



**RESCUE WIDOWS, ELDERLY, YOUTH AND
ORPHANS WITH AIDS
(RWEYOWA)**

**ANNUAL REPORT
May 2009-April 2010**

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TEBLE OF CONTENTS

1. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	3
2. Word from the Executive Director.....	4
3. Message from the Program Director.....	5
4. Overview.....	6
5. Backgrounds.....	7
6. HIV/AIDS Prevention Program.....	8
6.1. Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Sensitization/Education.....	8
6.2. Voluntary Counseling and Testing for HIV.....	8
6.3. Condom Promotion and Supply.....	9
7. HIV/AIDS Care and Support Program.....	9
7.1. Community Outreach.....	9
7.2. Orphan Support/Sponsorship.....	10
8. Clients' Testimonies.....	11
9. Special Activities/Events.....	12
9.1. World AIDS Day.....	12
9.2. Christmas Packages.....	12
10. Community Health Activities.....	13
11. International Volunteer Placement Program.....	13
12. Challenges.....	13
13. Planned Activities.....	14
14. Conclusion.....	14
15. Conclusion.....	14

1. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABC	Abstinence, Being faithful and Condom use
AIDS	Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome
ARVs	Anti Retro-Virals (Drugs)
CAF	Children's AIDS Fund
CBO	Community Based Organization
HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
KACCAD	Kyosiga Community Christian Association for Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
RWEYOWA	Rescue Widows, Elderly, Youth and Orphans with AIDS
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TB	Tuberculosis
UK	United Kingdom
UNASO	Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations
USA	United States of America
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
YEAH	Young Empowered and Healthy



2. WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to share with you the RWEYOWA Annual report for the implementation year 2009/2010. This year has been completed in the usual RWEYOWA style of high levels of commitment, confidence, creativity and accountability. There have been some ups and downs, but these were all handled maturely and honestly by everyone concerned.

The remarkable achievements shown in the following pages of this report were often realized in the face of a number of challenges, including a heavy workload. However, to most members, job satisfaction was the force behind their tireless and unselfish execution of their duties to serve the less fortunate and vulnerable members of our community. Team work and the RWEYOWA spirit are always at work here, and with great honor I thank all the staff and volunteers for that undying spirit.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused suffering and death within the community, so I salute our sister organizations – such as Mildmay Uganda – for their continuing support of providing effective HIV treatment to our clients. Their continued services prolong and improve our clients' lives, despite the credit crash which has affected the global funding system.

Appreciation also goes to Children's AIDS Fund (CAF), which has made it possible for RWEYOWA to educate children about HIV /AIDS through sensitizing them and teaching prevention measures and general reproductive health, as is shown in this report.

We look forward for 2010/2011 with hope and confidence, knowing very well that HIV/AIDS is still with us and that there are no excuses for complacency.

For God and my country,

**Kasamba Ronald
Executive Director**



3. MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

It is difficult to fully capture, in a document of this kind, the full scope of the work of RWEYOWA and the remarkable difference it makes in people's lives within our community. This year under review marked the growth of RWEYOWA from a community based organization (CBO) to a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Registration Number **S. 5914/8248**. This enabled us to expand our services to cover the two districts of Kampala and Wakiso, which are the most densely populated in Uganda.

RWEYOWA continued to strengthen its HIV prevention, care and support services to realize its mission of curbing the further spread of HIV/AIDS and improving the livelihoods of those affected / infected with the virus in the community. This is manifested in its tremendous success in the areas of community outreach, voluntary counseling and testing, orphan support and sponsorship, comprehensive HIV/AIDS sensitization and education, and condom promotion/supply, as is clearly indicated in the following pages of this report.

Our partnerships with international individual donors and institutions have continued to grow, and we wish to thank our past and current international volunteers for their input and commitment towards the realization of RWEYOWA's mission.

Our local partner organizations, government, schools, RWEYOWA staff and the clients who have been instrumental in making this implementation year a success are also acknowledged and appreciated with our utmost gratitude.

In conclusion, this report documents RWEYOWA's work over the past year and calls for more action to strengthen support for the organization's vital interventions.

“Through partnership we can make a difference.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ssekibuule Wilson'. The signature is stylized and includes a small graphic element resembling a logo or initials.

Ssekibuule Wilson
Program Director

4. OVERVIEW

RWEYOWA continues to provide HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support services in the communities we serve. This report covers interventions and activities implemented in the year 2009/2010 (May 2009 – April 2010), which is the fourth year since the inception of RWEYOWA's significant work.

This year under review was characterized by remarkable achievements, lessons learned, and also some challenges. Most of RWEYOWA's programs/activities were consolidated and strengthened, made possible with financial, material, technical and moral support from our partner organizations/institutions, local and international donors, staff and volunteers.

Following registration with the National NGO Board in October 2009 as a Non-Governmental Organization, RWEYOWA expanded its services to cover the two districts of Wakiso and Kampala.

As regards RWEYOWA's HIV/AIDS prevention program, about 2,592 school-going youth have been reached with HIV/AIDS prevention and adolescent/reproductive health information. Approximately 1,580 people have been able to know their HIV sero-status, and many people at risk of HIV/AIDS infection have accessed condoms free of charge.

RWEYOWA's HIV/AIDS care and support program has supported 64 families registered under the community outreach project, enabled an additional number of orphans (8) to access education under the orphan sponsorship project, and referred at least 184 clients to partner organizations for treatment and other support services which fall outside of RWEYOWA's scope.

Five international volunteers have been hosted by RWEYOWA in this implementation year under review, and this has increased efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

Commemoration of the World AIDS Day and distribution of Christmas packages have been the major special events/activities conducted by RWEYOWA in the 2009/2010 year.



RWEYOWA team posing for a group photo

5. BACKGROUND

RWEYOWA is a non-profit organization founded in 2003 by a group of visionary Ugandan youth who were concerned about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in our community of Ssabagabo Makindye Sub County-Wakiso district. By May 2006, we had begun significant work in the community and had officially registered as a Community Based Organization. In October 2009, RWEYOWA registered with the Notional Board of Non-governmental organizations as a certified Non Governmental Organization (Reg. No. S.5914/8248), and expanded its geographical area of operation to cover both Wakiso and Kampala districts.

RWEYOWA was founded on five main objectives:

- To establish care and support activities/projects to improve the lives of those affected/infected with HIV/AIDS
- To prevent the further spread of HIV/AIDS and other STDs among people of all ages through the ABC strategy (Abstinence, Being faithful, use a Condom)
- To promote adolescent and sexual reproductive health of young people in the community
- To advocate for equality, respect, and protection of all those infected /affected by HIV/AIDS
- To promote coordination and cooperation through mobilization, information sharing and expertise with other partner organization in the struggle against HIV/AIDS

RWEYOWA has been instrumental in the implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support interventions, including comprehensive HIV/AIDS sensitization/education, voluntary counseling and testing for HIV, condom promotion and supply, community outreach, and orphan support and sponsorship, among others.

Mission statement: RWEYOWA exists to curb the further spread of HIV/AIDS and improve the livelihoods of those affected/infected with the virus in the community.

Vision statement: We envision a community accessing HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support services in the most prosperous and sustainable way possible.

RWEYOWA's operational principles

- Principle of practical involvement and participation of beneficiaries in the identification of key areas of operation and possible solutions in tackling issues associated with HIV/AIDS
- Principle of non-political and non-partisan operating environment
- Principles of non-discrimination, confidentiality, adaptation, responsibility and partnership

6. HIV/AIDS PREVENTION PROGRAM

6.1. Comprehensive HIV/AIDS sensitization/education

In this implementation year under review, our primary targets for HIV/AIDS sensitization sessions have been young community members aged 9-22. RWEYOWA continued to run



HIV/AIDS sensitization/education in progress

a project in which we conducted discussion groups in local schools in the community, focusing on the ABC approach (Abstinence, Being faithful and Condom use) as a means of HIV prevention, as well as discussing the effects of concurrent partnerships. These sensitization sessions have been conducted as more of a discussion and sharing knowledge than a lecture format.

By the end of this implementation year, a total of about 2,592 young people/youth have been sensitized about the spread and prevention of HIV/AIDS. This project also involved distribution of information, education and communication materials designed to communicate sensitive information to young audiences during the sessions. Through other activities like radio talk shows and World AIDS Day celebrations, which involved HIV/AIDS sensitization and education, people of all ages in the community have benefited from our services.

RWEYOWA staff presenting during the Health radio talk show



6.2. Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT)

This service has been available through RWEYOWA to enable people to know their HIV status, with the aim of further reducing the spread of the virus in the community.

It has promoted behavioral change for people who tested HIV negative, and acted as an entry point to other RWEYOWA services, including referral to partner organizations and health facilities for treatment and other health care services, for those who tested HIV



HIV Counseling and Testing in progress at Berkeley play ground



positive. Additionally, by offering VCT, people got to discuss HIV/AIDS and its impact, hence normalizing it and reducing HIV/AIDS stigma within the community.

A total of 1,580 people have been able to know their HIV status free of charge, of which 59.2% were female and 40.8% were male. Adults (those aged 18 and older) constituted 74.6% of the total number of people tested. During this implementation year, 86 people tested HIV positive, resulting in an overall infection rate of 5.4% among those we tested.

Of the total number of positive cases 89 % were adults (18 years and older), 64.4% of whom were women. This service has been offered in partnership with government health centers through which testing kits have been acquired. Each VCT clinic included registration, pre-test counseling, rapid HIV test, and post test counseling. For HIV positive cases, services included referral to partner health facilities and invitation to come to RWEYOWA office for further counseling. For vulnerable individuals and families in need, VCT clinics acted as an entry point into RWEYOWA's community outreach and orphan support projects.

6.3. Condom promotion and supply

Condoms have been made available through the RWEYOWA office at any time during our business hours, as well as during VCT sessions in the community. Along with provision of condoms, comprehensive sensitization and training in correct use and storage was offered. RWEYOWA has continued to receive free condoms from the Ministry of Health through the HIV and STD Control Program. In addition to having free condoms available for all interested individuals, we have been targeting specific groups at higher risk of HIV infection in the community for condom distribution. These included sex workers, long distance truck-drivers, urban motorcyclists (local public transport) and discordant couples, where one partner is HIV positive and the other negative.

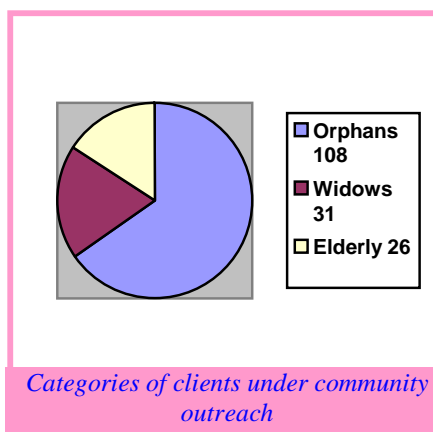
7. HIV/AIDS CARE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

7.1. Community Outreach

Through the community outreach project, RWEYOWA has helped 64 families during this implementation year under review. We have provided psycho-social support, assistance with basic necessities (especially food, clothes, etc.), and health checks to clients (individuals and families who have been infected or affected by HIV/AIDS). This project has been implemented with the goal of improving the livelihoods of our clients, including HIV/AIDS patients, AIDS orphans, and widows and elderly people who have lost spouses and/or children to HIV. The community outreach program also involves referrals to partner organizations and government health facilities for clients who required medical treatment and other health care services.



RWEYOWA client under community outreach receiving food and clothes



Categories of clients under community outreach

7.2. Orphan support/sponsorship

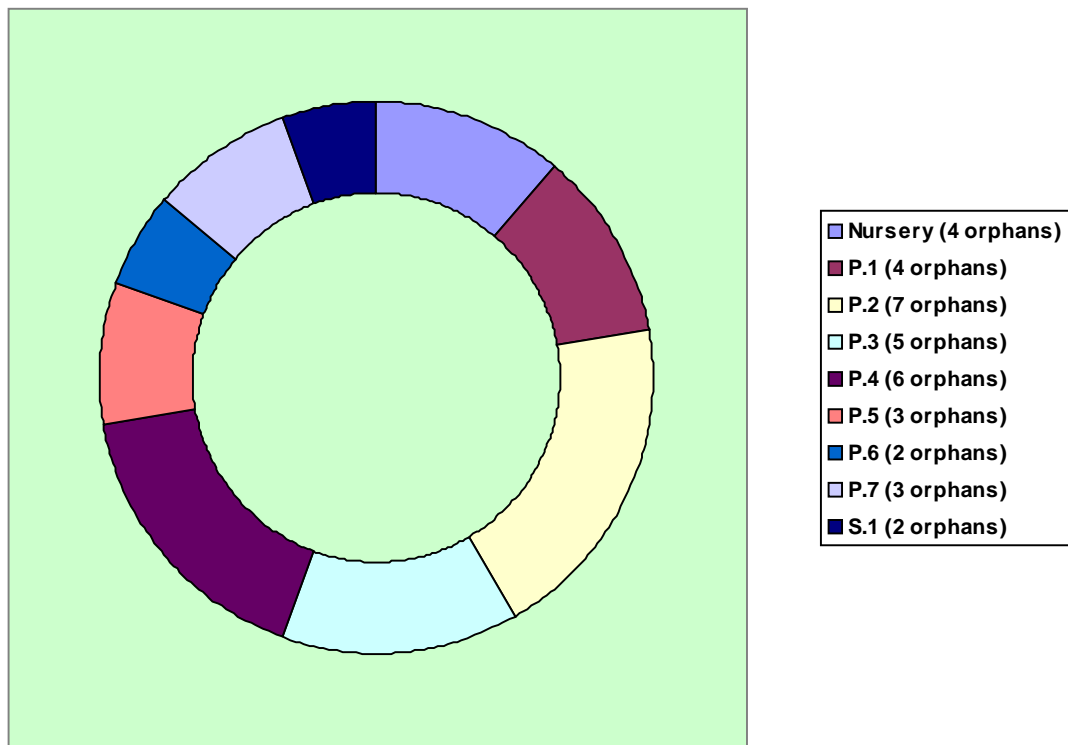
In RWEYOWA's endeavor to improve the lives of orphans infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS in the community, we have continued to partner with local schools to secure



Orphans under sponsorship program received scholastic materials

scholarships that enable orphans to obtain an education. An additional 8 orphans have been enrolled in this implementation year, bringing the total number of orphans under RWEYOWA's orphan sponsorship project to 32. We have also provided school uniforms and scholastic materials to each of the orphans under this project.

While RWEYOWA is unable to fund the education of all the orphans in our community, we have recently started a small program where individuals (from the community and internationally) can help us sponsor orphans. Under this arrangement, 8 orphans have been fully sponsored: 6 are in nursery and primary, while two have just started their first year at secondary level of education.



Orphans registered under RWEYOWA's orphan support/sponsorship program

8. TESTIMONIES



Before RWEYOWA support

Mathias Ssenyondo

“I fell seriously sick and almost died. Considering the fact that I had HIV and TB, I was stigmatized and discriminated at my sister’s home. I did not have financial ability to access treatment, food and soft drinks.

By luck, RWEYOWA people were concerned about my life and helped me to access treatment. I started taking drugs because I was assured of better food and drinks from RWEYOWA.

RWEYOWA people also provided counseling to me and all other people at home, and stigma and discrimination stopped.

In about four months, I started realizing unexpected changes in my life; gaining weight, stopped coughing, became physically active, and even stopped thinking about death.


I can’t believe that am now fully involved in my day-to-day activities.

I thank God for RWEYOWA people who were available when I needed their support most.”




After RWEYOWA intervention

Iradukunda Yvone (left) and **Namuli Erinah** (right) are some of our pioneer orphans under the orphan sponsorship program. They have just started their first year in a secondary school. Below are their hand written testimonies;



I am by names of Iradukunda Yvone Sandra, When I was still schooling at Mirembe primary school, life wasn't that easy. I could walk very long long distance to school and some times I could be late for morning classes and punished for late coming. After death of my father, my mother started struggling getting me school fees and my lunch at school and this made her to start looking for assistance. Through God's help we found RWEYOWA which helped me to get a nearby school called Namasuba Parents' School. They started supporting me in 2008 and RWEYOWA people paid me school fees up to primary seven. I sat for primary leaving examinations and I got a 1st grade with 7 points. This made RWEYOWA people happy and they got me a secondary school called Kawombe Memorial school and I am very happy because it is a very nice school. I am in boarding section and in mid term exams I was the 11th out of 94 students. When it came to end of term exams, I became the 6th out of 94 students which also encourage me to work so harder and harder. Am now heading to second term. And I will continue praying for RWEYOWA.
Iradukunda Yvone
Kawombe Memorial SS

KAWOMBE MEMORIAL SS
08/05/2010
I am by names of NAMULI ERINAH. I started my primary level at St. Elizabeth Primary School Namasuba. I can't remember the year when my mother died and my father died in 2007. And I am now living with my grandmother. After the death of my father, my grandmother had a problem of school fees and I started not going to school. When we told the RWEYOWA people, they started helping me by paying my school fees and giving me books. They changed me from St. Elizabeth Primary school to Namasuba Parents' School which has a good standard and I got a 1st grade in primary leaving Examination (P.7). Because of my good performance, the RWEYOWA people got me a good secondary school called Kawombe Memorial school which I like so much. I thank RWEYOWA for paying my school fees, giving me transport to school and other things of mine from primary five and I am now in senior one. I promise to continue working hard. I am now happy because I go to school every day.
Namuli ERINAH

9. SPECIAL ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

9.1. World AIDS Day

On 1st December 2009, RWEYOWA joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International World AIDS Day at Lufuka play ground, under the theme “**Universal Access and Human Rights**”. The rationale for this theme was the dire need to emphasize indiscriminate universal rights to information and services such as voluntary counseling and testing for HIV; antiretroviral drugs (ARVs); pediatric care and treatment; and the right to HIV and AIDS treatment for all, irrespective of age, gender, race, socio-economic status, and geographical location.



Commemorating the World AIDS Day, 1st December 2009

In partnership with other organizations and institutions, RWEYOWA brought together communities in Wakiso and Kampala districts to recognize this day locally. The event started with marching (along with a brass band) in the community, and involved local schools, organizations and local leaders. It was followed by a football match between RWEYOWA and Children’s AIDS Fund, drama and theatre presentations and guest speakers, including local leaders and people living with HIV/AIDS. A VCT clinic was also part of the event and at least 200 people were able to know their HIV status. This event attracted at least 500 people from Wakiso and Kampala districts.



RWEYOWA team prepared for a football match on the World AIDS Day 2009

9.2 Christmas Packages

RWEYOWA wrapped up the calendar year in its usual way by distributing Christmas Packages to its clients registered under the community outreach project, with the objective of enabling them to join the rest of the community in celebrating and enjoying



Staff packing clients’ Christmas packages



One of RWEYOWA clients receiving Christmas package

Christmas. Each package included sugar, rice, spaghetti, bread, and clothes for orphans. 62 families received Christmas packages and 98 orphans received clothes.

This activity was very successful because of the extensive financial support mobilized by Christiana Hoffman (long-term international volunteer from Texas, USA).

10. OTHER COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTIVITIES

RWEYOWA has continued to participate in various community health activities, including mass immunization, hygiene and sanitation demonstrations, and drug distribution. Also in this implementation year, two of RWEYOWA staff members – Ssekibuule Wilson and Kasamba Ronald – were recruited by the Ministry of Health as village health team members.

11. INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT PROGRAM

In order to elicit new organizational ideas, increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, enhance the organization's capacity, and facilitate cross-cultural exchange, RWEYOWA has continued to host short- and long-term volunteers.

In this implementation year under review, a total of six international volunteers were



Volunteers; Micheal, Alena and Christina from USA

hosted: Naeema Tharani from Toronto, Canada; Farah Kanji from Toronto, Canada; Alena Mack from California, USA; Michael Workowski from Wisconsin, USA; and Christina Hoffman from Texas, USA. They were all directly involved in the day-to-day activities of the organization, as well as in developing strategies to acquire material and financial resources to strengthen RWEYOWA's programs.

RWEYOWA's pioneer (first) international volunteer, Philip Nelson, has continued to volunteer as RWEYOWA's UK coordinator.

He has spearheaded fundraising activities in the UK to acquire resources for RWEYOWA and inspired other volunteers to come and volunteer with us in Uganda. We look forward to similar collaborative arrangements with other volunteers in the future.

12. CHALLENGES

Some of the challenges we experienced in the year 2008/2009 are ongoing and have appeared in 2009/2010 as well, namely an increased number of clients in need of RWEYOWA's support services and lack of reliable transportation. The sustainable solution for these challenges lies in acquiring more resources for the organization.

One of the unique challenges has been referring clients to partner organizations. Due to resource constraints, most of our partners have stopped registering new clients for treatment. For instance, Mildmay Uganda has been one of our strongest HIV/AIDS treatment partners since 2006, but they can no longer accept new clients for treatment due to limited financial resources.

An increasing workload for RWEYOWA staff has been yet another challenge. The organizational, community, and office tasks have been too great compared to the manpower available to complete them, resulting in a delay in accomplishing some of the tasks we set out to do this year.

In the face of the above challenges, however, RWEYOWA has continued to deliver high quality services in accordance with its mission of curbing the further spread of HIV/AIDS and improving the livelihoods of those in our community who are infected with and affected by the virus.

13. PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In the next implementation year 2009/2010, RWEYOWA hopes to:

- Establish sustainable support projects for youth and widows as means of improving their socio-economic livelihoods
- Strengthen its partnership with the government of Uganda by signing a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
- Purchase a vehicle to facilitate effective mobility and enable RWEYOWA services to reach more remote areas
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with a greater number of local and international organizations and agencies

14. CONCLUSION

2009/2010 has been a year of tremendous growth for RWEYOWA, from a community based organization to a certified non-governmental organization. A great deal of work has been achieved despite several challenges, and RWEYOWA is preparing to attain higher levels of service in the coming implementation year.

RWEYOWA wishes to acknowledge and appreciate all partner organizations, individual donors, and agencies that made RWEYOWA's implementation year 2009/2010 a success. These include, among others:

- Philip Nelson and his family/friends, UK
- Rotary Club of Downham Market UK
- Christina Hoffman and her family/friends, USA
- Jane Nelson and her family/friends UK
- Micheal Workowski and her family/friends, USA
- Alena Mack, USA
- Carolyn and France, UK
- Med Source, USA
- Viroqua Food Cooperation, USA
- Chippewa Valley Hospital, USA
- Mildmay Uganda
- Children's AIDS Fund (CAF)
- Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organizations (UNASO)

- AIDS Information Center
- Ministry of Health Uganda
- Kyosiga Community Christian Association for Development (KACCAD)
- Namasuba College of Commerce
- Roofings Ltd Uganda
- Straight Talk Foundation Uganda
- Young Empowered and Healthy (Y.E.A.H) Uganda
- Ndejje Health Center IV
- National Library of Uganda
- Book Aid International (BAI)
- St. John Primary School
- Namasuba Parents' School
- Born to Win Primary School
- Kawombe Memorial Secondary School

With our utmost gratitude, RWEYOWA wishes to acknowledge the key role played by the Board of Directors and above all the staff and volunteers for their commitment and diligence that ensured outputs for this year. RWEYOWA looks forward to continued, fruitful collaboration with these partners.

15. EDITORIAL TEAM

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. Kasamba Ronald | - | Executive Director |
| 2. Ssekibuule Wilson | - | Program Director |
| 3. Walusimbi Tonny | - | Coordinator |
| 4. Dr. Damalie Bajunga | - | Director |
| 5. Namuli Hasfah | - | Secretary |