



Stepping up nutrition interventions in 62 districts

Supporting uptake of Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods and smallholder farmers adoption of improved farming technologies

Production for Improved Nutrition



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RECO INDUSTRIES



Severe cases of malnutrition among children are treated with Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods and parents supported to provide a balanced diet. (Left, Claudia, a formerly malnourished child with her father.)

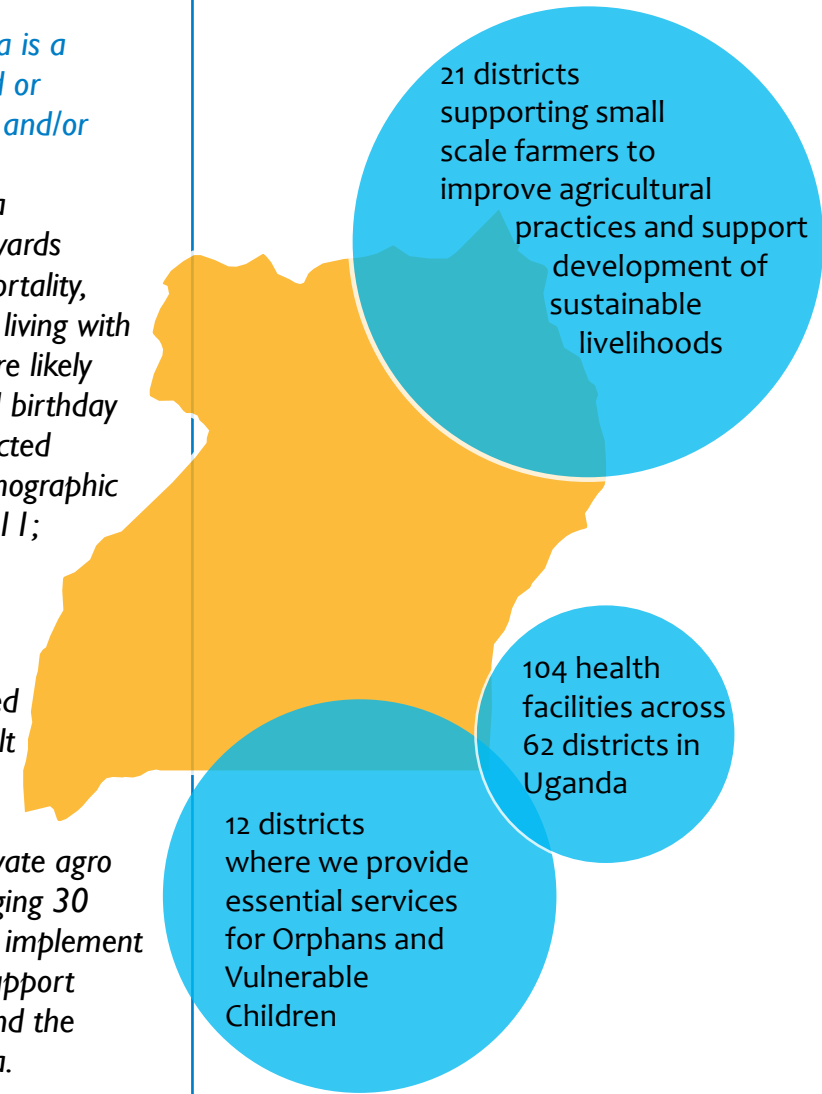
Malnutrition in Uganda is a consequence of limited or inadequate preventive and/or corrective actions.

While malnutrition is a leading contributor towards child morbidity and mortality, malnourished children living with HIV are five times more likely to die before their 2nd birthday compared to non-infected children. (Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2011; World Food Program 2013).

The USAID UGANDA Production for Improved Nutrition project is built on a public-private partnership where RECO Industries a private agro based business is bringing 30 years of experience to implement this project with the support of USAID UGANDA and the government of Uganda.

The success stories included in this book are a testimony that the interventions are transforming individuals and communities.

OUR INTERVENTIONS





OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

- Increased production of therapeutic and supplementary foods to children, pregnant women, and people living with HIV with moderate or severe acute malnutrition
- Establishment of an effective distribution system for therapeutic and supplementary foods within public and private sectors in Uganda
- Livelihood strengthening; improved agricultural practices; and increased market access of at least 80,000-150,000 local small scale farmers located in rural districts in Uganda
- Expand access to essential services for orphans and other vulnerable children, their caregivers and households

OUR INTERVENTIONS

The project contributed to meeting national needs for quality, therapeutic and supplementary foods to treat moderate to severe malnutrition among the most vulnerable especially children, pregnant women and people living with HIV and AIDS.

We strengthened the entire operations chain starting with internal systems improvements in finance, human resource, marketing, food production, and supply chain management including appropriate quality at source of raw materials from local farmers was a major focus.

To improve agricultural practices, strengthen livelihoods and increase market access for smallholder farmers, the project targeted farmers in Producer Organisations through farmer field schools to build their knowledge and skills in good agronomy practices, post-harvest handling and storage, and farming as a business. The project leveraged partnerships with agri-finance institutions and seed producers to enable farmers scale up the quality and volume of their produce using good inputs

Ready to Use Therapeutic Food: Emergency relief for severe cases

“...even if I dont tell, you can just look at me and see...”



Supporting PLHIV for better health

Loyce who is living with HIV was rapidly losing weight when she was counseled by a Isaac Buzaaka, the Buikwe HIV district coordinator who is also living with HIV. Loyce was started on RUTAFAs and she is all smiles when she talks about how that treatment saved both her and her daughter who was also later started on RUTAFAs. Loyce feels good and she knows it shows: “Even if I don’t tell, you can just look at me and see.” Loyce is also a volunteer at the hospital.



Shamilla gets her glow back

When 6 month old Shamilla was taken to Jinja hospital, she was diagnosed with severe malnutrition and started on a RECO brand, Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), RUTAFAs. While at the hospital Shamilla’s mother was taught about how to prepare nutritious meals including plenty of vegetables and fruit.

“I am proud of her; when she came she weighed only 4.5 kg and was extra tiny, but now she even has energy to play”, says nurse Jane, of Jinja hospital.

Shamilla’s mother says her daughter has her newborn glow back since the treatment started.

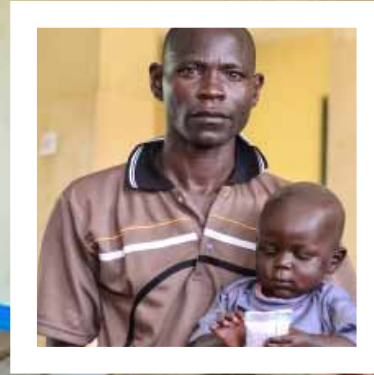


“I have new strength”

A single mother of 4 children, Margaret Atto’s weight rapidly dropped from 60 kg to 34 kg when she found out she was HIV positive. “I had lost so many people to HIV/AIDS, I feared I would die and leave my children to suffer. I became too weak and discouraged to tend the family garden and it is at this point I was forced to go to hospital”, Atto recalls. At Gulu Regional Referral hospital, Atto was started on RUTAFAs. She started to feel better, her appetite improved and Atto felt stronger. Within 4 months Atto had gained 13 kg. The health worker helped her plan nutritious, balanced meals to include protein, vegetables and fruit from her family garden. “RUTAFAs is real, it has given me strength even coming to the hospital I come with confidence.”

On the frontline: Capacity building and community sensitization

“...Good communication
with the Project has enabled
better stock management...”



Combating traditional myths

“When Adegga became very weak, his hair was pale so we tried to use traditional medicine. We dug a hole and let him lie in the soil and we smeared his body with special oil and herbs. When he wasn't getting better we brought him to the hospital. We were admitted and he was given both RUTAFAs and F100. It has been two weeks now and you can see he is already doing better; he can already eat twice a day. He was 7kg, and in 2 weeks he is 8.4 kg. He likes the taste.”
Felix Matoa, Adegga-

Building capacity to administer RUTAFAs

Richard Kiplangat has worked at Kapchorwa hospital for 17 years and has witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of malnutrition. For many years although mild cases could be taught about a balanced diet, severely malnourished patients could not be helped. When the USAID Production for Improved Nutrition project started, the hospital staff were trained on administration of Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods and supported to sensitize communities about myths on nutrition and RUTF treatment. Richard is particularly happy about the introduction of new storage technology which has helped prevent moulding. As a result, they no longer have stock outs at the hospital.

Community sensitization

Nurses like Sister Margaret in Yumbe district are at the frontline of addressing malnutrition at the community level. Apart from administering RUTAFAs, the health workers are trained to use tools like Measuring Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) tapes to diagnose malnutrition. Severe cases are admitted and treated with RUTAFAs. Apart from this emergency treatment, nurses play a key role in raising awareness and educating communities about preventing malnutrition. “Food preparation is the problem. Women trade groundnuts for clothes.”

Increasing output: Supporting access to improved technologies

12,000 Lead
Farmers
trained on crop
agronomy, post-
harvest handling
and storage,
marketing, and
safe use of
inorganic agro
inputs,

Success for the Omega Farmers Group

Before joining the Omega Farmers Group, Nakibuuka kept a garden, but the harvest was never impressive so she had neglected the garden. When Nakibuuka joined Omega Farmers Group and visited the demonstration gardens supported by the Production for Improved Nutrition project, she was surprised to learn that even with a small usually unproductive garden she could turn things around and realize a good harvest.

Nakibuuka learnt the new farming methods at the demonstration garden and started improving her garden to the extent that her neighbours did not dare trample through its now neat rows. Nakibuuka and her family now have plenty to eat, and her neighbours are now buying vegetables from her. With the money she makes, Nakibuuka is able to keep her children in school meeting all their tuition bills for the first time.

The Omega Group is well respected in the community for their farming acumen and they act as community teachers enabling their neighbours improve their harvests with new methods they themselves have practiced. Omega has formed a drama group and they enjoy performing songs and plays to teach others that their lives can be transformed by simple improvements in their farming methods.

Bountiful harvests for Sironko farmers

Robert Wanzala, a member of the Mubimbi Farmer Group was inspired to expand his farming when he attended farmer field school trainings under the Production for Improved Nutrition project. The group was taught how to use fertilizers with very good results. Previously, the farmers used to harvest about 5 bags per acre, after using fertilizers they harvested 22 bags per acre. Encouraged by these results, Robert started with 1 acre where he improved the soil and his harvest increased. Robert secured a loan from the group and expanded his farmland to 20 acres. Today Robert and his family are reaping the rewards using the modern techniques that he learnt through the Farmer Field School.



Large families empowered to stave off malnutrition

Adiga Khemis is one of the farmers involved in the USAID/Uganda Production for Improved Nutrition programs to empower small scale farmers and their communities with improved agricultural skills to improve their produce (nutrient rich foods) both for home consumption and sell. The goal is to boost their livelihoods. Even with his large family of 18 children and 2 wives, they are not malnourished, as the family feeds on the nutritious foods they grow. This also saves the family money to take care of the children.



Milly Orodriyo, 38 year old widow, single mother of 5, and lead farmer of Andralize Producer Organization in Maracha district which has 3 men and 21 women members

Simple organic farming techniques transform kitchen gardens

Coaching on planting kitchen gardens using organic agricultural techniques has transformed the way the farmers grow vegetables in Yumbe.

Previously, during the dry season no one would bother with vegetable gardening. However, they learnt that they could garden in their backyard and use wastewater from the kitchen to water gardens. By being close to the homesteads the gardens are also protected. The farmers learnt how to grow *mandala* gardens (circular gardens divided by walk-through paths and keyholes which divide it into segments), sack mound, double dug beds and raised beds.

They were educated about improving nutrition by eating a balanced diet comprising greens from the kitchen garden.

From her kitchen garden Milly grows vegetables to complement her silver fish and carbohydrates diet of maize, millet and cassava.

“This time around I have been blessed with surplus produce from which I got additional income through the sale of our green vegetables.”



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