



Austrian Development Cooperation

CARE INTEGRATED APPROACH STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Rose Auma aged 58, is a resident of Pece Division- Gulu City and a single mother following the death of her husband and son during the insurgency by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in 1997. As an eyewitness to the cruel double tragedy, Rose was depressed, and her situation only worsened with the burden of responsibility of her seven children and 13 other orphans

left behind by her siblings. This left Rose hopeless and dejected until she came in contact with CARE International in Uganda. "During the LRA activities, my husband and first-born son were captured from the house and beaten to death before my eyes. I was left with a two-month-old pregnancy and 16 children to take care of since my three older children were

already married. While I was still moaning, I couldn't afford basic needs which forced me to work as a housemaid within Gulu where I live today. I would walk about seven kilometres to town in the evening with the kids to find security and shelter away from the rebels and then return in the morning after which I would go out to my housemaid job," she sadly narrates.



Lily Rose sorts rice in front of her three bedroomed house



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"Sometimes the money to pay fees for all those children was not enough and most times, I would plead with the teachers to let them stay in school until I managed to finish all payments," she adds.

As luck had it, in 2020 Rose was identified by CARE under the Women and Youth Resilience Project (WAYREP) as a community-based Facilitator (CBF) and later as a Community Gender Activist.

She received several trainings on gender-based violence as a CBF and an Activist which helped

transform her to live positively amidst painful memories and trauma of her past challenges as well as support many others with similar stories within her community.

In January 2021, Rose joined the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) where she was elected as the group's chairperson after members identified leadership qualities in her. WAYREP participants are encouraged to join VSLA groups for Economic Empowerment which is crucial for psychosocial wellbeing.

Through the VSLA, she started small scale farming as an alternative livelihood for her family and a support mechanism to reduce her vulnerability to more gender-based violence "I had often been ridiculed by my fellow women for being a single mother who failed to get a new husband. However, I did not know how to deal with it until I joined Bed ki Gen VSLA. I underwent training on saving and gender-based violence which has helped me to heal and become a better person," she smiles.

Through the loans she borrowed from the VSLA, Rose was able to start building a three-

bedroomed house that is in the wee stages of plastering. She rented land in the village to enable her carry out agricultural activities.

"Through continuous agriculture and market sales, I can pay back loans and continue building. I thank God for health, for CARE that supported me psychosocially, and my group members for making me the chairperson. Now I have earned the respect of so many people and I feel good," she concludes. CARE also provides Psychosocial support (PSS) to GBV survivors, support with referrals, and closely coordinates with service providers to get prompt and quality support.

According to WAYREP's GBV Coordinator, Gloria Ondo, participants are financially facilitated to access services using the Survivor Fund but are also accompanied to different service points for appropriate services required to aid their recovery process. "We create supportive relationships with survivors, do follow-ups to monitor their recovery progress, continuously provide PSS to increase their resilience which helps to lessen the psychosocial effects thus contributing to their general wellbeing" Reports Gloria

WAYREP is a five-year project funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) implemented by CARE in Uganda and CARE Austria in partnership with two local NGOs. The project targets 44,600 direct beneficiaries, with 75% being women and girls (focus age: 15-30 years) and 250,300 indirect beneficiaries. Participants are selected in collaboration with local partners, refugees, government, persons with special needs and city authorities.



Lily Rose (Left) with the rest of the women in BED Ki Gen VSL

