WHAT WE DO IN UGANDA

Child of Hope is a Ugandan-led organisation with support from British long-term volunteers. It works to lift families out of poverty in the huge Namatala slum of Mbale.

Its main focus is providing free education, healthcare and welfare support to children from some of the most disadvantaged families (one per family, generally), who receive free nursery and primary education in the Child of Hope School and then either secondary school education or vocational training.

Education is not usually free in Uganda and these are children whose parents cannot afford to send them to school. Without this education, their prospects would be entry into prostitution, crime, lifelong poverty and an early death. Their mothers are encouraged into economic empowerment through our Income Generating Activities (IGA) scheme, which helps them to start small businesses to help their families become financially self-sufficient. The school children are given regular meals and clothing. There is welfare support for their families and foster care for orphans and other vulnerable children.

FEED THE BODY, FEED THE MIND

Children learn better on a full stomach, so daily meals are provided for them at school. Nursery children receive breakfast, and those in the primary classes – together with the neediest nursery children – are also given a cooked lunch. Clean drinking water at school reduces the risk of parasitic infections.
EDUCATION

There were 138 children on roll in the nursery school and 360 children in primary classes in 2019. In addition, 75 older former pupils were supported at local fee-paying secondary schools. At CCP Vocational Training Institute, 22 young people were supported on teaching training, electronic installation, catering, and hairdressing courses.

At Mbale Community College, 9 young people were supported to learn mechanical engineering, masonry works, tailoring, agriculture and carpentry.

Classroom learning at Child of Hope took a new twist as pupils’ learning went global, with a shared live video maths lesson with a class from St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol! The new initiative follows strong links that children from Child of Hope have been developing with children in schools in the UK through letter writing, emails, video calls and fundraising.

School activities: Class work is not the only activity undertaken by the children at our school. They are also involved in games and sports, music, dance and drama, social clubs, gender activities and capacity development workshops; some even volunteer to help on our small farm. These integrated social activities in our mainstream education programmes have created a lovely environment for learning for our children.

Academic performance: In 2019, the top class of our nursery school promoted all the children (100%) to the primary one class for the 2020 academic year. We also had great results for the primary school; all children passed in first and second grades. Of the 29 children who completed their Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE), seven passed in division one and 22 in division two – outstanding results as most of these children would previously have had no education at all.

Staff had a successful 2019 in all the four major departments (Administration, Nursery School, Primary School and Family Support Team) and organised a memorable Christmas party for all the children.
Major Achievements in 2019

Our secondary school construction was welcomed by the children, parents and communities of Namatala, Doko, Namabasa, Nasenyi, Kabwangasi, Kolonyi and Nakaloke. It will ensure that all our children get the best education and are mentored to high standards – which is a great relief for the children, especially the girls. The children in Namabasa and surrounding areas will now walk far shorter distances to access secondary school education.

**Business start-ups:** Another 40 mothers were added to the IGA support programme and received an initial grant (around £26) and business management training. This brought the total number of parents currently on the programme to 324 parents. They received ongoing business education and counselling and were organised into 32 functional groups for empowerment, support allocations and supervision. Many saw their businesses grow and expand, enabling them to buy household assets, purchase land, relocate to better rented accommodation, purchase livestock and pay school fees for other children to go to local schools.

**Foster family placements:** Over 30 vulnerable children (either orphaned or deemed at risk) continued to enjoy the welcome environment of their foster families. Foster parents receive a monthly sum of money to assist in the care of their foster child.

**Community and health education:** The community in our service areas received education in health care and environmental management from our family support teams (health, social workers and IGA). This largely contributed to a reduction in school dropout of teenage girls due to earlier-life pregnancies. It also promoted strong partnership for community development; parents attended our development meetings in large numbers, which led to a further reduction in social crimes because the youth were empowered with life skills.

**Agricultural innovations:** Following the acquisition of 11 acres of agricultural land in 2018, we grew about four tonnes of rice and one tonne of maize in 2019. We hope to obtain an irrigation scheme to provide enough water to grow crops throughout the year.

**Safe water:** Our rainwater harvesting system is very successful, and to ensure that children always have access to enough clean water, we constructed a water well in 2019 to access safe underground water. This maintains a supply of water during drought periods for cooking, cleaning and drinking. At the secondary school site we installed a borehole. Both water projects are to be improved with solar water-pumping devices.

**Pupil graduation:** Students in their last year of vocational training completed their certificated courses. They included electrical installation, carpentry, mechanics, agriculture, tailoring, hairdressing and catering.

**National Examination Sitting Centre:** In the past, our children would trek to another school to sit for their national Primary Leaving Examinations, which was rather difficult for both the school and the children. But in 2019, the Ugandan Ministry of Education approved our school as an examination centre and we started sitting for national examinations in our own school.
The FST is an integrated team with health care staff, social workers and the IGA team. Together, they provide a holistic approach to health and welfare, following up any absences daily and working in the slums to assist pupils and their families when they are ill, struggling or in crisis.

When children are abandoned or they face danger, foster placements are arranged. Fostering is a recent innovation in Uganda and has become the government's intervention of choice, recognised as delivering better outcomes for children. Children that have gone through the trauma of being orphaned often struggle with attendance and often show behavioural difficulties. But continuous partnership between our team, foster parents and the foster children has led to improved attendance and behaviour. Children are provided with medical and health services to give them the best chance to attend school regularly and learn. There is one nurse and two health assistants based at the school. Height and weight are monitored, malaria and other illnesses are treated promptly with medicines, and jiggers (a common parasite) are removed from the children. When in-patient treatment is needed, we pay for this at the nearby Joy Hospice. Mothers are educated in basic hygiene and given family planning advice.

The positive impact on the family of one child being included in our school programme has been demonstrated by Child of Hope and, as a result of the FST’s interventions and support, many parents are now able to pay for siblings to attend other local schools.
Objective compassion is shown in dealing with problems arising from families living in extreme poverty. A thorough understanding of the local community, and preservation of a high reputation within it, are both essential. Prayer and hard work are the cornerstones of everything done by Child of Hope.

IN UGANDA
COH Outreach Uganda is a registered Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in Uganda, which employed around 80 staff during 2019 in Mbale, Eastern Uganda. There are now four arms to Child of Hope; the nursery school, primary school, family support team and the new secondary school (from 2020). All of these programmes are supported and served by the administrative and site management departments. Each section has a manager to oversee it, together with a deputy manager. The executive director and top management team, including advisors, operations manager, support services manager and finance manager, work jointly to ensure high-quality service delivery throughout the organisation.

The schools are founded and owned by Child of Hope Outreach Uganda and are legally obliged to be governed by their own management committees, overseen by a board of directors.

IN THE UK
A team supports the Ugandan operation through a UK registered charity, Child of Hope. This team consists of eight trustees, two part-time paid roles of director and administrator, a part-time fundraiser who applies for grants, and a handful of vital volunteers.

The quality and efficacy of programmes require constant monitoring. This includes regular review of ‘best practice’ (internationally and nationally), followed by regular staff mentoring and supervision, with training, to improve programmes. Child of Hope undertakes daily analysis of costs with scrupulous checking of expenditure.
So, a huge thank you to donors, child sponsors, trusts, churches, schools, businesses, programme sponsors, volunteer fundraisers, cake-bakers and everyone else who helps us achieve all this.

Child of Hope relies completely on the good will of donors, and the result is huge change to individual children’s lives, family lives, and the community as a whole.

**THE COST:**

**Uganda:** Expenditure for our nursery school, primary school, family support team, secondary fees and secondary school construction was £248,043.

**UK:** During 2019, expenditure for administration, monitoring, fundraising, marketing, fees and Ugandan directors visiting the UK was £22,782, just 8.85% of the total income of £257,436.

**THE FUTURE:**

Increased funding would allow us to instigate new and wider-reaching programmes that will produce even greater social impact. We are careful not to ‘spread ourselves too thinly’, but here is a list of things we would have done in 2019 if funding were available. Maybe in 2020, with your help, these will become possible:

- Install electricity and/or solar energy to the secondary school.
- Build a Family Support Team co-ordination centre (Health, Welfare and IGA business development) to accelerate our social care impact.
- Install an irrigation system at our agricultural site for year-long food production to supplement our child feeding programme.
Child of Hope's new secondary school opened in February 2020 with four secondary years S1, S2, S3 and S4. We're excited that our secondary students can now enjoy the same level of quality education as in their nursery and primary years.