

BICODA



Photos: Caroline Turyatamba

Above: Hilda Tusingwire, founder and coordinator, BICODA.

Left: BICODA helped purchase reading glasses to enable this student to stay in school.

With support from AIM, BICODA offers several different types of income generation activities for families. One such activity is beekeeping.

When Hilda Tusingwire and Arthur Katungwensi traded their business life in Kampala to return and work in their rural home in Buyanja, Rukungiri District, many were skeptical that they would be able to make it. For Arthur and Hilda the decision was made with the knowledge that it would not be easy—however, they had enough faith in their vision to utilize their experiences, technical expertise, and connections in beekeeping to make a difference in the lives of their community.

Once back in Buyanja, they were immediately struck by the poverty and number of orphans in their community. They found that many of the very young were malnourished and sick because they had no income to buy food and other necessities such as medicines. They also had no knowledge of nutrition or hygiene. Many older orphans and vulnerable youth were turning to sex

work for money and some were engaging in substance abuse. Adding to these difficulties, some orphans were also HIV positive but lacked information, care, and support.

Recognizing these issues, Hilda and Arthur looked for ways to support the orphans and vulnerable children to keep them in school. They wanted to empower older children who were out-of-school with vocational opportunities and to train them in nutrition, and personal and environmental hygiene. They also wanted to provide information on life skills and sexuality so they could know how to avoid HIV and sexually transmitted infections, as well as psychosocial support and home visits for the affected homes.

So they changed their business plans to bring families that were taking care of orphans and vulnerable children into their business of beekeeping, thus providing an



Raymond Asiimwe, BICODA community volunteer, with a pineapple crop provided by the organization.

income-generating opportunity, while looking for ways to help keep the children in school and address some of their other needs. To bring this idea to fruition, Hilda and Arthur founded BICODA, the Buyanja Integrated Community Development Agency, to increase support to orphans and vulnerable children in Buyanja. The agency orients orphans in health and life skills and they train and educate parents and volunteers in integrated orphan and vulnerable children support.

With support from AIM, BICODA offers several different types of income generation activities for families such as beekeeping. Six beehives have been given to each household. The refined products generated from the beehives include honey, mosquito repellent candles, and fertilizer ready for the market. BICODA also provides raw materials such as pineapple plants and enriched

AIM'S ROLE	Provided funding, technical assistance, equipment, and capacity building
TOTAL GRANT GIVEN	Ush 40,969,500
CONTRACT PERIOD	November 2004 to December 2005
ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY AIM	Orphans and vulnerable children Income generation activities
OTHER DONORS	Africare

potato vines to households for nutritional support.

To date, BICODA has supported over 200 orphans and vulnerable children ages 6-18 years old. They encourage the children to stay in school to attain basic education and provide school supplies for primary school orphans. ■