

REVIEW OF 2009



It's the end of the year and we take stock of what we all with God's help have been able to do and see happen. The goal of the child project is to present a holistic gospel and meet some of the social, physical, spiritual, and economic and education needs of the people we work with. This is primarily done as the center emphasizes the importance of education, empowers children to meet their own economic needs through teaching them livelihood and life skills, and seeks to provide for basic needs. In targeting the children, FOCUS also hopes to reach the parents, and therefore the wider community, with the Good News of Jesus Christ in order to influence the community's values.

The children's program fits within the scope of FOCUS objectives under its program of CODE - (Compassion and Development). It is a discipleship program geared to:

- i) Respond in love and compassion to varying situations of need in communities in our country as a result of war, poverty, ignorance, disease or other social problems.
- ii) Respond with a view to assist communities in such situations to learn how they can live better and more meaningful and productive lives.
- iii) Encourage and challenge students and other Christians to work with disadvantaged communities with a view of practically responding to the needs of others

This year, through the children's program, many families in the community have been helped to provide their children with formal and informal education, spiritual and behavioural development, social and interaction skills, medical treatment and physical well being (food), health and hygiene issues addressed. Our achievements in different aspects of our work have been;

EDUCATION

We made school fees payments for 138 children and youth through the course of the year making it possible for them to get a formal education. We provided scholastic materials for these children in terms of books, pens and pencils and also provided other school needs for 4 students whose parents/caregivers could not complete their children's tuition top up.

Seven students graduated from the program having completed various courses of study. 28 new children were registered in the program. A total of 17 students were removed from the program. Some lost interest in the program, some graduated, while others were removed for other reasons and stopped attending centre programs.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Discipleship classes for children who are born again were held at the end of every centre day and were well attended by the children and also enjoyed. Every centre day, children were taught the word of God and it's

relevance in our lives. During parents' meetings, the parents were also encouraged to put their hope and trust in God.

Once every holiday, the born again children along with one staff member held a day of prayer and fasting. Children went out to minister to people outside the project as had been planned.

A children's camp was held in January where students in classes 2 and 3 attended.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL GROWTH

To improve and increase children's interactions with one another, all children at the project were able to go for a one day outing for fun and games. This is also an opportunity to increase the children's exposure to some of the places they would never have otherwise been to. This year the outing venue was Kasubi beach.



The project was able to hold its third sports day. Game competitions were held in football with other inter class teams and village teams as planned which created opportunities for interaction. More games equipment was bought that enabled more children be involved in sports.

Children were able to attend different learning programs at the centre where they could meet and have fun and fellowship with one another. They were taught coping skills to handle challenges in life and to improve on their self esteem in the life skills classes. All children were taught and encouraged to relate and associate with peers and other people in the community in the right way.

Leadership training was done in the life skills classes, and during prefects meetings.



LIVELIHOOD SKILLS TRAINING

In December, 52 students aged 13 to 20 were trained in livelihood skills and enterprise development at the centre. This program aims to equip students with practical and marketable skills that will enhance their livelihood and promote self reliance. The students learnt and produced items of a much better quality than we have ever had before.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children were sensitised and taught on basic health care and hygiene at least three times every month. Treatment was given to children in form of first aid treatment at the centre and more serious cases were referred to Mulago hospital and Bethesda clinic. Prescribed drugs were bought to ensure that children remained healthy.

Children were all given a balanced diet whenever they came to the centre. Food was distributed to very needy families as planned and food supplements were given to those children and parents who were particularly sick or poor.

Children were involved in cleaning up at the centre as planned by their classes. Parents and caregivers were taught about health and hygiene during parents' meetings. Health screenings for all children were done as planned and findings discussed with parents. We held a medical mission in which 355 received free treatment from the community

STAFF

A new board to oversee work in the child program was appointed. It consists of a parents' representative, two tertiary student representatives, a community leader and representative, two graduate/associate representatives, and the General Secretary. The FOCUS council chairperson and the treasurer are ex-official members plus the program director. The department has 3 full time staff, 6 volunteers, 5 of whom are students at university, and 4 support staff (2 cooks and 2 security men).

CHALLENGES

We have 6 age groups but only have 4 classrooms. 2 of these groups conduct classes outside (under a tree and on the office veranda) posing problems with the student's concentration.

We have 10 un-sponsored children whose home situation is still so bad and would really benefit from continued assistance.

Inadequate funding limits the interventions that we can undertake in the community. The increase in cost of living also means that families struggle to provide even basics like food and shelter to their children.

Orphaned and abandoned children struggle to get foster homes and keep changing guardianship which further destabilizes them

TERTIARY STUDENT INVOLVEMENT



FOCUS is a tertiary student-oriented organization. The vision of the ministry, is to evangelize, disciple and equip students in the tertiary institutions of Uganda through the Christian Union—each campus's Christian club. Often times, finding a connection between student work and a child program becomes confusing for some. However the principle of work here is that the child project serves as an integral mission's model to orient and train students to the work of discipleship. We work with the understanding that the Gospel ought to be proclaimed and demonstrated and we work towards the vision to transform students and change society. Despite that vision, the Project still faces difficulty in recruiting students to the work-doing off-campus missions.

We have seen a marked increase in the number of students responding this year, but many more still need to come on board. Our role remains that of mobilizing students and graduates to this work. We face constant excuses and reasons why people are unable to give or support others less

fortunate than themselves, but as one of our former interns Joel put it, 'what we lack individually, we compensate for in community—"what I do not have, the other has, and what I have, could be of use to the other." Instead of occupying ourselves with the abilities or inabilities of the self, we should rely on the ability of the other, as connected by virtue of the Community of Jesus Christ, bound together in His name, and go out to do the tasks of His Kingdom.

We will keep challenging students and you all out there, that as enabled by your relation to Christ, and because of your relationship with other people where you are, begin a ministry of food and meals distribution for

the poor, helping students in low-income situations, saving for fees by skipping meals, ...share what you do have and together we will make a difference. Oh, yes, help us support one more child go to school in our project on top of whatever else you will be doing!

Many of our intended outcomes are ongoing. As we plan for next year, many of them will recur. We intend to intensify our efforts to meet our objectives particularly in the areas in which we fell short.

As someone who supports this program, you can take courage in knowing your love to Uganda's children is bringing hope where there was once despair. Together we are making progress toward a brighter future for Uganda-one child at a time.

SENDING MONEY

We got the following information from both intervarsity and IFES about details of sending money through them.

To make a gift to support the FOCUS Uganda Mulago Child Project please send a cheque, made payable to IFES Trust, to IFES, 321 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7JZ. Please note that this method can only be used to support the Child Project, NOT to sponsor specific named children. All gifts sent to IFES in support of named children are returned to the donor.

For Donors in the United States who would like to support the FOCUS Uganda Mulago Child Project, please write your check, made payable to: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. Send it to: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Attn: Donation Services, P.O. Box 7895 , Madison , WI 53707-7895 . Please note that gifts sent through InterVarsity can only be used to support the general fund of the Child Project, NOT for CHILD SPONSORSHIP. All gifts sent to InterVarsity in support of named children are returned to the donor.

Another way you can send money to us is directly to our account in Uganda. The details are;

Chartered Bank Uganda Limited
5 Speke Road Branch,
P.O. Box 7111
Kampala. Telephone 256 0414 258117, Fax 256 041 342875, 231473
Swift address: SCBLUGKA
Account name; FOCUS Mulago Child Development Center Project
Account number: 0102010643100

We would like to express our very sincere thanks on behalf of the children, families and staff of FOCUS for your support to us last year. We would not have done anything without the money you sent in. Thank you so much indeed. For those who support children in the project, please send in the support money for 2010 as we have started another financial year. It costs USD 300 to sponsor a child per year!

Audrey Karuhanga

Program Director