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Promoting access to
quality education for all



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Before the intervention of HILLS project, some of the class sessions at Kachango Primary school were held under trees. With empowerment of school heads and lobbying, these changed.

Background

ActionAid with funding from **Hills and Cooks families** has been implementing the **Hills project** in four schools in Gogonyo sub county Pallisa district for the past two years. The Hills project aimed at increasing education financing to increase access to quality public education for children from poor households in rural areas. The project specifically aimed at addressing education inequality by promoting the following:

- Increased awareness of the rights to free quality education by the children and parents.
- Increased accountability in the delivery of free quality public education.
- Existence of earmarked funds for free and quality education.
- Existence of legislation and policies to improve public education and regulate private providers of education.

The Hills project was first initiated as a research and during the research, conducted in Gogonyo sub-county Pallisa district; one of the issues that came up was that public education financing was not sufficient to meet the standards of a quality education. There were a lot of challenges these schools were facing, poor infrastructure, teacher pupil ratio was very low

and schools were run without any plans.

These challenges gave ActionAid a pointer that it needed to do something to address issues affecting education and four schools were selected with the aim of, improving performance, increasing retention, and reducing teacher pupil ratio among others.

The project is being implemented in Gogonyo sub-county as a pilot in four primary schools namely, Ajepet, Akuoro, Kachango and Gogonyo Primary Schools and we have been engaging with different stakeholders, teachers, parents, pupils, school management committee, education officials and district and local leadership. We have been supporting the district to increase public education financing for schools and building the capacity of schools to come up with school improvement plans so that they have a systematic way to improve performance and infrastructure development. We have also been working with the children and parents to create awareness among them about their right to free quality education and the responsibility of parents towards the education of their children so that they can contribute in any way to improvement in the learning performance of the school.

We have also been helping them understand the connection between the taxes they pay and education so that they can be motivated to pay taxes and for accountability.

We have seen milestones and achievements in the four schools we are working in: these four schools have come up with school improvement plans and most of them have been able to improve on their infrastructure and use them for lobbying for more funds.

One of the biggest challenges that has been contributing to the poor education standards in Pallisa district has been lack of enough teachers in public schools. However, because of constant lobbying by ActionAid and communities, this year Pallisa district passed a budget of close to one billion shillings to cater for recruitment of teachers and nurses.

Another achievement of the project is increased awareness, parents and children are now able to demand for accountability of UPE funds. Before, schools would finish a year without holding any meeting but in the four schools, they hold annual Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings and management provides accountability. They also display accountability on their notice boards for everyone to see. These practices have also been adopted by nearby schools.

We also provided suggestion boxes for the children to freely speak and demand for accountability from the teachers by dropping their grievances in the suggestion box.

Parents are more interested and involved in the school affairs they contribute to the school feeding programmes either financial or in kind and this have led to increased retention of pupils in school and their concentration during lessons.



One of the lessons we have learnt from implementing this project is that education performance can improve if all the stakeholders are involved and if well financed.

With the coming of UPE, parents had a misconception that government was solely responsible for the education of their children. The Hills project has shown that involvement of key stakeholders increased child retention and improved performance. We learnt that if we mobilize all the stakeholders to have interest and get involved then we get improved financing and performance.

Previously schools would charge development fee and most of the parents could not afford and they prioritized boy education over the girl child but with the Hills project, we learnt that if government meets much of the financing burden, then parents can also encourage girl child education. The presidential directive halting the charging of development fees if followed will be a massive boost to our efforts.



Emmanuel Wafula, Cluster Coordinator

The project has also taught us that as parents understand why they pay taxes they are motivated to demand for accountability and increased education financing. In the areas that the project is being implemented, there is increased accountability and transparency because the increased awareness and involvement of parents and pupils in the day to day running of schools.



A primary six science class in session at Kachango primary school

Schools attribute improved school performance to the Hills project

Pallisa district has been registering some of the worst education results both for primary and secondary schools in Uganda. To change this and improve the education standards, ActionAid through the Hills project used an advocacy approach targeting children, teachers, SMCs, PTAs, district, and local leaders to ensure that everyone participated and contributed.

Before the Hills project, these four schools did not have clear plans and schools were run in an adhoc manner. Under the Hills project, teachers' members of management committee and PTAs were orientated on their roles and expectations.

As a result, each of the schools came up with school improvement plans which have been a driver for developments in these schools.



Opolot Samuel Head teacher, Ajepet Primary school

Before the Hills project, things were not systematic because we were operating without an action plan/improvement plans. Parents, SMCs and the teachers were not united because they were not speaking with one voice but when ActionAid came, the school benefited a lot. They lobbied for the construction of a classroom, teacher's quarters and they dug a bore-hole and erected talking compounds and girls were trained on how to make pads and given sewing machines.

Now the girls make pads and these girls are remaining in school because now they have no menstruation challenges. These reusable pads have enabled the girls improve on their hygiene and this has increased the performance of the girl-child. The district also put up a girls changing room and washroom, so their challenges are handled on the spot at the school.

The school improvement plan is forwarded to the sub county, when they sit they look at the improvement plans and single out the priority areas for them to fund. We were able to get the pit latrine and the classroom block constructed because of having a school improvement plan. This improvement plan showed the sub county leadership the school's development priorities and need for increased funding.

The sub-county forwarded some of the issues in the school improvement plan to the district and the district came in and constructed the boys' latrine. Before, the boys were sharing one latrine with the teachers, but this problem has been solved.



Pupils of Ajepet Primary School making pads using a sewing machine given to them by ActionAid

Because we had another challenge of trespassing in the school, we used the capitation grants to start fencing the school because we saw that the district leadership was delaying. The school improvement plan has given us a way and focus, now we can see what we have been able to achieve and what we have failed.

Before Hills project came, the children were completely green about their rights but when it came, children were taught about their rights and this were also written and placed in the compound. When now you ask now the children about their rights, they will tell.

Before the children used to starve because we didn't have a provision of feeding them, the school improvement plan made us provide midday meals to the children. We asked the parents to contribute because children could not starve.

We involved the parents and asked them to contribute foodstuffs which were then prepared for the children.

The suggestion box introduced under the Hills project has improved the relations between teachers and pupils because the pupils are able to freely express their issues and we act on it.

These interventions has improved performance because two years back we were doing badly academically but last year there was an improvement because we started getting some pupils in division one. This year we are expecting better performance because of the good relationship fostered between administration and the pupils. The children also gained confidence to talk to the teachers freely.

Also as a result of these interventions, the school enrollment has increased from 900 to a population of 1,210 currently and even the girl child is maintained at the school because of the conducive learning environment at the school.

The sub-county also supported us with 14 desks, and this has somehow reduced the number of children sitting on the floor.

However, despite these achievements, the school still faces the problem of shortage of teachers, high population of pupils. We also need offices and teachers' quarters catering for all the teachers.

With contribution from the parents, we have been able to recruit teachers; this has been a very welcome boost. These two are paid monthly using the development plans. I would like to thank ActionAid for this project because it has really uplifted Ajepet Primary school.



Pupils of Ajepet Primary school plant trees in their school compound

I thank ActionAid for the support it has given Ajepet primary school since 2001. Before ActionAid came, the education standards of the school were very low and the SMC and PTA were not very active. However, the Hills project prioritizing education has helped Ajepet because the parents were sensitized on the importance of taking children to school. The school management committee and PTA were sensitized about their roles. We are now playing our roles very well and the standard of education in this school has improved.

Before we had some plans, but we would not even put them in action because we were not united and supervision was very weak. But ActionAid showed us how to come up with school improvement plans and how to implement and achieve the set goals.

As School Management Committee, we make sure that parents bring all the children to school; all the children are attending classes and ensure that the teachers are playing their roles very well. We also monitor the use of UPE funds to promote accountability.



School Management Committee member, Ajepet Primary School

Before the Hills project came, the school did not take issues of menstrual hygiene seriously. Whenever a girl experienced menstruation, we would send them home and only return when they were feeling better. The Hills project emphasizes access to quality education to both boys and girls so the school started taking issues of menstrual hygiene seriously. The school started budgeting for materials for making re-usable pads and now girls are staying in school.

Using the school improvement plan, the school also put up a washroom for girls which have been very critical in improving girl child retention in school. The girls can bath and change uniform and pads during school days. Because of this, the gap in performance between the girls and the boys has significantly narrowed. The

dropout rate of girls has reduced, and the girls are consistently attending school. Before we would have 200- 300 girls attending school but now days we have up to 600 girls in school because of the conducive learning environment.

I really thank Hills project very much because it has done a lot in Ajepet primary school, it has helped the girl-child in our area. It has helped girls who would not have had chance to go to school, not only to come to school but also to progress further to higher institutions of learning.



Adita Florence Senior woman Teacher, Ajepet primary school.

I would also miss up to twelve days a term during menstruation but because of the washrooms and availability of re-usable pads, I no longer miss school. The washrooms also ensure that we can maintain proper hygiene. All these have contributed to a conducive environment and as a result we are able to concentrate in class leading to better performance. I am now very focused.

Evelyn, a primary six pupil from Ajepet primary school

I know that I have a right to eat, play, education, right to shelter, right to medical care and right to play. Before ActionAid came to our school, we used rags as pads during menstruation, but they lobbied and we got washrooms for girls and they taught us how to make re-usable pads. Now we are very smart and concentrate fully in class.

15 year Justine, primary seven pupil, Ajepet primary school.

Following our school improvement plan in 2018, we realized that we needed to have a school feeding programme so that we keep children at school and boost their ability to pay attention in class. We realized that most of the children would miss school because of no food and those who would attend, they would not pay attention.

We have two gardens of cassava, beans, maize and sweet potatoes all on eight acres of land. This has ensured that there is a steady supply of food when children are in school.



John Henry, Head teacher Gogonyo primary school- Pallisa

Before Hills project came, most of the schools including Gogonyo primary school were doing very badly and things were not done in a proper way. When Hills came, they sensitized the community and we were encouraged to have the school feeding program, they gave us a grinding machine and constructed a kitchen. All this started after the school management committee was sensitized to come up with school improvement plans which we follow every year.

Through the support of the Hills project we came up with the tree planting project for the school, we have trees planted around the school compound, and the school has taken over the school feeding program. ActionAid has continued to empower the community especially the parents on their roles and responsibilities as parents. In the school improvement plan, we had

key targets; one was to improve the performance of the children which was very bad. One of the ways to improve this was introducing feeding of the school children. The children themselves cultivated the crops and the parents supplemented by contributing whatever they could. It was also a challenge because not every child was able to come to school with a book or a pen so we sensitized the parents to provide scholastic materials which they are now doing.

Another challenge is that the school was having dilapidated structures, but we lobbied the sub-county and they have started renovating the structures and they also supplied us with desks.



Some of the pupils and teachers in one of the school gardens. The pupils plant several crops which they harvest and eat during school days.

The children now know their rights and demand to get what they are entitled for example if a teacher is not teaching; they report him to the administration. Some even report their parents to the school in case they feel they are not treated well. This shows that the children have learnt to hold their parents and the teachers accountable having learnt about their rights through the Hills project. The girls come to us in case the parents are forcing them into early marriage, and we step in and caution the parents. This is something that could not happen years back.

The school management committee also did not know their roles but when the project came in, it trained them and showed them what they were supposed to be doing as School Management Committees (SMCs). SMCs are the pillars of the school and are supposed to lobby for services and goods for the school while the PTA is to coordinate between the school and the community. These two bodies are now working very well unlike before when they would clash constantly.

There is a big improvement now in our school because now everyone is aware of their roles and they are playing them. The school enrollment before was around 900, but because of these changes, this has risen to 1,472 pupils.

Before we used to experience a big number of girls dropping out before they reach P 7. But when the project came, they sensitized the girls and taught them how to make pads, this has been important in keeping the girls in school.

The project should continue because it has brought us to a certain level because a lot has changed for the better. The knowledge of making school improvement plans will stay with us even if the project is coming to an end, this will continue benefiting the school for years to come.

Before, the school had never gotten a candidate pupil passing in division two but with these changes, last year we had pupils passing in division two. We are optimistic that we shall have some passing in division one this year. Head teacher, Gogonyo

There are many factors that make a girl miss school and the first thing is menstrual hygiene challenges like lack of pads. Many families in this area cannot afford to buy for the girls pads and most parents don't value girl child education. This project put the girl child at the forefront since it came. It taught the girls about their rights and the values of education and this has reduced on the girl child dropout. They were given knowledge on how to make pads and how to keep hygiene during menstruation. The school built a washroom, bought soap and basins and this are helping the girls stay at school. Over the years the girls' performance has improved because now they can concentrate in class without missing because they have overcome menstrual challenges.

Before the Hills Project, there was a lot of absenteeism and poor performance faced at the school. ActionAid gave us tree seedlings and sensitized the pupils about their rights, ActionAid also sensitized teachers, parents and SMC and PTAs on their roles. This sensitization made the parents contribute to the construction of a store for the school. ActionAid also gave us talking compounds which you can't find in other schools. Children have been empowered by being given a suggestion box and now they can air out their

grievances. We had the challenge of inadequate, desks and classrooms but because of the sensitization, we received a two-classroom block, parents contributed towards construction of the store. The learning environment has improved because children were studying under trees but now, they study inside class.

As a result of the strides the school has made, Last year three quarters of our pupils in p7 managed to pass to join secondary schools, a very big improvement. We have also significantly reduced on school dropouts and now our enrollment stands at 1363 pupils

I thank the Hills project for the support they have given to this school; everyone now knows what to do. Even if they say the project is ending now, we know what to do and what direction to take.



Charles Okurut, Head teacher Kachango Primary School

Before the Hills project, most children did not know about their rights but as I talk now, they are aware and they know their rights. They have started loving being at school and studying because they know it is one of their rights.

The suggestion box has also helped the pupils articulate their issues. Before there was no way of airing their views but when the Hills project brought the suggestion box, now they are free and they write what is touching them, they drop it in the suggestion box. It is read by the administration and the issue is addressed.

Some of the issues addressed using the suggestion box include reduction in teacher absenteeism, lack of meals and menstrual hygiene challenges.

Before the project the schoolgirls used to depend on pads bought using UPE funds but these were few. To promote menstrual hygiene pupils were taught skills on how to make reusable pads and we lobbied the district until we got a five-stanza pit latrine for the girls which contained a washroom.

This has improved retention of girls in school which before they would miss up to 10 days in a term.



Grace, Senior woman teacher Kachango primary school

Akuoro Primary School faced the problems of absenteeism, early teenage pregnancies, no feeding program, high girl dropouts, poor infrastructure, no desks, trespassing, inadequate teachers, no safe water.

Under the Hills project, staff and school management committee were trained on the management of the school to improve performance. They identified the challenges and came up with the way forward.

One of the issues we have been able to solve is adding more teachers, we recruited three volunteer teachers being supported by parents after sensitization from ActionAid. We have also come up with the talking compounds with key messages for the learners. The school has also budgeted for materials for making reusable pads so that girls don't face menstrual hygiene challenges. This has improved girl child retention in school because these pads are available at school.

Children were also given training about their rights, as we speak, the children of Akuoro primary school are aware about their rights and they fight for these rights



in case they see an infringement.

Parents were also sensitized about their role especially in providing scholastic materials and taking on keen interest in their children.

When government gave out the learning materials, they were inadequate and only one child got in our school. It is very good that ActionAid has brought for our children to promote home learning. As a school we shall ensure that the teachers move around and help the pupils understand these materials.

As a school we have also learnt to account for all the money and materials received because of ActionAid sensitization meetings. The finance committee budgets but it must be endorsed and approved by the SMC and the sub-county leadership monitor and supervise our activities.

The Hills project has been instrumental in uplifting the standards of schools in Gogonyo parish, I wish for a follow up programme to ensure continuity of the programmes.



Lawrence Omedo, Head teacher of Akuoro Primary School in pallisa



Mr. Okurut Charles, Head teacher Kachango Primry School, shows off the newly constructed classroom block



Pupils and teachers being trained to make pads (upper left, a pupil of Ajepet primary school checking messages in the suggestion box and in the picture on the right, pupils of Gogonyo primary school weeding school garden



Pallisa District leaders pledge to adopt good practices of the Hills project

Pallisa district council has been very positive on education financing – we have been concentrating on classrooms, desks and sanitation facilities. We have been implementing whatever we planned.

Over the years there has been increased financing to the education sector because the education sector alone has been consuming over 30% of the district budget, it is the highest with teachers' salaries accounting for a substantial amount. We focused on increasing facilities in schools by constructing and renovating where possible.

As we play our role, parents are also supposed to ensure provision of scholastic materials and supporting the feeding programme but they are hampered by the high poverty levels. However, I have noticed that the four schools supported by the Hills project are better in these areas.

I have also noticed that because of ActionAid work, stakeholders in the community are very vigilant and there has been increased demand for service quality enhancement. We see people lobbying because they know who to approach.

We have been having a weakness in teacher recruitment made harder by splitting of the district. We have now stabilized and in the next financial year we are going to recruit around 297 teachers, this will take us a long way in improving education services and reduce pupil teacher ratio which is very high in the district.



Robert Mukesi, district planner, Pallisa

To have this budgeted for and passed took a lot of effort and persistence from different stakeholders especially ActionAid and for this we are grateful.

As a district we will adopt practices that have shown to work under the Hills project and reliable than in other schools. For example we shall support SMCs and PTAs to play their roles because Hills has shown that they are critical in the growth of a school.

Before this intervention, there was poor attendance of girl child in schools mainly because of menstrual hygiene challenges. Our parents were also not sensitized about their roles and would not know what was happening in schools but the Hills Project changed all these. As I speak these schools have changed a lot, you find that majority of them are feeding the children, parents are contributing and the schools are also growing some food.

They also did a lot to promote girl child by training the girl child and the senior woman teacher to make re-usable pads and ActionAid even procured for them sewing machines and materials for making re-usable pads. There is some improvement that has been noted because ActionAid has involved all the stakeholders. The children are now aware of their rights and can stand up and speak for themselves. ActionAid has also been at the forefront of fighting against violation of children rights, child labor, child pregnancies and early marriages. Brought noticeboards, suggestion boxes and talking compounds which are critical in improving the learning environment. They have also been engaging us to go on radios and sensitize the people during these COVID-19 times.

ActionAid has also been at the fore front of fighting for increased in the recruitment of more teachers, we have been having a very big challenge of few teachers. I am happy to say that there is a budget for recruitment of more teachers this financial year.

Some schools like Kachango had inadequate classrooms but last year they received one classroom block and others have got more latrine stanzas.



Jessica, Acting Inspector of schools.

We have learnt some good practices from the Hills project like the need to teach other schools on how to make re-usable pads and also adopting the school feeding programme, sensitizing the parents on their roles. We have also learnt that there is need to promote the girl child education.

We are also encouraging other schools to get in touch with these four schools and photocopy these learning materials being given out to support remote learning. We have also been supporting other schools within the district to come up with their school improvement plans.



Pupils of Kachango primary school proudly show off some of the pads they have made. These pads have helped keep these girls at school.

What I have noticed in the four schools where ActionAid has been involved; There has been improvement in the presence of teachers in schools, the issue of teacher absenteeism is no longer there because of ActionAid work.

These children are performing fairly compared to other schools.

These schools have adopted school feeding for their pupils unlike other schools that are struggling. This has been possible because of improved relationship between teachers and parents in these schools.

I have also noticed behavior change of these children compared to others not supported by Hills project.

We applaud the remote learning initiative because it is complementing government efforts and as a sub-county, we are going to talk to the parents by using the local leadership structure. We are going to be fully involved.



Okurut Nicholas sub county chief Gogonyo

As a sub-county we are ready to ensure sustainability of gains from these four supported schools and promote replication of certain practices like formulation of school improvement in other schools.





Pupils of Ajepet primary school child rights club performing a drama to fellow pupils. Most of the children now know about their rights as a result of the sensitization done by ActionAid.



A stakeholders meeting which was organized by ActionAid to forge a way forward to improve performance in schools





Pupils receiving reading materials from ActionAid to help them continue learning while at home.



Some of the pupils show of their reading materials.



Hills Project promotes remote learning amid COVID-19 pandemic

Uganda is currently under lockdown down because of the COVID 19 pandemic currently ravaging the world. Schools have been closed and this has brought education of the children to a standstill. ActionAid through the Hills project has engaged several stakeholders to see how children can learn while at home.

Primary six and seven pupils of Ajepet, Gogonyo, AKuoro and Kachango were given learning materials of the different subjects to enable them study during this lock down. This is a welcome relieve for poor parents who do not have televisions and radios.

We have carried many activities under the Hills project during this lock down which include:

We have engaged with SMCs, PTAs of the schools in the four schools we support to see how they can support remote learning while children are at home. During these meetings, they shared the challenges children were undergoing during the lock down and came up with roles each of them can all play to support remote learning.

They generated several action points that would ensure children continued to learn at home and ensure that they are safe from COVID 19 we also engaged with UNATU to support remote learning to have a big impact because UNATU is a big and influential umbrella body. The also showed the role they can play to ensure this remote learning is a success.

We also had engagement meeting with the district task force that is responsible for enforcing the presidential and Ministry of health guidelines. We came up with the challenges the children were facing at home and the role the district could play to ensure that children continue accessing quality education despite being inn lock down.

We also engaged with district education officials to ensure that schools came up with school improvement plans that fit into covid 19 situation. The SMCs have been able to come up with applicable plans which with

specific roles for all the different stakeholders.

We are distributing remote learning materials to the learners, government tried to distribute but they were not enough so under Hills project we thought of providing this reading materials to P6 and P7 to continue learning at home with the different stakeholders committing to ensure it's a success.

We are distributing books covering the four subjects to enable the pupils' access and learn them on time during this lockdown.

What has changed is that the different stakeholders committed to play their roles to ensure this initiative is a success especially carrying sensitizations on radio talk shows to reach out to the parents to fully support the children especially the girl child.

There has been increasing number of teenage pregnancies and during our engagement meetings were tried to tackle it as a matter of agency by calling on all stakeholders to take responsibility of their roles. We reached out to police and parents to ensure children rights are protected fully. The sub county promised to come up with bye laws to restrict movement girls beyond certain late hours.

As the project comes to an end it leaves behind schools with school improvement plans that are shaping the growth of these schools. Now schools have wash rooms for girls and menstrual hygiene is taken seriously.



Aguti, Grace, Programmes officer ActionAid LRP Pallisa

We are assembled here today at the school to receive some study materials from ActionAid through the Hills project. These learning materials will help our children during this look down. The children are now going to concentrate instead of loitering around and only doing domestic work. Parents and teachers will help guide the children using these learning materials. We are very grateful for this initiative because the children will be oriented with their studies and improve on their knowledge. It will also help the candidate class to prepare for the final examinations because questions maybe set from this same material.

As the Head teacher, I will be moving around homes monitoring and supervising teachers and parents helping the children understand the learning materials.



Opolot Samuel Head teacher, Ajepet Primary School

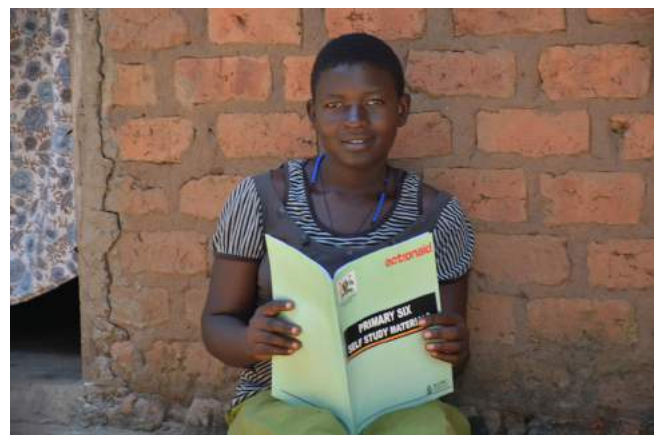
Naftali Chairman PTA, Yesterday we had an engagement on how to run, manage and plan for the schools during the lockdown. We also looked at ways on how to run the schools in case they are reopened by the ministry. As a PTA, I have been involved in mobilizing the parents to contribute PTA funds, feed the children and money to renovate the classrooms and the parents have been responding well. We mobilized and sensitized the parents about the importance of education. Now parents know their duties like buying scholastic materials, contributing to the feeding, buying uniform. When the project comes to an end, we shall continue because we know our roles and we will play them.

Oduch Emmanuel – Teacher Kachango primary school, I would like to thank ActionAid for coming to support the education of children. Our pupils of P.6 and P.7 have been supported with reading materials of the four subjects and we are really happy for this. I am sure that the pupils are going to ensure that the books are read while at home. This is going to keep them busy doing school work instead of playing and doing home chores only. As a class teacher of primary six, I am going to engage my fellow teachers to ensure that these children revise and coached in one way or the other.

Grandmother of Anna, a primary six pupil of Kachango primary school, During the lock-down, my granddaughter has been helping me with household reading and doing a bit of revising but now that ActionAid has given them some reading materials, I am going to ensure that she reads all the subjects by giving her more time.

During the lock-down, I have been following government standard operating procedures to avoid contracting COVID-19 like washing hands regularly and avoiding crowds. However, here in the village we do not have masks so this has restricted my movements. I have been at home, washing, cooking, digging and fetching water but sometimes I would revise my books after lunch. I have also been revising with my friends from better schools to improve myself.

Now that they have given us the reading materials, together with other classmates, we are going to read and where we don't understand we shall consult our teachers because most of them stay nearby. We really thank ActionAid for facilitating this remote learning.

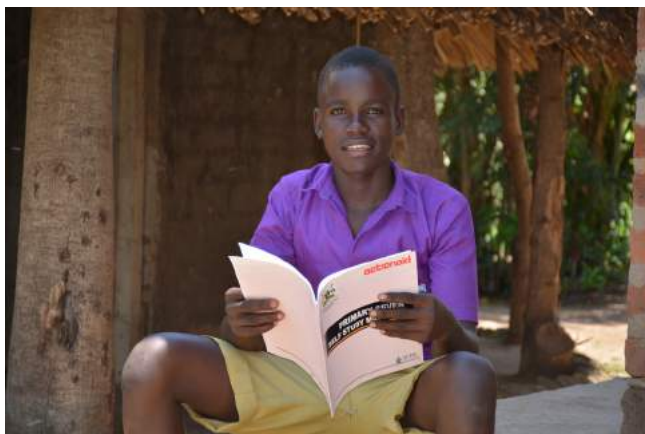


Apio Anna, a primary six pupil of Kachango primary school, 14 years old



Pupils of Ajejet primary school after receiving reading materials from ActionAid

As a candidate I would like to thank ActionAid very much for this remote learning initiative because it is going to enable me pass the primary leaving examination despite the impact of the lock-down.



Amona Emmanuel, pupil of Kachango primary school in Primay Seven

Akello Joan, 14 years old primary seven, during the lockdown , I have just been at home doing domestic work, digging, cooking, and washing plates and clothes. I have not been able to read and revise because we do not have a radio or television to listen to teachers. We are happy that ActionAid has given us these reading materials. It is going to keep us busy because we are expected to read and do some exercises. I will also share with friends from neighboring schools so that they are not left behind. Now that we have these reading materials, we are going to revise and catch-up with school work.

Odong Derrick in Primary Seven, Gogonyo primary school, During long down, I have been hunting, looking after animals, fishing and digging. I have not been able to read any books since the lock-down because we didn't have any learning materials. But now that we have been given learning materials from ActionAid, I am going to reduce on domestic chores and pay more attention to my books. I thank ActionAid so much for this support. Together with my friend we are going to form discussion groups and start going through the learning materials. No i am going back home to read my books seriously and I know I will pass.

Sustainability

We made sure that sustainability was integrated in the implementation of this project. One of the things we focused on was to increase participation of all the stakeholders so that we nurture interest in education. With all the stakeholders involved interested, they will continue demanding for these services even when the project ends.

Another strategy we have used is to advocate for increased budgetary financing to public schools and this is happening. This budgetary increment means that the schools have more money and so they can continue implementing their school improvement plans.

The school improvement plans are also a sustainability strategy because the schools are now systematically and strategically be able to continuously improve the performance and infrastructure of the school. Reducing pupil teacher ratio by procuring more desks, recruiting more teachers, putting up more stanzas of pit latrines and we are seeing these being implemented by the leaders.

The project has been on track but with the outbreak of COVID 19, all the schools were closed and everything was put on hold. We thank government for encouraging home learning through self-study, use of televisions

however children in rural schools are missing out because they don't have access to televisions, radios and no electricity. The learning materials couldn't reach all the children and so through the hills project, we have been able to support these children by reprinting the self-study materials for p6 and p7 developed by Ministry of Education and Sports to help them continue learning at home as they prepare for end of term examinations.

We have also been having meetings with, PTAs, SMCs, teachers, and district education officials to come up with strategies to support home learning and self-study and they have promised to continue reaching out to the children for the successes of the initiative.

We are also creating awareness during this period, we are using radios to support children to have time to study and not only concentrate on doing domestic chores.

We have also noticed increased teenage pregnancies during this period and so we are working with the district and police to ensure the protection of the rights of children by arresting and prosecuting perpetrators and sensitizing the parents.





ActionAid is a global movement of people working together to achieve greater human rights for all and defeat poverty. We believe people in poverty have the power within them to create change for themselves, their families and communities. ActionAid is a catalyst for that change.

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FRONT COVER:
PUPILS OF GOGONYO
PRIMARY SCHOOL IN
PALLISA DISTRICT

PHOTO:
HARRISON

BACK COVER:
ILLUSTRATION:
HARRY MALT



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