



Resilient  
*Women's*  
ORGANIZATION



# Annual Report **2019**



## **RESILIENT WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION**

# **CBO Activity Report 2019.**

Resilient Women's Organization started as CHEL Child Mothers' Development Organization in August 2016, a Community Based Organization with the major goal to empower girls, young women, teen mothers and society's vulnerable women out of poverty and into self-sustainability.

The founder members' goal was to break the poverty cycle in the lives of our community's young women and since the Organization's official registration in December 2016, up to date, we have managed to open up a temporary shelter for teen mothers and young women, started a Farming Project in Nakawuka and Life and Vocational skilling services, etc. are ongoing at our offices.

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.

MISSION STATEMENT.

HOW WE WORK (STRATEGIES).

## **Activities;**

- COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FAMILY VISITS.
- RESCUE & REHABILITATION.
- LIFE & VOCATIONAL SKILLS PROGRAMS.
- FARMING & NAKAWUKA OUTREACH PROGRAM.
- RESILIENT CLUB SCHOOL PROGRAM.
- BACK TO SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM.
- RESETTLEMENT AND FAMILY RECONCILIATION.

SWOT ANALYSIS.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

## INTRODUCTION

Resilient Women's Organization's activities are part of the organization's efforts geared towards women empowerment and breaking the poverty cycle in the lives of the affected and at-risk girls and young women. RWO has been active in reaching out to the very vulnerable, especially girls, teen mothers and young women at-risk of gender based abuse, teenage pregnancies, etc. and bringing them together under our social economic empowerment intervention.

## MISSION STATEMENT.

### **Historical Background.**

For the two founding sisters who grew up around poverty, having noticed the country's high unemployment rates, rising teenage pregnancies and the harder it was/is getting to break the poverty cycle since it takes money to make money and the realization that the cliché "the rich get richer while the poor get poorer" is indeed a fact, Clare Nantaba and Hope Lydia Ndagire found themselves very lucky to be in a position of some education and a lot of ideas. With poverty comes exposure to a lifestyle lacking in Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights information, morale, family values and all sorts of STI's since individuals find themselves at the mercy of need; young women are even more vulnerable as men with some money will take advantage of their situation and seduce them with promises of a better life only to abandon them later with children, further widening the poverty cycle. These young women are not just at risk for a life of poverty but also STIs & HIV/AIDS of which infection rates are high in low income areas. The

question on the sisters' minds was, how do we give hope to these vulnerable young women? How do we create meaningful change and break this cycle?

Answers and solutions came through the birth of CHEL Child Mothers' Development Organization (CCMDO), renamed Resilient Women's Organization (RWO).

Resilient Women's Organization's Mission is to create lasting solutions to poverty and unemployment in the lives of teen mothers, young women, vulnerable women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and their children through women education empowerment programs.

Vision;

RWO envisions a community where the girl child and women are living up to their full potential as equal and empowered members of society.

RWO's activities are based on the following values;

- God above all else
- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Equality

- Teamwork
- Honesty & Transparency
- Respect & dignity for all

### **Aims & Approach;**

Our Organization’s activities are based on the belief that if we are active collaborators in transforming our own lives, then we hold the key to creating a society that lives up to its potential.

We believe that one can make a difference in their own life given a little nudge, and with hope restored, and the right information, girls and young women realize they indeed have the power and will to change their own lives. All our organization does is giving them the grounds, knowledge and skills to realize that inequality and vulnerability is not an option.

The message that “It’s in your power to change your life” is central to our women empowerment & education initiatives which are geared towards social change, self-employment and breaking the poverty cycle.

Our approach involves four steps; Outreach, Shelter, Counseling and Skilling. These steps are utilized in our women empowerment educational tools.

### **HOW WE WORK/ STRATEGIES.**

Resilient Women's Organization's team works through the strategies below to achieve its mission;

### **1. Mobilizing Families, Communities, and Local Leaders/ Influencers.**

Through this strategy, the team at RWO carries out community outreaches and family visits for mobilization and sensitization purposes. Mobilization and Family visits took a turn this year as we got all our villages of operation Local Council Chairpersons, Women's representatives and youth leaders on board our cause of advocating for the girl child, social and economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women plus vulnerable families as a tool for community development and a way to put an end to teenage pregnancies, early unions and child marriage.

Strategizing meetings where held with influencers and local leaders as stakeholders in our organizational mission. The area Police Department Children and Family officers, and District Probation officer are some of the influencers we brought on board. These partnerships are crucial as we continue to work with children and girls in particular, and having the law on our side helps us to better sensitize.

### **2. Providing Direct Services to at-risk, married, and formerly married girls.**

Another way we work is by providing direct services to at-risk, married and formerly married girls. Through activities like rescue and rehabilitation of girls and young women who find them in abusive situations for example sexual abuse and gender based violence, we give these young women a safe place and space to stand up to this abuse,

counseling and mentoring plus Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights education and in no time, they are ready to face their abusers and also move on from these situations.

Direct services are also provided at our “Drop-In-Center for Young Women” where girls and young women drop in to seek information and advice regarding their lives and rights, their education, and peer support. Others come through for counseling and mentoring services, and leave our center with Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights educative messages, etc.

Other Direct services we provide include Life Skills and Vocational Skills training. Here we have this year managed to procure more sewing and knitting machines, plus study stools and materials for our beneficiaries to get the whole package of this particular skill. Hairdressing, crocheting and shoemaking are other favorites of our girls.

From these life and vocational skills, we top it up by conducting Financial Literacy and Basic Entrepreneurship Workshops for our beneficiaries to make good use of the skills learnt; six work shops were conducted in the different villages, to ensure that our communities and beneficiaries learn the best way to handle the small businesses they have, so as to better cater to their families, especially the girl child.

### **3. Advancing girls’ leadership by working directly with girls and boys in our community schools.**

While advancing girls leadership by working directly with girls, 2019 saw us initiate the Resilient Club school program where girls are encouraged to share with peers their stories and journey of family, school and community, their dreams and the problems they face. They are further



encouraged to navigate topics of child marriage and teenage pregnancies and school dropout rates, which have become unfortunate realities. The club encourages these girls and boys to stand out and stand up in their communities and families and schools against bullies, peer pressure and early sexual unions. Teachers and Parents/guardian are occasionally invited to way in and watch their children have a voice they deserve in how their lives are led. We have so far partnered with two schools; Sure Prospects Schools (secondary and Primary levels) and also Kitala Primary School this year. Coming to 2020, we hope and plan to partner and bring this club to many other schools and encourage/mentor more girls to lead and stand up for themselves and their communities.

An understanding of these key strategies has our work spilling through to the activities below:

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FAMILY VISITS.**

Continuing on the work done in 2018, 2019 has seen us in communities mainly to conduct family visits in order to carry out family sensitization and educational exercises, reconciliations and resettle the girls at our shelter. Our team works with community leaders, families and the local police to identify and reach families where girls are at-risk of teenage pregnancies, child marriage, etc. so as to sensitize these families on the way forward and find solutions that don't involve abuse of individual rights.

We visited, sensitized and had outreach services Mpala, Kitala, Nalugala, Nakawuka and Kigungu. And also went as far as Kiboga,

Ntuura in Lwengo District and Lyantonde, as we traced families of some of the girls that ended up in our rescue shelter project.

The other part of outreach is to sensitize communities about HIV/AIDS, Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights, women empowerment and the importance of learning hands on skills and educating them about being healthy self-sustaining members of society through health workshops, small business management lessons and general health classes.

Outreaches also included sensitization and advocacy on the rights of the girl child, keeping girls in school and ending teenage pregnancies and child marriage in our communities.

It is important to note that these outreach exercises are conducted in partnership with local leaders and community influencers from all the villages of operation. Local Council Chairpersons, Local Youth representatives, women's representatives, District probation officer, Community Development Officer and The Children and Family Department of Police officers are some of the major players on board as stakeholders.

## **RESCUE & REHABILITATION OF AT-RISK YOUNG WOMEN.**

Through our 2017 outreach activities, it came to our notice that a number of young women and teen mothers are without support from family and thus left stranded. Our outreach educational packages did little in regards to giving these young women the hope they needed and we realized that they needed structure and stability in their lives. With abuse and gender based violence, a lot of young women run away /or

desire for a safe place away from this abuse. After thorough study, the board came up with the idea of a temporary women's reform shelter, where girls and young women are rescued and rehabilitated.

While at the shelter, the girls get counseling, led by our in-house Social Worker, all in the name of getting them to stabilize emotionally and spiritually. When they realize that they have a safe place, we now concentrate on giving them hands-on skills, Small scale business management classes, health and reproductive lessons plus beginner English lessons so that they can prepare to be self-sustaining individuals. This is done while conducting family sensitization drives to enable family resettlement and reconciliation.

This year, our Kitala Shelter has given 16 young women a chance to reform their lives without worrying about where their next meal is to come from or where they will sleep, or fear of facing abuse.

### **LIFE & VOCATIONAL SKILLS PROGRAMS.**

While at our organization premises and during community outreach, our women education & empowerment program activities make up part of our organization's core activities. Our young women empowerment/education package involves activities like;

- Hairdressing and salon management; Here our young women are trained in the lucrative hands-on hairdressing business which gives them a skill they can use to get employment or work on their own to earn a living.

- Crafts Lessons; with crafts, our women are trained in the art of making jewelry, handbags, purses, sandals and decorative artifacts.
- Tailoring; here, sewing and making clothes and bags is taught.
- Housekeeping. This is very important knowledge in the life of women and should be taught to every young woman. While at the shelter, the young women learn to properly keep and maintain plus plan for home. The basics of how to clean, wash, dust and cook is all taught.
- Business Management is another component of our women empowerment/education package. While the girls are trained in making crafts, hairdressing, and tailoring, business management comes in handy as they embark on the journey to sell and make items for sell and to handle customers from our walks of life.
- Beginner English Lessons are also important especially to a young woman who didn't finish early education but aspires to broaden her knowledge. And as we know it, English is Uganda's official language.
- Health & Reproduction classes. These are taught as a vital component in the life of a growing young woman. Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights topics are handled.

These life and vocational skills trainings and lessons are compulsory to all the women under RWO.

Vocational skills training lessons also had a boost during 2019 after we received the Girls First Fund grant, we managed to purchase knitting and tailoring machines and matching accessories.

## **FARMING AND NAKAWUKA OUTREACH PROGRAM.**

Another activity our organization has put emphasis on is farming and asset growth which we took on not only to help with food security but to also teach our young women about farming. Uganda is an agriculturally gifted country and it is a shame in this day and age to find young people who cannot farm. We have since early 2019 managed procure piece of land in Sakabusolo, Nakawuka, and even went further to build on it. A chicken coop, goat and pig pen are some of the structures that where put up in 2019, with pigs, goats, hens plus food crops grown on the premises.

This year saw our organization enjoying a bountiful harvest of cassava, matooke and sweet potatoes which the girls planted themselves.

With Nakawuka as an organizational asset, we look forward to more growth and expansion of our services in this remote part of Uganda.

## **BACK TO SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM.**

RWO mostly works with adolescent girls and young women plus teenage mums and our women's ages range between 10 and 18. These are school going ages and very often, girls come forward to tell us about their desire to further their education as most of them dropped out at some point.

Our back to school sponsorship program reaches out to these particular young women and together with well-wishers and visiting volunteers, we have managed to take some of the women and their children back to school.

2019 saw our very own Olivia Kisakye, who was rescued from child marriage, finish her Primary Leaving Examinations. We are excited for her journey forward in education and life.

With this Back to school program, our girls are benefitting as they rejoin formal education. Education is still important if we want to attain the much desired change from poverty and keeping girls in school is one of the tools we use to end child marriages and teenage pregnancies.

## **RESILIENT CLUB SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Under this school club program, we have reached out to two schools so far and we have the go ahead to form Resilient Clubs. These clubs are to act as a platform for dialogue, for open talks, for advocacy for children's rights, a safe space where members come to openly talk about their problems and challenges in their homes and schools, and communities,

and also a space to mentor these young people to become fruitful, happy and empowered members of our community. Through this platform, we hope to further push our mission and agenda, especially to eliminate Child Marriages, Teenage Pregnancies and Early Unions. We aim to keep socially empowering all our stake holders with our gender transformative approach. We will work hand in hand with all our stakeholders, from Teachers, School Administrators, Church official and Family heads to the District Probation Officers and Police's Child and Family department unit.

## **RESETTLEMENT & FAMILY RECONCILIATION**

We come across a lot of displaced young women and even offer temporary shelter to some of them. Other than skills training, counseling, it is our duty as Resilient Women's Organization (RWO) to resettle and reconcile these girls with their families, relatives or guardians.

This year, we successfully resettled 10 girls back to their families.

Our Field Operations Manager, Mr. Mugambwa Paul together with the administrative team travelled to Kiboga, Ntuula, Nakawuka and Baita to handle these cases and sensitize particular families about issues of teenage pregnancies, child marriage, gender inequality, and economic empowerment sessions as a preparation for the resettlements.

## SWOT ANALYSIS (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats)

### Strengths;

As a young organization (2019 is our 3rd operational year), we are very much still young on this path of community development through advocating for the girl child and women. 2019 saw us accomplish a lot as seen during the aforementioned activities.

This 2019, specifically on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, we received our very first grant from The Girls First Fund to support activities for a whole year in a Project to Respond to and Prevent/End Child Marriages, Teenage Pregnancies and early Unions. This came in at the right time as Resilient Women's Organization stands up taller, financial growth goes a long way towards organizational growth. This grant added more power to our management team because through it, we purchased office equipment and furniture.

Our greatest strength lay in our unwavering dedication and commitment towards the people we serve and towards our cause. It is still one of our strengths. From the founders to the staff, the RWO team has been dedicated to changing the lives of those vulnerable young women we encounter. This dedication is made stronger through our faith in God above which in the end makes accomplishing our set goals easier.

An amazing display of team work was another of the strengths depicted during the execution of the aforementioned activities. Even with all mannerisms of obstacles, the RWO team always gets together for the



overall good of the organization. This always comes in handy with all organizational activities.

Funding also came from our friends and volunteers, Judi & Richard Musick. We are blessed to have this relationship. The couple also visited and spend 2 weeks volunteering with us, all the way from Oregon, USA.

Continued support from visiting volunteers, local leaders and parents / or guardians of the young women we work with is another factor that helped smoothen the ground of all our activities throughout 2019. Our partnership with a local NGO, Volunteers 2 Uganda has given us a continuous supply of volunteers specialized in social work, adult education, nursing, HIV/AIDS research, and councilors. We hosted and welcomed 35 volunteers (mostly female) from the USA, Europe, North America and Asia, and our organization is still benefiting from this free inflow of manpower and knowledge, and free PR. It is from these volunteers that most of our programs' funding comes.

Another point of strength is our Partnership with Local Leaders and Influencers. Over the course of the year 2019, we had three meetings of dialogue about Child Marriages and Teenage Pregnancies, plus the situation of adolescent girls & young women, plus youth within our community. We have brought all these leaders on board as Stakeholders in our implementation plans gives us a better edge and platform.

### **Weaknesses;**

The entire RWO team agrees that our biggest weakness or shortcoming is lack of funds to push most of our activities through effectively and we

pray for more funds to help us reach out more families and young women.

Another weakness is the lack of enough staff or workers yet the scope of organizational activities at RWO is enlarging with each new month. We could definitely do with more staff. We plan to hire more member beginning of next year 2020.

Our reporting and documentation is lacking yet we have to keep tabs on all the work we do and document it properly. We have realized this and are working on a monitoring tool plus better equipped staff so that all activity documents and reports are filed correctly and in time.

More training is also needed for our staff in order for them to execute their duties well. Capacity building plans are underway for the following year.

### **Opportunities;**

As RWO grows and expands, there is evidenced room for growth that has come with our organization's name becoming a household brand. This can be put down to the transparency with which we do our work and the women whose lives we are changing.

Buying and owning a farm land was the biggest opportunity that the organization got in 2017 and our farming project plus other activities are taking shape due to the availability of this farm land. We are now working harder to develop and raise funds for organizational property growth on this land so as we reduce future operational costs.

The continued support from Volunteers 2 Uganda and the numerous volunteers who keep coming to take part in our projects is another opportunity we thank the good Lord for. There are unimaginable resources if the organization is to properly tap into this volunteer haven. From free public relations to free labor and priceless gifts, we can't go wrong with this opportunity.

### **Threats;**

There is a lack of adequate training amongst the RWO staff and this poses a huge threat to proper management and running of the Organizational activities. More output would be realized with proper or more training. This will be adequately catered this coming year,

For this particular threat, the Director proposes to include a workers' training program among the organization's programs. And she called upon the staff to make better use of the Internet as a research mechanism to further educate themselves.

More partnerships and work with sister organizations was also called for as a solution to the evident ignorance of workers at RWO regarding some NGO/ CBO operational issues. We will work harder at this in this last quarter of the year and next year.

## **2019 BENEFICIARIES AND MEMBERS.**

Girls under the rescue and rehabilitation program;

- 15 girls have benefited from our safe space shelter this year.
- Ages range between 13-19 years.
- Situations range from sexual abuse, violence and abuse at home, forced marriages after dropping out of school, and homelessness.

Adolescent Girls & Young Women who received direct services other than shelter;

- 98 adolescent girls and young women in total, this includes at-risk, married, and formerly married girls.
- Age ranges here are between 12-24 years.
- Situations range from dropping out of school, abuse at home, joblessness, broken homes, abandonment by spouses and guardians citing lack of finances, fear of being married off, and illiteracy.

Families that benefited from family sensitization and counseling visits;

- 12 Families from Kitala Village
- 8 families from Mpala village
- 3 families from Nakawuka village
- 2 families from Nalugala
- 13 families visited and sensitized for resettlement and family reunification cases of sheltered girls.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENT.**

Attached is a Financial Statement of the year as compiled by our Finance & Administrative Manager, Miss Nantaba Clare and our Accountant.

Please note that most of our expenses have been funded by Girls First Fund, then Judi & Richard Musick plus other personal donors who especially fund the Back to School Sponsorship Program.

Prepared by the

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