

IMPACT REPORT 2013



Children
of Uganda 

The 2013 Annual Impact Report includes activity during January—December 2013. To learn more, we invite you to visit www.childrenofuganda.org or connect with us on social media.

Our Mission:

Give a hand UP to vulnerable youth by providing access to quality education and skills training for self-reliance.

Board of Directors (2013):

Ellen Boudreau, *Chair*
Stephen Alpern, *Treasurer*
Sonni Aribiah, *Secretary*
Peter Carter
Sarah Farster
Gretchen Littlefield
Jamie Natelson
Talitha Phillips
Paige Sipe

U.S. Staff:

Pamela Brannon, *Executive Director*
Julie Fitzgerald, *Office Manager*
Nicole Moorman, *Communications Manager*

Uganda Staff:

Margaret Kasekende, *Program Director*
Yvonne Natukunda Mpairwe, *Program Officer*
Ritah Namakula, *Finance Officer*
Richard Mukisa Mutesasira, *Administrative Officer*
Prossie Lamunu, *Program Assistant (Sponsorship)*
William Nadiope, *Finance Consultant*
Moses Nsubuga, *Office Assistant*
Winnie Nakalembe, *Social Worker*
Irene Ndagire, *Office Attendant*
Roger Segawa, *Office Volunteer*
Richard Mulwana, *Driver*
Joseph Sekyondwa Matovu, *Project Officer (Kyotera)*
Deborah Nakiduuli, *Project Assistant (Kyotera)*
Fred Ssekamate, *Volunteer (Kyotera)*

Children of Uganda

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Progress

This year at Children of Uganda (COU), we focused on making new connections and expanding our reach—both in Uganda and here in the U.S. We achieved this through new community outreach partnerships, the development and redesign of our website at www.childrenofuganda.org, as well as the completion of extensive preparations for the 2014 *Tour of Light*. COU's Board of Directors held their annual meeting in Uganda this summer where they conducted site visits to partner primary and secondary schools, Philip's House (where our mentally and physically handicapped youth receive daily care), and the homes of our Family Empowerment participants. We listened to the people in the communities we serve and are now striving to better address their needs and concerns.

In an effort to expand and strengthen our advocacy work on the ground in Uganda, we successfully secured a grant via the Independent Development Fund (IDF) to initiate the implementation of a 2 year Community Response to Child Labour (CR2CL) project in Rakai District. The project's aim is to increase community awareness regarding the adverse effects of child labour and to support community action in protecting child rights. COU is also committed to supporting local women and their small businesses through the Family Empowerment Program, which provides knowledge and skills training, counseling, support for Income Generating Projects (IGPs), as well as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).



Over the past 19 years, COU has provided access to quality education, life skills training, food, clothing, shelter and medical care to thousands of orphaned and vulnerable youth in Uganda. As a result, over 1,300 children have successfully completed the program since 1995 and we are proud to mention that many of these graduates are now engineers, doctors, teachers, and more. In addition to providing access to quality primary and secondary schools, we also support students through vocational school, teacher training, university and other tertiary institutions of learning. These responsible individuals are now well on their way to becoming healthy, productive members of Ugandan society who understand the importance of giving back to their community. Our children are so grateful to their sponsors for all the love, care and life-changing investments they have made in their future.

In the pages that follow, we hope that you too will see a year marked with progress and achievement. We truly owe our success to people like you who gave generously of their time, talent and resources this year.

With Sincerest Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Brannon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pamela Brannon,
Executive Director

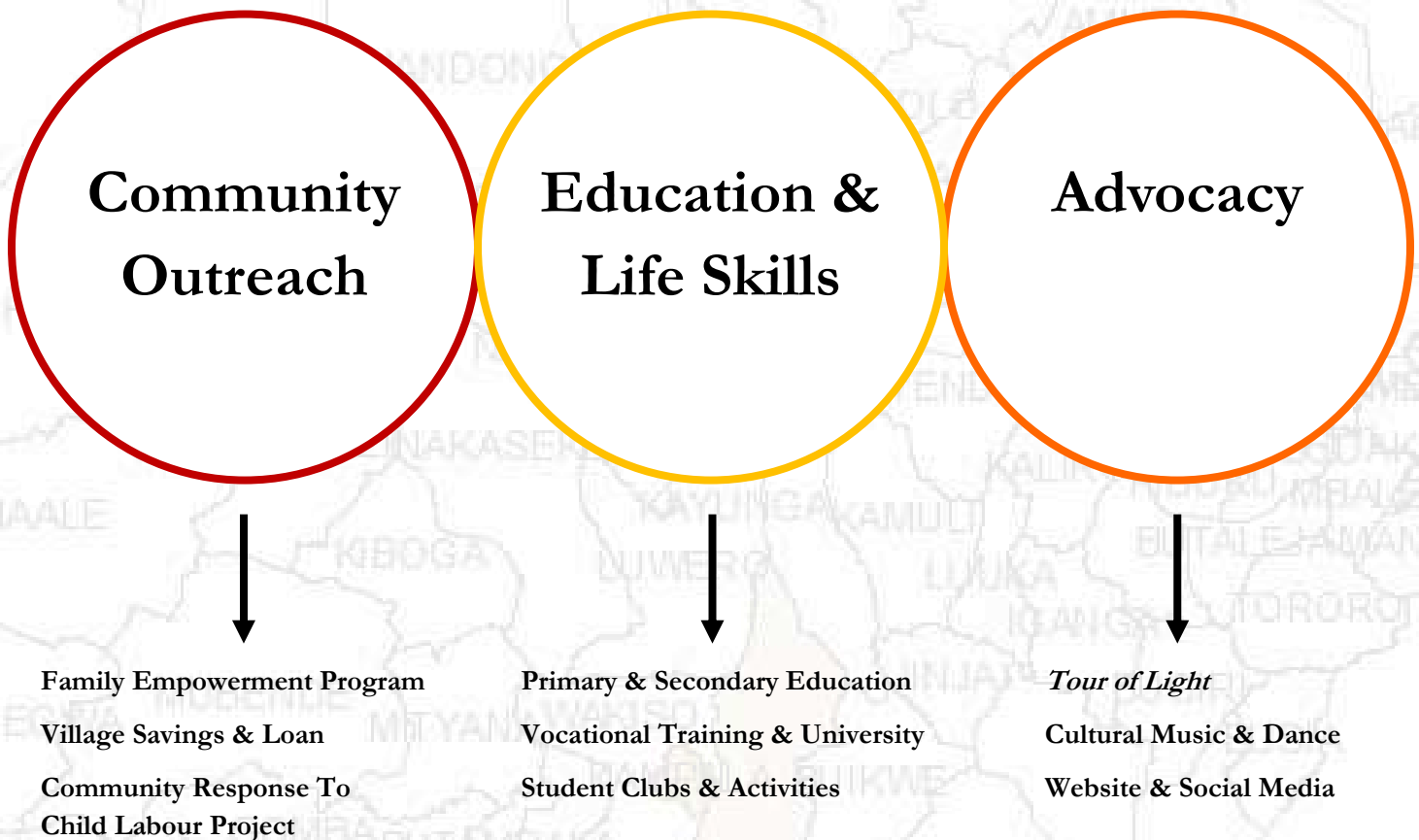
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen Boudreau". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ellen Boudreau,
Board Chair

What We Do At Children of Uganda

Children of Uganda (COU) was founded in 1995. As both a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization headquartered in the United States and a non-profit NGO in Uganda, COU provides opportunities to orphaned and vulnerable girls and boys through the provision of basic education, social welfare, and life skills development. Many of the children have been orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS or adversely affected by the sickness of their parents and other family members.

Currently home to an estimated 8 million orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs) whose families have been devastated by AIDS, extreme poverty and civil conflict, Uganda has the largest orphan population per capita of any country in the world*. COU is helping to educate and support OVCs in Rakai, Mukono and Kampala districts of Uganda, while at the same time promoting global awareness of the effects of poverty and AIDS, through the following programs:



www.childrenofuganda.org

Join us on **Facebook** (www.facebook.com/ChildrenofUganda)

Follow us on **Twitter** (www.twitter.com/ChildrenUganda)

Watch us on **YouTube** (www.youtube.com/ChildrenofUganda)

*Uganda National Strategic Plan of Intervention of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children, 2011/2012 - 2015/2016

Community Outreach

This year, we expanded services to our child guardians and to the wider communities where they live:

Family Empowerment Program (FEP)

Now in their 2nd year of the program, members of FEP – all women who have one COU sponsored child – and the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) continued to organize weekly meetings at Kiwanga. At the end of the year, savings and profits were shared among the 17 members of the group totaling UGX 2,117,000; a profit of UGX 269,000 (\$108). Members of the VSLA have benefited from the program by borrowing at very low and affordable interest rates. At the end of the share-out, UGX 10,000 (balance on interest) was left in the cash box as start-up capital for the next cycle. In addition to savings for the group, the program has helped grow small businesses in the following industries: grocery, food vending, agriculture, mushroom growing, retail shops, a piggery project and a firewood business.



Programme Director, Margaret Kasekende, hands over the savings earned by each member of the VSLA on behalf of the group's chairperson at their annual meeting.

Community Response to Child Labour Project (CR2CL)



On Nov. 7th, 2013, COU—with support from the IDF grant—provided 20 child protection committees with one bicycle each to better enable follow up on reported abuse cases and protect children's rights.

\$80,000 was awarded in grant funding via the Independent Development Fund (IDF) to implement the CR2CL project in Kasasa and Kakuuto sub counties of Rakai District—with a 2 year roll-out and initial funds received July, 2013, the following progress was made:

⇒ **20 child protection committees were established**, 10 at parish level and another 10 in partner schools.

⇒ The project officer, project assistant and child protection committees **worked together to identify and register the vulnerable children engaged in child labour**. Many were found living in poor conditions, with no shelter, food, clothes, and worst of all—they were being exploited as labourers.

⇒ **4 counselors** were identified, interviewed and taken on to counsel the victims of child labour and their guardians. Each

sub county was allocated 2 counselors and each has been instructed to **reach at least 25 children per month**.

⇒ **2 dialogue meetings** (one per sub-county) were held in public places (village marketplace/trading centers) to sensitize the masses on child rights. **12 talk show appearances on Radio Budu** were also conducted from July to December, with 4 spot messages running every month on the dangers of child labour, factors fueling the problem, law enforcement and existing policies, and more.

⇒ On Nov. 30th, COU facilitated 42 children, 6 teachers from partner schools and 5 committee members to start a **child labour free zone awareness marathon**. The event was organized by ANPPCAN Rakai branch. It was intended to raise awareness on the dangers of child labour and to call upon the community for help.

Education & Life Skills

COU provides school fees, nutritious food and access to basic medical care for hundreds of young people in need. Check out our impact by the numbers this year:



Sponsors—like our friend, Talitha—make dreams come true for our children.

304

individual child sponsors from across the world supported students at the FULL (\$984/yr. or \$82/mo.), CO (\$504/yr. or \$42/mo.), vocational and/or university level (\$1,500+).

25 students placed in new vocational trade or teachers training programs in 2013.

268

total students (122 male & 146 female) enrolled in either primary, secondary, vocational, or university education.



Welcome to the COU family class of 2013!

6

life skills clubs developed and now supported via the IDF grant.

29

new children (15 girls & 13 boys) joined the education program in 2013.

100%

of P.7 sponsored pupils passed their primary school leaver exams with 1st or 2nd grades, qualifying them all for secondary education in 2013.

(From 2012 P7 candidate student results)

7

mentally and/or physically handicapped individuals sponsored through Philips House program.

13

students graduated from the program this year—1 student completed a university degree course, while the other 12 finished their training from various vocational institutes in driving, catering, electrical installation, mechanics, social work and social administration.

NEW ^{COU} Alumni Association created and now managed by old boys and girls of the organization – bringing all the beneficiaries back together to assist one another in career guidance, mentorship and support.



Peter Bukenya graduated on Oct. 18th from Ndejje University with a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering. Congrats, Peter!

Student Success

2013 was marked with many accomplishments from our students—at the primary, secondary and higher education levels. **Learn more about some of these exceptional individuals and what they’ve learned this year:**



Paul Zaake is a third year student at Gulu University where he is working towards a bachelor’s degree in Agriculture. This year, during his summer recess term, Paul conducted studies at the zonal agriculture research centers in two different districts for a period of 4 weeks and then spent an additional 4 weeks training with various community farmers. He is expected to graduate from his program in October, 2014.



Jackie

Nambejja, who joined COU’s program in 2012, is the youngest member of the 2014 *Tour of Light* music and dance troupe. Jackie built upon her natural talent by learning new cultural dances, folk songs and how to play a few traditional instruments.



Margaret

Najjagwe is a very outgoing, kind-hearted and responsible young lady. This year, her peers elected her to become the Head Prefect at St. Kizito Sabina Primary Boarding School. She also passed her P.7 exams with a 1st grade, so next year she will advance to Masaka Secondary School. Margaret is excited and ready to learn many new things.



Elvis & Baron are twin brothers who both graduated this year from secondary school and entered Makerere University thanks to their sponsors. Elvis is studying Quantitative Economics and Baron is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Petroleum Geoscience Production. They are grateful to embark on this new chapter together.



Isaac

Wasswa is a brilliant student who scored at the top of his S4 class, qualifying him for advanced studies (S5 & S6 at Masaka Secondary School.

Advocacy

2014 Tour of Light—Music, Dance and Storytelling

COU is committed to preserving Uganda and East Africa's vibrant music and cultural heritage; and so, many of our students benefit from a rich curriculum and instruction in traditional singing, dancing and drumming.

Every few years, the *Tour of Light* brings these talented children to perform across America. Through music, dance and drama, these young people aim to share their beautiful culture, to raise global awareness of the effects of HIV/AIDS on children in developing nations around the world and to advocate for international assistance on behalf of their fellow brothers and sisters in Uganda.

We spent all year preparing for the 2014 *Tour of Light* both in Uganda and in the U.S.—coordinating music and dance trainings, creating promotional materials, booking performances, home stay and hotel accommodations, transport and so much more.

In Uganda, a group of 26 COU sponsored children were selected based on their exceptional talent and skills to partake in rehearsals at Kiwanga. The group comprised of youth aged 6-18 years old and 22 (12 girls and 10 boys) were ultimately chosen to participate in the 2014 *Tour of Light*—a 10 week adventure to the U.S. that started off on January 8th, 2014.

The 2014 *Tour of Light* was a great success. Not only did they shine on professional stages, but they also engaged in cultural exchange programs and put on spectacular events at churches, schools, universities and community centers across the U.S. In addition to entertaining vast audiences and raising awareness, COU secured funding for their programs on the ground, as well as over 40 new child sponsorships.

New Website Launch!

www.childrenofuganda.org

We worked all year long on the development of our new website and coordinated the exciting public reveal for the first week of the 2014 *Tour of Light*. This was a major achievement and has since helped us to better connect our work with the people who make it all possible—YOU! Here, you can check out videos, photos, success stories, news updates and so much more.

"Thank you for your support, love, kindness and cooperation. You must really love us because if it wasn't for your support, the training could not have gone on... [I'm thankful] that there are people who really do think about us."

~Kellen Nassozi, 2012 and 2014 *Tour of Light* performer



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