



Build Africa Uganda Strategy to 2018



Our vision

People in Africa leading fulfilling, happy lives

Our mission

To partner with African communities to create lasting educational and livelihoods opportunities



A new classroom block at Madoc Ailak Primary School

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Foreword

The Build Africa Uganda (BAU) Strategic Plan 2014-2018 was drafted by the executive team, with input and guidance from the Board and the CEO. The process began in October 2011 when the initial strategic planning stakeholders' workshop was held, during which guidance was provided by an external consultant. From this an initial draft was prepared. More views and refinements to the draft document were made by the Board Programme Sub-Committee and the entire BAU Board of Governance, respectively. This was followed by the development of the implementation strategy and the monitoring and evaluation framework, with input from BAU staff.

The guiding framework for the formulation of the BAU Strategy is the 2014 to 2018 Build Africa Strategy, which defines the purpose and direction of the organisation over the next five years. Build Africa's goal over that period is to improve the quality of education and livelihoods of more than a million people in rural Africa. In order to deliver on education and livelihoods work, the whole organisation is committed to seven key approaches as detailed in the following BAU 2014 to 2018 Strategic Plan.

We would like to thank the board members and staff of Build Africa Uganda and the Build Africa International Senior Management Team for their contributions.

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Chairperson
Build Africa Uganda Board

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Executive summary

In order to increase our impact and build on our expertise and knowledge base, Build Africa will not only continue its focus on education and livelihoods in the coming five years, it will expand upon them as well. We have also taken into consideration the integrated nature of the two sectors, especially at community level where we predominately work. The interventions and locations that we choose will be further informed by the district analyses that we commission.

Based on the education and livelihood challenges that poor and vulnerable communities in Uganda face, Build Africa Uganda (BAU)'s programme goals in the next five years (2014-2018) are to ensure that: firstly, children in BAU programme areas access quality education; and, secondly, communities in BAU programme areas have improved food security and increased incomes.

We are committed to Build Africa's seven strategic approaches, to guide our programmes and to ensure that we give children and their families the opportunities they need to escape the cycle of poverty. These approaches are:

1. Laying the foundations for learning
2. Maximising learning
3. Including girls
4. Preparing for continuous learning
5. Supporting financial services and business development
6. Boosting harvests and increasing access to markets
7. Strengthening resilience to shocks and stresses

In order to make this happen, in the next five years BAU will address its key organisational challenges, and enhance its areas of strengths, with specific emphasis on: expansion; Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL); innovation; partnerships; child safeguarding and child protection; partnerships and influencing. Internally, we will concentrate on flexible and sustainable fundraising; good governance; staff development and retention, and communications. As a result BAU's capacity to achieve its objectives will be developed and strengthened.

In this document you will find a short history of the organisation, an overview of the challenges the communities we serve face and an overview of our goals over the next five years and how we intend to achieve them. Our monitoring and evaluation framework (showing how we will measure success) is presented in a separate document.



The water pump at Kahara Primary School

The early learning class at Jeeja Primary School



Introduction

Build Africa (BA) is an international development organisation with 30 years' experience working in some of the poorest regions of the world. For the last 12 years the organisation has focused on education and livelihoods opportunities in Kenya and Uganda. BA works through two country offices that share a jointly developed mission, vision and set of values. In both our Education and Livelihoods programmes we jointly develop models, based on our own experience and that of others, which are tested and refined through constant learning and improvement; while common financial controls and operating procedures ensure maximum efficiency across our programmes.

Build Africa has a long-term commitment to its country offices, providing them with the capacity to manage programme design and implementation well; and the ability to independently monitor, evaluate and fundraise in the most effective way possible. Within this organisational framework, country offices develop and implement their own country strategies, design their own programmes, manage their own staff and finances, and have their own national boards. Besides its capacity building role, Build Africa UK acts as guardian of the brand and fundraises for a significant number of BAU operations.

BAU's education and livelihoods work is concentrated in the districts of Kumi, Ngora, Bukedea, Masindi, Kiryandongo and Buliisa, all situated in the Eastern and North Western Regions of Uganda. The wide variety of programmes in recent years has included support to Universal Primary Education, business skills and enterprise development, Village Savings and Loans Associations and HIV prevention amongst youth.

We have had the following impact on primary education in the areas where

we work¹: a 65% average increase in enrolment in BAU-supported schools; a significant reduction in the drop-out rate in BAU-supported schools compared to non-BAU schools; an 81% increase in exam entry in BAU-supported schools compared to a 6% decrease in non-BAU schools; and 76% of pupils in BAU-supported schools are now passing exams in grades one to three and continuing their education.

Interventions to address gender specific barriers to girls' education (for example menstrual management and life skills) have also been implemented. Through our Livelihoods Programme community members (many of them parents) save through their VSLAs and access loans so that they can start income generating activities. As a result, parents have been able to provide school materials for their children, pay school fees, pay medical bills, buy assets and the like.

BAU has been undergoing a process of steady growth and development. This process has been underpinned by two phases of systematic planning. The first phase, covering the period 2004 to 2007, was characterised by small project planning. The second,

¹ BAU Study Reports 2011-2013

post-2007 phase, saw the partial development of two strategies, one for education and one for livelihoods. The present Strategic Plan has therefore evolved from previous planning efforts, but it has many unique and striking features that have resulted from the formulation process as well. The guiding framework for formulation of the BAU strategy is the BA 2014-18 strategy document, which outlines our seven approaches, our values, the direction the organisation is heading in and how BA's capacity will be strengthened and resources provided to make this happen.

The distinguishing feature of the current Strategic Plan is the inclusion of the views and concerns of beneficiaries, relating to both the education and livelihoods sectors. BAU has commissioned several project evaluations, for the EQUIP and VSLA projects for example. We have also conducted district baseline assessments for Amuria, Kaberamaido, Oyam and Apac primary schools and carried out pre-project design community consultations.

Concerns raised in the education sector include: inadequate infrastructure, poor community attitude and participation, low teacher motivation, poor performance of pupils and poor school governance systems. In the livelihoods sector they include: poor production skills, absence of business development skills, limited access to financial services and limited access to markets². These issues have informed the programmes' strategic development.

Country context

The 2013 Uganda Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Progress Report shows that Uganda has made considerable progress in achieving the MDGs, having already achieved two of its 17 targets. For example, it has halved the number of people living in absolute poverty and achieved debt sustainability, and it is on track to achieve another eight.

Despite these successes, the report notes that there are a number of areas where progress remains slow, stagnant or is in reverse. One of the areas for which MDG progress has been below expectations is the primary

² BAU Needs assess report in Amuria, Kiryandongo 2011, EQUIP evaluation report 2011, VSLA Evaluation Report, 2013.



A village saver putting his business ideas into practice: Jackson and his maize milling machine

school completion rate. While this has increased slightly, the pace of progress has been too slow to ensure that all Ugandan children complete the full course of primary education by 2015. Concerns regarding education quality and poor learning outcomes persist, although basic literacy is gradually improving. While gender parity in primary education has been achieved, progress at the secondary and tertiary levels has slowed.

The share of Ugandans living in poverty decreased from 56.4% to 24.5% between 1992/3 and 2009/10³. However, of those that live above the poverty line, around 13 million described as 'insecure non poor' remain vulnerable to falling into absolute poverty. Poor and insecure households lack access to coping mechanisms such as savings, borrowing or support from friends or family.

The reduction of poverty and vulnerability is an integral part of Uganda's national development. Social economic transformation means that all households are made more secure and hence forward looking with a strong incentive to invest. The additional emphasis that the National Development Plan places on economic growth and structural transformation requires that more attention be paid to inequality. Unfortunately inequality is perceived to be rising in Uganda, as is resentment about unequal access to economic opportunities.

³ MOFPED, Uganda Poverty Status Report, May 2012

Education provides the most important route to future economic opportunity. Children that fail to complete primary school will be disadvantaged as adults, and their children will in turn be less likely to complete their education. Only 28% of 13 to 18 year olds in 2009/10 completed primary school⁴. Those who fail to do so because of circumstances beyond their control rather than because of a lack of talent or effort. Addressing this inequality would have large benefits in terms of household prosperity and ultimate economic growth. With this context in mind, the education and livelihoods sectors will continue to be our focus as we implement our 2014-18 Strategic Plan.

Our programme goals

Over the next five years Build Africa Uganda will be improving the quality of life of the communities where we work. We will do this in two important programme areas:

- we will ensure that our beneficiaries have enough food and income at household level to meet all their basic needs;
- we will make certain that children are able to access a good quality education.

⁴ MOFPED, Uganda Poverty Status Report, May 2012

Build Africa's strategic approaches to education and livelihoods

Justification for the focus on education and livelihoods

Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) highlights education as one of the instruments for enhancing the quality of life of the poor. Education is perceived to benefit the poor directly by bringing higher incomes, better health and empowerment. The government of Uganda (GoU) introduced Universal Free Primary Education in 1996, and school enrolment has tripled since then. However, the increase in enrolment has not been matched by a corresponding increase in Government investment in the sector. Even though the Government allocates about 31% of its annual expenditure towards primary education, the sector still struggles to fully meet the basic requirements of a holistic, quality driven, efficient and equitable primary education system.

In this strategy Build Africa focuses on four areas that enable children and their families in Uganda to reap the rewards of an improved education. These are: laying the foundations for learning; maximising learning; including girls and preparing for continuous learning. These four approaches will help us provide early childhood development, an improved quality of education, girls' education, better transition to secondary school and vocational skills.

Evidence suggests that diversification of income and livelihoods strategies play a central role in raising incomes, savings, investment in human capital, productivity and the inclusiveness of the development process⁵. We will therefore help communities accumulate income from their various enterprises by putting them in touch with existing markets and providing information so that they can make informed decisions.

⁵ MOFPED, Uganda Poverty Status Report, May 2012

We will also provide access to credit facilities and help households use their loans properly for economic development. Finally, proper agricultural practices and the building of community resilience to shocks and stresses will be encouraged to ensure that available land is used for the maximum benefit of the communities, especially in regard to economic empowerment. In this strategic plan, three approaches to livelihoods are highlighted: financial services and business development; agricultural production, value addition and market access; and resilience to shocks and stresses. The integrated nature of livelihoods and education is also taken into consideration.

The key issues underlying the seven approaches, what we want to do in the coming five years and the expected outcomes are discussed in the following sections.



Nyakibete Primary School

Laying the foundations for learning

Officially, in Uganda children aged three to five years are expected to be enrolled in pre-school so that by the age of six they proceed to primary one. In reality there is a wide gap between pre-school enrolment and the population of three to five year-olds. Currently, only 9% are enrolled in pre-school (leaving 91% excluded).

The distribution of Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres is highly driven by income levels. Areas where the population earns a high income tend to attract ECD classes because there is an assumption that the parents and guardians can afford the fees. This pattern of setting up ECD centres eliminates the majority of the rural children from benefiting in pre-school.

Although the quality has slightly improved following the introduction of guidelines by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), the quality of learning in most of the schools leaves a lot to be desired. This is compounded by a poor learning environment, poor hygiene, poor infrastructure and unqualified teachers, all the result of inadequate resources. The state of pre-primary education in the country under-scores its value and calls for immediate action from all the concerned authorities. There is evidence that with a good early childhood development foundation, children perform better at primary school and are more prepared for life, work and secondary school.

Build Africa Uganda will improve the school-readiness of girls and boys by using innovative approaches to working at pre-primary level, changing parental attitudes to early learning and increasing the resources available for young children to aid their development. As a result there will be increased pre-school enrolment for children aged 3-5 years and a better quality of ECD education.

Maximising learning

While more children than ever access primary school, the quality of teaching and learning has gone down, with that in rural areas being far below that in urban areas. There is a vast range of problems and challenges impeding primary education service delivery in rural areas. Many of the schools still lack appropriate infrastructure such as classrooms, staff houses and proper



Amugagara Primary School

water and sanitation facilities. Most primary schools face overcrowding, particularly in lower primary, with an average pupil to classroom ratio of 123:1 (three times the amount recommended by the Government). For example, in Buliisa the pupil to latrine stance ratio is over 120:1 and about 16% of the existing toilet facilities are in a very poor physical state⁶. The acute shortage in teacher housing (estimated at over 60,000⁷ units) has impacted negatively on teachers' morale. This has resulted in staffing problems, especially in rural areas where there has been a 12% increase in teacher absenteeism⁸.

Other issues like failure to meet the immediate needs of children also cause a serious challenge for primary school education. In a 2009 report by the Makerere Institute of Social Research 70% of the children surveyed in the Northern, West Nile and Eastern regions of Uganda were found to lack enough exercise books and/or something to write with; 56% of pupils did not eat anything at school; while over 65% of pupils didn't eat anything before leaving their homes. While good school governance and community participation directly impacts on education attainments under Universal Primary Education (UPE), primary schools are still challenged by poor management structures with leaders who lack vision.

Build Africa Uganda will develop the skills and competencies of children in all the areas we work in so as to increase

⁶ MISER, Baseline Survey for Quality Enhancement Initiative, 2009

⁷ National School Census Data 2005

⁸ Uwezo National Assessment, 2010

the number of children reaching the end of primary school. We will do this by improving the quality of teaching, increasing access to clean water and food, increasing the engagement of parents in the education of their children, improving the management and governance of schools, expanding the availability of appropriate books and equipment, and by providing a conducive learning environment for both genders. As a result teaching and learning methods will be better, as will governance and management. Children will also enjoy a more conducive environment because of improved infrastructure and because their rights will be better protected and promoted.

Including girls

Gender disparity in Uganda's education system manifests itself in both enrolment and retention. This situation exists for a number of reasons. Firstly, parents have different aspirations for boys and girls. Girls are educated so they know how to read and write or be better mothers, rather than for employment. Secondly, married daughters are believed to be less likely than married sons to remit cash income to their parents.⁹ Of the pupils who enter primary school, 48% of boys and 29% of girls complete the cycle.¹⁰ Recent studies¹¹ carried out on the causes of children dropping out of primary school show that multiple socio-economic factors in the community and in the

⁹ Atekyereza/Educating Girls and Women in Uganda, July 2001

¹⁰ Atekyereza/Educating Girls and Women in Uganda, July 2001

¹¹ (Nakanyike, Kasente & Balihuta, 2002, DHS EdData Survey, 2001, Save the Children Fund, 2002)

school cause pupils to drop out, and these are location specific and different for boys and girls. The costs of schooling continue to lead reasons for dropout, even with UPE¹². The cost of uniforms and school materials may be high for a poor family who then choose to keep their girls at home while sending their boys to school. The Uganda Demographic and Health EdData Survey (2001) indicates that marriage and/or pregnancy are common reasons for girls aged 13 to 18 years dropping out of primary school, especially in the Eastern and Northern regions. In addition, girls experiencing menstruation without adequate preparation or facilities are regularly absent or even drop out of primary school (Education for All, 2003). Investing in gender at rural schools can halve girls' absenteeism and drop out rates and increase girls' confidence and self-esteem.¹³

We will increase the number of girls who benefit from a quality education by changing attitudes, building self-esteem, giving girls more say in the decisions that affect their education, introducing teaching styles that are sensitive to girls' needs, and giving girls positive role models. In this way we are addressing the barriers to girls' education and poor retention at school, ensuring that girls receive a quality education in schools and communities where their rights are upheld and respected and where they learn life-skills that improve their self-confidence and capabilities.

Preparing for continuous learning

Although Universal Secondary Education (USE) was introduced in 2007, transition in Uganda remains low with only 68.6% of children continuing to secondary school.¹⁴ A variety of factors form barriers that prevent children making the transition to secondary school. These include financial reasons (household income, financial circumstances and the relative affordability of the direct and indirect costs of school such as boarding, travel and materials); and missed opportunities through child labour. Other factors include household composition (circumstances such as bereavement or orphanhood can increase the dropout

¹² Education for All (EFA) Gender and Education in Uganda, A Case Study for EFA Monitoring Report, 2003

¹³ Impact of Providing Sanitary Pads to Poor Girls in Africa, University of Oxford, November 2009

¹⁴ World Data on Education 2010/11, United Nations



Lunchtime at Obosoi Primary School

rate); attitudes towards education (the views of both parents and children have a significant impact); access and quality of education (the quality and availability of schools varies according to location); well-being and exclusion (health, pregnancy, disability, gender and the needs of other disadvantaged groups affect drop-out rates¹⁵); and pupil readiness (pupils can leave primary school without the skills they need to do well at secondary school).¹⁶

¹⁵ CREATE 2009 Dropping Out of School, Policy Brief No 8, CREATE, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK

¹⁶ Uganda National Examinations Board, National Assessment of Progress in Education, 2011

Low transition to secondary school, combined with a high drop-out rate at primary school, results in a significant number of young people leaving school early without qualifications, needing support to help them get a job.¹⁷ Low school completion rates and limited capacities in vocational and technical education are ultimately reflected in the low productivity of Uganda's labour force. Youth unemployment and under-employment is a growing concern in the country. It is estimated that the current job market can only absorb 20% of the youth. The youth therefore need

¹⁷ Handbook on Career Guidance for Policy Makers, OECD, 2004

a variety of skills and experience to be employable.

We will increase the number of children who have the relevant skills and abilities to make the successful transition to secondary school or work. We will do this by improving vocational skills, ensuring parents and communities support the post primary education of their children and ensuring children are receiving a good quality education. As a result children will be adequately prepared for secondary education and they will acquire vocational skills as part of their basic education.

Supporting financial services and business development

Although data shows that a 10% increase in access to money reduces poverty by 3%¹⁸, financial services in Uganda are inaccessible and expensive.¹⁹ The nominal lending interest rates range from 17% to 23%. In the formal micro finance sector, the rates are even higher, ranging from 24% to 36%

¹⁸ Operational Plan 2011-2015, DFID Uganda, May 2011

¹⁹ Operational Plan 2011 – 2015, Dfid Uganda, May 2011

per annum²⁰. Financial exclusion plays a significant role in preventing the development of reliable incomes and limits investment in urgent household needs or Income Generating Activities (IGAs). Community consultations by BAU in Amuria district confirm that this limits wealth creation and traps people in poverty. In the sampled areas, 35% of the people did not have any IGAs. The main reason was lack of capital to invest (54%). Additionally, 56% of people consulted had never accessed business skills training, limiting opportunities to expand their IGAs and increase incomes.²¹ For individuals to become more financially secure they need to be able to save money, or have access to it in times of need.

Build Africa Uganda will improve the income generating abilities of rural people by providing them with better access to financial services and improved business skills. We will make this possible by providing people with the opportunity to save and access credit through savings and loans groups, and by giving them the skills and knowledge they need to get their businesses up and running and diversify their sources of income. We will also support them as they develop their businesses. These opportunities are mostly taken up by women since it is women who are most involved in household responsibilities and who tend to invest more in children's education, health, access to food and nutrition. As a result there will be increased financial literacy, access to a broader and more affordable range of financial services and improved business skills among communities where Build Africa works. The resulting business ventures will increase incomes and improve the quality of life in households.

Boosting harvests and increasing access to markets

An overwhelming 86% of the communities that we support are farmers involved in small scale subsistence farming who sell their surplus at market. Four main challenges face the agricultural sector in Uganda: low production and productivity, low value addition to agricultural produce and limited market access, weak implementation of agricultural laws and policies, and weak public agricultural institutions.

²⁰ National Development Plan – 2010 – 2015

²¹ BAU ACOLIP Baseline Survey Report in Amuria District, December 2011

Ugandan agriculture is characterised by low yields and a low application of modern technology. Whilst communities produce surplus for sale, there is a general lack of access to markets. This situation is aggravated by the lack of organised marketing structures for farmers and price fluctuations.²² According to a rapid livelihoods assessment carried out by BAU in Kiryandongo District, the low prices are partly due to limited access to market information and middle men taking advantage of the farmers' need to sell their produce immediately.²³ To make it worse, 95% of the farmers interviewed were unaware of the existence of any marketing cooperatives that could help them get better prices for their produce.²⁴ In addition, communities lack evidence-based guidance on enterprises with ready markets suitable for investment and which promise quick returns.

We will work with rural farmers to increase the returns achieved on their agricultural enterprises, resulting in improved incomes and food security. We will help them to do this by looking at new ways of increasing the value of their produce, by training them in ways of improving productivity, and by exploring opportunities to provide access to wider markets with better prices. As a result, communities supported by Build Africa will have relevant skills in improving the productivity of their agricultural enterprises and the capacity to compete in relevant markets with quality products and services. Combined with the creation of a conducive environment for production and competitive market access, households will have diversified sources of income that will improve their quality of life.

Strengthening resilience to shocks and stresses

In Uganda rain-fed smallholder agriculture is particularly vulnerable to unpredictable weather, pest attacks, livestock epidemics and poor seed quality. According to the Poverty Status Report 2012, half of all the households surveyed had suffered from extreme weather over the previous years (mainly drought), while 17% had experienced

²² Kiryandongo District Development Plan, 2011 – 2017

²³ Build Africa Kiryandongo Rapid Livelihood Assessment Report, Nov 2011

²⁴ Build Africa Kiryandongo Rapid Livelihood Assessment Report, Nov 2011



agriculture-related shocks.²⁵ Because of their inability to respond even relatively mild stresses (such as delayed or inadequate rains) can lead to major livelihood shocks. Building the resilience of affected people so they can respond positively to these changes requires that we help them cope with current change, adapt their livelihoods, and improve

²⁵ MOFPED, Poverty Status Report, May 2012

ecosystem health so they are able to avoid problems in the future.

This means not only helping people directly but also developing good policies, plans and programmes to support wider development. In order to positively impact people's lives, projects must be implemented at sufficient scale and over a long enough period to have lasting benefits. Community solidarity,

engagement, ownership of resources, and the capacity to organise are also critical for building resilience. When people are able to draw on their own capacities, strengths, and values, instead of viewing themselves as hopelessly poor, resilience is strengthened.²⁶

²⁶ USAID, UKAID Discussion note, "Building Resilience to Food Security Shocks in the Horn of Africa", March 2012

BAU will help individuals prepare for and withstand environmental and economic shocks and stresses. We will continue to develop new approaches and work in collaboration with others to build community resilience, focusing on measures such as income diversification, water and land management, and conservation. As a result communities will have the capacity to plan, adapt and respond to shocks and stresses and

secure more income from diversified activities. In addition, the communities will have the capacity to demand and realise their rights and entitlements and they will have better access to publicly provided goods and services.



Aipeitoi Village Savings and Loans group, Kumi

Our values

To be successful we must be an organisation made up of people who share a set of key values, embedded in all our activities. Five core values will shape the actions of everyone who works for us, and determine our responses to the challenges we meet:

Putting the well-being of children first, in everything we do. We will focus on ensuring that the child's well-being is a priority for all our people, in all our projects, and throughout our organisation's culture, informing how we act and respond.

Reflect, learn and share to develop highly effective ways of working. We can be proud of our culture of striving to achieve high standards in everything we do. We aim to be an organisation that constantly learns from our partners, from the communities we work with, and from external agencies. We monitor and evaluate our work to measure the differences we are making and actively share the results with others.

Pushing the boundaries of development. We actively encourage creativity and innovation to identify new and improved ways of tackling the causes and consequences of poverty. This will ensure we can deliver a much wider range of projects at a greater scale and quality.

Empowering our people. Strong leadership will help empower every member of staff, encouraging them to act with integrity at all times, be open to new methods of working, and to make best use of opportunities for personal and professional development. We will only achieve our goals by raising expectations and helping our people to meet them. Every member of staff, trustee and partner is an ambassador for Build Africa, whether answering a phone call or running a project.

Inspire people to work with us. We may work with small savings and loans groups or multinational agencies to deliver change, but they must all be inspired by Build Africa and by what we are trying to achieve.



The garden at Kooki Primary School.

Where are we now?

Organisational Health refers to an organisation's ability to achieve its goals based on an environment that seeks to improve its performance and support employee well-being.²⁷ A self-assessment of BAU through two internal processes has revealed key strengths and weaknesses that will inform our capacity building priorities for the next five years. Results from the BAU SWOT analysis and Bond health check are attached in Appendix One.

We have a strong programme design, with an accumulated wealth of experience in income and educational programmes. Our programmes promote community participation and feedback and staff are strong in community mobilisation. Community engagement is enhanced by good collaboration and partnering with key stakeholders at the local level. The organisation has competent staff and an inspiring leadership, with a skilled and supportive board of directors. Organisational policies and systems are well developed and a good monitoring and communication culture is maintained

at all levels of the organisation. Lastly, stable funding from BAUK has contributed to the organisation's sustainability over the years.

But there are also areas of weakness that will need to be addressed during implementation of the strategic plan. While BAU is strong in programme design, a lack of harmonisation between the programme strategy and monitoring and evaluation system has been a challenge. The organisation also needs to complete the development of its fundraising strategy in order to boost its programme funding. There is inadequate engagement with the media, private sector and the research community. A communication strategy that will enhance the organisation's national visibility therefore needs to be put in place. Low partner capacity has been a challenge and there is no partner development strategy. More resources also need to be invested in staff learning and development and the organisation's capacity in policy influencing must be developed as well.

²⁷ David Alman, Organisation Health –Improving Organisation Performance and Employee wellbeing, 2010



Lillian Papayi, a village saver from Kahara, selling tomatoes and silver fish at her 'kibanda' (market stall)

What will we do to get there?

In the next five years BAU will address the key organisational weaknesses, and enhance those areas of strength, that have been identified by the SWOT analysis and Bond Health check. We will focus on the following areas: Expansion, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL); innovation; partnerships; influencing and child rights. Internally, we will concentrate on flexible and sustainable fundraising; good governance; staff development and retention; and communications.

The expected organisational outcome is that BAU's capacity to achieve its objectives will be developed and strengthened. This will be achieved through investing in the following areas and interventions.

BAU Programme Expansion

By 2018 we will have expanded strategically into at least three new districts and communities where there are poor education and livelihoods outcomes. This will follow completion of district selection based on clear criteria and transparent process.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

There is a need to acquire more internal evidence of what works and to strengthen our internal capacity in undertaking reviews, evaluations and consultations. We will therefore maintain a monitoring and evaluation system that is aligned to the Strategic Plan. This will enable the organisation to provide regular information on project and programme performance in order to promote their efficient and effective implementation and operation. We will also assess our own capacity in monitoring and evaluation and identify areas for improvement. BAU recognises the importance of learning from its own experience and that of others. Through interactive MEAL systems involving Build Africa-UK (BAUK), Build Africa Kenya (BAK) and its partners, we will be able to share and use this knowledge to increase organisational effectiveness and to inform new work.

BAU is committed to developing programmes and projects that meet

community needs. Programme locations will be chosen on the basis of desk research that utilises relevant published data, and community consultations will inform the project design. We will continuously engage with beneficiaries, build relationships, welcome feedback and be accountable for results, all of which are necessary if we are to learn and improve on the road to achieving our mission.

Innovation

We will identify and explore innovative ways of working that will improve our effectiveness, and we will proactively share with NGO's and others the lessons we have learned from our work. We will enhance creativity and innovation in programme design by increasing our research capacity, and promote a culture that encourages good ideas and supports small scale projects that try out new ideas. Staff capacity will also be built into the new approaches (for example in the Early Learning and Resilience to Shocks and Stresses strategic approaches) in order to support new project designs.

Partnerships

We will develop partnerships with organisations that have the skills, experiences and ideas that will help us tackle common problems beyond our capacity. Different types of partnerships will be promoted, including cooperation, coordination, networking and coalition building. Relationships will be built with peer organisations (e.g. PEAS), with local organisations (e.g. KACE, RDP), with larger INGOS (e.g. WaterAid, CARE) and with district and national government bodies. A partnership development strategy will therefore be developed and implemented to streamline partnership building approaches within BAU.

Influencing

We believe that we can better deliver our mission and vision if we employ policy influencing as one of our work strategies. We can build on our strengths in community mobilisation, in evidence based needs assessment and research and in the distinctive contributions we have been able to make in the areas where we work, to provide vital insights for influencing policy. We have a good understanding of our key policy making aims and in some cases we have made contact with relevant government officials and other key players on selected advocacy issues. Building on these experiences, BAU will develop and implement an organisation strategy for policy influencing in the next five years, with particular emphasis on well researched advocacy issues that promote our mission and strategic objectives.

Child Safeguarding and Child Protection

BAU will design and implement actions to ensure that children are listened to, safeguarded and protected. Children's rights and protection will be strengthened through various project activities. We will explore partnerships with various agencies with expertise in child safeguarding and protection interventions. In order to do this we will have to develop the knowledge and skills of the BAU team.

Communications

BAU will develop and implement an organisational Communication Strategy that is realistic, affordable and within the financial and human resource capacity of the organisation. BAU's Communication

Strategy will be within the framework of the overall BA Communication Strategy and tie in carefully with BAU's Fundraising Strategy in order to gain maximum benefits for BAU and BA as a whole. BAU will collaborate with colleagues in BAK and BAUK to produce regional communications where necessary. Partners with communication skills will also be exploited for experience sharing and joint communication gains. The ultimate objective of our Communication Strategy will be to create brand awareness among the national and international donor community and relevant government departments.

Flexible and sustainable fundraising

Supplementary to the Communication Strategy proposed in the last section, BAU needs to cultivate potential donors. Target donor audiences will range from institutional donors, international individuals, trusts and foundations, corporates and local individuals. These donors have different characteristics that we will need to take into consideration. For example, while institutional donors are highly competitive, they tend to have long term funding relationships (rather like trusts and foundations whose funding is relatively smaller). International individuals have volatile interests and small funding potential, but they can provide links to bigger funding sources. While we do not have highly developed corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments in the country, corporates are able to provide free visibility, and we should exploit this. Despite their low funding potential local individuals can also get more people to learn about BAU nationally.

Our fundraising focus will be on securing diversified funding to enable fulfilment of strategic goals and objectives, in addition to ensuring effective stewardship of existing relationships and current donor funds. We will aim to raise flexible funding that covers the core costs of the organisation and allows BAU to invest in growth. This will be achieved through developing and implementing BAU's Fundraising Strategy by the end of 2014, in close collaboration with the BAUK and BAU boards. The key focus of the Fundraising Strategy will be to build BAU staff's fundraising capacity; proactively develop relations with local partners, in particular US based vendors (for joint



proposals), and donor agencies; explore creative projects that demonstrate innovation and Value for Money (VfM); submit high quality proposals and donor reports; and strengthen internal systems to track impact and sustainability.

Good governance

While BAU has got a strong and diverse governance body, its guidance and advisory role will have to be strengthened if we are to achieve more self-sufficiency. We will do this by increasing board exposure to our programmes, ensuring that they interact with staff, engaging them in strategy development processes and resource mobilisation and making certain that they actively consider risks and ways to mitigate these risks. We will continually assess where skills and knowledge need improving and recruit to fill these gaps on our board.

Staff development and retention

Staff capacity to deliver on this Strategic Plan will be improved when we implement our comprehensive Staff Development Plan, based on a skills analysis. The organisation will aim at retaining highly talented and motivated staff, so that we can implement quality programmes in alignment with the overall resources strategy. We will also examine how we can free up senior management time to concentrate on strategic issues. A comprehensive health, safety and security plan will be developed and implemented and aspects of HIV and AIDS and gender will be mainstreamed within the HR policy.

Appendix 1: SWOT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity & innovativeness in programme design • Appropriate & relevant programmes • Good collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders • Skilled and competent staff • Strong organisational policies and systems • Skilled, experienced and supportive Board of Directors • Accumulated knowledge and experience in provision of income and educational programmes • Stable funding from BAUK 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of harmony between the programme strategy and the monitoring and evaluation system • Lack of a Uganda fundraising strategy • Weak partnerships that don't compliment BA's work • Limited national visibility and weak PR strategy • Limited formal staff training opportunities • Lack of a partner development strategy
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Government policies that support young people • Modern technologies (radio, internet) • Availability of skilled labour in the country • Political stability • Willingness of communities and leaders to work with BAU • Existence of structures to use as entry points in communities • Vibrant and visible corporate sector (corporate social responsibility) • Existence of financial institutions to work with VSLAs 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falling school attendance due to emigration • High levels of poverty in operating areas • Coalition funding trends could disadvantage BAU • Change of donor funding policies following the discovery of oil in Uganda • Negative cultural practices/beliefs (such as early marriage) that threaten our education goals

Source: BAU SWOT Analysis Results, 2011

Appendix 2: BOND HEALTH CHECK RESULTS

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and Integrity: shared values and vision, distinctive contributions, good beneficiary voice • Leadership and Strategy: strong and diverse governance, inspiring leadership, a developing organisational strategy • Beneficiaries: good community participation and feedback, staff are good at mobilising communities • Monitoring: innovative, good monitoring culture, able to communicate results, adequate knowledge management • Internal Communications: good internal communication and staff participation and collaboration is well developed, adequate communication between BAUK and BAU • Money Issues: value for money, we maintain a risk management register, strong staff capacity, good accounting systems and financial reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes: inadequate programme and monitoring and evaluation resources • People: inadequate learning and development, internship programmes lacking, and a lack of health, safety and security plans • Partners: undefined roles and responsibilities, low partner capacity and sustainability • External Relations: lack of a communication strategy, inadequate engagement with the media, private sector and the research community • Influencing: lack of an advocacy strategy and low staff capacity and experience in policy influencing

Source: Build Africa Bond Health check, 2014

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