bulk sms, social media and Community Theater to break or remove some of the barriers such as stigmatization and cultural practices that prevent young girls from going back to school. We team up with other NGOs to advocate for better

gender sensitive policies and special consideration to the girl child education.

Start up support

The girls still on the programme are offered an integrated education and training that involves vocational skills, leadership skills, personal awareness, communication skills, entrepreneurship skills, life skills and reproductive health. On completion of training, the young woman is provided with a contribution towards the purchase of key tools or equipments that are necessary for practicing the acquired skills and earn income. Some girls are given refurbished computer and a printer, those in tailoring are provided with sewing machines, and those in hair dressing are provided with the required saloon tools.

The girls are required to contribute to a student's fund beginning a year after their business has become successfully in order to support other girls in future.



4. Project Implementation strategies

- We use the existing linkages with community based organisations to identify the vulnerable girls who have dropped out of schools, then use the existing e-society centres and vocational colleges to provide training in ICT and vocational skills that these girls requires. Those willing to go back to school are supported to enroll in school until their finish college.
- School teachers help in identifying poor and conflict affected girls who are really needy and without any help from other

organisations. We ensure the girl whoever enrolls on the programme is the very poor girl, vulnerable and voiceless in the community but willing and ready to study.

- We facilitate ongoing mentorship, organize interaction with successful women and provide leadership training to ensure that the girls are fully empowered to speak out about the plight of poor girls and single mothers in the community-continuous advocacy.
- The girls who enrolled and completed the program are followed up monthly to ensure that they utilize the skills acquired to improve their livelihood.
- We have developed partnership with local government, other NGOs and private companies that offers internship and apprenticeship opportunities. Developed partnership with [Global fund for Children](#) and [Africa offline](#) organisations based in USA, which will market the art, crafts, jewelries made by our girls in the American markets and beyond.

Why you should support RIC-NET on this project

- RICNET is a community owned organisation, focusing on the poor and the vulnerable persons in Rwenzori region- Western Uganda. These vulnerable Youth (mostly Girls) need your support in order to attain skills and education that is not only the last hope for them but also for their poor families.
- The organisation is credible in project implementation / management and financial accountability over the years. We publish our financial details in all our reports that are public in all centres and other CSOs in the region and have been awarded a **National Quality Assurance Certificate**.
- There is a track record of the girls who have changed their lives with support of RIC-NET as seen from video testimonies and your support can change more lives for the better.
- The organisation operates in an area that has always experienced ADF rebel's attacks and inter-tribal conflicts. The area is categorized as a "hard to reach" by Uganda Government (Bundibugyo and Ntoroko Districts), so your support is really going to the very vulnerable persons (Girls) "the poor of the poor".
- RIC-NET is a grassroots based organisation and owned by the local communities. So, your support is a milestone and a foundation for survival of not only the present generation but the children of those young girls whose lives will become better based on the intervention.
- Lastly, RIC-NET has project are sustainable. We have built partnerships with the local government, vocational colleges and secondary schools to ensure that parents and the community leaders own the project right away from its start so that they can ably indentify with its results and ensure it does not stop when funding stops.

5. BUDGET

Global Giving Grant Budget					
	DESCRIPTION	DETAILS	UNIT COST	QUANTIT Y	USD
1	Human Resources				
	Costs related to salaries/allowances, trainings of persons directly related to the project - Example: Salary of project officer				
1.1	Youth Development officer (key project staff)	monthly salary	300.00	12	3,600
	Subtotal Human resources				3,600
2	Administrative/Operational costs				
	General, non-project expenses, such as rent, utilities, and office supplies - Example: Communications/Internet				
2.1	office stationary and internet		50	12	600
2.2	Annual financial audit report	contribution to audit fees	200	1	200
2.3	monitoring the project activities every six months	travel costs and refreshment to monitoring team	250	2	500
	Subtotal Administrative/Operational costs				1,300
3	Project Activity costs Direct project/programs implementation costs in School support				
3.1	conduct 5 days residential training for 10 women teachers in psycho-social support so as to continuously support girls in schools	refreshment, trainer Honarium, training materials, residential costs and travel refund	200	5	1,000
3.2	Two hours psycho-social sessions with girls in secondary schools every two weeks	travel and lunch for mentor per day	15	48	720
3.3	counseling session per school per month	travel and lunch for staff	20	40	800
3.4	organize bi-monthly drama and community theatre near	drama group facilitation	300	12	3,600

	refugee camp community (Kyaka II and Ramwanja refugee camp)				
3.5	hold monthly reproductive health education session in schools	travel and lunch for staff	20	50	1,000
	Sub Total				7,120
	After School support				
4.1	training young girls dropout in vocational, ICT, Entrepreneurship and life skills	training materials, monthly Honarium for trainers; equipment maintenance	50	200	10,000
4.2	Support to babies of young women who attend training with nursery school bursaries.	100 babies for each training session	60	50	3,000
4.3	support to 50 young women with apprenticeship opportunity	contribution to their upkeep at apprenticeship organisations	100	50	5,000
4.4	start up equipments or tool for saloon or tailoring business	saloon equipments or sewing machines	250	30	7,500
4.5	start up for secretarial business	computer set, printer and scanner	500	25	12,500
	Subtotal				38,000
5	Grand Total				50,020

6. ABOUT RIC-NET

The organisation genesis was at an open space forums for Rwenzori region CSOs in 2002/2003, which indentified need for effective and reliable information sharing among different shake holders as the most important element that would unlock the region potentials.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RwN9d5SeiU>

RIC-NET is a community based, Community initiated and community owned organisation registerd as Not for profit local NGO S.5914/11258 (**under NGO registration ACT, CAP.113**) incorporated as company without share capital Reg. 85565 (**under section 16(1) of company Act**).

Our members are 15 Information Centres owned by CSO/CBOs in the seven Districts¹. RIC-NET in non political and has a network of over 50 rural information points spread in rural areas where women, men and the youth meet weekly basis., currently the organisation has a team of 15 staff, 20 volunteers.

RIC-NET is always in touch with the community through open space forums every two years, member's annual reflection meetings, sharing of quarterly Magazines and annual report (financial and narrative).

<http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/01/reflecting-on-progress-and-future-yields.html>

Vision Informed and Active Citizens in a Democratic Society;

Mission Empowering citizens to access and use information for Civic engagement and wealth creation;

Our Core Values

Respect- Recognize the innate worth of all people, the value of diversity and enabling everyone to exercise full potential;

Integrity-Accountable at all levels for our actions, open in our judgments and communication;

Commitment-Taking due care in doing work, foster innovation, creativity and ensure community custodianship for achieving a greater positive and lasting change.

¹ Kasese, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Ntoroko, Bundibugyo, kyegegwa, Kyenjojo.

Our approach



Our Programmes areas

Community Empowerment and youth (CEY) - unlocking people potentials by offering a range of skills development services or tailor-made training and apprenticeship opportunities for the youth and women. Improving livelihood at households through Agriculture, preventive and reproductive health, and support to entrepreneurship.

Knowledge sharing and Advocacy (KSA)- Building an information society by facilitating access to reliable, timely and relevant information, knowledge and skills in the field of, Education, Health, Human Rights, Governance and Agriculture for sustainable food security.

Technology for Social Accountability and Development (TSAD)- collaboration efforts in designing and deployment of different platforms that allows citizens to engage with their leaders without putting themselves at risk and building capacity of both CSOs and civil servants to use ICT for development

Social inclusion, Rights and livelihood (SIR) – we amplify the Silent voices of the social excluded persons to assert and demand for respect of their human rights. Sensitizing the community to tolerate and defend the minorities' rights and Dignity. Build their capacities to generate wealth and reduce their poverty exacerbated vulnerability

RIC-NET Organizational Chart

