

Progress Report: *Keep HIV+ Children in School*

Project Implemented by Mase Foundation Uganda

Background

The *Keep HIV+ Children in School* project was established to ensure that children living with HIV continue accessing education despite social, economic, and health-related challenges. Education remains a critical pathway for breaking cycles of poverty, stigma, and vulnerability among HIV-positive children and their families.

Despite a challenging funding environment, the project has continued to make meaningful progress. Supported children have remained enrolled in school, with improved attendance and retention rates. Through school fees support and scholastic materials Mase Foundation Uganda is striving to reduce school dropouts among HIV+ children under its care.



Children training session by MaSe Foundation trainer

This continuity has been especially significant during a period marked by the withdrawal and reduction of funding from major donors, including USAID funding cuts and similar decisions by several European partners. In the face of these setbacks, the resilience of the project has been sustained largely through committed donors and well-wishers.

We at Mase Foundation Uganda extend our sincere gratitude to all donors and partners who have stood with these children during this trying moment. Your unwavering support has ensured that education was not interrupted, even as global funding priorities shifted. At a time when many programs were forced to scale down or close, your commitment has been a lifeline.

While school attendance has been maintained, it is increasingly clear that education alone is not enough. Many HIV+ children face structural challenges such as food insecurity, inadequate housing, limited access to healthcare, and lack of family income.

These factors directly affect school performance, health outcomes, and long-term wellbeing. There is a growing need to move beyond short-term educational support and invest in more holistic, structural interventions that address the root causes of vulnerability. Without such support, the risk of absenteeism, poor performance, and eventual dropout remains high.



Some of MaSe sponsored children during Mase Day celebration

To ensure long-term sustainability, Mase Foundation Uganda recognizes the urgent need to establish self-sustaining initiatives. These initiatives would enable children and their households to meet basic needs such as food, healthcare, and school-related expenses independently.

Potential approaches include income-generating activities, vocational skills development for older children and caregivers, and community-based social enterprises. Such initiatives would reduce dependency on external aid, strengthen household resilience, and ensure that education support is backed by stable livelihoods.



MaSe sponsored children dancing during Mase day celebration

The *Keep HIV+ Children in School* project continues to make a meaningful impact under difficult circumstances. However, sustaining and expanding this impact will require renewed commitment, structural support, and innovative, self-sustaining solutions. Mase Foundation Uganda remains dedicated to walking this journey with the children and calls upon partners and supporters to continue standing with them—so that no child's education is cut short due to illness, poverty, or shifting global priorities.