



ITALIAN AGENCY
FOR DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

A SEED IS ALL WE NEED

Program
“Nourishing with food and
knowledge the communities
of Moroto and Napak”



DOCTORS
WITH AFRICA
CUAMM



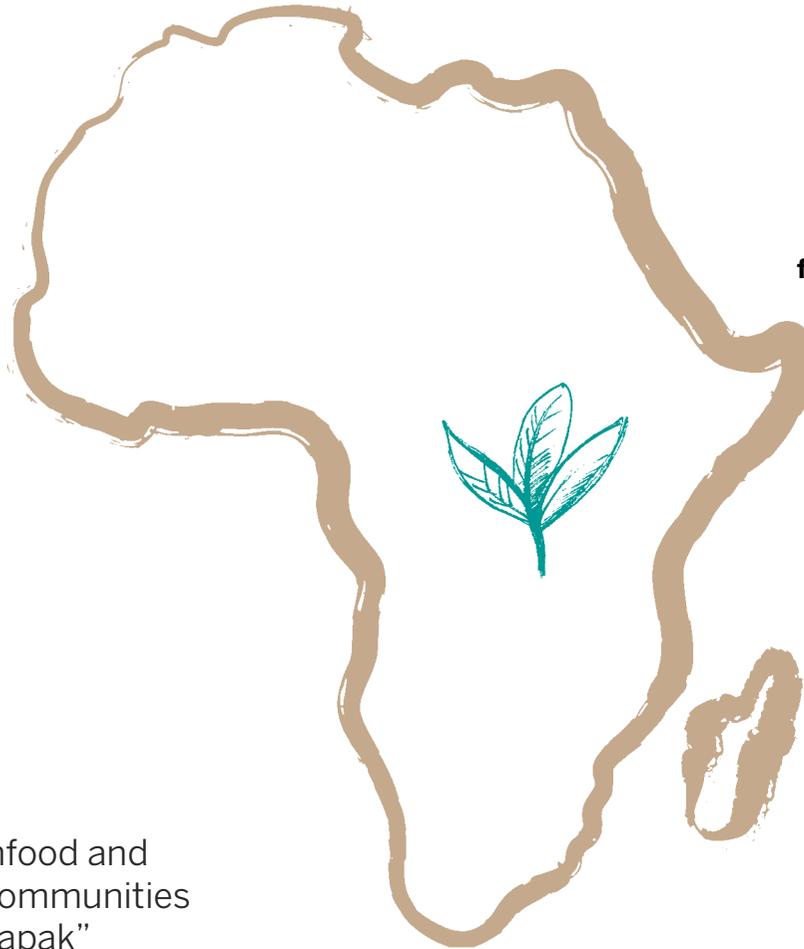
AFRICAMMISSION
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This collection of testimonies comes from the meetings made in two and a half years of project by our collaborators among the people of Karamoja. Its objective is not to celebrate our success, but to show the signs of hope. To show that if people are offered a path of growth, made of **concrete proposals** that enhance what's already in traditional culture, carried by the willingness and a **constant support**, results can be achieved. Maybe these can seem small fruits, however, in a context of extreme poverty they represent a great step that can **improve immediately the living standards** of families and community and, in the long term, to prepare people **to catch the new opportunities** coming from the progressing “modernity” that threatens to overwhelm their identity and tradition.

A SEED IS ALL WE NEED

**Collection of testimonies
from the voice of the protagonists:**

**AGNES NAKALEI
ALICE ICHUMAR
MOSES TAPEM
CHRISTINE NGOLE
RACHEL IRIAMA
SABINA ANGURA
MARKSON LOKURO
PASCA KODOO
MARK LOUSE
MARTHA TUKEI
NAUSE MARIA
CHRISTINE ALEPER
ROSE AKWII
SABINA NAKUT E ANNA LOLEM
LUCY NAKIRU
PAUL HOSMAN LOKUT
ESTHER LONGOK
MARGARET LOKERIS**



Program:
“Nourishing with food and
knowledge the communities
of Moroto and Napak”

AID.11489

KARAMOJA: UNTIL THE LAST MILE

THE CONTEXT

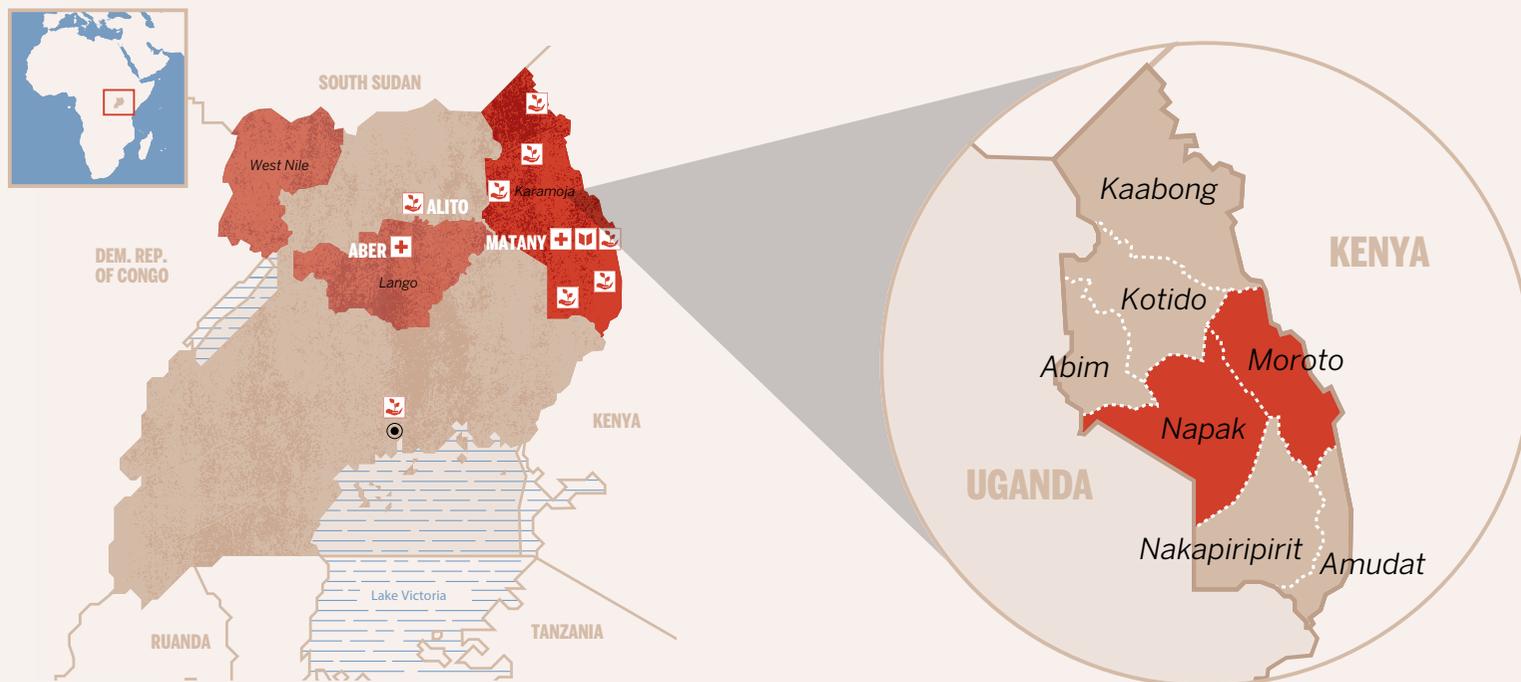
The Karamoja region is one of the poorest in Uganda. It is inhabited mainly by semi-nomadic shepherds, shows a **lack of clean water**, has a **high rate of illiteracy** and the **mortality among children under five** is higher than the national average. The percentage of the population living under the poverty line is the 60,2% and the 33% of the young people over 15 doesn't work: 86% of young people doesn't study or work and the 70% of children over 10 never went to school. Only the 0,9% of children between 6 and 12 years old is schooled. The scarcity of clean water is one of the other serious problems of the region: only the 15% of the families use improve hygiene facilities, while over the 80% still have no access to toilet facilities, even if in the last 5 years the number of the toilets in the region

has increased from 10 to 30%. **The difficulty of finding healthy food and the inadequate nutritional and sanitation practices** among communities are the cause of **60% of deaths due to severe acute and chronic malnutrition. The most affected areas are the districts of Napak and Moroto**, the poorest in Karamoja, where the issue of malnutrition and food insecurity affects many families. Poor quality, availability and access to nutritional services make the situation definitely worse; in the Napak district less than 10% of malnourished children were admitted to nutritional rehabilitation treatment, while in the Moroto district the figure rises to just 19%. For this reason, the local authorities are in great difficulty in ensuring the monitoring of nutritional status and in planning interventions to combat malnutrition and improve food security. Furthermore, **the situation is**

rapidly worsening as a consequence of climate change, particularly due to the irregular rains that cause a severe lack of water.

THE PROJECT

In order to cope with such a serious situation, the project **“Nourishing with food and knowledge the communities of Moroto and Napak”** has been ongoing since July 2018. This three-year intervention is 80,68% financed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, implemented by Africa Mission – Cooperation and Development and Doctors with Africa Cuamm, in partnership with Università Cattolica di Piacenza, Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Meyer and Informatici senza Frontiere. The involved ugandian partners are Choose Life Home Base Care and Moroto and Napak district governments.



UGANDA

 **Cuamm active projects:** West Nile, Lango, Karamoja

 **AMCD active projects:** Kampala, Alito, Karamoja

KARAMOJA DISTRICTS

District concerned by the project AID-11489: Moroto and Napak, total surface 7516 Km² and 282.200 inhabitants

(UBOS 202 Data)

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

We aim to **contribute to improving the nutritional status and food security** of the Karimojong population in the Napak and Moroto districts, particularly mothers and children under 5 years of age, in a sustainable and integrated way.

In particular, the intervention intends to:

- Increase and guarantee the availability of food for communities, promoting good agricultural practices (food security)
- Promote the adoption of good nutritional and adequate hygiene and sanitation practices to ensure that food is nutritious and healthy (food safety)
- Improve access and quality of nutritional services in 22 health centers.

To achieve the abovementioned goals, various **activities** have been promoted and developed, including:



KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE (KAP)

SURVEY, a survey to identify the cultural determinants for malnutrition; survey on health aspects of malnutrition (SQEAC, an analysis on the abandonment of malnutrition treatment, anthropological and clinical research on breastfeeding and weaning); a survey to evaluate the food insecurity and the impact of farming techniques.

TRAINING AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

85 model farmers and 85 community farming groups (GAC) were identified and they all have received basic training in sustainable agriculture and farming. Some of the groups received seeds and farm tools to create demonstration gardens in which they apply the agronomical skills and techniques they learnt, others received small farmed animals for a more zootechnical path. GACs were followed by trainers along the entire project.



TECHNICAL TRAINING

We supported the agricultural communitarian Groups (GAC) formation course through cross training to:

- Solve conflicts between the group;
- Manage land and water;
- Store and preserve the product;
- Learn basic marketing and business techniques to sell the product.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Awareness-raising activities were organized with various community actors on best nutritional and hygiene and sanitation practices, in particular focus group discussions on the importance of a varied and balanced diet, and demonstrations to women of how to cook simple recipes with food available in the villages.



MONITORING AND SUPPORT

The 22 health centers involved in the project were supported in order to improve the accessibility and quality of nutritional services, in particular prevention and treatment of malnutrition.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Support was provided to local authorities and to various community actors, especially for the improvement in data collection, analysis and reporting; a fundamental activity for identifying priorities and making decisions.



NAPAK AND MOROTO COMMUNITIES





PROTAGONISTS' VOICE

IF YOU CULTIVATE THE GARDEN WITH GOOD SOIL AND YOU TAKE CARE OF IT, SOON YOU WILL SEE LIFE THERE

NAME | **AGNES**

SURNAME | **NAKALEI**

AGE: 25 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NAKAALIMON VILLAGE

FAMILY: SINGLE MOTHER WITH THREE CHILDREN
AGED 3-10, WITH A SICK GRANDMOTHER





AGNES NAKALEI

The project, among others, has taught us to plan the product marketing in order to increase profit and to use the “Village Saving and Loan Association” tool, which is a kind of village money box that allows community members to keep their own savings in a safe place and obtain a loan for multiple purposes such as buying seeds and tools for garden or food and medicines for their own family.

During the day, I take care of my children and my mum, then I work in the field and in the kitchen garden. I take a part of the vegetables to the Moroto market to sell them. I use the money earned mainly in three different ways: to buy what my children need, to buy corn to make local beer, which I then sell in the village, and finally a part in my savings group’s village money box. The project has taught us to work, to improve ourselves and to face difficulties together, as a team. If everybody make a contribution, no matter if little, the benefits will be great.

The project has given stability to my life and my family’s. Farming is not just planting seeds in the ground but it is also understanding which is the best soil for each seed. If you farm a garden with good soil and you take care of it, you will see life there. All you need is just to find the right spot and to work hard. If you just sit around, you will never gather anything.

1 (Village Saving and Loan Association microcredit system)



- **1** Agnes and her child prepare the kitchen garden
- **2** Agnes shows the “village’s money box”
- **3** The harvesting in the garden

COMMUNITY'S POWER: HELPING EACH OTHER

NAME | **ALICE**

LAST NAME | **ICHUMAR**

AGE: 20 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NAWANATAU NADUNGET,
MOROTO COUNTY

FAMILY: MOTHER AND TWO CHILDREN





ALICE ICHUMAR

Alice Ichumar is a 20 years old mother that lives in Nawanatau Nadunget in Moroto sub-county. Lokeris Angelina, a Community Health Team (CHT) member, involved Alice in community's activities and food demonstrations.

Alice breast-fed her son until he was 6 months old, but at weaning he started to refuse eating. "It's been very hard because my child would not eat anything but breastmilk which was not nourishing enough for him. So I asked Lokeris Angelina for help. She is a mother from our community and a CHT member, so she gave me advice on how to help my child accept food other than milk - says Alice -. She advised me to give him soft food when he's hungry and to breast-feed him later if necessary.

This advice has been very helpful and when my child turned 7 months old started to eat normally". Few months later, when her son was 14 months old, Alice got pregnant again and told Lokeris she was afraid to keep on breast-feeding her child. She was advised to continue breast-feeding until the milk dried up naturally. Moreover, Lokeris suggested her to go to health facilities for prenatal care services.

"Thanks to Cuamm outreach activities, I was able to share my knowledge with other mothers, helping them improve their childcare. Now, mothers can bring their children with them and keep on breastfeeding" said Lokeris.



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- 1 Mothers supporting mothers
- 2 Ichumar and community worker Lokeris Angelina who helped Ichumar with her child situation
- 3 Meeting with community members

I'M HAPPY BECAUSE WE MANAGED TO DO A LOT FOR THE VILLAGE

NAME | **MOSES**

LAST NAME | **TAPEM**

AGE: 22 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: LOKITUMO VILLAGE

FAMILY: MARRIED, ONE CHILD





MOSES TAPEM

“If you put together tomato leaves, chili peppers, ash and cow urine you get a natural pesticide. I didn’t know that, I learn it thanks to the project.

It has been important because for the first time me and my village managed to save the crop from vermin this year. That’s not the only thing I learnt from the *model farmer*¹: I learnt how to trim and thin plants, I acquired familiarity with crop conservation practices and I’ve been trained to work in group. I’m happy because with the support from project staff we fenced off our garden, we planted there and we prepared the greenhouses with eggplant, tomato, onion and sukumawiki seeds.

We then transplanted plants in the garden and pulled the weeds, watered the plants when the rain season was over and if there wasn’t enough water we took it from the river thanks to the canal we dug. The vegetables have grown up well and the group started to eat them, preserving some to sell it and, with what we earned, we bought the food we needed, like salt.

“The extraordinary thing is that the whole community benefited from this project, even those who were not part of it. Personally, I understood that it’s not enough to be content with growing the sorghum and wait for its maturation. There are other crops that grow way faster and can be eaten or sold. In so doing we faced malnutrition and food scarcity better than before. I want to keep doing this job even after this project is over and I will train other people teaching them what I’ve learnt”.

¹ (Farmer of reference, trained to help Community Agricultural Groups)



- 1 “Exchange visit” two groups meet to share experiences
- 2 Moses transplanting the plants to grow in the garden
- 3 Natural pesticide preparation



THE COMMUNITY TRIGGERS THE CHANGE

NAME | **CHRISTINE**

LAST NAME | **NGOLE**

AGE: 19 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NAWANATAU NADUNGET,
MOROTO COUNTY

FAMILY: FATHER, MOTHER AND SIX CHILDREN





CHRISTINE NGOLE

At the early age of 19, Christine became the second wife of James who already had five children from the previous marriage, so Christine had to take care of them. Christine and her husband were drunk most of the time and lived in a dirty environment without taking care of their children. They could not even provide food for the family. The children were therefore malnourished and some of them started walking very late, when they were 3.

The turning point was when Christine got involved in village community's activities by Lamongin Charles, a model farmer and a Community Health Team (CHT) member.

Christine is one of the proud beneficiaries of this program: "before the program started, my life was unhappy. Since I started participating to food demonstrations, health workers have taught me so much and my life got better.

My husband and I stopped drinking – added Christine – He now takes care of the family and I've learnt how to cook porridge using the food available here. We managed to save money for our charcoal activity to buy food for a balanced diet".

Lomongin Charles, who followed Christine closely, claims to be proud of her and extremely satisfied with her progress in the community from the beginning of the program: "before this program there was a serious information gap and a lack of knowledge, but now things are different", he finally stated.



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- 1 Local food for a balanced diet
- 2 Farming activities promoted by the project in which Christine is involved
- 3 Outreach activities for women in the community

HELPING EACH OTHER AND JOINING HANDS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GROW A RICH HARVEST

NAME | **RACHEL**

LAST NAME | **IRIAMA**

AGE: 27 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: VILLAGGIO DI NAPEILET

FAMILY: SINGLE MOTHER WITH TWO CHILDREN





RACHEL IRIAMA

“How do you become a *model farmer* ¹? One day, some friends of mine told me about a project that selected people in the community. They asked me to represent them and I accepted. I used to stay at home all the time because my husband had left me, but then I went to Nakichumett for three weeks and I took part to training courses: I learnt how to sow seeds following lines, to build a small garden, to prepare a local pesticide and preserve the harvest.

I went back to Napeilet and I taught everything learnt to the group: my life changed, I used to eat dried fruits from plants but now my diet is rich of vegetables, thanks to the seeds I had access to through the project.

We used to eat once a day, now I cook three times a day and my children are happy. The project gave me useful tools, in addition to knowledge: I've been able to grow corn, beans and other vegetables to eat and sell. I keep the money I gain and my savings in the *village money box* ². It's just a box, but I care about it because using my savings I can pay school fees, buy medicine and buy new seeds.

My dream, if the Lord helps me, is to make the garden bigger in order to grow more corn and vegetables, also to help my group whose wonderful name is Ethila. **This project gave more tranquillity to the communities and to my family too; I'm grateful for that. I learnt that helping each other and joining hands is the only way to grow a rich harvest”**

¹ (Farmer of reference trained to help community agricultural groups)

² (VSLA Village Saving and Loan Association saving and microcredit system)



- **1** Seeds sent to Rachel and her group
- **2** Training meeting with Community Groups
- **3** Rachel shows the fruits of her labour

SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR THE COMMUNITY WELL BEING AND HEALTH

NAME | **SABINA**

LAST NAME | **ANGURA**

AGE: 25 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NAKICHELET VILLAGE

ROLE: VILLAGE COMMUNITY WORKER





SABINA ANGURA

In the village where Sabina Angura lives, food safety is a serious problem because crops are affected by drought. Sabina works in her village as a community worker in the Village Health Team (VHT) and deals mainly with nutrition and health.

“When I see a malnourished kid I suggest to the mother to take him to the hospital, to follow good hygienic-sanitary practices and to feed her child with good and healthy food.

– Sabina says –. VHT role is very important because I can teach people at home good hygiene practices and I think I set a good example for the community by ensuring cleanliness of my place. It makes me happy when I see someone eating correctly and respecting the good hygienic-sanitary practices that I taught them. Now I can really help my community”.

Sabina is excited about her job and she works hard supporting her community and other women.

“Not long time ago I met a woman who was cooking the same porridge that Cuamm team taught her to cook for her children during a food demonstration and it made me feel really satisfied to see her happy and able to take care of her children. Finally, the community is learning”.



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- 1 Visits for malnourished child in health centers
- 2 Children screening activities
- 3 MUAC measurement for children nutritional status



I JOYFULLY DEDICATE MYSELF TO RETURN WHAT WAS GIVEN TO ME

NAME | **MARKSON**

LAST NAME | **LOKURO**

AGE: 27 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NACUKA VILLAGE

FAMILY: MARRIED, THREE CHILDREN AGED
1 TO 6 YEARS OLD





MARKSON LOKURO

The best part of this project is to have received not only the seeds, but also the knowledge to make them grow. Last year I managed to grow many vegetables, mostly sukumawiki, eggplants, tomatoes, corn, beans and nuts I sowed thanks to the tools the project gave me. From the part of the crop sold, I gained 631.000 shillings. Lord, I've never seen so much money.

Thanks to this profit I bought flour, sorghum cooking oil that I added to the products we grew and preserved for my family. It's been great to eat something different with my children and wife. Thanks to the *model farmer*¹ demonstration I learnt how to sow, plough using oxen and how to create natural products to defend my plants from pests.

During these years she helped us to make decisions in group. She's been a point of reference for our community and allowed us to expand our sales in bigger markets with higher profit margin, granting more food for everyone. In this village today, thanks to the project, there are less children suffering from malnutrition and that's a great result we didn't even expect.

I'll keep on striving to improve my knowledge on agriculture and share it with other people, just like the project did with me. That's why I dedicate myself happily to reciprocate what has been given to me: the more people will carry out these practices, the sooner the food insecurity and malnutrition will cease to exist not only for my family, not just for my village, but for every family and village in Uganda.

1 (Farmer of reference trained to help community agricultural groups)



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- 1 Family, group, community, the project's pillars
- 2 Oxen trained to plough
- 3 Meeting to deliver tools

MOTHERS HELPING MOTHERS

NAME | **PASCA**

LAST NAME | **KOODO**

AGE: 28 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: VILLAGGIO DI KALOI, RUPA

ROLE: MOTHER, GROUP MEMBER
OF "CARE TAKERS" FOR THE TREATMENT
OF MALNOURISHED CHILDREN





PASCA KOODO

“The support group allowed us to improve our children’s nutrition thanks to local food preparation as porridge with sorghum flour, pumpkin and sunflower seeds. We’ve been helped to take care of them more effectively”.

These are Pasca Koodo’s words, one of the women participating to moms’ support group in Rupa community. These groups, organized as part of the project in Moroto and Napak districts, intend to be a support space for the moms in the community to better manage their children malnutrition, preventing relapses.

In every group there are from 5 to 10 mothers participating and sharing their daily challenges and they try to find solutions together.

With the help of a community health worker they learn to identify promptly the child sickness sign, to ensure them a correct nutrition and they visit the mothers’ homes every week to monitor the children’s health and give advices.

“We developed a strong bond between us: we discuss about health issues, but more than that we started to save money in a sort of community fund for eventual loans for our community members – Pasca says. This money let us buy a lot of food to ensure our families a balanced diet and also seeds for family gardens”.

Today every child’s condition has improved: they are fine and mothers keep on helping each other also economically. That is a change that starts from the community.



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- 1 Porridge preparation
- 2 Mothers’ group during outreach activities
- 3 Everyday life moment

KNOWING GOOD FARMING PRACTICES WILL HELP US HAVE A GOOD HARVEST

NAME | **MARK**

LAST NAME | **LOUSE**

AGE: 27 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NACUKA VILLAGE

FAMILY: MARRIED WITH TWO WIVES,
FATHER OF A CHILD AND ONE ON THE WAY





MARK LOUSE

“Our group learnt a lot thanks to the project. Last year we received oxen thanks to whom we can plow a much bigger portion of our garden compared to what we could do using the hoe. Our project provided us different seeds: from peas to onions, tomatoes and sukumawiki, and many others.

We managed to grow tomatoes inside small greenhouses and we recently transplanted them in our garden. This makes us faithful that we’ll get a good harvest.

This year we had to face a lot of problems. First of all, the direct sun destroyed a part of our crops. Then the spread of Coronavirus brought a lot of changes: we couldn’t move, we couldn’t greet each other, we couldn’t sell our products because the market was closed. There has been also the cholera plague that killed some of our friends. Finally we are afraid of the insecurity in the night: we fear to be killed and our animals get raided.

The project is helping us regaining our faith also thanks to an expert facilitator ¹ that supports us and talks a lot with us, making us aware of our mistakes.

My gratitude becomes my commitment in sharing what I’m learning to my family and also to people in the village that aren’t members of the group; I’ve learnt that only knowledge of good farming practices can guarantee a good harvest”.

(Project collaborator in charge of following Farmers Group on the field)



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- 1 Removing weed from village garden
- 2 Transplanted plants from the greenhouse
- 3 Tomato field hoeing

THE MIDWIFE WHO FIGHTS MALNUTRITION

NAME | **MARTHA**

LAST NAME | **TUKEI**

AGE: 35 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: RUPA COUNTY, MOROTO DISTRICT

PROFESSION: MIDWIFE





MARTHA TUKEI

“Rupa county is a place in Uganda known for gold mining and where the malnutrition rate is high. That’s because women go to work in mines and leave their children at home with their older siblings that can’t take care of them properly” – explains Martha Tukei, a midwife who takes care of outpatient therapeutic treatment at Rupa health center. She loves her work, she takes care of moms and their children. In 2019 in Rupa health center, the healing rate was really low due to nutrition related problems. Thanks to Martha’s work, things have really improved reaching great outcomes in treating and healing malnutrition cases.

After a careful supervision and assessment in the health centers, Cuamm identified some critical issues that needed to be addressed: inappropriate patients’ data collection, and inadequate counselling sessions and follow-ups of patients.

“Before admitting mothers, I take my time to interact with them, one by one, so I establish confidence and trust. These moments help them opening up, giving me the chance to support them and make sure they carry on their treatment and therapeutic diet in the right way for the time they need” – explains Martha.

Thanks to her commitment, Martha has been selected as a “model midwife” and works with Cuamm to train other health centers staff who still has to improve their nutritional services. It’s a daily team work to improve the health of the community, particularly mothers and children.



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- 1 Children nutritional status check
- 2 A nutritionist interacting with peer moms group
- 3 Mothers and their children waiting to be visited in the health center

KNOWLEDGE MAKES YOU IMMORTAL

NAME | **MARIA**

LAST NAME | **NAUSE**

AGE: 60 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: LOMORUCUBAE VILLAGE

FAMILY: MARRIED, MOTHER OF 6 CHILDREN





NAUSE MARIA

“My desire is to *kneel*¹ in front of the people who started this project. I am grateful because, even if I’m old and I don’t know much about farming, you taught me new and modern methods of farming. This helped me to feel young again in my life.

I am very happy because until now I had never cultivated many varieties of vegetables in my garden.

I also grow cassava and the main difficulty for me is remove the weeds, because it must be done at least four or five times, to obtain the right size of the tuber.

When it reaches the correct size, cassava becomes resistant to the sun and drought.

Grasshoppers have also become a problem but with the pesticides we prepare, based on natural ingredients, we can easily chase them away.

Cassava is the future; it gives an excellent harvest even if you have to be patient because its ripening time is long. I want my children to learn from me how to cultivate the cassava because I believe it will be a valuable means of subsistence for them.

I keep teaching my children what I know because knowledge is what makes you live forever”.

1 (Kneel before a guest is a form of greeting and respect in the local praxis)



- 1 Cassava fields cultivated by Maria.
- 2 Ready cassava plants
- 3 Exchange visits on farmers’ experiences

ANOTHER STEP IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MALNUTRITION

NAME | **CHRISTINE**

LAST NAME | **ALEPER**

AGE: YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: LOKILALA, NANDUGET
DISTRICT, MOROTO COUNTY

FAMILY: MOTHER OF 6 CHILDREN





CHRISTINE ALEPER

Christine is mother of six children and lives in Lokilala village with her family. She is one of the mothers benefiting from the project's nutrition program in the Moroto and Napak districts.

When she was pregnant with her last child, Christine was encouraged by the village health workers to undergo antenatal visits in the health center. It was something totally new to her, but from her first visit she had felt supported and reassured.

“During these visits, the health centers' operators, supported by CUAMM, gave me some important information about health: how to follow a balanced diet using local foods, how to identify the symptoms of newborn sickness, together with good health and hygiene practices - says Christine -.

These health education sessions continue for all mothers even after giving birth”. Thanks to the knowledge gained, Christine noticed that her baby was not well, and she immediately took him to the health center where he was diagnosed with severe malnutrition and edema. The health workers decided to transfer and hospitalize her and her baby in Moroto for two weeks and then continue with outpatient therapy.

Christine was always encouraged to continue taking her babies to check-ups to monitor weight and was supported by practitioners to learn how to cook nutritious food instead of making use of therapeutic food.

“As a mother, I followed everything that was recommended to me and, with some sacrifices, I was able to buy suitable food for my children, especially for the youngest who recovered in December 2020” concluded Christine.



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- 1 Children's weight monitoring
- 2 Christine Aleper smiling with her son
- 3 Children's life in the village

I ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO LEARN HOW TO BREED PIGS TEACHING THEM EVERYTHING I LEARNED

NAME | **ROSE**

LAST NAME | **AKWII**

AGE: 67 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: ETOOLONOUS JUNIOR
QUARTERS GROUP

FAMILY: SINGLE WOMAN TAKING CARE
OF HER THREE GRANDCHILDREN





ROSE AKWII

“These children are my family since they lost their parents. My sister’s children are numerous, I have faced many challenges to support them, I had to provide them food, clothes, and medicines. I am extremely proud of the pig breeding activity that I was able to undertake thanks to the project. The business generates a small income that allows me to support the needs of the family.

This year our sow gave birth to 11 pigs, four of them died, but now that the trainer of the project has provided me with medicines for the treatments, I feel relieved. This business creates many challenges: when the pigs graze, they often invade the neighboring lands and destroy the surrounding gardens.

In addition, smaller pigs can sometimes get sick, and this makes it harder to feed them.

It is very difficult to organize the management of the animals. Not all members of the group participate constantly, while to take care of the animals you need a continuous daily work.

COVID-19 made things even worse because it stopped us from selling pigs, the markets were closed and we were not free to move.

Despite the difficulties, I really like our business and I’m ready to get involved to continue ours business, which among other things is the only source of income for my family. I encourage children to learn this job, teaching them everything I have learned; each one is responsible for a pig and must be able to look after it. So when the new pigs have grown up they will be able to see the result of their work and learn how to be a good entrepreneur”.



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- 1 Pigs in Rose’s pigsty
- 2 Project educator visiting one of the pigs
- 3 Community group meeting

COOPERATION THAT COMES FROM THE COMMUNITY

NAME | **SABINA - ANNA**

LAST NAME | **NAKUT - LOLEM**

AGE: 25 AND 40 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: ACHERER, MOROTO DISTRICT

FAMILY: SABINA, MOTHER OF TWO TWINS,
AND ANNA, A VHT MEMBER





SABINA NAKUT E ANNA LOLEM

Sabina was 25 when she gave birth to two twins in Moroto Regional Hospital. Her babies were healthy and Sabina was breastfeeding them normally since her milk drastically reduced.

She didn't know what to do, so she sought Lolem Anna's help, a Village Health Team (VHT) member, a group of community health workers that raise awareness on health topics and identify cases in need of health assistance.

Anna had already taken care of Sabina during pregnancy and encouraged her to go to prenatal visits, making her understand the importance of assisted delivery. She accompanied her to Acherer Health Center where the children were diagnosed with malaria.

At the center, she had the opportunity to participate in health education sessions on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months and on the correct position during the attachment. Anna began visiting Sabina three times a day helping her taking care of the twins and encouraging her follow a balanced diet to continue producing milk. «I'm so grateful to Anna and to all the health workers for the continuous support they gave me and my children». Thanks to the acquired awareness and to their precious help, her sons started to eat again, and Sabina continued to take care of them.

Likewise, Anna felt really satisfied seeing such a positive impact on another mom's life. «I feel much more confident and I gained more knowledge through training. I want to keep on improving my skills to improve the life of other mothers».



- **1** Moms waiting for the prenatal visit
- **2** Sabina and Lolem Anna, who helped her during pregnancy and to take care of her children
- **3** The importance of healthy food for a balanced diet

IT WAS THE “VILLAGE MONEY BOX” TO HELP ME CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

NAME | **LUCY**

LAST NAME | **NAKIRU**

AGE: 48 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: VILLAGGIO DI LOKERU

FAMILY: MOTHER OF FOUR CHILDREN





LUCY NAKIRU

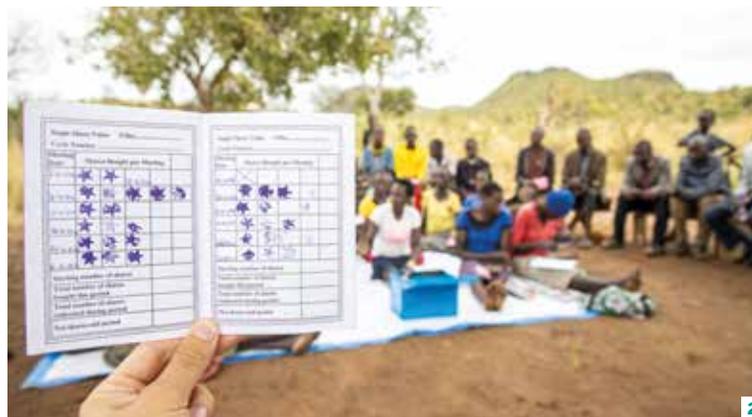
“The village money box is what helped me change for the better: in the previous years I used to hide the money I earned inside my hut, but the risk of it disappearing or being eaten by rats was very high. This project, on the other hand, provided every village with a *money box*¹: we keep our savings inside it and we keep record of it. We can always ask for loans to the group if necessary.

Personally, I have borrowed 100 thousand schillings to buy salt, rice and meat for my family, and then I returned the money back to the group. Sometimes I ask for loans to buy the sorghum in large quantities: I pay it 1,500 schillings and sell it at the market for 2,000. With the income obtained, I can pay the debt and I make purchases for my family. For example, this year I was able to buy more acres of land and now I own more than ten acres of corn to harvest I think about the future profit I will make from it with more positivity and hope. From last year’s harvest I got eight hundred-kilo bags of corn each: I sold them for 780,000 schillings.

With this money and a small loan from the group I managed to buy more land for my daughter who can now cultivate it to get a useful harvest for her and her family. I was also able to purchase a silo where we store the supplies that we will need throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to buy a dairy cow for my family and maybe an ox that can help me in sowing. **I had never thought to plan my activities in this way, but this years’ experience is proving to be very useful for all of us and gives us courage and hope. For this reason, I thank those who wanted this project everyday”.**

1 (VSLA Village Saving and Loan Association)



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- 1 Lucy showing her land’s fruits with pride
- 2 “VSLA” the loans register of the group
- 3 Group managing the “village money box”

A CHANGE THAT STARTS FROM THE SCHOOL

NAME | **PAUL HOSMAN**

LAST NAME | **LOKUT**

AGE: 52 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: IRIRI, KARAMOJA

FAMILY: IELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER



1

ECM-U
CELEBRATING



PAUL HOSMAN LOKUT

Thanks to his work as a teacher in Lokopo primary school, Paul Hosman carries out community outreach activities, in particular for children.

“I feel I can be really helpful thanks to my role. We teach children how to wash their hands in the right way, we share with them the risks linked to transmissible diseases and how to prevent them through hygiene – Paul explains -. There is also the food insecurity issue which is really present in Karamoja.

There are many malnourished kids but I can see their health is slowly getting better, especially thanks to project related community meetings during which we teach moms the good nutritional practices – says Paul -. I try to encourage moms to take care of her children and of their diet because a good health status is essential to keep them focused and productive both at school and at home”.

Despite Paul noticing an improvement, there are still many steps to take.

“It’s a change of mindset and habits that requires time and we have to face daily challenges, as for water in boreholes. Boreholes are often far away from villages and people collect rainwater or water flowing in the streets and use it to clean their homes and cooking utensils they use to cook for their family – says Paul -. I hope this project keeps going and reaches the most isolate villages, thanks to our community health villages. In the meanwhile, I will keep on spread health messages for the entire community’s welfare.



2



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- 1 Health and nutrition education also involves children
- 2 Paul supports outreach activities, in particular for children
- 3 Access to clean water is essential for health

I WANNA KEEP THE FAMILY GARDEN FOR ALL MY LIFE, FOR MY CHILDREN'S FUTURE

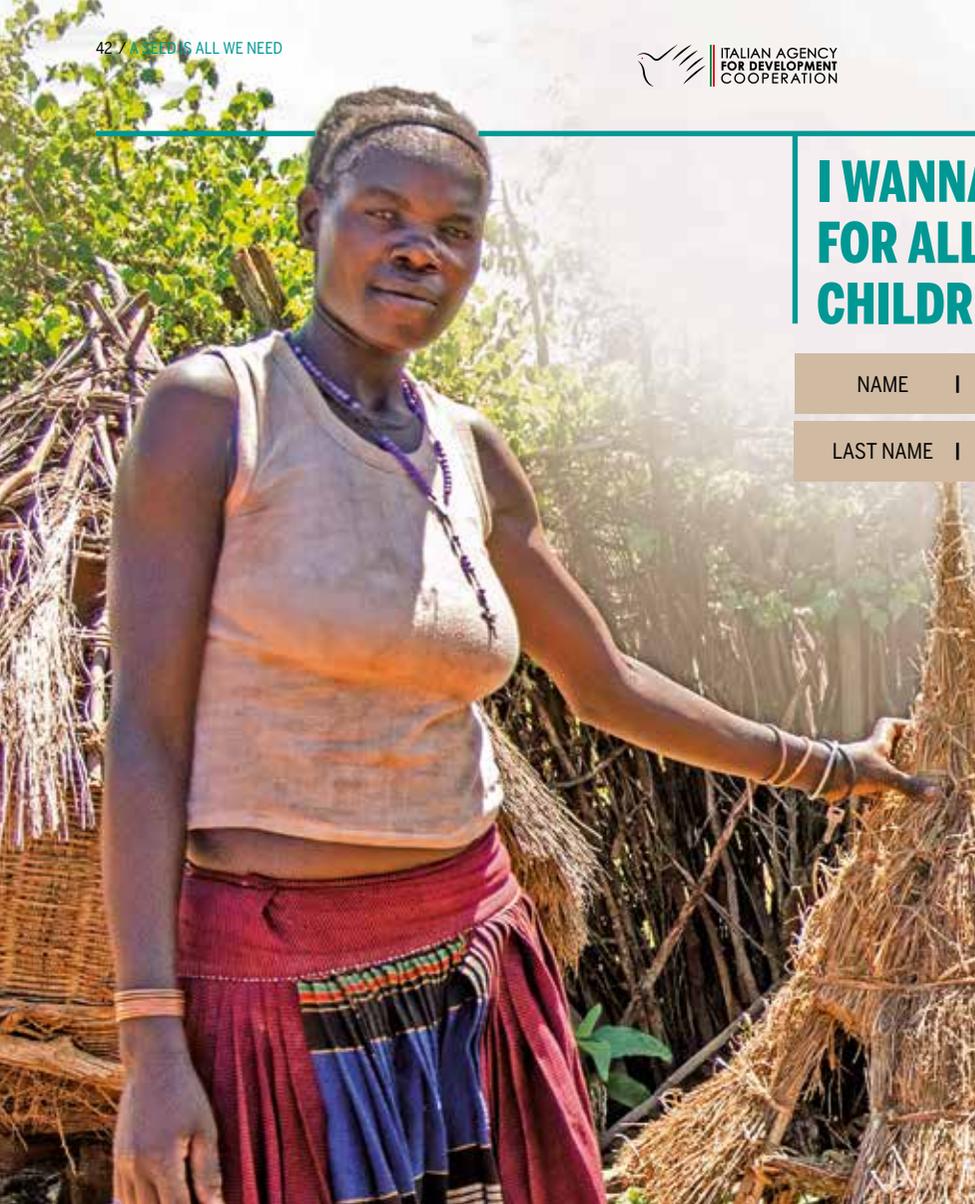
NAME | **ESTHER**

LAST NAME | **LONGOK**

AGE: 31 YEARS OLD

PLACE OF STAY: NACUKA VILLAGE

FAMILY: MARRIED, MOTHER OF FOUR CHILDREN





ESTHER LONGOK

“During the training period we’ve been trained on different aspects of agriculture, including the domestic garden. To build the garden it is necessary to create a circle to define its space and the platform to contain the sources of livelihood for plants, from water to nutrients. We need to prepare the stakes, that have to be 60 cm tall for the lowest base and 1120 cm for the highest. We then prepare the ground with different layers of grass and soil, then we cover it all with a layer of fertilizer.

We can then start sowing and planting: peas, spinach, green vegetables, tomatoes etc. The garden gets really beautiful and fertile; the vegetables grow and it’s possible to collect them a bit at a time, depending the family need. A part of the product is destined to be sold, so we can buy, for instance, soap, cooking oil, salt.

This kind of garden requires a considerable amount of preliminary work that it’s not possible to do it alone, without other people’s help.

The availability of tools and equipment provided by the project is essential, like hoes, pitchforks, pickaxes, shovels, water tanks, soil, fertilizer and a wheelbarrow.

I think I’ll keep my garden for all my life, I think it’s only chance to have vegetables available every day. I gave birth a month ago and, thanks to the vegetables I grew, I could breastfeed my son since the beginning. **My wish is to work with my four children; I would like to teach them many things to make them competent and independent.**



2



3

- 1 Esther’s family shows the village garden
- 2 Harvest time
- 3 Gardens’irrigation

ACTING TOGETHER FOR EVERYONE'S HEALTH

NAME | **MARGARET**

LAST NAME | **LOKERIS**

AGE: 25 ANNI

PLACE OF STAY: LOKITUMO VILLAGE

FAMILY: "PEER MOM"





MARGARET LOKERIS

Margaret is a member of Lokitumo community and she's a peer mom, who's committed to raising awareness among her community's member, in particular other moms, on the importance of personal and home hygiene, of washing hands, especially before cooking food for their children.

"In addition to spreading messages on good hygiene practices, I explain to other mothers like me, how to recognize when their children are sick, when they need to be taken to the hospital explaining to the doctor the symptoms. I try to make them understand how important taking care of their children is" – Margaret explains.

Despite her commitment in the community, there are still many challenges, also caused by food insecurity present in Karamoja. "Sometimes it's hard to make people understand the importance of some topics, such as hygiene, when people struggle to get food to feed their families. Drought is increasing food scarcity and the amount of children suffering from malnutrition" says Margaret.

That's why the project carried out by AMCD and Doctors with Africa CUAMM wants to integrate different components, farming and health to improve communities nutritional status and food security and give them the knowledge and tools they need for a sustainable development.

"I believe in this project and I think I can be a point of reference for the community's moms thanks to my role – concludes Margaret -. Helping each other, it will be easier to improve everyone's health.



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- 1 Women collecting clean water which is fundamental for a healthy life
- 2 Women preparing food
- 3 Raising community's awareness on good care and hygienic-sanitary practices

“We lived a truly constructive and beautiful meeting experience with people in Karamoja. Our commitment’s key words have been: practical training, community, cooperation and support. Together with community groups we learnt how to sow, how to treat the product and how to harvest, then we learnt to see the fruit of the land and breeding an opportunity to supplement family income through the sale overcoming the single self-consumption.

We did a training to help overcome the inevitable conflicts that come from collaboration and to experience how the usage of a “village moneybox” can help them manage their money in a better and community way.

The transition from a semi-nomad life to a permanence imply a long and difficult cultural change but we saw that what we offer is effective and can really represent an opportunity to improve families life quality in Karamoja even if Covid-19 outbreak and other contingencies raised the level of difficulty, we are satisfied with the job we’ve done.”

Pier Giorgio Lappo

Africa Mission Cooperation and Development (AMC&D)

Karamoja region, Napak and Moroto districts in particular, report one of the highest malnutrition rates in Uganda: the determining factor must be searched in the aspects of social, economic and environmental nature.

Unfortunately malnutrition mainly affects children and teenagers and, if not addressed in time, it can bear serious consequences on physical and cognitive development even in adult age.

Thanks to this project we were able to work with doctors and nurses to grant high quality nutritional services in sanitary facilities, promoting malnourished children care and teenagers’ families support to avoid relapses.

The support program gave us an opportunity to develop training courses to make people aware of good nutritional practices and maternal and child help. Despite all the difficulties we believe we did an important job to fight malnutrition in Karamoja, working in an exchange and mutual contribution perspective with local authorities, medical staff and the communities involved in order to find real and lasting ways to help the poorest and most vulnerable families”

Simone Cadorin

Doctors with Africa CUAMM

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All the photos in the publication refer to project activities carried out by various Community Agricultural Groups (CAG&D), and Support Groups (CUAMM), even if, in some cases, the images used to illustrate the testimonies are not related to the group to which the person interviewed belongs.

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