RURAL ACTION COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION (RACOBAO)

".....Bringing hope to the community"



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD:



Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel K. S. Kamya

We embark on our activities for the year 2014 amidst major changes in the organization:

- A change in top management at the head office.
- A creation of offices in Kampala for easy contact with partners and other NGO's.
- Extension of our operational area to cover the districts of Sembabule, Kalungu, Kalangala and the Teso sub region.
- Broadening our focus to include Peace Building,
 Peace and Good Governance and Human rights.

All those changes are a testimony to our proven maturity from a local, one district NGO to a national fully fledged NGO. And as we look forward to an exciting new future, it is comforting to know that we have the support of our funding partners. This is tribute to good management and good team work by all our staff as well as sound guidance by the Board.

All this is confirmed by a clean financial audit report for the year 2013 and a reassuring Organisational Capacity Assessment report recently issued.

As we salute the outgoing Director, Mr. Senkima and his team for ably nurturing RACOBAO from infancy to maturity, let us all resolve to rally behind the new team and its leader, Mr. Haq Makumbi as they take on the new challenges and them all the give necessary support. It is my belief sincere that RACOBAO will continue to grow even stronger and that communities we are committed to serve will increasingly benefit from our determination deliver to quality services. All this is possible with God's guidance and support. God bless you.

WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR:



Mr. Haq Makumbi

RACOBAO has come to the end of the 6th year of operations stronger and well-grounded in the areas of operation. Some of the opportunities for successful implementation of the projects this year have included enthusiasm of communities towards RACOBAO programs, continued good working relations with all stakeholders, good relations and communication with funding partners, becoming members of the ACT alliance, collaboration and networking with other like-minded organizations, involvement of and strategic guidance from the distinguished RACOBAO Board members, and continued motivation and capacity building of staff.

We are especially grateful to our funding partners who enabled the implementation of the following projects during the year 2013.

The WATSAN (Water and Sanitation) Project funded by Icelandic Church Aid and Children in Africa that enabled the construction of 10 houses, 10 latrines, 7 kitchens, and 7 water tanks benefitting over 50 orphans from Child headed households and PLHIV.

Strengthening Communities against HIV/AIDS, GBV and Discrimination (SCAAD) Project funded by Dan Church Aid aimed at strengthening capacity of duty bearers to fulfill their mandates as well as empowering rights holders to claim for their rights against harmful cultural practices, sexual and gender based violence, and discrimination.

The Livestock Project: funded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) where RACOBAO aims at rebuilding the socio economies of HIV/AIDS Households vulnerable especially those that were shattered by the epidemic through the provision of over 360 local goats.

The Strengthening Community response against HIV/AIDS project: HIV using the new combination prevention four sub strategy in counties in Rakai district; Dwaniro, Lwamagwa, Kacheera and Kagamba.

Strengthening Community structures for sustained ART provision in Lyantonde district: This Lyantonde ART Adherence Project seeks to reinforce adherence among people living with AIDS on ART

Strengthening community child rights protection structures in Lyantonde: mainly targeting early marriages and land grabbing for orphans and widows (PLHIV).

Most of these projects are ongoing and will run into 2014 and beyond.

In 2012, the Board of Directors sanctioned the new strategic plan that opened up RACOBAO operational scope beyond the traditional Lyantonde/Rakai into areas such as the North and North east Uganda. Management approached Pharmacists without Boarders, Sweden (FuG) that has since granted RACOBAO a 2 year project for 2014 and 2015 to be implemented in Sembabule district. Similarly, in July 22 and 23, 2013, RACOBAO visited Teso and Karamoja region at the invitation of the respective Local Governments through Teso/Karamoja Peace Initiative Program (TEKAPIP), a local NGO operating in that region. TEKAPIP and RACOBAO have since agreed on joint fundraising and implementation and have since submitted a joint proposal to the EU.

Given the anticipated level of growth as well as the ongoing changes, RACOBAO conducted an organizational capacity assessment (OCA) to identify strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. Dan church aid provided funds for the exercise which helped to identify appropriate resources given the anticipated changes. It also resulted into an organizational development whose implementation is already underway. Similarly, since RACOBAO is threatened by aging vehicles and motor cycles, we approached our donors to support the acquisition of a new vehicle. Join me to applaud Dan church aid that provided us the funds to purchase the car. We have since acquired a new Ford Ranger.

I like to take this opportunity to inform you that Mr. Stephen Ssenkima who was our Director since 2009 left RACOBAO in November 2013. Stephen took up other responsibilities as the Country Director of LWR, Uganda office. We at RACOBAO are proud that once again one of us has been identified by an international agency to be appointed to such an important portfolio. We wish Stephen success in his new

responsibilities. As a result, Board of Directors appointed me as Director. I take this appointment with great humility.

Allow me to salute the Board for their unwavering the support to management of RACOBAO. The year 2014 presents more opportunities for growth. As we move forward, i call upon fellow staff and our strategic partners renewed energy. Your support and commitment towards the delivery of quality projects to the rights holders is paramount.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

Vision:

A Uganda where all people are living a dignified life and are actively participating in the development of their communities.

Mission:

RACOBAO is a local NGO that is committed to the full realization of Health Rights and entitlements of the vulnerable persons in the targeted districts. We do this through empowering communities to promote the demand-side of accountability and delivery of accessible, quantity and quality public services and building capacity of relevant duty bearers to appreciate and fulfill citizens' rights of, especially, the most vulnerable men, women, boys and girls.

Thematic areas:

- HIV prevention, care, and support
- Advocacy and Human rights protection
- Water and Sanitation
- Nutrition and Food security
- Household and Community Economic transformation

Strategic Implementation strategies and Plan:

- Community Empowerment
- Advocacy and protection of Human rights
- Gender mainstreaming
- Networking and collaboration
- Capacity building

Projects implemented in 2013:

- Strengthening Community Response against HIV and AIDS in Rakai District Funded by the Civil Society Fund (CSF).
- The Household Water and Sanitation improvement project funded by Icelandic Church aid (ICA).
- The Rakai Livestock project funded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
- Strengthening Community structures for Sustained ART provision in Lyantonde District funded by Pharmacists without Borders (FUG), Sweden.

- Strengthening Community Responses against HIV/AIDS, GBV, and Discrimination (SCAAD) funded by Dan Church aid.
- Strengthening Community Based Child Rights Protection in Lyantonde District, funded by Independent Development Fund.
- Design Federating VSLAs into Cooperatives in Lyantonde District, Funded by DCA & Lutheran World Relief.

RACOBAO PROJECTS:

Strengthening Community Responses against HIV/AIDS, GBV, and Discrimination (SCAAD) is a project funded by **Dan Church Aid** operating in Lyantonde District. The project targets People Living with HIV/AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Pastoral communities.

RACOBAO under this project aims at; Duty bearers including Local government, traditional, and religious institutions taking actions towards effective service delivery and elimination of harmful practices, Rights holders, in particular OVC and people living with HIV in Lyantonde district empowered to claim for SRH and HIV/AIDS services and challenge harmful practices that predispose them to HIV infection and further vulnerability, Vulnerable Rights holders in particular MARPs (Boda-Boda riders, CSW/barmaids and hotel attendants, Married and in long-term relationships (women 30-35 and men 40-45), OVC and people living with HIV in Lyantonde having increased access to information, prevention, care and other support services in relation to HIV and Enhanced capacity for the RACOBAO board, Management and staff to achieve strategic objectives.



RACOBAO has formed over 50 VSLA groups in the 03 sub-counties of Kinuka, Kasagama and Mpumudde to economically empower both men and women so that they can progressively take over responsibility of looking after their families.

The Household Water and Sanitation Improvement Project is a project funded by ICELANDIC CHURCHAID (ICA) operating in Lyantonde District and Rakai District targeting Orphans and Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Through this project, RACOBAO has improved the living conditions and household sanitation among families of children living alone and people living with HIV and AIDS.



Some of the families that received new homes under the Icelandic church aid funding.

The Livestock Project is a project funded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in AMERICA (ELCA) operating in Lyantonde District and Rakai District. It targets Orphans and Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

The project aims at reduced vulnerability to social and economic effects of HIV& AIDS of targeted households.



Widows and orphans affected/infected with HIV/AIDS receive goats from RACOBAO under ELCA funding.

Strengthening Community Response against HIV and AIDS in Rakai District is a project funded by the Civil Society Fund (CSF) operating in Rakai District targeting MARPS (commercial sex workers, fisher folks, truck drivers, Boda boda cyclist, youth out of school, people in long-term relationships and People Living with HIV/AIDS).

Through this project in the 04 sub-counties of Kacheera, Lwamaggwa, Dwaniro and Kagamba, RACOBAO aims at; Increasing demand and utilization of HIV prevention services among men and women, Increasing adoption of safer sexual practices, creating a sustainable enabling environment to mitigate socio-cultural and structural drivers of HIV/AIDS epidemic, Strengthening coordination and referral mechanisms among HIV/AIDS providers, Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system of RACOBAO and the consortium members to monitor and measure project outputs and outcomes in the targeted sub counties.



Women and men attending the HIV/AIDS
Counseling and Testing services at Lwanga
landing site during an outreach on Lake
Kacheera.

Strengthening Community Structures for Sustained ART Provision in Lyantonde District is a project funded by **Pharmacists without Boarders, Sweden** operating in Lyantonde District, targeting Orphans and Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

The project aims at; **S**trengthening referral networks for provision of ART and support services to 1,000 PLHIV in Lyantonde, Advocating for increased ART service delivery in Lyantonde district, Enhancing capacity for the RACOBAO board, Management, and staff to effectively achieve objectives of the organisation.

The Orphans Skills and Household Improvement is a project funded by Children in Africa (BiA) operating in Lyantonde District and Rakai District, targeting Orphans and Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

The project aims at improved living conditions among families of children living alone and people living with HIV and AIDS

Independent Development Fund is a project funded by **Children in Africa (BiA)** operating in Lyantonde District. It targets rights holders (Orphans and Vulnerable Children) and duty bearers (Local Leaders, Cultural Leaders and Religious Leaders).

Under the orphans skills and household improvement, RACOBAO aims at making sure that; Duty bearers including Local government and other child protection structures are empowered to promote, protect, and fulfil the rights of OVC, Children in particular OVC empowered to claim for their rights and challenge all forms of rights violations that predispose them to further vulnerability, and Strengthened capacity of RACOBAO to fulfil its mandate in Lyantonde district.

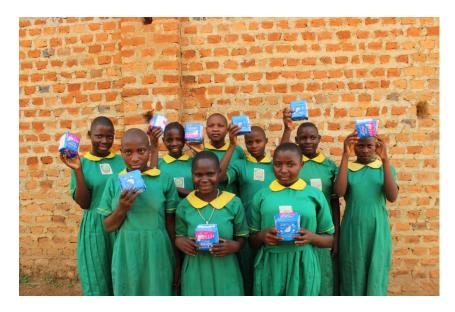
OTHER SMALL PROJECTS:

RACOBAO during the year implemented other small projects funded by individuals. These include:

Supporting small families with goats and food funded by Global Giving America.

Supporting six children with school fees funded by Anna Olafsdottir and Hrafnhildur of Iceland and Marsha and Michael of America.

Keeping young girls in school by providing sanitary pads funded by Global Giving America.



Some of the young girls of Kempega Primary School that are kept in school by providing sanitary pads to them.



Nakibelu Jackline was supported for Vocational Training by RACOBAO, after completion of her studies she was still given a sewing machine to help her start up a Small Income Generating business and she is now supporting her siblings.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Organisational Capacity Assessment at RACOBAO:

The gradual shift from a needs based approach into rights based programming coupled with new alliances with some strategic national partnerships have been cultivated to push RACOBAO into meaningful at district level as well as national level lobby and advocacy efforts. The OCA was a welcome tool to help define RACOBAO's capacity needs to dwell into this role

RACOBAO also foresaw significant changes in future occasioned by the impending shift out of Rakai/Lyantonde of DanChurchAid; RACOBAO's longest major donor. This shift is expected to be completed by 2018. The withdrawal of this funding partner will have strong implications on RACOBAO programs because DanChurchAid currently funds about 45% of RACOBAO operational budget annually. Therefore this capacity assessment will seek to underscore the internal mechanisms available to bridge a major funding gap that might be created.

The OCA specifically aimed at the following objectives;

To define the critical success factors that will influence RACOBAO's future performance and to identify and set relevant indicators for measuring and evaluating RACOBAO competency.

Help lead RACOBAO staff, board members, and the general assembly through structured discussions which will lead to development of performance indicators for measuring changes in organizational capacity.

Generate a pool of data which will lead RACOBAO into an action planning phase that provides the organization with an opportunity to set change strategies most appropriate to our environment in a bid to be more relevant to the community and become self-sustaining in the future.

Help generate key gaps in relation to RACOBAO capacity to survive independently without funding from DanChurchAid (DCA) and will help draft a transition plan to build internal capacities for fundraising and resource mobilization way ahead of 2018 which is the planned period for DCA phase out of Lyantonde and Rakai districts.

Provide continual learning processes that allow RACOBAO to monitor change, track the effectiveness of the capacity-building efforts, and integrate new learning methodologies as RACOBAO needs change and capabilities increase.

The information gathered through the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) processes will be used to draft a transition framework/plan that will be used to prepare RACOBAO staff, management, and Board in the eventual withdrawal of funding by DanChurchAid by 2018.

The Village Savings and Loans Associations are improving people's lives:

A story from Rosemary:

Namboze Rosemary aged 46 yrs is a person living with HIV/AIDS taking care of 05 children and a VSLA member found in Nkoote village, Wabusaana parish, Kinuka sub-county in Lyantonde district.

Rosemary is a hardworking lady with a positive attitude, she likes learning and discovering new things, always wished to be a good caring mother for her children but faced so many challenges including sickness and poverty.

Before the introduction of the VSLA methodology by RACOBAO to people in the communities, Rosemary lived in a poor house with her 05 children which her husband abandoned her with after finding out that she was HIV positive. She used to sell a local beer in one room of her house as an income generating activity and whatever she could get was always spent on the basic needs and school fees for her children. Later her poor house collapsed and that was the end of her local beer business and school for her children. She resorted to casual labor which included digging for her neighbors to earn a living. She could work from 7:00 am - 3:00pm a day and would be able to earn 2000 - 3000 USHS but all the money would be spent on basic needs.

When RACOBAO introduced the VSLA methodology that also targeted the HIV infected and affected households in its struggle to increase the household income of the vulnerable families, Rosemary was also reached by the RACOBAO Field Officer who encouraged her to join the VSLA that had a share value of 1000 on a weekly basis. She bought the idea of the introduced saving culture and decided to join the VSLA. Rosemary was able to save on a weekly basis and later came up with an idea of borrowing from the VSLA to resume her local beer business which she did.

The 1st loan was worth 20,000 USHS which she invested in a local beer business and was able to pay back the loan plus its interest in installment in a period of 03 months as well as saving on a weekly basis. She got a second loan worth 40,000 USHS which she was also able to pay back. Her 3rd loan that was worth 60,000 was invested on decoration materials which people in her community hire for parties. The profits she could get from the local beer business and the decoration material were invested into plastic chairs that she also hires along the decoration materials in which a single hire can generate her 80,000.

It is from the saving culture she started, the loans, the investments she made and hard work that have enabled Rosemary construct her own business house in Nkoote trading centre and her children get back to school. "The first time I joined VSLA, I had fear that I wouldn't be able to save on a weekly basis but from the skills and knowledge I acquired during the trainings from RACOBAO on the VSLA methodology, I confidently started saving from the little I had. Look at the investments from the VSLA. I am now a good caring mother for my children. I take this opportunity to thank RACOBAO for what I am, thank you RACOBAO, Rosemary said".

Turyasingure Felix and his sister get hope after the support from Icelandic Church Aid through RACOBAO.

Turyasingura Felix 25 years old is from Kyakyozi village, Mpumudde parish, Mpumudde subcounty in Lyantonde district. He lost his parents to HIV/AIDS in the 1990's when he was in his early teens. In the process of taking care of their parents who were bed ridden in terms of medication and basic needs, most of their household items and property were sold but unfortunately the parents never made it.

He was left with a young sister (Nahabwe Edvina 15 years) who is now in her senior two.

According to Felix, "before the death of our parents, we used to eat enough food, medication, beddings, clothing and could go to school but all that became history after their death and from then life became very hard because we dropped out of school and found challenges in getting our basic needs to an extent of having 01 or no meal a day".

They lived in a grass thatched house that was about to collapse and leaked whenever it rained. This made the life of these orphans so challenging as they had no money that would help them construct a new house because they were still young and the little money they could get from well-wishers was always spent on basic needs.

It was through the field activities carried out in their community by the RACOBAO field assistant that these orphans were reached. With support from the Icelandic Church Aid, the orphans were supported and were built a new house, kitchen, water tank and a toilet.

Being an elder brother, Felix resorted to being a community casual laborer in order to pay school fees for his sister Edvina and to earn a living for both him and his sister. "before getting the support from RACOBAO our old grass thatched house used to leak whenever it rained and it was about to collapse which always left us with sleepless nights in fear of losing our lives to a collapsing house when a sleep. Although we still face some challenges, our biggest challenge was shelter and now since we got the help from RACOBAO, we can sleep safely and

plan for the next day happily. Thank you RACOBAO because you have given us hope with an improved quality of life said Felix".

The impact of a Kitchen Garden on Peresican's life:

Tusasirwe Peresican is a 49 year old widow living with HIV/AIDS. She lives in Kanyeganyegye village, Mpumudde parish, Mpumudde sub-county in Lyantonde district. Peresican lost her husband in 2009 to HIV/AIDS who left her with 04 children (03 boys and 01 girl) of which 01 boy is HIV positive and others are negative.

Peresican began falling sick several times until she got an idea of going to Mpumudde Health Centre III to test for HIV. According to the results, she tested HIV positive and was enrolled on ART in 2012 after experiencing a low CD4 count which was accompanied by several cases of AIDS. Peresican was bed ridden for 05 months when she had just started ART but her condition improved steadily.

In 2013, Tusasirwe benefited from the Kitchen Garden project. The Community Based Trainer of RACOBAO helped her prepare a vegetable kitchen garden that included cabbages, carrots, green paper, nakati, dodo and egg plants after realizing that she was very weak due to poor nutrition. The purpose of preparing her a kitchen garden was to enable her get vegetables to boost her nutrition which was also a recommendation from the medical practitioners.

Peresican was successful with her kitchen garden because she was able to feed from the vegetables. The variety of vegetables helped to improve her nutrition hence; reducing the side effects of ARV drugs. Presently, Peresican is healthy, does farming and house work activities. "This kitchen garden has helped me a lot both economically and health wise because I no longer go to the market in search of vegetables since I have them in my kitchen garden which has helped me save my little money for other basic needs, improve my nutrition as well as for my children. I promise to continue taking care of my kitchen garden and add some other new types of vegetables in it because it saved my life" Tusasirwe said.

The Safe Sail Boat making it easy to reach people around the landing sites of L.Kacheera.

RACOBAO purchased a painted red and blue striped wooden boat roofed with an orange tarpaulin, 10 life jackets and a 9 horse power engine that makes it to move efficiently. This was because the fisher folk communities were had to be reached by health workers due to water transport difficulty especially on the landing sites surrounding Lake Kacheera where a majority of fisher folks mainly fisher men and prostitutes were having unprotected sex which led to the rampant spread of HIV/AIDS. The fisher folk communities were not able to access Anti-Retroviral Drugs since they had little knowledge about HIV/AIDS.

The boat is on the shores of Lake Kacheera, Lwanga parish, Kacheera sub county, Kooki County in Rakai district. It has often been used during out reaches to mobilize for fisher folk communities especially fisher men in the lake as they catch fish including other fisher folks on the 5 landing sites surrounding Lake Kacheera that include:Lwanga,Mukokote,Kabumba,....and...for HIV Counseling and Testing (HCT).

The safe sail boat has attracted so many fisher folks as they are able to sit in the boat and wear life jackets as they sail while the health workers sensitize them about the;

- Importance of HCT.
- Importance of condom use.
- Difference between HIV and AIDS.
- Modes of HIV transmission.
- The myths about HIV&AIDS
- Sexuality and life skills.
- Stigma and discrimination
- Cultural and religious value of marriage to mention but a few.

The fisher folks have turned up in large numbers compared to the past 5 years for the services mentioned above and there has been capacity building among them who serve as volunteers and counselors to PLHIV by encouraging them to access and adhere to Anti-Retroviral drugs.

The use of condoms among the fisher folks is an increasing demand that they have many outlets created where they access them to save themselves from the HIV/AIDS scourge. Due to frequent urban lake migration, the fisher folks request for consistent trainings provided by RACOBAO staff with the help of Village Health Team every month.

Child rights article (Ronald).

Fug article (Achilies).

Goats article (Gordon).

Other achievements

- The is a reported increase in the number of people joining Village Savings and Loans Associations giving us a hope that people have learnt the saving culture and that in future they will be able to meet their basic needs and run their families independently.
- There has been an increase in a number of men going for HIV counseling and testing and the health centers and the outreaches conducted.
- Constructed 03 houses, 03 latrines, 03 water tanks to the most vulnerable members of the community.
- There is a reported increase in awareness about the child rights in the communities basing on the reports received by the duty bearers from people in their communities about child rights violations.
- Supported 25 AIDS patients on ARVs with nutritious food staffs

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

RACOBAO received 02 visitors from Pharmacists without Boarders i.e. Mr. Lars and Mrs. Lars that had come to monitor the work done by RACOBAO in its project activities of supporting AIDS patients on ARVS to adhere to treatment in the sub-counties of Kinuka and Mpumudde.



The Pharmacists without Boarders Sweden representative Mr. Lars and Mrs. Lars (left) during a monitoring visit to RACOBAO.

Staff news

During the year, RACOBAO appointed 02 new staff members i.e. the Documentation Officer Ms. Babirye Josephine and a Community Based Monitor Mr. Wasswa Samuel.



A group photo showing the current RACOBAO staff.

We are grateful to the following donors who gave us the resources to help us implemented several projects in the year 2011. Below is a list of donors and their contributions;

Name of donor	Country	Amount Given (UGX)
Dan Church Aid (DCA)/Danida	Denmark	314,433,812
Icelandic church Aid (ICA)	Iceland	8,874,625
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)	America	102,964,045
Pharmacists without Borders (FuG)	Sweden	115,145,000
Global Giving (GG)	America	677,029
Open Door Project Uganda (ODPU)	America	6,187,500
UWEZO	Tanzania/Uganda	10,287,200
Marsha and Michael	America	3,958,790
Children in Africa(CIA/BiA)	Denmark	49,044,400
HURINET		18,786,891
LWF/Icelandic church Aid		151,059,809
Civil Society Fund		293,360,498
Independent Development Fund.		74,989,625
Lutheran World Relief		12,597,750
Other Donors Local		200,000
Reserve Income		3,070,000
TOTAL:		1,165,618,974

Challenges for the year:

- The growing number of people who need ARVS but cannot access them due lack of transport to the health centers and lack of food to accompany the drugs.
- Some Negative cultural practices like marrying off young girls a below the age of 15 in the pastoralist communities is still a big challenge.
- RACOBAO is still challenged by lack of a permanent office. RACOBAO acquired four acres land from West Buganda Diocese for construction of an office. This has not been possible due to lack of resources. The organization spends 10 million Uganda Shillings annually for office. If we had our own offices, this money would go into supporting program work.

PICTORIAL:



Molly Payne from U.S.A, Quest University of Canada conducting field work activities, she was an intern student at RACOBAO from October 2013 to January 2014.



RACOBAO conducted a 02 days camp for orphans from Child Headed Households.



The L.C.V Chairperson of Rakai district launched a Safe Sail Boat that will help health workers carry out HIV/AIDS Counselling and Testing outreacheas on the landing sites of Lake Kijanebarora and Lake Kacheera.

RACOBAO Board Members



Rtd. Bishop Kamya- Chairman



Dr. Margaret Nakakeeto - Vice chairperson



Fr. Christopher Mutsinzi- Member



Mr. Ambrose Tebyasa- Member/Advocate and Commissioner of Oath.

Key Management Staff of RACOBAO as of December 2013

- 1- Haq Makumbi Bugembe Director
- 2- Vincent Mayega Deputy Director / Head of Programs
- 3- Lillian Kasozi Head of Finance and Administration
- 4- Goretti Namubiru Accounts Assistant
- 5- Vincent Mayega Livelihoods Officer
- 6- Achilles Wasswa HIV and AIDS Support Officer
- 7- Babirye Josephine Documentation Officer