Improved Nutrition, Stable Incomes
AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE — THANKS TO YOU.

2014 DONOR IMPACT REPORT

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Director’s Message

In 2014, the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods accomplished more in its mission to transform the lives of rural Ugandans than in any of my prior five years as director. Building on an intimate knowledge of community needs and a strong foundation of documented successes gained over the past 10 years, we’ve focused our resources on programs that are critical to sustaining progress towards eliminating poverty and malnutrition in rural Kamuli District.

With the addition of Nakaswezi Primary School, the school lunch program served about 3,200 protein-rich meals to primary school children each week. This number is expected to grow as we engage more schools.

The establishment of four nutrition education centers this year means there are now seven centers providing nutrition, health, family life, and latrine at Namassagi Primary School, and the registration of the Iowa State University-Uganda Program as a nongovernmental organization (NGO). While the dormitory and related facilities demonstrates our commitment to the educational success of young women, our NGO status provides the flexibility to operate independently, develop new partnerships and attract international funding.

Finally, as my term as director comes to a close, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to you, our donors, for your generous support and guidance.

Sincerely,

Mark Westgate
Director, Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods
Professor, Department of Agronomy

THANKS TO YOUR COMMITMENT to improving lives in the developing world, the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2014 — and made significant gains in advancing its mission to combat global hunger, malnutrition, and poverty. Since 2003, the center has employed a people-centered approach in Kamuli District, Uganda, that has helped farmers and families achieve food security, improve household nutrition and stabilize income. The center’s programs have worked with more than 1,200 families and have affected 10,000 people. While laying the groundwork for a higher quality of life for rural Ugandans, the center’s service learning and internship programs have taught Iowa State University and Makerere University students what it takes to be change agents in improving the lives of others around the world.

“Transformative change takes time. Many challenges remain. But something good is coming from Kamuli District. It has helped farmers and families achieve food security and stabilized income. The center’s programs have worked with more than 1,200 families and have affected 10,000 people. While laying the groundwork for a higher quality of life for rural Ugandans, the center’s service learning and internship programs have taught Iowa State University and Makerere University students what it takes to be change agents in improving the lives of others around the world.”

— Dorothy Masinde, Associate Director, Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

1. The importance of this resource to the community and our working relationship with it cannot be overstated. Our long-term commitment to the development of rural communities of Kamuli District was solidified this year through the completion and dedication of a girls' dormitory, kitchen facility and latrine at Namassagi Primary School, and the registration of the Iowa State University-Uganda Program as a nongovernmental organization (NGO). While the dormitory and related facilities demonstrates our commitment to the educational success of young women, our NGO status provides the flexibility to operate independently, develop new partnerships and attract international funding.

2. Forty-four Iowa State University and Makerere University students participated in the CSRL Service Learning Program, the highest number since the program inception.

3. Two boreholes and cisterns were installed in a community where clean, safe water was desperately needed. The addition of Nakaswezi Primary School, the school lunch program served about 3,200 protein-rich meals to primary school children each week. This number is expected to grow as we engage more schools.

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Growing the Value of Crops

Hunger is losing its grip on Kamuli District, Uganda. Through center programs aimed at helping Kamuli District farmers get the most from their small plots of land, the percentage of rural families able to meet their daily nutrition needs has jumped from 10 percent up to 60 percent within the last five years.

Even better, many farmers often have leftover crops to sell. The resulting income enables them to make housing improvements, pay school fees and purchase medicine. “Improving agriculture is a stepping stone to lifting people out of poverty,” says David Acker, associate dean for academic and global programs in ISU’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. “That’s why agriculture has been the foundation for the center’s work.”

Gleaning indigenous knowledge and insights from Kamuli farmers, Iowa State scientists and practitioners — renowned for their agricultural expertise — work closely with local farmers to develop culturally sensitive solutions to the harsh conditions limiting agriculture production throughout the region.

The most effective practices are shared through farmer-to-farmer training, demonstration projects and other outreach efforts such as call-in radio shows.

In 2014, small landholder farm families in Kamuli District realized many gains, including:

- Increased crop yields through improved soil management, use of pesticides and fungicides, crop rotation and growing pest and stress-resistant crop varieties
- Greater consumption of dietary protein through the addition of beans and amaranth crops that complement the traditional staples of corn, matoke, cassava and sweet potatoes
- Income from the sale of surplus crops through the use of strategic marketing practices
- Improved grain storage techniques that help mitigate the “hunger season,” typically experienced between growing seasons

These gains are creating more favorable and sustainable conditions for healthy, food secure and economically stable families and communities.

With losses as high as 50 percent, effective grain storage is critical to improving food security for farmers and their families.

Last year, Tom Brumm, Iowa State associate professor of agricultural and biosystems engineering, along with Dennis Bbosa, a graduate of Uganda’s Makerere University, researched grain storage methods with a goal of reducing the devastating rate of post-harvest crops lost to insect damage.

The solution? Hermetically sealed, 55-gallon barrels that proved 100 percent effective at eliminating damage from maize weevils, the main culprit in post-harvest crop loss.

The center plans to purchase several of these airtight barrels for its school lunch program, which stores between 2,200 and 6,000 pounds of grain at any given time.

“Starting with the school lunch program, parents will see how the storage containers work. The long-term goal is that they transfer the storage solution to their own farms,” says Brumm.
LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

When it comes to selling livestock, Kamuli District farmers are at a disadvantage.

Without scales to weigh their animals, farmers don’t know the true value of their product and traders almost always underestimate it. As a result, farmers often sell their livestock for much less than it is worth. Many farmers can’t read, the application uses diagrams to instruct farmers in its use. Nadopoe is currently working with farmers to test the application’s usability.

HERE'S HOW THE APPLICATION WORKS:

• The farmer measures the animal’s body length, heart girth, body width (over the shoulders) and height.
• The farmer then inputs the data into the phone application.
• The app calculates an estimated weight.

Because many farmers can’t read, the application uses diagrams to instruct farmers in its use. Nadopoe is currently working with farmers to test the application’s usability.

“We’ve tested the calculations with more than 400 pigs, and the predictions are accurate within two or four kilograms,” says Walugembe. “This information will empower farmers when selling livestock, and it will help them to improve animal management.”

The application is based on the results of a research study conducted by Walugembe; Max Ruthschild, Iowa State professor of animal science; C.F. Curtis Distinguished Professor in Agriculture and M.E. Ensminger International Chair, Gideon Nadopoe, interim team leader for the center; and others.

A consistent source of both nutrition and income, livestock plays a critical role in advancing the quality of life for Ugandan families.

In Kamuli District, the center’s livestock program leverages Iowa State’s expertise in animal husbandry, agribusiness and extension to help the region’s poorest farmers — mostly women — start and run successful livestock enterprises.

There are currently 400 farmers adding chickens, goats, cows and pigs to their operations. The livestock enterprise of Amuras and Eylysia Tigayiza is a shining example of how the program works and the difference it can make in raising families’ standard of living.

Moving Up

In 2010, Amuras Tigayiza, a family farmer in Bugadumu Sub County, was struggling to feed her family. After her only cow’s calves died, Tigayiza knew she needed help. She sold the cow for farmland and enrolled in the center’s livestock program.

After constructing a goat shed on her land, program staff trained Tigayiza in animal husbandry and marketing strategies and provided her with fodder planting materials, animal drugs and a pair of goats. When the female goat gave birth, Tigayiza passed one offspring on to another farmer, according to the program’s protocol. She went on to raise the remaining offspring, selling them for other livestock.

Throughout this process, the center provided technical support in disease management and other issues.

Today the household owns four goats, two cows, one bull and a female calf. Tigayiza’s husband, Eylysia, is now a partner in the successful enterprise.

The Tigayizas assert that the inclusion of animal protein in their family’s diet — especially milk — has improved their health, and using manure from the animals has improved the condition of their crops. Regular sales of goats, bananas and milk have stabilized their income.

They’re used the money to secure their children’s education, plaster their house; purchase clothing and pay for medical care. Farmers like the Tigayizas are often commissioned to share their knowledge with other farmers and create a network for experimentation and sharing of best practices. This farmer-to-farmer outreach speeds the transfer of knowledge and ensures livestock practices will continue to improve.

“Amuras and Eylysia tell me they are healthier, happier and more respected in the village,” says Gideon Nadopoe, interim team leader for the center.

Extending the Benefits of Livestock
Combating Malnutrition

“Miracle child.”

That’s what people call Jonan Zadoki — an active, happy, five-year-old boy — who at the age of three suffered from “severe wasting.” Everyone assumed he would soon die.

Determined to save him, Jonan’s grandmother brought Jonan to Naluwoli Nutrition Education Center (NEC). It is one of a handful of centers established by the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods aimed at ensuring the proper nutrition of pregnant and breastfeeding women and children, from birth to age five.

Over six months, Jonan received three daily servings of a nutrient-dense porridge while his grandmother was trained in health and nutrition, hygiene, sanitation and agriculture. When they graduated from the program they were given seeds of grain amaranth, soybean and millet. The goal was to enable the grandmother to sustain Jonan’s health indefinitely.

Within a year, Jonan’s weight doubled and he began playing with other children.

“Jonan’s grandmother is grateful to the nutrition education center for making her dream come true; for Jonan to ‘be alive’ again,” says Laura Byaruhanga, community nutritionist with Iowa State’s Uganda program.

Substantial Growth

In 2014, the opening of four NECs increased the number of centers to seven. The new NECs were opened to meet increasing needs and improve accessibility. In addition to the services Jonan and his grandmother received, NECs partner with local health centers to provide immunizations, HIV testing and other critical health services.

More than 440 women and children are enrolled in the centers, and more than 1,000 have participated since 2011. Reports from local health centers show malnutrition rates have decreased while birth weights have increased — key indicators of a healthier population.

Women Helping Women

While graduates of the nutrition education program go on to care for their own families, they also identify cases of malnutrition in their communities and refer them to NECs. Other graduates assume leadership roles in the NECs, becoming trainers or mentors for new enrollees, and most join a support group that helps strengthen their skills in promoting health and nutrition.

“This is an organic movement. Women who have graduated are identifying malnutrition and doing something about it,” says Hannah Durr, a junior majoring in global resource systems who worked with NECs during her internship. “They are helping themselves.”

Combating Malnutrition

In addition to growth, other NEC developments include the following:

• Nutrition Education Center graduates and participants extended the reach of the NECs to the larger community. Forming dance and drama groups, these women (and some male partners) performed at several community meetings throughout Kamuli District, spreading the message of nutrition to more than 560 people.

• In July, a microfinance program was launched that enables NEC graduates to acquire laying hens. Four mothers currently are keeping 300 layers. Eight other mothers are being trained to keep an additional 600 layers.
Providing Clean Water

Imagine life without convenient access to clean water. What would you do?

In rural Uganda, children and adults travel several miles — in intense heat, burdened with heavy containers — to gather this most basic of human needs. Add to this the fact that many of the water sources are contaminated, and the spread of waterborne illnesses makes the need for clean water even more urgent.

Boreholes

Since 2007, the center has funded the drilling of two boreholes each year. Once established, boreholes are maintained and managed by the community in which they are located.

With the addition of the 13th and 14th boreholes, more than 5,000 households and 2,800 students now have access to clean water every day. As a result, waterborne illnesses have decreased by half and sanitation and hygiene practices have improved significantly. And instead of spending hours transporting water, children can spend more time in school and adults can engage in income-generating activities.

Beyond the Wells

Permanent tip-taps (hand washing stations) were installed at Namasagali and Nakanyonyi primary schools, providing students and teachers with a convenient way to improve hygiene. Namasagali school also benefited from the installation of a second cistern that collects and stores standing water around the nearby borehole. The water is used for irrigation, watering livestock and other tasks, and the removal of standing water reduces mosquitoes and the risk of contracting malaria.

A treadle pump was attached to the cistern at Nakanyonyi Primary School. Operated like a stair-stepping machine, the pump has sped up the process of watering the school garden. The same school also received a roof catchment tank that provides more water for irrigation and livestock. Both a treadle pump and catchment tank were previously installed at Namasagali Primary School.

"I went to fill watering cans to irrigate the fence we had planted. At the same time, a man approached who was obviously gathering water for his family. He insisted I go first. Not with words, but with gestures. He had so little, yet he insisted I take the water. I was reluctant, so he pumped the water for me. Then I pumped the water for him. The look on his face said, ‘Thank you.’ We didn’t speak at all but much more was said in that moment. He renewed my faith in humanity."

— NICK JACKOWSKI, IOWA STATE JUNIOR, GLOBAL RESOURCE SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE
Ensuring Sustainability | YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

Educating Youth

With 48 percent of its population under age 15, the future of Kamuli District depends on the development of its youth. Formal education, life skills and perseverance will be required of these young people to sustain and advance the gains realized over the last 10 years.

Classroom Teaching

Each summer, students from Iowa State and Makerere University work with hundreds of students in four primary schools and one middle/high school. They teach subjects such as math and science, in addition to sanitation, nutrition and hygiene. More important, these temporary teachers serve as role models and are committed to inspiring their charges to pursue higher aspirations.

“It was important to me to spend time talking to students about the value of education. To let them know that the freedom to choose who you want to be comes from education,” says Nick Jackowski, Iowa State junior majoring in global resource systems and environmental science.

School Lunch Program

While Kamuli District students once struggled to concentrate in school, they are now focused, energetic and eager to learn. School enrollment has increased and school officials report that students are scoring much higher on their exams. Most administrators, school board members and parents attribute this positive change to the school lunch program.

The lunch program serves more than 5,200 meals each week among three schools. Each meal provides 850 nutrient-dense calories. For some students, lunch is their only meal for the day. Students’ families are required to contribute a portion of the ingredients — a sacrifice for most, but considered worth the benefits to their children’s health and education.

In 2014, the lunch program increased to five days a week at Namasagali Primary School. A new program was launched at Naluwoli Primary School in response to parents’ requests. Lunch is currently served once a week but will increase to two days a week as parents increase their contributions.

School Gardens

Serving as outdoor learning labs, school gardens teach students and local farmers practical skills in raising and harvesting crops, caring for poultry and marketing. For the students, this deeper understanding of agriculture, in addition to working side-by-side with Iowa State and Makerere students, has changed their perspective. Rather than a punishing chore, students now view agriculture as an economic opportunity that can vastly improve their present and future lives.

The gardens’ greatest impact, however, is on children’s food security. They provide at least 30 percent of the grain for the school lunch program, and once a week the chickens provide an egg atop the nutritious meals. Besides supplementing thousands of lunches, the gardens have become a source of income. High-value crops such as tomatoes and amaranth are sold to buy other ingredients and ensure the lunch program’s continuity.
Summer 2014 marked a major step toward empowering girls to reach their full potential. The completion and dedication of the girls’ dormitory at Namasagali Primary School means girls are more likely to finish school than to drop out and marry early. This promising development has positive, long-term implications for the girls’ futures, and also for raising the status of women throughout the region.

Historically, it’s been difficult for girls to stay in school for a number of reasons: a dangerous walk between school and home, lack of sanitary solutions during menstruation and their role as family caretakers. The dormitory removes girls from their caretaker role and eliminates daily travel. It also offers incentives such as evening meals, camaraderie with other girls, comfortable beds with mosquito nets and the opportunity to study rather than doing household chores.

Construction of the 50-bed dormitory was a collaborative effort. The community donated bricks and sand, the center provided concrete and Namasagali students carried bricks to the building site.

Keeping girls in school longer is critical to their life success. Girls who are educated are less likely to get pregnant at an early age and as adults they are more likely to be healthy, literate and economically secure. The new dormitory at Namasagali Primary School is a major force promoting a positive life trajectory for girls in rural Uganda.

Students aren’t the only ones benefiting from new housing this year. Construction of a teachers’ house at Nakanyonyi Primary School was also completed. Similar to a duplex, the house accommodates two teachers who will reside on school property. Having teachers on site will ensure the gardens are better cared for and will allow the school to start a poultry operation. And the teachers’ house will enable the school to recruit top teaching talent.

The new girls’ dormitory and the five-day school lunch program created the need for an industrial kitchen at Namasagali Primary School, which was completed in 2014. Another kitchen is being constructed at Nakanyoni school and is expected to be completed at the end of summer 2015. The kitchens will improve the efficiency of preparing and delivering meals for both lunch and dinner.
Training a Generation of Entrepreneurs

The Youth Entrepreneurship Program, located at Namasagali College, trains in- and out-of-school youth on the many facets of agricultural entrepreneurship. The ultimate goal is to help young adults grow into productive, self-reliant community leaders.

About 120 participants have received hands-on training in poultry care and production, vegetable growing and management, bookkeeping and product marketing. This motivated group of Kamuli District youth raised and sold 700 broilers and grew corn as a cash crop and vegetables. Quickly catching on to the principles of supply and demand, the youth stored the corn and later sold it during the off-season.

New additions to the program in 2014 included a microfinance initiative meant to spur the growth of participant-led, agricultural initiatives; a day long leadership workshop; and an apiary.

Only two years old, the Youth Entrepreneurship Program is working to overcome challenges such as reaching out-of-school girls. At the same time, however, the program already has had a positive effect on many youth that will last a lifetime.

FINDING HIS WAY

After dropping out of primary school in 2013, Lubaale Daniel’s life could have taken a downward spiral. Instead, he joined the Youth Entrepreneurship Program at the urging of Martin Lukwata, a graduate student from Makerere University, who at that time served as the program leader.

“Dan immediately got involved in almost everything we were doing,” says Lukwata. “From the broilers to the apiary to the maize fields.”

Soon Dan asked for his own small plot of land. He wanted to use his new skills to earn money and become self-sufficient. He no longer wanted to burden his father who already struggled to provide for eight other children.

Although the micro finance program hadn’t started yet, Lukwata was able to procure some collard seeds, pesticide and fungicide, which he gave to Lubaale.

“Dan created the most beautiful vegetable garden I had ever seen. And the harvest didn’t disappoint,” says Lukwata.

Dan was one of only two collard suppliers during the August 2014 season and was the only producer from which suppliers would buy. He used his profits to buy a mobile phone that he uses to communicate with customers and has already prepared next season’s nursery beds. Lukwata says Dan’s parents are always thanking the program for giving his son a purpose in life.

“This has shown me that even little things can make a difference in someone’s life. The cost for setting up Dan’s first garden was about $30,” says Lukwata.
Learning Life-Long Lessons through Service

Service learning is deeply connected to both the mission and culture of Iowa State University. Not only do students learn while contributing to the social good, service learning strengthens their resolve to make the world a better place. In Uganda, students are learning what it takes to be change agents in helping to improve the lives of others.

Each summer, Iowa State students join students from Makerere University for the center’s service learning program. Students live together and form lasting bonds as they teach in primary schools, care for school gardens and work in school lunch programs. They also form bi-national teams to complete defined projects. This year, the select group of 40 students completed projects in the following areas:

- poultry management
- irrigation
- agroforestry
- farming
- construction
- beekeeping
- youth entrepreneurship

While most students assert they receive much more than they contribute, the experience is especially rewarding for Iowa State students majoring in global resource systems.

“I always wanted to do development work — benefiting someone’s life somehow. This experience encouraged me even more in that direction,” says Melissa Larson, Iowa State senior majoring in global resource systems and environmental science.

Larson contributed her technical skills gained from previous studies in industrial engineering to irrigation and rainwater harvesting projects. Her team installed a treadle pump and rainwater catchment system at Nakanyonyi Primary School and built a second cistern at Namugaga Primary School. The goal was to improve and increase the water supply and the efficiency of irrigation.

Nick Jackowski, also majoring in global resource systems and environmental science, worked on agroforestry projects. He helped re-establish and fence in a fruit orchard that had been destroyed by cattle and planted indigenous fencing at Nakanyonyi Primary School to protect the garden from wandering livestock.

“I still find myself thinking about the kids, the Makerere students and Kamuli at the end of each day,” says Jackowski. “How it has transformed me is still unwinding.”

After completing the service learning program in 2013, Hannah Darr, a junior from Indianola, Iowa, returned to Uganda this year to complete her global resource systems internship. She spent most of her time immersed in the Nutrition Education Centers.

“The women had so little and yet they were happy,” says Darr. “This changed my ideas about what I need to survive and to be happy.”

Darr is planning a third trip to Uganda in March 2015. She is most excited to see the progress of the mothers and children.
“The Center for Sustainable and Rural Livelihoods has brought many people together to work toward a shared goal — eliminating hunger and poverty through agriculture, education, research and service. Now in its 10th year, this multifaceted partnership has provided both tangible and intangible benefits to everyone involved: the families, farmers, schools and communities of Kamuli District; students and faculty from Iowa State and Makere University; and benefactors like you, whose depth of caring and support make everything possible.

“Because of your enduring commitment to nurturing and strengthening its programs, the center has turned a shared passion and drive to better one corner of the world into real, significant progress in the fight against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Through the center’s efforts, Iowa State’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is known worldwide as a global college addressing global challenges across many disciplines.

“‘Transformational’ is the only word to describe the results the center has achieved. Severe malnutrition has been addressed. Access to clean water has increased. Improved farming practices have been implemented. Education is preparing the next generation to become future leaders in their communities. Peoples’ lives have been changed — you can see it in their faces.

“Our students who have participated in the center’s service learning, internships and research have experienced something they will never forget. They truly have been changed. They’ve realized something incredibly important — that by working hard and applying your knowledge, you can make a real difference in people’s lives. Not just later in their careers. But right now.”

— WENDY WINTERSTEEN, Endowed Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Iowa State University

NEW NGO STATUS

In 2014, Iowa State University was registered as a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Uganda to further the work of the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods.

Named Iowa State University – Uganda Program, the new NGO will help Iowa State operate more efficiently in Uganda and will enable students, faculty and staff to initiate and manage projects more directly. The first four employees of the NGO began work on Sept. 1.

The newly established NGO exemplifies the center’s commitment to raising the standard of living in rural Uganda and ensuring improvements are sustained.
CLEAN WATER, NUTRITION EDUCATION CENTERS, YOUTH AND FARMER TRAINING AND SCHOOL LUNCHES. THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE CENTER’S INITIATIVES MAKING MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCES IN KAMULI DISTRICT, UGANDA.

Individually, these initiatives have moved the needle toward a better quality of life for local farmers and their families. Together, they comprise the foundation of a complex system progressing toward transformational change. A change that will turn the current gains related to food, nutrition and income into a higher standard of living that is both expected and sustained.

It’s an aspirational vision, but one that is possible—

THANKS TO YOU.