

# African Revival Uganda Jumpstart Report



## Introducing African Revival:

Our vision is **an Africa where every child has equal access to quality education** as we believe that education is the key to overcoming poverty. Known for our holistic, responsive and innovative approach, since 2004 we have worked with dedicated national field staff and both primary and nursery schools in Uganda, Zambia and South Sudan to allow every child to fulfil their potential. We don't just provide infrastructure; we empower whole communities – pupils, teachers and parents – to transform schools into thriving learning environments that build brighter, better futures.

*The end goal is simple: to  
improve equal access to  
quality education*

In Uganda, we work in the Acholi sub-region in the North, the centre of a brutal two-decade insurgency by the rebel group; Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). When peace was restored in 2006, the people of northern Uganda started to rebuild their lives, but the effect on the schooling system has been long-standing, with many children displaced, abused and traumatised. Uganda is currently facing a population endemic, with its population doubling roughly every fifteen years. Now, more than ever, it is vital to help support the schools in this region.

## Project Summary:

We are working with 10 nursery schools in the Nwoya District of Northern Uganda, to improve the quality of nursery education available. Our Jumpstart! programme focuses on Early Childhood Development (ECD), which affects 7,000 children in the Nwoya District. Since our project began, dropout rates have reduced from an average of 16% to 3% in the schools we're working with.

We have trained 26 nursery teachers, and an amazing 433 primary teachers, in Early Childhood Development (ECD). We have also sent 19 unqualified nursery teachers on training to become qualified caregivers. Due to our effort in this direction, we have achieved a total of 43 qualified ECD caregivers in the targeted Jumpstart! Schools

The Jumpstart! project has achieved the construction of 10 playgrounds in the target schools. It is noted also that the playgrounds are one of a kind and the only playgrounds in Nwoya district. Based on our needs assessment in the district and beyond, a number of schools have expressed the playgrounds as prioritised need, citing the impact of play and social interaction in all aspects of child development.

# Focus on Purongo Hills Primary School

## The School:

Purongo Hills Primary School is a small school located in the Nwoya District of Northern Uganda. Despite being called a Primary school Purongo always only had nursery facilities – but this year they have expanded to include P1 – P3 too. Over the course of the Jumpstart! Programme the Enrolment Rates at the school have increased drastically:

**2015:** 30 pupils

**2016:** 120 pupils

**2017:** 186 pupils

## Beneficiary Stories:



**Head Teacher – Scovia.**

*“Before the 9 month training we received from African Revival at Gulu Primary Teachers College we had no idea about ECD - all classes were taught orally, and there were no pictures or charts on the wall. Now we are able to plan, and follow a routine for ECD students. We now know for students to understand a concept we must show them, or draw a picture. The training has also helped the school as we have drawn up a development plan.*

*The playground has helped us to achieve increased enrolment figures, and with our training we have been able to mobilise the parents – who contribute financially and by helping at the school garden.”*

**Achola Rubinah –VSLA member & parent.**  
Before Jumpstart! Rubinah’s daughter was not in school – as a single mother Rubinah could not afford the school fees. Thanks to AR led community mobilisation Rubinah enrolled Sandra (now in K3) and joined the VSLA.



*“Joining the VSLA allowed me to borrow money to pay the school fees, and also meant I could borrow 70,000 shillings (£15.56) to start my own business. With this loan I bought tables, and chairs, and shelves to start my own hotel & restaurant. Now business is good and there are lots of customers – some days I can make up to 50,000 shillings! I have even been able to make a sign. I am also very impressed with the nursery education at the school.”*



**Penongi Labedo roughly translates to ‘Nothing comes without work’.**

## **K2 Pupils at Purongo Hills**

Pupils have greatly benefitted from ECD teacher training – and now are learning through play and in outdoor settings. Here pupils were making models from grass in the garden – items included brooms, jewellery, thatched roofs and even a car!



### *David Ojok – Parent & VSLA Treasurer*

David currently has 2 children at Purongo Hills (Okello Wan in K3 and Adong Lillian in K2) and is the VSLA Treasurer – there are 9 different VSLA roles, all filled by community members. David informs us that current savings at the VSLA are 2.3 million UGX (£511). Before community mobilisation David did not want to send his children to nursery school. Attending VSLA meetings at the school allowed David to meet teachers, and see lessons – now he encourages other community members to send their children to school.



*“The VSLA has helped me to meet the school fees, buy uniforms from the children and provide other financial support for the community. I have also borrowed some money for cultivation; this income will support my tailor business and help me pay the school fees. The VSLA is also helping children in other schools because the whole community is free to join and begin saving”.*

### *The Nwoya District Education Office*

African Revival is the largest partner of the Nwoya district, and the District Education Officer (DEO) has asked for his thanks to be passed to UK Aid for supporting the Jumpstart! Programme. Already the DEO and District Inspector (DIs) have noted that Pupils entering P1 from Nursery School are much more prepared for learning. The District will continue to prioritise nursery education and are encouraged by the establishment of ECD centres at such a high number of schools within the district.

### *Jino Kulusu – ECD Caregiver*

Having already taught at primary and secondary schools Jino became interested in Nursery education and worked as a caregiver. It is very uncommon for men to be ECD caregivers in Uganda, as it is culturally seen as a very maternal role – given the age of the children. During the course of Jumpstart! African Revival promoted teachers networking through the STIR Teacher Changemaker Programme; Jino was selected as the core education leader – and was the first ECD teacher to be assigned this role. Now Jino meets with tutors, DEOS, and other members of the education sector.



*“Training at Gulu College helped us to pick up the right skills to teach children a concept well, and design lessons that the children will enjoy. The supportive visits helped to guide us when we felt like things have not been going well. The STIR Teacher Change maker Programme has allowed me to discuss ECD with many important people, and meet teachers to share experience with – I have been to Kampala twice for this. Before Jumpstart! there was a gap between parents and teachers, but now they work with us to support their children.”*

*“It took me time to see how the playground would help, but now I often use it for outdoor activities as children can learn a lot. Children ask me about the animals we have, or practice their maths pretending to sell each other train tickets, I can even teach children about road safety as they play on the cars or motorbikes”.*



## **Progress since Annual Review:**

There has been an increase in student enrolment across the Nwoya district. As of term 1 in 2017 there was an increase of 8% compared to term 1 in 2016, student numbers went from 29,416 to 32,110. This has impacted on the number of caregivers in the region - there were 43 trained caregivers in Nwoya region in term 1 2017 compared to 36 the previous year (Nwoya DEO Report 2017).

The perception of pre-primary education among parents and the wider community has been positively transformed as a result of parent-led activities and outreach programmes like open days and VSLAs. African Revival has constructed 6 more playgrounds in Nwoya district through East African Playgrounds, bringing the total number of playgrounds to 10. Investment in pre-primary education through the provision of playgrounds has enhanced community buy-in. The benefit that playgrounds have on the general wellbeing of children (along with their teaching and learning value) is becoming self-evident to community members, as is shown in Jino Kulusu's story above.



Teachers have periodically received refresher training and attended change maker workshops. The workshops are centred around 'learning improvement cycles' which allow teachers to gain practical skills on lesson delivery and classroom practices. Teachers collaborate with each other to develop themes which enrich the curriculum, making lessons locally-relevant and connected to the particular contexts in which the teachers and children live.



*Teachers designing learning materials*



*Numbers written in Acholi*

A total of 138 community members who have taken up roles of responsibility within the schools (i.e.: members of the Parent Teacher Association and School Monitoring Committee) have received refresher training on how to engage with parents and encourage them to take an active interest in pre-primary education. The refresher courses also cover practical skills on organising events for parents to come together, collaborate on projects, support each other and discuss their children's education.

African Revival has jointly monitored the progress of Jumpstart! with the District Education office, the District Monitoring Team and Gulu Core Primary Teacher's College (GCPTC). Regular meetings have been held in which challenges have been discussed and success stories have been shared. African Revival is collaborating with the District Chief Administrative Officer and the Department Education Officer to facilitate a conference aimed at overcoming challenges posed by national and local policies, such as school land disputes, absenteeism and teacher transfers.

## **Lessons Learnt since last Review:**

There have been no new risks identified since the last review, and we do not envisage any new risks over the next few months. We continue to prioritise women and girls, and will continue working with parents to ensure increased female pre-primary enrolment.

## **Upcoming Plans:**

As Jumpstart! draws to a close we will continue to ensure that we have delivered the maximum possible impact in our target schools. Monitoring and Evaluation will be central to our work over the next few months. We will maintain our relationship with District Education Officials who will continue monitoring the ECDs after the programme comes to an end.



Nwoya district has identified ECD as one of their key focuses for the future, we will work with them to devise a strategy to build on what has been achieved through Jumpstart! over the last three years. The strategy will include:

- Refresher training for caregivers, the training will be customised according to the gaps identified during joint monitoring in term 1 and will also include general skills like lesson planning and classroom routines.
- Monthly monitoring meetings so that education stakeholders can regularly come together to share experiences and discuss challenges.
- The facilitation of regular meetings between African Revival, the District Education Office and GCPTC to mobilize and conduct joint monitoring of ECD schools.
- Training for members of local government by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with GCPTC on all facets of ECD education.
- Working with members of the school community (for example, PTA members) to organise Parent's days and other forms of outreach for terms 2 and 3, 2017.
- Provide ongoing, routine support for parent led projects like VSLAs.
- Maintain play facilities through repair works and monitor them to ensure safety. This includes refresher training for playground maintenance committees. Signs will be put at each playground to ensure that UK Aid's involvement is clearly visible.
- Provide ongoing, routine support for parent led projects like VSLAs.
- Continue community sensitisation on the benefit of ECD with an emphasis on the value of female education.
- Provide financial support to the schools where necessary.

