

# **RURAL ACTION COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION (RACOB AO)**

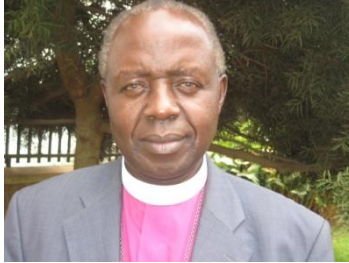
*“.....Bringing hope to the community”*

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2014**



*A community member accessing HIV Counseling and Testing services during an outreach held at Lwamaggwa trading center. This was among the activities undertaken by RACOB AO in 2014.*

**STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD:**



**Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel K. S. Kanya**

**WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR:**



**Mr. Haq Makumbi**

## **ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:**

### **Vision:**

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

### **Mission:**

RACOBABO 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 2014:**

- 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 Sembabule 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.

## **PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY RACOBABO FOR THE YEAR 2014:**

### **Strengthening Community Responses against HIV/AIDS, GBV, and Discrimination (SCAAD) funded by Dan Church Aid operating in Lyantonde District for the period 2012-2015.**

Under the above project, RACOBABO continued her gradual shift from implementing needs based projects to focusing on rights based programming through empowering the most vulnerable community members to become confident to challenge situations that put them at risk of HIV/AIDS. This has been done by working with Religious leaders, cultural leaders, community health structures to highlight challenges in service delivery . Furthermore, through formation of Community Based Monitoring groups (CBMES) and conducting community Barazas, duty bearers have been held accountable by rights holders where service delivery has been poor. Furthermore under this project, economic empowerment through mobilising PLHIV networks, OVC and other vulnerable groups to join Village Savings and Loans Associations has improved the standard of living of the vulnerable groups and enhanced rights holders' participation in project activities. As such, they have gained more confidence through economic empowerment to challenge poor service delivery in the district. Therefore continued support under this project will bring about improved service delivery through advocacy.

Below are pictorials for the project.

## **The Household Water and Sanitation Improvement Project funded by Icelandic Church Aid (ICA) -2014**

The water and sanitation project is funded by Icelandic Church aid targeting households affected by HIV and AIDS in Lyantonde and Rakai District. During the year 2014, 12 houses (07 for OVC and 05 for PLHIV) were constructed in the sub-counties of Kinuuka, Kaliiro and Kasagama in Lyantonde District. Each household received a house, pit latrine and bath room, a water tank, kitchen and domestic utensils.

It is estimated that a total of 18,000 households of OVC and PLHIV in Lyantonde and Rakai district are living in poor housing conditions (**Mildmay, Lyantonde and Rakai OVC report, July 2014**). It is expected that, with continued support the number of people living in poor housing conditions will improve.

***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 RACOBABO 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, RACOB AO 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 service providers, Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system of RACOB AO 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 Borders, Sweden** operating in Lyantonde District, targeting Orphans and Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

The project aims at; Strengthening 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 RACOB AO 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, RACOB AO 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 RACOB AO to fulfil its mandate in Lyantonde district.

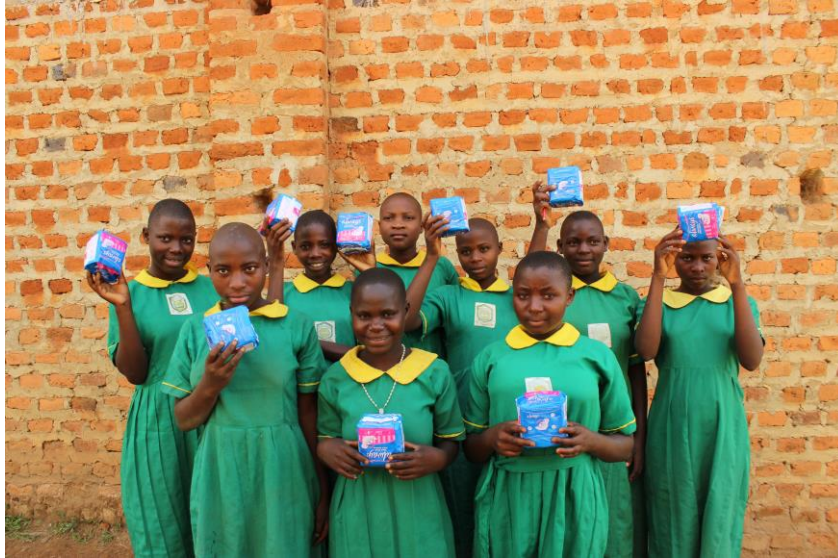
#### **OTHER SMALL PROJECTS:**

RACOB AO 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 RACOBABO, 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 RACOBABO:**

RACOBABO conducted an OCA from ...../.../..... To ...../...../..... Since 2008, RACOBABO had never gone through a comprehensive capacity assessment exercise to help identify its strength and weaknesses. This is always aimed at helping the organization focus itself into the future.

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 RACOBABO into meaningful at district level as well as national level lobby and advocacy efforts. The OCA was a welcome tool to help define RACOBABO's capacity needs to dwell into this role

RACOBABO also foresaw significant changes in future occasioned by the impending shift out of Rakai/Lyantonde of DanChurchAid; RACOBABO's longest major donor. This shift is expected to be completed by 2018. The withdrawal of this funding partner will have strong implications on RACOBABO programs because DanChurchAid currently funds about 45% of RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO's future performance and to identify and set relevant indicators for measuring and evaluating RACOBABO competency.

Help lead RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO to monitor change, track the effectiveness of the capacity-building efforts, and integrate new learning methodologies as RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO for what I am, thank you RACOBABO, Rosemary said”.**

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

Turyasingura Felix 25 years old is from Kyakyozi village, Mpumudde parish, Mpumudde sub-county 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO, we can sleep safely and**

**plan for the next day happily. Thank you RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO 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.**

RACOBABO 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 RACOBABO staff with the help of Village Health Team every month.

[Child rights article \(Ronald\).](#)

[Fug article \(Achilies\).](#)

[Goats article \(Gordon\).](#)



## Other achievements

- There 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

RACOBABO received 02 visitors from Pharmacists without Borders i.e. Mr. Lars and Mrs. Lars that had come to monitor the work done by RACOBABO 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 Borders Sweden representative Mr. Lars and Mrs. Lars (left) during a monitoring visit to RACOBABO.**

### **Staff news**

During the year, RACOBAAO 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 RACOBAAO staff.***

### **Funding sources:**

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;

<b>Name of donor</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Amount Given (UGX)</b>
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
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>1,165,618,974</b>

**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.
- RACOBABO is still challenged by lack of a permanent office. RACOBABO 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 RACOB AO from October 2013 to January 2014.**



**RACOB AO 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 outreaches on the landing sites of Lake Kijanebarora and Lake Kacheera.**

## **RACOB AO Board Members**



**Rtd. Bishop Kamyā- Chairman**



**Dr. Margaret Nakakeeto - Vice chairperson**



**Fr. Christopher Mutsinzi- Member**



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

### **Key Management Staff of RACOBABO 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