

Mend the Broken Hearts Uganda



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VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS EMPOWERMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION (VHECEP) PROJECT

Terminal evaluation report (January 2020)



Group members after attending to their garden

Funded by



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1. INTRODUCTION

Vulnerable Households Empowerment and Civic Engagement Promotion (VHECEP) Project is a two-year community empowerment initiative that was implemented by *Mend the Broken Hearts Uganda* (MBHU) – a local Community-based Organization operating in Kanungu district in Uganda from January 2018-December 2019. The project was funded and supported by the Civil Society Fund in Development-Denmark. It targeted to directly benefit about 500 poor households in Kanungu district in Uganda.

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The project takes advantage of strategic partnerships for purposes of technical backstopping, legal and psychosocial support, awareness creation, and project community ownership and sustainability. These include lower local community-based associations, government departments like district police family protection unit, district and Kanungu town council community-based services and production departments, and local political leadership.

The project had two overriding objectives set to be achieved by the end of year 2019, namely;

1. Objective 1: By the end of the two-year project, 500 vulnerable households within 30 villages are organized in sustainable self-help groups and have acquired better agricultural and financial practices leading to improved food production and increased income that are sufficient for a decent livelihood for all children and adults in the household.
2. Objective 2: By the end of the two-year project, at least 3000 community members and local leaders are conscious about human rights and issues such as gender-based violence and are able to report and refer cases of rights violation, acquire legal advice and holding leaders accountable

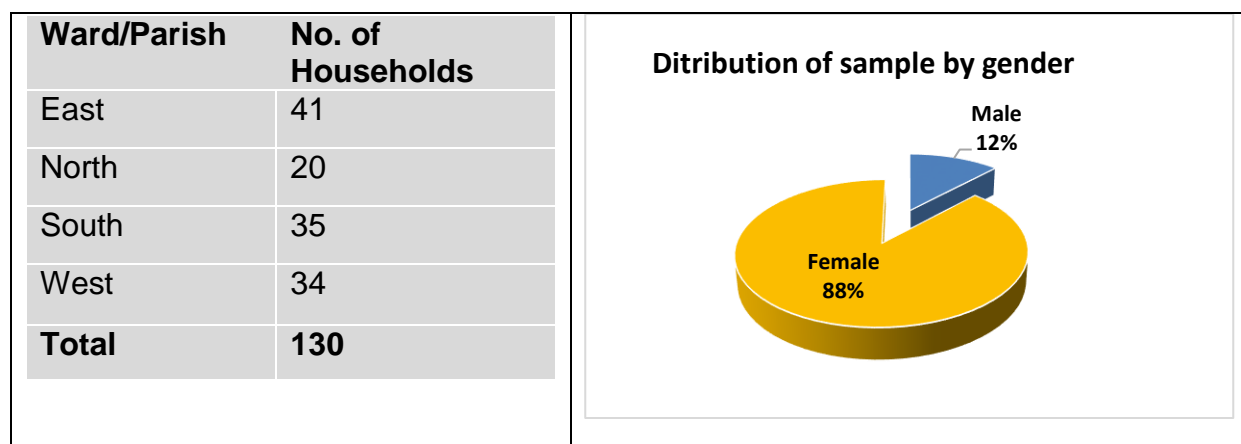
2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the degree to which the project has achieved its objectives during its life of two years. The study targeted vulnerable households. The evaluation questionnaire (Annex 1) is based on the project requirements. It is structured as follows:

- Section A: Household food and income security
- Section B: Awareness of basic human rights, child rights, women's rights, and case management

The selection of geographical location of the beneficiaries was, first purposive (for parishes/wards and villages/cells) followed by random sampling (for the beneficiary households): purposive to ensure that all the beneficiary geographical locations are included in the study, and random to eliminate any study biases. A total sample size of 130 households was used. The actual sample per location (segregated by gender) is provided in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Evaluation sample size



The data collection tool was pre-tested before being administered to the respondents. Data collection took 5 days. Data was then entered and cleaned for analysis. Analysis was conducted using MS Excel; descriptive statistics and cross tabulations were employed. Comparatively, most of the household caregivers (88 percent) are female.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section details the findings from the study, organized under two major themes: (a) Household income and food security; and (b) Caregiver's awareness of basic human rights and case management.

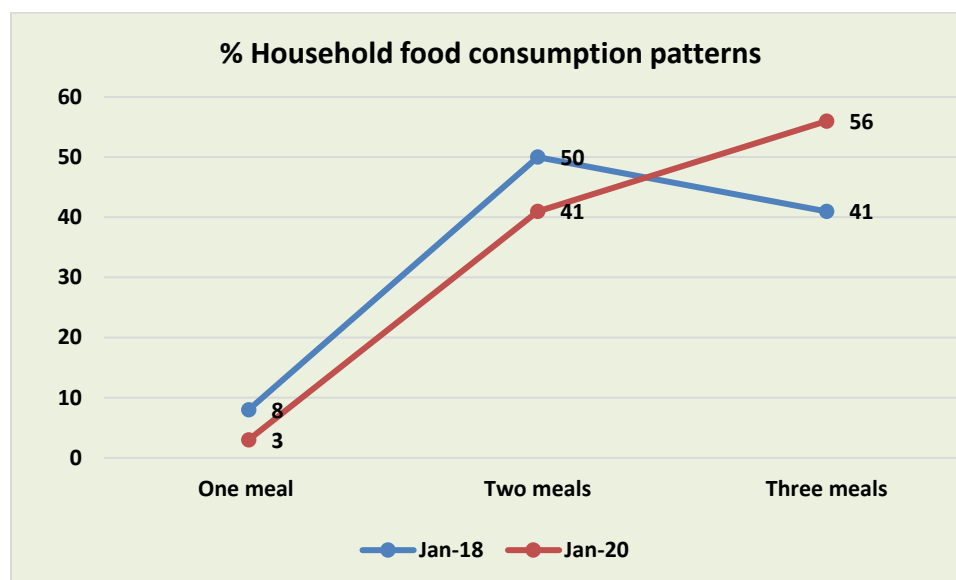
3.1 Household food and income security

Household income levels and food consumption patterns are fundamental factors in defining vulnerability. This sub-section gives highlights about household income/livelihood sources, income levels, food consumption patterns, and household savings. A comparison of evaluation findings with baseline statistics is critically pointed out.

3.1.1 Household food consumption patterns

This sub-section probes into households' food consumption patterns in the last six months to the project closure. The study found out that, on the average, food consumption patterns generally have been improving over time. The number of households that affords three meals a day increased from 41 percent to 56 percent in a period of two years. In the same period, the number that depended on only one meal reduced from 8 percent to 3 percent.

Figure 2 Household food consumption patterns

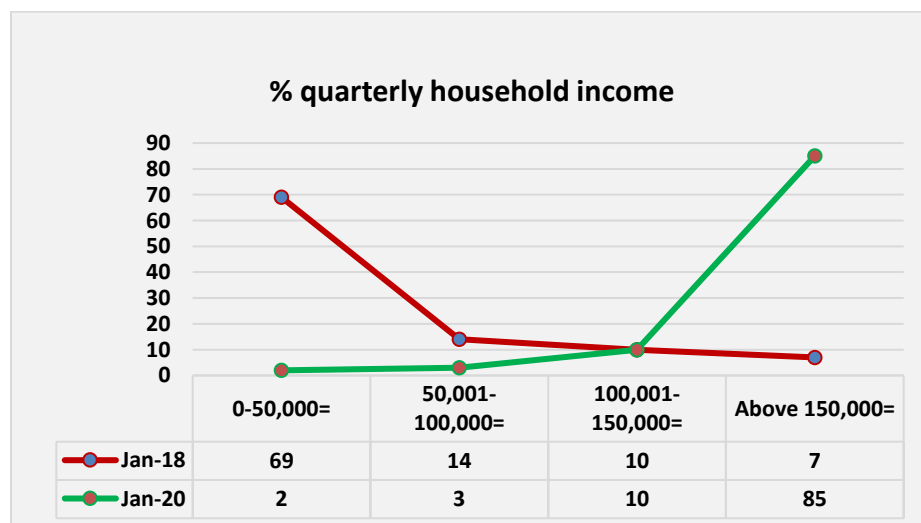


The 44 percent of households that cannot afford three meals a day remains a development concern much as there has indeed been a tangible improvement in household food security as pointed out above. These households can hardly afford other basic needs of life such as clothing and children's school requirements.

3.1.2 Household income levels

At the beginning of the project, 69 percent did not earn beyond UGX 50,000 quarterly whereas only 7 percent earned above UGX 150,000¹. By the close of the project, however, 85 percent of the households could earn above UGX 150,000 and only 2 percent earned below UGX 50,000 – presenting a sharp positive trend in income security. Figure 3 below gives a fair state of household quarterly income.

Figure 3 Household average quarterly income



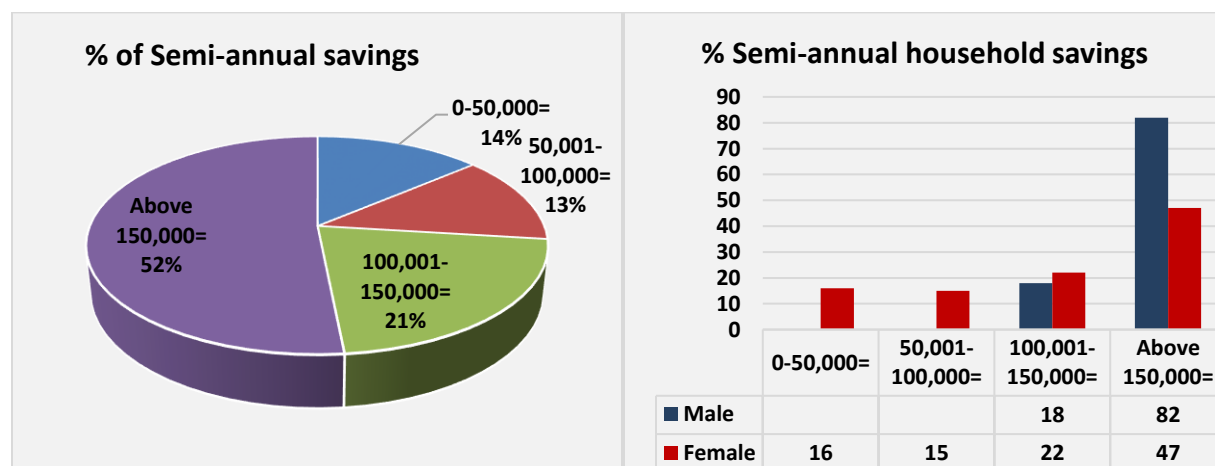
¹ Note that \$1=UGX3.600=

Generally, the project has brought about a visible transformation in household incomes, reducing the number of those earning below UGX 50,000 from 69 percent to 2 percent, and uplifting the income of those who previously earned above UGX 150,000 from 7 percent to 85 percent. Households that do not earn beyond UGX150.000= (15 percent) can hardly afford the minimum standards of living including supporting their children in government schools.

3.1.3 Household savings

Promoting a culture of saving in the beneficiary community was a key aspect of the VHECEP project. Savings is believed to be an indicator of household improving living standards. The evaluation study sought to establish whether household incomes somewhat translated in savings. Findings reveal that on the average, while 85 percent of the household earned over UGX 150,000, 52 percent were able to save at least the same amount of money in the last six months of the project. 73 percent of the households are now able to save at least UGX 100,000. This is a good indicator of the project success and more so a sign that with little support for community-led initiatives people can be financially transformed in such a short time as five years.

Figure 4 Household savings



Important to note, however, is that comparatively men appear to be better savers than women: all the 16 men-provided households were able to save at least UGX 100,000 compared to about 70 percent female-provided households. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that virtually women attend to most of the family details (from children to spouses and elderly) and so hardly can save. Nonetheless, the project registered considerable success in promoting savings and achieving income security of the beneficiary communities.

3.2 Community awareness of basic human rights and case management

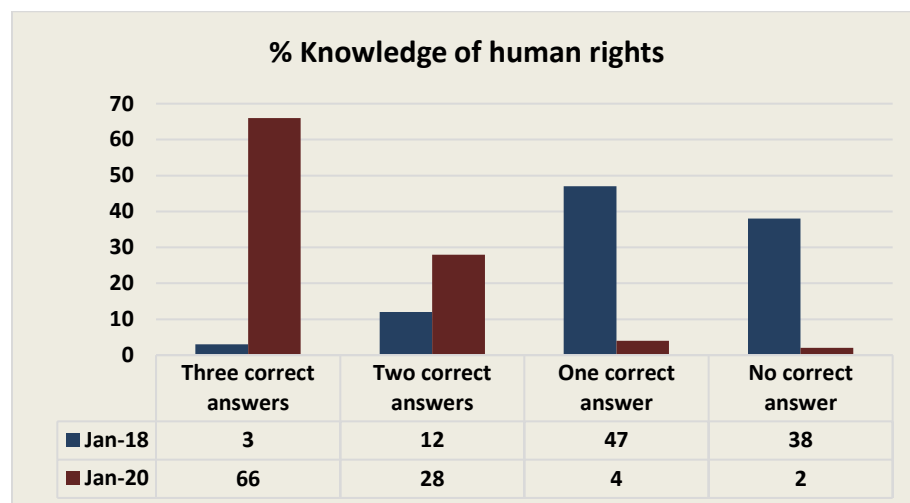
Knowledge about human rights and active engagement in protecting them is a precursor for community development. This sub-section probes the knowledge of household caregivers about rights of children and women, as well as local legal systems and their jurisdiction in management of civil cases and violation of rights.

3.2.1 Knowledge of human rights in general

At the beginning of the project when asked to mention three examples of human rights generally, only 3 percent of the respondents were able to state at least three right answers and

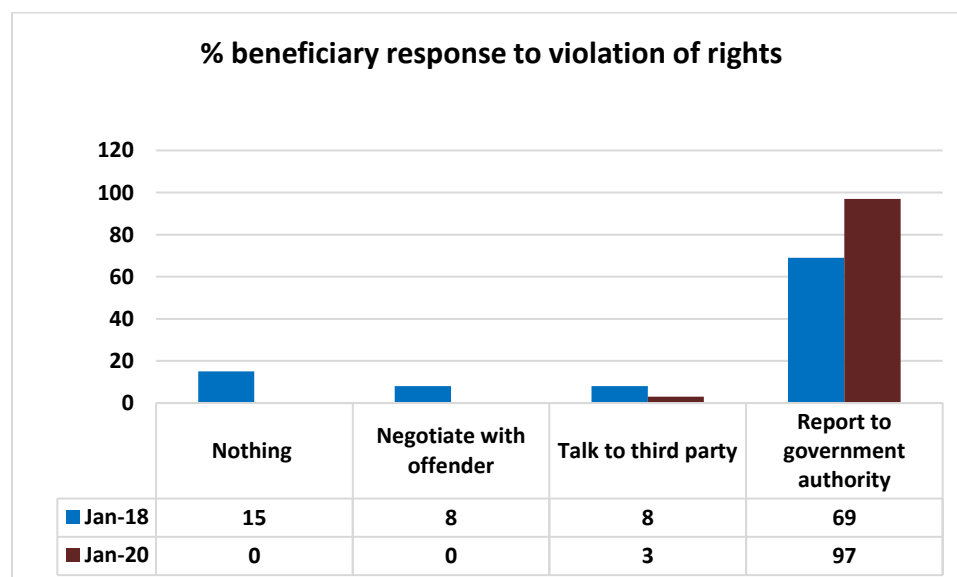
38 percent did not at all know anything about the subject. However, by close of the project majority 66 percent could understand basic human rights pointing out at least three examples, and only 2 percent were ignorant about human rights (see Figure 5 below). This demonstrates a clear impact the project has made in the beneficiary community – which encourages good neighborliness and social cohesion, ingredients for socio-economic development.

Figure 5 Respondents knowledge of human rights



When asked what they would do if a family member became a victim of human rights violation (including gender-based violence, child abuse, etcetera), overwhelming 97 percent would report such cases to a local legal authority, whereas the remaining 3 percent would seek guidance from a third party. This position shows a great improvement from the earlier findings at the commencement of the project where 69 percent would seek legal intervention, 15 percent would do nothing or withdraw from the case (largely to avoid further conflict with the usually stronger abusers), 8 percent would negotiate with the offenders to reach a compromise (including grievous cases of child defilement), and 8 percent would seek guidance from third parties.

Figure 6 Beneficiary response to violation of rights

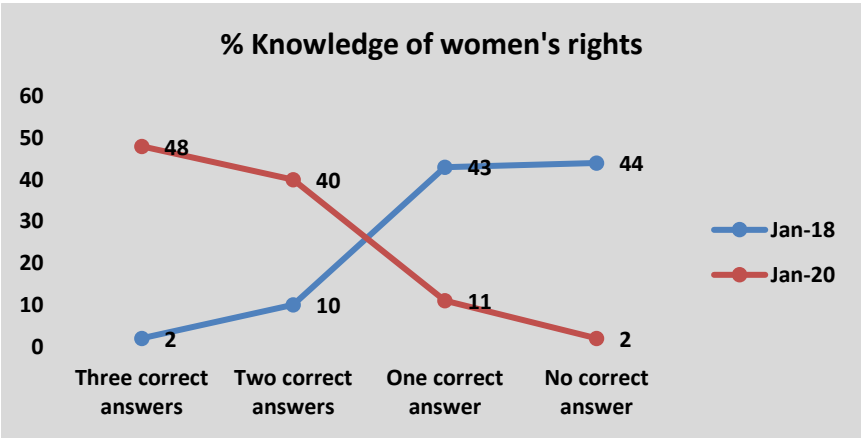


Even the 3 percent who would talk to a third party would do so for the sake of avoiding escalation of conflicts in a bid to ‘maintain’ good relations – and depending on the case. It is indeed good news that people are aware of their rights and seek to respect the rights of others.

3.2.2 Knowledge of the rights of women

Patriarchy still reigns in the African society. Apparently, women and girls are largely treated unequal to men and boys, and as a consequence their rights are hardly respected. Caregiver knowledge of women’s rights was much wanting at the beginning of the project: 44 percent of the respondents could not mention any of the rights of women and only 2 percent gave three correct answers, when asked to mention three examples of women’s rights. However, by the close of the two year project, the situation had turned around: only 2 percent of the household caregivers were oblivious of women’s rights whereas majority 48 percent could articulate the rights of women and 40 percent could fairly clarify the rights of women by citing at least two examples of the specific rights (see Figure 7)

Figure 7 Beneficiary knowledge of women's rights

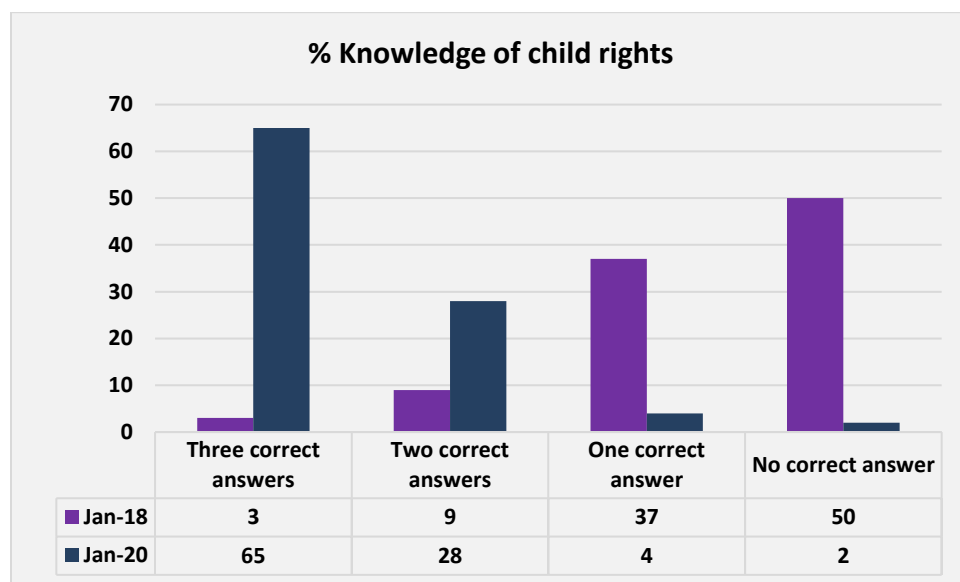


The tradition tables of mistreating women because of their gender are increasingly being turned down, paving way for gender equality and social equity. The VHECEP project has contributed immensely toward this noble cause.

3.2.3 Knowledge of the rights of a child

The African child remains vulnerable in a number of perspectives. Community knowledge of its rights is a fundamental step toward socioeconomic transformation of the household to which it belongs and the wider society at large. At the commencement of the project, majority 50 percent of the household caregivers were not aware of any rights of a child; and only 3 percent were enlightened about the rights of a child.

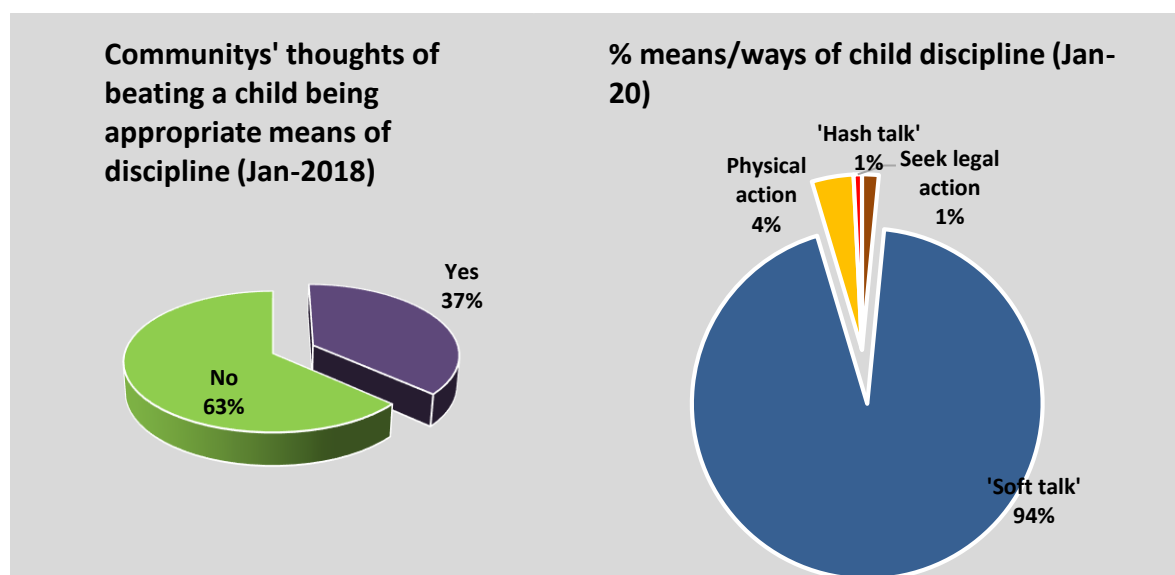
Figure 8 Beneficiary knowledge of the rights of the child



Conversely, by close of the VHECEP project, 65 percent of the caregivers could clearly articulate the rights of a child, 93 percent understood fairly children's rights, and only 2 percent could not understand the same. The project, therefore, greatly contributed to awareness creation about the rights and obligations of children and appreciation of children as contributing members to societal development.

One of the parameters used to assess how the community has appreciated the respect of children's rights was the question of disciplining the child. Traditionally, child beating is perhaps the leading common violations of children's rights in Uganda. At the beginning of the project when asked whether beating a child was an appropriate means of discipline or control at home and or school, 37 percent of the caregivers asserted that indeed it was.

Figure 9 Community thoughts of appropriate means of child discipline



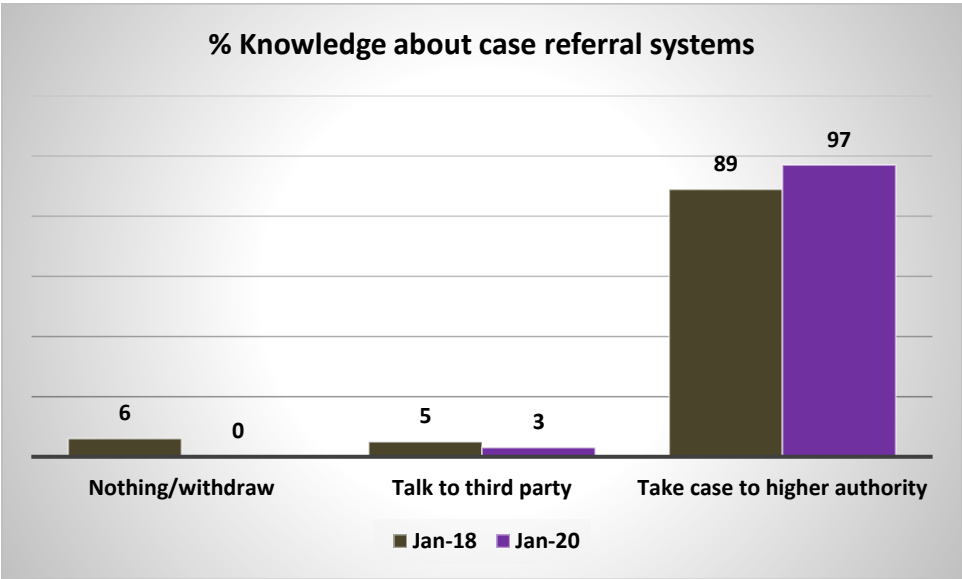
However, two years later when asked how appropriately an errant child should be disciplined, 94 percent of the household caregivers chose “soft talk” or counselling as the appropriate means of correcting undisciplined children. This is a remarkable achievement the project has registered in making the community accommodative of her children.

3.2.4 Community knowledge of case referral system

The Local Council One (LC1) is the lowest legal authority to handle violent cases in the community. It recommends referral of those cases it fails to handle or are outside its legal jurisdiction to a higher authority, say courts of law or police.

During the baseline study when asked what they would do if the LCI chair did not handle their case to their satisfaction, 6 percent said they would withdraw from the case (for fear of further damage to their relations), 5 percent said they would seek comfort from an opinion leader such as a religious leader, community elder, and cultural leader (to avert further conflict). The majority 89 percent would take their dissatisfaction to a higher legal authority. This was indeed good performance. However, by the close of the project, 97 percent could boldly petition higher legal authorities; and the remaining 3 percent would seek advice from a third party – for the sake of peaceful coexistence (see Figure 10 below). This is an indication the project has greatly achieved the objective of imparting knowledge about civil and legal rights.

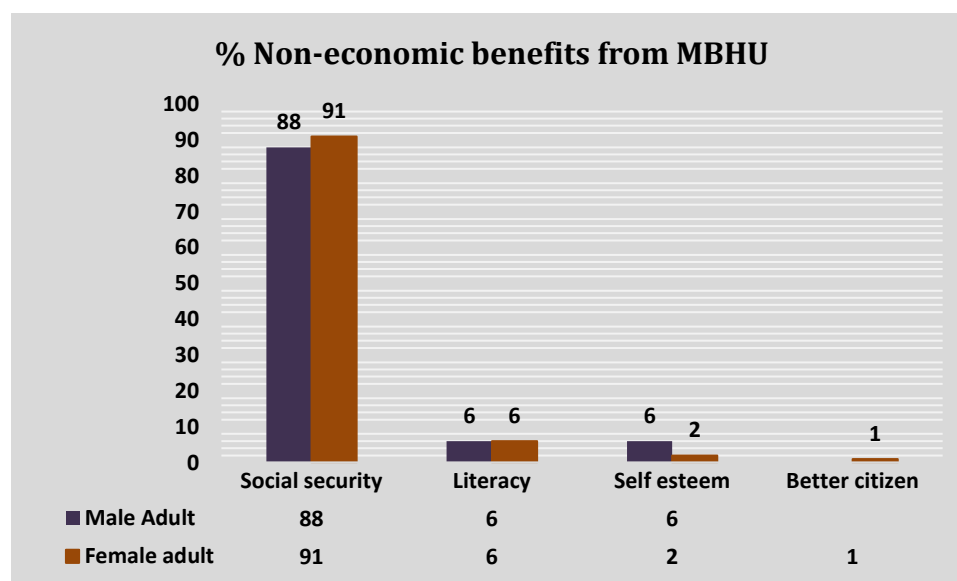
Figure 10 Beneficiary awareness of the case referral system



In a related development, a probe was made into people’s knowledge about the roles of their political representations at the sub-county level (Councilors), district level (Chairperson) and national level (Member of Parliament). The study established that the people were aware of their political leaders’ roles including “sensitization about government programs”, “taking and defending people’s views to their political councils”, “supporting them in the pursuit of their rights”, etcetera – failure of which their leaders would be “voted out” during the subsequent elections.

3.3 Non-economic benefits from MBHU

The study sought community perception of MBHU's contribution to community development other than economic benefits and awareness creation about human rights. The community claims that being a stakeholder in the organization's business has been transformative in a number of aspects. For instance, through such informal arrangements supported by MBHU as village savings associations, about 90 percent of the respondents say social security² for their households is now guaranteed.



Other members of the community testify that their literacy and self-esteem levels have improved. A number of respondents appreciated MBHU generally for the contribution to community socioeconomic development – through supporting vulnerable members of society access social justice, link to external economic opportunities and participate in civic and social engagements. The community leaders as well as government departments (such as Kanungu town council and district local governments) largely view the organization as “a strategic partner in development” (Mayor, Kanungu town council), “a link advocate for the vulnerable in our community” (Head, Child and Family Protection Unit, Uganda Police Kanungu), and “a supportive arm in the delivery of community and gender-based services in the district” (District Community Development Officer, Kanungu).

²Social security basically entails group support to a troubled member (usually household) to pull through difficulties including school requirements for children, sickness and bereavement of a dead kinsperson.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: VHECEP terminal evaluation questionnaire

VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS EMPOWERMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION PROJECT (VHECEP)

Project End-line Evaluation Assessment Tool

Instructions: Please administer this tool ONLY to the project primary beneficiaries

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<p>Hullo! My name is [enumerator's name]. I am here to conduct a study on the impact development programs have made in your community. I would like to ask you to participate in a one-to-one interview on issues concerning development projects that have been implemented in your area in the last two years. The discussion will take about 30 minutes. Please answer all the questions truthfully. You will not be judged on your responses; you may refuse to answer any question and you may choose to stop the discussion at any time.</p> <p>There is no direct benefit to you in participating in this study and your participation is voluntary. However, we hope that if this study is done well, your community will benefit from the subsequent programs that may come into your community in the future.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Respondent No.:</h3> <div style="font-size: 24px; margin: 10px 0;"> _ _ _ </div> <p>Parish _____</p> <p>Village _____</p>	<p>Enumerator:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Date: _ _ _ _ </p>
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A. beneficiary Household Profile		
<p>1. Household primary caregiver³ is:</p> <p>1 = male adult</p> <p>2 = female adult</p> <p>3 = child (below 18 years)</p>	<p>2. Age of the household caregiver:</p> <p>1 = below 18 years</p> <p>2 = 19 – 60 years</p> <p>3 = over 60 years</p>	<p>3. Number of individuals in the household:</p> <p>1 = 1 – 3 persons</p> <p>2 = 4 – 6 persons</p> <p>3 = 7 and above persons</p>
B. Food and income security		
<p>4. Over the past 3 months, how many meals did the household have on average per day?</p> <p>1 = Not everyday</p> <p>2 = One meal per day</p> <p>3 = Two meals per day</p> <p>4 = Three meals per day</p>	<p>5. How much money (in UgX) did you spend⁴ during the last 6 months?</p> <p>1 = 0-50.000</p> <p>2 = 50.001-100.000</p> <p>3 = 100.001-150.000</p> <p>4 = Above 150.000</p>	<p>6. How much money (in UgX) were you able to save during the last 6 months with your SHG (Akabox)?</p> <p>1 = 0-50.000</p> <p>2 = 50.001-100.000</p> <p>3 = 100.001-150.000</p> <p>4 = Above 150.000</p>
C. Awareness of basic human rights and gender-based/domestic violence cases management		
<p>7. Can you mention at least 3 examples of human rights?</p> <p>1 = Three Correct Answers</p> <p>2 = Two Correct Answers</p> <p>3 = One Correct Answer</p> <p>4 = No Correct Answers</p>	<p>8. What would you do if your family member became a victim of human rights violation?</p> <p>1 = Nothing/withdraw/keep quiet</p> <p>2 = Talk to neighbor/family member</p>	<p>9. Can you mention three examples of the rights of the child?</p> <p>1 = Three Correct Answers</p> <p>2 = Two Correct Answers</p> <p>3 = One Correct Answer</p>

³Household primary caregiver should be the primary beneficiary of the project.

⁴ Expenditure here is a proxy measure of income.

	3 = Negotiate with the offender 4 = Report to LC/police/court/ CDO/ PSW/ any other authority	4 = No Correct Answers
10. How best can you 'discipline' a child in wrong? 1 = 'Hard talk'/ verbal hash rebuke 2 = 'Soft talk'/ counsel 3 = Physical action: cane, slap, etc 4 = No action/ keep quiet 5 = Take him/her to a legal authority 6 = Seek counseling/ talk to someone 7 = Other (specify).....	11. Can you mention three examples of women's rights? 1 = Three Correct Answers 2 = Two Correct Answers 3 = One Correct Answer 4 = No Correct Answers	12. If the LC 1 Chairperson did not handle your case satisfactorily, what would you do? 1 = Take the case to a higher authority (LC2, Police, Court) 2 = Talk to an opinion leader 3 = Nothing/withdraw from the case 4 = Other (specify).....
13. If a powerful neighbor did harm to you (grab your land, defile your child, etc.), what would you do? 1 = Take the case to a higher authority (LC2, Police, Court) 2 = Talk to an opinion leader 3 = Nothing/withdraw from the case 4 = Other (specify).....	14. Apart from financial benefits, how has being a member of your group (SHG) benefited you? 1 = Social security/protection 2 = Literacy/education 3 = Self esteem 4 = Better citizen (neighbor, spouse, parent) 5 = No change 6 = Other (specify).....	
15. What roles should be played by your LC1 Chairperson?		
16. What roles should be played by your local Sub-county Councilor?		
17. What roles should be played by your Member of Parliament?		
18. Explain in detail how you and your household have benefited from VHECEP.		

Thank you.

Supervisor Reviewed filled form? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comment:

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Supervisor sign & date:
