



SOCY

SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN UGANDA

PROJECT SUMMARY

SOCY improves the health, nutrition, education, and psychosocial wellbeing of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and youth, as well as reduces abuse, exploitation, and neglect among this population.

THE SOCY APPROACH

SOCY sees the wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth as nested within the structures that surround them: their families, communities, and society at large. SOCY strengthens these structures and reinforces their ability to care for and respond to the needs of vulnerable children and youth. The project aims to achieve the following by 2020:

Economic Empowerment of OVC, Youth, and their Caregivers

To increase resilience and make families less susceptible to shocks, SOCY provides multiple levels of household economic support, depending on each family’s level of vulnerability. SOCY provides critically vulnerable households with access to cash transfers for temporary support. Less vulnerable households, but those that are ready to build assets, are assisted in forming savings and internal lending communities (SILC). SOCY also engages these households in child-centered financial education, to ensure that vulnerable children’s needs are prioritized in the household budget. For the last tier, SOCY facilitates market linkages for households that are ready to grow

QUICK FACTS	
Project Type	Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
Funder/funding	USAID/\$45 million
Project location	Central, Southwestern, and Western Uganda
# of people served	114,448 OVC and caregivers
Timeframe	2015–2020
Partners	Action for Community Development, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization, Palladium, Centre for Creative Leadership, Georgetown University Institute for Reproductive Health, Living Goods, and 11 civil society organizations in 22 districts

their income and assets. In addition, SOCY provides youth business apprenticeships and trainings to grow and market high-value crops. Across all households, SOCY provides Better Parenting sessions for caregivers, communication counseling for couples, and social and financial skills training for youth.

Capacity Strengthening of Local Government and Civil Society Organizations (CSO)

Implemented through government and CSO partners, SOCY ensures sustainability by strengthening the capacity of local institutions. SOCY focuses on increasing financing and bolstering an effective, high-performing workforce involved in the OVC response. Additionally, SOCY improves the planning and coordination among stakeholders and the use of evidence in program decision-making by leveraging a robust management information system. SOCY is also purposed with transitioning children from institutional care to family-based alternatives and reinforcing the protection systems that are required for this effort.

Improved Coordination of Community-based Clinical and Socio-Economic Services

SOCY delivers care and support services that are responsive to the life stages of vulnerable children, youth, and their caregivers. For very young vulnerable children, SOCY ensures that linkages to early childhood development (ECD) services are available. For adolescents and youth, SOCY implements a program designed to help adolescent girls and young women ages 10-24 develop into Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) women. DREAMS' regulated peer-to-peer discussions help young women build their confidence and equip them with skills to combat societal threats, such as HIV infection. In addition, DREAMS participants receive the vocational entrepreneurship skills training and have the option to join SILC groups to support their economic independence. Lastly, the DREAMS curriculum includes Parenting for Lifelong Health or *Sinovuyo* trainings targeting adolescents ages 10-17 and their caregivers.

Beyond ECD and DREAMS services, SOCY also refers vulnerable children, youth, and their caregivers to appropriate socio-economic and clinical services that



Gertrude (center) attends *Sinovuyo* meetings with two of her five children. Photo by Hugh Rutherford for CRS.



Grace (L) and Ruth (R) are part of the DREAMS program, where they are trained in income-generating activities such as tailoring. Photo by Hugh Rutherford for CRS.

are available in their communities, such as HIV Testing Services (HTS), supports HIV+ individuals to access antiretroviral therapy, adhere to treatment and work with clinical partners to monitor viral load. Underpinning SOCY's service referrals is a proven and robust household case management system to ensure families receive the service and support they need to get ahead in life.

KEY RESULTS

As of September 2017, key achievements of the project include:

- 114,448 OVC and their caregivers accessed care and support services
- 7,281 at-risk individuals supported to access HTS
- 10,987 active OVC households in SILC activities
- 16,983 adolescent girls and young women received a package of core services—parenting, social-economic assets building, and HTS—through the DREAMS program
- 12,730 youth received economic strengthening and life skills capacity building support
- 8,825 caregivers participated in *Sinovuyo* trainings
- 12 out of 19 districts have functional government OVC coordination structures

