

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD VISION'S HOLISTIC APPROACH TO
CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING IN UGANDA**

By

Ji-Hye Chung

CAPSTONE

Submitted to

KDI School of Public Policy and Management

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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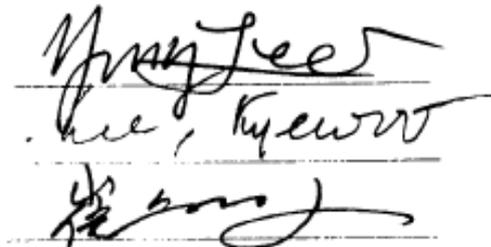
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ABSTRACT

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Many aid donors have been exploring various approaches in order to eradicate poverty and help poor children effectively. As an effort to achieve this objective, the holistic approach and integrated program has been adapted to development programs since 1990s. This study takes a close look at Kachonga Area development program in Uganda which has been implementing integrated programs to see the effects of the holistic approach.

Secondary data were reviewed and key informant Interviews were carried out to find how programs were integrated one another and what impact the holistic approach brought. From this study, we obtained two main findings. Firstly, when projects are integrated, they bring synergy so as to achieve an overarching program goal. In the process, communities would be engaged and empowered. The fruits of a development program can be sustained through the empowerment of communities. Therefore pursuing a holistic approach is on the right track to achieve the mission of development programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to see the impact and mechanism of the holistic approach of an integrated development program in Uganda in order to find influential factors in children's well-being. One of major goals of the development program is to provide help for children in poverty. In the beginning of aid history, many charity organizations targeted children and provided them direct service in relation to their health and education. As the evaluation of development programs evolved, it was discovered that targeting only children and implementing stand-alone projects restricted impact and this is why aid organizations changed their strategy with an assumption that it takes a village to raise a child, which means the approach must be holistic.

Area Development Program (ADP) is the development program model developed by World Vision and it reflects a holistic approach. ADP model started in 1991 and it has been implemented for more than 20 years. There is a need to see whether the holistic approach brought desired effects on children and how it is being operated in the field. The method of this study is to review secondary data, conduct key informant interviews and find significant case stories in Kachonga ADP which is operated by World Vision Uganda. Hopefully this study would present a valuable insight to other development partners who are interested in the holistic approach.

2. Introduction Of World Vision And Its History

World Vision (WV) is one of the largest international Christian NGOs which started in Korea after the Second World War. Its mission is to help poor children in the least developed countries and it is shown in the mission statement:

Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness,

Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so.

In the beginning of its ministry, WV used to supply food, gift-in kind and medical services directly to recipients in order to meet basic human needs. The way to give direct benefit to recipients is called service delivery and this approach might have reduced the suffering of the poor in the fastest way.

As aid programs expanded and studies on their impact were conducted, they found that stand-alone projects couldn't produce as much impact as expected in enhancing the lives of the poor. Many failures and limitations of those projects were reported. Based on such results, aid agencies searched for a new paradigm.

Keeping eyes on the findings, WV also figured out that poverty could not be eradicated just by addressing current direct needs from their up-close experiences with beneficiaries. Although charity organizations delivered a lot of assistance to the vulnerable people, if their support stops, the children will return to the previous life and must be suffering again. In addition, the external support may increase the dependency of poor families so they were not well-equipped to overcome the situation. In other words, direct help of individuals had serious constraints and its benefits couldn't be sustained even after a huge sum of money was spent.

3. Introduction Of Area Development Program Of World Vision

With those lessons learned, the awareness of the need to develop a better way to support the poor had been raised. Against the backdrop, WV decided to change their program model. WV developed 'Area Development Program' expecting synergy effects created from inter-projects and sustainability solidified by community participation. ADP is a new program model focusing on the development of the entire area rather than individuals. The area covers several parishes selected as the target area and 4~5 sectoral projects are being implemented to accomplish the overarching program goal. The composition and scope of projects are decided through community representative meetings to increase the ownership and capacity of the relevant community.

ADP started in 1991 and it has been operated for more than 20 years. Many aid agencies and organizations adopted this holistic approach in their program model.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Research Question

Transformation of lives of the poor seems not to be achieved by specific sectoral efforts. A holistic approach which covers social aspects as well as physical and mental ones is necessary. More than 20 years have passed since the holistic approach was introduced in the early 1990s, aiming to ultimately enhance the well-being of children. WV expects that this approach may bring some significant changes on the lives of children and more sustainability of community environment in which children grow.

As the old African proverb says, it takes a village to raise a child. When varied sectoral projects are being implemented together and other community members such as family or village members have been involved, the growing environment of a child will reinforce the results of those projects and the program goal can be accomplished.

In this study, Kachonga ADP in Uganda was chosen as a case to examine whether the holistic approach brought positive impact on the poor and how. Thus the questions would be the following:

- What are the results of Kachonga ADP based on the holistic approach?
- What impact has been made from the program?
- How does the holistic approach contribute to achieving an overall program goal in Kachonga ADP?
- What is required for making the holistic approach effective?
- What is required for sustaining benefits from development programs?

We believe that an ADP approach is better than a single-sector project approach in improving well-being of children. My study is going to take a close look at the outcomes of Kachonga ADP in Uganda which adopted the holistic approach and to prove or disprove the hypothesis.

4.2 Research Method And Participants

The study was conducted using qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The data were collected through documents, secondary data review and in-depth informant interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared and the interview was carried out by the researcher in cooperation with local program staff who has an understanding of the program area. Documents on the integrated development program of WV, concepts of ADP, baseline and evaluation report, design document and annual report and child well-being report of Kachonga ADP were collected with the help of World Vision Kachonga ADP and they were reviewed.

Field work was undertaken in 6 out of total 36 villages located within Kachonga ADP. Program sites such as schools, health centers, boreholes, community-based organizations, and beneficiary households were visited and interviews were conducted with more than 15 selected stakeholders: parents, teachers, persons in charge of a health center, water user committee members, community-based organization members, representatives of a cooperative, beneficiaries and local government officials in education, health and community development in order to get detailed information.

The interviewees were selected with the help of ADP staff to represent the community and aliases were used for all. The field research took one week in early January, 2013 and 1~2 hours were spent per interviewee. This number of interviews was sufficient to have complete and reliable information. ADP staff also participated as respondents.

4.3 Research Target Area

This study was conducted on the case of WV's Kachonga ADP in Uganda. The Kachonga Area Development Program started in May 2005 in Butaleja District with skeleton staff distributed in 5 parishes of the sub county. The district is located in Eastern Uganda bordering Mbale in the East, Namutumba district in the West, Pallisa district in the North and Tororo in the South.

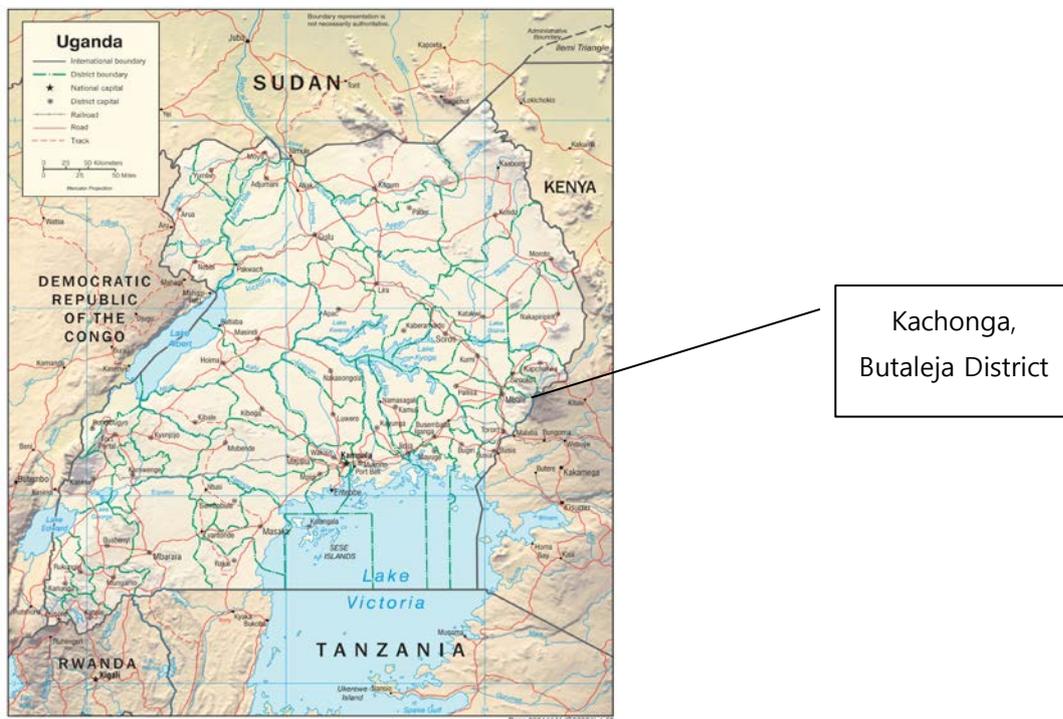


Figure 1: Map of Uganda, from the Central Intelligence Agency. *CIA Maps* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005).

Butaleja has seven sub counties with a total population of 160,882 people (81,855 females and 79,027 males). It is approximately 28sq kms in size and about 230 kms from Kampala, Uganda's capital city. The ADP covers the entire Sub-county comprising eight parishes: Nasinyi, Namunasa, Namawa, Nambale, Kachonga, Kaiti, Nabiganda and Nampologoma Parish. Currently the ADP covers 36 Villages. Kachonga Sub County has a population of 29,682 according to 2002 housing and population census.

The settlement pattern of Kachonga ADP is both clustered and scattered. As a result, there are areas where homesteads are concentrated in one part of the village leaving other parts uninhabited or with very few people living there. The main income source of this area is agriculture and animal rearing but the agricultural productivity is low and there are few other income sources. The low income level and insufficient ability to provide basic service is main problems. Those characteristics of Kachonga ADP are common in the eastern region of Uganda. That's one of the reasons why this study selected Kachonga ADP. This ADP could be a representative of other ADPs in Uganda and our findings could be generalized to other ADPs.

The overall program goal in Kachonga ADP is to improve the wellbeing of people in Kachonga Sub County through integrated community development by 2020. Specifically the ADP will seek to improve community wellbeing in Water & Sanitation, Education, Health, HIV/AIDS and Child Sponsorship Management with the support of World Vision Korea.

As the first phase of five-year implementation was completed in 2010, the program was evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative methods.

4.4 Child Well-Being Aspirations

To measure the meaningful impact of the area development program, Child well-being aspirations were introduced in WV in 2009. Fundamentally the area development program aims at improved lives of children so that measuring changes on the well-being of children may be essential when the effectiveness of the program approach is discussed. WV views child well-being holistically. The child well-being aspirations are WV's way of describing a holistic picture of child well-being and providing a common language for stakeholders across the partners. Child well-being aspirations are used to measure the effectiveness of the development program in this paper.

The four child well-being aspirations are the following:

- Girls and boys enjoy good health.
- Girls and boys are educated for life.
- Girls and boys experience love of God and their neighbors.
- Girls and boys are cared for, protected and participating.

The four aspirations are divided into 15 child well-being outcomes. They describe developmental outcomes for children that contribute to these aspirations. Because child development is based on holistic and inter-related factors, the child well-being outcomes are interdependent. Effective programming can affect multiple outcomes at the same time. The child well-being aspirations and outcomes are presented below.

Table 1: The Child Well-being Aspirations and Outcomes

GOAL	Sustained Well-being of children within families and communities, especially the most vulnerable			
ASPIRATIONS	Girls & Boys :			
	Educated for life	Enjoy good health	Cared for, Protected and participating	Experience love of God and their neighbors
OUTCOMES	Children read, write and use numeracy skills	Children are well-nourished	Children are cared for in a loving and safe family and community environment with safe places to play	Children grow in their awareness and experience of God's love in an environment that recognizes their freedom
	Children make good judgments, can protect themselves, manage emotions and communicate ideas	Children are protected from infection, disease and injury	Parents or caregivers provide well for their children	Children enjoy positive relationships with peers, family and community members
	Adolescents are ready for economic opportunity	Children and their caregivers access essential health services	Children are celebrated and registered at birth	Children value and care for others and the environment
	Children access and complete basic education		Children are respected participants in decisions that affect their lives	Children have hope and a vision for the future

Source: World Vision International. Integrated Ministry, *The Handbook for Development Programs: The Essentials*: 2011 (California: Integrated Programming Effectiveness, 2011).

The aforementioned outcomes provide a framework for measuring the impact of developmental work on children's lives.

In dialogues with communities and stakeholders WV has a responsibility to highlight significant child survival issues such as poor nutrition and health, and lack of access to and quality of education, particularly where children are at risk because of these factors. It is important to act to address severe child well-being issues. Specifically, WV is targeting the following:

1. children report an increased level of well-being
2. an increase in children who are well-nourished (ages 0~5)
3. an increase in children protected from infection and disease (ages 0~5)
4. an increase in children who can read by age 11

5. FINDINGS

Through the research, two main factors of a holistic approach which are influential to children's well-being are identified.

1) When projects are integrated, they bring more positive impact in achieving program goals.

Kachonga ADP has been implementing 6 projects since 2005 and they are education, water and sanitation, health, HIV/AIDS, food security and sponsorship. This study took one of major aspirations; educated for life to see how projects are linked to and influenced by each other in achieving the objective. The goal of education projects is to improve quality of education for 10,000 school age children and its outcome is to improve literacy levels among children in Kachonga sub-county through an improved learning environment. The goal and outcome are in line with one of main aspirations of CWB; educated for life. According to the evaluation report in 2010, the ADP has improved the learning environment for pupils through the building of more class room blocks and supply of desks, tables and chairs for teachers. It also provides scholastic materials and teaching aids. Other activities for an educational purpose include construction of latrines in schools, provision of economic support for children and introduction of news writing skills.

As a result, the quality of education and learning environment in this target area made great progress compared with a situation before the projects started. The survey results revealed that more people in the community have been to school. School going children, especially girls have increased. The improved learning environment led to 65.5% of children less than 18 years being in school in 2010 and 27.1% were being supported by World Vision. The ratio of people who received formal education for at least 1 year was up to 88% from

71% in 2007. Support of vulnerable children also increased and the pupil to teacher ratio slightly reduced from 80 to 79. And the ratio of girls among students in primary school increased from 48.2 to 52.4% during the program period. (World Vision Uganda 2010)

Interviews with community development facilitators were carried out too. Nora, Alice and Susan who are in charge of sector projects in Kachonga ADP participated in these interviews. Nora used to work in a boarding school as an art and design teacher for 4 years. It was an expensive school and there were not many needy children in that school. Nora wanted to interact with vulnerable children and see that they achieve their goals in life. Therefore she became a Child Sponsorship Development Assistant and has been working for 8 years in this area. Alice worked for a project which responds to gender-based violence in the refugee camp as a gender officer for 4 years. Now she is working as a community development facilitator for several sectoral projects. She could have a balanced view as she experienced both types of projects. Susan has been working for 6 years as a sponsorship officer in WV interacting with children. As the ADP was implemented, they could closely check what changes took place in the community.

From the interview, the attributions of the education project to improve children's education environment are clearly found.

Nora: Even this year we've seen throughout the interventions that we are making build construction school blocks whereby the enrollment of children in school was less but after the constructing, the enrollment has gone high and this year we have registered a number of first grade which was not happening.

Alice: In Kachonga ADP, of course we have software that involves training and construction. There are constructions in place. Like in schools we have

buildings to support the children.

Susan: Then we had children not being in school, at school going age but they are not in school. A number of them and I think the team handle it with the other partners to called us officially we have Compassion, the other counselor, chairman of Muyagu, as peer headed a move on having children go back to school and that's an impact they have gone to the level of talking to because we have small video hall ... this children to go and saw [see] ... And I think they have gotten to this movement or having this in this video centers at that such that children going to school and I think that's the impact.

All positive improvements appear to be originated from the educational project. However, through the interviews, we found that the other non-educational projects had significant effects on the improvement of children's learning environment together with the education project.

Kachonga ADP has been implementing 6 projects since 2005 and they are education, water and sanitation, health, HIV/AIDS, food security and sponsorship. Each project in ADP has its own objective and while pursuing the mission, they are contributing to achievement of other project goal as well. As an example, let us see how non-educational projects have synergy effects on education. The food security project supports income generating activities for poor households so that parents can have additional income to send their children to school.

Along with food security, the health and nutrition project enables children to enjoy good health and to be educated for life. It increases accessibility to health facilities and gives training on how parents can easily prepare nutritious food with locally available crop. As a result, children who are healthy can have better performance in their study and grow up with

a sound relationship with neighbors. The HIV/AIDS project supports people living with HIV/AIDS to increase their income and the project sensitizes community to decrease stigma and in turn ease discrimination toward patients and their children. As a community begins to change their attitude, children from HIV/AIDS households can go to school easily. By reducing the distance and time to fetch water, the water and sanitation project carves out time for children to go to school.

The following interviews support that how other projects were contributable to the improvement of education environment in the field.

Nora: I've begun realizing the changes through the project I'm having, that is food security. I began seeing at least, even the parents who are in poor state, they can at least raise something through the interventions what we do in the community. They can now have school fees for their children, grow what we have given them, they can cultivate maybe they can sell those crops like tomato, different things they can ... they sell ... fed their children. We have given very many food crops where family who used to have one meal a day. At least they their children have milk. So there is a great change I've realized.

Susan: Health and nutrition project gives training on how parent can easily prepare nutritious food with locally available crop. The project enables children to enjoy good health and at the same time it contribute to all aspects of child well-being because children who are healthy can have better performance on their study and be grown up with sound body, mind and relationship with neighbors.

In addition, the two case stories below show how projects are integrated and

contribute to the lives of the vulnerable. Fario is a 45 year-old lady who turned out to be a HIV/AIDS positive and now works as a counselor for HIV positives.

Fario: When my husband passed away because of HIV/AIDS and I found as HIV positive in 1987, my family had been suffering a lot. We cultivated crops and fruits and sold them but it's not enough to afford the living cost. My family could have only one meal a day and I couldn't afford for hospital bills and school fees, uniforms for children. At the same time we had to fight with discrimination from neighbors as well as poverty. My children were also stigmatized in school. They became a laughing stock and had been discriminated against so they didn't want to go to school.

However, I was trained through model farming workshops and have got goats and a heifer through Health and HIV/AIDS Project and then I could come out from the extreme poverty and was able to pay school fees for children. At the same time, through the intervention of sensitizing on HIV/AIDS, community began to change their attitude towards HIV/AIDS. Many pupils from household living with HIV/AIDS can go to school like my children, Now 4 of my children are already grown up and working in town after school graduation and 3 are still under my care.

Nora: I'd like to share a story about two boys who were reunited with family after they had separated. Their parents had gone to elsewhere to earn a living. Children just move around and they do some work for people for getting something to eat. They are found while I was doing the sponsorship project, taking photos for Annual Progress Report of children and their neighbors

informed me that the child is in the stream. When I found them they had no clothes, and almost naked. They don't have what to put on, even a blanket. With gift-in-kind and sponsorship project, they could get blankets and some clothes. In addition, with the help of local community, the parents came back to community and now they are living with their children. The children are happy now and even one of them is in the town school, studying from a better school in Mbale town.

The interviews and case stories above reveal how projects are integrated for the benefit of the poor. As we've seen above, the integration of all projects is essential to achieve program goals.

2) Sustainability can be ensured through empowerment of the community.

One of the most important factors in development programs is to sustain the outcomes of the program. When external supports ended, the possibility of the community to maintain the results should be considered in advance. Therefore whether the holistic approach can ensure the sustainability is an important matter. The holistic approach requires involving various local partners in the process of programming. Through their participation the community is being empowered to sustain the outcomes of the program. ADP Annual report shows increased community involvement in education which is seen in offering midday meals to children, visiting children at school and parents helping children in their homework assignments. Strengthening national and local level advocacy on children's right to education leads to the reinforcement of the School Management Committee as well. The participation has increased the capacity of the community as well as brought educational impact.

From the interviews, we found how the local community is being involved to

address the needs of the community.

Susan: the health facilities are in place and the drugs are there because of the partnership with the district. It's possible because we have different partners.

Susan: Then we had children not being in school, at school going age but they are not in school. A number of them and I think the team handle it with the other partners to called us officially we have Compassion, the other counselor, chairman of Muyagu, as peer headed a move on having children go back to school and that's an impact they have gone to the level of talking to because we have small video hall ... this children to go and saw [see] ... And I think they have gotten to this movement or having this in this video centers at that time such that children going to school and I think that's the impact.

The influence of community involvement is shown well in the case story of the two boys mentioned earlier. The most important factor making the family reunited is what the community did.

Susan: After urgent needs were addressed, I've mobilized people in the community and appealed them to help these children and one lady called Akari Catherine, who went home and brought clothes. Some of them are for her kids and gave the clothes to these children. Then, I went to the local council chair person and we wrote a letter actually telling them this is child abuse. This parent ... came back to the village and now they are living with their children. Neighbors helped them to make a living near the village and now the children are happy and even one of them are in the better school in

Mbale town.

Fario's story explains how the vulnerable can be empowered through active participation too.

Fario: When my husband passed away because of HIV/AIDS in 1987, this was regarded as witchcraft. I had to fight with discrimination from neighbors as well as poverty. When HIV/AIDS project started in 2007, development committees in a grass root level were formed in order to sensitize community on HIV/AIDS and community began to change their attitude towards HIV/AIDS. As the awareness towards HIV/AIDS changed, I could have new life. I was selected as a village committee member in the beginning and now I'm a chair person of local council. In fact when I was contested in the first time, people thought that I would die soon so I couldn't even apply for that position.

However, as the awareness on HIV/AIDS increased, community got to know that HIV positive can live long like other healthy people. Now I can give counseling to other people living with HIV/AIDS. I shared what I harvested with my clients who were suffering from poverty. Now I can sustain my life and give helps to others.

Her story is amazing. She gives hope to others as a role model of the community. She used to be just a powerless HIV/AIDS positive and was not able to support even her family but now she turns to an active agent of change and sustains the outcomes. Only with the participation and empowerment of a community through the holistic approach, benefits of the program can be sustained.

6. CONCLUSION

The causes and symptoms of poverty are complex and they are linked together. So in order to eradicate poverty, a holistic approach and integrated program is needed. Many development organizations have taken the holistic approach and World Vision is one of organizations which adapted such approach to its program model. The case of Kachonga ADP shows how it could contribute to achieving the overall program goal measured by child well-being. Projects such as HIV/AIDS, health, food security, sponsorship and education under one development program were integrated each other and changed the lives of the poor together. Secondly a holistic approach involves community members in its implementation and in the process of participation and the community is being empowered. Therefore, the community can become independent to sustain benefits of the program and help their neighbors. This means that the holistic approach transforms beneficiaries into change agents.

The ADP has been addressing the poverty issue and intended to sustain program results through the participation and empowerment of communities. Those facts are confirmed through the interviews and case stories. Although this study has limitations, it's obvious that the holistic approach makes individual projects integrated so that they bring many positive impact and better changes and, at the same time, enhances the capacity of the community and local partners so as to sustain the program effects continuously.

7. Limitations

Child well-being outcomes are chosen to measure the impact of a program on the children and it has four aspects of well-being; education, health, child right and relationship with God and neighbors. The two aspects, education and health, are addressed in this paper. However the measurement of the child right and relationship with God and neighbors are not properly reviewed here. Despite some limitations, we could assume that those two aspirations were definitely improved as other two did.

Secondly the program we examined has been operated for the first phase of only 5 years. This is a short period to see the real impact of the program. It's assumed that at least 15~20 years are needed to examine the overall impact. Yet we could see some kinds of short-term results through this research. There has been a limited resource but this study will provide a foundation for rigorous further study in the future. So there is a need to do more in-depth systematic studies.

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