Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) project National Closure Event

Kampala, March 20, 2018
Background:
Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) project has ended after seven years of activities in 35 districts; the national closure event was a great moment to reflect on the work done during these years together with development partners, policy makers, researchers, OVC practitioners and beneficiaries. 300 people participated at the closure event.

Focus of the event:
- To present key program successes, challenges and lessons towards improving information for the global OVC community of practice.
- Delve into the change at beneficiary level including the change for implementing partners, districts and staff of the activity.
- Share results of the AVSI Furaha Graduation and Resilience Model including a three-year panel study on program participants.
- Demonstrate and share the Collaborative Learning and Adaptation experiences.
- Exhibit activity results through various beneficiary creations.
- Showcase the publications developed and tested during the activity implementation.

The event was also a chance to exhibit and share materials developed from the SCORE experiences: manuals, Standard Operating Procedures, change story booklets.

Beneficiaries also exhibited their crafts at the event.

Experiences through SCORE project:

Massimo Zucca - on behalf of AVSI Foundation Country Representative, John Makoha.

“SCORE just demonstrated that resilience can indeed be achieved by the poorest and most vulnerable households. I thank AVSI Foundation together with its consortium partners and local economic partners for making change in the lives of children in more than 34,000 families.

Our gratitude to the U.S. Government, through USAID for the chance of a better life for the people of Uganda.

I also thank the Uganda Government through it’s Ministries and Local Governments for a great collaboration.

AVSI Foundation is committed to promoting the dignity of all individuals, especially those at the last mile.”

Colette Marcellin - Deputy Head of Mission, US Embassy in Uganda.

“SCORE provided us: staff, beneficiaries, partners, with a learning opportunity. The project has become a reference for AVSI projects worldwide.

Our gratitude to the U.S. Government, through USAID for the chance of a better life for the people of Uganda.

I thank AVSI Foundation together with its consortium partners and local economic partners for making change in the lives of children in more than 34,000 families.”

Giampaolo Silvestri - Secretary General, AVSI Foundation

“...The SCORE project assisted 34,000 households to move from vulnerability to resilience, and the journey towards resilience was exciting.

SCORE encouraged change in all actors. It offered a range of options, which tested people’s free will to grow.

And seven years later, we see long lasting change and we hear real stories of people managing their future.

I am aware of the achievements the SCORE project has made in the lives of deprived people in Uganda - more than 125,000 individuals are now living a better life out of USAID-funded SCORE project: I particularly thank the US Government for their generosity towards Uganda.”

Hon. Florence Kiyingi - Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs
Seven years of SCORE in Uganda

Goal:
To decrease the vulnerability of moderately and critically vulnerable children (VC) and their households.

- Objective 1: Socio-economic strengthening
- Objective 2: Food security and nutrition
- Objective 3: Child protection and legal services
- Objective 4: Family strengthening and access to critical services

SCORE Approach
- Multi-sectoral
- Family-centered approach
- Commitment to “fit the project to the people”
- Use of evidence and robust Monitoring and Evaluation System
- Capacity building and “Graduation model”

Menu of Interventions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic strengthening</th>
<th>Food security and nutrition</th>
<th>Child protection and legal services</th>
<th>Family strengthening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Savings and Loan Associations</td>
<td>Farmer field school</td>
<td>Child friendly school model</td>
<td>Referrals to access critical services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market oriented training, Community skills training, Financial literacy</td>
<td>Urban horticulture and kitchen gardens</td>
<td>Home visits</td>
<td>Parenting skills training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship training</td>
<td>Interactive learning sessions</td>
<td>Life skills training</td>
<td>Community dialogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market intelligence and linkages</td>
<td>Cooking demonstrations</td>
<td>Legal clinics</td>
<td>Community dialogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Chain Development</td>
<td>Radio spot messages</td>
<td>Identification and referral of protection cases</td>
<td>Psychosocial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkages</td>
<td>Nutrition learning sessions</td>
<td>Birth registration</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCORE is leaving its partners stronger:

"...at first we were not doing well with our finance policies but now we have a system in place. We adopted to use SCORE’s SMS Tool and our structures are now stronger."
Community Volunteer Initiative for Development (CVOID)

"...throughout the implementation of the SCORE project, Meeting Point has become known to stakeholders in the district and several development partners have invited us for consultation and coordination meetings. They have also showed interest in working with the groups we are supporting."
Group Interview with Meeting Point Kitgum Project Officers, December 2017

HIV Status:

- 70% of beneficiaries know their status.
- Total HIV positive beneficiaries in current caseload followed up monthly for treatment and adherence support: Adherence: 97% - 1,474
- On treatment: 99% - 1,505
- Followed: 1,528

Socio-economic strengthening

- Advanced Business Skills Training: 2,468 Individuals | 1,605 Households
- Market-oriented Skills: 16,350 Individuals | 11,396 Households
- Community Skills: Individuals 11,010 | Households 7,964
- Selective Planning and Management: Individuals 14,904 | Households 10,807
- Households linked to markets: Individuals 4,909 | Households 3,884

- 1,615 VSLA with 37,200 members have saved USD 3,889,055 and loaned USD 4,842,994.
- Average savings USD 108
- 5,349 youth (58% female) were enrolled into apprenticeship, (6%) are gainfully employed or own businesses following completion.

Food security and nutrition

- Agronomic Skills: Individuals 17,426 | Households 11,371
- Behaviour Change communication: Individuals 30,145 | Households 16,871
- Backyard gardening/Urban horticulture: Individuals 14,618 | Households 10,594
- Maltreated children referred: Individuals 932 | Households 756
- Nutrition Dialogue: Individuals 26,053 | Households 14,871
- Change in Food security and nutrition status: 83% of the beneficiaries.
- Consumption of a balanced diet (3 times a week): from 48% to 92%.
- Consumption of 3 meals a day: from 57% to 99%.

- 7 to 9.5 months increment in the number of months households have adequate food in a year. 51.6% to 13.5% reduction in the incidence of malnutrition.

Child protection and Legal services

- Local structures trained: 1,474
- Junior Farmer Field School: Individuals 966 | Households 657
- Interactive Learning session: Individuals 966 | Households 657
- Referrals for Protection: Individuals 25,335 | Households 9,846
- Child Friendly School: Individuals 7,642 | Households 4,466
- Improved vulnerability status of Child Protection and Legal Service: 56%.
- Child Labour reduced: from 15% to 4%
- Child abuse reduced: from 38% to 6%
- Drug abuse from 7% to 2%
- Knowledge of where to seek legal support: from 78% to 99%.

...It brings joy to me to see people excited to exit a project because they are now able to send their children to school, they can afford nutritious meals, and they now live in happy homes.
Results of the graduation and resilience model:

- Enrolled 28,736 households.
- 3,934 households (13.6%) Lost to follow up due to urban setting/fishing communities.
- 3,041 (10.5%) Institutional care.
- 7,550 (25%) transitioned to Better Outcomes and 1,385 to Bulambuli and Namayingo District Local Governments.
- 12,416 households graduated (83.5% of all active enrolled 14,876).
- 1,075 (11%) households Not graduated – to Transition.
- 75% of graduated households resilient.

Conclusion:

- People however vulnerable, when engaged meaningfully can make great contributions to their own development.
- Design and tailor interventions to needs and resources.
- Involve program participants in defining their own journey to development.
- Multi-sectoral programs can deliver great changes.
- Shocks are inevitable - Integrate environment and risk management in all resilience-based programs.
- The time to work with beneficiaries is now while the project runs as these interventions will have a huge impact on resilience of families.
- Prevalence of some demographic characteristics may affect transitions in vulnerability; orphanhood, child headed, elderly headed households, disability, chronic illness.
- Interventions such as savings groups may continue post graduation.

Other outcomes:

- Surface water as source of drinking water reduced from 45% to 22%.
- Households without latrines: from 21% to 5%.
- Children enrolled in school: from 76% to 86%.
- Absenteeism from school: from 44% to 9%.

DREAMS

- SCORE worked with 6,000 girls under the DREAMS activity. The project assisted the teenage girls with the formation of savings groups, provision of financial literacy, psychosocial support, life skills and parenting trainings.

Other outcomes:

- Early Child Development: 2,498 Individuals.
- Early Child Community Play Groups: 1,972 Individuals.
Anaka Primary School in Nwoya District Northern Uganda perform during the event. Dance and songs from Child Heroes Early Childhood Group Implementing partner awards ceremony.

30 children congregate in a community playgroup to PLAY and LEARN. They were registered and supported to access birth cards. Their caregivers were supported with apprenticeship skills, are part of a savings group, and they have increased training in parenting and life skills. Caregivers also received messages on how to improve the nutrition of their children.

Anaka Primary School in Nwoya District Northern Uganda perform during the event. The change SCORE brought in families in Uganda will last for a long time.

The 80 year old school with 1,300 learners (670 female, 630 male) was started by Roman Catholic Missionaries. The school has seen remarkable increase in enrolment, especially of the girl-child since it began practicing the Good School approach. Anaka was recently among the best performing schools in the region’s music, dance and drama competitions. Thanks to the school’s drama club and protagonist teacher, Samuel Obita.