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# Community Empowerment Through Youth Employment: A Comparative Study of Social Programs for Youth Job Creation

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# **Community Empowerment through Youth Employment:**

**A comparative study of social programs for youth job creation**

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**Kampala, Mbale, Pader and Hoima, Uganda**  
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## I. Abstract

Entrepreneurial training may be a better means to livelihoods for youth in Uganda today than vocational or traditional education models. Even those with university degrees have difficulties being selected from saturated applicant pools for professional careers; vocational training programs give their otherwise-uneducated or unskilled students the means to an occupation though positions are limited. In traditional education systems or vocational programs, supplementary education encouraging entrepreneurship can help create careers where opportunities are scarce. By mobilizing youth, communities prosper. These activities can even create direct community benefit themselves.

This research observes the processes of both a vocational training model and a social entrepreneurship training model through observing two different organizations (Friends of Orphans and Educate, respectively). Methods used were surveying, interviews, observation, and research done at each organization in order to assess these models for efficiency (whether they were successfully placing students into career fields) as well as observe the benefit contributed to society through these trainings. Some quantitative data was used as support to the findings though most was qualitative, obtained through interviews and observation.

The findings show that while both were able to give youth careers, the entrepreneurial trainings had a higher success rate in doing so. Additionally, being that Educate encourages their students to begin social enterprises, the community impact reached further than that of Friends of Orphans. Among the alumni observed for the study, interventions were put in place to help connect them through different communication media, programs were initialized (at Friends of Orphans), and organizations were better equipped to assess the impact of their programs.

## II. Introduction

Today in Uganda, too many youth have completed schooling, some even recipients of a university degree, only to be left jobless. There simply aren't enough jobs to go around in Uganda. The result is that too many youth are either overqualified, like the vast number of taxi drivers who hold university degrees, or jobless. They are without means of income at an age where they are supposed to be becoming self-sufficient. Further, those who have not had the opportunity for an education are even further marginalized. In response to this lack of available jobs, many are left idling to begin petty trade, fill their time with destructive activities, or simply do nothing and become a burden on their family or community.

For youth, their age is a disadvantage in many ways. They are particularly vulnerable to being left out of employment opportunities because of their lack of experience to bring into the job field. Due to the lack of social security and retirement savings in Uganda, many older job holders carry on their careers as long as possible. Youth have less available. Also, having to begin providing for themselves or new families leaves youth particularly vulnerable to financial instability early on in their adult life, making it harder to recover or save for later.

According to a 2008 World Bank report, Uganda has the highest youth unemployment rate in the world; the country also has the highest youth population. For youths age 15-24, the unemployment rate is at 83 percent; even including those who do have jobs, 93 percent of youths live on less than 2 dollars per day.<sup>1</sup>

The General Entrepreneurship Monitor in 2003 showed Uganda to be the most highly-active nation in enterprising, but Uganda still ranks among the poorest countries in the world. Where entrepreneurship has been shown to grow economies, breed valuable competition, and create jobs, here these effects have not surfaced. Instead, Ugandan entrepreneurial activity pertains mostly to the majority of micro-enterprises dotting the street sides or people simply selling whichever products/resources they have in order to sustain a livelihood, not to create a growing enterprise. If these trends continue, the growth that entrepreneurship can bring to economies will never be realized within Uganda.

Where entrepreneurship has failed to create jobs, vocational training has had some

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<sup>1</sup> Kezio-Musoke, David. "The East African: - News | Uganda Has World's Youngest Population." *The East African: Understanding The Region - Home*. 28 Dec. 2008.

success getting otherwise unskilled people into the workforce. However, it has some inherent faults. In a weak economy where jobs are scarce and the growth of new job slots is dawdling, vocational training is limited by the availability of employment within those skill sets. Without new or growing enterprises, these job markets will never grow either. Further, even with the presence of new enterprises, these markets can easily be saturated at the rates these programs are producing graduates per year. For disadvantaged populations, vocational trainings provide hope where it may otherwise not be; but, the fact is, there are not enough jobs in the long run for all these hopes to be realized.

Therefore, the question to ask is what programs are effective in creating jobs for youth. The problem of youth unemployment needs to be addressed today. Plus, Uganda's weak economy suggests that the problem will continually need to be addressed in the future. Solutions must prove to be creating sufficient incomes for these youth vulnerable to unemployment and its effects, which can be destructive for society. Rather than burden society, youth can easily be mobilized to become project leaders within their communities. By creating community leaders, or simply creating positive change-makers, society benefits. Youth employment helps communities by keeping it's youth from being idle; youth "deployment" for social enterprising can catalyze those youth to give back to their societies, increasing the social impact. Therefore, in this study, ways will be explored for youth to enter labor markets and novel enterprises in order to assess the impacts made on their communities by their mobilization. The question will be whether programs are providing work to their beneficiaries and how this employment or "deployment" effects the greater community.

### III. Methodology

The research for the project was carried out via two internships. The first internship carried out was with Educate, an organization training Advanced Level secondary school students in social entrepreneurship skills. The other was with Friends of Orphans (FRO) which gives vocational training as one of many services to former child soldiers, orphans, child mothers, and those who are handicapped. Responsibilities to each of the programs internships actually enabled the data to be collected more easily. By being an official representative of the organizations, beneficiaries were much easier to access and gather together quickly.

At Educate, the surveyor's responsibilities were to gather information from alumni and current students about last year's launch party which served as the official kick start to the young entrepreneurs' projects (from alumni only) and opinions concerning the students' preferences on what to include on a website for Educate scholars. This information was gathered via separate surveys for each topic (see Appendix for a copy of the surveys given).

Also at Educate, further data was collected, with permission from Educate, from the students about their projects. The goal was to assess the intended longevity of the students' social careers as well as identify their entrepreneurial ambitions. The dynamics of the alumni program were also assessed to decide how efficient the program was in reaching it's alumni and benefiting them.

Friends of Orphans mentioned that they encourage freedom with their interns' projects, probably due to the lack of personnel available to guide an internship (especially during the exam period going on coincidentally with research).<sup>2</sup> Attempting to create an alumni network, research was collected by getting in touch with the alumni available to assess whether they had found a job and whether they were satisfied with their living condition.

After having trouble in getting hold of the alumni, the project changed. Instead, time was spent developing the current students to be prepared for life beyond graduation. A more proactive approach was made to keeping the current students within reach of the program via creating an agenda for an alumni meeting in 2012 and orchestrating a guidebook to stimulate their financial preparations. This involved interaction with the students and teachers to train both on how to use and encourage these programs. Through it all, the teachers were the most helpful in the execution of the internship being the sole linkages to information about their former students as well as the personnel who would be helping implement use of the new guidebooks.

Time was split between the two programs almost evenly with three weeks being designated to Educate research and two and half weeks being dedicated to that of FRO. Having six weeks to do the research was already a short amount of time, adding to it the fact that time needed to be split between the two programs. Despite any difficulties though, the contrast was a vital enhancement of the research.

Research started on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011, while preparations began the previous week. From

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<sup>2</sup> Friends of Orphans, as well as Educate, failed to explain that during the internship period, many of their activities would be halted due to final exams. This created further time constraints during research.

the week of the 4<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, research was done with Educate in Kawempe and Kansanga (at the Educate head offices) in Kampala and in Mbale, Eastern Uganda. From the 11<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, time was spend working at Friends of Orphans in Pader, Northern Uganda. After the long Easter break, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, research was done in the western town of Hoima again for Educate. April 29<sup>th</sup>, an attempt was made to visit Kyangwali, however circumstances did not allow for research to take place.<sup>3</sup> The last week of the practicum was meant to be spent preparing for/analyzing data from an annual meeting in Kampala for the alumni of Educate. Due to other trainings, the meeting was rescheduled from Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, until the following Tuesday, which put it out of scope of the time allowed for research.<sup>4</sup>

For both research tasks, surveys were passed out during face-to-face interactions with the students (either alumni or currently enrolled) and tangible copies were collected. For Educate, three surveys were given: the Launch Survey, the Data Collection for Online Database, and another general survey asking how entrepreneurship relates to them as they progress/have progressed out of the program. While collecting these three surveys, informal interviews were conducted with most of the students about their business projects and what skills they have gained from Educate. These interviews took place solely between the interviewer and scholars (either alumni or current).

At FRO, a survey was given to the current students, with help of a translator for some students, to assess their entrepreneurial qualities as a contrast with Educate. Alumni were strictly interacted with via interview with a translator. Many of the alumni did not know English well enough or could not pick out the words from an American accent so conversation via translator was an easier way to get the information during these interviews.<sup>5</sup> No current students were interviewed as it was exam time during the internship and the responsibility to the organization was to interact with the alumni instead. The brief survey given to the students to assess capacity for leadership and effects of FRO was a supplement for this gap. (See FRO Current Student Assessment in Appendix.)

Observation methods were also used as a way to gather information. With programs constantly trying to portray themselves in a positive light and students wanting to satisfy anyone

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<sup>3</sup> The surveyor had money stolen which did not leave her with enough to finance the rest of her stay there.

<sup>4</sup> While the researcher was able to attend, the time frame did not allow for the results of this meeting to fit within this research summary.

<sup>5</sup> Translators were Okello Yovan and Tama Pastore.

working for the program with their answers, observations became important in some of the areas of research to keep these biases in check.

*Challenges:*

The biggest challenge in collecting the research was balancing two projects at once. Although this challenge was foreseen, the addition of even more time constraints, due to final examinations being held coincidentally, drastically limited the available time with the organizations and their students. A rapid program for the first few weeks of the research was put in place to conduct the surveys, interviews, and meetings before the approaching holiday break (beginning either the week before or the week of Easter, continuing into the latter weeks of May). For Educate specifically, the alumni were pursued in the latter part of the research so that time with the current students would not be interfered with. Perhaps too many interviews needed to be done in too short of time.

Despite the scheduling problems with current students created by the ongoing exams, alumni of the programs did not have many problems with time constraints. Instead, their trouble was more logistical. It was somewhat difficult to round up the graduates from their respective homes or village with rising transportation costs. Students with less economic flexibility were left out more than those who had the funds to travel.<sup>6</sup> Again using the crutch of the internship, without being connected with the actual organizations themselves, the students who made the effort to travel and meet for interviews may not have felt so compelled.

Contacting the students was not easy either. Often, those who could be contacted represented a specialized sample. At FRO, where so many alumni were without even a mobile phone contact, it was difficult contacting them quickly, with only two weeks for the internship, or even reaching them at all. At Educate, the surveys could have been quickly distributed via email, however, most scholars did not have email addresses. Of those that did, the fact they had the access as compared to others created a biased sample (mostly socioeconomic). In the end, email was utilized to collect data, though many of the addresses were either incorrect or out of date, creating further barriers.

Due to time constraints, as well as relief in the high cost of travel to the budget, Lira and

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<sup>6</sup> Many of these same difficulties were reflected when talking to alumni about their own meetings. At Educate, the District Change Makers Association lacked members due to travel costs. At FRO, many alumni had similar problems or could not find the time to get off work in order to attend such a meeting.

Kyangwali were not included as a destination for Educate research. Moreover, in Pader District, alumni for FRO were only able to be reached within the town council. Many live in the rural sub-counties but transportation costs along with restricted contact means forced these populations out of the research sample. Limited time at all sites also favored students closer to the towns or with the means to transport themselves there. Therefore, some of the more rural, economically depressed alumni were left out of the surveying process for both organizations.

Another limit was the availability of existing data on each programs alumni. At FRO, there was no documented information about the graduates and at Educate there was barely any consistent data collected. Few teachers had properly returned the completed End of Term Surveys for their Educate scholars, but many did not. Only three classes could be fully accounted for in the data collection. This left a large gap in the available information about the alumni's project which meant time had to be spent finding out what the projects were before and rather than time spent deciding which to focus on. In an extreme display of the lack of information, difficulties at FRO led to an active intervention executed during the internship. With both organizations the alumni sample quantitatively was lackluster, though the information collected still yielded quality data.<sup>7</sup>

#### IV. Justification

Both organizations aiming to provide job opportunities to youth, Educate and Friends of Orphans, are donor funded. The two were each contacted separately prior to the internship period with the research topic already conceptualized. In all economies there exist employers and employees; naturally, some youth will grow up to make jobs, some will fill them, and sadly, in the current economic state in Uganda, many will be left fending for themselves otherwise. This study gains a dual perspective on available approaches to the problem due to its observation of two projects. By studying these two approaches, strengths and weaknesses are exposed. While vocational training can equip students with the skills to pursue a self-employed career, entrepreneurial training *necessitates* a self-start. Therefore, both *can* create new jobs for youth, or rather enable them to create jobs for themselves; but it needs to be assessed which is actually doing so.

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<sup>7</sup> Though it may not accurately represent the diversity of the true population.

While youth empowerment, employment, and community welfare may not seem closely connected, the areas are intertwined concepts within this research. Mobilizing youth for community purposes is a very strong force toward a society's well-being. It is said that Uganda has the youngest population in the world and that youth make up 51% of Uganda's total population. Not only does this put young workers at risk of falling into saturated labor markets, but it hurts those who invest in the fees for school through university only to find that getting a job was still not certain. Youth and their societies suffer when their energy is not utilized. Also, they have the capacity to make powerful changes in their communities if they feel empowered enough to do so. Therefore, the social impact of each program will be identified and assessed for their levels of impact.

The first organization, Educate has programs in secondary schools to teach students leadership skills and eventually how to start up a social enterprise. With twenty-four partner schools spread across Kampala (Kawempe, Makyinde, Busiro, and Wakiso areas), Hoima, Lira, Mbale, and Kyangwali Refugee Camp, this organization has a deliberate relevance to entrepreneurship.

If new enterprises breed new livelihoods for those operating them, this program is creating jobs for youth. Essentially, being teachers of entrepreneurship, they take an alternative approach to most classroom learning. Aiming to pass along the skills needed to start business enterprises, their approach encourages the students to be creative and expressive. This program's emphasis on innovation encourages students to get involved in novel business projects. In the long run, innovation can contribute toward diversified labor markets which protects against saturated job fields. No other trainings have the power to help diversify labor markets like entrepreneurial training.

Among other things they also identify community problems and aim to solve those problems. The social benefit of their program is inherent within the objectives. They seek to teach scholars how to bring about positive change in the community which is either profitable or sustainable. In theory, this method of "deploying" youth is most beneficial to the community, and therefore, worthy of heavy observation within the study.

The second organization, Friends of Orphans, is located in Pader Town Council within Northern Uganda. FRO takes in formerly abducted child soldiers, young mothers, orphans, and other vulnerable youth to offer them a number of services. Among the many services offered, the

Atim Ki Koma program trains these youth free of cost in seven areas of vocation--Carpentry & Joinery, Motor Vehicle Technology, Brick Laying & Concrete Production, Catering, Tailoring & Garment Making, Computer Sciences, and Welding. FRO differs from other youth vocational training programs because they target an even further disadvantaged group; their beneficiaries are former child soldiers, orphans, child mothers, or youth with handicaps. All children in this program are especially susceptible to unemployment because many have not completed school due to the more than twenty-year conflict in Northern Uganda, among other factors. Often, a multitude of difficulties in the students' past has prohibited their normal progression through school into a livelihood.

The program was chosen for its vocational training component, as well as to observe the social impact of its programs. With regards to community empowerment, preparing disadvantaged youth for job placement is in societies interests. Giving these students skills to join a profession is providing them with opportunities for jobs that would not be there otherwise, due to their limited schooling. FRO is not creating jobs themselves, nor preparing students for entry into novel professions, but they are providing them with skills to join an established and secure job field, granted they find placement.

FRO's social impact measurement will account for the changes created through their holistic approach toward social reintegration (for former child soldiers) and psychological support (for all students) Additionally, it will attempt to measure the further impact made upon their dependents, families, and the greater whole of their community.

Although the organizations target two vastly different populations, in different geographical areas, the differences add to the diversity of the sample and help to apply the data to a greater whole. FRO targets disadvantaged youth in the Northern Uganda district of Pader; Educate operates in four major cities in the central and southern regions within schools of all socioeconomic backgrounds. While FRO may have a more specific, or even exclusive, population of trainees than other vocational training programs, most vocational training programs by nature also deal with disadvantaged groups (who have been kept from schooling for other reasons like extreme poverty, for example). The groups combined make a diverse population. Therefore, the beneficiaries of both programs provide a sufficient sample for the intended research.

While either of the internships could have easily been integrated to fill the six-week research period on its own, the comparison was vital to the researcher's objectives. Both

programs will be juxtaposed; the differences, one being a vocational training program while the other focuses on entrepreneurship development, are important to observe side by side. In trying to see how youth will fit into job markets, the programs each represent a distinguished school of thought in approaching the dilemma.

Again, the internships were necessary for positioning to obtain the research. Without the internships at each organization, contacting these students would have been exhausting in the time frame given, especially within their delicate time schedules preparing for exams and the logistical trouble reaching out to alumni. The internships also allowed for better access to information at each organizations offices. Each program was more apt to giving out information when work was directly affecting their operations.

## V. Objectives

To learn about the approaches, specifically the program models, of Friends of Orphans and Educate

To assess the efficiency of the processes of connecting youth with job opportunities

To examine the extent to which the two programs have created social impact for the beneficiaries and their communities

To propose ways to improve the business practices of the alumni within both programs

## VI. Findings and Analysis

## ***Friends of Orphans:***

### *Program Model:*

Aiming toward giving hope to those without any job skills, Friends of Orphans (FRO) prepares disadvantaged youth for jobs with a wide variety of training courses. The processes have changed over time with restricted donations and high levels of demand for the services provided though the objectives have remained. In these objectives, FRO aims to prepare their students in a certain occupation alongside other supportive mental health services. The job-training process is not watertight, specifically with regards to the transition into labor markets as some may be slipping out of sight after graduation. Many are slipping out of sight because they did not find a job within their area of training and have returned to the village losing connections with the program and former classmates.

The application process begins by reaching out to possible applicants via radio.<sup>8</sup> During the application process, students are interviewed by a panel of FRO administrators and teachers in order to identify those students in need of the services provided.<sup>9</sup> They limit entrants to formerly abducted child soldiers, child mothers, orphans, or handicaps.<sup>10</sup> Once chosen, the admitted students pick out a course to study in the Atim Ki Koma Vocational Training Program.

'Atim Ki Koma' means "Let me do it myself" in the Acholi language native to Northern Uganda, which is an accurate reflection of the aims of the program. In their own words:

"Friends of Orphans is mandated to provide social protection of poor vulnerable children and communities. Such children include orphans, former abducted child soldiers, those that toil under exploitative conditions of labour as well as those that suffer sexual abuse and other forms of discrimination."<sup>11</sup>

Within Atim Ki Koma, they are given counseling, financial assistance (including housing and meals), as well as training in their respective course, all free of cost.

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<sup>8</sup> "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>9</sup> "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>11</sup> Obaita, Charles L. *Friends of Orphans: Strategic Plan 2007-2011*. Rep. Pader Town Council, Uganda: Friends of Orphans, 2006. Print.

The money supporting the program is provided by donors either through sponsoring the organization directly or often in sponsorship of a specific student. In the past, these sponsored students have even received further support such as start-up materials for their business from these donors.<sup>12</sup>

In their Strategic Plan for 2007-2011, some programs were intended to be implemented, but donor funds have decreased. A micro-credit component was supposed to be implemented as a way to improve the economic well-being of those involved with Friends of Orphans, even beyond the Atim Ki Koma training center. It was meant to provide seed grants for income-generating activities (IGAs), refer beneficiaries to other service outlets, and monitor with technical support.<sup>13</sup> In fact, within the first three years, 752 million Ugandan shillings were put into this enterprise.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, funds dried up and the enterprise was too expensive and inefficient to manage.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, adjustments have had to be made for efficiency. At first FRO offered training in only Tailoring/Sewing to child mothers and Carpentry to other abductees.<sup>16</sup> Since then, the program's courses offered have more than tripled. These adjustments have helped save precious donor funding, though the overall organization has functioned with success and kept the same general practices since it's founding in 2002.

In the two-year program<sup>17</sup>, the students learn their respective courses via both the theory and application of their vocation.<sup>18</sup> During this time, group counseling is offered by a number of staff members including teachers and the matron of the student dorms. Some students are counseled and taken in as Peace Keepers/Peace Officers to help resolve conflicts within the villages.

Alumni are ultimately responsible for placing themselves into positions of employment. They either filled jobs or created their own enterprises. In the beginning of the program's operations, when micro-finance was available to graduates, students were able to receive start-up

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<sup>12</sup> "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>13</sup> Obaita, Charles L. *Friends of Orphans: Strategic Plan 2007-2011*. Rep. Pader Town Council, Uganda: Friends of Orphans, 2006. Print.

<sup>14</sup> Obaita, Charles L. *Friends of Orphans: Strategic Plan 2007-2011*. Rep. Pader Town Council, Uganda: Friends of Orphans, 2006. Print.

<sup>15</sup> Obaita, Charles L. *Friends of Orphans: Strategic Plan 2007-2011*. Rep. Pader Town Council, Uganda: Friends of Orphans, 2006. Print.

<sup>16</sup> Obaita, Charles L. *Friends of Orphans: Strategic Plan 2007-2011*. Rep. Pader Town Council, Uganda: Friends of Orphans, 2006. Print.

<sup>17</sup> Three years are designated for the Computer program.

<sup>18</sup> "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

capital that they would not have otherwise.<sup>19</sup> Today, now that the program has been abolished, students do not usually have access to capital. A few graduating classes at FRO, have received start-up benefits from FRO<sup>20</sup>, though it is the year's available funds that determine whether those hand outs are given.

Availability of start-up capital was the most determinant factor in the type of employment assumed. Generally all alumni complained about insufficient income--whether employed, unemployed, or self-employed<sup>21</sup>; though some were clearly in better financial positions than others. Those with start-up capital/materials were better off than their less fortunate counterparts, bringing in salaries without ceilings.<sup>22</sup> The two most successful alumni interviewed were in self-started enterprises which had enough capital to get off the ground. Their employed peers were making significantly less per month; the median salary for those employed was 30000 Ugandan shillings per month, less than 1000 a day.<sup>23</sup> Further difficulties arose when their employers would not pay on time.

So, those who were provided start-up materials were more often self-employed or in favorable business partnerships, and coincidentally, more financially secure, though this wasn't always the case. One woman was provided a sewing machine by FRO after her graduation but still didn't have the money to buy materials. Therefore, she was left without money to start a business. Today, she complained about there being too much competition in town to enter into the market as an independent business woman. Many graduates, like her, were not able to find work after graduation and suffer further because of a high number of dependents. Especially women have high numbers of people who they must financially secure. The mean for those interviewed was 3.4 dependents.<sup>24</sup>

Other than being out-of-work, many were out-of-touch. After graduation, many leave the program without means of communicating back to Friends of Orphans. Major problems arose in tracking down many of the alumni which is due to a myriad of reasons. When questioned about contact with other alumni, many suggested that they spoke with those around but all of these

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<sup>19</sup> Strategic Plan and Ricky

<sup>20</sup> Interviews with Alumni at Friends of Orphans and "Interview with Staff at Friends of Orphans: Anywar Ricky Richard." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>21</sup> Interviews with Alumni at Friends of Orphans.

<sup>22</sup> Interviews with Alumni at Friends of Orphans.

<sup>23</sup> Interviews with Alumni at Friends of Orphans.

<sup>24</sup> Interviews with Alumni at Friends of Orphans.

people were located within the Pader Town Council. While some alumni were able to be reached, only those representing three departments were represented (Catering, Tailoring, and Welding). The alumni most easily contacted were Catering graduates working within the town council of Pader.

With a wide array of jobs available, many Catering students were successful in the transition to a workplace.<sup>25</sup> One was able to open her own business making breads to sell from her home. Others had jobs though they expressed a wide array of feelings toward their positions.

Tailoring too had moderate success among alumni interviewed in livelihood creation. Oddly, 2006 and 2008 graduates had received sewing machines to start-up their businesses and had a better transition into job markets because of them. The need for start-up materials is apparent, graduation years shouldn't dictate receipt of benefits.

Many had switched jobs (specific reasons unknown); many were unhappy with the late or insufficient payments; one had to quit working because her husband needed her at home; though one interviewed expressed complete satisfaction with her employer who was helping to pay her son's medical bills.

Only one Welding graduate was able to be reached. While he was currently employed, and happier with his pay than others in the previous groups, he divulged information that no others in his class had been so fortunate in finding a job. As far as he knew, from graduation and contact with former Welding students since then, none were employed with welding jobs. The fact that the Welding teacher was not able to provide the workplaces of any of his former students, only supported this evidence.

#### *Evaluation of Process:*

The main weakness seen in this process was the lack of training preparing the students for the transition between training and potential job markets. Because the microcredit component offered previously is no longer available for students to utilize, they are left without means to start their own business. Without preparing students to own their businesses, employment is the only option. Therefore, it is clear that FRO was not directly *creating* new jobs for the beneficiaries; instead, the students became equipped with job *skills* so that they could potentially hold a position.

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<sup>25</sup> This by no means asserts that a high percentage of the students find jobs. With the alumni reached for interviews, the very fact that they had a job made them accessible so no conclusions could be made based on any statistics collected about their ability to find employment.

Additionally, if positions aren't open, then the education was in vain. Merely having skill sets in a given area does not necessarily mean that one has a livelihood. Employment of the skills is necessary, though in Pader very hard to find, due to the small size of the district and it's economic depravity. Utilization of skills learned is the key determinant of FRO's success. Often without start-up capital, beneficiaries are left waiting for a job to open, lying vulnerable to financial instability.

The lack of communication to and among the alumni is detrimental to the program. During the surveying, contact was nearly impossible. The geographical area of the alumni is so large that verbal surveying was far too difficult: transport costs would be high, coordination would be difficult without sound communication systems, and often people do not have the financial freedom to take time off of work to meet. Further, most did not have telephone numbers to be reached at. Without a formalized network, communication is lost to report back to the program and alumni are left without support systems.

If FRO had the communication in place to know that jobs were not being filled, then an adjustment could be made to the program. However, by not knowing these weaknesses, changes cannot be made to improve upon them. The lack of information accessible to this research project only demonstrates this gap in FRO's process. The truth is, alumni need to be accounted for in order to assess the worth of the program.

Despite moderate rates of employment seen in the data collected with alumni, other factors suggest that many students are not so fortunate and that the sample was very biased. But this is the self-perpetuating product of such research. Contacting alumni in order to see how well-connected they were obviously produced skewed results; but conclusions can still be drawn. Logically, taking into account the economic state of those in the Pader District, those in Motor Vehicle Technology, Welding, and Computer Skills may graduate at a faster rate than jobs becoming available within their areas. For instance, within Pader town council, there were two internet café's and only a handful of other businesses operating with computer technology (mostly printing services). Within these internet and printing shops, none were hiring employees. Of course, the geographical location of many students' homes exist outside of Pader town; however, these areas are typically more rural, therefore being less likely to have such computer services or jobs available in these markets.

It is possible that without a job opportunity available that some students could still start

their own business in their respective field. Most often the problem was that start up costs are too high. The most extreme example, again, is that of students in the Computer course. Especially for these students described above, it is almost impossible for any of them to gain funds to buy their own computer. Even if the group saved to invest in a communal computer, the process of saving would be very demanding on their meager finances. Without jobs open and without start-up, the education they receive has no place to be practiced.

For other courses, jobs may not be as scarce and capital costs may not be as high, but graduating 20-30 students each year is flooding some job markets in Pader. Even with Tailoring, a high-demand business, alumni expressed that there was too much competition created in town for their new enterprises to enter into.<sup>26</sup>

Students do enjoy the process though. 84% expressed that training lessons were their favorite part about FRO (as opposed to the teachers or their classmates). Given the supportive community provided at FRO by both these groups (assuming they did not chose training as simply the least disliked option), the trainings must be highly valued by these students.

At FRO, many current students expressed the desire to become a leader (change-creator in the community) as well as to own their own business. In observation of the process at FRO, such desires were not being fulfilled. In the survey given, over 85% of students at FRO indicated they wanted to be leader in their community. All but one student said they felt their community would listen to them and all but three of the fifty seven surveyed felt they were capable of making change in the community. Students feel empowered to catalyze change in their communities. Despite these figures, FRO did not have programs for strengthening leadership skills.

With regards to business training, not all want to work under a boss. Over 95% indicated that one day they would like to own their own business, though no interventions are being sought to create entrepreneurs. Additionally, they possess an internalized loci of control which is a key characteristic of entrepreneurs: 91% of the students surveyed attributed their future to themselves<sup>27</sup>; only 54% attributed their future to God; and 47% were a split between the two.<sup>28</sup> The program was focused on training individuals to pursue pre-defined career choices, not to create their own job through a self-run enterprise and not to create community leaders.

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<sup>26</sup> "Interview with Alumni at Friends of Orphans: Ajok Alice." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>27</sup> They were to pick two options from a list. Of those who chose themselves, they also either chose their boss (1 vote, 1.7%); their family (20 votes, 35%); God (25 votes, 45.6%); or only marked the one option of "Myself" (5 votes, 8.7%).

<sup>28</sup> The students were asked to pick two determinants from a list of the following: Myself, My Family, God, FRO, Government, and My Boss.

Adjustments must be made.

The root of this gap may be the emphasis put on more holistic approaches to well-being rather than strictly how to create livelihoods for these individuals. After all, the program was put into place to provide support for a disadvantaged population. It may be that when such a student is focusing on reintegrating into society they cannot develop leadership skills at the same time. In other words, it may be that by offering group-based psycho therapy, they become part of a supportive community.

Naturally, individuals must feel a member of a community before they can feel confident enough to make changes within it, and FRO may be prioritizing this process. True, they are succeeding in this reintegration. In the survey, thirty eight of fifty seven indicated they felt FRO had changed them. When asked in more detail about their behavior characteristics from before attending FRO until the time of the survey, twenty nine students indicated changes in their behavior while twenty four marked no such metamorphosis.<sup>29</sup> Of those twenty nine who marked changes, nineteen either dropped a negative characteristic or gained a positive one; seven indicated negative changes (either obtaining a negative characteristic or abandoning a positive one); and three marked changes which could not be judged to be positive or negative.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, some students felt behavioral changes and although more general, many indicated they underwent some change at FRO. So, impact is being made upon the students. What needs to be further addressed is the sustainable support of providing these students with careers. In this attempt, many strides must be taken to better train the students for life beyond graduation.

#### *Community Impact:*

FRO is experiencing success in preparing disadvantaged youth for jobs beyond graduation and creating positive changes within their students' communities. Many youth, who otherwise would have no skills to offer in the workplace have been empowered and employed through their training process. These youth also learn important lessons in peace-keeping and group support through counseling. Learning goes beyond menial tasks or simple skill acquisition. Their holistic approach toward reintegrating child soldiers and supporting vulnerable youth creates a significant social impact.

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<sup>29</sup> Four were outliers who left either one or both parts of the question blank.

<sup>30</sup> "Survey for Friends of Orphans Students" Responses

First, the nature of their program breeds a community of support. The students help counsel each other, with teachers too, so that these youth who may feel outcast in other environments at least have the support of their peers and the staff. While these personal benefits may not be counted as a societal impact, the reintegration of these individuals is no doubt important so that this population can participate in their community and contribute without thoughts that they're still outcast.

Second, by giving out free education, food, and board to the students, they are preventing the financial strain from being on whoever would support these students otherwise. Due to the program supporting so many orphans, there is no telling if some of these students would ever be able to afford the fees necessary to attend any further schooling or trainings. FRO is making a financial contribution to the community from the sponsored scholarship of the students and the board-funding granted to them as well.

Last, the participation of child mothers in the program means that there is a tangible chain of beneficiaries; these children are dependent on their mothers who would not have had skills to offer for a livelihood otherwise. For every child mother within the program there is at least two beneficiaries who can be counted. In many cases, even more dependents need their financial assistance as can be seen by the average number of dependents within the alumni contacted-- 3.375 people. So, support goes beyond just the students.

While it cannot be clear exactly what effect these new jobs have on society, it can be argued that they are at least providing a service in their area. By distributing services into the more rural areas, costs are saved in expending the resources getting services from town centers.

#### *Recommendations:*

FRO can work to equip it's students with further skills to compliment the education given and give them the power to create their own career if jobs are not available. Further, with regard to community impact, job creation means that another was created, even leaving the initial job opening vacant for another to pursue. So, two benefit from a job created besides just one or possibly more with each new job created.

In the wider application, job *creation* may have better benefits to society. The responses of the survey were staggering with how many students desired to own their own business one day. If FRO wanted to address this gap there are ways for them to adjust easily to this need without

changing their program entirely. By complimenting skills training with business management trainings, students graduating would not be limited by job positions available.

In addition, the desire the students had toward leadership ought to be minded as well. By offering these trainings, the students would feel more empowered, granted they are in a position to assert leadership in the community (ie. they are accepted by the community). If both these positions were more encouraged by the program, community leaders and business owners, the programs impact would naturally multiply as they create change in their community.

To increase the sustainability of the program, students ought to be taught business practices simultaneously with their skills training in order to allow them an option for self-employment if jobs are not available. This involves breeding self-starting, resourceful, business-savvy students which could help the students not only in starting their own businesses but help push them to obtain necessary capital, therefore sustaining themselves post-graduation. By doing so, FRO would save resources expended in having to help link the students with available jobs and empower the students to monitor themselves.

Being one of many services offered at FRO, it must be weighted whether job placement is even at the forefront of the programs priorities. The reintegration of the students, from marginalization to participation within society, seems to be the main concern of the program. However, the resources expelled to train these students ought not to be wasted on poor execution. Without knowing exact figures, the lack of data on alumni whereabouts is the first gap which needs to be corrected in avoiding this problem.

The students, beyond feeling the benefits of the group therapy, do gain the skills necessary toward providing livelihoods for themselves. Leaders or community change-creators may even be created in the process on their own. Leaving the students to develop these skills naturally though is leaving out the great proportion who desire to be leaders. Creating these types of training programs would add value to FROs process by creating more self-starting individuals. In addition, it would further validate Atim Ki Koma's entire process because if leaders were created to lead communities or own their own business, the objectives of the program would be met. Even greater community impact would be made.

### ***At Educate:***

#### *Program Model:*

By identifying and training potential leaders within their communities, Educate's training

process breeds self-starting social entrepreneurs. Students are selected after completing an application form and a one-on-one interview.<sup>31</sup> Within this process, Educate looks for potential students based on their perceived capacity for leadership and the passion they display toward making changes in their community.<sup>32</sup>

If a student describes in the application his or her involvement within family activities or domestic projects, this is not weighed as heavily as if they were to be participating in those of the community. A girl who helps her mother with work does is less desired as a potential student than a boy who helped to stop a rape involving those outside of his family, for instance.<sup>33</sup> These applications are given only at Educate partner schools, of which there are twenty-four in all.

At most schools, the Educate class enrollment is around twenty students, though there are cases of some schools having only three students and others having thirty.<sup>34</sup> With the success of the program, there is a mission to expand enrollment.

For the first year of the two-year program, the students are taught leadership skills to breed confidence and internalize their locus of control.<sup>35</sup> Also, at each partner school there is a student-run Social Entrepreneurship Club to compliment the Educate course. Here, first year students are linked with second years as well as those outside of the program; they're encouraged to start group projects within the club. Social Entrepreneurship Clubs have nonexclusive membership so that other students can participate as well.<sup>36</sup>

The second year of the program is dedicated to formulating a socially responsible project plan. From the beginning, students are challenged to begin formulating novel ideas for their potential social projects. Educate attempts to breed creativity in the students alongside the skills they acquire in leadership and project planning. At the end of this second year, students are required to turn in a business plan for implementing their projects. Many even begin these projects before completing the program.

Currently, Educate is working to inspire more creative thinking in their scholars, which they believe leads to innovative business projects. In speaking with mentors in the program, cracking the shell of their students imaginations is often difficult. They attributed this difficulty to the

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<sup>31</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>32</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>33</sup> An example provided by Solomon Kayiwa in an informal interview at Educate headquarters.

<sup>34</sup> Alumni Database Spreadsheet (See Appendix)

<sup>35</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Brendan Sullivan." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>36</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Otim Gerald." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

Ugandan educational model.<sup>37</sup> To unveil their imaginative qualities, different games and activities are done that challenge the students to do something new and individual. For instance, at Mbale High School during the Educate class, students were taken outside to play a game which involved molding something out of an imaginary ball of clay, using gestures to give clues about the item. Although the mentor explained that everyone ought to come up with new objects to “mold” many students copied those before them or did not know what to do with such an open-ended task.

Once graduated from the program with their business plans assembled and ready to be implemented, the students attend an Alumni Launch where they gain further resources for starting their projects, while becoming part of the alumni network.<sup>38</sup> Many alumni with the resources to travel to headquarters and worthy business projects are welcomed toward additional trainings in a number of areas. Here, they learn about new business practices, innovative techniques (like solar energy), etc.<sup>39</sup>

The alumni network has ten elected leaders. Alumni leader meetings are held once every two months to discuss projects, receive further trainings, and communicate information between Educate and alumni not present. Educate has a lot of difficulty reaching the nearly 400 alumni due to transport costs, mobile phone costs, and lack of other communication infrastructure available. These leaders bridge that gap, somewhat. In addition, all leaders participate in District Change Makers Associations within their respective locations.<sup>40</sup> These associations were put in place so that alumni can cooperate on group projects within their areas on top of their own individual projects. They experience some similar difficulties getting the alumni together, though the costs are lessened being regionally located.

Further, alumni hold meetings for their districts within their own time schedules to communicate about projects and reinforce communication lines among themselves and with Educate.

Many alumni have started projects since graduation. Of 334 alumni surveyed, 257 had project ideas (many having more than one<sup>41</sup>), and 122 have projects already implemented. This statistic fails to represent the number of total projects though since so many alumni have multiple

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<sup>37</sup> “Interview with Staff at Educate: Otim Gerald.” Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>38</sup> “Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon.” Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>39</sup> “Interview with Staff at Educate: Brendan Sullivan.” Interview by Stacey L. Nelson./Also, information was observed (and confirmed) at Educate headquarters.

<sup>40</sup> “Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon.” Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>41</sup> Some even involving income-generating projects to finance other social projects.

endeavors. Out of eleven formally interviewed, there were 18 projects between them.<sup>42</sup> All projects fall under the categories of social enterprise or income-generation for a social project; in other words, all have social goals.

Among the surveyed scholars, an incredible number indicated positive feelings toward themselves as entrepreneurs, community leaders, and the potential for their entrepreneurial characteristics to continue throughout their lifetime. While the survey sample was small<sup>43</sup>, when asked “Do you plan to be an entrepreneur for your career?” All Educate alumni indicated ‘Yes’. When asked for an indication of how long this career would last, ten of the eleven respondents said that the career would last for the rest of their life. Even the one outlier provided an ambiguous answer of “After university” which could have easily meant to imply the same longevity in enterprising.<sup>44</sup>

When asked if they considered themselves entrepreneurs all indicated ‘Yes’; similarly, when asked if entrepreneurs play an important role in society all agreed. In response to whether their current projects could provide enough of a salary in the future, nine of the eleven thought the salaries would be sufficient and eight of nine said they could continue operations alongside school or other employment.

#### *Evaluation of process:*

Throughout observation of this process, the flow from potential leader to empowered change-maker was apparent within the various students participating. Their holistic approach in breeding leadership qualities alongside the other trainings truly emboldened the students. Continuing to empower the students through the alumni network, Educate was also adding value to the process while preserving benefit to the students. The major flaw seen was that the alumni network was not easy for some to have access to; therefore, full participation is impossible and some students may suffer from losing out on alumni programs.

Having a well-thought out plan to approaching the problem of youth unemployment, the organization identifies potential leaders and gives them tools to prosper. Any failures, therefore,

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<sup>42</sup> Two of the alumni had three projects between both of them which were not yet implemented and therefore were not counted in the total. The total only represented already implemented projects.

<sup>43</sup> The relevant survey took long in getting clearance from the Educate organization.

<sup>44</sup> “Educate Alumni Entrepreneurial Measurement” Waniaye Swale’s Response to Question 8

can usually be attributed to the participating (or rather non-participating) individual.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the major weakness of the program is simply when the aims are not realized--meaning that the student did not create a novel enterprise with a social objective. Fortunately, this is not the usual outcome. The organization intends to breed entrepreneurs not only for the implementation of a social project but for a life time of change-creating, leadership, and employment for these youth. Indeed they're intending to do so based on the survey responses. Empowerment of these individuals becomes a natural outcome of Educate's activities.

Even though students are required to turn in a business plan, some of these projects may not fall into Educate's intended framework of being "novel", "socially-oriented", or "income-generating".<sup>46</sup> Specifically, the program sometimes fails to foster creativity in its beneficiaries.<sup>47</sup> Working in close conjunction with Ugandan educational models, prone to having students regurgitate information thus inhibiting their creative outputs, Educate must work to change these conditioned responses.

Another problem students run into often is lack of capital. Educate has explored the idea of opening a microfinance company to lend to it's scholars, though does not have the means to do so currently.<sup>48</sup> In the past, the idea was set aside because providing start-up money was not a sustainable task for Educate to execute for it's members.<sup>49</sup> Having so many problems getting initial funding, extra funds could not be allocated. However, the idea has resurfaced as so many students are without initial capital to begin their projects alongside new grants available for organizations advancing the principles of entrepreneurship.<sup>50</sup> Having their own microfinance company would better allow for them to provide sustainable services to their members, without incurring the responsibility of having students lend from and possibly default on a loan given by a third-party.

While the alumni network as a broad whole is functioning in a self-sustaining way, a few alumni are not participating due to lack of motivation, costs of transport to meetings, or other factors. Because of the number of troubles coordinating the alumni logistically, these students may

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<sup>45</sup> Sometimes failure to complete the objectives of the program comes because of students' time constraints or transfer between schools (where the program may not be in place).

<sup>46</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>47</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Otim Gerald." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>48</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon" Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>49</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Kayiwa Solomon." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

<sup>50</sup> "Interview with Staff at Educate: Brendan Sullivan." Interview by Stacey L. Nelson.

lose the support of the network, miss communication with other alumni and Educate, therefore forfeiting continued support from the program. Having invested so much already in these students, Educate is in a tough position as these students cannot be further invested in under a limited budget. Therefore, alumni ought to be allocating some money from their businesses into covering these costs if they want to participate (ie. continue to benefit from the Educate program). Again, it is the students' own lack of mobilization that causes them to drift away from the program. The organization gives the students the means to generate income so lacking the small funds needed to participate in the post-graduate programs is usually a reflection of the student lacking facilitation of Educate's teachings.

*Community Impact:*

Educate is proving to be a powerful tool for youth job creation in Uganda. By instilling the skills for business management into their students, the organization is creating powerful changes via the individuals receiving it's education. The impact is indirect and intended to be that way; the beneficiaries are the change-makers while Educate is simply providing them an opportunity. By requiring a business plan upon program completion, they are forcing the students to have a design; implementation is up to the individuals. Therefore, the beneficiaries are empowered to begin creating change on their own.

The importance of this outcome is not to be overlooked as a tool for community empowerment. Once these students learn to be self-started change-makers, there are no limitations to what they can achieve. However, not all of these projects are providing sufficient income for the alumni. Most of the projects, rather than being an end career in themselves, are the starting points for lifelong entrepreneurial endeavors, according to these alumni. Statistics show that many are interested in remaining entrepreneurs (whether or not their salaries currently are satisfactory for supporting themselves).

The number of community projects implemented by the few interviewed indicates success in this process of growing or diversifying business endeavors. If alumni continue to use their energy toward community projects, their entrepreneurial trainings will most likely foster growth or further community projects. Even if they use their trainings to open profit-seeking businesses, Educate's goal may not be fully adhered to, though their community can still benefit with regards to job-creation and the services offered. Given that the endeavor is able to either provide a

service/product at a fair price for consumers or create further employment, the business is still serving the community. As these businesses grow, so will the number of people they employ. While few projects had other employees or profit-sharing partners, many had people involved with the work generating at least some income from participation in the project.

Creating self-starting individuals is a way to foster sustainable growth on an exponential level which makes Educate a successful program with regards to its objectives. Of students surveyed, 80% had either already started projects or had targeted start dates to initiate them--an even stronger indication that they are successfully breeding self-starting, community leaders.

Beyond the individuals' benefit, the community also benefits from their education in social entrepreneurship as they pass along the knowledge. Ubiquitously, responses among those surveyed show that all had begun teaching the skills they were learning to others within their community or family.<sup>51</sup> Eleven of eleven had taught their skills to others; nine had taught family members and seven had taught those outside the family in the broader community.<sup>52</sup> Of those same nine respondents, cumulatively they claimed to have taught 318 people the skills of entrepreneurship.<sup>53</sup> These are staggering indications of Educate's exponential impact, given the concepts are understood and implemented, like the students suggest.<sup>54</sup>

### *Recommendations:*

Educate ought to continue striving toward their goals with emphasis on innovation and a strong alumni network. With more innovation, these young entrepreneurs will embark on novel business endeavors which will diversify job markets. The General Entrepreneurship Measurement credits innovative techniques within business economies as healthy for growth and competition.

With a stronger alumni network, alumni will be held accountable for their projects. There will also be a stronger support system for them to fall back upon. What needs to be improved upon, since microfinance is not an option and many students do not have surplus funds to participate in meetings, is the method of communication. These students need not travel to meet when the web can be accessed for less money, communicating information instantly.

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<sup>51</sup> "Educate Alumni Entrepreneurial Measurement" Responses to Question 6

<sup>52</sup> "Educate Alumni Entrepreneurial Measurement" Responses to Question 6

<sup>53</sup> "Educate Alumni Entrepreneurial Measurement" Responses to Question 6

<sup>54</sup> Further, when asked if they felt people understood the concepts or wanted to know more about the ideas, there was positive response; they felt they were accurately explaining Educate's teachings while others were properly understanding.

## VII. Interventions

During the course of the study, with the freedom allowed by the organization, interventions were implemented. At Friends of Orphans, a system was put in place to both assemble the current alumni into a cooperative group and to keep the current generation of students active in creating a network before graduation. At Educate, an online network was set up and implemented so that the students could have better communication about ideas from across the country.

With many alumni lost to the FRO program, those who were able to be reached attended a set of meetings with a number of objectives. The first meeting was to acquaint the alumni once again<sup>55</sup>, offer ways to mobilize together for group benefit, and ask what action the group wanted to take. A translator was used, Yovan Okello, to speak efficiently with the group who had trouble with the American English of the researcher. Although the meeting was called on the premise of beginning a SACCO (Savings and Credit Co-operative Society) between them, many members expressed the fact that they thought they'd be receiving some monetary aid at the meeting. An overwhelming amount discussed the lack of any income being surplus enough to save. For instance, one woman was feeding six dependents on 20000 per month, and she was lucky enough to have a job. Disappointed to not be receiving funds, the members chose group leaders and the meeting ended abruptly without resolution.

The next meeting had much lower attendance but a much better outcome. Although attendance was low, the meeting was called under the premise of continuing the discussions of the previous week, which may not have motivated many to come.<sup>56</sup> With reduced numbers of attendees but the help of two FRO staff persons, a poultry project was created to generate group income. Chicken medicine was purchased for both local and exotic breeds as well as 40000 Ugandan Shillings were given to purchase the chickens after necessary preparations. The SACCO was also given to the Tailoring teacher to help manage as a fellow poultry farmer, FRO staff member (based on her offer to volunteer). This connection is serving to be a wonderful link of communication between the group and the organization.

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<sup>55</sup> Many of them meet informally though some do not.

<sup>56</sup> Only seven showed which was unfortunate because the second meeting did deliver some financial aid to the attendees.

For the current students, two separate methods were used to create a network. A meeting was scheduled for the students to meet on the second holiday session the following year. This way, beneficiaries would have time to fill job positions and those who had not could come gain support or network with their former classmates. The meeting was scheduled for April 11, 2012 (the Wednesday before Easter). Class leaders were organized to promote and run the meeting. The executive position was given to them as opposed to a teacher or staff member in running the meeting agenda to promote autonomy from FRO after graduation. At the same time though, leaders were encouraged to communicate the meeting's conclusions back to FRO management.

In order to keep track of other classmates, among other tasks, guidebooks were implemented with a number of functions to fulfill. Their purpose was to promote the students' active role in finding or creating their own jobs, to discourage or eliminate idleness after having attended FROs trainings. If the organization doesn't connect their students to a livelihood, then the money spent training them is wasted. Therefore, to protect these investments, the guidebooks help the students identify their career goals, collect their resources, and document their spending to better prioritize their finances. The guidebook had sections for the students to write contacts of classmates and resources around town; a sections was designated for identifying their ideal job, possible job opportunities, and possible other income-generating activities; while the last portion was reserved for keeping track of money earned and spent while documenting patterns in order to formulate financial targets. Most of the sections in the book were meant to either network for greater opportunity or to help the students see how they could get their own start-up capital. (See copy of Booklet Instructions in the Appendix.)

At Educate, the need for more lubricated alumni networking was also an issue, though on a different scale with contact means available.<sup>57</sup> Transport costs along with other factors deter from the smooth functioning of both the Change Maker's Associations and the alumni meetings. With students spread far geographically and communicatively (being far into villages perhaps without mobile communication) being able to sit and share ideas is a rare occurrence. Because of the high and rising cost of transport, a cheaper solution was offered. While other online resources have been able to connect the students across the country quickly, and other communication is utilized between them, an online database for alumni only had not yet been conceived. Whereas

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<sup>57</sup> The poverty faced by the beneficiaries of FROs services versus the diverse socioeconomic background of Educate students produced very different norms of communication among members. While there were those with some access to internet or phones in each of the programs, not all had access to these means.

transport costs for someone in Lira to headquarters could cost more than 30000 shillings, for 500, the student could go online to check meeting minutes.

To intervene, an internet resource was put into place via Facebook to allow the alumni and current students their own space to communicate. There are pages designated for regional activities to be coordinated and regional resources to be shared (ie. possible business people in the area, prices in common project areas like poultry, or event marketing). In addition, the webpage encourages country-wide communication about ideas for business projects, grant writing, or voicing opinions in accordance with Educate affairs. To differentiate from the other websites currently running for the organization, the new website is staff-made but student/alumni-run. This way it can help the students help each other without wasting staff resources at headquarters.

## VIII. Conclusions

From the research collected the main theme supported by both Friends of Orphans and Educate is that after graduation, novel enterprises are a quicker means to job-creation and community benefit, though they necessitate start-up capital. In order to have this capital, measures must be taken to plan out the way the enterprise will operate financially. While this process, along with that of holding a job position under an employer, is difficult, alumni networks mobilizing efficient forms of communication relative to the population are the most effective way to not only account for the rate at which alumni connect with job opportunities but to help those who do not. The strength of alumni networks, if the interventions function as intended, is that the programs are self-containing and don't put too much of a strain on the organization's resources.

## IX. Recommendations for Research

The most prominent recommendations for bettering this research would be in expanding the time frame for collection in order to reach a more diversified sample. As discussed, many cost

and scheduling factors did not allow for those in sub-counties (without transportation costs) to be reached, hence, the opinions of those populations were not included within the survey.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the added responsibilities of the internships need to be accounted for if research were to be executed in the same manner, via partnerships with the programs.

Though interventions sought to seal holes in the program processes, especially with regards to networking the alumni, the outcome of these interventions should be accounted for in future projects. Having started the projects rapidly toward the end of the short periods allowed during practicum scheduling, the products of these actions could not be measured or reported back into the final research.

More interventions also could have been made. For instance, if students at Friends of Orphans were able to begin a group income-generating project prior to graduation, perhaps start-up capital would not be such a hindrance after graduation. At Educate, if students could somehow contribute toward a communal account for meeting transport costs, then their alumni programs would run more efficiently.

Ideally, trying to look at the topic from a more specific perspective, the study would concentrate on just one program, which would mean some components would be exempted from observation. If an organization was found which satisfied all the criteria of strength for both programs, the research would benefit from focusing on one organization. While some like-minded organizations exist, none were as organized and easily integrated into as Educate and FRO with such restrictive time constraints. If an organization were to be found that offered entrepreneurial training to marginalized members of society, this program would be a great compliment to this research. Similarly, if Educate offered its program in the war-torn regions of Northern Uganda, the information collected from beneficiaries there would provide a good control for the rest of the research.

## X. Appendixes

### Survey 1: Alumni Entrepreneurship Measurement

Survey: Alumni Entrepreneurship Measurement  
Educate: Alumni Students

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<sup>58</sup> Except for a coupe whose transport costs were compensated by the researcher.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School attended during Educate training: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur? Yes No

Do you believe entrepreneurs play an important role in society? Yes No

Circle the jobs which you feel help society:

President Entrepreneurs Policemen Teachers Factory workers Boda

In a few sentences (about 20-30 words), give a description of your business idea. (Is it providing a service or a product? What resources are you using? Do you have a target customer or group?)

1. Did you choose this idea because of the resources you had? Yes No

Did you choose this idea because of the effect it would have on the community? Yes No

How difficult was it to choose a business idea?

Very difficult Difficult Easy Very easy

2. Is it a long-term business? Yes No

If so, how many months or years will you be operating the business?

3. Does your business make money? Yes No

If so, where will the profits spent? (circle all that apply)

Reinvest into the business Pay for school fees Donate to other people

Use for yourself Give to your family Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is there anyone to be working with you or for you? Please specify the type of work they will do--employee, volunteer, assistant, partner, for example.

5. If other opportunities came up for employment, could you still operate the business? Would you want to still operate the business? Yes No

Is it possible that managing your business could be a full-time job? Yes No

Would it provide enough of a salary for you? Yes No

Would you want to operate the business as your full-time career, if possible? Yes No

6. Have you begun to teach the skills you've learned to others in your community or family? Yes No

If so, who in your family or community did you teach (friends, neighbors, sisters, brothers)?

How many people?

Did you find it was easy to explain the ideas you learned in class? Yes No

If no, why? (circle all that apply)

Ideas were hard to explain Person didn't want to listen Not enough time

Person couldn't understand Person didn't understand entrepreneurship

If yes, did the people whom you were speaking to understand? Yes No

Did they want to hear more about Educate? Yes No

7. Give three reasons that Educate is making you more prepared for life after graduation.

8. Do you plan to be an entrepreneur for your career? Yes No

If so, for how many years?

9. Is your business project still operating? Yes No

If no, why?

Not enough money to start Not enough money to keep running Not enough time

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, will you continue with the business even during school or other work? Yes No

## Survey 2: Data Collection for Online Database Construction

Educate: Alumni and Current Students  
 April 2011, Surveyor: Stacey Nelson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which area fits your business idea (feel free to circle more than one)  
 Teaching/Counseling 17      Product-Oriented Business      Service-Oriented Business  
 Carpentry/Metal Work/Building 3      Computers/Information Tech 23      Tree Planting/Agri 20

If other, please specify: Singing, Beekeeping, musical instruments, animal husbandry, designing a badge (?), making pottery, sculpture-making, selling clothes.

*Internet Usage*

How often do you use the internet? (Circle the one that describes you best.) 154586  
 Never 15    Rarely 4      A few times a month 5    Every week 8      Everyday 6

When was the last time you used the internet?  
 Today 4      Yesterday 1    Last week 7    Last month 3      Last Year 5    Never 18

How often *can* you use the internet?  
 Never 8      Rarely 1    A few times a month 11    Every week 9      Everyday 8

What do you normally use the internet for? (circle all that apply)  
 Gaming 4      Communication with family and friends 12      Research 27      Email 12

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that if you needed to access the internet, you could easily do so?      Yes 37      No 1

If there were a website for Educate, would you go online more often?      Yes 36      No 2

Do you use the computer to do research for your business project?      Yes 15      No 19

If so, are there any websites you find useful? Please list them.

*Professional Business Linkage*

Have you ever been in contact with any professionals who do work similar to your business project?      Yes 22      No 15

Please describe how they have helped you in your business (circle all that apply).

Mentor 21      Business partner 7      Gave advice 18      Gave information 15      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How confident are you in contacting professionals about your business project?

Not at all 5      Somewhat 6      Very confident 24

*Grant Opportunities*

Have you ever looked into getting a grant for your business project?      Yes 10      No 23

\*\*\*Two answered No to first question and yes to second → didn't understand

If so, from which organizations?

Educate (x4), NAADS (x2), microfinance org, sacco org, MTI, IHO, Anzisha      Yes 2      No

Did you receive the grant?

\*\*\*\*One said "not yet" (uncounted)

Are you confident in writing a grant proposal?

Not at all 6      Somewhat 10      Very confident 18

*Database Structure*

Do you communicate with your friends and family online?      Yes 29      No 6

Would you feel comfortable communicating with other Educate scholars online?      Yes 36      No 0

If so, would you communicate to: (circle all that apply)

Share business ideas 28    Discuss business practices 24      Discuss relevant topics about Educate 20  
 Share opinions 24      Organize events/meetings 21      Check the latest news with other scholars 12

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

With the opportunity to be linked with professionals in your area, would you feel comfortable initiating contact with these professionals?      Yes      No

*General Questions*

Currently, what are the biggest challenges facing you as a young entrepreneur? (circle all that apply)

Business not profitable      Not enough people to work      Not enough customers  
 Lack of resources      Community not participating      Don't know enough about the area of work  
 Don't have enough time with school, work, etc.      Lack motivation      Bad business plan

Please list any other challenges you are facing: \_\_\_\_\_

What would help you most with your business project? Rank the following 1 through 5.

Grant writing tips      Communication with other Educate scholars      Talking to Professionals

Having general information on business plans      Reading about similar projects which had success

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Meeting Agenda for Friends of Orphans:

**Friends of Orphans: Alumni Outreach**  
Agenda for Alumni Meeting, April 2011  
Coordinator: Stacey Nelson

Introduction

Explanation of Reasons for Meeting, Stacey Nelson

- Bring the alumni together
- Share concerns and identify similar challenges within businesses
- Organize communication with Friends of Orphans
- Elect needed leaders
- (Optional) Begin discussion about cooperative savings or SACCO within the members

III. Identify Group Concerns, to be led by the group or the temporary group leader

IV. Explain SACCOs

- Give a brief description of SACCOs and group savings
- Let the group discuss the possibility of cooperative savings

IV. Elect Leaders

President, Secretary, and Treasurer (may already be in place)

Need to elect a Group Speaker: a person to organize the group concerns, suggestions, and general survey data then report this information back to FRO; this may be a job for a Vice President

May need to elect a Vice-Treasurer to help organize the finances in the case of the group starting a SACCO--Vice Treasurer can be in charge of collecting the money while the Treasurer can be in charge of organizing the finances

V. Suggest Tasks and Delegate Duties

Suggested Tasks:

- A. Group to meet once a month
- B. Discuss market prices, cooperative purchasing, cooperative problem solving:  
Suggestion: Purchasing supplies together to have strength against market  
Suggestion: Communicating about business practices to have strength against the market
- C. Solve common problems through cooperation

Delegate Duties

- Treasurer to meet again to learn about SACCO planning (April 21<sup>st</sup>?)
- Group Speaker to organize report for FRO
- Secretary to organize people for next meeting to make sure they attend
- President to decide the agenda for the next meeting

## Instructions for Guidebook (Friends of Orphans):

**Friends of Orphans**  
**Graduation Strategy Planning**  
A tool to help you help yourself

When we graduate from Friends of Orphans (FRO), we hope to get jobs in the courses we've been training in. Of course, FRO is there to help us be prepared to work. However, FRO cannot do all of the preparation for *your* career. We must be active in planning out how we are to start earning our money and how we are to use it. Therefore, each student ought to have a financial planning notebook starting in their last year of study.

This model works best if you can obtain a 48 page notebook. Follow the directions in making a booklet to help you organize your financial plan. Eventually, use it to plan out how you use your money.

On the first page, write down (1) your name, (2) your course, (3) your contact if you have it, and (4) a statement about what motivates you. Think carefully about (4) before you write it down. This should be a statement to remind you why you work so hard. *Examples include: I feel happy when working with wood, I want to build strong buildings out of bricks, I want to provide for my family with a good salary, I want to make good clothes at good prices, etc.*

On the next page, write down the type of job you want to have. Be as specific as possible. *For example, don't say: I want to work with computers. Instead, say: I want to work with data in Microsoft Excel on the computer. For other courses, it may not be easy to be so specific, but try to describe the job you want as best you can.*

Next page, write down the word "Resources" at the top of the page. Here, you will fill in all the things you have which you could use for your career. Look around you in the months to come and continue to write in new ideas. From this list, decide the resources that you'd like to get. Find out the price of these resources or where you can get them. *For instance, a catering student may write: 4 cups, 2 serving spoons, a honey farm, etc. I would like to obtain a saucepan at 6000 shillings. For a bricklaying student, perhaps: I have a place to get bricks near where I*

*live. My brother told me he would help me to burn the bricks.*

Skip a page.

On the next page, write down "Sources of Finance" at the top of the page. Here, you will write anything you believe you could do in order to get the money needed for your resources. *For example, ask older brother for money, or sell my phone to buy a cheaper one and keep the left over money, or beginning a savings community with others.* Continue to develop this page throughout the year. Write new ideas down as you think more about it.

Skip a page.

On the next write "Contacts" on the top of the page. Here is where you will write the names, telephone numbers, location, and other important notes about the people you meet who may be able to give you advice on getting a job. It is a good idea to write the names and possibly telephone numbers of your classmates in this section as well.

Flip halfway through your booklet. On this page, write "Job Opportunities". From here, begin writing about jobs you see which you admire. Write down what you like about them. Then, try to get more information about the job. (How much does it pay? How often would you work? Etc.)

Skip 4 pages.

Now, write "Finances" at the top of the page. Here we write down all of the money that comes into our hands and goes out. It may help to write next to "Finances" at the top of the page. Then draw lines down the page so you get a table looking like this:

Date	Money Earned	Money Spent	Comment
Total:			

Here, you should write down whenever you receive or spend money. Write the date first. Then write down whether you were receiving or spending the money by the amount (so if I bought a rolex I would write 1000 in the Money Spent category). Then, in the comment column, write what you bought or where you received the money.

For the last section of your notebook (this should be the last page or the last two pages), mark at the top "Financial Goals". This section is to be completed later, after you have been marking down the money you spend and earn for a few weeks. Try to notice if you're spending a lot of money wisely or whether you could save more. When you look at how much money you spend, is there anyway you could spend differently to save more money? Once you decide how much you tend to save or spend, set a goal for yourself with finances. *For instance, spend only 4000 shillings per week.*

Continue to use this notebook to plan out your career and finances.

Make whatever notes you would like in this book. Try to write down whatever ideas you have. Feel free to add or change it as you'd like.

## Instructions for Database (Educate):

### Educate Alumni Meeting Database Construction Instructions May 10, 2009

1. This will be a website without staff in charge. It is a website for the *scholars*, past and present.

\*\* Log onto Facebook and join the group: "Educate! Scholar's Resource Network" If you don't know how to do this, refer below.

2. Each region will have it's own separate page. On these pages, students and alumni will be encouraged to share resources in the area like prices for similarly bought items, contact information for relevant businesses and business men, organize events or meetings in the area, collaborate on ideas, etc. The possibilities are endless.

\*\* In order to best utilize the information, each leader must elect one computer-savvy person within their regional meetings to collect relevant information from the website to report back to either the group or to Educate staff, depending on the type of information.

\*\* There ought to also be a person selected (probably the *most* internet-savvy person) to make changes if needed to the website. This person will need to accept an officer position on the website.

3. In order to access the page, one must have a Facebook account. To have an account, one must have an email address. Each alumni must get registered in order to participate and share ideas.

\*\* Have everyone make an email account if they don't already have one. An address can be created at [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com), [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com), or other email providers. Once the account is made, send an email to [educate.alumni.network@gmail.com](mailto:educate.alumni.network@gmail.com). The email should have the following information:

Name:

Email address:

Alumni or Current Scholar?

Business project (if it is there):

Contact information

\*\* Once the email address is made, create a Facebook account. This can be done at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

\*\* Once the Facebook account is created, search for the terms "Educate! Scholar's Resource Network" Sign up for the group and begin using the resources!

4. The website will have more features such as Success Stories, Comment Boards, etc. If you have any changes that you would like to make you can elect to do so, probably through a vote of relevant members. All changes can be made by the person elected to make changes to the website (in #2).

5. Share ideas! "Educate" each other!

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