



Concordia Volunteer
Abroad Program

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Executive Summary

This report gives summary of CVAP activities in Uganda in 2009. The content includes information and feedback on activities as well as opportunities, challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations. The performance as indicated in this report is benchmarked on the planned activities as stipulated out in the strategic plan (2008 – 2011) and the annual work plans

CVAP Uganda country office would like to thank its local partners in Uganda particularly SOS children's village Uganda for the blossoming partnership and networking that enabled smooth flow of CVAP activities in the last year. Special thanks to CVAP Canada office for the technical assistance and timely release of funds and importantly for facilitating students of Concordia to travel for volunteer work in Uganda; their contribution to the initial success of the program is invaluable.

Collective thanks to all students volunteers that showed tremendously the zeal, commitment and energy to realize the planned activities and to every one whom in one or the other made a contribution towards CVAP success this year, 2009.

Introduction

Activity Profile in Gulu.

Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program (CVAP) is a non-profit organization incorporated under the Quebec Provincial Laws in the city of Montreal, Canada. Created by students at Concordia University of Canada, CVAP's purpose is to create avenues for students to provide volunteer services in targeted countries of the developing world particularly Africa.

In Uganda, CVAP had a formal partnership with SOS Children's Villages which is a humanitarian international organisation committed to protecting the increasing number of orphaned, destitute, abandoned, neglected and abused children who are exposed to the insecurity and vulnerability of life with no parent or family to support them. Through its work in Gulu, CVAP strives to realize its vision: ***an empowered and united community, which is developed and self sustaining.***

CVAP Administrative Staff Structure and with their Roles

Director of Operations

- Accounting officer of CVAP & head of Uganda country office
- Provide management & supervisory oversight to program functions.
- Coordinates administration & policy related activities.
- Public relations, external communications and resources mobilization
- Staffs recruitment functions
- Resources mobilization & advocacy.
- Building Strategic partnerships for program enhancement and networking.
- Coordination of policy & institutional capacity building functions

Program Coordinator

- Responsible for public relations, together with the Director Of Operations
- Coordination of policy & institutional capacity building functions
- Technical assistance and supervision of staffs below the position
- Program development & resources mobilization

Administrative Assistant

- Provide management & supervisory oversight to program functions.
- Coordinates administration & policy related activities.
- Public relations, external communications and resources mobilization
- Resources mobilization & advocacy.
- Building Strategic partnerships for program enhancement and networking.
- Coordination of policy & institutional capacity building functions

Student Volunteers

- Planning, coordinating, implementation, monitoring, Reporting and evaluation of program activities
- A total of 33 students volunteered this year, from Concordia University in 2 **Groups:**
- Group 1 had 16 student volunteers
- Group 2 had 17 student volunteers

Local Volunteers

CVAP operated with 7 local volunteer for four months.

- For field support to the organization
- Planning, coordinating, implementation, monitoring, Reporting and evaluation of program activities
- Providing field support to student volunteers

Support Staff:

- Provides Daily administrative & social support to CVAP

Cook (2)

Driver (2)

Gatekeeper (2)

Orientation

Objective: To induct Student Volunteers with knowledge and an understanding of participatory community work

Program orientation provided on the first week of each group of students that came to Uganda this year. The orientation program was done to prepare the student to be able to undertake their activities here in Gulu appropriately and included the following activities.

- CVAP project overviews were given to the students to give a clear picture what CVAP activities are and how they are conducted.
- Narration of Culture and norms of the host community. This was done to enable the student do their work in Gulu while observing a certain lifestyle deemed important to the community and so that their work is highly appreciated and respected.
- Educational field trip to Fort Baker, an important historical site. This was intended to give the students a day away and relax after a long week of orientation and most importantly, was to bring them closer to their local counterparts.
- Scavenger hunt. This was done to get the students aware of the important places they may need during their stay in Gulu.
- Visits to partner organizations. This was done to introduce the students to partner organization where they would be working and or visiting on official reasons.

Activities implemented in the year 2009

Layibi child mothers' income generating activities

Objective: To promote Layibi child mothers beads initiative through finding market and lobbying for assistance to enhance their income and make them self sustaining.

This project was initiated to create opportunities for child mothers to engage in fruitful and income generating activities that would enable them sustain their families and other project activities. The specific objective is to create income generating opportunities for the Layibi Mothers through the sale of handmade paper bead jewelry.

CVAP Students did the following with Layibi Young Mothers.

- CVAP students advertised and market their beads through a hosted sale at a public place. 1,200,000 UGX were got from a day sale in June
- CVAP students gave income management training to the young mothers group.
- Solar cooker training and materials were also provided to supplement their energy needs for cooking.
- Loan for income generation were provided to the young mothers. 6 mothers received this loan/grant to enhance their businesses.
- The students found that the Layibi Mothers collective was greatly depleted from last year, and that the participation level of the mothers was low. The group was given several options to continue accessing CVAP support, however, they chose to decline this offer. As a result the partnership is considered closed for the time being.

Solar Cooker Project

Objectives: to provide the locals with a cleaner, healthier and cheaper alternative means for cooking.

This year 2009, CVAP introduced a solar cooker program intended to benefit a large cross-section of the Gulu community. The solar cooker was implemented after an intensive research

that concluded that quite a good number of household cook using charcoals which is hazardous to respiratory health and the environment. The project was implemented through demonstrations and trainings to several women group including SOS FSP care givers and the Layibi young mothers group.

A total of 5 workshops were organized to train people on how to construct and manage and the solar cooker structure. All trainings were successfully conducted and the system is expected to function effectively in the dry season, from December to March.

Support to Partners

Objective: *To support and engage CVAP partners into activities that change and improve the lives of the community and the vulnerable groups of people.*

Sport Outreach Ministry (SOM)

CVAP have been working with SOM since 2008 and have supported a number of project initially started by SOM. This year 2009 CVAP continued to support SOM in the following ways.

- This year CVAP engaged in one major activity at SOM and managed to build a low cost permanent house to a vulnerable family initially supported by SOM. The two room house was built between June and August.
- CVAP students also provided basic household items to a family of an HIV+ mother to enable her improve her life and income.
- CVAP students organized a beads exhibition to market product locally made a group of women in Koro. Overall 1,113,000 UGX was raised in a day. This was held on the 13th August 2009

*CVAP student's
constructing a family
house in Koro*



St Jude Children's Home.

St Jude children's home is a non profit catholic organization committed to providing comprehensive care to orphans, abandoned, and vulnerable children in Gulu. CVAP started working with St Jude this year, 2009, and has facilitated the center in the following ways below.

- CVAP provided 100 mosquito nets to be used in the center. This was aimed to reduce the rate of malaria infection amongst the children at the orphanage. Mosquito net structures were bought and hanged up on the wall.
- CVAP also provided two medical check up's and treatment to the children at the centre through SOS clinics and Joint clinical center Gulu. CVAP decided to bring a team of medical personnel and a laboratory on-site in order to assess the health condition of the children with disabilities, for whom transportation is a difficulty. Many of them were receiving medical treatment for the first time. This team was composed of medical officers and doctors from Gulu Referral Hospital and SOS Children's Village clinic.
- The exercise was undertaken in a period of two days. Medical check-ups were done for 29 disabled children, 21 non-disabled children (siblings of disabled) and 6 care-takers on August 1st and 2nd 2009.
- CVAP students also provided and made medical files for all 56 individuals at the consolation site. This was a very important step in keeping track of the medical records of the children and their caregivers.
- CVAP also acquired medical supplies and basic medication through donations from NGOs (NUMAT, GULU Hospital and the Mercy Project). Various donors were contacted and provided CVAP with supplies through NGO outreach.
- Sponsored hygiene workshop and hands washing stations/equipments. CVAP bought hand washing equipments and had workshops to teach the kids how to manage the hand washing equipments.

- CVAP provided agricultural material like gloves, sprayers, and seeds to improve small scale agriculture and students and local volunteers participated in the agricultural work at the centre. Variety of food crops were demonstrated on few plots at the center. This included vegetable and fruits.
- CVAP Provided Mattresses for the babies' home and consolation site within St Jude. Some kids at the center were sleeping on beds without the soft cover of mattresses.
- Some students helped in teaching the younger children at St Jude daycare and school.
- Family tracing programs were design to be followed up by other partners.
- CVAP started up a basic clinic at the center and lobbied for drugs to be used there. The Mercy Project donated money to purchase drugs and Rotary Club of Gulu donated Vitamin B supplements.

CVAP handing mattresses to St. Judes Children's home



NUMAT: Northern Uganda Malaria and Tuberculosis.

NUMAT is a USAID funded organization working in Northern Uganda to support victims of HIV/AIDS as well as stop the prevalence of the pandemic. CVAP became NUMAT working partner this year 2009 and has jointly organized two different health campaigns with NUMAT.

- In June this year CVAP organized an HIV/AIDS sports gala sponsored by NUMAT, with onsite voluntary testing and counseling. HIV/AIDS information workshops were also held at the same venue. Many health partners were brought on board to take different roles.

- In August CVAP organized an HIV/AIDS music drama and dance (MDD) festival sponsored by NUMAT. Six drama groups participated in the drama and three partner's organization were brought on board to make the event successful.

SOS Children's Village

CVAP have worked with SOS since its first year of operation in Uganda. This year CVAP continued to support SOS in a number of ways as below.

- CVAP students and volunteers contributed to a resource centre at SOS. This is aimed at promoting literacy amongst the children at the village and community children and youth who might need to access information from the library.
- CVAP students and volunteers also provided 6 livestock (goats) to vulnerable families in the SOS FSP program. This was a continuation of a livestock program started in 2009 to improve the livelihood of the FSP caregivers.
- CVAP students also help in Data entry at the clinic and provided computer programming to enable easy clinical data management.
- CVAP students Constructed a compost box to provide compost manure from daily household waste for agricultural improvement at the fields in SOS.
- CVAP completed a house that was started by an FSP beneficiary in Bardege by purchasing iron sheets, 1 door and 2 windows and paying for labor work.
- Facilitated SOS African Child day program by donating a total amount of 200,000 UGX to facilitate the child matching.
- Provided a grant to the SOS, FSP loan project. This was to increase the money that can be borrowed by the loan members. (FSP beneficiaries)
- Conducted solar cooker workshop to SOS beneficiaries. Several workshops on solar cooker were undertaken with SOS FSP mothers. This was done to provide cheap alternative source of energy for cooking.



A house belonging to one of the FSP caregivers, CVAP contributed the roof, doors, and windows.

Networking: Engaging with other non-governmental organizations

Objective: To support and engage CVAP partners into activities that change and improve the lives of the community and the vulnerable groups of people.

- Create new and strengthen old partnerships with local organizations to reinforce the relationship between CVAP, CVAP partners and other NGO, CBO and governmental organization and ensure sustainability.
- Assess and approach potential sponsors through proposal writing and attending numerous meetings
- Pick up donations and distribute appropriately to CVAP partner organizations

CVAP had a NGO outreach team whose work was to approach various NGOs asking for resource that CVAP can utilize to support its beneficiaries. This NGO outreach team managed to contact a number of Non Governmental Organizations who provided supports to CVAP beneficiaries.

Through the NGO Outreach Program, CVAP received donations from the following organizations and distributed them to its partner organizations that have direct link to the communities in need.

UNICEF Donated educational materials; 5 school in-a-box kits each weighing 48kg and 3 replenishment kits. These kits include school supplies for children and school materials for teachers. They also donated 2 recreational kits.

- SOS Children village receive 1 and ½ replenishment boxes. Most of the school supplies donated will be distributed to the children of the FSP program and some will be kept for the resource centre and some school material should be donated to the SOS school
- St- Jude Children’s Home received 3 school in-a-box kits, 1 replenishment kit, and 1 recreational kit. The school supplies will be distributed to the children in need. Classroom material such as blackboard paint, maps, clocks and chalk will be used to enhance the classroom appearance and assist the quality of teaching.

GULU Hospital Donated the following medication; Paracetamol (1 tin), Albendazole (1 tin), Vitamin A (2 tin), Metranidazole (1 tin). Most of this medication was prescribed at the St-Jude’s medical check up day by the doctors and the remaining had been stored until a nurse was hired onsite.

NUMAT donated 60 HIV determining test and Stat packs for HIV tests and 25 Para check test for malaria testing. All of the HIV determining test and Para check test have been used and the remainder of the Stat packs will be re-sent to NUMAT

SSUBI donated paint. The paint was donated to SOS and to be donated to FSP beneficiaries. Out of the organizations that the Outreach team contacted, some could not respond immediately and they provided a commitment to donate or help in various ways. Below are commitment made by organizations that will be followed up.

Gulu Disabled Person Union: Has committed themselves to follow up with GYDA and the Ministry of Health to get the wheelchairs donated to the children of St-Jude Children Orphanage.

AVSI Foundation: A staff of AVSI, a physiotherapist, went to the consolation site at St. Jude and assessed all the children with physical disabilities, and made a report for further follow up.

Gulu District NGO Forum: Agreed the assist SOS to get a computer donated for their resource center.

Rotary Club: Agreed to follow up with the ministry of health to donate wheelchairs.

Contact was also made with Rotary Club Gulu to contribute towards St Jude’s medical needs and plan is underway.

Challenges/gaps

Budgetary Constraints

The rising cost of food and fuel was a serious constraint on the budget. A large chunk of program funds were unnecessarily spent on accommodation in Kampala, transportation and food for the students, meaning that the program's Youth and Recreation projects suffered most as a result of these constraints. However, volunteers outsourced from partner organizations to meet project goals.

Working with SOS:

In particular, working within SOS' operations alone would not provide enough work for students and local volunteers during the summer months. The functioning of the Family strengthening Program has been particularly frustrating, since the administration and staff for this program seem to lack enthusiasm and commitment towards their work.

Involvement of local Volunteers in All Aspect of the projects:

Local volunteers have proved to be important to the program, but they are not being used to their full potential. Student volunteers have not been encouraged to involve the local volunteers in every aspect of the project, including those particular aspects, which may take a bit more time for them.

CVAP received fantastic feedback from its partners and the community that it worked closely with. Friendships have been created between the local volunteers and the student volunteers and between CVAP and the community members here in Gulu. All these were possible because of a committed and trained staff, well coordinated and well planned orientation and briefing on the culture and the norms of the people here in Gulu.

SOS being our major partner recognized and appreciated the students' involvements in their programs. SOS children's villages awarded the student with certificates of appreciation in recognition of their support to the children's village in Gulu.

St. Jude's Children's home appreciated the students' participation in their program, and stated in their appreciation letter that the relationship this summer changed the face of their community.

Debriefing, Recommendations and Conclusion

Following the completion of program activities in Gulu, each group returned to Kampala to participate in a day-long debriefing retreat with the purpose of:

- (1) Evaluating the program's strengths and weaknesses, and recommending improvements;
- (2) Preparing the students for re-adaptation to life in Montreal after participating in such a program; and
- (3) Ensuring that each group ends the program in a strong and unified note. The retreat marked the official end of each group's participation in the program. The following recommendations were mentioned:

Recommendation:

- Change the length of the program to a four – month stay, with no more than twenty volunteers.
- Continue to create links and partnerships with other organizations.
- Pay increment for some staff (based on a survey of acceptable salary levels in the Gulu area)
- CVAP should get a motor cycle to assist the office in Gulu; this would help minimize use of the vans for small errands hence cut fuel costs.
- Recruit local volunteers to fill in during the time students are in Canada, this will sustain the program for the local community.

Conclusion

Overall, CVAP program 2009 within Gulu was a great success thanks to the team work of all who participated in the program for the benefit of the beneficiaries. Within a short period of time, volunteer's engagement with people within Gulu Municipality contributed immensely to the development which was demonstrated by hard-work, gaining an incredible amount of knowledge, and ensuring transfer of resources to the people who need.

CVAP student volunteers and their local counterparts do commend St. Jude Children's home, NUMAT and various organizations/partners who supported them during their program work in Gulu, as well as appreciate them for all the contributions they continue to offer to vulnerable children and youths.

CVAP has a very good reputation with partner organization as well as other multi-national agencies that managed to support beneficiaries with material and financial donations.

Budget Line for the Recreation and Community Outreach Programs, 2009

This table illustrates the total funds that were budgeted for the specific program 2009. They do not reflect a budget for the period this financial report covers.

Table 1.

Item	CN \$	US \$	UGX
Recreation Program	8,512	6,977	13,950,000
Community Outreach	28,243	23,150	46,300,000
Totals	36,755	30,127	60,250,000

Exchange Rate: 1 US \$ = 1.22 CN \$ and 1 US \$ = 2000 UGX

The Expenditure Sheet

This table illustrates the total funds spent between January 2009 and September 2009 on the *Youth and Recreation Program* and the *Community Outreach Program*.

Table 2.

Item	CN \$	US \$	UGX
Recreation Program	3,083.5	2,527	5,054,167
Community Outreach	32,787.5	26,875	53,750,000
Totals	35,871	29,402.	58,804,167

Exchange Rate: 1 US \$ = 1.22 CN \$ and 1 US \$ = 2000 UGX