

2012

Somero Uganda *Somero Uganda Annual Report*



Somero Uganda
Supporting education for slum girls and young Women
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**Supporting slum girls
and young women
with education and
livelihood skills**



Ms. Anna Nabulya

Word from the chair person Advisory Board

With pleasure I share with you our work during the year 2012, Somero Uganda remains focused on empowering young girls and women from and within the slums of Kawempe a suburb in Kampala. Somero Uganda focuses on skills development for the most vulnerable girls from the hard to reach areas. Education remains the path way through which we hope to attain and reach our long standing mission of empowering young people through education and skills training for self-advancement and sustainable community development.

We have been able to support girls who are in the in-school program without registering any dropouts. The out of school programs have also been strengthened with a unique empowerment program, the first of its nature within Kawempe division. In this report we are proud to report that over 70% of the out of school girls supported in 2012 have been integrated in the employment sector.

However, there is a growing need to continue with the learning programs in Uganda for girls and young women especially those living in the slums as they are the most marginalized people.

Therefore, as remain committed to serving the communities and improving the lives of the vulnerable girls and young women living in the slums, we call upon organizations and individuals to join us in the struggle. Our target is to cover a bigger population of the young women and girls and ensure that sustainable improvement of their lives is attained through our programs.

Yours

Ms Nabulya Anna

Chair person Advisory Board Somero Uganda

Word from the Chief Technical Advisor



can read how happy and proud members of staff are to have been able to guide girls who find themselves in difficult situations, as a mentor.

The fact that a good number of girls have found jobs in the formal sector after completing their internships, has made our graduation days even more special. Girls and young women have found jobs in shops, as secretaries or in the IT-sector and the existence of (long) waiting lists for the trainings prove that more girls and young women feel it is worthwhile to attend Somero's educational and skills programs.

Also staff members themselves have benefited from the capacity building and the increase in funding and partnership leading to a clearer division of responsibilities between individual staff members and between the different departments and to a greater sense of belonging and personal development. The presence of some highly committed and qualified volunteers in 2012 has served as a great incentive and made it further possible for the organization and the people who work at Somero Uganda to grow.

In 2012 Somero Uganda has continued to strengthen its partnerships and has set up more community projects to raise awareness on the often very difficult living and work situations of many young girls. Somero Uganda has gained respect and trust from local leaders, primary schools and CBOs which have led to an increase in support at community level and to a decrease in stigmatization and hopefully abuse of the girls and young women involved.

To make it possible for Somero Uganda to further expand in the coming years, an increase in financial and non-financial support is necessary. During its strategic planning process, members of staff made valuable proposals for future initiatives like a home based schooling program for young mothers.

For 2013, I wish for Somero Uganda a continuous strengthening of its position and a drive to actively search for opportunities in order to secure more funding and establish sound partnerships. It is my hope that in the next years many more vulnerable girls and young women will enjoy and can benefit from the programs and the trainings of Somero Uganda.

Yours Janice Reul

Executive summary

Only 56 % of the Ugandan population has completed primary school level and twice as many Ugandan women, compared to men, cannot read nor write. Only one fifth of all girls starting with primary school remains at school for at least five years. Girls are often denied access to education for financial or for cultural reasons. These girls belong to the most vulnerable groups of the society, as they usually have to earn their living in the informal service sector, where they are at risk of being exposed to sexual exploitation and violence. This has formed the back bone of the Somero Uganda programs.

Somero Uganda is a Community Based Organization based in Kawempe Division Kampala District, Uganda behind Kawempe City Council. The organization is registered under the Kampala City Council Authority Reg No. KAW 778.

Mission statement, We strive for a Uganda where young women and slum girls between 14 and 25 years receive educational support needed for a self-determined and self-sufficient life to act as agents of social change with full community support.

Our vision is: A Uganda where young women and slum girls between 14-25 years achieve education support needed for a self-determined and self-sufficient life to act as agents of social change with full community support.

Our mission is: To empower young women and slum girls through education and skills training for self-advancement and sustainable community development.

The year 2012 saw a greater success towards the achievement of our vision and this report clearly spells this out. The success has been a result of the energetic and innovative team of Somero staff and volunteers, the Advisory board, the partner organizations, the young people coming to our centre and the entire community. To all of them we extend our special regards.

We also recognize the efforts of some individuals including Mrs. Janice Reul who has not only been a member of the advisory board but also acted as a chief technical advisor to the field team. Valentina Actis Danna, Nora Wegner and Ewa Wiktoria Pieczyńska, as international volunteers funded by the GLEN network and students on internship, contributed a lot to the success of the activities implemented throughout the year.

We extend our appreciation to our main partner Somero Germany (www.somero.de) who not only funded most of the organization activities but also provided technical support.

This year we implemented two main projects which was the computer project and the education project funded by Somero Germany. The computer project was co-funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through Nord Sud Bruken and Somero Germany. We also received monetary and physical grants from individuals, leading to a continuous success of the activities.

We recognize your efforts.

Administration



Admin. Accountant
Najjuma Lydia

Somero Uganda has an administrative team of three young people including Nsubuga Geoffrey Simbwa (National coordinator), Nakakande Irene (Senior Programs Manager) and Najjuma Lydia Agatha (Administrative accountant). This administrative team sailed Somero Uganda throughout 2012. The team received full support from the Advisory board and Mrs. Janice Reul in particular attended administrative meetings every week.

Administrative documents were developed, including a strategic plan 2013-2015, systematic accountability procedures, report writing and monitoring systems and communication procedures.

The team managed to increase funding in 2012, compared to the previous financial year. A new IT women empowerment project worth 10,000 Euro funded by the

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) –Germany government was also secured.

Grants were also mobilized from organizations and individuals including Hertie School of Governance (10 Laptops), the International Labor Organization (reading books), the Kyambogo University(subject books) , Mrs. Tiny Reul (200 euro), Mrs. Mia Smeets (200 euro), Mrs Marlies (USh200,000) and Mrs. Janice Reul (Ush500,000).

We thank so much our partners in Germany-Somero who supported us throughout the year, individual donors and government line ministries who have committed themselves towards helping us. Without them all this would have been in vain.

Najjuma Lydia

For, Administration

A word from Geoffrey, National Coordinator



Nsubuga Geoffrey Simbwa

I am pleased to share with you some of our experiences during the year 2012, as we successfully implemented a one year girls and young women empowerment project that are living under hardships of sexual exploitation and at the risk of catching HIV/AIDS in Kawempe division. With the difficult economic situation, not only in Kawempe but all over Uganda, the youth having no kind of formal employment, are forced to find alternative means of survival which ignores their health situations.

This is worse with girls and young women in a Uganda where some parents still look at them as assets and marriage materials, thereby re being deprived of education and as a result cannot compete for a favorable work pay in the formal sector hence ending into commercial sex work as an alternative to sustain themselves a worst form of labour.

The year 2012 put us in position to strengthen and uplift all our programs for these girls, with the integration of reproductive health rights, a strong referral network system and financial literacy.

It was a stepping stone in the efforts to work closely with the community and create change in the lives of the most vulnerable hard to reach young people who have constantly been abused and exploited sexually.

My visit to Berlin Germany in April 2012 was also another learning experience. I carried home a lot of best practices that helped us strengthen our programs the more. Thanks to Nord Sud Bruken that funded the journey.

I also extend sincere and warm gratitude to our Board members, our partner in Germany, the Ugandan Government, our individual friends, the Kawempe community and the girls and young women who contributed so much to our mission, I also acknowledge the time and efforts of the Somero Uganda staff who directly work with the girls and young women in order to successfully cause change to their lives.

Nsubuga Geoffrey Ssimbwa

National Coordinator Somero Uganda

A word from the senior programs Manager



Ms. Nakakande Irene

The year 2012 showed a highly committed and self motivated staff. The friendly approach also brought the students much closer thereby creating an open environment which has been so instrumental in providing psychosocial support. The introduction of the staff capacity building fund was of a great importance. The staff used the fund to gain more knowledge in different fields which has helped to improve the programs. The different workshops, conferences and meetings attended also opened us to new ideas from different organizations.

Coordinating the Scholarship education program I realized the will community mentors developed to support the education of girls and young women as a result of Somero Uganda programs. This gave me the courage to continue working. The Administration of the networking schoolings are a blessing to Somero girls for they have made reentry so easy. A safe learning environment without stigma from teachers and students has also been realized. This has been possible with works of the ILO/IPEC SCREAM methodologies (Supporting children's rights through Education the Art and the Media) that we have used throughout and has helped to realized safe learning schools in the area.

I thank my colleagues and the Somero Board with whom I worked throughout 2012. I also thank the Germany team that provided funding to enable the organization's activities running throughout 2012 and I hope the same will happen for 2013.

God bless you all

Nakakande Irene

Senior programs Manager

Somero Uganda

The Education department

The Senior programs manager Ms. Irene Nakakande coordinated the education department throughout the year 2012. The department which provides education scholarships to girls and young women supported 20 students in primary and secondary school during the year 2012 with the support of a partner organization Somero Germany-Berlin. Through organized workshops, village meetings and community art murals, it successfully convinced parents within the slums to educate the girl child. As a result 2 more girls were taken to school but under the supervision of Somero Uganda.

Through her networks, Somero Uganda also secured 16 bursaries from two primary schools including Modern World Junior schools and Excel community school. This we set to benefit Somero girls who already have children to take to schools which improved their psycho-social fitness.

The Somero Scholarship program

The nature of Somero education scholarship program targets girls and young women who have dropped out of schools and those at risk of dropping out. The beneficiaries are withdrawn from child labour activities including commercial sex work, food vending, karaoke dancing bar attendants and house girl work. Majority of these girls have been found trafficking in search for job and yet others have deserted or disappointed by marriage after having forced into it by their parents.

The scholarship supports the trafficked girls to identify mentor families who are usually relative to support psychologically and socially as they pursue their education. These mentor families are provided with foods by the organization during the holiday times when the students are at home.

The scholarship ensures full education support with not only school fess but also scholastic materials. Still the student is supported until she completes her university/institution education. However the demand is over-whelming

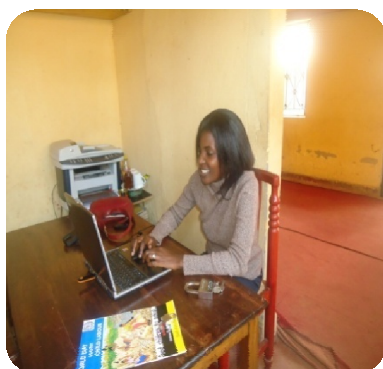
Future prospects

The M&E process revealed a group of young mothers who found it a challenge to be re-integrated into the school setting due to stigma and responsibilities. Consultation meetings resulted into the development of a home based schooling program which will provide classes to a group of mothers who will gather at one of their homes. Professional teachers from the networking schools, paid for by Somero Uganda, will conduct

the lessons using the National Curriculum and the students will sit for their National Exams after 2-3 years of studying. The program will be piloted in 2013.

Community development department

In the beginning of the year 2012, this department was coordinated by Mrs. Nandawula Sarah Kalungi who was later assisted by Mr. Olweny Arthur when she took her leave in June. The department coordinates all programs related to the community. Throughout the year the department implemented different activities as conducting 5 staff capacity building workshops in the areas of IT and counseling and health, 15 community sensitization meetings both at the center and inside the community (the village community meetings (VCLAs)), facilitated by trained peers, peer to peer trainings, life skills building workshops and behavioral change sessions held once a week throughout the year.



Mrs. Nandawula Sarah .K.

A word from the coordinators

Women and girls still face the barrier and challenge in the formal sector to secure jobs because of the nature of orientation from and within their back ground. In this case education to this group is the second resort and not considered a priority. This then increases their chances of being involved and recruited into commercial sex work with the hope of sustaining their lives and babies within the community where poverty is also at its highest pick.



Mr. Olweny Arthur

As the community department, we have taken the responsibility to serve the community and in this context. We have worked closely with the local leadership from the division of Kawempe to reach out to these hard to get in touch with girls and young women.

However there is still a big population of young girls engaged high risky behaviors, who have not been reached due to the limited resources. This poses to be a treat to the already rehabilitated girls as they risk relapse.

We take this opportunity to thank the board members, the staff members and the community and the Somero girls for their support and commitment. I also send my regards and thanks to the team in Germany.

The IT department

Still at its evolving stage, the computer lessons developed into a full department in the year 2012. Ms. Sanyu Ruth, the Department Head, showed the enthusiasm to make sure that the department was equipped with the basics needed. In the beginning of the year the computer lab shifted to a bigger room which could accommodate 30 young people for a single session. More furniture was bought and this was boasted by the arrival of 10 laptops donated by the Hertie school of Governance, in Berlin in Germany in April 2012. The commencement of the IT women empowerment project in June with funds from BTZ brought in 10 more laptops, a projector, a printer and also improved the security with security locks.

Because of all these developments 75 girls and young women were equipped with IT skills as compared to the only 16 girls and young women trained in 2011. Other developments later in the year included the drafting of the **‘IT Manual for vulnerable young people -with no or low levels of education’** which will be pre-tested and developed further in the year 2013.

A word from the IT department Coordinator



Ms. Sanyu Ruth

Working as the coordinator has made me draw closer to my students which made me understand them better. I felt much closer to the girls than any other staff that I felt bad whenever one didn't turn-up for lessons. My smile always grows wider on the graduation day. Sometimes I don't believe myself when they invite me at their workplace and tell me how much they earn.

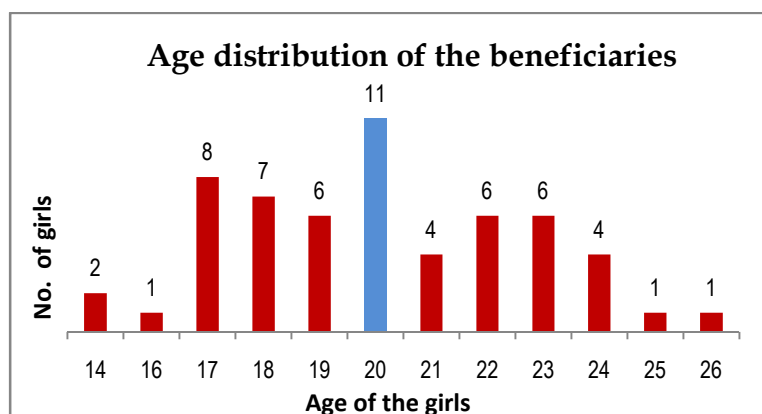
In 2012, Somero Uganda managed to conduct two graduation ceremonies with 75 girls and young women. Over 70% of these managed to get paid job with zero risk of sexual exploitation.

As the IT coordinator, I extend my token of thanks to Somero staff, the community and the young women, for the team work and for having to be able to learn more from them.

Profile of the Somero girls and young women reached out in the year 2012

During 2012 Somero Uganda developed a data collection tool and data system with the support of Valentina Actis Danna, an international volunteer from Italy, who worked with Somero for 3 months. With this tool the organization managed to come up with a profile and to analyze the characteristics of the Somero girls, assisted during the second half of the project. Though this information is very useful, it does not capture all the girls reached out by the organization in 2012. The graphs below present only the outcomes for a total number of 57 girls who followed trainings at Somero Uganda between June and December 2012.

Graph 1: Age distribution (N=57)



The average age is 20 years. The majority of the girls fall under the range 17 - 24 years. 18 of them are teenager (14 to 18 years old), 21 are young girls (from 19 to 21 years) and 18 are young women (from 22 to 26 years old).

Education and work status

56 out of 57 girls interviewed completed primary education, while 1 girl stopped in P6.

Most of the girls who completed primary also attended secondary education: some of them reached S6 while other stopped before. A high number of girls did not provide a clear answer.

Table 2: Grade completed

GRADE COMPLETED					Still in school
S2	S3	S4	S6	Didn't Join Secondary	5
3	4	8	6	29	

Table 3: Reasons to drop out from school

Reasons to drop out	No. Answers
Lack of money after parent's death, loss of job, sickness etc	19
Pregnancy	17
Early marriage	12
Domestic violence	6
Poor performance	2
Other	1
Total answer	57

The **reasons to drop out** both in primary and in secondary are illustrated in the table.

The principal reasons are related to financial issues with 19 cases, while in 18 cases girls were expelled due to positive pregnancy tests compulsory carried out regularly at school. 12 girls were forced by parents or relatives to get married while 5 girls were denied a chance due to parents' misunderstandings. On the other hand 2 girls dropped out because parents believed that she could perform better.

Still dreaming, Most of the girls (40 out of 57) wished to go back to school to complete primary and/or secondary, attend vocational training or join university.

University wished	No. Answers
Law	6
Secretarial studies	6
Computer studies	5
Nursing	5
Accountancy	4
Education	3
Mass communication	3
Medicine	2
Business administration	2
Commerce and Banking	1
Industrial art and design	1
Fashion and design	1
Social Science	1
TOTAL	40

Table 4: Educational wishes

Work status

All girls are not working but many are involved in different activities for a living.

Table 5: Activities girls are involved in

Activity	No. girls
Commercial sex	26
Karaoke dancing	10
Food vending	8
Bar attendant	5
supermarket attendant	5
House wife	5
Shop attendant	2
Nothing	6
Total	57

Reproductive health and sexual status

In general, 35 out of 57 girls declared to be sexually active. In terms of sensitization 42 girls out of 57 were aware about STDs, and 54 out of 57 were sensitized on HIV/AIDS. All/Most girls had a general knowledge of these diseases. Most of them (36) got reproductive health sensitization at school.

Considering systems of prevention, 22 girls declared to know condoms and how to use them while the majority didn't know them, never used them or were not aware of their existence. The majority of the girls knew about abortion and a small number of girls reported having undergone an abortion themselves.

30 out of 57 girls wished to meet doctors either individually or in a plenary to acquire more knowledge on Reproductive Health issues.

Some girls were forced into sex without really wishing it, and therefore were traumatized about it. Others were not aware of system of prevention and practised unsafe sex. Some of them needed proper education on Reproductive Health and all related issues. Some girls have boyfriends and behave responsibly by using condoms, doing blood test regularly, being faithful and discuss about sexual issues with peers.

A full report is available please do contact us.

Way forward

As we end the year 2012 we realize a lot a head of us. This comes after resurrecting the lost hope among girls and young women living in the slums which has increased the demand of services against limited resource. The existence of parents and relatives who still look at girls as asserts also give us a reason to work.

Our new strategic plan 2013-2015 has looked at the sustainability of the organization by opening membership to the public, fund raising for land where an own school could be built and purchase more furniture and computers among others. It also looks at strengthening the existing programs and also includes more significant programs like reproductive health, Home based schooling for young mothers among other. *This strategic plan is available-please contact the office.*

Our partners in Germany are still committed to support the scholarship holders, and some administrative issues throughout 2013. The Germany government will still fund the empowerment project until June 2013. This however does not cater for the need. We therefore call on individuals, donors and well wishers to join us in the struggle.