

# International Alternative Care Conference

Geneva, 3 to October 2016



Lucy Buck, Founder & CEO  
Child's i Foundation

## Hosts



## Partners



# The development of regulatory systems with limited government resourcing

(AKA Care reform on a budget)

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- 50,000 children in institutions
- Proliferation of institutions in UG since 1990's
- Unregistered, unregulated and privately funded
- Poverty and lack of access to education are the main 'push factor' for families placing children into orphanages



## 5 years later (with limited resources)

- National Child Protection Working Group established Alternative Care Task Force in 2011 chaired by MGLSD
- Alternative Care Framework (2012)
- Updated Children (Approved Home) Rules, 2013
- Baseline research to ascertain situation of institutions in Uganda
- Children (Approved Homes) assessment toolkit
- Alternative Care Implementation Unit
- Child Helpline operational in all districts
- Alternative Care Curriculum
- National Alternative Care Panel run by MGLSD
- District Gatekeeping Panels
- Draft reintegration guidelines
- Ugandans Adopt campaign
- Emerging Uganda Care Leavers initiative
- Children Act amendments (2016)
- Publishing a social work issues paper



# National Alternative Care Framework Continuum of Care

## Pro-Active Activities

Child Vulnerable to disruption / abandonment

Support Vulnerable Families

Abandonment Prevention

## Pro-Active Activities

Child vulnerable to disruption / abandonment

Kinship Care

Short Term Foster Care

Transitional Care

## Permanent Placements (prioritised)

Highest Priority / Starting Point for Alternative Care



Reunification

Community / Kinship Care

Domestic Adoption

Long-Term Foster Care

Inter Country Adoption \*

Specialised Residential Care

All child care plans should reflect and work to these alternative care priorities

All activities and attempts made for each should be recorded in the care plan along with next actions

These priorities should be key to all related policies and procedures

\*In line with the Children's Act

## Challenges

- High percentage of children being recruited across district borders into institutions (50%)
- Lack of Government human and financial resources (63 out of 189 approved staff positions filled)
- Lack of co-ordination between different civil society initiatives
- Orphan tourism and mission trips continue to fund orphanages
- Children's villages actively recruiting children.
- Resistance from orphanages to change model of care.
- Lack of social work capacity to implement framework
- Limited recognition of the importance of the role of a social worker.
- Lack of understanding from donors funding institutions
- Lack of enforcement of the approved Children's Homes Rules
- Lack of SOP's for closure and reintegration
- Lack of an inter-agency case management system

## Hope never runs dry

- Engaged and dedicated Government
- National Action Plan for Alternative Care to guide the implementation of an ambitious plan to ensure no child is placed in any form of institutional care, especially children under the age of three and reduce the overall number of children in institutions by 60% led by the Alternative Care Implementation Unit
- Strong National Child Protection Working Group
- Documenting our journey and showing an alternative is possible on social media. Storytelling + data.
- Availability of funding (Terre des Hommes, USAID, Oak Foundation)
- National Association of Social Workers Uganda
- Strong coalition of CSO's led by UCRNN engaging the Government in the reform
- Ugandans embracing children returning from institutions, becoming adoptive parents and foster carers



- Examples of good practice across the spectrum of Alternative Care and developing guidelines for reintegration, foster care and adoption.

## Transforming 18 orphanages #lessons learnt

### IGNORE AT YOUR PERIL...

- Children
- Government
- International Donors
- CCI director
- CCI Social Worker
- Families and communities

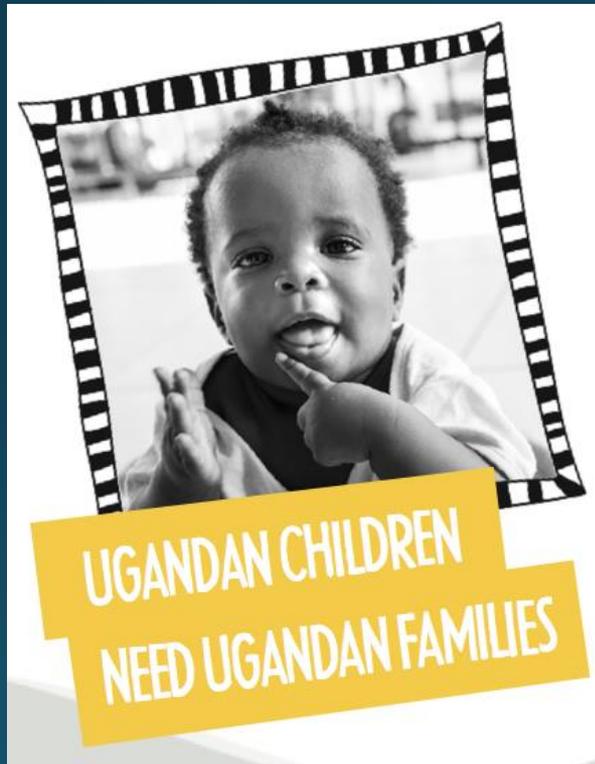
Transform or close and do not try to improve

Take on a district. Prove and replicate.

DI is complex. It takes time, expertise and investment

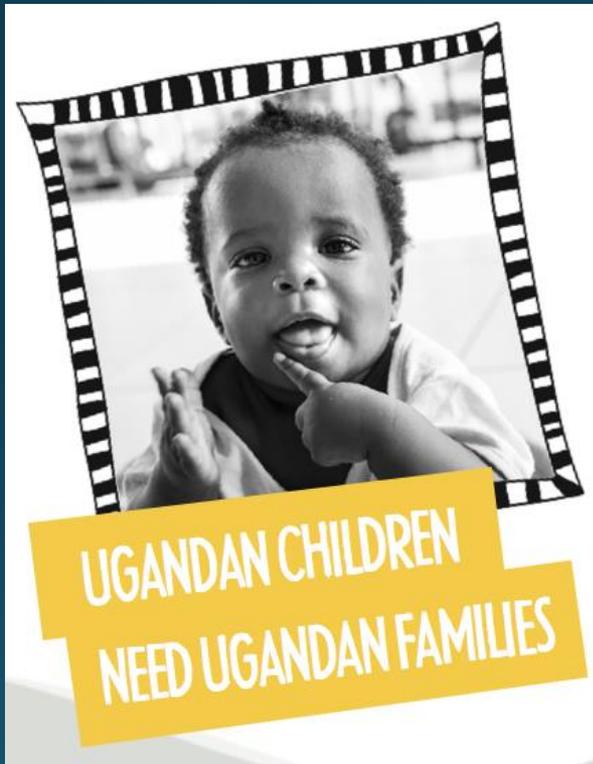
Use peers to tell their story

## Changing hearts and minds



- Ugandans Adopt is a government-lead multimedia campaign promoting domestic fostering and adoption in Uganda.
- The multi platform campaign includes prime time TV shows, radio adverts, billboards, newspaper features, magazine articles and church and business presentations.
- 313 enquiries from parents in Uganda to adopt in the past 12 months.
- As a result, Ugandans Adopt have a bank of approved adoptive parents ready to adopt abandoned children.
- For more information on adoption please visit <http://ugandansadopt.ug> or [www.facebook.com/ugandansadopt](http://www.facebook.com/ugandansadopt)

## Top tips for story telling



- Story telling – content is king.
- **Beginning** – Set up the problem
- **Middle** – what did **you** do to change the situation
- **End** – The happy ending
- Be vulnerable.
- Be honest.
- Do not use jargon.
- Do not criticise.
- Highlight good – create a critical mass
- Have a conversation **do not** broadcast.
- Give people the **power** to change the situation (donors)

## Promoting domestic adoption – 'how to...' guide

1. Design logo
2. Wordpress website
3. Facebook group
4. Identify families who have adopted who are willing to front campaign.
5. Create content – videos or photos
6. Target & boost on FB – national celebrity endorsement?
7. Print brochures
8. Hold an open day and invite families.
9. Invite the press
10. Start the conversation 😊

# UGANDANS

# ADOPT



## Making people heroes

**BUDGET of \$275 on Facebook:**

- 470,000 reached
- 5500 likes
- 195 shares
- 508 comments
- 20 expressions of interest
- *'Wow this all great I am so happy to see that we are adopting an adoption mindset. The best place for children to thrive is in a family and not an alternative home. I too want to adopt two children someday. Pray for me!!'*



**Ugandans Adopt**  
Published by Ugandans Adopt [?] · 19 October at 15:16 · 🌐

Little Praise was found abandoned in Mulago, a Kampala suburb in February this year, at one-and-a-half months and placed into emergency care. After our social workers tried in vain to trace her family, she was approved for adoption in August. Luckily for Praise, there was a loving heart waiting to receive her. Her adoptive mother had been undergoing assessment and was approved to adopt by the Government Adoption Panel on the same day! After a successful bonding arrangement wi... See More



71,433 people reached Boosted

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## We make families, not orphans

