

**3<sup>RD</sup> FIELD VISIT REPORT,**  
**COMPLEMENTING THE LUND DIOCESE MISSION SUPPORT TO THE MORU REFUGEE COMMUNITY IN**  
**KIRANDONGO REFUGEE SETTLEMENT - UGANDA**

**DATES:**

MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> – THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2016



**Some of the Refugee women frying snacks for get an income**

**VENUE:**

MORU REFUGEE COMMUNITY - KIRANDONGO REFUGEE SETTLEMENT - UGANDA

**IMPLEMENTED BY:**

GITTA IVAN DAN [For and on behalf of Lund-Diocese]

**PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY:**

To carry out a needs assessment of the Moru refugee community

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE .....	3
THE APPROACH AND PROCESS .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	4
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS .....	5
General meeting with leaders.....	5
Women leaders.....	6
Selected youth leaders.....	6
The youth Bible training awareness meeting .....	7
Children leaders including the teachers in the nursery school.....	8
The elders committee .....	8
THE OBSERVATIONS.....	9
CONCLUSIONS.....	12
APPRECIATION .....	12
APPENDIX.....	14
THE SWOT ANALYSIS:.....	14
LIST OF THE ELDERS' COMMITTEE .....	16
ACCOUNTABILITY FOOTNOTES .....	16
THE VISIT IN PHOTOS .....	17

## **PREAMBLE**

There were growing reports about great population changes in the Moru refugee community, which were affecting planning for projects that aimed at improving the livelihoods of the refugees in Kirandongo. The desire to extend support was therefore limited by inadequacy of data and organized programming which preempted this 3<sup>rd</sup> field visit.

Ivan was directly commissioned by the Diocese of Lund to undertake a specific mission requiring;

- a. An updated physical population report about the refugee
- b. Identification of the pressing needs to the refugee community after meeting with the various community groups and their respective leaders
- c. Identification of how best the reading tent activity can be implemented
- d. Support the leaders in the community to come up with a proposal that would be considered viable to the Lund partners on the one hand, but also owned by the members of the community on the other hand.

Therefore, full facilitation for this field trip was covered by Lund Diocese-Sweden, and the field trip successfully took place from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Ivan representing Lund Diocese directly on the one hand, and IBBY-Uganda on the other hand.

This report shows the findings from the visit and makes key recommendations or interventions that were identified and agreed upon by the committee of elders/leaders that met last among the groups that were targeted.

## **THE APPROACH AND PROCESS**

A physical visit required traveling from Kampala to the Moru refugee community in Kirandongo refugee settlement, located in Kirandongo district from Bweyale trading centre along Kampala-Gulu Road. For effective gathering of information and interfacing with more people, the coordinator was accommodated at Ebenezer Guest house - a new, fairly descent and relatively cheaper accommodation facility, to reduce costs of travel in and out of the refugee settlement.

A few handouts were procured and delivered to benefit the community as a gesture of goodwill and courtesy. These were;

1. 1 box of washing soap which contains 24 bars
2. 2.5 cartons of salt

3. 20 boxes of two types of anti-malaria tablets, and of paracetamol tablets respectively

Spending 4 days on the assessment visit, meetings were carried out with various community groups to ensure that there was full representation in the data collected. This project can now rely on verifiable reports evidenced by photographs and a few short video clips taken using a digital camera that shall remain earmarked for this community's projects.

The mission through meetings with the following community groups both to listen to their challenges and to share experience with them on matters that concern the mission. Thus;

1. General meeting with leaders –
2. Women leaders
3. General youth group and their leaders
4. Children leaders including the teachers in the nursery school
5. The elders committee – selected by Rev Sosthen and Victor Lee to; prioritize the needs identified, oversee and support the implementation of any future project activities resulting from this survey.

A core committee of elders supported me to appreciate the most pressing needs of the community and to describe them into an action proposal that Victor Lee and I would put together upon approval of the key recommendations made at the end of this report. The elders' committee made commitments for as much local support as needed for the project activities that were mutually agreed upon.

The specific needs assessment information that was gathered from the various meetings has been summarized in a SWOT analysis table attached as appendix of the report to help keep the focus on answering the needs of the community.

The accountability excel spreadsheet and all respective acknowledgement forms and receipts have also been submitted to complete the report process. A separate proposal document shall be written submitted with detailed costing following a review of the recommendations by Lund Diocese.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.**

Rev Sosthen and his wife, together with Victor Lee, received me very warmly and they went to great length to ensure that I received all the information I needed, by mobilizing all the key community gatekeepers.



I was well catered for regarding lunch meals and there wasn't any appearance or expression of doubts or fears of either my intentions or actions. I was able to meet the Mr. Joseph, one of the leaders who oversees the refugee clusters, throughout the visit and thereby received a guarantee of support from the camp political leadership through his person and office.

The groups shared enthusiastically about their needs, and I was given very detailed information and there was also enough time to meet with the elders committee to analyze and identify priority areas that can be considered for intervention – The recommendations of this report are given in ascending order with the preference of this committee. Names and contacts of the members of this committee have also been attached as an appendix to affirm ownership and support the follow up process of the activities accruing from this survey.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS**

### **Day 2: Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

#### **General meeting with leaders**

Having arrived on Monday afternoon, all the charity items were handed over to Rev Sosthen and Mama Veronica who acknowledged receipt and an affirmation of the purpose of the visit was shared by all parties. Given the challenges of mobilization, all meetings were moved to start on the following day.

11[eleven] members mainly men, were invited to represent the rest of the community in sharing ideas and generating solutions aimed at improving livelihoods of the refugees in the Moru community. 8 of the members in this meeting were new arrivals [*had arrived after June 2016*] and therefore this confirmed the changes in numbers that had been highlighted earlier.

In the meeting, Rev Sosthen clearly intimated that my visit was a follow up of a relationship stemming way back in South Sudan, dating as far back as 20years, even mentioning the 1<sup>st</sup> generation of church leaders who initiated the Lund-Lui Diocese link. He affirmed that the friends from Lund Diocese in Sweden were simply interested in ensuring that their relationship with Lui Diocese is not stopped or displaced by the current war situation in South Sudan. He therefore officially welcomed me to carry out a successful needs assessment.

The leaders shared their achievements, challenges and pressing needs of the refugee community and also worked with community members to identify demographics. Refer to the SWOT analysis for a summarized view of the achievements or strengths, weaknesses or challenges, opportunities and threats that may harness or hinder the success of any future project.

## Women leaders

The meeting with women was specifically tailored to answering the two major questions; i.e, what they are doing to improve the lifestyles and incomes as refugees and how help may be channeled to them to promote this good work. Their recommendations and challenges have also been incorporated in the SWOT analysis table.

One thing that stood out was the fact that they had taken small initiatives bake cakes, bread and food snacks to receive small incomes from which they can procure soap and salt for survival in the camp. In fact, during the meeting, we had an opportunity to share the biscuits they bake locally and this ensured that sales for the day were made by the person in charge of the business. This was a joyous fellowship, because they all appreciated the need for business literacy to limit losses in such small enterprises.

## Day 3: Wednesday 23rd

### Selected youth leaders

To make work easy, some members of the youth group were appointed to carry out the task of mobilizing their peers to answer the two major questions; What do they want do and what they would love to learn in the event that resources were available. There is evidence that the Moru refugee community desires to pursue education because, just as the women called for adult



Victor -Center, Posing for a photo with some of the selected youth

literacy, the youth group equally placed high the need to go back to school given the availability of sponsorship

I therefore had sufficient time to share my testimony with them and to

challenge them to create and take action on steps that can give them income, however small this may be. I mentioned four key areas that I have discovered as important for life, thus;

1. The need to love and make peace with everyone, because hate was a sort of bondage that limited growth, based on Romans 12.
2. The importance of acquiring life skills and making a habit of continuous learning because information is power and knowledge is wealth. Using myself as the example, I mentioned of how I had started a company that trains farmers on growing commercial crops like ginger, bud eye chili and that we were expanding to include okra. They were encouraged by the example, because showed them how seriously I account for every shilling that comes to my life through maintaining a daily income and expense statement.
3. The will, or optimism to become what rather seems impossible. I used the illustrations of the outgoing and incoming American Presidents. A black man with Kenyan descent, and a businessman without political experience, yet elected to lead a world power. To this justified with Mark 9:23.
4. The network of friends, family and mentors that God has put our to guide us and to strengthen us on our journey. I shared that every person mattered in life because of their value which may never be obvious to us at the onset.

To conclude the meeting with the youth, I emphasized that God was the umbrella for all the factors and forces of life and that life remains meaningless and empty without total dependence on him as Lord and Savior. We concluded in prayer and a challenge to change the way we live and see our lives.

### **The youth Bible training awareness meeting**

Although not directly connected to my mission at the settlement, I was invited to listen in, through an orientation meeting that was mobilizing the youth group to participate in a systematic Bible study series for church leaders and pastors. This initiative was also spearheaded by Rev. Sosthen who had traveled to Kenyan some months back to solicit that the program be continued in the refugee settlement at Moru church, given the fact that it had been hindered by the war in South Sudan.

The leaders of the ministry organization had been invited to have a physical visit and to arouse the interest of the young people to participate in this learning process. The program was proposed to begin around mid January 2017, at Moru Church, targeting 30 Christian workers who would commit class time, study and participate in the learning of 10 scripturally based Christian books giving atleast 40 – 60 hours of study per book. The study books are; Bible study methods and rules of interpretation, Old Testament survey, New Testament Survey, the art of preaching, Bible doctrines, personal spiritual life, church administration, Christian education, church history and evangelism, discipleship and mission.

The training would be full facilitated by sponsoring ministry and that meals [break and lunch] would be provided to the selected students. A very welcome complement and indirect solution to the needs identified among the Youth.

### **Day 3: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Children leaders (teachers in the nursery school)**

The meeting with the children leaders had to be very brief because they had to attend to the children who were doing their end of term examinations. I mainly took a number of photos and recorded a short video message from both the 2 teachers who serve the consistent 192 children in the nursery section.

The nursery school was fully functional but without materials [writing and coloring books, pencils/colors, and reading charts among other teaching aids] for the children to use in the



Ivan-center, 2 teachers who serve the nursery school, with some children in photo.

learning process. While there were children's chairs, there was a considerable number who were sitting on mats laid on the floors.

The good thing is that they were using the reading materials that had been procured from Uganda Children's Writers and I am convinced that the teachers would benefit if they are equipped on how to support children to read. This is because I realized that the child who held one such book was more interested in the pictures, and could not make sense of material, let alone read 2 words.

#### **The elders committee**

The community youth leader, 3 key opinion elderly men, Mama Veronica as a women's' representative, 3 members from the youth leaders, Victor Lee and Rev. Sosthen were mobilized to form this committee.

The purpose of this final meeting was to prioritize what needs may have to be addressed in order of preference. General challenges being faced by the community were highlighted and the leaders were divided into three groups, to independently choose out 4 key areas that need to be worked on as interventions.

Their respective responses were written out on a board and by numerical presentation, the solutions that were similar from each of the 3 groups were listed in the order they were presented. While there were many needs, and the some elders saw the need to focus health interventions above education interventions, the general presentation indicated that;

- a. Improve the nursery school was the first priority
- b. Invest in agriculture support
- c. Enhance Income Generating Activities for women and youth
- d. Support the establishment of a health clinic

### **About the reading tent**

It was clarified by the elders that while the reading tent program was a wonderful way of supporting the children, the following concerns about its implementation existed

1. The vital beneficiaries from the reading program were not nursery children but those in primary who could try to read so that the activity is a success. However, mobilizing these children out of their respective primary schools would be difficult since they were under the sponsorship and strict monitoring of Windle Trust.
2. The holiday time is the preferred period because this way, the parents can be influenced to send their children for the activity. However, there needs to be a training of a few young people from the community who would both participate as helping hands, translators and also benefit. For example, the nursery school teachers, and the Sunday school workers would be vital.
3. To handle a one-off activity such as a reading tent was not deemed a priority except if it can be designed to have continuous monitorable impact for the children in particular and the community in general.

### **THE OBSERVATIONS.**

#### **A. Extension to the Moru church**

Under the leadership of Rev. Sosthen, there has been an extension to the church structure to accommodate the increase in the congregation. Victor Lee has also been assigned leadership of a sub-parish [the Lotuka



**Elders prioritizing needs in groups in the church extension**

community church] that was opened under the auspice of the Moru church. He works under the guidance of Rev. Sosthen and Rev. Henry to oversee the affairs of the ministry.

This means on the other hand that training for Christian ministers is a critical issue to ensure that the congregations are served well.

#### B. Construction of classroom blocks

Through funding from Windle Trust [an international organization that supports primary school children in the settlement to access education] construction of 3 classroom blocks is being done. This target to create learning space for the children, and hopefully the classes will be support the development of a community primary school.

I learned that through soliciting, the community would however be expected to cater for the welfare of the staff who are to work at the school as the struggle equally is for the teachers of the nursery school.

#### C. Community initiative, solidarity and organization

##### i. Women livelihood group

The women are organized and coordinated well to ably work on orders for weaving mats, bedcovers, table clothes and are willing to learn how to improve on these skills and to learn new skills such as baking if funds and trainers were available

Infact I personally placed an order for 1 set of table cloths and chair covers to be a witness to their commitment and prove the quality of the work. They mentioned that averagely, it would take them 2 weeks to finish a set, given availability of resources.

##### ii. Water and Sanitation campaigns

The community has mobilized itself to ensure that all households in the moru community access water by centrally paying the bill to the National Water Cooperation. This shields the individuals who may not immediately have the money to pay, although such defaulters are followed up to make their unit payment of Ugx50 per jerrican.

##### iii. Poultry farming and farming activities

There are currently 200 birds of chicken reared for purposes of raising income to promote community activities. The leadership has also ably procured 2 acres of



land on which they have grown white beans both for sale and for supplementing the food that is given. I ate better flour, very well prepared Okra, fish and beef, which were signs of an optimistic and hardworking people.

iv. Good will from the leadership

Apart from the commitment of Rev. Sosthen, the smaller group leaders and the political leaders and the entire camp administration is very supportive of

activities and programs aimed at improving the quality of life for the refugees.



**Members pose for a photo with Mr Joseph-3rd right, a Key political leader and Rev. Sosthen**

I met with Mr Joseph -3<sup>rd</sup> from right in photo [one the political leaders at level III], who oversees more a combination of clusters and his comments about the Moru were very encouraging. He specifically mentioned that they are a group of hardworking people. Note that he [Joseph] is a Kenyan, living in the

settlement and working closely with Rev Sosthen to strengthen networks and relationships therein.

v. Youth interest for empowerment

Apart from organizing themselves into over 7 football teams, [2 for women and 2 for children], the youth have formed themselves into a drama group, and some girls have been trained in hairdressing among other skills.

Among the young people, there exist those who can build, take care of poultry, do tailoring, and sewing and among others. These lists of work groups were compiled and a leader identified for each category in case that intervention is chosen to be taken.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

From the elders committee, it is more important to improve the quality of the nursery school by; procuring scholastic materials for the children, availing more furniture, empowering the teachers and volunteers to support in control and care of the children and by contributing towards the enrolment of more teachers and facilitating them.

The community is ready to learn and take action towards moving itself from dependency to self-reliance. In fact they are more interested in empowerment support for their already existing income generating activities and are eager to expand into commercial agriculture as an initiative to generate funds that can be used to empower the school, the church and other community activities.

Therefore, I recommend that scholastic items, materials and activities that can be done to improve the nursery school are specifically identified and presented. With the help of IBBY-Uganda, this can build into the reading tent training for the young girls and children teachers, before the reading tent is effectively carried out.

Secondly, some funds can be earmarked for the women and girls groups that engage in making of hand crafts, as a ground for establishing a semi-professional vocational skills training centre based at Moru Church. The elders committee together with the youth leaders can directly propose the figures. Funds generated here can be moved into the women savings program to further facilitate individuals who desire to develop using soft loans, and or for such community programs like setting up a church clinic, buying more materials for the school.

Thirdly, support to rent land outside the camp for commercial agriculture to benefit the community will be a very welcome initiative. Funds generated here may be moved towards paying teachers, porridge for children, paying for more food among other areas

Please note that these interventions will require the commitment of some skilled people to support the groups in monitoring, accountability, reporting, and in building cohesion through on-going field support. Overshadowing these, there needs to be continuous sensitization meetings with young people to ensure that they are equipped with life skills and information on health, work, and career guidance among others.

## **APPRECIATION**

1. To Lund Diocese for its commitment to its partners in Lui Diocese who are currently displaced by war in Uganda and in various parts of East Africa, and for facilitating this mission visit and committing to take action as a result.
2. To IBBY-Uganda for its willingness to support the refugee community especially in the area of education empowerment.



3. To Rev Sosthen for his tireless efforts of advocacy and soliciting for moral and material support for his congregation and community, and for pro-actively participating in the transformation process of this community and for keeping hope alive among the church through teaching and preaching the word of God.
4. To Veronica for her medical assistance to the community, her leadership to the women and her care for members of the community and for organizing my meals.
5. To Victor Lee and the community leadership in general for their guidance and participation that has seen this mission a success.
6. To God for journey mercies, wisdom and for favor before a foreign community group.

## APPENDIX

### THE SWOT ANALYSIS:

#### A SUMMARY OF THE STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS IDENTIFIED

<p><b>STRENGTHS /ACHIEVEMENTS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The numbers of refugees has all been fit into the community and church. The church has actually been expanded and a second congregation in another location was created</li> <li>2. Strong community solidarity that has enabled them to start and maintain over 190 children in nursery school through;             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Paying Ugx200,000 per month for two teachers</li> <li>b. Expand the church structure to create room also for the children</li> <li>c. Find ways of feeding the children every day at school [porridge]</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Started a poultry farm with 200 birds</li> <li>4. Purchased 2 acres to support agricultural production.</li> <li>5. Started a women savings and credit scheme</li> <li>6. Access to a play field for children youth and for community activities</li> <li>7. Procured a piano for supporting music skills training especially among the youth and to support congregation workshop.</li> <li>8. Organized the sports teams for women(2), older youth (4)and children below 14years(2)</li> </ol>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES /CHALLENGES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High number of refugees which has reduced both food and land portions. Current estimate in the settlement is 73,000 people.</li> <li>2. Many willing but less skilled community leaders can affect professional development and records management</li> <li>3. Few water sources that require payment yet majority of the refugees do not have means of income</li> <li>4. The absence of firewood and or lack of resources to procure charcoal for cooking</li> <li>5. Insufficient chairs, no tables and writing materials for the children. This is coupled with few a teacher ratio of 1:100</li> <li>6. Lack of uniforms and sports gear for the sports teams to facilitate safe sport</li> <li>7. Poor facilitation for the community leaders who mobilize and maintain statistical data</li> </ol>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES /AREAS TO EXPLOIT</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are more people in the community who can be turned into a massive source of voluntary labour, and they can also be empowered into a good market source.</li> <li>2. Many unreached children can be empowered to</li> </ol>	<p><b>THREATS /AREAS OF CONCERN</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Congestion of children may result in poor quality learning and increase possibility of jigger infection especially during dry seasons</li> <li>2. High numbers which will cause a</li> </ol>

<p>have a good education foundation through reading and education support programs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Specialize in the production of Okra and beans for commercial purposes as some of the required food supplements for all refugees. This can be supplemented by mid and long term agricultural investment ventures on hired land outside the camp. For example, growing ginger for the export market.</li> <li>4. Focus on professional music empowerment both for skills enhancement and for livelihood. If guitars, drums and sound equipment are procured</li> <li>5. Expand existing women and girls Small scale income activities using an internal training mechanism to increase production, thus consider promoting their items on Ugandan and external markets.</li> <li>6. Good will and interest from the political leadership can be harnessed to create a successful refugee community that can inspire other refugee communities.</li> <li>7. Presence of land for hire n the settlement and its neighborhood</li> <li>8. Exploiting the charcoal/firewood gap by making and selling briquette charcoal as an alternative</li> </ol>	<p>continuous drop in the food portions that are given to the refugee households</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Incorporation from the neighborhood and or poor support community when investments pick up.</li> <li>4. Poor weather or bad harvests in the case of agricultural investments</li> <li>5. Weaknesses in business management and accountability that can may frustrate Income Generating Activity's investment</li> <li>6. Stability in South Sudan which may necessitate return when a number of capital investment has been done in Kirandongo</li> <li>7. Natural disaster or unforeseen circumstances</li> </ol>
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### LIST OF THE ELDERS' COMMITTEE

NO	NAME	TITLE	CONTACT
1	James Majan Barnabas	Community leader	0771089366, <a href="mailto:jmabanbarnabas@gmail.com">jmabanbarnabas@gmail.com</a>
2	Veronica Karaba	Women's leader	0780610603
3	January J. Sebit	Elder	0775562240
4	Charles M. Kajiako	Church elder	0780943279
5	Alex Nimiri	Pastor	0787973867
6	Charles Maburlus	Member	0778045119
7	Justin Malish	Member	07803091014
8	Jackson Friday	Member	0780332521
9	Victor Lee	lead mobilize	0775888555
10	Alex Malia	Member	0781667293
11	Sosthen Amin	Church pastor and elder	0780727525

### ACCOUNTABILITY FOOTNOTES

1. For all possible places where receipts of payment could be received, they have been attached and sent in a separate email named – accountability receipts
2. There wasn't any specifications as to how much of the amount sent was to be spent on drugs, salt and medicines, therefore a total of Ugx194,000 was spent.
3. For purposes of validity, such a mission could not rely on a borrowed camera which could not be accessed by the time of travel, therefore, priority was given to this. The equipment shall be handed over as per the guidelines given in response to this report.
4. The accommodation and meals' costs were minimized such that more direct activities receive maximum attention. Secondly this was facilitated by the presence of a new and better accommodation point in Bweyale, nearer to the settlement, than in Kigumba as earlier planned.
5. A detailed excel spread sheet has been attached showing how all the money was spent.

**THE VISIT IN PHOTOS [other photos have been sent a separate email]**



**Top left** - Arriving at the Moru Community, **Top right and center left**- the salt, soap and medicines that were given, **center right**- a meeting with the women leaders, and **bottom left**- the foundation being laid for the 3 classrooms being set up by Windle Trust. Other photos shall be sent separately.