

# FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEEDY COMMUNITIES

## OVC - Goat beneficiaries report- 2008

### **Introduction**

Mbale District is faced with an ever increasing number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children largely attributed to HIV/AIDS (prevalence rate of over seven percent), poverty and other factors. Over 60% (unpublished) of children in Mbale communities are denied an opportunity to exploit their full potential to develop due to poverty. Several of these children are orphaned and vulnerable to exploitation in society, the majority of who are under the care of grand parents or women who do not have the capacity to help them live sustainable livelihoods. Such children in most cases have dropped out of school due to lack of tuition and/or scholastic materials.

Most of these children live in extreme poverty, one meal a day, ill health, poor shelter and sanitation conditions, poor clothing, deficient diets and lack of an education; this alone makes their future uncertain.

Despite interventions by several actors to address the OVC problem, not much has been covered due to the ever rising numbers of OVC, FDNC under the community health department and the Child Sponsorship program (OVC focused) strives to improve the lives of these children through several interventions.

FDNC works in 27 communities in the greater Mbale region (Bugisu). The organization mainly targets women/girls, orphans and vulnerable children to help them live sustainable livelihoods. These disadvantaged groups are empowered with knowledge and skills to manage their health and incomes for better livelihoods.

Through partnership with Pont Wales, FDNC implements an OVC goat program to help improve nutrition, health and incomes of households for OVC. Goats and nets are distributed to OVC in an effort to better livelihoods. Pont also supports FDNC's community health program by training Community Health Promoters (CHPs) and Operational level health workers (OPLs) to implement health programs in the communities and prominent among these is the malaria program which specifically targets children under five years old.

Table below shows statistical data of goats received (2005-2008)

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of goats received</b>	<b>No of original goats alive</b>	<b>No of kids</b>	<b>No of goats dead</b>	<b>No of goats sold off</b>	<b>Total No. of goats</b>
2008	53	53	02	Nil	Nil	55
2007	20	16	12	06	Nil	28
2006	30	28	44	05	03	72
2005	36	24	38	08	05	62
Totals	139	123	96	19	08	217

### **Notes**

- FDNC has so far purchased 53 local she-goats and 01 hybrid he-goat in 2008 (30 she-goats are pregnant and 2 kids already born). We decided to buy local she goats to reduce cases of deaths in goats due to poor handling and care. Our OVC goat project did not do

well in the past partly because of the delicate nature of hybrid goats 'imported' to new environments. We however bought a hybrid he-goat to start our own breeding of 50% hybrid off springs within the same environment. We believe that by the time the kids are born they will automatically adopt to the environment and therefore minimized deaths.

#### **Achievements of the OVC goat program**

- Improvement in livelihood i.e. income generating activities, improvement in health and nutrition because of delicious milk.
- The program has also led to responsible children as they look after their goats after school and are keen about its wellbeing.
- FDNC has provided beneficiaries with high leading fodder trees for feeding goats.
- Some children have been able to pay their fees through this programme by selling-off springs.
- The goats program has improved soil fertility i.e. dung and urine as used as manure in farming.

#### **Challenges encountered**

- The goat program is also a long-term project and may not answer urgent needs such as fees payment and scholastic materials.
- Death of some goats due to unknown sicknesses, some goats died due to change of breeding environments i.e. from hot places to cold places.
- The size and breed of some goats has led to slow growth and hence explaining the delay to have kids.
- Inability to offer veterinary services such as treatment has led to poor yields from the goats.
- Overhead costs are high and partly affect monitoring of the program.
- Some beneficiaries have sold off goats especially when they got sickly

#### **Way forward**

- We are now purchasing local goats to reduce on transport costs and death rates due to climate changes.
- We have contracted a veterinary officer to reduce on death rates of some goats and also ensure improved yields from goats.
- We are offering sensitization services to the beneficiaries on goat breeding.
- We have decided to concentrate on one community for implementation of the OVC program in order to reduce overhead costs of monitoring.