

WORK:



**NO CHILD'S
BUSINESS**



UGANDA

2019 - 2024

Work: No Child's Business in Uganda

Areas: Busia and Karamoja sub-regions (Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts)

Sectors: Gold and marble mining, domestic and informal work

Partners:

- Environmental Women in Action and Development (EWAD)
- Hivos
- Nascent Research and Development Organization
- Save the Children International
- Uganda National Teachers Union

2,000,000

In 2017, 14% or 2 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 were engaged in child labour

5,557

People were reached through community mobilisation and other activities

7%

increase in the percentage of children aged 5-17 in school

74%

323 youth - former child labourers - have been trained, 74% of whom are now in decent jobs

12,160

Children withdrawn or prevented from child labour

56% to 51%

The programme achieved an overall reduction in the number of children engaged in child labour, from 56% at baseline to 51% in 2024



Child labour in Uganda

Child labour in Uganda has increased significantly in recent years. In **2017**, 14% or **2 million children** between the ages of 5 and 17 were **engaged in child labour**. By **2022**, 40% or **6.2 million children** were **engaged in child labour**. In **rural areas**, such as Karamoja, the number of children **engaged in child labour rose to 55%**.



How we measure our results

- Key Performance Indicator studies (2x) at baseline and endline. In total, these included household surveys with over 3343 respondents in Uganda
- SenseMaker studies (3x) during the baseline, mid-term and endline to measure community norms change involving 135 adults and 298 children in Uganda.
- Gender analysis to develop gender sensitive and transformative interventions.
- Annual outcome harvesting to reflect on our interventions and contributions to change.
- External mid-term review and final evaluation.

Impact summary

The WNCB programme was implemented in the high incidence areas of **Karamoja and Busia**, where **social norms, poverty and weak education systems perpetuate the cycle of child labour**. The programme achieved an **overall reduction in the number of children engaged in child labour**, from **56% at baseline to 51% in 2024**. Despite the overall improvement, Karamoja saw an increase of around 10% in the proportion of children engaged in child labour within households compared to baseline. However In Busia, the proportion of children engaged in child labour decreased from 68% to 47%.

Stories of change

Collaboration with communities and government in Uganda

Karamoja occupies the eastern part of northern Uganda and is one of the poorest regions in Uganda, with income poverty at 61% and food poverty at 70%. There is also a lack of quality education and opportunities for young people. Out of 40 communities in Karamoja, only 10 had a primary school before the programme started.

WNCB's four partners in Karamoja, Uganda, have been working with communities and government to improve access to education and change social norms to get children out of work and into school.

The story of the strong collaboration between the WNCB partners in Karamoja shows how working with the area-based approach proved to be a useful and successful approach in the specific context of this region. The many challenges in Karamoja needed to be addressed at the community level. At the same time, the lack of quality education and opportunities for young people had to be addressed. Working with government, communities, teachers and the private sector proved to be a successful approach in this challenging context, giving partners the space to adapt elements of planning and action, and leading to sustainable results.

This story highlights the successes, challenges, key steps and lessons learned.

wncb.org/story/uganda_1/

Multi-stakeholder collaboration in gold mining in Uganda

Uganda has an estimated 50,000 artisanal and small-scale gold miners, 30% (over 15,000) of whom are children. Although Uganda's 2001 mineral policy sought to ban child labour in mining, this was never incorporated into the country's mining regulations. The law's minimum age protection (16 years) does not apply to children working without a formal employment relationship. Traditional gold mining activities have had a significant impact on school enrolment in the district, with many children dropping out of school to work in the mines.

WNCB partner Environmental Women in Action for Development (EWAD) has been working with governments, mining companies and communities in 30 villages in Busitema, Buteba, Tiira Town Council and Sikuda sub-counties of Busia District to eliminate child labour in the mining industry and work towards sustainable change, reaching over 4,280 households.

This is the story of how EWAD has successfully used a multi-stakeholder approach to prevent and address child labour in mining communities.

wncb.org/story/uganda_2/

Achievements

Communities

“ Our partners have protected 12,160 children from child labour.

A total of 22,579 people living in the wider catchment area at district and parish levels were reached through child protection services, and 5,557 people were reached directly through community mobilisation, various back-to-school campaigns, radio talk shows, community dialogues and other activities. This has led to children being withdrawn from child labour and enrolled in school or other services, including a total of 882 children in Nakapiripirit and Moroto, and a total of 1,326 young people in Busia.

During the entire programme period, 12,160 children were withdrawn from child labour and/or prevented from falling into child labour through the efforts of our partners. The WNCB programme has effectively reduced exploitative child labour in the programme areas by promoting lighter, home-based work, thereby improving children's well-being and facilitating their participation in education and other development activities.



Schools

“ Enrolment in school of former child labourers in Busia District and Karamoja has improved significantly.

The endline household survey we conducted showed a 7% increase in the percentage of children aged 5-17 in school. In Busia District, 84% of children were in school at the end of the programme in 2024, and in Karamoja, 76% of children were in school, demonstrating the impact of our work.

Our endline tracer study shows a significant improvement in the educational status of former child labourers in Busia District and Karamoja. A remarkable 87% (199 children) are currently enrolled in primary school, while 7% have progressed to secondary school and a modest 6% are in vocational or tertiary education. This represents a positive shift from the 2022 tracer study, where most children (44%) were in bridge/transitional schools and 24% were enrolled in primary school.

Through the establishment of 25 Child Rights Clubs in the communities, children and the school community are now more aware of children's rights. The programme used the SCREAM method (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media), and 170 teachers were trained to create child-friendly classrooms.

A notable achievement of growing community support for children's education is that in all eight project villages in Karamoja, communities have demonstrated their support by collectively donating over 60 acres of land on which government and community schools have been built. The local authorities have assigned nine teachers from the government payroll to three of the new schools. Nanyidik Community School was handed over to the local government in November 2023, and plans are underway to do the same for Acherer and Nakiloro Community Schools.



Economic strengthening



” 323 young people have been trained, improving their chances of proper employment.

In Moroto and Nakapiripirit, 216 young people (120 females and 96 males) and in Busia 107 young people (19 males and 88 females), all former child labourers, received community-based training to increase their opportunities of proper employment. We have successfully trained 323 youth over the life of the programme and 74% of the youth trained through the WNCB programme are now in decent employment.

The number of families engaged in income-generating and self-sustaining activities that do not involve child labour, such as agriculture, has increased significantly from 158 in 2022 to 200 in 2024. These families and communities have been supported through Village Savings and Loan Associations, where they have access to loans and very low interest rates to start or increase their income-generating activities.

Private sector collaboration



” Working conditions for agricultural and factory workers have improved over the past five years.

In Uganda, we made a local and regional impact. 40 employees of Sunbelt Mining Company and Tororo Cement were trained in child safety and protection. The two companies also developed and posted codes of conduct to prevent and address child labour in their workplaces.

240 artisanal miners have received skills training in group formation, resulting in the formation of 16 associations in four villages. Four of these associations have already been linked to the government's economic empowerment programme, the Parish Development Model.

The WNCB programme has also improved working conditions for agricultural and factory workers over the past five years, rising from 24% in 2022 to 58% in 2024. The majority of private sector workers surveyed (76%) reported that they were allowed to form and join unions or associations, suggesting that workers' rights to organise are respected. Active participation in unions or associations also indicates that workers are involved in collective bargaining and representation. Our final survey results also show that a larger proportion of workers (51%) receive regular pay increases, reflecting a commitment to fair pay practices and potentially improving living standards.

At the end of the programme period, 27 private sector organisations are working towards the prevention and elimination of child labour. Furthermore, 92 organisations are strengthened to operate more sustainably through the interventions and support of our partners.

Government



” Local leaders advocate for social services as rights holders.

Three WNCB team members sit on the national steering committee on the elimination of child labour and have contributed to the national action plan on the elimination of child labour and the child labour policy review. The WNCB partners also trained local leaders in effective lobby and advocacy; these leaders are now lobbying for social services as rights holders.

In Uganda, the partners cooperated with the national Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to accelerate the processing of ordinances and approval of bylaws that address the root causes of child labour. The WNCB partners also worked with the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development to finalise and disseminate the National Child Policy.

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Save the Children



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