

Community Reading Days Concept Note

Introduction

At enjuba, we envisage a Uganda with Responsible Citizens, Authentic Leaders and Credible Change Agents. With a staggering 56% of our population below 15 years of age, we chose to zero in on primary school going children. We believe that children can only reach their full potential if they learn how to read and comprehend what they read. In order to succeed in life, every child should ideally finish school with a lifelong love of reading and the necessary literacy skills. We implement this through three major programs, namely; the Spelling Bee, Teacher Training and Reading Initiatives.

Definition

Community Reading Days is a literacy program of enjuba that seeks to engage children (4-12 year olds) and their parents/guardians in literacy and life skills activities so that they continue learning despite the prevailing social-economic factors at play in their respective communities.

Background and Rationale

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed over 10 million primary and secondary children out of school. Since no one is certain of the earliest return to normalcy, an inclusive learning approach that leaves no child behind is essential.

According to the World Bank, 83 percent of children 10 years and under in Uganda are learning poor (meaning they can't read and comprehend), and lack functional skills for the dynamic job market. While the lockdown only created a temporary out-of-school problem, prolonged closure of schools is making being out of school permanent for some children, especially older ones that are being lured into petty jobs, early marriages or as we have seen, many girls getting pregnant, and we know that in many communities in Uganda, that means no more school.

In an effort to bridge the gap left behind with closure of schools, enjuba has introduced the Community Reading Days to engage with children and their parents with the aim of improving literacy so as to obtain better learning outcomes. The main beneficiary of this program is the child, but we believe we can best reach children through their parents who are currently spending most of the time with them.

Objectives

- a. To catalyze literacy improvement among children by enhancing their love for reading
- b. To bridge gaps that hinder children from learning to read and write irrespective of their socio-economic background
- c. To reinforce and/or change the perception of intentional parenting as a critical role that influences and shapes the future of this nation in various ways.
- d. To strengthen our professional relationship with our host partners especially in matters of improving learning among children.

Expected Outcomes

- a) Children eager to learn to read in order to read to learn and eventually improve their academic performance in the long run
- b) Children able and willing to learn irrespective of what stage of life or their socio-economic background.
- c) Fully engaged parents, ready to intentionally give of themselves to ensure that their children continue to learn while at home
- d) Sustained and extended learning among children in their respective communities as spearheaded by our host partners