



CARE Tanzania

SUPPORTING ADOLESCENT GIRLS EMPOWERMENT – SAGE II

FINAL REPORT JULY 2013 – APRIL 2018

Project Name: SAGE II (Supporting Adolescent Girls' Empowerment)

Project Location: Kahama District, Shinyanga Region, Tanzania

Reporting Period: July 2013 - April 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Supporting Adolescent Girls Empowerment project provides mechanisms through which girls access opportunities to quality education. The project utilizes social support, government structures, and girls' agency to ensure the girls stay and complete the education cycle.

Successful implementation of planned activities during July 2013-April 2018 operation period did register the following achievements:

- Increase in number of students visiting dispensaries for ASRH services that was influenced by three trainings provided to village health workers on girls and adolescent mentoring skills as a result 9,388 students (6790 girls and 2598 boys) used ASHR services provided by dispensaries
- Improvement in school retention and attendance as a result of engagement with local leaders and government institutions on ensuring that all registered students are completing school. The free education policy which was rolled out in previous years further supported the ability of families to ensure that students remain in school.
- A sustainability strategy is in place since February 2017 and remains on track. The three Kahama district councils have started including parts of the strategy into their budget plans.
- A total of 744 (542 girls and 202 boys) Non formal education (NFE) learners sat for grade VII examination and among them 275 girls and 123 boys passed and have been enrolled in secondary education
- Tricycle fuel and maintenance costs are included in district health budget.
- Strengthening of community health committees, to understand and execute their roles. 46 (22 female and 24 male) village health workers have been trained on safe motherhood.
- Supported girls' participation in sports and games in order to increase and improve their self-esteem and networks. The project procured and distributed 4 balls to each of 23 schools (2netball and 2football).
- The project supported all mainstreamed NFE learners with learning materials such as exercise books, pen and pencils.
- CARE has also established agreements with 23 primary schools for sustainable academic support to mainstreamed students, following the end of the project's stipend payments to NFE facilitators. Schools will also engage other teachers to ensure full support to mainstreamed learners. These meetings created project ownership among the community members and local leaders in order to sustain SAGE results.
- VSLA groups in the project area still playing an integral role on mentoring girls to become successful entrepreneurs through including them into VSLA groups has led girls to practice leadership skills and build life experiences.

INTRODUCTION

CARE is implementing the *Supporting Adolescent Girls Empowerment* (SAGE) project in Tanzania's Shinyanga region since June 2009. With generous support from **Elaine and Miles Alexander**

Philanthropic Fund CARE was enabled to continue to support girls education initiatives from July 2013. The project is in its fifth implementation year aiming at **improving the quality of life among 1,500 marginalized adolescent girls and young women** in 23 villages in Kahama district.

SAGE's activities are directed toward achieving the following objectives:

1. Increase access to **equitable and quality education and sexual and reproductive health services** for adolescent girls;
2. Build **leadership skills** among girls and young women;
3. Engage institutions and local leaders in protecting and upholding the **rights of adolescent girls**; and
4. Improve **access to financial services** to support adolescent girls.

This report highlights on key activities towards achievement of the objectives, it also gives a summary of achievements and challenges.

Project activities and results

Objective 1: Increase access to **equitable and quality education and sexual and reproductive health services** for adolescent girls.

The project works with the Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) initiative to meet its goals and has the following core activities;

1.1. Strengthen teachers' capacity to use gender sensitive teaching methodologies

The project team conducted trainings to enhance skills on interactive, gender sensitive teaching methods to 52 (17 female and 35 male) teachers including their supervisors. The training was also aimed at introducing teachers to changes in the education curriculum. Topics covered were development of lesson plan, scheme of work, and lesson notes; using gender sensitive approaches; and teaching techniques to enhance reading, writing and arithmetic skills teaching technique and changes in the education curriculum. The changes include enrolment of pupils below 6 years old as long as they meet minimum requirements of passing a reading and arithmetic test.

A pre/post assessment was conducted to establish levels of awareness regarding training topics. Scores from the pre-assessment ranged from 4/17 to 13/17 with 6% of participants scoring 13 – 17 points. From the post-assessment the lowest score was 7/17 while the highest score was 16/17, with 58% of participants scoring 13 – 17 points. Overall, the training raised understanding of gender sensitive teaching methods and awareness on changes in Tanzania education policy and curriculum.

1.2. Monitoring and COBET girls' retention and completion

To enhance attendance, the project facilitated revival of extracurricular activities like tailoring work, mock parliament and sports. School authorities, local leaders and primary courts within the project

area acted to ensure laws and bylaws are put into action to ensure school retention and attendance of all students.

Enrollment and retention data were collected to measure progress made with specific attention to mainstreaming of adolescent girls aged 10 to 17 years into formal school.

Chart 1: NFE learners' enrollment to formal school, completion, transition 2010-2017.

Year	Mainstreamed			Completed grade 7			Joined Sec. Education		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
2010	13	21	34	2	6	8	0	0	0
2011	74	56	130	15	7	22	2	2	4
2012	191	52	243	49	24	73	12	5	17
2013	685	18	703	154	98	252	35	28	63
2014	299	153	452	79	19	98	56	43	99
2015	238	0	238	39	22	61	41	11	52
2016	0	0	0	113	4	117	18	19	37
2017	0	0	0	91	22	113	64	2	66
2018	0	0	0	-	-	-	47	13	60
Total	1500	300	1800	542	202	744	275	123	398

Since 2013 to date 133 (83 girls and 68 boys) have completed secondary education, while 11 (8 girls and 3 boys) dropped out, and 197 (156 girls and 41 boys) are still in secondary schools. Drop out reasons include poverty as many students were not able to pay for school costs. The project witnessed decrease of dropout rates as the government has declared free primary and secondary education to all public schools.

1.3. Supporting girls' transition to formal schools through girls club, social networking and mentoring.

The project supported NFE learners after their transition to formal school system. The support was aimed at ensuring they complete primary education, it includes backstopping of *Achieve!* group activities, and supply of learning and vocational materials. *Achieve!* groups are engaged in income generating activities, their major source of income is embroidery, soap making, batik, gardening and making of traditional handcraft products. Grade seven leavers who were members of *Achieve!* groups do teach skills about operating sewing machines to their peers at a small fee. The activities contribute in integrating NFE students in formal school, make them confident and hence the morale to continue with schooling. 920 girls and 308 boys are formal and non-formal students existing members of Archive groups in 23 NFE Centers.

1.4. Increase access to knowledge and information that lead to better maternal health practices.

The project conducted trainings to 46 school teachers and 46 village health workers on mentoring adolescent girls with SRH skills, and safe motherhood and sustaining youth friendly SRH services. Similarly, 457 students [317 girls (including 140 NFE girls) and 140 boys (including 60 NFE boys)] and 2012 538 students {355 girls (including 123 NFE girls) and 183 boys (including 71 NFE boys) attended trainings.

As adolescents (acquire SRH knowledge and skills through peer educators, trained teachers within schools, and health workers SAGE places a priority on ASRH education and services because poor girls in rural areas often have little access to television and radio, the primary media for mass ASRH education campaigns, and are hence particularly vulnerable to contracting STIs – including HIV, which is highly prevalent in Tanzania.

As a result of these training, the project has been recording increased numbers of adolescents seeking ASRH services at dispensaries. Trends have started to show reduction in teenage pregnancies, early marriages, and new STD and HIV infection as shown in tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2: Attendance to ASRH services at nine dispensaries within the project area

Dispensary	Type of Service											
	Counseling/ASRH service and testing on STI/HIV/AIDS/UT			Treatment, family planning services			Attending ASRH sessions within their schools			Answering questions		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Segese	84	67	151	48	35	83	1877	467	2344	220	209	429
Ntobo	62	44	106	23	23	46	453	217	670	173	98	271
Ngogwa	76	50	126	45	108	153	765	307	1072	307	211	518
Shilela	49	47	96	28	31	59	567	236	803	101	111	212
Bukwangu	38	29	67	27	52	79	567	448	1015	67	109	176
Ntobo B	33	34	67	12	77	89	372	220	592	203	155	358
Buganzo	36	35	71	9	28	37	349	299	648	37	56	93
Kalagwa	17	32	49	17	33	50	128	188	316	23	30	53
Nyambula	36	55	91	9	44	53	273	149	422	22	58	80
Total	431	393	824	218	431	649	5351	2531	7882	1153	1037	2190

The number of students attending ASRH sessions within their schools increased from 7870 (5344 girls and 2526 boys) last reporting to 7955 (5397 girls and 2558 boys) at project closing. Similarly, the number of students visiting dispensaries for counselling and testing on STDs and HIV/AIDS has also increased from 770 (398 girls and 372 boys) last reporting period to 824 (431 girls and 393 boys) this report. These numbers provide preliminary indication of increasing levels of awareness on the importance of SRH services to adolescents.

Table 3: Adolescent SRH data

			Ngogwa	Segese	Shilela	Ntobo	Total
2013	Early pregnancy		11	21	13	9	54
	Child marriage		8	11	5	7	31
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	5	0	1	2	8
		Boys	3	7	4	3	17
Total		8	7	5	5	25	
2014	Early pregnancy		4	7	8	6	25
	Child marriage		3	3	7	4	17
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	4	3	0	4	11
		Boys	6	1	4	2	13
Total		10	4	4	6	24	
2015	Early pregnancy		8	7	1	1	17
	Child marriage		5	0	5	0	10
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	0	4	2	1	7
		Boys	0	0	5	2	7
Total		0	4	7	3	14	
2016	Early pregnancy		4	0	3	2	9
	Child marriage		6	5	4	4	19
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	2	0	2	1	5
		Boys	1	3	0	0	4
Total		3	3	2	1	9	
2017	Early pregnancy		0	3	0	1	4
	Child marriage		5	2	0	1	8
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	1	0	0	3	4
		Boys	2	3	0	0	5
Total		3	3	0	0	6	
2018	Early pregnancy		0	0	0	1	1
	Child marriage		0	1	1	0	2
	New STDs & HIV/ AIDS	Girls	1	0	0	0	1
		Boys	0	0	2	0	2
Total		1	0	2	0	3	

An average of 3 teenage pregnancies per year to zero pregnancy within last three years is noted as an impact of ASRH knowledge and skills to all project centers and the host villages. Early pregnancies in 2013 and 2014 were 79 among them 7 were students. 72 were non student adolescents while early pregnancies since 2015 to 2018 were 31 all non-students.

1.5 Supporting community support system

Segese, Shilela and Mega wards community members have been provided with a motorized tricycle which operates from the Segese Health Center and provides transportation services to the clinic in case of complicated deliveries. About 172 pregnant mothers received the service during SAGE II, thus helping reducing maternal and child mortality rates.

Despite the benefits of the tricycle ambulance, the community members faced problems in covering fuel and maintenance costs of ambulance. CARE successfully lobbied the Kahama District Medical Officer (DMO) to support the motorcycle running costs as part of the district budget. The tricycle ambulance is now registered as a government asset and the DMO office incurs fuel and maintenance costs. This is an example of collaboration between the project and the local government.

Objective 2: Build girls' leadership skills.

2.1. Extracurricular activities

A total of 920 adolescent girls organized in clubs known as “Achieve!” groups have become peer mentors, role models, and ambassadors of the rights of girls to sexual and reproductive health as well as gender equality at their schools and in their communities. With the facilitation of SAGE, all 23 participating schools have formed their own “Achieve!” groups. Within each group, SAGE guides girls to form smaller groups of up to 10 members who engage in one or two types of income-generating activities such as canning vegetables, tailoring, batik, embroidery, or making beaded ornaments, jewelry, bar soap or liquid soap. SAGE also helps group members take part in activities such as dialogues, debates, mock parliaments, singing, physical activities, sports, role play, games and drama to help girls gain self-esteem, confidence, and self-expression and to network with other girls.

Results from youth leadership index administered to boys and girls in NFE classes shows that 62% of girls view themselves as leaders as compared to 56% of boys. This shows the impact of extracurricular activities in building girls leadership skills

2.2. Promoting linkage between women leaders in VSLAs and girls participating in leadership development activities.

The efforts on promoting linkages between VSLA women leaders and girls to improve girls' leadership skills have succeed as number of girls with handcraft skills has raised from 57 to 83. The girls are still primary school students but able to fully participate in all VSLA group activities during off school hours. They have been accepted as permanent members of VSLA groups regardless their age. In addition, 13 girls who completed primary school last year are active VSLA group members.

The handcraft skills increased the likelihood for young girls to be accepted in VSLA groups as they were bringing something in hand the same as other members with cash in hand as capital for income generating.

Objective 3: Engage institutions and local leaders in protecting and upholding the rights of adolescent girls.

While forming one of the pillars of CARE's women empowerment framework, this objective is aimed at creating an enabling environment where both the formal and informal structures are taking action for the rights of girls' education and development. Key activities in the reporting periods were facilitating

dialogues on SAGE sustainability strategy with Local Government Leaders; and promoting engagement of men and boys as champions of girl's rights.

3.1. Engaging local leaders in protecting and upholding adolescent girls' rights:

The project team linked local leaders with the Kahama district police gender desk officers for reporting and taking immediate legal action in cases such as rape, sexual abuse, beating and even killing of women and girls based on witchcraft beliefs, stopping girls from attending schools or forced marriage. 4 incidences were reported and managed. This explains the role of government officials and individuals in ensuring that protocols that protect the rights of women and girls are adhered to.

Also, the project facilitated meetings with project stakeholders to introduce the closeout plan and developed sustainability strategy for both SAGE and Jifunze!. The three district councils of Kahama town, Ushetu and Msalala agreed to 16 commitments that will ensure sustainability of SAGE and Jifunze! within their catchment areas. The commitments fall under the broad categories of: planning and funding of SAGE/Jifunze! activities; supportive supervision; community engagement; and registering of VSLA groups. In addition, Msalala council will also be supporting project beneficiaries through district council education fund by providing them with school uniforms and learning materials.

If the strategy is implemented as planned, all SAGE and Jifunze! project beneficiaries will receive necessary school needs/ materials from their host councils so as to ensure that they complete grade seven and secondary education.

3.2. Promoting men and boys as champions for girls' rights

The project conducted four training sessions for men and boys about enhancing girl's empowerment and advocating for girls' and women rights. Involving men and boys builds community awareness and helps ensuring that women and girls' rights are protected.

Overall, there are now 178 men and 930 boys playing the role of improving community awareness on gender equality and helps ensuring that women and girls' rights are exercised within the project area. The work of trained men and boys has been recognized by other NGOs such as Human Health Society Foundation (HUHESO) which is engaging the champions into activities like conducting human behavior change campaign as gear of reducing HIV/AIDS spread where they earn money. This recognition of the work of champions has attracted other men and boys to join the movement. The essence of engaging men and boys as champions of girls' rights is to achieve sustainable results in gender equality. Men and boys are engaged in ending gender-based violence, oppression of women and all forms of gender inequality in their communities.

Objective 4: Improve access to financial services to support adolescent girls.

4.1. Build capacity of VSLAs for parents of NFE learners

The project has been promoting access to financial services through VSLAs and advocating for use of some of the funds to support girls' education. The project conducted monitoring visits to 28 active VSLA groups. The activities also included mentorship and feedback sessions where groups were advised to acquire full registration from district councils, have an up-to-dated and signed group constitution, members to have specific income generating activities in which to invest the loans; and timely repaying of loans. The groups were also advised on procedures for securing loans from their district councils through ward executive officer and ward councilor warranty.

The project has reached 52 VSLA leaders (38 women and 14 men) with technical support. Group members have business and improved their income through selling products like grain (maize & rice), batik, and earrings and dried sweet potatoes at weekly markets within their community and through trade fairs.

A total of 962 VSLA members (683 women and 279 men) have started their income-generating activities with CARE's technical support. As a result of membership in VSLAs, women have started their paths towards economic empowerment through doing business, saving and expanding their capital by accessing loans. All 28 VSLAs accumulates the equivalent of \$60,000 in shares and interest from loans. On average members each earns about \$76 to support their daughters' education and household needs.

SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES

5. Successes

- Adolescent girls can earn income through income generating activities such as tailoring and food vending and this is often more successful than becoming a member of a VSLA as they do not have enough capital to buy shares in the VSLA group.
- By creating access to basic education for 1347 learners (1201 girls and 146 boys) this funding has enabled them to delay child birth. Illiterate mothers have more children than literate mothers. Education enables women to change their attitude over family planning and preference to small family size. Education for girls brings everlasting change which lifts many households out of poverty traps.
- SAGE has protected 3758 girls from HIV, they are aware of ASRH. These girls are ASRH peer educators in schools, families
- The project is increasing women ability in economic production which reduces gender inequality. SAGE has enabled 683 VSLA women and 920 girls in school and 13 school leavers to raise their incomes to support themselves and their families' needs.
- 920 girls from 23 schools are members of girls' social clubs where they are conducting tailoring and embroidery, cooking and gardening and practicing entrepreneurships. The project has increased girls' confidence, voice, vision, organization and decision making skills. Hence, are less likely to suffer gender based violence.
- The number of girls visiting health care centers for ASRH services has risen from 398 during the last reporting period to 431 now.

- To date, the project has increased the number of men and boys playing the role of improving community awareness on gender equality and women and girls rights to 178 men and 930 boys.
- The project in its implementation from 2013 to 2018 reached 10,638 (male 2,954 and female 7,684) direct beneficiaries and 407,588 (male 163,035; female 244,553) indirect beneficiaries within Kahama district in which currently divided into Kahama town and kahama rural; and through community awareness meetings conducted in 23 villages, wards and school platforms and events whereby information, education and communication materials branded products were disseminated. The project used VSLA groups, sport games, role model and champions with influential people like District Commissioner, District Executive Directors, religious and political leaders for lobbying and advocacy intervention to large community.

6. Challenges

- Traditional mind sets within the entire community lead women and girls to remain passive and they do not always pursue opportunities available to them, including the right to education.
- Girls right to education are not yet fully recognized by the policy framework in Tanzania. While the Education and training Policy of 2007 makes commitment to remove barriers and provide opportunity for all girls and boys to complete basic education, there are still no instruments to put the policy into effect. The guideline for returning pregnant girls back to school was not approved by the parliament and the government has made it clear that pregnant girls will not be allowed back to government schools after delivery.
- Apart from growing up in a society where adults do not communicate with adolescents on sexuality issues, SAGE girls who seek ASRH services face social norms and cultural barriers from health workers. Adolescents' girls revealed that, some health providers show negative attitudes and reactions to adolescent girls who ask for ASRH information and services. Some health workers are concerned about moral and cultural norms. CARE will continue to create awareness to health providers, parents and local leaders about the importance of breaking these norms.
- Lack of scholarships for girls who transition to secondary schools poses a major risk for girls to drop out. CARE will continue to facilitate acquisition of business skills to adolescent girls and encourage them to join VSLAs to enable them earn income and support themselves in secondary schools

It is the hope of CARE Tanzania that other partners will continue to advocate for the right of girls to education and development through collecting and sharing evidence from the field.

7. Lesson learnt

Unexpectedly, men have contributed positively and supported women economic empowerment and girls and women rights. Men engagement is needed in order to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. Men form 29 percent of VSLA members. Having men as VSLA members was not a preliminary goal. SAGE focused on women and later invited men because most women could not read and write hence not able to keep records in books.

Human Interest story: Adolescent girls' economic empowerment



Mary Joseph explaining the handicrafts to visitors

Mary Joseph is 15 years old and studying at Wisolele primary school. She dropped out of school when she was in grade 2 as a result of her family's move from Magu to Nzega. She stayed out of school for the next 4 years engaging in domestic and agriculture activities. In 2011 she enrolled as a NFE learner and was subsequently mainstreamed into grade 3 in 2014.

Mary is currently in grade 6, she is one of the learners who have been with the project for six years. During her time with the project she has been given training on making handicrafts which developed her skills on soap, batik and jewelry making and sewing. Recently during a commemoration of the International Day of the African

Child she showcased what she has learnt through the project.

"I enjoy my ability to make different handcraft products including batik, earrings and soap. I can also use a sewing machine and make my very own school uniforms. I am grateful because I reregistered in school and I am sure I will pass my grade seven exams. Hopefully I will be able to join secondary school. And if I don't get accepted I have the skills to not I will start my own business"

Conclusion

With the support of Elaine & Miles Alexander Philanthropic Fund, CARE's SAGE II project provided second chance for out-of-school girls and boys to unleash their potential and achieve their educational dreams. By equipping adolescents with vocational skills, life skills, sexual and reproductive health knowledge, information and services, we were preparing them to take charge of their futures and reduce their vulnerabilities. NFE schools and learning centers expose girls and boys to development opportunities and influences beyond those found within their families. Investing in education will expand children's opportunities beyond the traditional roles of provider, homemaker, father, mother, and spouse.

Over the project life time we have made strides in improving the lives of girls in the communities we work in and we've seen a decrease in child marriage, early pregnancy and new HIV/AIDS infections. Additionally the girls who have re-entered into schools are continuing with their studies. As the project is phasing out we remain positive that the actions outlined in the sustainability strategy will work to to insure that girls in Kahama continue to receive the support that they require.