

Trust Update April 2024



UGANDA SKILLS



Tailoring Students

Summary: Thank you for your support of our new vocational skills centre for marginalised girls and young mums, in Soroti, Uganda. This project started in March 2024, following the refurbishment of Global Care's Soroti Centre in order to create appropriate training facilities. A total of 35 girls have begun short training courses in subjects including baking, tailoring and hairdressing. Global Care's Head of Operations, Steve Wicking, visited in March 2024.

Background: The coronavirus pandemic had a catastrophic effect on the educational prospects of millions of children and young people worldwide. In Uganda, schools were closed for two years, and thousands of young people failed to return to the classroom when schools finally re-opened. Teenage girls were particularly badly affected.



Some fell pregnant during extended lockdowns, others were married off early by desperate families. Some were earning through unskilled labour as their families now faced crippling debt, others were simply unable to catch up on missed education. Global Care has been working in Uganda for more than 40 years, through a variety of initiatives aimed to reduce child poverty and increase access to education.

Project Aims: The project aims to offer vocational skills training to at least 105 marginalised girls and young women who ended their education prematurely, in trades including hairdressing, baking and tailoring, over a three-year period. Acquiring vocational skills will give these girls the ability to support themselves – and their children – adequately into adult life, following the failure of their educational prospects.

Project report: The project successfully launched in March 2024 with the enrolment of the first cohort of 35 girls – 6 trainee bakers, 13 trainee hairdressers and 16 trainee tailors. The girls attend the Global Care Soroti Centre five days per week.

Head of Operations, Steve Wicking, visited the project in March. He said: “It’s great to see the centre being used for this initiative, and I was impressed with how well the girls have settled in. They’re keen to learn new skills and are working hard.” Steve was particularly impressed with the ‘welcome’ cake baked by the baking students!

Children’s stories

Sixteen-year-old *Acham has an 18-month-old daughter called *Anna. They live with Acham’s parents, her brother and 17-year-old sister-in-law, who also has a small baby, on a small plot of land on the outskirts of Soroti.



Acham left school in Primary 5, when schools closed due to Covid. She was not able to return to complete her primary education as her family could no longer afford school fees or equipment. She fell pregnant in 2022, aged 14, and the baby’s father refused to acknowledge her or take any responsibility for her. Before Acham joined the hairdressing course at the Global Care Soroti Centre, she helped

her mother sell grains in the market. This is traditionally seen as a job for an older woman, and Acham was embarrassed to be there and found the work boring.

In contrast, Acham is enjoying the hairdressing training. She walks to the centre each day – one hour each way – and has never missed a session. So far she has learned how to create styles including twists, Kiswahili plaits and cornrows and says she hopes to open her own salon one day.



Eighteen-year-old *Florence left school in Primary 7, the last year of primary school in Uganda, due to Covid. She never returned to the classroom, as her parents couldn’t afford secondary school fees after the pandemic. Prior to joining the tailoring course, Florence stayed at the family home in the village, unemployed. Now she is living with her sister near the Global Care centre, so she can attend her course.

Florence told Head of Operations Steve Wicking that the teachers were good and she was enjoying her course, and was particularly interested in designing dresses. Her parents have already started saving what they can to buy her a sewing machine, in the hope that she will be able to open her own tailoring workshop in the future.

Budget: The total budget for this project over the first 12 months is £11,918. Over three years it is expected to cost £35,755. Thank you to SPAN for your generous support of £2,000 towards the cost of this project. We hope you can see how your generosity is improving the wellbeing and life chances of some extremely vulnerable young people in Uganda.

**Children's names changed to protect identity.*

