



Restoring Hope,  
Transforming Lives

# Amplifying Impact!

The TPO Uganda Newsletter

FOCUS ISSUE IV: CHILD PROTECTION



April-June, 2020

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## About Amplifying Impact! ISSUE IV

This Amplifying Impact! Quarterly Newsletter showcases the impact of TPO Uganda's intervention in Northern, Western, Karamoja, and West Nile regions of Uganda. This issue covers TPO Uganda's child protection intervention with a focus on the achievements in the period of April through June 2020. Our specific engagements have been on strengthening family-based care, supporting case management, and building the capacities of community-based and national level structures to respond to the needs of refugee children, orphans and other vulnerable children during COVID-19) period.

From April- June 2020, we implemented child protection activities in 18 districts in Northern, Western, Karamoja, and West Nile regions of Uganda. We invite you to read and share in our unwavering commitment towards rebuilding the lives of vulnerable children.

18

Districts with ongoing child protection activities

1,000+

No. of households reached with child protection activities in the 18 districts

1,000+

No. of child protection cases managed in the different districts

3,000+

No. of children reached with a range of child protection activities

## Read inspiring stories and testimonies from our work

### Extending financial support to children with disabilities (Northern Region)

*“At that moment, I lost hope of treating my child. I did not have money for transport let alone feeding and medication. My child was only depending on panadol to reduce the headache” Sarah (not real name) narrates*

Sarah gave birth to her child Aaron when he was normal. With time, she noticed that her child's head was increasing in size. Semmy took Aaron to Ogur Health Centre IV where he was diagnosed with hydrocephalus; a condition that occurs when fluid builds up in the skull and causes the brain to swell. She was referred to NGO called ADINA Foundation to have her child treated however the NGO was resource constrained and referred her to CURE children's Hospital in Mbale. Due to resource constraint in her household, she couldn't afford the funds for the operation. Sarah was later identified by a TPO parenting facilitator who assessed her family for vulnerability and connected her to TPO Project Officer. TPO supported Sarah to take her child to CURE Children's Hospital where he was operated. The child is now able to lift his head, see, and his condition is far much better than before.



## Strengthening community-based service delivery systems for enhanced child protection

In Western Uganda, TPO Uganda worked with the Ministry of Gender Child Protection Working Group at the national level, Alternative Care Panels, and the District and Sub-county OVC Committees (DOVCC and SOVCC) to sustain momentum and response to the challenges affecting children and youth. Through the DOVCCs, SOVCCs, CDOs, and parasocial workers TPO provided services to children, youth and their caregivers. Child-related services such as health, education, birth registration, facilitating access to ART /ARV treatment, socio-economic strengthening interventions, and psychosocial support were delivered to children, youth and their caretakers for their wellbeing during the COVID 19 lockdown. The parasocial social workers and CDOs continue to monitor and report any cases of GBV and VAC through teleconference calls. Moreover, the parasocial workers have ensured that children continue to access health services: children whose households are far from the health centres, the TPO Social Workers have worked with medical facilities to ensure that children who had not accessed their Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs during the lockdown are delivered at their homes.

In hard to reach areas in some districts such as districts, Mbarara, Gomba, and, Rukungiri the District Health Officers are working with the Social Workers to deliver drugs to all the children and youth who missed appointments whether they are TPO beneficiaries or not. Social workers' follow up visits are

## Media Pick: checkout our recent publications

Read our publication on Community Management of child-friendly spaces <http://tpoug.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/knowledge-development-resource1.pdf> for more inspiring child protection stories from our work

Read our inspiring stories, lessons and experiences from our work on shaping the future for Uganda's children and youth <http://tpoug.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/TPO-SOCY-Experience.pdf>

### Key resource



**DEPARTING CEO OF TPO UGANDA:  
"DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE  
WHERE THE PROBLEMS OCCUR"**

Read an interview from our outgoing Country Director sharing his experience on working with TPO Uganda for over 20 years <https://tpoug.org/index.php/2020/06/17/departing-ceo-of-tpo-uganda-decisions-should-be-made-where-the-problems-occur/>

limited to homes with critical cases. To support good nutrition for children on medication, the Social Workers have encouraged each household to establish a backyard garden to improve on their nutrition in homes.

## Enhancing case management approaches for improved child Protection

The lockdown period enforced by the government of Uganda due to the COVID-19 outbreak brought in a new wave of child abuse in homes. Child abuse cases ranging from children witnessing domestic violence to being victims of multiple types of violence doubled in number. Most of these issues arose due to stress, redundancy, and financial distress. The TPO Social Workers identified families suffering from GBV to intervene and prevent further harm to children. Cases of domestic violence and child protection issues are identified and addressed by Districts Project Coordinators in collaboration with Probation Officers and the Police to ensure that the home environment is safe for children. Through family mediation, the identified houses are provided with guidance and support on how to cope with stress and handle household matters without resorting to violence. Cases such as forced child marriages, child neglect are identified and referred to the police (CFPU) while others are handled by the local council one.

The likelihood of reoccurrence of violence was also assessed and alternative measures such as economic empowerment of the household, provision of psychosocial support to alcoholic spouses

## Editor's Note of Thanks

*By Jude Okeria, Head of Programmes*

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TPO Uganda is committed to strengthen community based interventions that ensure increased protection for children in the areas of operation. We would like to thank all our partners, government and communities who have supported the efforts in preventing and responding to Violence against Children during COVID 19 Pandemic. Your invaluable resources and support has increased Children's wellbeing.

put in place to ensure children are protected from witnessing and experiencing violence.

## Capacity building of staff for improved MHPSS delivery

TPO continues to build the capacity of its staff and health workers through training in basic psychosocial support with a focus on the identification of mental disorders and basic counseling. The participants were equipped with relevant skills and knowledge in assessment for common mental, neurological and substance use disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and strengthening resilience and coping skills in children and their caregivers. Trained health workers and staff have been able to engage in community outreach enabling caretakers and children with mental health issues to have access to services. These capacity-building programmes have enabled TPO to create a niche of extra skilled health and community workers who are able to provide MHPSS interventions that link health facilities to communities and households.

## Promoting parenting to strengthen family-based care for children during COVID-19

TPO continues to champion specialized parenting models to strengthen caregivers' knowledge and practices on positive parenting during the COVID-19 lockdown. Our parenting program delivered in North-Eastern Uganda targets households with vulnerable children such as children suffering from child abuse in households. In this period, individual households and parents/caregivers were reached with messages on parenting during COVID-19 through the community reference groups.

Although interventions on child protection are ongoing to ensure the safety of children, there are emerging issues such as gambling among the youth, child marriage, and theft resulting from children being at home during this lockdown. To counter these issues, the community support structures with support from Police have created awareness on the dangers of such practices to

the children and the youth. Furthermore, community structures like the Community Reference Groups have remained alert to report any case of child abuse within their community making it easy for victims/survivors to access different services.

## **Strengthening child protection coordination at the national level**

The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) Secretariat focus has been on coordinating members to share their experiences in providing care and protection services to children within the family. The national-level coordination has been consistent amidst the COVID-19: Members were engaged majorly online via the online CPWG community on Basecamp to discuss critical emerging child protection issues. The online discussions focused on what the CPWG members sharing their experiences on what's working and not working, level of community engagement, and support required from like-minded organizations in implementing their child protection activities during COVID. The online meetings have been regularized to monthly to enable fast-tracking implementation of agreed on actions within this new context of COVID-19.