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EVALUATION

Ex-Post Evaluation of the Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) Activity in Uganda

December 2018

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EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE, COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES (SCORE) ACTIVITY IN UGANDA

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Cover photo caption: Focus group discussion in Central region of Uganda.

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ABSTRACT

This ex-post evaluation examines the sustainability of outcomes from USAID’s Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) activity. SCORE developed family-specific plans to “graduate” households from activity support. The activity focused on capacity building, improving socioeconomic status, food security, and access to protection and legal services. The evaluation collected qualitative data from beneficiaries and key stakeholders across seven districts in Uganda.

The evaluation found that households learned new skills and knowledge to help them mitigate their challenges, including village savings and loan associations, home gardening, and farming. However, financial instability remains a common challenge among households, and their circumstances and levels of vulnerability vary widely. About 88 percent of households reported experiencing a shock or stressor in the last year, although nearly 40 percent felt they did not have the ability to handle shocks, and 26 percent felt they could handle shocks but with difficulty. Respondents felt that SCORE did not provide enough support for the most critically vulnerable households (e.g., elderly, disabled).

The evaluation concluded that SCORE’s strengthening of households’ skills reduced the impact of shocks and stressors for many households. However, there is a need to examine hindering factors, particularly those beyond the activity’s control such as natural disasters that can have a huge economic impact on households that rely on farming. As one of the first graduation models of its kind, lessons learned from SCORE – both positive and negative – require further testing and time, and strong monitoring and evaluation practices to continue to learn from them.

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System (USAID)
AFR	Africa Bureau (USAID)
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse (USAID)
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID)
EQ	Evaluation Question
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FFS	Farmer Field Schools
IP	Implementing Partner
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
MSI	Management Systems International
NAT	Needs Assessment Tool
NGO	Non-government organization
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
SCORE	Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and Their Families
SOW	Statement of Work
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Vulnerability Assessment Tool
VC	Vulnerable Children
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This ex-post performance evaluation explores the sustainability of outcomes from, and the overall implementation model of, the Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) activity in Uganda. It was commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Africa Bureau in collaboration with USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment; the Uganda Mission; and the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning.

Activity Background

SCORE was a seven-year, \$34,326,470 USAID award from April 2011 to April 2018, that sought to decrease the vulnerability of critically- and moderately-vulnerable children and their households in 35 districts in Uganda. A consortium led by the AVSI Foundation ran the activity, with sub-awards to CARE International, FHI 360, and TPO Uganda. The activity was implemented at the local level, through at least 66 civil society organizations. SCORE used a multisector and family-centered approach, offering a menu of services across different components to beneficiary households.

SCORE developed family-specific development plans intended to support households to “graduate” from having to receive the activity’s support. SCORE’s staff collaborated with people in government and community settings to implement the activity. Under the overall goal of decreasing the vulnerability of critically and moderately at-risk children and their households, the activity had four key objectives: improve the socioeconomic status of vulnerable children (VC) households; improve the food security and nutrition status of VC and their household members; increase the availability of protection and legal services for VC and their household members; and increase the capacity of vulnerable women and children and their households to access, acquire, or provide critical services.

Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide USAID with a stronger understanding of the perceived changes in the well-being of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their families since SCORE graduation. The evaluation also provides learning on factors that contributed to or inhibited the sustainability of outcomes and will help USAID assess the effectiveness of the SCORE graduation and resilience model in sustaining long-term outcomes. The evaluation answers the following evaluation questions (EQs):

1. What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries?
 - a. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now?
 - b. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?
2. Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being?
 - a. Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)?
 - b. How have changes in households’ ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors?
3. How have SCORE’s graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes?

- a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model?
- b. What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation used qualitative methods to learn about the sustainability of SCORE outcomes and the resiliency of the beneficiary households. The evaluation team conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with activity implementers, national and sub-national stakeholders, community workers, and beneficiaries in Uganda. The team also used external third-party data to complement the qualitative findings. Prior to fieldwork, the evaluation team received approval for the evaluation design and draft data collection instruments from Ugandan research institutions.

Site Selection and Sampling

While SCORE implementation occurred in five regions of Uganda, this evaluation collected data in only two regions: Central and Northern. These two regions had the greatest number of implementing partners (IPs) and consistently high numbers of Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) respondents. The team purposively selected seven districts based on the number of IPs: Luweero, Mukono, and Buikwe (Central region) and Gulu, Kitgum, Nwoya, and Amuru (Northern region). The team worked with the AVSI Foundation to identify key stakeholders and select local IPs in the seven districts. The local IPs helped the team organize interviews with beneficiaries and FGDs with community volunteers.

Primary Data Collection

The team collected qualitative data between August 13-24, 2018 from beneficiaries, IP and USAID/Uganda staff, local officials, and community volunteers. Interview guides the team developed in consultation with USAID were piloted prior to data collection. The team conducted 98 KIIs and FGDs, including 46 in the Northern region, 39 in the Central region, and 13 in Kampala (mostly government officials and IP staff). The team recorded and transcribed all interviews and FGDs it conducted.

Of the 46 beneficiary interviews, 54 percent (25) were held in the Central region and 46 percent (21) in the Northern region. Most beneficiary respondents were female (74 percent) as well as heads of household (76 percent). Women were overrepresented in the sample because they constitute most of the activity beneficiaries. Respondents ranged in age from 24 to 78 years old. On average, households had 7.2 people, 4.6 of whom were children. However, the number of children ranged from 0 to 11.

Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis

The team imported verified transcripts into qualitative analysis software (QSR NVivo 12), and developed a draft code structure based on themes emerging from its initial review of the transcripts. Once team members verified the code structure, they used thematic analysis techniques to review the coded data and create/identify sub-codes and themes to examine the evidence. While primary qualitative data drove the evaluation team's analytical process, the team utilized mixed-methods analysis, where relevant, to triangulate the data. The team used VAT data and tracer studies to create a panel of all households present in more than one VAT for the seven districts, calculated frequencies and averages at the household level over two or more VATs, and then aggregated and grouped all the households by resiliency status.

Limitations and Challenges

Challenges and limitations of the evaluation design and implementation included:

- **Evaluation scope.** The evaluation collected data from a small sample to get a deeper understanding, but this sample is not generalizable to the larger population of SCORE participants.
- **Recall bias.** Data collection occurred in some cases several years after households graduated from SCORE, and it might have been difficult for respondents to remember their involvement.
- **Social desirability bias.** Respondents may have given answers they think the interviewer wanted to hear, out of a concern of losing or not getting benefits in future.
- **Selection bias and availability.** The team faced some challenges in locating respondents, since SCORE already ended, but was able to reach the sample size needed.
- **VAT data.** The team faced challenges in reviewing SCORE's VAT spreadsheets (e.g., labels).
- **Institutional review board delays.** The evaluation experienced delays in receiving research approval from Ugandan institutions, requiring adjustment to the fieldwork timeline.

Findings and Conclusions

EQ 1: What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries?

a) How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now?

Around 80 percent of beneficiaries interviewed perceived their well-being to be “good” and valued the SCORE interventions for teaching them new skills, which many have adopted. Respondents most commonly cited interventions related to the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), home gardening, farming, and family strengthening as beneficial. However, only 26 percent of beneficiaries reported their well-being had improved since the activity ended, which was mostly linked to lack of income and financial stability. Many households reported not being able to meet all their essential needs.

b) How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?

About 42 percent of households do not believe they can maintain their well-being in the future. External threats such as drought, floods, fluctuating prices, illness, and death threaten their perceived ability to sustain their well-being. The evaluation team found that the impact of these shocks varied depending on household capacity. Beneficiaries perceive financial instability to be the key factor in their future well-being. While many continue to apply skills learned through SCORE, they feel their fate is ultimately beyond their control. Those who were more positive about their future had also engaged longer and participated more in SCORE.

EQ1 Conclusions: Overall, SCORE contributed positively to improving beneficiaries’ knowledge and skills to help mitigate their challenges, especially through VSLA, home gardening, and family strengthening. However, most beneficiaries did not feel their well-being had changed since SCORE ended. For the most vulnerable households, the gain in knowledge/skills was not enough to improve their well-being, as many could not meet all essential household needs without a major change to their income/financial stability. Key factors in beneficiaries’ ability to maintain well-being include variations in levels of vulnerability, family structure and size, access to land and other resources, motivation, and level of participation in SCORE.

EQ 2: Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being?

a) Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)?

Beneficiaries noted several positive aspects of SCORE, including acquiring skills in financial literacy and managing their finances, which led to increases in savings through VSLAs. By pooling financial resources, many beneficiaries reported positive experiences in having access to credit, which increased their ability to pay school fees and develop their household capital base. At the time of the evaluation, many beneficiaries were still participating in the VSLA initiatives, which were used for those facing shocks. In addition, several beneficiaries were still practicing kitchen gardening and some aspects of modern agronomy. Beneficiaries also reported improved child nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation practices from the increase in knowledge supported by SCORE.

However, many beneficiaries described the greatest challenge to maintaining their well-being as income and financial insecurity. Other challenges reported included a lack of land and other resources. There were constraints in adopting new skills, especially eating habits and modern farming methods because of affordability. Some beneficiaries who did not have funds to buy in could not participate in the VSLAs.

Another gap that beneficiaries noted was the complexity and variation in circumstances and definitions of vulnerability levels. Both beneficiary and district stakeholders felt that SCORE did not adequately address or provide support for the most critically vulnerable households, in particular those that are elderly- and child-headed as well as large families with many children and orphans. They suggested providing additional support including subsidies or cash transfers. For other critically vulnerable households, respondents suggested monetary support and paying school fees to assist such households in implementing new skills.

b) How have changes in households' ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors?

While 88 percent of respondents reported experiencing a shock or stressor in the past year, nearly 40 percent felt they could not handle shocks and 26 percent felt they could handle them with difficulty. However, about 50 percent of households felt better prepared to respond to shocks in the future. Although SCORE worked to strengthen certain skills to improve household resiliency, many beneficiaries felt these skills were not sufficient to ensure their ability to respond to shocks and stressors. The primary threat to resilience is rooted in financial well-being, and the biggest perceived stressors to such well-being are death and environmental shocks. Household resiliency and approaches to manage shocks varied; the most common response was to borrow money from VSLAs or family-pooled resources. In extreme cases, community support funds were provided. Others sold valuable assets, resolving their short-term crisis but inadvertently creating larger and longer-term stresses.

Those not in a VSLA had considerably more difficulty coping with such hardships and did not know how they would overcome future shocks. In addition, there were issues with VSLAs when there were bad crop seasons or other economic challenges, since the VSLA would not have enough money for households to borrow. Another limitation of the VSLAs was the amount of money one can borrow.

EQ2 Conclusions: SCORE interventions improved knowledge and skills across different domains, resulting in behavior change. Many of the improvements came from changing eating habits, hygiene and sanitation practices, and family dynamics. The VSLA was an important intervention for those who could participate, providing access to small short-term loans that could help households from slipping into greater vulnerability. However, different interventions worked well for some and not for others. Households vary in their capacity to learn and implement new skills and knowledge.

EQ 3: How has SCORE's graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes?

a) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model?

All respondents commended SCORE's focus on knowledge and capacity building and its potential to increase resiliency. Respondents at all levels praised SCORE's innovative graduation and resiliency model, including its family-centered approach; the dedication to tailoring the approach to suit each household's needs; the emphasis on the quality of interventions and time to achieve outcomes rather than the number of graduates reported; and the monitoring of graduated households over one year.

The primary weaknesses respondents noted in the SCORE model included the lack of special consideration for critically vulnerable families who were less likely to graduate and more likely to become more vulnerable. These households needed additional support (e.g., immediate relief via subsidies or cash transfers) to help them to benefit from SCORE interventions. Other weaknesses included challenges in linking households to critical legal and other services due to transport costs and service fees they could not afford. Beneficiaries also reported that they did not clearly understand "graduation," leaving some to feel left behind or not understand why they failed to graduate.

b) What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

Key programmatic factors facilitating the sustainability of SCORE outcomes included: the timeframe from enrollment to graduation; the extended duration of the activity that allowed time to graduate households, monitor their resilience, and enroll new households; systems strengthening in monitoring and evaluation and with local partners; and coordination with central and local government bodies and community systems. Factors that inhibited sustained outcomes included insufficient consideration of critically vulnerable households that needed additional support to apply new skills.

Key external factors facilitating sustained outcomes included the commitment of government and community systems and services to provide ongoing support; the availability of other non-governmental organizations projects to provide support, and the pre-existing local culture of community support. External factors inhibiting resiliency included a lack of funds for local governments and partners to maintain support and services; natural disasters; illness and death in a household (in particular among breadwinners); and the male-dominated culture that impeded changing behavior and mindsets.

EQ3 Conclusions: Strengthening households' skills and empowering communities to work together can help reduce the impact of shocks and stressors on households. SCORE's efforts to increase resiliency are an important step towards long-term sustainability. As one of the first graduation models of its kind, lessons learned from SCORE require further testing and time, strong monitoring and evaluation practices, and the flexibility to report on failures and learn from them, for this new model to ultimately succeed.

Recommendations

Recommendations for USAID

- 1. Supporting the most vulnerable households** – When designing future projects, USAID should consider the varying degrees of vulnerability and target interventions to specific vulnerabilities as well as specific needs. Future projects should critically assess the unique needs of such households and be allowed some flexibility to address differences in household capacity to help the most vulnerable.
- 2. Capacity building** – USAID should design future projects that use a graduation model to have a clear and agreed strategy for developing the capacity of local IPs and the government. The transfer

of responsibility of service delivery and government support are crucial for sustainability. Capacity building should be a standardized approach that is measured and tracked.

3. **Information sharing and learning** – USAID should ensure there are mainstreamed reporting and feedback mechanisms between USAID, IPs, and the government. There should be clarity on information needs and guidance on the best formats for providing this information. This should include information sharing across partners with a feedback mechanism.

Recommendation for Implementing Partners

4. **Clarity on terminology and household preparation for exit/graduation** – IPs should ensure that all beneficiaries are clearly informed of their status and given the necessary support for the next phase of livelihood.
5. **Integration of national OVC tools** – IPs should attempt to integrate critical national OVC tools into their activities to facilitate joint planning, monitoring, transitioning, comparative analyses, and support supervision. SCORE did not use national OVC tools, which makes it difficult for the Ugandan government to track progress towards achieving national goals.
6. **Agricultural development as an agent for addressing poverty and vulnerability** – IPs should strengthen partnerships with marketing and production departments to address weather- and pest-related shocks that can undermine the resilience of beneficiaries who depend on agriculture.
7. **Referrals** – IPs should improve referral practices so beneficiaries can access services the IP does not provide. The needs of OVC beneficiaries can be more comprehensively met through shared referrals.
8. **Exit practices for beneficiaries** – IPs should invest in strengthening the organizational structures of VSLA groups and linking them to relevant local government offices. Socio-economic safety should be a key consideration for graduation. IPs should assess the viability of VSLA group membership, as weaker ones often collapse once the project ends.

Recommendations for the Ugandan Government

9. **Government ownership** – The government should bring SCORE-created structures into its public service structures, as this pool of human resources can support OVC services. In addition, future USAID projects should utilize government systems when possible, or work with the government to ensure new systems can be integrated into existing systems to foster sustainability.

General Model Recommendations

10. **Identification of beneficiary households:** Strengthen engagement with stakeholders from the outset of the household identification process, including: local government officials, local IPs, community leaders, and community-based workers. Use existing district-level data on OVC mapping to help with this dialogue, as this mapping is always based on a wide stakeholder engagement.
11. **The VAT:** Revise the VAT to improve its accuracy to measure household characteristics by:
 - Adding “flags” within core component areas to guide graduation decisions;
 - Adding weights to categories or identify critical conditions that must be fulfilled; do not base graduation solely on a cumulative score;
 - Adding a household-defined variable for graduation;
 - Including variables such as food security to have a minimum threshold before graduation; and
 - Considering adjusting the VAT threshold for graduation.
12. **Household mapping and needs assessment:** Household plans and needs assessments should be done at least annually following the VAT assessments, to better highlight key areas for improvement in the coming year, and copies should be provided to the households.

INTRODUCTION

This ex-post performance evaluation explores the sustainability of outcomes from, and the overall implementation model of, the Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) activity in Uganda. The United States Agency for International Development's Africa Bureau (USAID/AFR) commissioned the evaluation in collaboration with USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3), the Uganda Mission, and the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning. Annex I provides USAID's statement of work (SOW) for the evaluation.

SCORE was implemented from April 2011 to April 2018 and sought to decrease the vulnerability of critically- and moderately-vulnerable children (VC) and their households in 35 Ugandan districts. The activity's goal was to build economic resilience, enhance food security, improve child protection, and increase access to education and critical services. The E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project¹ conducted the evaluation using a predominantly qualitative approach to explore how SCORE affected and sustained beneficiary outcomes over time and what aspects of the activity's implementation model contributed to these sustained outcomes.

This report first describes the evaluation purpose and questions, then presents background information on SCORE, describes the evaluation methodology, limitations, and ethical considerations, and presents findings, conclusions, and recommendations for each evaluation question.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide USAID with a stronger understanding of the perceived changes in orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their families' well-being since SCORE graduation. The evaluation used a qualitative study design to explore factors that contributed to or inhibited the sustainability of outcomes of the graduation model. This will help USAID assess the effectiveness of the SCORE graduation and resilience model in sustaining long-term outcomes. The evaluation sought to examine improvements within the context of the graduation model and how participants experienced and interacted with the activity.

Results from this evaluation may inform the design of future OVC projects that consider using a graduation model as well as current activities such as USAID's Sustained Outcomes for Children and Youth and Better Outcomes for Children and Youth. USAID/Uganda, other USAID missions, and USAID/Washington will use the findings of this evaluation to understand the factors that sustain OVC interventions and particularly the SCORE graduation and resilience model to design sustainable projects that employ graduation approaches. In addition, this evaluation provides information on strategies and approaches that can create conditions for long-lasting and transformational impacts, to help countries transition from aid dependency to self-reliance.

¹ Management Systems International (MSI), A Tetra Tech Company, implements the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project in partnership with Development and Training Services, a Palladium company; and NORC at the University of Chicago.

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation answers the following evaluation questions (EQs):²

1. What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries?
 - a. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now?
 - b. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?
2. Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being?
 - a. Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)?
 - b. How have changes in households' ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors³?
3. How have SCORE's graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes?
 - a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model?
 - b. What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

USAID's SOW provided the following definitions to clarify terms included in the EQs:

- **Well-being** relates to key SCORE focus areas based on objectives (i.e., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services, and critical services).
- **Capacities** include skills, knowledge, empowerment, and self-efficacy.
- **Key components of the SCORE model** are vulnerable household identification, assessments (Vulnerability Assessment Tool [VAT]), needs mapping, household planning, implementation (services), follow-up, re-assessment/graduation, and resilience.

ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

The Situation in Uganda

Despite consistent economic growth over the past decade, Uganda continues to face challenges in assisting vulnerable populations, especially children. There are more than four million children living in poverty and over two million orphans in a country of around 41.5 million people.⁴ Although the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS has fallen since 2000, more people now live with the virus than 15

² On August 10, 2018, USAID provided written approval to revise the EQs from its original approved SOW. The questions presented here, and in Annex 1, are those USAID approved on August 10.

³ From USAID's *Resilience Measurement Practical Guidance Note Series 2*: "Shocks are external short-term deviations from long term trends that have substantial negative effects on people's current state of well-being. Shocks can be slow-onset like drought, or relatively rapid onset like flooding, disease outbreak, or market fluctuations. Stresses are long-term trends or pressures that undermine the stability of a system and increase vulnerability within it. Stresses could include factors such as climate variability, chronic poverty, persistent discrimination, and protracted crises like intergroup conflict." See https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GN02_ShocksandStressesMsmt_Final.pdf

⁴ See E.J. Walakira et al, 2016. *The State of the Ugandan Child—An Analytical Overview*. <https://swsa.mak.ac.ug/sites/default/files/docs/Analysis-of-the-State-of-Ugandan-Child-Final-Final-%20Final.pdf>.

years ago and the effects of HIV/AIDS continue to affect the financial well-being of households.⁵ The prevalence of HIV fell from 7.3 percent in 2011 to 6 percent in 2017. There are 1,300,000 people living with HIV and AIDS in Uganda; 73 percent know their HIV positive status. Of those who are HIV positive, 67 percent are on ART and close to 60 percent are virally suppressed.⁶ The slow and steady challenge of health promotion and prevention is compounded by a high birth rate (an average of 6.46 births per woman since 2000) and the world's third-highest dependency ratio (a measure of the non-working age to working age population).^{7,8}

Education is also an ongoing problem in Uganda. Only around 40 percent of children who enroll in level one at primary school make it to level seven.⁹ While Uganda has made strides in overall poverty reduction, research suggests this is partially attributable to stability after a period of political unrest and civil strife, rather than technological or economic development. Other factors restricting households' ability to deal with and recover from local or general shocks include relatively low rural productivity, health vulnerability, stagnant urbanization, and limited access to education.¹⁰ These factors keep households vulnerable and limit opportunities for development despite the country's overall reduction in poverty. In addition, Uganda faces an acute and increasingly dire food insecurity situation.

There is a clear need to promote resiliency given the broad challenges facing people living in vulnerable situations in Uganda. Addressing health, educational, nutritional, and social-emotional constraints requires highly targeted interventions, particularly because Uganda has a large youth population, dozens of languages, and significant ethnic diversity. SCORE was designed to tackle these challenges.

SCORE Activity Overview

SCORE (AID-617-A-11-00001) was a seven-year (April 2011 to April 2018), \$34,326,470 USAID/U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) award that sought to decrease the vulnerability of critically and moderately vulnerable¹¹ children and their households across Uganda. A consortium led by the AVSI Foundation ("AVSI") implemented the activity, with sub-awards to CARE International, FHI 360, and TPO Uganda working through at least 54 local implementing partners (IPs).

SCORE used a multisector and family-centered approach. This included (1) offering a menu of services to beneficiary households to help improve the socioeconomic, food security, and nutrition status of VC and their household members, and (2) improving the availability of protection and legal services and building the capacity to access, acquire, or provide critical services. SCORE was based on the *Furaha* (happiness) graduation and resilience model. The activity developed household-specific development plans, based on beneficiaries' needs, and worked to "graduate" households from having to receive the activity's support. As a PEPFAR activity, SCORE recognized the importance of alleviating poverty since it

⁵ Nabyonga-Orem, J, W Bazeyo, A Okema, H Karamagi, and O Walker. 2008. "Effect of HIV/AIDS on household welfare in Uganda rural communities: a review." *East Africa Medical Journal* 85 (4): 187-96.

⁶ The Republic of Uganda, Uganda AIDS Commission, "Uganda HIV/AIDS Country Progress report July 2016 – June 2017". http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/country/documents/UGA_2018_countryreport.pdf

⁷ Hausmann, Ricardo, Brad Cunningham, John Matovu, Rosie Osire, and Kelly Wyett. 2014. "How Should Uganda Grow?" CID Working Paper (275): 1-41.

⁸ Evaluation team's calculations based on World Bank data.

⁹ Walakira, Eddy J., Denis Muhangi, Sam Munywiny, Fred Matovu, Eric Awich Ochen, Ismael Ddumba Nyanzi, Joshua Kayiwa, et al. 2016. "The State of the Ugandan Child – An Analytical Overview". Kampala/Washington D.C.: USAID/QED.

¹⁰ Hill, Ruth, and Carolina Mejía-Mantilla. 2016. "Welfare, income growth and shocks in Uganda: Understanding poverty trends from 2005/6 to 2011/12." *GFDRI/World Bank Working Paper*.

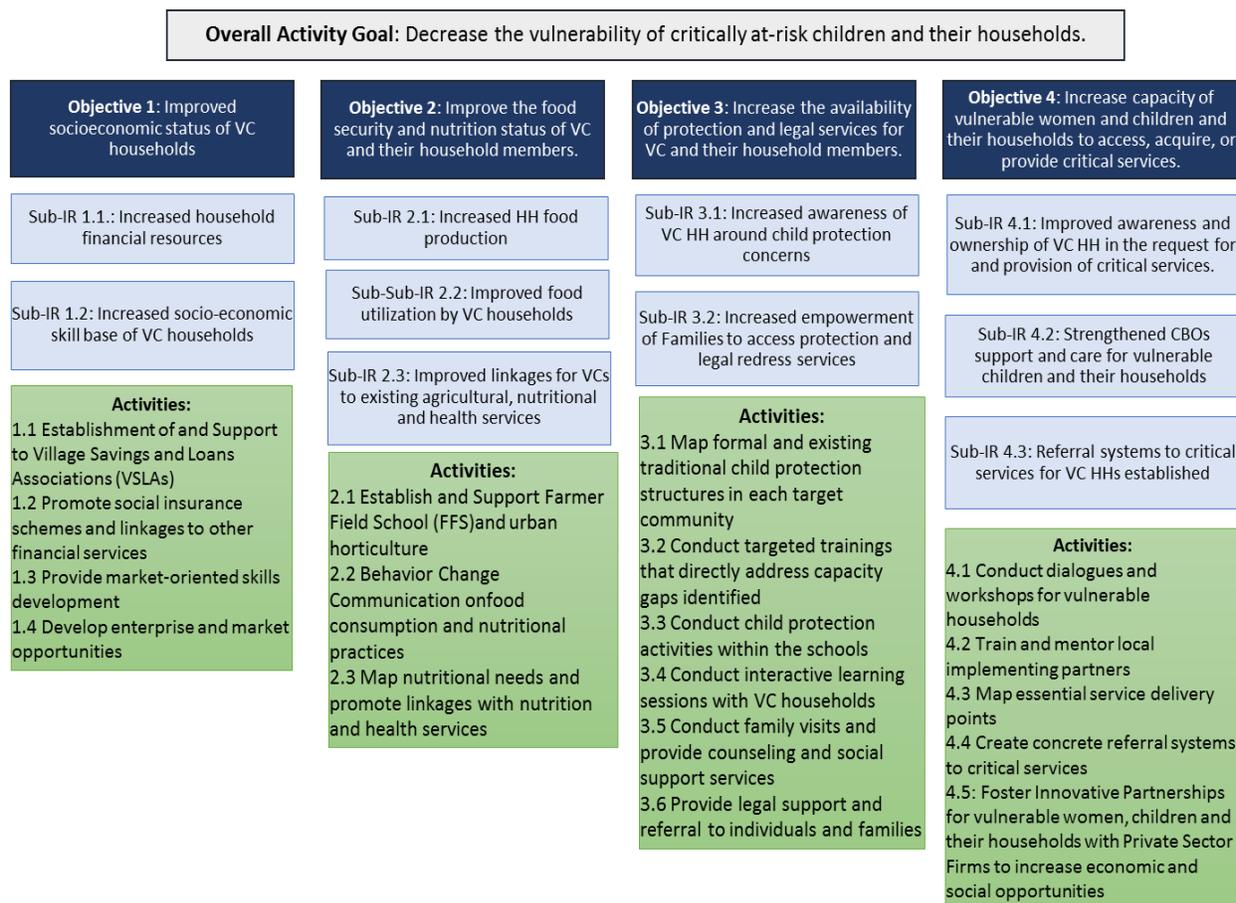
¹¹ As per Uganda's national guidelines, vulnerability is categorized into Slightly, Critically, and Moderately vulnerable. The categories are based on scores generated from the Household Vulnerability Assessment tool (HVAT), a multi-dimensional measure for household vulnerability. On a scale of 0-100, 75-100 is critically vulnerable, 50-74 -moderately vulnerable, 25-49 slightly vulnerable and 0-24 can graduate.

is a driver of vulnerability, which increases the risk for HIV infection.

SCORE's Theory of Change

SCORE's underlying development hypothesis was: "If the activity provides a combination of social and economic interventions to enable VC and their household members to graduate out of vulnerability, then these households will be able to achieve improved socioeconomic status; gain improved food security and nutritional status; increase access to protection and legal services; increase their capacity to access, acquire or provide critical services; and sustain these outcomes over time to achieve improved resiliency to shocks and other economic, health, and capacity constraints." Figure 1 shows the activity's theory of change and main interventions.

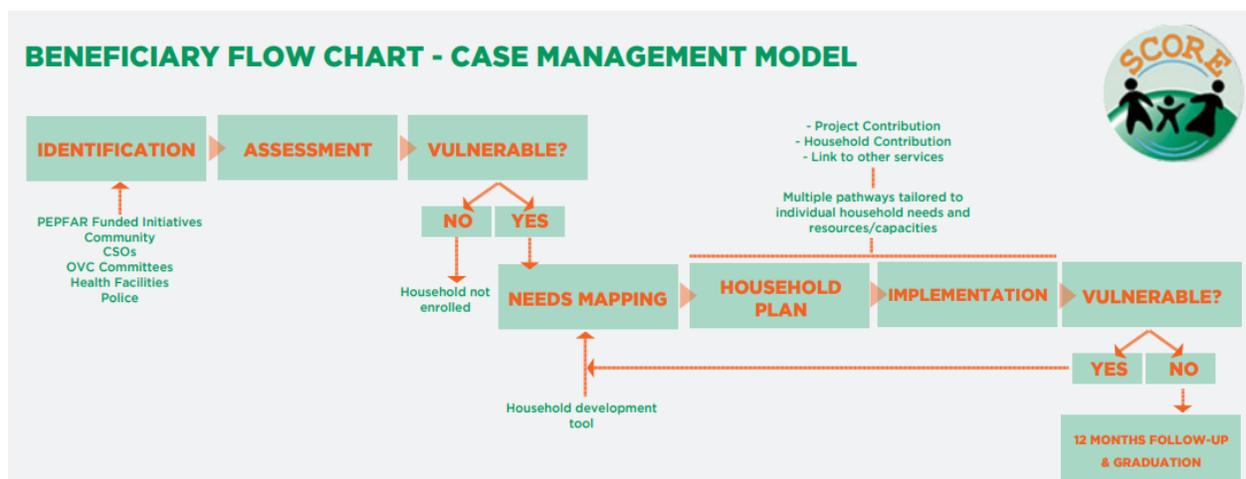
FIGURE 1: SCORE'S THEORY OF CHANGE AND ACTIVITIES



SCORE Graduation Model

The SCORE approach was based on the graduation model to build household capacity before they graduate from the activity. Figure 2 shows the beneficiary pathway through the activity and on to graduation. The model used local IPs to identify potentially vulnerable households in the targeted communities. The IPs then used the VAT that SCORE designed to measure households' vulnerability through an index child in each household. The VAT has six sections: (1) background/demographics, (2) protection, (3) food security, (4) economic strengthening, (5) family strengthening, and (6) the assessor's general impressions.

FIGURE 2: OVERVIEW OF SCORE'S BENEFICIARY FLOW CHART



Source: SCORE activity documents

Based on the total VAT score, children were assigned critically, moderately, or slightly vulnerable status. A higher score means the greater vulnerability,¹² up to a maximum score of 132. SCORE considered households with a VAT score of 40 or higher as vulnerable and in need of intervention. Household needs determined the specific mix of interventions the activity would employ. The VAT was also used each year to reassess the households and track their progress throughout the activity and after a household graduates. Households graduated out of SCORE after maintaining a VAT score below 40 for two consecutive assessment periods. As with any graduation approach, the threshold for success is critical. SCORE assumed that a VAT score below 40 was sufficiently robust to determine resiliency across all implementation contexts.

The government of Uganda also created an assessment tool for its OVC programs known as the Household Vulnerability Assessment Tool (HVAT). The HVAT, adapted from the Vulnerability Index, is implemented nationwide and uses elements of the VAT. Several studies have examined the reliability and validity of the graduation model and the VAT. The SCORE final performance evaluation conducted by MEASURE Evaluation raised concerns about inconsistencies in how different partners applied the VAT. Hence, assumptions of an appropriate threshold, consistent responses, and reliable application of the VAT should be kept in mind when referencing the SCORE graduation and resiliency model.

The graduation model and VAT define key terms that are helpful to understand SCORE's approach:

- **Vulnerability:** When an individual or household is unable to withstand shock, risk, or stress, they are considered vulnerable. A household with a VAT score above 40 is considered vulnerable and enrolled for support.
- **Graduation:** A household graduates when it maintains a VAT score below 40 in two consecutive assessments. At graduation status, households are out of vulnerability and are stable because of consistent interventions over two or more years.
- **Resilience:** A graduated household that maintains a score below 40 without external assistance after one year or more is considered resilient. Resilient households should withstand minor shocks with no support from SCORE.
- **Sustainability:** Households that continue to maintain themselves with knowledge and skills acquired from SCORE long after graduating are considered sustainable. Sustainability can be economic, social, and environmental.

¹² Critically vulnerable = 90-116 points; moderately vulnerable = 50-89 points; slightly vulnerable = less than 50 points.

SCORE Results

SCORE reported the following achievements at the end of the activity in 2018:¹³

- As of April 2018, 34,779 households with VC and at least 200,000 individuals in 35 districts of Uganda were enrolled in SCORE.
- As part of Objective 4, 9,970 individuals and 8,329 households participated in life skills programs, while almost 2,000 children joined a community playgroup.
- For households supported under Objective 1, average household income increased from \$12 to \$39 while the unemployment rate fell from 15 percent to 1 percent.
- More than 80 percent of households demonstrated reduced vulnerability. Eighty-nine percent of households graduated, and 74 percent of those that graduated were considered resilient.
- Four cohorts of beneficiary households, corresponding to 13,311 households, went through graduation ceremonies to celebrate these accomplishments.

Multiple evaluations and assessments have been conducted on SCORE and the graduation model. One of these was a supplementary evaluation that used existing data on HIV/AIDS indicators and households' graduation. This evaluation reported the following findings in July 2018:¹⁴

- The proportion of SCORE beneficiaries who knew their HIV status increased by more than 30 percentage points over time and reached almost 70 percent. A greater proportion of adults compared to children learned their status.
- Almost all HIV-positive beneficiaries were on HIV treatment and self-reported adherence to treatment at their first assessment. However, more than 40 percent of HIV-positive beneficiaries lacked data on these indicators.
- Households with at least one HIV-positive member had better outcomes on food security, school enrollment, child labor, and child abuse compared to those without such members. Households with at least one HIV-positive member were less likely to graduate than those without.
- Graduated households were more likely to have greater awareness of the HIV status of their members and better treatment adherence compared to non-graduated households.

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

This ex-post evaluation used a mainly qualitative approach to explore the status and capacity of SCORE beneficiaries after graduation and investigate what factors in the activity's implementation approach led to sustained outcomes over time. Annex II summarizes the sources and data collection and analysis methods the team used to develop the findings and conclusions for each EQ. Annex III provides brief biographies of the evaluation team members. The end of this section addresses evaluation limitations and challenges.

To answer each EQ, the evaluation team collected primary qualitative data from activity beneficiaries, community workers, government officials, and IP staff. The team also reviewed findings from existing SCORE research, evaluations, and related data. The analysis of the VAT and tracer studies complemented the analysis of the primary qualitative data to give context to households' past situations.

¹³ See: <http://www.avsi-usa.org/score.html>.

¹⁴ Charyeva and Cannon, "Uganda's SCORE Program for Vulnerable Children and their families: Evaluation Supplement of HIV Analysis". July 2018, USAID, MEASURE Evaluation.

Data Collection Methods

The evaluation team used qualitative methods to learn about the sustainability of SCORE outcomes and the resiliency of beneficiary households. The team conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with SCORE IPs, community workers, government officials, and beneficiaries. In addition, the team used external third-party data (e.g., VAT data, other evaluations, SCORE documents) to complement the qualitative findings.

Site Selection and Sampling

SCORE operated across Uganda, but it was outside the scope and available resources of the evaluation to conduct a fully representative sample. To determine where to focus data collection efforts, the evaluation team reviewed SCORE data and documentation and consulted with USAID/Uganda and USAID/AFR.

SCORE divided Uganda into five regions for implementation. The activity worked in six to nine districts within each region. The number of local IPs varied, with most concentrated in the Central (26) and Northern (16) regions. The team therefore decided to focus data collection activities in the Northern and Central regions. Although the evaluation did not aim to be representative, focusing data collection activities on the two regions where SCORE had the greatest number of IPs as well as the highest and third-highest number of VAT respondents ultimately yielded a sample that captured a high density of implementation activity. The purposive selection of the Central and Northern regions as a starting point for sampling was intended to ensure that the team collect data from areas where SCORE focused its efforts; approximately 47 and 33 percent of SCORE activities occurred in the Central and Northern regions, respectively. Within each region, the evaluation team stratified districts based on the density of partner coverage (i.e., how many different IPs were in a given district), then purposively selected the top two districts with high IP coverage and the bottom one or two districts with low IP coverage. This resulted in seven districts across the two regions.

FIGURE 3: MAP OF UGANDA



Source: <http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Uganda>.

In the Central region, the evaluation team ruled out Kampala (which is highly urbanized and unique as the capital) and Wakiso (which is quickly urbanizing). Table 8 in Annex IV provides a breakdown of IPs

by district in the Central and Northern regions. In the Central region, this approach resulted in the selection of Luweero (a largely rural agricultural district) and Mukono (which borders Lake Victoria) with higher IP density, and Buikwe with lower density. In the Northern region, the team selected Gulu and Kitgum as the high-density districts and Nwoya and Amuru as the low-density districts. The Northern districts are also post-conflict areas with high numbers of OVCs.

KII and FGD Respondent Selection

In collaboration with AVSI, the evaluation team developed a list of national-, regional-, and district-level government officials knowledgeable about SCORE. The list included IP staff, national and local government representatives (including community development officers, probation and social welfare officers, and agricultural production and marketing officers), and USAID/Uganda staff. The team selected these respondents purposively and based on respondent availability.

With AVSI, the team selected local IPs that worked with beneficiaries in the seven districts and would assist the evaluation team (e.g., provide beneficiary lists). AVSI facilitated communication with local IPs that helped organize the team’s interviews with beneficiaries and FGDs with community volunteers. The team selected beneficiaries according to whether they graduated or were eligible to graduate from SCORE in 2015, to provide a better understanding of the status of households after three years. The sampled beneficiary list included 25 percent non-graduates and non-resilient households. However, beneficiaries were sometimes selected based on their availability and willingness to participate.

Through the local IPs, the evaluation team organized FGDs with homogenous groups of community workers, where possible. Where this was not possible, some groups were combined. Each FGD consisted of four to eight stakeholders from one of the main community volunteer groups (e.g., teachers/protagonists, community legal volunteers, village health teams/farmer field school workers).

Primary Data Collection

The evaluation team developed the interview and FGD guides in consultation with USAID and piloted them prior to data collection. Annex V provides the KII and FGD instruments.

Two sub-teams conducted the KIIs and FGDs from August 13-24, 2018 in the Central and Northern regions. As shown in Table 1, the team conducted 98 interviews and FGDs, including 46 in the 4 Northern districts, 39 in the 3 Central districts, and 13 in Kampala (mostly government officials and IP staff). All beneficiary interviews were conducted by local evaluation team members in the local languages of Acholi, Langi, or Luganda. The team recorded all KIIs and FGDs and had them transcribed and translated into English by a Ugandan translation firm. Annex VI lists the positions and affiliations of key stakeholders and IPs the team interviewed.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS CONDUCTED

Respondent Type and Method	# Conducted
Stakeholder KIIs (e.g., national and sub-national officials, USAID)	22
SCORE IP KIIs	16
SCORE community worker FGDs	14
Beneficiary KIIs	46
Total	98

Table 2 further details the number of FGDs the team conducted with each type of community volunteer group. The team worked with IPs to organize each FGD, since participation was voluntary, and types of

volunteers depended on the availability of the volunteers and their willingness to participate in a FGD.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF FGDS BY TYPE OF COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER GROUP

Community Workers FGD Groupings	# of FGDS Conducted
Community-based trainers	3
Community legal volunteers	1
Protagonist teachers	4
Role model mothers	1
Mixed groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition peer educators, community-based trainers, community legal volunteers • Nutrition peer educators, village health teams • Community-based trainers and village health teams 	5
Total	14

Secondary Data Collection

The evaluation team conducted a desk review of relevant and available SCORE data and documents as well as documents from outside sources such as SCORE partners and USAID. This review permitted the team to identify existing gaps in information and better understand which primary data to collect.

The team also used secondary data from the VAT and tracer study databases to assess beneficiary vulnerability over time and to provide a context for analyzing the qualitative data. Annex VII lists the documents and data included in the desk review.

Data Analysis Methods

Qualitative Data Analysis

The evaluation team verified the KII and FGD transcripts, imported them into the qualitative analysis software QSR NVivo 12, and developed a draft code structure based on themes emerging from the initial review of the transcripts. Once team members verified the code structure, they coded all transcripts, then used thematic analysis techniques to review the coded data and create sub-codes where necessary. The team summarized responses to each theme/code and pulled out quotations from respondents to illustrate key findings. This included highlighting “outlier” responses and experiences, such that the summary write-up captured the range of responses. Annex VIII provides the qualitative analysis codebook.

The process of identifying sub-themes within each code and examining the evidence supporting the themes and sub-themes allowed the team to highlight concepts and relationships between themes and sub-themes. Using coded transcripts, the evaluation team calculated, where possible, summary statistics to analyze the number, and average responses by theme and respondents.

Quantitative Data Analysis

SCORE’s use of the VAT during activity implementation and as part of its tracer studies resulted in a large quantity of data. Different analyses using the VAT data had already been conducted. However, the evaluation team used both the VAT and tracer studies from the selected districts to create a panel of all households present in more than one VAT assessment for the selected seven districts. Team members then calculated frequencies and averages at the household level over two or more VAT periods. All district households were aggregated and grouped by resiliency status. Resiliency status is based on the

tracer VATs: if a household had a score above 40 for the last tracer they were a part of, they were marked as not resilient. For example, if a household fell below 40 in the 2015 tracer but above 40 in the 2016 tracer, it would be marked as not resilient. The team analyzed data from VATs 3-6 and the 2015 and 2016 tracer VATs. If a household was not part of the tracer data, it was dropped since there was no way to assess resiliency status without that information. Table 3 shows the number of households available in the VAT data for each selected district.

The evaluation team analyzed data from the VAT and tracer studies to better understand the contextual situation of household resiliency in the seven selected districts. The analysis focused on households' resiliency status (from tracer study data) by comparing key variables across resiliency status and districts. While there are limitations with the VAT and tracer study data (see the Limitations section), the team used a panel method to track households over two or more VATs. Through this method, the team examined the situation of households in 2016 (when the last tracer study collected data). This analysis does not determine beneficiaries' current resiliency and only shows a snapshot of change over 2014-2016. The analysis highlights basic relationships but is limited in its ability to infer why certain trends appear. For this evaluation, the team only used the VAT data to verify certain findings and provide context and historical perspective.

Gender Aspects of the Evaluation

USAID evaluation policy and guidance call upon Agency staff and evaluation teams to examine EQs and processes from a gender perspective. Gender aspects must be considered and incorporated during all phases of an evaluation. In answering each EQ, the evaluation team sought to recognize and cut across the heterogeneous and often interacting social and cultural strata to which respondents belong. The goal of this evaluation was to assess (1) the inclusiveness of various vulnerable populations – including gender (both women and men), elderly and child-headed households, disabled persons, orphans, and other sub-groups identified as vulnerable, and (2) whether and how differences may exist in outcomes, resiliency, and sustainability based on identity and status.

USAID Participation

An interactive and collaborative process between the evaluation team, USAID/AFR, USAID/Uganda, and USAID's Global Health Bureau guided the design and implementation of the evaluation. Several USAID staff members closely consulted with the team throughout the development of the evaluation design to ensure it was well aligned with USAID objectives and expectations. USAID/Uganda also participated in the in-brief and debrief meeting, providing the team with feedback before and after fieldwork.

In addition, three USAID staff were involved in initial data collection activities: Alphonse Bigirimana (USAID's activity manager for this evaluation and the senior monitoring and evaluation advisor with USAID/AFR); Lily Asrat (senior evaluation advisor with USAID's Office of HIV/AIDS in the Global Health Bureau); and Fiona Waata (monitoring and evaluation specialist in the program office of USAID/Uganda). These USAID staff participated in the in-country team planning meeting, instrument piloting, and the first five days of data collection in the Central region. During the team planning meeting, the evaluation team collaborated with the USAID staff to finalize the evaluation protocols, questions, and approach. This helped ensure mutual understanding of the evaluation, its purpose, and what data were most important to USAID. In addition, the USAID staff learned firsthand about SCORE outcomes by participating in interviews with IPs and government officials. The external evaluation team carried out all coding, data analysis, and reporting independently.

Evaluation Limitations and Challenges

Challenges and limitations of the evaluation design and implementation are described below, along with how the evaluation team mitigated them.

- **Generalizability.** SCORE was implemented nationwide in conjunction with over 50 local IPs. However, this evaluation was designed to collect detailed data from a small sample of respondents to understand how SCORE beneficiaries are faring after graduation. The sample was not designed to be generalizable to the larger population of activity participants. The two regions selected for this evaluation account for many SCORE beneficiaries, and the selection of high- and low-density IP districts, in theory, gave the evaluation team valuable insight into multiple implementation contexts.
- **Recall bias.** Households that graduated in 2015 were enrolled in SCORE in 2012 or 2013. Data collection for this evaluation was done in 2018. Hence, it might have been difficult for respondents to remember their involvement from three to five years earlier. Respondents may not have known whether services received in 2013 were provided by SCORE or another donor-funded activity. Recall bias may lead to exaggerated negative or positive perceptions of past experiences, as people tend to remember only key aspects over time. A well-crafted, pre-tested, and relevant KII instrument, appropriate follow-up questions, and use of secondary data helped the evaluation team mitigate some of the challenges from recall bias.
- **Social desirability bias.** It is possible that respondents gave answers they thought the interviewer or facilitator wanted to hear. The evaluation team was particularly sensitive to this given that USAID staff participated in some data collection activities. The team sought to ensure that all interview questions were thoroughly tested and that respondents understood that their responses were anonymous.
- **Selection availability.** Although the team worked with local IPs to conduct the beneficiary interviews and FGDs, there were challenges finding people since SCORE had already ended. However, with AVSI and local IP support, targeted interviews were completed and beneficiaries who had moved or died were replaced with new beneficiaries.
- **VAT data.** The evaluation used existing VAT data to help contextualize the qualitative data. However, when analyzing the VAT data, the team faced challenges between the different spreadsheets of the VATs and tracer studies, as there were missing variables and data and inconsistent in data types. For example, some VAT outputs had items listed as “Yes/No” but the same items were listed as “True/False” in other VATs. Since this evaluation used the VAT data only to provide context and historical perspective, the team believes these limitations did not significantly affect the validity of the evaluation.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) delays.** The evaluation experienced some delays in receiving local IRB approval, which required adjusting the fieldwork timeline.

Ethical Approvals and Consent

The evaluation team received approval for the evaluation design and draft data collection instruments from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (the local IRB in Uganda) through the Mildmay Uganda Research and Ethics Committee.

The team obtained informed written consent from respondents before carrying out any data collection. All participants signed a consent form (provided in Annex V) to verify their understanding and agreement to participate in the study before conducting interviews. The team made sure respondents understood that their responses would be used for research purposes only and would be made public without compromising their confidentiality and anonymity.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Status and Demographics of the Sample

Resiliency Context Based on VAT and Tracer Study Data

The VAT and tracer study data included 3,876 households in the 7 selected districts. Of these, 71 percent of households (2,766) were reportedly resilient. Luwero and Buikwe had the highest resiliency rate at about 91 percent, while Amuru reported the lowest rate at 52 percent (Table 3).

TABLE 3: HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCY STATUS BASED ON VAT AND TRACER DATA

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total # HHs	% Resilient
Amuru	174	186	360	52%
Buikwe	18	174	192	91%
Gulu	84	312	396	79%
Kitgum	522	696	1,218	57%
Luwero	42	492	534	92%
Mukono	150	600	750	80%
Nwoya	120	306	426	72%
Total	1,110	2,766	3,876	71%

The main source of income for both resilient and non-resilient households came from informal employment, followed by casual labor. Both fathers and mothers were the main income contributors to the family, with close to equal percentages across different VATs. On certain VATs, more mothers were the main contributor than fathers. The percentage of children reported as the main income contributors was low for both groups; this figure was only 0-3 percent across four VATs (See Tables 14 and 15 in Annex IV).

Resilient households had a slightly higher average number of index child meals per day, at 2.5 versus 2.3 for non-resilient households. The discrepancy in school attendance was much higher between the two groups. Index children in 93 percent of resilient families were attending school, compared to index children in 74 percent of non-resilient households. In Buikwe district, while resilient households had a 95 percent school attendance rate, only 50 percent of index children in non-resilient households were attending school. There were similar numbers in Amuru district. When households reported on the index child's school attendance overall, 15 percent of children from non-resilient households were missing at least 1 month of school, compared to 6 percent of resilient households. Resilient households also reported, on average, 19 percent higher incomes than non-resilient households. Further, resilient households had slightly fewer members on average (8.1) than non-resilient households (8.6) (Table 4).

TABLE 4: VAT HOUSEHOLD INDICATORS FOR STUDY DISTRICTS

Indicator	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total Mean
Average Number of Meals Per Index Child	2.34	2.51	2.42
Average Number of Household Members	8.6	8.1	8.4
Average Household Income	\$111,743.82	\$133,337.3	
Percent of Index Children Attending School	74%	93%	84%
Percent of Index Child Absent from School at least 1 Month	15%	6%	10.5%

Although the scope of this evaluation did not include a new VAT assessment, data from previous VATs show differences between reported resilient and non-resilient households. These data also provide overall context for the main sources of household income, number of family members, and education

status – which, depending on the household, can play a key role in facilitating or hindering a household’s ability to face challenges and shocks.

Demographics of Respondents

The evaluation team conducted 98 interviews and FGDs, including 46 interviews with beneficiaries (34 female and 12 male), 14 FGDs with community volunteers (including community-based trainers, teachers/school-based protagonists, community legal volunteers, and village health teams), 16 KIIs with IP staff, and 22 KIIs with stakeholders.

Beneficiaries were the key respondents for answering EQs 1 and 2 about their perceived well-being, built capacity, and ability to meet basic needs. Of the 46 beneficiary interviews, 54 percent (25) were held in the Central region and 46 percent (21) in the Northern region. Most beneficiary respondents were female (74 percent) as well as heads of household (76 percent) (Table 5). Based on interview responses and the larger number of women beneficiaries across the different interventions, males were less interested or available to participate. This is common in OVC programs where the primary caregivers are often female. Respondents ranged from 24 to 78 years old. On average, households had 7.2 people, 4.6 of whom were children. However, the number of children ranged from 0 to 11 (See Table 12 in Annex IV). This household average is lower than the reported average from the VAT.

TABLE 5: BENEFICIARY RESPONDENTS’ HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS (N=46)

Beneficiary Demographics	% of Respondents
Female respondents	74%
Male respondents	26%
Respondents who are heads of households	76%
Respondents who graduated from SCORE	89%
Households with a new child in the past year	24%
Households with a newborn child this past year	22%
Households with children (non-newborns) joined in the past year	24%
Households with orphan(s)	41%
Households that experienced the death of caregiver	4%
Household with a child who passed away this year	9%
Households with elderly members with no income	20%

While around 89 percent of households (41 of 46) self-reported graduating from SCORE, fewer reported that they felt prepared to handle shocks and challenges (i.e., resilient). Only 24 of 46 household respondents reported whether they were resilient, and 19 of these 24 reported they were resilient.¹⁵ Most of the remaining 22 of 46 beneficiary respondents did not know whether they were resilient.

Few of the households interviewed experienced death of a caregiver (4 percent) or of a child (9 percent). However, 24 percent had elderly family members not earning income living in the household, while 41 percent had an orphan living in the household. In addition, 22 percent of households had a newborn child in the last year. All these factors are key to understanding the challenges different households face.

¹⁵ Resiliency was defined as able to respond to shocks or stressors.

EQ I: What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries?

a) How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now?

To better understand SCORE's direct influence on beneficiaries, this EQ considers beneficiary perspectives on their current well-being. As expected, beneficiary perceptions of well-being varied, but 80 percent of beneficiaries self-reported their current overall well-being as "good." Only around 26 percent felt their well-being had improved since SCORE ended, while the rest felt it was the same, reported a decline, or were struggling (see Table 17 in Annex IV).

Many factors contribute to well-being. The variation in beneficiaries' well-being stems from differences in access to and ownership of land and other resources, the physical capacity of household heads to engage in productive activities, the level of vulnerability at the start of SCORE, household structure, and attitudes and commitment to improve.



Children in Northern region playing after school.

Credit: Eve Namisango, Palladium

Some beneficiaries shared many examples of positive changes in their households' welfare and ability to meet basic needs in SCORE's intervention areas of income and financial stability, food security and nutrition, human and child rights, and family relations. Respondents mentioned a variety of interventions that contributed to their well-being. The most cited were village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) and interventions to improve household security and nutrition (e.g., home gardens, farming). These interventions were often linked to improving nutrition through food diversity and improved production and food storage practices, or being able to save money. Beneficiaries involved in VSLAs and community volunteers noted the ability to cover school fees was an important change in their households. The quotes below give examples of the changes households made.

"Yes, there was tremendous change; I didn't have anything but now my household boasts of things acquired through saving; whoever asks me how I got household items I tell them it was through annual savings with the saving groups and that is how I have been able to pay school fees for my children." – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

"I no longer beg...you know there are changes in my life. I am able to get some money [for] basic needs at home. I am able to get food from my garden and feed my children. So, for me, that shows there have been great changes in my household." – Beneficiary interviewee, Buikwe, Central region

In addition to household food and nutrition, many beneficiaries also cited SCORE's work in human and child rights and strengthening family relations as key components in their improved well-being. Household members gave examples of learning about parenting techniques (e.g., communication, alternatives to physical abuse, positive parenting), women's rights, and reaching out for legal assistance when needed.

“In my household now, we treat each other equally and respect one another. We even work together with my husband and children. This is helping us improve on the lifestyle in our household...We all have knowledge in the protection of one’s rights and well-being. As a woman, I have my rights and ability to foresee the well-being of my children...because knowledge is power, and I have been well-equipped.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

“I have a husband and he used to really beat me up all the time and I was in pain all the time. But with the knowledge, I got from SCORE that we can report such abuses to police or any other legal body to seek redress. I did that, and he was summoned and cautioned towards the mistreatment he used to give me...He listened and realized he was doing a bad thing. Now he has reformed, though his relatives at first were not happy with me that I had reported their son or brother. But now they understand.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

Although most beneficiaries felt their well-being had improved because of SCORE, many also believed they had not achieved the appropriate thresholds to effectively meet and maintain their households’ essential needs and welfare. About 60 percent (19 out of 30) of households reported not being financially secure. A large part of not being able to meet their needs was income. This was due to their poor financial situation, which included a mix of financial commitments (e.g., school fees), debts, and income instability (e.g., low crop yield, poor profits). Lack of financial control was a key challenge in perceived well-being.

“Me and the children are living fine. The problem is only one; getting money and food.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Kitgum, Northern region

At the moment I am doing so badly financially as I explained to you. We earn little and yet we spend a lot. For me to get 10000UGX I may have to work for four or five days to earn it, but I will go to the shop with this and I cannot buy most of the things I need with it...We do not have money and yet prices for commodities are so high. And for us farmers, even when you harvest your produce the money you will get out of it cannot help you get the basic necessities you need.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

Among the quarter of beneficiaries interviewed who did not feel their well-being had improved since SCORE began, some perceived their current well-being as “average” or unchanged. They noted little or no change in their income or financial stability. Some lacked the confidence or ability to qualify any significant change in their well-being. Others felt strongly that their previous improvements in well-being had been negated by the excessive poverty they face, and that they had or were sliding back into critical vulnerability.

“I will not say that my household is good or bad, we survive off the little income that I make to dress, feed, educate the children as well as paying house rent but based on the knowledge and skills gained from SCORE [we are] managing with the little we have.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

Several disparities contributed to variability in beneficiary well-being. These included the level of vulnerability at the start of SCORE; household structure (e.g., elderly, female, or child-headed) and size (e.g., number of children and orphans); ownership and access to land and other resources; physical capacity of household heads to engage in productive labor and activities; and the attitudes, commitment, and self-efficacy of the individuals.

Conversely, IP staff noted that the elderly had limited physical ability to engage in activities such as agriculture and VSLAs. For this reason, they did not achieve optimal outcomes from the capacity-building model of service provision. Among beneficiaries interviewed, the average age of the household head was about 50 (ranging from 24-78), with about 67 percent above age 40. However, based on SCORE’s data, 11.3 percent of household heads were over age 65. Beneficiaries, IPs, and government

officials mentioned that *“The elderly need some special help...”*, which would include support from a caretaker or caregiver. As one elderly beneficiary in Mukono expressed, *“Please let them help me, I have aged, and children are now a burden. I have tried to use the advice they gave me but now I have aged I can’t help them well.”* SCORE did not focus on elderly caregivers, and this population might need more direct support compared to other vulnerable households.

“These households just needed handouts to make them continue living. You find a household where there are only two people, a man, and a wife, and they are both elderly. For such a household you can do nothing other than continue supporting them. And to make it worse, we could not even involve the neighbors because they said they do not have neighbors who are willing to support them; they don’t even have their relatives close to them. Those households gave us difficulty. I think even if we added more ten years they would still not graduate.” Kill with IP staff, Kitgum, Northern region

b) How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?

Although many beneficiaries reported they were still practicing several SCORE-initiated activities, most felt they could not maintain their well-being in the future and lacked confidence in their ability to sustain their financial well-being without additional support.

Beneficiaries identified threats they had experienced that affected their households’ ability to sustain their well-being. These threats included escalating prices of essential commodities (e.g., sugar) and agricultural products, unpredictable weather patterns (e.g., droughts, floods), and illness and death (including of household breadwinners). About 88 percent of beneficiaries reported a shock in the year prior to the interview (see Table 17 in Annex IV). The evaluation team found that the impact of these shocks varied depending on the household’s capacity. Those with tradable assets could exchange them to meet emerging needs. Others would access funds through their VSLA platform, and the very poor commonly relied on relatives or temporary community support. In some instances, beneficiaries could not pay back VSLA loans and faced serious penalties owing to loss of property, deserting homes, or relocating out of fear of such penalties. While only some beneficiaries experienced any of these difficulties over the past year or experienced them differentially, all the examples threatened households’ stability. Ultimately, all resulted in greater financial difficulties, including low/no harvest or home farm yield, lost/reduced income, higher levels of debt, and the inability to meet the basic household needs.

“This will be hard for me... I have two sick people battling cancer, so I can’t say I will manage to [maintain well-being]. This will be possible if I get some help to pull through.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Buikwe, Central region

“I am not prepared, because emergencies are difficult to deal with, for us farmers, life is hard.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

“I did not have money, but I went to a rich person and I exchanged my bicycle for 100,000; and then my friends also contributed condolences and we buried her.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Mukono, Central region

Despite SCORE’s initiatives to improve household knowledge, capacity, and self-efficacy to maintain well-being, 18 respondents stated that ultimately “their fate was in God’s hands” because they lacked the necessary resources and ability to navigate unexpected challenges they are likely to experience. About 42 percent of beneficiaries felt they did not have the ability to sustain their well-being, while around 30 percent responded yes, but with difficulty (See Table 17 in Annex IV). As illustrated in the quotes below, respondents often referred to God when talking about their future and ability to respond to challenges.

“I have not done anything. Take for example the drought that has been there. All we can do is to wait for the rainy season and then get to plant. It is beyond our control. We leave everything in God’s hands. We only do little by watering the small portion of land where we have planted the backyard gardens.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

“If God helps you, you overcome them. When you fall sick, it is God who heals after making an effort to take medicine. If the medicine fails to heal you and God decides to call you, He takes you.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

Some beneficiaries felt SCORE should have done more to ensure their financial security by increasing access to larger loans or funds. Many felt SCORE should have provided small start-up funds and/or supplies (e.g., seed stock and fertilizer for home gardens and farming; basic tools and materials to start small businesses using vocational skills training). This would have helped them apply new skills acquired from trainings. Some indicated they would willingly pay this back (as they do VSLA loans), but without this they were constrained and sometimes unable to put new skills into practice. These beneficiaries felt they needed access to larger loans outside the VSLA to be able to really improve their financial situations. This is because money available through VSLAs is limited to how much beneficiaries save, and only those who have the money to join VSLAs can benefit from its loans.

A smaller proportion of beneficiaries felt more positive about sustaining their well-being in the future. Those who reported positive perceptions mentioned SCORE-led capacity building, application of skills and knowledge gained from the activity, access to credit and financial services through VSLAs, and continued hard work and engagement in home gardens and agriculture/farming. As with beneficiaries’ perception of current well-being, the time and level of participation and engagement in the activity was an important determinant of confidence in their sustained well-being.

“I will continue to do it and if possible even do much better. I will continue with VSLA and farming. I plant to even grow more groundnuts next year to help improve my income. So, I will not stop to work hard for the well-being of my family.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Kitgum, Northern region

“I feel I am now independent and can-do things on my own since I got the skills and knowledge. I am able to transfer the knowledge into practice. That is a sign of having gained from SCORE and we are on our own now...It is only unreliable [weather] patterns that is concerning.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

EQI Conclusions

Beneficiary perceptions of their well-being varied since graduation from SCORE, but almost all still feel vulnerable. Overall, SCORE positively contributed to improving beneficiaries’ well-being, even if they did not feel their well-being had changed since SCORE ended. Activity interventions increased beneficiary knowledge and skills, including improving awareness on family issues (e.g., parenting, abuse). These interventions might not directly lead to improvements in economic well-being, but they do support an individual or household’s overall well-being.

The most commonly cited beneficial interventions were related to VSLAs, home gardening, and farming. However, for a considerable number of beneficiaries the gain in knowledge/skills was not enough to improve their household’s well-being. Many households are not able to meet all essential needs without a major change to income/financial stability, which is their biggest challenge. While this was not SCORE’s main goal, there are limits to the impact the activity’s interventions can have on household well-being without a change in income.

Key factors in beneficiaries' ability to maintain their well-being include variations in levels of vulnerability, family structure and size, access to land and other resources, and motivation and participation in SCORE. Beneficiaries who were more actively engaged in SCORE or who were engaged over a longer period were more likely to continue applying the skills and knowledge gained.

Many of the challenges to well-being that households face are external and unknown (e.g., droughts, floods, fluctuating prices, illness and death). While many beneficiaries continue to apply skills learned through SCORE, they feel their fate is ultimately beyond their control because of all the external challenges they face and put the control in a higher power. Based on the number of beneficiaries who expressed that God was deciding their fate, the relationship between faith and poverty, including how it affects a household's ability to maintain well-being, is an area for further exploration. Although SCORE provide new knowledge, skills, and access to services, these external factors are outside the scope of the activity. Those who were more positive about their future had also engaged longer and participated more in SCORE.

In some ways SCORE was sustainable in that beneficiaries learned new skills and information on how to mitigate challenges to their well-being. However, many of the biggest challenges households face (e.g. extreme poverty, natural disasters) are too large for an activity like SCORE to address.

EQ 2: Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being?

To gain insight into beneficiaries' perceptions about changes to their well-being since graduation, the evaluation team asked them to compare their current state to what it was like when SCORE ended (or when they graduated). About 37 percent of beneficiaries interviewed cited a decline in their well-being between the end of SCORE and the time of data collection (see Table 17 in Annex IV). This question was asking about their perception of their state, and not whether their capacity had improved through SCORE, as there are many aspects that can impact a household's well-being. Key issues beneficiaries mentioned that affected their well-being included the inability to meet education demands for those with school-aged children and difficulties in meeting daily household needs such as food. This decline in well-being was, in most instances, attributed to unfavorable economic conditions like the lack of job opportunities and meager sources of income. The following quote illustrates the case of one beneficiary.

"[My current state since SCORE ended] has deteriorated because I have very many responsibilities and yet I have no sources of income. There are times when I fail to get food and we spend nights without food because of poverty. Money is little, and the jobs are also very few." – Beneficiary interviewee, Mukono, Central region

a) Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)?

The evaluation team asked beneficiaries to provide examples of improvements relating to SCORE interventions as well as challenges and gaps faced. Improvements that some beneficiaries perceived were cited as challenges or gaps by others. This underscores the multifaceted aspects and variations in vulnerability across households, and the importance of SCORE's tailored case management approach. Although some findings presented in this section might seem contradictory, this reflects the different experiences that beneficiaries expressed. The evaluation team tried to capture all views to provide an overall perspective of how SCORE impacted different beneficiaries. Perceived improvements, gaps, and

challenges that beneficiaries expressed are discussed below.

Perceived Improvements

Many beneficiaries felt SCORE interventions improved their ability to address key household needs. This opinion was shared by other respondents such as IP staff, community volunteers, and government officials and is discussed further in EQ 3; this section focuses on beneficiaries' perceptions. The findings below are examples of positive changes that beneficiaries reported.

Improved Socio-economic Status

SCORE's socio-economic interventions helped some respondents to develop their household's capital base to regularly meet basic household needs and pay school fees and other costs. When beneficiaries were asked about positive SCORE socio-economic interventions, they most often mentioned VSLAs. According to SCORE's final report, 38,059 individuals engaged in 1,297 VSLA groups during the activity. Many respondents even reported current and continued participation in VSLAs, which enabled them to save, borrow money to meet immediate needs, and invest in income-generating activities. IP and local government respondents noted that many VSLAs had been registered at the sub-county level and were linked to banking institutions, which they considered important to households' future resiliency and sustainability. Improved financial management skills allowed beneficiaries to plan, save, invest, borrow, and repay loans.

"VSLA has improved my household's well-being in that after the cycle, I find myself with some money. I used the money I got through the VSLA to buy [livestock], and it is helping my household now. Some of the money...pays school fees, hospital bills, clothes for the children and food for the family too." – Beneficiary interviewee, Kitgum, Northern region

"We learnt saving money but for that one it is basically my wife doing that; she is the one saving in the VSLA. At the end of the year the association members come together...the members do save the money every week on every Thursday. So, each of you will save money and if you want you can get a loan and if you borrow 100,000, you will be mandated to pay at least 10,000 back every month in addition to the 100,000 you borrowed. Now that money makes profit and time for sharing profits comes...That is what has encouraged us to learn to save money in VSLAs because at the end of the year you will be given some profit. So, SCORE taught us to save." – Beneficiary interviewee, Mukono, Central region

Other positive interventions that beneficiaries mentioned included learning new vocational skills and farming, which improved households' financial stability and helped them purchase essential items. Respondents also noted that new marketing and value chain strategies, such as pooling yields and developing linkages with buyers to sell in bulk, increased profits from crop yields.

"SCORE trained us on many things but the one I now use and have benefitted from is farming. They trained us in farming and then also some business skills they also gave us. This was important especially for the agricultural crops we plant. For example, like this year the prices for maize has dropped so they trained us on what to do. We are to look for the market as a group." – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

Improved Food Security and Nutritional Status

When asked about nutrition and food security, many respondents shared the importance of their home garden. Among those interviewed, the uptake of home gardens gave families the capacity to prepare nutritious meals, thereby improving household food security and their ability to provide a balanced diet, as well as prevent malnutrition in homes. Several beneficiaries noted they were still practicing kitchen gardening and some aspects of modern agronomy (e.g., local production of manure/fertilizer). According

to SCORE's final report, the activity trained 17,426 individuals in agronomic skills and 14,618 individuals from 10,594 households were trained and set up backyard gardens.

Some beneficiaries expressed that due to farmer field schools (FFS), they were now able to harvest beyond subsistence levels and implement good food storage practices to prepare and save in case of crop failure or crises, or to sell to boost income. As noted below, community volunteers also noticed an improvement in the farming practices and outcomes of beneficiaries.

“Before SCORE interventions there were many children suffering from malnutrition, but after parents were trained on how to prepare food and manage home gardens, there was improvement in nutritional status and a reduction in numbers of children with malnutrition. Those who engaged in FFS were able to overcome many challenges...Some progressed from small to big scale farming which increased their income and their ability to pay school fees too.” – Community volunteer FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

Many beneficiaries noted health improvements due to better personal hygiene and sanitation practices. They mentioned learning about the use of latrines and handwashing as well as clean kitchen practices, sweeping the compound, and digging rubbish pits. In some communities there was a shift from the use of unhygienic options for disposing human waste to the construction and use of pit latrines. A few beneficiaries reported less sickness due to improvements in sanitation.

“They would advise us to keep good hygiene around the home because when the children grow up in a dirty environment they are attacked by diseases. They were teaching us about taking care of children and nutrition because when a child is taken good care of their immune system is boosted.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

Community-based volunteers compared the pre-SCORE and post-SCORE contexts. They reported that hygiene improved due to approaches used to dry household utensils (i.e., using racks to dry them after being washed), and food storage practices were more hygienic as households had specific storage areas for food. Personal hygiene also reportedly improved as more household members washed their hands after using a toilet or before eating food.

“The change I have seen with the people I am working with is before SCORE program people did not have toilets and hygiene was very bad but by the time SCORE phased out people had improved they have latrines they have changed and adopted the habit of being clean. Before digging up the latrine they behave like they won't use it but after they feel proud of having it, households have drying racks there is recognized improvement in hygiene.” – FGD community volunteers mixed group, Mukono, Central region

Increased Availability of Protection and Legal Services

Beneficiaries who discussed SCORE's impact on child protection reported increased awareness of the rights of children and where to report cases of child abuse. Similarly, community workers described positive changes in attitudes toward child protection and increased awareness among adults within a community as to their own responsibility for protecting children. For example, some beneficiaries described how child protection activities and interventions helped parents appreciate the value of education and motivated them to enroll and keep their children in school. Beneficiaries often mentioned learning about parenting skills (e.g., not yelling at or hitting children).

“Initially I could cane the children over anything. But currently I try to study my children and I can know how well I should handle them without caning them and they are now happy because I do not cane them often like I used to do before SCORE.” – Beneficiary interview, Buikwe, Central region

Overall, SCORE's protection and legal services interventions were not highlighted during the interviews and FGDs. Some respondents mentioned learning about their rights and domestic violence. Female

beneficiaries mentioned learning to speak out if their husbands hit them. This technique, they said, helped in stopping the behavior. None of the examples specifically mentioned using legal services to solve this problem. FGD respondents also mentioned that they often dealt with domestic violence, a subject on which they trained families.

“Before the community legal volunteer training, many of our people didn’t know where to go in case they are affected in one way or the other. And the people who were responsible for those structures like the [local councils], police probation officers would also find it hard to deal with these clients. But SCORE also trained the [local councils] through us the [community legal volunteers]...One of the challenges for the children like domestic violence, it reduced...Peace prevailed and when domestic violence reduces.” – Community volunteer FGD participant, Kitgum, Northern region

Increased Capacity of Vulnerable Women, Children, and their Households (Family Strengthening)

Beneficiaries reported positive changes within the home and better anger management, resulting in reduced stress, depression, and gender-based violence. There were a number of examples of husbands and wives learning to work together, for example to resolve domestic violence issues.

“My husband was not an easy man. He was really rude and a drunkard...He could chase me away and sometimes even thoroughly beaten. I was tired of reporting the same domestic violence all the time to even his brothers. He would not change. The best I would do is to run and sleep in the bush. When SCORE came they encouraged us to go with our husbands to listen to their teachings...That helped to transform my husband. Now I am a happy woman. He no longer quarrels on me or beats me up as he used to do...even the children used to fear him...Our family is now a happy one compared to the time SCORE had not come.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

In addition, some beneficiaries described how the parenting intervention helped them have a better relationship with their children at home. According to beneficiaries, positive parenting training – reduction in harsh language and corporal punishment and better relationships and communication skills with children – led to improved behavior of children and more harmony in the household. Respondents seemed to still use the skills they learned to help manage their households.

Perceived Challenges and Gaps

About 98 percent of beneficiary interviewees noted challenges and gaps in addressing key household needs, as described below. Few expressed confidence about their ability to sustain capacity. While there are examples of improvements to current well-being as described above, more respondents cited concerns about their ability to maintain well-being in the future.

Socio-economic Status

Respondents most often saw financial instability as the main cause of challenges and their inability to meet daily household needs. Unfavorable economic conditions, such as a lack of job opportunities or unreliable sources of income, affected their ability to purchase essential household items. Inflation also increased the prices of essential items and, thereby, household costs.

Female household heads, especially those with insufficient income, cited the inability to pay school fees and other costs (e.g., uniforms, books, supplies) as a key household challenge. Beneficiaries felt the lack of subsidies to pay school fees was a gap in SCORE’s interventions. Although some households could use VSLAs to pay school fees, critically vulnerable households had insufficient funds to participate in VSLAs and, therefore, had trouble paying school fees.

“They had told us to form the VSLA group so that we save but at the moment I had issues. I am the mother and the father, I have to pay school fees, buy books etc. so putting aside money to save was hard for me so I didn’t join. I need transport to go and [buy] my medication from the health facility. So when I evaluated myself I realized I won’t manage to be able to save weekly but my colleagues are saving.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Buikwe, Central region

An additional issue a few beneficiaries raised was VSLA money being stolen or, more often, people failing to pay back loans, which disrupted the VSLA’s ability to operate.

“Others may even borrow money from the group and fail to pay back in time... This is bad. You can even raid their villages and even fail to sell things you have confiscated from them. The person you have raided may even become angry, yet he has used the money and failed to pay it. So, when you raid village homes become annoyed, so it even creates hatred.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

Some respondents felt SCORE should have done more (e.g., provide initial startup capital, seed stocks) to improve the financial security of the most vulnerable households to meaningfully engage in the activity and develop and implement the new skills and capacity gained.¹⁶ Some households lacked the resources to implement some of SCORE’s proposed activities/referrals (e.g., lack of land or the ability to access services due to travel costs and service fees). For example, households trained in farming did not have the basic equipment or seeds and fertilizers to apply skills and sometimes did not even have the land to farm.

Food Security and Nutritional Status

Beneficiaries discussed challenges they faced in their food security and nutritional status. One of the main difficulties was using what they learned without having the right resources. For example, beneficiaries reported learning new cooking and nutritional information, but not always being able to use them if they could not afford to buy meat or vegetables were not available.

Some beneficiaries felt SCORE could have done more to propose nutritional food varieties they could afford. Although SCORE emphasized nutritious but low-cost foods, several said although they understood the importance of a balanced diet they could not afford to pay for meat, fish, and other items to put this training into practice.

“Because with that one, if you have not grown a variety of food which you can use to change the diet in your home, then it’s bad. At least you must grow other things and you must keep changing diet so that the children can also grow well. So, for me, I was trained but I did not have the capacity to access all the foodstuffs proposed.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

Another problem reported was access to land or insufficient land for farming/gardening. This limited beneficiaries’ ability to use the skills they learned. Land scarcity was a dominant theme in the Northern region. Beneficiaries noted that access to farm land and land conflicts were problems; this included people stealing land. There was also a lack of equipment and basic supplies to produce home/farm crops. In some cases, beneficiaries had only rudimentary tools such as hoes, which were not suitable for larger farming. Another external factor was low crop prices, especially for maize. This affected household incomes and their ability to purchase food, farming equipment, etc. Some mentioned the need for monetary support to hire labor and purchase pest-resistant seedlings. Although outside SCORE’s scope, poverty is a driver of vulnerability and increases the risk for HIV infection. This was the basis for SCORE’s design to tackle poverty and vulnerability. Poverty for these households cannot be tackled without agriculture.

¹⁶ This is a similar finding to what was reported in the SCORE final performance evaluation.

“You know at the moment we use hoes to open up the land and at times the garden is so big that alone you cannot manage to do the work. So, you need to hire labor of other people but sometimes the money is not there to pay for the labor you hired. The challenge is on digging and getting improved seeds for planting. I don’t know why these days almost all the seeds need to be sprayed. So, it becomes difficult to get money to buy the insecticides to spray the crops you have planted, else you lose it all.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

A few IP respondents mentioned the lack of linkages between SCORE and the local government to provide seeds or seedlings. For example, for a few communities involving extension workers from the beginning and in planning allowed them to access hybrid seedlings, pesticides, and some machinery for tilling land with training provided by government. However, this was not practiced in all communities. District production and marketing offices did not continue SCORE trainings.

“We could improve more in terms of collaboration and engagement like where we are implementing these activities we could engage more of our extension staff because when it comes to livelihood we are the experts in that area. So, there were some gaps in the implementation I think we needed to engage more of our extension in the process of delivering services we do it concurrently so that by the time such a program ends we are totally bonded to the group.” – Production officer interviewee, Northern region

Protection and Legal Services

SCORE’s legal support was limited to the advisory or referral level. Beneficiaries commonly faced serious challenges in accessing legal services for child protection, gender-based violence, and land conflict. Cost, corruption, and lengthy legal procedures were some of the main barriers to accessing legal services. However, SCORE never supported beneficiaries up to this level. Low referral completion rates were due to a lack of resources to pay travel costs and service fees. Often, households were referred to an external service but would not have sufficient funds to pay for the service or the travel costs.

Respondents observed that inherent weaknesses in the child welfare and protection system undermined the effectiveness of SCORE’s child protection interventions. Child protection actors (e.g., police, probation and social welfare officers) face a range of capacity constraints including inadequate human, financial, and technical resources that prevent them from effectively discharging their mandated functions. In most districts, probation and social welfare officers have limited capacity and resources to consistently ensure proper case management. Similarly, many police stations and posts are inadequately staffed and lack basic equipment (e.g., vehicles, medical examination forms, paper) to conduct effective investigations and evidence collection in cases of child abuse. It is common for the police to ask victims and their families for transport money to go to the scene of the crime and apprehend the perpetrator. This systemic limitation was a barrier for households.

Capacity of Vulnerable Women, Children, and their Households (Family Strengthening)

Overall, beneficiaries did not discuss specifics related to family strengthening. However, some noted existing community problems with combating domestic violence and alcohol abuse. As mentioned above, some income-poor households had to prioritize money for essential items such as food, and could not pay school fees. Women often had less control of money, which created issues within families.

“The incomes are low, if you as a woman you are dependable on a man’s income that is problematic. The money will cause issues you will tell him you need fees for children or this and the other and he will tell you he has no money.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Buikwe, Central region

More women than men (husbands) attended SCORE interventions. Although women are often the main caretakers, maintaining a balance with male/female participation is critical to achieving family

strengthening outcomes. According to SCORE's final report, of the 38,456 individuals who obtained critical messages through dialogues and workshops, 22,802 participants were female and 15,654 were male. For parenting skills, 5,393 women participated versus 2,421 males. This shows that a large number of women participated in SCORE. As one respondent explained, women are dependent on men and unless they choose to engage and make changes, there will be limited strengthening of families.

“The challenges that families face is men are not involved in the program when you mobilize them, the man will give a directive to the wife to go and attend...she attends the training and goes back to she tries to explain to the husband about what was taught but his response will be it's you who is literate, so the husband shows no responsibility at all yet if he is involved and they work together they can get the best out of it. Men have lost all the responsibility to the mothers that's why mothers decide to work with their children for a better living, those are the challenges I find in the community.” – Community volunteer mixed FGD participant, Mukono, Central region

b) How have changes in households' ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors?

Although respondents felt their well-being had improved somewhat after SCORE, they expressed considerable concern about the impact of unforeseen shocks and stressors on their ability to sustain this improvement over the long term. Almost all respondents reported that shocks were a common occurrence, and about 88 percent reported experiencing a shock or stressor in the past year. Nearly 40 percent felt they were not able to handle shocks, while around 26 percent felt they could handle shocks but with difficulty (see Table 17 in Annex IV). The most commonly mentioned threats to resilience were illness/death (notably loss of household heads/breadwinners), environmental shocks (e.g., droughts, floods), and loss of crops, yields, and income. Other shocks and stressors included increased burden of educational fees, fire destroying homes and crops, and escalating prices for basic consumer items.

However, the primary reported threats to resilience were economic barriers and poverty. Households with less financial security reported more challenges to resiliency and their ability to manage shocks and address basic needs. In addition, elderly, chronically ill, and disabled beneficiaries faced heightened challenges in dealing with shocks due to their limited capacity to engage in productive activities to cover food and other essential household costs. These groups reportedly were not considered appropriately targeted to participate in SCORE.

Household resiliency and approaches to respond to shocks and stressors varied greatly. There was limited capacity to deal with large shocks and stressors. For example, to handle shocks, beneficiaries borrowed money from the VSLA or sold property to meet basic and immediate needs. Some households that borrowed money reported struggling to pay it back, while others failed to repay their loans. Many households lost valuable properties and assets in the process, inadvertently creating new and greater stresses that eroded their capacity to meet future basic needs. In cases of severe shocks (e.g., death or loss of a home), community support was another safety net, providing a one-time sum of money to assist affected households.

For minor shocks or hardships, many beneficiaries borrowed money from the VSLA or relied on pooled family resources. Those not in a VSLA had considerably more difficulty coping with such hardships and indicated they did not know how they could or would overcome these in the future. In addition, there were issues with VSLAs when there were bad crop seasons or other economic challenges, since VSLAs would not have the money necessary for households to borrow. Another VSLA limitation was the amount of money one can borrow. VSLAs worked better for small loans to pay school fees or purchase food. Those not in a VSLA had considerably more difficulty coping with such hardships and indicated

that they did not know how they could or will overcome these in the future.

Some respondents said they were able to adjust their behaviors, practices, lifestyles, and livelihood strategies in response to changed circumstances and conditions. While some beneficiaries were optimistic about the future, they also acknowledged how unpredictable life could be and reported that their ability to cope with hardship would depend largely on the magnitude of the shock and their ability to tap into surrounding social networks.

“They gave us knowledge in that we do what we can but again knowledge without help is tricky because after some time you can’t afford to move forward yet you are interested in that particular service.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Buikwe, Central region

Differences between Graduated and Non-Graduated Households

Community-based volunteers interacted and continue to interact with households. They commented on key differences observed between graduated and non-graduated households. SCORE data showed that graduated households had better socio-economic status and financial literacy as they were more likely to be part of VSLA groups. They also reported improved self-efficacy in managing social problems and family conflict resolution, were positive about promptly seeking health care, and were more likely to practice kitchen gardening. The latter is a quick source of food for domestic consumption and income generation in instances where they can sell off the surplus. These developments were largely shaped by training and routine supervision to monitor progress toward goals established in their respective household plans.

“I think the graduated household you will find that they are a little better compared to what they were before because now they are able to meet all the household expenses, they are able to take their children back to school, if you see a graduated home, you see a clean home with all the hygienic and sanitation facilities, the homes look different and also you find that they know how to handle money when they get money and most of them are engaged in small IGAs whereby they do little business like selling pancakes which help in income generation so I think that is how they are at the moment.” – Community-based trainer FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

Non-graduated households had comparably lower socio-economic well-being, greater food insecurity, poor family relationships, and low capacity to meet basic needs. As explained by a community volunteer,

“Yeah there is a great difference because you see the non-graduated households in some extent they still have problems in their homes, problem like little food to consume in the household, at times they even fail to eat twice a day but in a graduated household since they know how to balance their budget income, they eat three times a day and also in terms of paying school fees, most of the graduated households have the ability and capacity to pay school fees so their child is not chased from school frequently...And then concerning the gender-based aspect of it, the none graduated Households don’t know how to handle their problem at home is still a challenge, you find a man drinking a lot, the woman keeps going in and out of her home but there is a bit of settlement in a graduated household.” – Community-based trainer FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

In instances where they were able to join VSLAs, they were commonly seen as high-risk groups with a high likelihood of using loans for purposes other than those for which the loans were obtained. Diversion of funds was mainly due to having many problems to deal with. The result was the inability to repay loans and the possibility of losing their assets.

“Since non-graduated household member borrowed and failed to return the money, next time again you are coming to ask they will not give you...And once you have borrowed for a purpose it must be used for that purpose. If you divert it for a different purpose and then come back. Like if you have borrowed for

school fees and then we find you in the center drinking alcohol using the money the group will caution you, they will not next time give you.” – FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

One beneficiary cited the loss of property following a failure to repay loans and dropping out of the VSLA, leaving them without a platform for quick loan and credit services.

“They [non-graduated households] get loans and they don’t bring back and when forced to pay they sell off all their property-coffee, animals to pay back. And they end up dropping out of saving groups and saying ill about the group. They fail to pay back the loan and thus dropping out.” – Beneficiary interviewee, Luwero, Central region

Non-graduated beneficiaries interviewed used similar indicators to ascertain reasons as why they had not made it to graduation, as illustrated by the quote below.

“I think they based on the home environment, incomes, the well-being at home. I think I am not yet ready to be graduated. Maybe I did not have a toilet, dish rack, kitchen; the teachers came and taught us that we should have all these things and once you put them in place you see a change in your family.” – Beneficiary interviewee (not graduated), Buikwe, Central region

Resilient and Non-Resilient Households

Data showed that non-resilient households slid back into poverty and vulnerability because of a reduction in frequency of contact with SCORE community-based trainers and activity staff. They clearly required continued interaction to sustain their well-being, as illustrated in the quote below.

“Then there are some households which were graduated but are back to poverty line because others after the graduation they went back to normal life. They are aware that they are graduated but still want our presence like some group members to come and say [lapwony] meaning teaching please come to visit us.” – Community-based trainer FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

The evaluation team found that households that reported a previous episode of a severe shock were more likely to be non-resilient. Severe shocks include loss of the family household head or breadwinner and weather-related shocks and stresses. Beneficiaries noted that to cope with harsh weather conditions that culminated in severe losses in yield, they would move and practice agriculture in areas close to water bodies. Households that lost breadwinners struggled to find suitable alternatives to address that gap would slide back into vulnerability.

“I suffer to get the money needed through the support from the good neighbors. Then issues of death sometimes are very challenging. It is unexpected, and this happened at the time I lost my husband. Handling the burial expenses and other requirements was a difficult thing. But with the grace of God, we managed to handle it. I don’t have the strength to face such shocks since there is nothing much I do financially to get income. What I get is just from hand to mouth. I may not be fully prepared to address such challenges.” – Beneficiary interviewee (non-resilient), Gulu, Northern region

Resilience Capacity Measurement Framework

Using USAID’s Resilience Capacity Measurement Framework,¹⁷ SCORE has been most successful in addressing adaptive capacity by strengthening beneficiary skills to be proactive in making choices to

¹⁷ Vaughan, E. (2018). Resilience Measurement Practical Guidance Note Series 3: Resilience Capacity Measurement. Produced by Mercy Corps as part of the Resilience Evaluation, Analysis and Learning (REAL) Associate Award. <https://www.fsnnetwork.org/resilience-measurement-practical-guidance-series-guidance-note-3-%E2%80%93-resilience-capacity-measurement>

respond to shocks. In addition, SCORE contributed to some households' absorptive capacity by teaching them skills that changed their ability to address shocks. SCORE's biggest challenge was with transformative capacities. Although it contributed to starting to change cultural and gender norms as well as supported some governance mechanisms, there is still a great deal of work to be done.

EQ2 Conclusions

SCORE's interventions provided households with meaningful knowledge and skills that assisted in behavior change. Many of the improvements came from changing eating habits, hygiene and sanitation practices, and family dynamics. SCORE helped improve relations within the household and improved beneficiary self-efficacy (notably among women) to address, discuss, and resolve issues without fear or fighting. The VSLAs were also an important intervention for those who could participate, providing access to small short-term loans to help households avoid slipping into greater vulnerability.

However, different interventions worked well for some and not for others. Households vary in their capacity to learn and implement new skills and knowledge, which affects how interventions benefit them. The primary gap is the complexity and variation in household circumstances and definitions of varying levels of vulnerability. SCORE did not adequately address or provide support for the most critically vulnerable households, in particular those that are elderly- and child-headed, those with disabilities, and large families with many children and orphans.

Although SCORE supported the strengthening of certain skills to improve household resiliency, these skills may not be sufficient enough to ensure a households' ability to respond to shocks and stressors. Not all beneficiaries are prepared to address shocks and stressors if they arise. The primary threat to resilience is rooted in financial well-being, and the biggest perceived stressors to this are death and environmental shocks. While some beneficiaries overcame shocks and hardships and felt optimistic about their future resiliency, all respondents acknowledged the unpredictability and unknown magnitude of future shocks and hardships, and most felt they were not sufficiently equipped to manage them.

In some communities, SCORE interventions did not adequately link to government services for sustainability. Had local government production officers been more involved, the activity could have leveraged extension workers to continue training and education to address emerging challenges.

EQ 3: How has SCORE's graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes?

SCORE's graduation and resilience model and approach sought to develop capacity and skills within vulnerable households, not provide handouts or donations. The activity intended to develop competencies, abilities, self-belief, and empowerment within the home and community that could be sustained beyond the activity. Ultimately, this model was intended to develop resiliency within households and communities so they could better withstand and manage hardships, shocks, and challenges to their well-being.

a) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model?

Strengths of the Model

Respondents identified four key strengths of the SCORE graduation model: (1) focus on strengthening knowledge and self-efficacy to improve well-being and resilience; (2) high-impact intervention areas; (3)

inclusiveness of women, people with disabilities, youth, and orphans; and (4) the case management and graduation model.

1. Focus on Strengthening Knowledge and Self-Efficacy to Improve Well-Being and Resilience

All categories of respondents spoke favorably about SCORE's model. Central- and district-level government officials praised SCORE for its innovative approach, noting its potential to increase resiliency (and, thus, longer-term sustainability) beyond the life of the activity. Government stakeholders also noted the dedicated effort to first "win over" beneficiaries to this self-strengthening approach, then "wean them" from the activity, allowing new households to join and monitor and assess their resiliency and well-being over time. IPs and community workers said the training they received helped them continue supporting these families after SCORE ended.

"Knowledge does not rot – we may not use it right now but it can still be useful in future." – Community volunteer FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

Beneficiaries and community workers stated that, overall, SCORE gave them knowledge and skills they did not previously have to better manage their homes and community. While SCORE faced some resistance at first (as described in the Weaknesses of the Model section below), it did not use a traditional approach of offering handouts and short-term assistance, and most beneficiaries (except the most vulnerable) ultimately recognized the benefits of self-help. This awareness that knowledge and skills development is more useful in the long term was a significant shift in the mindsets of beneficiaries, communities, and district and central government officials.

"If I compare SCORE to another project, I realize they have done a better job; the outcomes are seen by all, unlike other [projects] who when they leave the outcomes also disappear." – Community volunteer FGD participant, Amuru, Northern region

"I feel SCORE has given us the skills and knowledge already. They equipped us with the tools needed. What remains for us now is to practice the things they taught in order to improve our well-being. That is the important thing left." – Beneficiary interviewee, Gulu, Northern region

2. High-Impact Intervention Areas

Beneficiaries, community workers, government officials, and IP staff the evaluation team interviewed frequently mentioned a number of high-impact SCORE interventions (Table 6).

TABLE 6: HIGH IMPACT INTERVENTIONS BY AREA

Outcome Area	Interventions	Supporting Beneficiary Quotes
Income generation and savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA was the biggest contributor to improved ability to withstand minor hardships and crises. • FFS improved agricultural practices and starting home gardens. 	<p><i>“I am grateful to SCORE for the VSLA, for training us about VSLAs. The VSLAs are still helping us to date for the money I get to pay school fees.”</i></p>
Improved food security and nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home gardens and FFS combined with improved knowledge about nutritious meals and the importance of multiple daily meals. 	<p><i>“We were trained to have backyard gardens where we can easily water...We are able to have some green vegetable throughout the year... That helps to boost our nutrition hence avoiding malnutrition [which we learned]. We plant varieties of vegetables in just a small plot.”</i></p>
Increased availability of human and child rights legal and protection services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community activities to raise awareness about human and child rights and the legal and protective services available to them. 	<p><i>“It brings changes in regard to the rights of the child...when such cases [of abuse or poor treatment] happen in the community, other people condemn the acts, citing the laws that prohibit them.”</i></p>
Increased capacity of vulnerable women, children, and families (family strengthening)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community activities to improve awareness and understanding of women’s rights and supportive communication within the home as opposed to fighting, shouting, and violence (both gender-based and child abuse). 	<p><i>“If the family is not a strong unit, no matter how much money you earned or protected your children that family would not be able to sustain its own well-being. The positive relationship between parents and children that came out strongly in the parenting skills training created a whole lot of difference in people’s lives.”</i></p>

3. Inclusiveness - Women, People with Disabilities, Youth, and Orphans

In line with the government of Uganda’s policy for social development, respondents indicated that SCORE was designed to identify and target vulnerable families and a critically important subset of disadvantaged peoples. These included OVC affected by HIV/AIDS, adults and children with disabilities, women- and child-headed households, youth, and particularly out of school/work youth. Most respondents at all levels felt SCORE effectively targeted (i.e., enrolled) the most vulnerable individuals and households. A key example of improved gender relations was the primary role of women in the VSLAs. Because of engagement in community dialogues, men supported these women in their efforts to save and provided some or all the funds to do so. IP staff and government officials perceived women and children as having benefitted the most, through skills development, improved gardening for nutrition, increased school attendance, self-efficacy and empowerment, and stronger family relations.

4. Case Management and Graduation Model

SCORE’s graduation and resilience model is a process that includes: identification of vulnerable households, the VAT, needs mapping and household planning through a needs assessment tool (NAT), implementation (services), follow-up, re-assessment/graduation (using the VAT), and resilience. Several IP and government respondents praised the graduation model as an innovation that set the stage for further learning, best practices, and replication for future graduation models. The rest of this section describes what respondents described as the key strengths of these components.

a) *Identification of Beneficiary Households*

Most respondents, from central government officials to household beneficiaries, felt SCORE’s process for identifying vulnerable households was good and assessments were conducted correctly. Many IP and

government officials noted that SCORE's overall methodology succeeded in identifying vulnerable households and enrolling moderately vulnerable households that stood to benefit from activity interventions. Household eligibility depended on key criteria such as having HIV-positive persons in the home, OVC affected by HIV/AIDS, and overall household income and financial stability. Government officials also saw the home visits and the time taken to assess and score vulnerability across various areas of the VAT as key to correctly assessing vulnerability.

Government officials, USAID staff, and some IP staff noted that SCORE had identified households that could benefit from the interventions, as opposed to the extremely vulnerable who would struggle to implement and apply new skills. At first, some households felt excluded and the process of identifying households to enroll was unclear. Over time, however, those excluded understood why and even learned and joined groups without encouragement or support from SCORE.

"They were genuine because we are members of these communities and are witnesses to the fact that they are the rightful people registered. Additionally, during the selection, local leaders and area heads were there to verify that the rightful people were selected." – Community volunteer FGD participant, Amuru, Northern region

"From the time they did the assessments of the households the graduation model focused on the household itself despite the fact that the project supported a lot of group activities, they looked at the household and they supported it through the seeds of interventions to get out of the vulnerability status so I think that household specific methodology was good on one hand but it also took into consideration the participation and involvement of the households. What I would say starting from the positive they didn't look at the household as a vulnerable household and therefore all the support has to be given, but they looked at what is it that the household has and what can we build on within the little resources or gaps within the household." – KII with central government stakeholder

For the most vulnerable households enrolled, respondents noted challenges in the basic resources required to apply skills and the overall sense of defeat that discouraged them from engaging and attempting to confidently apply new skills.

b) VAT

Some government officials, USAID staff, and SCORE staff credited SCORE for providing a model of learning. For example, some of the questions in the VAT were also included in the HVAT developed by the Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development and used nationally across OVC core programs. Further, SCORE introduced the concept of household graduation, procedures that can be followed to graduate households, and assessing the sustainability of household resilience and the reasons why. One central government stakeholder stated that this support was a big help to the government's overall monitoring and evaluation system.

Most IP, government, and USAID respondents described the VAT as a comprehensive tool with relevant questions to gauge levels of household vulnerability. The tool has two key components: household income level, which needs to meet a certain threshold for the household to graduate; and the identification of an "index child" (often an orphan or child who was not enrolled in school or was given less food to eat compared with other children in the home) whose vulnerability would be measured annually and at each VAT assessment.

These respondents also saw the annual VATs as useful for IP and local government staff when conducting spot checks and household visits and as the foundation for the graduation model's monitoring and evaluation system. The VAT provided a way for SCORE to track participants over time on the same variables. It was also seen as a positive addition that households were tracked after the

interventions.

c) *NAT and Case Management Approach*

SCORE used the NAT to make household action plans jointly with key household members. This participatory process helped household members understand which key areas of vulnerability they should address, and what they needed to know and do to improve their condition and well-being. During this process, staff explained the various SCORE interventions (e.g., vocational skills, apprenticeship opportunities for youth) so households could understand and choose options that suited their needs and capacities. As one beneficiary noted, “*problems must be identified before they can be fixed, so it's a good process.*”

Most government, IP, and USAID respondents considered SCORE’s tailored approach to each family’s needs to be one of its most “*powerful features*” because “*people are different and situations are different.*” Households were quite different and required different sets of interventions. As a result, the case management approach was a laborious undertaking. The specific needs, challenges, and context of each plan also made it difficult to measure or compare results across households. Nonetheless, SCORE’s family-centered approach was critical to each household’s success.

d) *Pre-Graduation and Graduation Periods*

SCORE conducted VATs annually and continued to support vulnerable families with designated interventions per their household plans until they achieved the threshold score for graduation.¹⁸ This indicated they had achieved sufficient skills and ability to no longer be considered vulnerable. A key aspect of SCORE was the pre-graduation period of one year, during which time households continued to be monitored. If one year later their VAT score still met this threshold or had improved, they were graduated from the activity. This provided beneficiaries time to prove and build confidence in their ability to remain above vulnerable status before they graduated. SCORE IPs and key stakeholders felt it was critical not to rush the graduation process, or families were more likely to fail. The graduation process was deemed positive in that it motivated households to succeed.

e) *Graduation Targets*

In the beginning, SCORE did not have any specific graduation targets; its focus was on the quality of the interventions, learning and adjusting as needed, and allowing time for improvement in capacity and well-being. SCORE’s performance framework and indicators measured results against key outcomes, although the activity did track VAT scores and numbers of households graduating over time. As the graduation process required a minimum of two years (the third year measured resilience) before a household was eligible, SCORE only included graduation targets in its final two years, after learning from prior experience what percentage of households were likely to graduate.

f) *Monitoring Resilience*

SCORE defined a resilient household as one that could maintain (or improve) its well-being for at least one year after graduation. SCORE partners, IP staff, and government respondents cited this aspect of the graduation model as critical to its success. In addition, tracking and monitoring household well-being post-graduation allowed SCORE and key stakeholders to begin to identify household characteristics, environmental factors, and other stressors that affected the resiliency of graduates. IP respondents indicated that SCORE was “*deliberately designed*” to graduate some households before the end of the activity, then monitor how they did post-graduation. This follow-up and review component allowed

¹⁸ Households graduated out of SCORE after maintaining a VAT score below 40 for two consecutive assessment periods.

them to measure if, when, and how the model was successful.

“From the time they did the assessments of the households the graduation model focused on the household itself despite the fact that the project supported a lot of group activities, they looked at the household and they supported it through the seeds of interventions to get out of the vulnerability status so I think that household specific methodology was good on one hand but it also took into consideration the participation and involvement of the households.” – KII with central government stakeholder

Weaknesses of the Model

Respondents also shared three key weaknesses they had observed based on their experience and interactions with SCORE: (1) not suitable for the extremely vulnerable and most disadvantaged households; (2) challenges in intervention areas; and (3) the graduation model.

I. Not Suitable for the Extremely Vulnerable and Most Disadvantaged Households

Most of the most vulnerable beneficiaries and some IP staff noted that knowledge and training alone are not enough to cover the complexity and varying levels of vulnerability that some families face. For extremely vulnerable families (e.g., those without land or a source of income, those with poor or inadequate shelter or homes, those with large families and many OVC, elderly, or disabled members, those headed by children), respondents indicated that these households needed some form of welfare and handouts. The most vulnerable households might need different assistance since they are starting at a lower threshold than others.

Within the Ugandan government and SCORE definitions of moderately and critically vulnerable families, respondents also indicated that no matter how long some critically vulnerable households remained in the activity they were unlikely to graduate. If they did, they were far more likely to slide back into vulnerability than those assessed as moderately vulnerable. For this group, the primary challenge was to begin to apply new skills and capacities learned since they lacked basic resources to do so. Respondents felt that if SCORE had provided some initial small investment (either capital or material) to be repaid over time, these families would have been better placed to improve their well-being, practice new skills, and ultimately thrive and improve in the future. Although this might be thought to be outside the scope of SCORE, poverty is a driver of vulnerability and increases the risk for HIV infection. SCORE was designed to address poverty and vulnerability, and poverty, for the most vulnerable households, cannot be tackled without increased access to resources to help them improve their status.

“There are [other] households that we call the most vulnerable, the poor of the poorest, the bottom of the pyramid that will need some push for example there are households throughout the five years every time you would go you would find a case of a malnourished child because you can just not effect nutrition security with words of encouragement and knowledge in such very poor households so I agree there those ones that will need some support to stabilize then they can gain from the knowledge.” – KII with SCORE IP staff

a) *Households Less Likely to Graduate Out of Vulnerability*

Program managers and community-based volunteers noted that households whose heads had disabilities or was elderly were less likely to graduate from critical or moderate vulnerability. These respondents consistently noted households with these characteristics needed additional support such as immediate relief to address the self-efficacy inequities to be able to benefit from SCORE. To put into practices the skills gained, they needed resources such as land to engage in agriculture or the ability to generate savings and become part of the VSLA group.

“There are some households that never graduated. I think even if we added more ten years they would still not graduate. These households just needed handouts to make them continue living. You find a household where there are only two people, a man, and a wife, and they are both elderly. For such a household you can do nothing other than continue supporting them. And to make it worse, we could not even involve the neighbors because they said they do not have neighbors who are willing to support them; they don’t even have their relatives close to them. Those households gave us difficulty. These were households that had critical illnesses and then households that had disabilities. Sometimes you may try to do for them better things but still, you would not succeed.” – KII with SCORE IP staff, Kitgum, Northern region

“Another weakness was that as we enrolled we found out that many household heads were women who were very weak and of course when you assess, this person really needed support and you can’t leave this person out and the challenge was the way the program was implemented it had continuous activities where this person was supposed to be involved but because of age, sickness they couldn’t participate in this.” - KII with SCORE IP staff, Mukono, Central region

Similar concerns were also raised for households whose heads were living with HIV, elderly, or frail. They were also less likely to graduate because of their limited physical capacity to engage in activities that could improve their socio-economic well-being following the training.

“In my place, all the beneficiaries they selected were too old and others were HIV positive. Ever since they selected them until they die, they are full of problems. The sick one cannot dig, the old one cannot dig, and they have not sourced of income. The one who gets tired is the one that dies.” – Community-based trainer FGD participant, Mukono, Central region

Poverty was also cited as a defining factor for households that are less likely to graduate from vulnerability. Being poor compromises their self-efficacy and general ability to compete favorably in engaging in economically productive activities.

“Those who are not able to graduate are more than those ones who are able to graduate. Simply because the community comprises of the majority are peasant farmers below standards of living. So, it makes a majority to be people who are not able to be to the minimum level, they cannot help themselves out of this situation, it’s a trap.” - FGD participant, Gulu, Northern region

2. Challenges in Intervention Areas

SCORE IP staff noted several challenges in intervention areas. These are supported by the key challenges that beneficiaries identified (see the findings for EQ 2 above). FFS and the associated technical skills and knowledge in agronomy that comprised this component were initially beyond those of core SCORE staff. As one SCORE respondent stated, “agronomy is a science, and not a layman’s or simple skill to transfer.” As a result, SCORE staff had to invest significant time in learning and understanding issues such as matching crops to soil type, drought-resistant strains, fertilization and irrigation, when and how to rotate crops, and safe storage of harvests and yield, to begin to pass this knowledge on to beneficiary participants.

A similar challenge was farmers’ linkages to markets and VSLAs, and community groups’ linkages to banks. For both market traders and banks on the one hand, and farmers and village savings groups on the other, there was not a clear understanding of the cost and benefits. Considerable efforts were therefore made to build mutual understanding and trust and to support initial linkages to ensure they were maintained beyond the life of the activity. Respondents felt strongly that these were critical to future resiliency and longer-term sustainability. They also felt that future models should consider engaging a partner with core competencies in these areas or outsourcing this aspect to private sector

partners (further strengthening linkages, which also presented unanticipated challenges and barriers in these intervention areas).

3. Graduation Model

In the FGDs with community workers and interviews with beneficiaries, nearly half of respondents noted that “graduation” was not clearly defined, explained, or understood by those enrolled at the start of SCORE. Some beneficiaries mentioned not knowing if they graduated or never being told about it. This meant that, even at the end or at the time of graduation, many households were confused. While many understood this meant achieving a level of knowledge, capacity, and skills to continue maintaining their well-being without ongoing activity support, others thought this meant completing a series of courses and interventions, not being suddenly left on their own to manage themselves. While graduation was generally viewed as a celebration of some sort of success, the definition and understanding of this success varied widely. For some, the lack of self-efficacy and support systems to maintain courage and belief in themselves was lacking.

“Graduation is such a permanent term – it needs to be recognized as transitional; like graduating from primary school – you aren’t done with school, you have simply moved upward in some areas.” – KII with SCORE IP staff

Community workers in most FGDs noted that graduates were excited to “celebrate” graduation, but few fully understood that this meant the end of SCORE’s support and few believed they could sustain their status afterward. IP staff reported that while income is a critical indicator of ability to maintain well-being, other categories such as nutritional status and funds for school fees may still be lacking. Although the evaluation team identified concerns about households that met the graduation threshold, they were often not considered prior to the household’s approval to graduate; households graduated according to their cumulative scores. Local and central government respondents as well as IP staff noted that the threshold level for graduation was too low to achieve the end goal of resiliency and sustained well-being.

a) *Identification and Assessment of Beneficiary Households*

According to respondents, key weaknesses in the beneficiary identification process were limited involvement of key stakeholders (e.g., community-based volunteers, community-level opinion leaders, and in a few instances community development officers at district and sub-county levels). These people felt they knew the vulnerable households but were never consulted in the identification and assessment process. As a result, some felt that moderately and critically vulnerable households were at times left out.

Respondents expressed varying opinions about who should be involved in the assessment process. Community workers felt they knew these households best, had strong relations with them, and could more likely elicit responses that were honest and true. However, community workers were often semi-literate, which caused problems in accurately and consistently assessing homes (e.g., using the VAT). Allowing local leaders to take the lead in this was considered problematic, as there is a tendency to include family members over those most in need, in the hope that relatives will receive handouts. IP staff had less interactions with community members, which jeopardized the trust required from a household to respond honestly. In general, respondents felt that a range of stakeholders (including community leaders, community workers, local government officials, and IP staff) should be engaged in the process, thereby ensuring consistency, fairness, honesty, and accuracy. This may be more time consuming and costly in the beginning, but ultimately more efficient and beneficial. Engaging IP staff from the start also assisted in following up on VATs and with monitoring and evaluation efforts.

IP staff and community workers also noted that some households were reluctant to disclose their true state of vulnerability because they were embarrassed to admit their current situation. Others misrepresented themselves as more vulnerable than they were in the hope of obtaining handouts, gifts, and assistance. Some IP and community workers felt households rushed through the assessment or stated they were okay because they did not see the benefit of spending their time on this activity.

b) VAT Challenges

Respondents said the most critical problem in the VAT was the composite and unweighted score used as the threshold for graduation. For example, income threshold held the most value in the final VAT score, as did the improved well-being of the index child over time. While beneficiary respondents perceived income and financial security to be the number one indicator or predictor of well-being and resilience, a household reaching a certain income threshold did not necessarily mean high nutritional status for the entire family. Similarly, while an index child might improve sufficiently, community workers noted that, at times, this came at the expense of or without inclusion of other VC in the home.

SCORE respondents and government stakeholders all noted the challenge of defining graduation criteria and felt this required more critical thinking. Currently, the threshold score for graduation is a composite score of various measures within the VAT. Shifts in one area might affect another area as well as the total score. But one could still graduate with poor scores in a critical area, which was a challenge felt by community workers, families, and SCORE IPs.

In addition, now that the government is using the HVAT nationally, the VAT creates challenges with collecting data that is not aligned with the government system. Government officials expressed that SCORE was unwilling to adapt or include other tools due to their reporting requirements. The HVAT could have been used at any point of pre-graduation assessment, and alongside the activity tools as some other activities have done.

c) Graduation Targets

SCORE IP staff expressed mixed feelings about setting graduation targets in similar models. While it helps in working toward a goal, there is a considerable risk in setting targets as IPs feel pressure to achieve them. In this case, it would have potentially sacrificed quality, resiliency, and sustainability, which would have undermined the entire model's objective. Additionally, IP budgets were allocated based on caseload or the number of beneficiary households, so there was a disincentive to graduate (due to the resulting reduction in funds) and pressure to prove themselves successful (by reaching targets even if this meant rushing, forcing families, or sacrificing quality).

“When we started...we didn't have targets as a project...we started to see graduation rates (initially around 22 percent) which gradually increased each year. Partner (IP) reactions differed, and some wanted to forcefully graduate households (to hit targets) others wanted to forcefully maintain them (because funding allocation depending on the number of households involved/case load.” – KII with SCORE IP staff

“Targets – something to aspire to, BUT have to have leeway to not hit it, and if not, reflect on why and learn from it. If you dumb down (use stupid) criteria just to graduate, you can hit any target you want. The challenge on the client is to create the right tech definition for graduation. It can't be a top down, make or break deal because circumstances change, and programs need room to learn, report failure or challenges and strengthen from this.” – KII with SCORE IP staff

d) NAT and Case Management Approach

Respondents cited two main weakness of the NAT and household plan. First, copies of the household plans were not left with families, making it hard for them to remember when to attend meetings and

other activities. Respondents felt that because many beneficiary households were not very literate and would struggle to follow the NAT, a user-friendly version could be adapted to assist them in following the plan as agreed. Second, once developed, a household's NAT was never updated, altered, or revised to reflect growth in areas or needs or challenges in others. VAT scores may have varied, but NATs remained static. This was seen as a weakness in the SCORE approach. Fewer respondents said the willingness and attitudes of participants varied greatly, and that sometimes participation rates and follow-up by IP and community staff reached only 60-70 percent, despite these detailed plans. Nonetheless, many households graduated. This was a cause of concern for the quality and consistency of implementation in general.

b) What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

Table 7 summarizes the main programmatic and external factors that hindered or facilitated SCORE outcomes.

TABLE 7: FACTORS FACILITATING AND HINDERING SCORE'S OUTCOMES

	Facilitating Factors	Hindering Factors
Programmatic	Timeframe from first VAT to pre-graduation and graduation (minimum of two years)	Extremely vulnerable households cannot apply new knowledge and skills; they need additional help or a different type of approach/model
	Long activity timeline allowed time to graduate households, onboard new households, and measure resilience	No follow-up support or monitoring plans to assess resilience and sustainability over time
	Systems strengthening, monitoring and evaluation, training of IPs, and coordination with local government bodies	Much of the data were initially paper based; changes in systems/measures made analysis and comparison difficult in the activity's early years
	Stakeholder participation at the national and district levels was strong	The Ugandan government was not involved in the initial design of SCORE, so ownership and understanding took longer
External	Interest of government and community systems and services	Lack of funds to maintain support and services in some places
	NGOs and other projects providing support	Natural disasters (e.g., drought, floods), illness, and death
	Culture of community support	Male-dominated culture, challenge to change mindsets

Key Programmatic Factors Facilitating the Sustainability of SCORE Outcomes

Respondents noted that SCORE allowed time to graduate households, monitor their resilience, and enroll new households, which facilitated the sustainability of outcomes. Systems strengthening in monitoring and evaluation and with local partners also helped to not only allow learning throughout the activity but also to strengthen the capacity of local IPs.

In addition, respondents perceived the holistic and integrated nature of the activity's support to vulnerable households using a range of interventions that addressed needs in multiple sectors and areas as helping address the multiple and interacting vulnerabilities OVC households face. For instance, one graduated beneficiary described how leveraging VSLA loans, and the knowledge from the FFS, enabled their household to increase its agricultural yield, which moved the family out of critical vulnerability, left it more food secure, and helped give it the means to educate the family's children.

SCORE's resilience-based approach focused on building skills of beneficiary households to enable them to become self-reliant. The focus on capacity and skills training, rather than giving beneficiaries handouts, was perceived to be a more sustainable way to improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries. For example, building self-reliance among OVC caregivers through parenting education and economic skills strengthened long-term resilience and improved household relations and self-esteem.

The activity prioritized the engagement of different stakeholders at the community, local government, and central government levels. At the community level, SCORE was implemented in close collaboration with community volunteer groups such as community legal volunteers and peer nutrition educators. Participants described the use of local community structures in the implementation process as an excellent way to improve community ownership and buy-in, encourage locally inspired responses, and promote sustainability. Community volunteer groups were perceived to be 'closer' to beneficiaries, and a way to ensure that knowledge is retained in the community. At the local government level, SCORE sought to collaborate with staff from the community-based service department and production department, health facilities, and officials from the justice, law, and order sector – especially the Ugandan police force and magistrates.

Key Programmatic Factors Inhibiting the Sustainability of SCORE Outcomes

A key programmatic factor inhibiting the sustainability of SCORE outcomes was insufficient consideration of critically vulnerable households that needed welfare support or some initial donation to apply new skills learned. For some, the model was effective in areas such as capacity and skills strengthening and self-efficacy, but the main challenge was the sustainability of well-being. Without ongoing support, households may not be able to maintain their increased level of well-being, especially when faced with shockers or stressors.

In addition, SCORE did not seem to have a systematized and coherent strategy for mainstreaming activities into local programs. Consequently, some government stakeholders did not feel like they were part of the decision-making process. Some government officials expressed that they had not been part of SCORE since the beginning, especially the design phase – which could have helped foster relationship and strengthen activity implementation. In addition, some IPs had low capacity, which affected how the interventions were implemented.

Key External Factors Facilitating the Sustainability of SCORE Outcomes

A key factor facilitating the sustainability of SCORE outcomes was the interest and commitment of government and community systems and services to be part the activity. The government supported SCORE and appreciated its work. IP staff and government officials mentioned the availability of other NGO projects to provide support, and the pre-existing community services that were available. In addition, a key factor was the local culture of community support, and the interest and dedication of community leaders and households.

Key External Factors Inhibiting the Sustainability of SCORE Outcomes

Key external inhibiting factors included a lack of funds and capacity of local governments and partners to maintain support and services once SCORE ended, affecting the vulnerability of households. Natural disasters such as floods and drought were a challenge for farming and gardening. Illness and death, in particular among key breadwinners, was a threat to households' stability. The male-dominated culture also impeded changing behavior and mindsets needed for SCORE initiatives to succeed, including having males participate in the interventions.

SCORE's ability to identify, target, and provide services to address constraints was further complicated by the presence of external factors that its capacity-building efforts may not have been able to address.

For example, SCORE may have properly identified a household as having a financial constraint and provided appropriate services, but the general equilibrium context (e.g., interest rates, commodity prices, Uganda's credit rating) could affect the availability of credit for beneficiaries.

EQ3 Conclusions

There were many strengths in the type of interventions SCORE provided and its innovative graduation and resiliency model, including its family-centered approach and the dedication to tailoring the approach to suit each household's needs. The focus on knowledge and skills development rather than handouts to foster long-term outcomes is a significant shift in the mindsets of beneficiaries, communities, and district and central government officials. In addition, the monitoring of graduated households during the year after they graduated allowed for important follow up.

Although the SCORE graduation model brought a new and useful approach, there were still weaknesses with its implementation in practice, especially in relationship to households' involvement and understanding of the expectations of them under the model. Beneficiaries were confused at times about what graduation meant, and did not always feel ready to stop receiving support. In addition, there seemed to be a lack of understanding or even awareness around their own household plan (NAT), which could affect the ownership households have of their own progress. Other key weaknesses included the lack of special consideration for critically vulnerable families, which limited them from fully benefitting from the interventions. In addition, SCORE's lack of partnership with the local government in some areas hindered government buy-in and the sustainability of activity interventions and outcomes. There are also key weaknesses on the precision of the VAT and the lack of change in the NAT, which could have helped SCORE better target and plan for the different households.

Overall, by strengthening household skills and empowering communities to work together, SCORE helped reduce the impact of shocks and stressors on some households. SCORE's effort to increase resiliency was an important step toward long-term sustainability. However, there is a need to examine hindering factors, particularly those beyond SCORE's control, that have a huge impact on the economic stability of a household that relies on farming. As one of the first graduation models of its kind, lessons learned from SCORE – both positive and negative – require further testing and time, strong monitoring and evaluation practices, and the flexibility to report on failures and learn from them, for this new model to ultimately succeed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, the evaluation team recommends the following actions for designing future graduation and resilience models.

Recommendations for USAID

- I. **Supporting the most vulnerable households** – USAID should design future projects to consider the varying degrees of vulnerability and target interventions based on specific needs and vulnerabilities. Future projects should critically assess the unique needs of vulnerable households and allow for some flexibility to address this inequity in self-efficacy capacity to help the most vulnerable households. The most vulnerable may not be able to apply the knowledge and skills offered in a graduation model and will need extra support to realize improvements in socio-economic status and food security.

- Income is biggest barrier for households to obtain food or invest in agricultural or business, as well as participate in interventions such as the VSLAs. Providing subsidies (e.g. seeds, fertilizer, start-up costs) or monetary funding (e.g. school fees, food) in future programming could give households the start they need to become resilient.
 - Increasing the income of vulnerable families takes time. For immediate results, vulnerable households will need to be supplemented to show improvements.
 - Other critically vulnerable groups such as the elderly could be paired with young relatives or linked to partners who can provide relief.
 - Continuing to test variations of the graduation model to suit different vulnerability levels may result in more graduates and increased resiliency.
2. **Capacity building** – USAID should design future projects that use the graduation model with a clear strategy for developing the capacity of local IPs and the government. For sustainability, the transfer of responsibility of service delivery and government support are crucial.
- To foster this process, USAID, the government, and the IP should have an agreed training and technical assistance strategy for community development officers at district and sub-county levels. Capacity building should target sensitization about OVC programs in the districts, understanding the theory of change underpinning the proposed interventions, the project tools, and preparing these officers for supervision, monitoring, and evaluation roles.
 - Capacity building of local IPs should be standardized, measured, and tracked with the objective of “graduating” some IPs so they can provide services and receive and manage donor funds directly. All IPs should also be oriented on the national OVC framework to enable the collection and sharing of data that may be useful for national planning and decision making.
3. **Information sharing and learning** – USAID should ensure mainstreamed reporting and feedback mechanisms between with IPs and the government. There should be clarity on information needs and guidance on best formats for providing this information.
- Sharing information enhances joint evidence-based decision making for both government and IPs. It also keeps government partners abreast of ongoing activities, developments, and challenges. This approach also makes it easier for government officials to support supervision and transition and be part of evaluations to identify best practices and recommendations for future programs.

Recommendation for Implementing Partners

4. **Clarity on terminology and household preparation for exit/graduation** – IPs should ensure that all beneficiaries are informed of their status, are prepared, and are given the necessary support for the next phase of livelihood. There was a lack of clarity on what “exit” and “graduation” from the activity meant for beneficiaries. Some were not even aware of their status as beneficiaries and only alluded to reduced interactions with activity staff; these individuals tended to be not prepared for life after the activity, which threatened the sustainability of their well-being.
5. **Integration of national OVC tools** – IPs should integrate national OVC tools into future projects to ease joint planning, transitioning, comparative performance analyses, support supervision, and monitoring. SCORE did not use national OVC tools such as the HVAT or the previous vulnerability index, even at the pre-graduation assessment. Having common approaches to measure vulnerability would make it easier for the government to track progress towards national goals.
- Projects should also be flexible in adopting emerging critical national OVC tools. Projects should be designed to encourage learning and adapting in the face of changing or new indicators, evidence, and issues, and follow PEPFAR guidance on evidence-based programming.

6. **Agricultural development as an agent for addressing poverty and vulnerability** – IPs should invest in strengthening partnerships with marketing and production departments to address weather- and pest-associated shocks that affect crops and yields, compromising their resilience and general well-being. Most beneficiaries largely depend on agriculture and it is hard to address poverty and vulnerability without tapping into modern agronomy or agricultural development. The local government has a marketing and production department in each district, which runs extension worker services for agricultural advisory support. SCORE worked with these departments but the relationships were not strongly grounded to allow for continuity post-activity. Meaningful partnerships are also important for sustaining achievements after the activity as support and supervision would continue as part of the extension worker framework. The partnership could be strengthened through joint needs assessment, planning, development of interventions, and knowledge sharing.
7. **Referrals** – IPs should strengthen their practices in referring beneficiaries to other partners to help them access services the IP does not provide. OVC work is complex given the multi-dimensional nature of core program areas. Beneficiary needs can be comprehensively met through shared referrals. The government has a compendium of OVC service providers, but there is limited utilization of this mechanism. It might be worth investing in a digital platform to facilitate and track referrals and their outcomes, and evaluate the efficacy of the referral strategy for meeting household needs.
8. **Beneficiary exit practices** – IPs should invest in building and strengthening VSLA groups and linking them to relevant local government offices within districts to help address group monitoring needs and key staffing issues, and enhance their capacity to tap into existing and emerging government socio-development programs. Socio-economic safety should be a key graduation consideration and the viability of the VSLA group that members belong to should be assessed and supported to resilience if needed, as weaker groups tend to collapse once projects end.

Recommendations for the Ugandan Government

9. **Government ownership** – The government should move SCORE-created structures into its public service structures; this is a pool of human resources that can support OVC services. For example, the community legal volunteers should be merged into the public service structure to support child protection. Community-based trainers could also be considered under the village health team structure. This would enhance efficiency in resource utilization and support continuity of roles and services post-activity.
 - USAID should also design projects utilizing the government systems when possible. When creating new systems, USAID should work with the government to ensure they can be integrated into existing systems to foster sustainably.

General Model Recommendations

Future graduation models should consider the following adjustments to the enrollment, VAT, and NAT processes:

10. **Identification of beneficiary households** – A variety of stakeholders should continue to be engaged from the beginning of the household identification process, including local government representatives, local IPs, community leaders, and community-based workers.
 - Government guidelines for household identification exist and were followed by SCORE in some areas. Some stakeholders, such as community leaders and district and subcounty officials, noted

they were not involved in the household identification and selection processes and had reservations on whether the right households were identified for the activity. Using existing district-level data on OVC mapping, where it exists, might help with this dialogue, as the mapping is always based on a wide stakeholder engagement.

- The identification process should ensure a fair and impartial selection, as well as consistency and accuracy in its application.
- Participation will increase ownership among key local stakeholders who will remain after the project ends, as well as increase understanding, competency, and confidence of all involved in their abilities and in their communication and coordination of efforts thereafter.
- Depending on resources, projects should seek to identify and enroll all households that meet vulnerability criteria within a parish or district, rather than set a predefined cap or target number to enroll in project areas.

11. **The VAT** – The VAT should be revised in the following ways to improve its accuracy and sensitivity to measuring complex household characteristics:

- Add “red flags” within core component areas to be part of the information used to guide graduation decisions, as opposed to basing the decision on total scores alone as there is a risk of graduating households with critical vulnerabilities in a particular core component area.
- Add weights to the various categories or identify critical conditions that must be fulfilled. Do not base graduation solely on a cumulative score. The Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development has criteria for automatic enrollment into OVC programs that should inform this process.
- Add a household-defined variable for graduation, so households can take ownership of the process and their graduation if/when the time comes.
- Include other variables such as food security for all (adults and children) and school attendance, in addition to key variables (e.g., income), to measure a base minimum threshold before a household is eligible for graduation.
- Consider adjusting the VAT threshold for graduation, as some reported that it was too low to facilitate resiliency.

12. **Household mapping and the NAT** – Household plans and NATs should be done at least annually following the VAT assessments, to better highlight key areas for improvement in the coming year.

- Provide households and community workers with a copy of the household plan that is simple, user-friendly, and suited to semi- and illiterate households, to help them follow the plans as agreed.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Evaluation Statement of Work

Ex-Post Performance Evaluation of the Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for vulnerable children and their families (SCORE) Activity

This statement of work (SOW) is for an ex-post performance evaluation commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development's Africa Bureau, in collaboration with USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3), the USAID/Uganda Mission, and the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning. The evaluation will examine the Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for vulnerable children and their families (SCORE) project. USAID's E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project¹⁹ will lead the design and implementation of the evaluation.

SCORE Project Background

Despite consistent economic growth over the past decade, Uganda faces ongoing challenges in assisting vulnerable populations, especially children. By some estimates, there are over four million children living in poverty and over two million orphans in a country of around 41.5 million people.²⁰ To address these challenges, USAID/Uganda has funded the SCORE project (AID-617-A-11-00001), a \$34,326,470, seven-year (April 2011 to April 2018) award that aims to decrease the vulnerability of critically and moderately vulnerable children and their households in 35 districts in Uganda.

The project is run as a consortium led by the AVSI Foundation, with sub-awards to CARE International, FHI 360, and TPO Uganda. The project is implemented at the local level, through at least 66 civil society organizations (CSOs). SCORE uses a multisector and family-centered approach, offering a menu of services to beneficiary households. SCORE develops family-specific household development plans, based on household and individual beneficiary needs—with a goal of graduating households from project support. SCORE staff collaborate with people in government and community settings to implement the project.

The goal of the project is to decrease the vulnerability of critically vulnerable children and their households. The SCORE model has four key objectives:

Objective 1: To improve the socioeconomic status of VC households.

- An integrated, market-based approach that tailors support to vulnerable children (VC) and their households to improve their socioeconomic status using three strategic pillars:
 - Increase household financial resources
 - Increase socioeconomic skill base
 - Facilitate market inclusion

Objective 2: To improve the food security and nutrition status of VC and their household members.

- SCORE addresses food security through a mix of activities aimed at enhancing the capacities of VC households to produce and use foodstuff, as well as household knowledge and behavior of nutritional practices and services, along the following strategic directions:

¹⁹ Management Systems International (MSI), A Tetra Tech Company, implements the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project in partnership with Development and Training Services, a Palladium company; and NORC at the University of Chicago.

²⁰ See Walakira, E.J., et al, 2016. *The State of the Ugandan Child—An Analytical Overview*. <https://swsa.mak.ac.ug/sites/default/files/docs/Analysis-of-the-State-of-Ugandan-Child-Final-Final-%20Final.pdf>.

- Increase household food production
- Improve food utilization
- Refer VCs to existing agricultural, nutritional and health services

Objective 3: To increase availability of protection and legal services for VC and their household members.

- Child protection interventions strengthen social safety nets protecting VC from abuse and exploitation and will increase access to legal support and civil restitution for VC and their households. Activities are rooted in the following strategies:
 - Mobilize communities and increase their awareness around child protection concerns.
 - Empower families to access protection and legal redress services
 - Enhance referral mechanisms through which households can access relevant protection and legal services

Objective 4: To increase capacity of vulnerable women and children and their households to access acquire or provide critical services.

- Activities bridge existing gaps and offer a safety net that can capture and redirect VC households that fall short of or require further support beyond the scope of the mainstream result areas 1, 2, and 3. The main strategies SCORE pursues under this objective are:
 - Stimulate household awareness and ownership in the request for and provision of critical services
 - Reinforce CSOs/community-based organizations to support and care for VC and their households
 - Develop referral systems including partnerships with the private sector

SCORE Implementation Approach - The SCORE consortium’s technical approach is based on the following programmatic principles:

- Commitment to “fit the project to the people” using family-specific household development plans featuring the mix of activities deemed most appropriate with an emphasis on household capacities and needs.
- Development of family-specific Household Development Plans, encompassing a mix of activities designed to facilitate transition out of vulnerability.
- Use of evidence: SCORE prioritizes research, evaluation and learning and plans for external research for aspects including; parenting skills OR, child-friendly schools OR, life skills OR, VSLA OR, and bank linkage.
- Premised on capacity building and graduation model. SCORE is continuing to utilize and test the effectiveness of these two premiered models.
- Gender mainstreaming throughout all elements of the project.

The SCORE activity is based on the *Furaha* (happiness) graduation and resilience model. By design, SCORE envisaged an approach to accompanying the project’s clients OUT of the project. SCORE aims to transition beneficiaries out of their state of vulnerability and therefore be able to take on their own destiny, without having to be “handed over” to another project and another again.

Development Hypothesis - USAID believes that if the SCORE project provides a combination of social and economic interventions to enable VC and their household members to graduate out of vulnerability, then they will be able to achieve improved socioeconomic status; gain improved food security and nutritional status; increase the availability of protection and legal services; and increase their capacity to access, acquire or provide critical services.

Existing Performance Information Sources - SCORE staff have collected a large amount of project design (e.g., household needs assessments), implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and research data. SCORE conducted operational research on topics such as parenting, child friendly schools, bank linkages, and life skills. SCORE also maintains a robust M&E and case management system. For example, SCORE conducts at least two vulnerability assessment tool (VAT) appraisals on all beneficiaries enrolled in the project and has also been conducting follow-up VAT assessments of graduated beneficiaries as part of ongoing “tracer studies.” Finally, the MEASURE project, a USAID M&E support project, conducted a final performance evaluation of the SCORE activity, which has data available, as well. Below is a list of relevant key documents the evaluation team will need to review, which USAID/AFR will assist the evaluation team in obtaining as needed:

- SCORE project reports (available on www.score.org)
- SCORE annual workplans
- SCORE project M&E plans
- SCORE case management and M&E systems
- SCORE graduation booklet
- SCORE research study reports, including:
 - Preventing Child-Family Separation: SCORE Efforts Stabilize Vulnerable Families in Uganda
 - Community Legal Volunteers in SCORE: Assessing Their Effectiveness
 - Determinants of household vulnerability and the factors that affect transition from critical, moderate to slight vulnerability: An investigation based on SCORE project’s five-year vulnerability assessments
 - Comparing outcomes of the SCORE Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT), National Vulnerability Index (VI) and the Child Status Index (CSI) on same households
 - Determinants of school enrollment and absenteeism
 - Effectiveness of the SCORE project at addressing the drivers of family separation
 - Operational assessments of core programming activities: community legal volunteers, youth life skills training, parenting training, and savings groups
- Final performance evaluation report of the SCORE project and accompanying data
- SCORE tracer studies and accompanying data, methodology documentation, and instrumentation
- Other USAID-funded research being conducted on the SCORE activity

Evaluation Purpose, Audience, and Intended Uses

Purpose - USAID/AFR is commissioning this evaluation to examine the sustainability of SCORE outcomes among beneficiaries that graduated from the project between 2011 and 2014. USAID hopes to better understand the perceived changes in orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their families’ wellbeing since graduation. In addition, this evaluation will inform understanding of the factors that contribute or inhibit sustainability of outcomes.²¹ Finally, this evaluation is being commissioned to assess the effectiveness of the SCORE graduation and resilience model.

Audiences - The primary audiences for this evaluation are USAID/AFR, USAID/Uganda, and SCORE implementing partners. Secondary audiences for this evaluation are other implementing partners that have adopted similar graduation models, such as USAID’s Sustained Outcomes for Children and Youth

²¹ The SCORE project discusses sustainability in terms of “resilience” which it defines as “the absence of negative change from lower to higher vulnerability in the period after graduation.”

(SOCY) and Better Outcomes for Children and Youth (BOCY) activities. The results of this evaluation may also be of interest to other donors that are implementing their own graduation model interventions, and USAID/PPL/LER which is interested in factors affecting the sustainability of project outcomes.

Intended Uses - USAID will use this evaluation to inform and improve the design of future OVC projects. USAID/Uganda is particularly interested in documenting the effectiveness of the graduation and resilience model and disseminating the findings from this analysis. The findings will also be used by USAID/Uganda, other USAID missions, and USAID/Washington to understand the factors that explain sustainability of OVC interventions and particularly the SCORE graduation and resilience model to design sustainable projects that employ graduation approaches. In addition, the Agency is interested in strategies and approaches that help create conditions for long-lasting and transformational impacts to assist countries transition and move from aid dependency to self-reliance.

Evaluation Questions - The SCORE ex-post evaluation will answer the following questions:

The SCORE ex-post evaluation will answer the following evaluation questions (EQs):²²

1. What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries?
 - a. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now?
 - b. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?
2. Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being?
 - a. Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)?
 - b. How have changes in households' ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors?
3. How have SCORE's graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes?
 - a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model?
 - b. What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

Note:

- A) **Components include:** identification, assessments (VAT), needs mapping, household planning, implementation (services), follow-up, re-assessment/graduation, and resilience.
- B) **Capacities:** skills, knowledge, empowerment, and self-efficacy
- C) **Well-being:** in relation to key SCORE focus areas based on objectives – socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services, and critical services.

Lines of Inquiry for the Evaluation Questions - The following lines of inquiry will help guide the evaluation team in answering the above evaluation questions. These lines of inquiry should inform the development of data collection instruments and the issues that the evaluation findings and recommendations should address, but do not need to be answered separately in the final evaluation report. Rather these lines of inquiry will frame the analysis and the conclusions drawn from the findings for each evaluation question. Each line of inquiry is associated with an evaluation question above but may also cut across and inform the broader evaluation approach.

²² On August 10, 2018, USAID provided written approval to revise the evaluation questions from its original approved SOW. The questions presented here, and in Annex A, are those that USAID approved on August 10.

- Since graduation, how do beneficiaries perceive their future well-being?
- What factors may have affected resiliency or regression in their well-being since graduation?
- How have changes to households' capacity to address basic needs affected the resiliency of children and the household generally in the presence of financial or health-related shocks?
- Are there geographic or socio-cultural variations in the sustainability of outcomes since SCORE graduation?
- Does the duration, scope, implementation approach, or provider affect households' ability to graduate and sustain positive outcomes?
- What specific inputs or implementation approaches in the graduation and resiliency model have supported sustained household outcomes?

Gender Considerations - In line with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and Automated Directives System (ADS) 205.3.8, the evaluation will consider gender-specific and differential effects of the SCORE project. The evaluation team will disaggregate data by gender to analyze the potential influence these effects have on perceptions and outcomes. This could include looking at issues such as how and whether perception of changes in well-being differ between men and women, how capacity to address basic needs has fared since graduation between genders, or how men and women view the key factors to sustaining outcomes after graduation. USAID expects the evaluation team to apply gender-sensitive methods while conducting interviews to ensure that accurate data are collected. For example, if the evaluation team asks about intra-household decision making to learn more about the local context, it may be helpful to interview respondents away from other members of the household. The evaluation team will conduct further inquiry on gender themes as they emerge during data analysis.

Evaluation Design and Data Collection Methods

USAID expects that the evaluation design and methodology for this evaluation will include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches, where appropriate. The evaluation team should, as much as feasible and appropriate, consider methodologies that leverage existing SCORE quantitative and qualitative data, including case management data (e.g. VAT and needs assessments), monitoring and research data, other project implementation data (including quarterly and annual progress reports), internal SCORE graduated household tracer studies, and data from the SCORE final performance evaluation.

Primary data collection activities for this evaluation are expected to be primarily qualitative in nature. Qualitative data collection methods are likely to include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

- **In-depth interviews**: USAID expects the evaluation team to conduct key informant interviews with SCORE stakeholders, including USAID staff, SCORE implementing partner staff, government representatives, and SCORE beneficiaries. Interviews with staff from other donor activities that are implementing graduation models similar to SCORE may also be considered.
- **Focus group discussions**: The evaluation team may conduct focus group discussions with SCORE beneficiaries, social workers, and other relevant stakeholders. The evaluation team should work to ensure diversity in the age, gender, and geographic location of focus group participants.

No additional quantitative data will be collected as part of this evaluation. The evaluation team may triangulate evidence collected through the proposed qualitative methods and available quantitative M&E and project implementation data to answer the evaluation questions.

The evaluation team responding to this SOW will prepare an evaluation design proposal that will include a detailed methodology on a question-by-question basis (including data collection and analysis methods,

sampling approach, and data sources), draft data collection instruments, anticipated timeline, proposed team composition, and estimated budget.

Sampling - In its evaluation design proposal, the evaluation team will propose a sampling strategy for qualitative data collection. A purposive but representative sample of focus group and key informant interview participants will be used to reduce selection bias. Only SCORE graduates who have not been transitioned to other activities should be considered for inclusion in the evaluation sample. The evaluation team will consult with USAID/Uganda on the selection of key stakeholders and interview sites. The evaluation design proposal should also include an illustrative list of interview subjects. This will allow USAID and SCORE staff to assist in identifying additional stakeholders and highlight any challenges or gaps in data collection prior to implanting the evaluation design.

Data Analysis Methods - In its evaluation design proposal, the evaluation team responding to this SOW will propose specific data analysis methods on a question-by-question basis, including the appropriate mix of methods necessary to respond to the evaluation questions. Potential data analysis methods include pattern/content analysis and comparative case analysis.

Ethical Review - The evaluation team will comply with Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements in the U.S. and Uganda for conducting the evaluation. Upon finalization of the evaluation design and survey protocols, it is expected that the evaluation team will seek IRB approval(s) from the relevant institutions.

Evaluation Strengths and Limitations - The strengths and limitations of this evaluation will depend on the final design proposed by the evaluation team, in consultation with USAID. The final design should reflect a robust approach to answering the evaluation questions and contribute to the global knowledge on sustaining outcomes for OVC and vulnerable households. Initial strengths and limitations that accompany any ex-post evaluation of this type and are specifically relevant to this evaluation include:

Strengths

- **Graduation model evidence:** This evaluation will be one of the first to assess whether and how the graduation model affects sustained outcomes. The results from this evaluation are expected to inform future USAID programming as well as add to the global body of knowledge on the use of a graduation approach to implementing development activities.
- **Unique perspectives:** Qualitative data collection for the evaluation will draw upon unique perspectives that may be lost in a broader, quantitative survey. These data will provide USAID and other stakeholders with insight into perceptions of participating households and help fill gaps in the available quantitative data. Quantitative data collected from SCORE's application of the VAT were designed to assist with implementation activities, not to inform evaluative research. However, these data provide some baseline insight into household and OVC challenges. Coupling this and other SCORE data with in-depth, nuanced qualitative responses presents an opportunity to assess SCORE's approach and how best to assist people living in poverty.

Limitations

- **Cannot definitively attribute sustained outcomes to SCORE:** While USAID expects the evaluation to focus on outcomes that arise from SCORE's comprehensive graduation model, a variety of factors affect these outcomes. While there is increasing use of counterfactual-based impact evaluations to measure ex-post project effects, the evaluation design will not allow for this approach. In its evaluation design proposal, the evaluation team should note how its

approach will attempt to account for confounding factors. However, USAID recognizes that the ex-post evaluation design will ultimately be limited in its ability to mitigate this issue.

- **Evaluation scope:** SCORE was implemented nationwide in conjunction with over 60 local partners in Uganda. The ex-post evaluation should attempt to purposively capture data from a relevant and meaningful sample of SCORE beneficiaries and stakeholders but will likely be unable to draw a representative sample. This limitation means that findings will necessarily be limited and could potentially differ from the specific experiences of certain SCORE beneficiaries and stakeholders. To mitigate this, the evaluation team will need to ensure that any caveats to findings are clear, that as much secondary data are utilized as possible to determine whom to interview, and that the selected sample captures the median experience of SCORE graduates to the greatest extent possible.

Evaluation Deliverables - The evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables and will provide a final list of proposed deliverables and due dates in its evaluation design proposal for USAID’s approval.

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
1. Draft Evaluation Design Proposal	o/a 30 days following USAID’s final approval of the evaluation SOW
2. Final Evaluation Design Proposal	o/a 10 business days following receipt of all written USAID comments on the draft evaluation design proposal
3. Draft Evaluation Report	To be proposed in the evaluation design proposal
4. Final Evaluation Report	o/a 15 business days following receipt of all written USAID comments on the draft evaluation report
5. Stakeholder meeting presentation	To be proposed in the evaluation design proposal

All documents and reports will be provided electronically to USAID. All qualitative and quantitative data will be provided in electronic format to USAID in a format consistent with ADS 579 requirements. Prior to the submission of the final evaluation design proposal, the evaluation team will discuss with USAID whether its preliminary dissemination plan for this evaluation indicates other deliverables that should be prepared. Such additions as agreed with USAID will then be included in the final evaluation design proposal.

Evaluation Design Proposal - Prior to implementation of data collection activities for this evaluation, the evaluation team will deliver an evaluation design proposal that describes the conceptual framework for the evaluation and the justification for selecting this approach. USAID/AFR must provide its approval of the design proposal before the evaluation team begins in-country data collection. The design proposal must at least contain the following:

- Discussion of the overall approach of the evaluation, highlighting the conceptual model(s) adopted by evaluation question and demonstrating a clear understanding of the SCORE intervention logic.
- Discussion of the data collection and data analysis methods that will be used to answer each evaluation question, and the limitations for each method.
- Discussion of how gender analysis will be integrated into the evaluation design.
- Detail key data sources that will be selected to inform the answer to each evaluation question.
- Discussion of the sampling approach, including area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, and limitations of sample.
- Discussion of risks and limitations that may undermine the reliability and validity of the evaluation results, and the proposed mitigation strategies for each.

- Summarized evaluation methodology in a matrix that contains for each evaluation question: measure(s) or indicator(s), data collection method(s), data source, sampling approach, and data analysis method(s).
- Timeline showing the key evaluation phases (e.g., data collection, data analysis, and reporting) and specific deliverables and milestones.
- Responsibilities and qualifications of each evaluation team member
- Discussion of USAID staff participation in each evaluation phase and their anticipated roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements.
- Discussion of logistical considerations for carrying out the evaluation, including specific assistance that will be required from USAID, such as providing arrangements for key contacts within the mission or government.
- Detailed estimated budget.

Draft Evaluation Report - The draft evaluation report must contain at least the following:

- **Executive Summary:** This section should be up to five pages in length and describe the purpose, project background, evaluation design and methodology including the evaluation questions, and key findings, conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned from the evaluation.
- **Background:** This section will provide a brief description of SCORE that highlights its scope, development hypothesis, and activities undertaken.
- **Evaluation Design and Methodology:** This section will detail the overall evaluation design and methodology and related research protocols undertaken in conducting the evaluation, including the relevant data collection and analysis methods, sampling approach, and related challenges or limitations encountered during the evaluation and mitigation approaches employed.
- **Findings:** This section will present findings collected from the evaluation relevant to each evaluation question. The evaluation findings must be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not be based on hearsay. The findings must be specific, concise, and supported by the quantitative and/or qualitative evidence analyzed through scientifically plausible methodologies.
- **Conclusions:** The evaluation report will present evaluation conclusions that are interpretations and judgments based on the findings described and must logically follow from the gathered data and findings and be explicitly justified. If necessary, the evaluation team will state its assumptions, judgments, and value premises in presenting a conclusion so that readers can better understand and assess them.
- **Recommendations:** This section will concisely and clearly present recommendations that are drawn from specific findings and conclusions provided in the report. The recommendations must be stated in an action-oriented fashion and be practical, specific, and with defined target audience(s).

Final Evaluation Report - Following receipt of all USAID comments on the draft evaluation report, the evaluation team will prepare a final version that incorporates and responds to this feedback. The final evaluation report should contain the same sections as noted above for the draft evaluation report and should also include:

1. **References:** This section should include a list of all documents reviewed, including background documentation.
2. **Annexes:** These may include, but are not limited to, the evaluation statement of work, instruments used in conducting the evaluation, any statements of differences received, as well as other relevant sources of information.

Evaluation Team Composition - USAID anticipates that the evaluation team will include two core members: a team leader and an evaluation specialist.

Team Leader - The team leader will be primarily responsible for the quality of the evaluation design and its execution. This is not anticipated to be a full-time position.

Key qualifications expected for the Team Leader include:

- Graduate degree, preferably a Ph.D., in a relevant economic development or public health field.
- Demonstrated ability to gather and integrate both quantitative and qualitative findings to answer evaluation questions.
- Demonstrated experience managing multinational teams and producing high-quality and timely reports for USAID or similar audiences.
- Sound knowledge of OVC, HIV/AIDS, and evaluation methods.

Evaluation Specialist - The evaluation specialist will work in close coordination with the Team Leader and will be actively engaged in efforts to oversee and ensure the quality of data collection activities, ensure that data codebooks are clearly written, and that all data collected can be properly transferred to USAID. The individual should have a graduate degree in a relevant social science field and may be a host country national. The individual will have sufficient previous experience with evaluations and other types of relevant studies. Gender analysis experience is also desirable. This is not anticipated to be a full-time position.

Home Office Support - Home Office support will be provided by the firm(s) that will be implementing this evaluation, as required, including quality assurance, research and analysis support, financial management, administrative oversight, and logistics.

- **USAID Participation** - To support the capacity development of USAID staff and enhance the quality of the evaluation, USAID/AFR anticipates a mixed evaluation team that would include both external members (the evaluation team members listed above) and one to two USAID staff. USAID staff may participate in all aspects of the evaluation except certain data collection, analysis, and reporting tasks that may present managerial obstacles, unnecessarily insert bias into the process, or pose potential conflicts of interest. The evaluation team leader may decide to exclude USAID staff from specific evaluation activities including data collection tasks if the objectivity and independence of the evaluation could be compromised. Participating USAID staff will be under the supervision of the evaluation team lead throughout the evaluation period. The USAID Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and Activity Manager for the evaluation (Dr. Bhavani Pathak [USAID/E3/PLC] and Alphonse Bigirimana [USAID/AFR], respectively) will ensure that communications of participating USAID staff related to the evaluation are channeled through the evaluation team lead. The COR and Activity Manager will also ensure smooth collaboration between USAID and evaluation team members. In its evaluation design proposal, the evaluation team should propose specific roles and responsibilities and reporting and communication channels for USAID. All travel costs for participating USAID staff will be entirely covered by USAID.
- **Scheduling and Logistics** - The following chart provides an illustrative overview of the preliminary estimated timeframe for the evaluation and key deliverables. The evaluation design proposal will include a detailed schedule and proposed delivery dates.

Illustrative Evaluation Timeline

Task	2018 Calendar Year			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Draft and Final Evaluation Design Proposal				
IRB Submission				
Data Collection				
Data Analysis and Reporting				
Oral Presentation of Findings and Conclusions (if necessary)				
Draft Evaluation Report				
Oral Presentation(s)				
Final Evaluation Report				

The evaluation team will be responsible for all logistics, including coordinating all travel throughout the region, lodging, printing, office space, equipment, car rentals, etc. USAID, SCORE, or other local partners will provide support to set up initial meetings with key stakeholders with any local government stakeholders or private sector partners.

Reporting Requirements - The evaluation report will follow USAID guidelines set forth in the agency's Evaluation Report Template²³ and How-To Note on Preparing Evaluation Reports²⁴ as well as the [Mandatory Reference for Automated Directives System 201 on USAID Evaluation Report Requirements](#).

The Final Evaluation Report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding references and annexes. The evaluation team will deliver a copy of the final evaluation report to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) within 30 days of COR approval to post it on the DEC.

All members of the evaluation team should be provided with USAID's mandatory statement of the evaluation standards they are expected to meet, shown in the text box below.

²³ See <http://usaidearninglab.org/library/evaluation-report-template>.

²⁴ See <http://usaidearninglab.org/library/how-note-preparing-evaluation-reports>.

MANDATORY REFERENCE FOR ADS CHAPTER 201 CRITERIA TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Pursuant to 201.3.5.17, draft evaluation reports must undergo a peer review organized by the office managing the evaluation. The following criteria should serve as the basis against which the report is reviewed. To help ensure a high-quality evaluation report, these criteria must be included in the evaluation Statement of Work to communicate to evaluators USAID's quality criteria.

1. Evaluation reports should represent a thoughtful, well-researched, and well-organized effort to objectively evaluate the strategy, project, or activity.
2. Evaluation reports should be readily understood and should identify key points clearly, distinctly, and succinctly.
3. The Executive Summary of an evaluation report should present a concise and accurate statement of the most critical elements of the report.
4. Evaluation reports should adequately address all evaluation questions included in the SOW, or the evaluation questions subsequently revised and documented in consultation and agreement with USAID.
5. Evaluation methodology should be explained in detail and sources of information properly identified.
6. Limitations to the evaluation should be adequately disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
7. Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or simply the compilation of people's opinions.
8. Findings and conclusions should be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
9. If evaluation findings assess person-level outcomes or impact, they should also be separately assessed for both males and females.
10. If recommendations are included, they should be supported by a specific set of findings and should be action-oriented, practical, and specific.

Data Management - The storage and transfer of data collected for this evaluation will adhere to the requirements laid out in ADS 579.²⁵ The evaluation team should also follow applicable IRB guidance on data security and confidentiality. Final datasets are expected to be submitted to USAID in a format consistent with ADS 579.

Estimated Budget - The evaluation team responding to this SOW will deliver a detailed estimated budget in its evaluation design proposal for USAID's review and approval prior to commencing implementation of the evaluation.

²⁵ See <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf>

Annex II: Getting to Answers Matrix

The following table provides a summary of the EQs, data, and data analysis approach used for this evaluation. For each EQ, the evaluation team employed qualitative pattern/content analysis, wherein thematic trends are highlighted and compared, and planned/actual comparisons utilize SCORE data and documentation and make comparisons between past household status and current reported status. The evaluation team analyzed quantitative data using descriptive analysis to highlight frequencies and trends, as well as basic inferential analysis, such as correlations and chi-squared tests.

Evaluation Questions	Evidence Needed	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Sampling Approach	Data Analysis Methods	
1. What is the perceived status of well-being for graduated SCORE beneficiaries? a. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive their well-being now? b. How do SCORE beneficiaries perceive the sustainability of their well-being in the future?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SCORE IP staff - SCORE beneficiaries - SCORE Tracer data - SCORE docs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FGDs - KIIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respondent-specific interview template - FGD protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purposive sampling for qualitative FGDs and KIIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pattern/content analysis - Descriptive analysis - Inferential analysis 	
	Y						Description
	Y						Comparison
	Y						Explanation
2. Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their capacity to sustain their well-being? a. Do beneficiaries perceive any improvements, gaps, or challenges in addressing their key needs related to SCORE activities (e.g., socioeconomic, nutrition/food security, legal services and critical services)? b. How have changes in households' ability to address their basic needs affected household resiliency in the presence of financial, health, or other shocks and stressors?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SCORE IP staff - SCORE beneficiaries - SCORE Tracer data - SCORE documentation - Key stakeholders - Community workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FGDs - KIIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respondent-specific interview template - FGD protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purposeful sampling for qualitative FGDs and KIIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned/actual comparisons - Pattern/content analysis - Descriptive analysis - Inferential analysis 	
	Y						Description
	Y						Comparison
	Y						Explanation
3. How have SCORE's graduation and resilience model, including the design and implementation features, contributed to sustained household outcomes? a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the key components of the SCORE graduation and resilience model? b. What are the primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SCORE beneficiaries - SCORE IP staff - SCORE Tracer data - SCORE documentation - USAID staff - Key stakeholders - Community workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs - FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respondent-specific discussion guide - FGD guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purposeful sampling for qualitative KIIs and FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned/actual comparisons - Pattern/content analysis - Descriptive analysis - Inferential analysis 	
	Y						Description
	Y						Comparison
	Y						Explanation

Annex III: Evaluation Team Composition

The evaluation was led by Jennifer Peters, a public health professional with over 22 years of experience in maternal and child healthcare, family planning, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and safe water and malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Ms. Peters supervised data collection and analysis activities and was the lead author of this evaluation report.

Two local experts worked closely with the team leader to carry out data collection and analysis tasks. Eve Namisango, a local evaluation specialist, conducted interviews and facilitated FGDs as well as assisted with data analysis and logistics. The local OVC specialist, Ismael Ddumba-Nyanzi, also carried out data collection and supported analysis.

Two local logisticians, Jeniffer Kataike and Hellen Lakaa, assisted the evaluation team members in coordinating and conducting interviews and FGDs, arranging travel, and providing other logistical tasks during field data collection.

Gwynne Zodrow, an MSI home office evaluation coordinator, worked closely with the team leader to ensure the successful execution of the evaluation design, facilitate the in-country team planning meeting, support data coding and analysis, and provide quality assurance for the evaluation report.

The E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project home office team assisted the evaluation team with technical guidance and reviews, data analysis, copy editing, and administrative support.

The evaluation team members signed conflict of interest disclosure statements, which are retained by the MSI home office and available upon request.

Team Leader – Jennifer Peters

Ms. Jennifer Peters is a public health professional with over 22 years of experience in maternal and child healthcare (MCH), family planning, HIV/AIDS, TB, and safe water and malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Her areas of expertise include monitoring and evaluation, programmatic and performance framework design, program and grant management, and social and behavior change communication. As an independent consultant, she has lead and participated in over 10 evaluations of USAID projects. She has participated in numerous assessments and evaluations for other donors and implementing agencies. She is experienced in collecting qualitative data, including key informant interview and focus group discussions.

Local Evaluation Specialist – Eve Namisango

Eve Namisango, the local evaluation specialist, will be responsible for assisting with translation, logistics, facilitating FGDs and conducting interviews, as well as analysis of qualitative data in close collaboration with the team leader. She will also provide local context and subject matter expertise throughout the evaluation. Ms. Namisango has been designing, managing and implementing monitoring and evaluation systems and conducting project evaluations since 1996. She has research experience in several sectors including palliative care, HIV/AIDS prevention, OVC, maternal health, minority populations (e.g. sex workers and LGBTI), and food security for USAID and other donors. Ms. Namisango has led qualitative and quantitative data management and analysis, designed questionnaire design, trained enumerators and research assistants, facilitated focus group discussions, conducted in-depth interviews, applied structure observation templates, and led and contributed to final reporting. Ms. Namisango has an MSc from King's College London in Palliative Care Policy and Rehabilitation.

Local Evaluation Specialist – Ismael Ddumba Nyanzi

Mr. Ddumba Nyanzi is an experienced public health researcher and evaluator with over eight years of experience in mixed methods research, program monitoring, and evaluation. He has experience with qualitative analysis as well as quantitative analysis of survey and population data. Additionally, he has technical expertise in HIV/AIDS, child care and protection, childcare system reform and social welfare system strengthening, and maternal and child health. Mr. Ddumba Nyanzi has conducted research with vulnerable populations including OVC, women, victims of domestic and gender-based violence, sex workers, and people living with HIV/AIDS. He has extensive experience with qualitative research including conducting key informant interviews and focus groups discussions, particularly involving vulnerable populations. He has worked on numerous evaluations and assessments focused on orphans and vulnerable children in Uganda including a study on the Uganda OVC National Policy and the final evaluation of the Uganda SCORE Project. He has been published in numerous journals, and holds two Master's degrees in Social Work & Social Policy and Public Health from the University of Southern Denmark and Makerere University.

Home Office Evaluation Coordinator – Gwynne Zodrow

Gwynne Zodrow is a technical manager on the Strategy, Evaluation, and Analysis team at MSI. Ms. Zodrow provides M&E support to multiple government and private sector clients in a variety of areas, including health, agriculture, and food security. Her expertise includes strategic planning, results-based management (RBM), facilitation, monitoring systems and evaluations. Ms. Zodrow has been involved in various evaluations and research projects, and the development and delivery of M&E and results-based management, training materials and curriculum for multiple different organizations.

Annex IV: Supplementary Tables

TABLE 8: SCORE IPS BY DISTRICT FOR THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN REGIONS

Central Region SCORE Districts	Number of IPs	Northern Region SCORE Districts	Number of IPs
Kampala	11	Gulu	5
Wakiso	7	Kitgum	3
Luweero	5	Lira	3
Mukono	3	Otuke	3
Buikwe	2	Alebtong	2
Buvuma	2	Lamwo	2
		Nwoya	2
		Amuru	1

TABLE 9: PERCENT OF INDEX CHILD ABSENT FROM SCHOOL AT LEAST ONE MONTH BY DISTRICT AND RESILIENCY STATUS

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total Mean
Amuru	18.6%	2.9%	10.7%
Buikwe	20.0%	8.6%	14.3%
Gulu	13.9%	7.5%	10.7%
Kitgum	15.0%	7.5%	11.3%
Luweero	0.0%	3.2%	1.6%
Mukono	11.4%	6.5%	8.9%
Nwoya	26.3%	5.8%	16.1%
Total	15.0%	6.0%	10.5%

TABLE 10: PERCENT OF INDEX CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total Mean
Amuru	58%	96%	77%
Buikwe	50%	95%	72%
Gulu	78%	93%	85%
Kitgum	77%	94%	85%
Luweero	81%	84%	83%
Mukono	93%	94%	94%
Nwoya	85%	92%	89%
Total	74%	93%	84%

TABLE 11: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY DISTRICT AND RESILIENCY STATUS

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Difference
Amuru	\$ 106,689.66	\$ 71,500.00	\$ (178,189.66)
Buikwe	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 98,965.52	\$ 33,965.52
Gulu	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 126,288.46	\$ 37,288.46
Kitgum	\$ 147,435.63	\$ 123,812.76	\$ (23,622.87)
Luwero	\$ 130,571.43	\$ 137,109.76	\$ 6,538.33
Mukono	\$ 143,960.00	\$ 244,939.50	\$ 100,979.50
Nwoya	\$ 99,550.00	\$ 130,745.10	\$ 31,195.10
Total	\$ 111,743.82	\$ 133,337.30	\$ 21,593.48

TABLE 12: AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY DISTRICT AND RESILIENCY STATUS

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total Mean
Amuru	8.0	8.5	8.2
Buikwe	8.7	7.6	8.1
Gulu	9.0	8.7	8.9
Kitgum	8.6	8.2	8.4
Luwero	9.4	8.5	8.9
Mukono	8.0	7.2	7.6
Nwoya	8.7	8.5	8.6
Total	8.6	8.1	8.4

TABLE 13: AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEALS PER INDEX CHILD BY DISTRICT AND RESILIENCY STATUS

District	Not Resilient	Resilient	Total Mean
Amuru	2.04	2.27	2.16
Buikwe	3.00	2.93	2.97
Gulu	2.12	2.37	2.24
Kitgum	2.03	2.26	2.14
Luwero	2.52	2.80	2.66
Mukono	2.62	2.79	2.71
Nwoya	2.06	2.17	2.12
Total	2.34	2.51	2.42

TABLE 14: TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME SOURCES ACROSS VATS AND TRACER STUDY BY RESILIENCY STATUS

	Casual Labor	Formal Employment	Informal Employment	Remittances	Unemployed	Other
Not Resilient HHs						
2014 (VAT 3)	5%	4%	89%	1%	2%	
2015 (VAT 4)	5%	3%	63%	2%	1%	26%
2016 (VAT 5)		2%				98%
Tracer 2015	5%	2%	49%	2%	1%	42%
Tracer 2016	14%	1%	59%	1%	3%	23%
Resilient HHs						
2014 (VAT 3)	9%	3%	85%	1%	1%	
2015 (VAT 4)	6%	3%	72%	1%	1%	17%
2016 (VAT 5)	0%	0%	2%			97%
Tracer 2015	4%	3%	63%	1%	1%	29%
Tracer 2016	5%	2%	39%	0%	54%	

TABLE 15: MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME ACROSS VATS AND TRACER STUDY BY RESILIENCY STATUS

	Children	Father	Grandparents	Mother	Relative(s)	Other
Not Resilient HHs						
2014 (VAT 3)	1%	25%	19%	43%	11%	1%
2015 (VAT 4)	3%	17%	19%	32%	4%	26%
2016 (VAT 5)		1%	1%	1%		
Tracer 2015	2%	15%	13%	24%	4%	42%
Tracer 2016	3%	21%	15%	33%	3%	25%
Resilient HHs						
2014 (VAT 3)	2%	35%	13%	40%	9%	1%
2015 (VAT 4)	2%	35%	10%	30%	6%	17%
2016 (VAT 5)		2%	0%	0%	0%	97%
Tracer 2015	2%	30%	9%	25%	6%	29%
Tracer 2016		19%	4%	20%	3%	54%

TABLE 16: SCORE ASSESSORS REPORTED OPINIONS ON HOUSEHOLD STATUS BY RESILIENCY STATUS

	Good Situation	Critical Situation	Fair Situation	Bad Situation	Other
Not Resilient HHs					
2014 (VAT 3)	15.1%	0	80.0%	4.9%	
2015 (VAT 4)	16.8%	1.6%	44.3%	11.4%	25.9%
2016 (VAT 5)	0.5%		1.6%		
Tracer 2015	11.4%	2.2%	33.0%	11.4%	42.2%
Tracer 2016	2.7%	4.3%	34.1%	35.7%	23.2%
Resilient HHs					
2014 (VAT 3)	24.1%		70.3%	5.6%	
2015 (VAT 4)	38.8%	0.2%	39.9%	4.1%	16.9%
2016 (VAT 5)	1.1%		1.1%	0.4%	
Tracer 2015	34.9%	0.4%	30.8%	5.2%	28.6%
Tracer 2016	14.5%		28.4%	3.3%	53.8%

TABLE 17: BENEFICIARIES' RESPONSES ON THEIR PERCEIVED WELL-BEING

Beneficiaries' Responses to Interview Questions – Self-Perception			
How is your current wellbeing?		Are you able to sustain your wellbeing?	
Good	80.0%	No	41.9%
Bad	0.0%	Yes	27.9%
Average	18.6%	Yes, with difficulty	30.2%
Do you face challenges sustaining your wellbeing?		Have you experienced a shock in the last 1 year prior to this interview?	
Yes	98.0%	Yes	88.4%
No	2%	No	4.6%
Do you think you can handle shocks?		Do you think your well-being has changed since SCORE ended until now?	
Yes, I can handle	30.2%	Declined	37.2%
No	39.5%	Improved further	25.6%
Yes, with difficulty	25.5%	Same	16.3%
		Struggling	20.9%

Annex V: KII and FGD Instruments

Interview Introduction

Hello and thank you for agreeing to talk with us. My name is [name of interviewer] and I represent the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project. Together with me is [name] who will be taking notes during the meeting. We work with a group of research organizations in the United States, including Management Systems International. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has hired us to conduct an independent evaluation of its SCORE activity.

We would like to have a discussion with you to learn about your experiences with SCORE and your current household status. Our role here is to ask questions and listen to your opinions and experiences. We will be recording this discussion so that we can make sure we accurately note what you are telling us, and not forget anything that was said. However, we will not share your identity with anyone and you will not be directly quoted. If you would prefer we take notes and not use the recorder, please let us know. Please note that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers in this discussion. We would like you to share your experience and give feedback, either positive or negative. Your response will not affect decisions about whether you receive any kind of donor-related benefits now or in the future.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to not answer any question or stop participating at any time. You are not obligated to answer any question that you are not comfortable with. This discussion will last approximately 1 hour. The information you give will be stored safely for the duration of the project and shared anonymously with USAID. *[Hand them the consent form and give them time to read it. Once they are done ask if they have any questions].*

(Read if more than one respondent in KII): We ask that everyone here respect each person’s privacy and confidentiality, and not repeat what is said during this discussion. But, please remember that other participants in the group may accidentally share what was said.

[START THE RECORDER TO GET VERBAL CONSENT]

Do you agree to participate in today’s discussion?

[IF THE RESPONDENT SAYS “YES”, MAKE SURE THEY SIGN THE CONSENT FORM AND CONTINUE DISCUSSION] (One copy should be given to the respondent and one copy kept by the interviewer)

May we begin?

KII Interview Consent Form

Project title: Post evaluation of the sustainable, comprehensive responses for vulnerable children and their families' activity in Uganda.

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Peters

Introduction

I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today.

1. You are being requested to take part in an in-depth interview in the above study.
2. This consent form explains what the study is about, what will be done in the study, risks and benefits, and other information that will help you to decide whether to participate in the study.
3. Please read this document or have a study team member read it to you. And ask any questions you have.
4. After all your questions have been answered and you have clearly understanding about the study, you may decide whether you want to participate in this study or not.
5. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to either sign or place a thumbprint on this consent form to show that you understand the information provided and that you voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. If you decide to use a thumbprint, this will be done in the presence of an impartial witness.
6. A copy of this form will be given to you if you wish.
7. You are requested not to sign this consent form if it does not have the stamp from the Mildmay Uganda Research and Ethics Committee or if the date in the stamp is expired.

Background: This is a research study that is being commissioned by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to explore the results from their Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) project which was implemented in Uganda from April 2011 to April 2018. SCORE worked across 35 districts to decrease the vulnerability of children and their households through a multisector and family-centered approach, offering different services to beneficiary households, including: socio-economic strengthening, food security and nutrition, child protection and legal services and strengthening families to access critical services.

This study will be collecting interview data from SCORE project staff and key informants (15 total), SCORE IP community workers (4 focus groups), and graduated beneficiaries (56 total) from the project to examine and learn how SCORE has affected and sustained outcomes over time and what aspects of the project were the most successful. Through this study USAID hopes to better understand the perceived changes in vulnerable children and their families' wellbeing since SCORE graduation.

You are being invited to participate in this study by being interviewed by the research team. Participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to not answer any question or stop participating at any time.

You are not obligated to answer any question that you are not comfortable with. This discussion will last approximately 1 hour. Below is additional information about the study and your participation, please read through and let one of the team members know if you have any questions.

Recruitment and Participation: You have been contacted to participate in the study because you received one or more interventions under the USAID SCORE project in Uganda and graduated from the activity in 2015. Or you worked on or with the SCORE project.

Voluntary withdrawal from the study: You have a right to withdraw from the study at any point in time. You can decide to give your consent to the researchers to use the information gathered to the point

of withdrawal in the analysis. However, you also have the right to request that results from your interview should be destroyed and not used at all.

Benefits of participating in the assessment: USAID and implementing partners will use the evaluation to assess the performance and effectiveness of their interventions to support vulnerable populations in Uganda. While there may not be direct benefits to you, your participation will help to improve interventions within your region or community. Participants will receive a token of appreciation for their participation in the study of 20,000 Ugandan shillings.

Risks of participating in the assessment: There is minimal risk to you if you decide to participate in the study. The interview may take longer than expected, however the study team will ensure that any potential discomfort and unease are well managed and minimized.

How confidentiality will be maintained: Participation in this study shall be kept highly confidential. All study materials (questionnaires, consent forms, recorded tapes, transcribed scripts, etc.) will be stored in locked file cabinets by the principal investigators. Study materials will not be labeled, and interviews will be given a unique study identification number for each study participant.

Research sponsor: USAID is the lead United States Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential around the world. Management Systems International (MSI), is a Washington, DC based firm who is leading the study on behalf of USAID.

The results of the study will be used for decision making. Results of the evaluation shall be shared at USAID and will be used to inform and improve the design of future vulnerable children projects and activities that may consider using a graduation model for implementation. USAID/Uganda, other missions, and USAID/Washington will use the findings to understand the factors that explain sustainability of similar vulnerable children interventions.

Contact information for participant questions: This study has been approved by Mildmay Uganda Research Ethics Committee (MUREC), however if you have any questions about this evaluation, if there are things that you do not understand about the evaluation, please contact the study coordinator: Eve Namisango: +256772460536 E-mail: enamisango@gmail.com. In case you have questions related to your rights as a research participant, please address them to members of the Research Ethics Committee: Ms Harriet Chemusto, Chairperson, Mildmay Uganda Ethics Review Committee on 0392174236, email murec@mildmayuganda.org or Uganda National Council for Science and Technology - info@uncst.go.ug

Statement of understanding:

I confirm having read the information sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and any question I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report subsequently produced by the researcher.

I understand the conditions and procedures and know what the possible risks and benefits are for **me** participating in this evaluation written above. **My participation is** voluntary, and I may decide to **discontinue my** participation or to withdraw from the assessment at any time. The evaluation may be discontinued without my consent by the assessment team conducting the study or by the donor of the study.

I consent voluntarily to participate as a subject in this evaluation.

I understand that I do not give up any of our legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this informed consent form to keep my information throughout the assessment.

Participant Name	Date	Signature/thumbprint
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Name of study staff	Date	Signature
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Witness:

I attest that the information in this document was read to the participant and he/she fully understands the purpose of this study, their role, the risks and benefits, as well as their rights regarding the study participation/consent. They are aware participation is voluntary and confidential and they voluntarily accepted to take part in this study.

To those that used thumb print to for consent (Only):

I attest that the participant's name is _____ has put his/her thumbprint on this consent form on this day of _____.

Name of witness (Print)	Date	Signature
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Interview Guide for Beneficiaries

Name of Interviewer:	
Date of Interview:	
Name of CBO:	
Location of Interview:	
Start Time of Interview:	
End Time of Interview:	
Participant Gender:	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Region:	
District:	
Parish:	
Head of Household:	Y/N
Language of Interview:	
SCORE Graduate:	Y/N
Resilient:	Y/N

Household History

We'd like to ask you a few questions about you and the people living in your household.

Question	Insert number here
1. How old are you?	
2. How many people currently live in this household on a regular basis?	
3. How many of those are children?	
4. What are the approximate ages of those children?	
5. Has anyone in this household had a child in the past year?	Y/N
6. If 5 = Y, how many newborn children have joined this household in the past year?	
7. How many children (non-newborns) have joined this household in the past year?	
8. Are there any orphans living in this household?	Y/N
9. Have any caregivers in this household passed away in the last year?	Y/N
10. Have any children in this household passed away this year?	Y/N
11. Are there any elderly household members that do not earn an income?	Y/N

Before we get started talking about SCORE, we would like to ask you about the current services and support you are receiving.

- Are you or your household currently receiving any support or services from any project or organization in your community?
 - If yes, what types of activities or services are you receiving in the following areas:
 - Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services
 - Nutrition and food security
 - Protection and legal services
 - Other family services
 - Other areas outside SCORE (please describe)
 - Did SCORE refer you to any of these services?
 - Were any of these funded by USAID?

Involvement in the SCORE program

We'd like to understand more about your participation in the SCORE program.

- When did you first start participating in the SCORE program (indicate year)?
- When did your participation in the SCORE program end (indicate year)?
- What SCORE activities did you and your household members participate in or receive? (*Probe: VSLA, nutrition, legal services, education, etc.*)
 - What new skills/knowledge did you gain/learn? Examples?
 - Which of these services were the most helpful/relevant? Why? Examples.
 - Which were the least helpful/relevant? Why? Examples.
 - Do you still receive/participate in any of the SCORE initiated services or activities?
 - What services would you have wanted/needed that SCORE was not able to provide? Why?
 - Were there additional skills that would have helped you and your household? Why?
 - Since you graduated, have you gained new skills or knowledge in the areas of:
 - Socioeconomic (e.g. VSLA and financial services),
 - Nutrition and food security,
 - Protection and legal services,
 - Other critical family services?
 - How did you gain these skills? Please explain.
 - Have these skills been useful in improving your households well-being? Please explain.
- Overall, how did you find the process that SCORE used for enrollment, needs assessment, mapping your needs and developing a household plan? (*Probe for each part of the process*)
 - Why?
 - Were these different processes useful to your household? Why?
 - What would you change about any of these processes?
- What did graduation mean to you? (*Skip if HH did not graduate*)
 - How did you feel when you graduated from SCORE?
 - Did you feel better prepared to stand on your own?
 - Do you feel the timing of your graduation was right? Why?
- Why do you think you did not graduate? (*Skip if HH graduated*)
 - Why do you think others did not graduate?
 - After your involvement in SCORE, did you feel better prepared to stand on your own?
- Have you or any member of your household been referred by SCORE for other services? What/why – example?
 - If yes, were you able to access these services? If not, why?
 - Did the referral services meet your needs? Please explain.

Well-being

- Did SCORE change your households' ability to improve your well-being?
 - If yes, how? Please provide examples (*probe: Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other family services*)
 - If no, why not? Please provide examples (*probe: Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other family services*)
 - Who was most affected by each change? (*probe: was everyone affected in the same way? Ask about the adults, the children, girls, boys etc.*)
- How would you describe your household's current well-being?

- *(Probe: Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other critical services)*
- Since your graduation/involvement with SCORE, what has changed in your household well-being?
 - Probe for examples of positive change and negative changes in core areas (*Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other critical services*) Why? Examples?
 - How did these changes occur?
 - Who was most affected by each change? (*probe: was everyone affected in the same way? Ask about the adults, the children, girls, boys etc.*)
- What are the challenges you face in maintaining your well-being?
 - *Probe: Socioeconomic – VSLA and financial services, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other critical services*
 - Did SCORE help you and your family with any of these challenges?
 - How? Or why not?
- Do you feel that your household is more or less financially secure? Why?
 - If you were unable to cover known/expected expenses in the last 12 months, what did you do? What prevented you from meeting these needs?
 - What could the SCORE project have done differently to help you make your household more financially secure? Please explain.

Household resiliency in the presence of shocks and stressors

- Since your graduation/involvement from SCORE, has your household experienced unexpected shocks or hardship? (*Probe: emergency house repairs, education, drought, increased prices, health issues, food, accidents & death, etc.*)
 - If yes, please explain.
- What was your household's response to this shock(s) or hardship? please explain.
 - Do you feel your household has completely recovered? Why?
 - Do you feel prepared to respond to these shocks/challenges in the future? Why?
- Do you feel that SCORE's support contributed to your ability to respond to this shock or hardship?
 - How so? Or why not? Examples.
 - Were there areas of SCORE's support that you feel better prepared you?
 - Are there areas that you feel did not help prepare you or that were less relevant?
 - Are there other areas outside of the SCORE intervention areas that would have better prepared you to respond to these shocks or hardships?

Future well-being

- Do you think you can maintain your current household well-being in the future?
 - If so, how?
 - If not, why not?

Those are all the questions I have for today. Are there any other comments you would like to share about your household's well-being or the SCORE program?

Interview Guide for SCORE Stakeholders (USAID, Consortium Partners, Implementing Partners)

Name of Interviewer:	
Date of Interview:	
Location of Interview:	
Start Time of Interview:	
End Time of Interview:	
Organization name:	
Respondent's organizational title:	
Respondent's relationship with OVC programs.	
Respondent's role/relationship with SCORE:	
Length of time working with SCORE	
Language of interview:	

General questions about the model

1. What do you think of the **graduation/resilience** model?
 - a. Do you think it achieved your goals/intentions/expectations?
 - b. What do you see as the strengths, weaknesses/gaps of the model?
2. What are the primary **programmatic** factors that **facilitate** sustainability of SCORE outcomes?
3. What were the primary **programmatic** factors that **inhibit** sustainability of SCORE outcomes?
4. What were **external** factors that **facilitate** the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes? (*Probe: systems strengthening, linkages/referrals*)
5. What were **external** factors that **facilitate** the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes?

Questions about the components of the model – (MAY NOT BE RELEVANT TO DISTRICT OFFICIALS)

6. **Identification:** Was the **approach** used for identification of vulnerable households **effective**?
 - a. What would you have done differently?
 - b. Were the most vulnerable households identified?
7. **Assessment:** Is the VAT tool an **effective** tool to identify and assess the needs of beneficiaries throughout the graduation process?
 - a. (Probes- did it assess the right things? Did it use the right criteria to identify the vulnerable? Was it applied consistently among different users?)
 - b. What would you change about the VAT to better assess household vulnerability?
 - c. How would you compare the VAT tool in relation to other vulnerability assessment tools (Child Status Index - (CSI) MEASURE tool to identify the needs of children, and the Household Vulnerability Assessment Tool (HVAT) the MOH tool used to assess household vulnerability?)
8. **Needs mapping:** Please describe the **needs assessment** process.
 - a. (*probe: who is involved, how it works, etc.*)
 - b. Did you think that the needs assessment process was designed well to fairly measure beneficiary needs? (*Probe: What would do differently?*)
9. **Household plan:** Please describe the household planning process.

- a. How **relevant** were the household development plans to household needs (in SCORE intervention areas). Please explain.
 - b. Did beneficiaries **have a say** in selecting intervention areas that met their perceived needs?
10. Implementation: Which specific SCORE activities/services have **best supported** household **outcomes**?
- a. Why?
 - b. Which contributed least? Why?
 - c. What were the **barriers** and **challenges** during activity implementation?
11. Follow-up and graduation: Do you think the **time-frame** and **process** for follow-up VAT assessment was appropriate? (*Probe: 6 month, 12 month, and 12 month after graduation*)
- a. Do you think the **threshold (conditions)** for **graduation** were appropriately set?
 - b. What would you change any of the graduation **threshold (conditions)**?
12. Resilience/sustainability: Since graduation, to what extent have SCORE beneficiary households maintained their **capacity** (e.g. skills, knowledge, empowerment and self-efficacy) to **sustain** their **well-being**?
- a. What helped them **maintain** these capacities? Please provide examples.
 - b. What **challenges** did they face in maintaining these capacities? Please provide examples.
 - c. To what extent do households have the capacities to sustain their **well-being today**?
 - d. and in the **future**?
13. Do you think graduated households are equipped to respond to unexpected hardships and ongoing challenges (**shocks and stressors**)?
- a. Why? Examples.
 - b. What **coping strategies** do households have to prevent or manage these events?
 - c. How do **government and community systems** support beneficiary households' ability to respond to shocks and stresses? Please explain.

Other - gender

14. What do you think about SCORE's **inclusiveness** in targeting beneficiaries (male, female, youth, elderly, disabled persons) beneficiaries?
- a. What worked well?
 - b. What could have been improved?

Those are all the questions I have for today. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about the SCORE program or graduation and resilience model before we complete the interview?

Focus Group Discussion Consent Form

Project title: Post evaluation of the sustainable, comprehensive responses for vulnerable children and their families' activity in Uganda.

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Peters

Introduction

I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today.

1. You are being requested to take part in an in-depth interview in the above study.
2. This consent form explains what the study is about, what will be done in the study, risks and benefits, and other information that will help you to decide whether to participate in the study.
3. Please read this document or have a study team member read it to you. And ask any questions you have.
4. After all your questions have been answered and you have clearly understanding about the study, you may decide whether you want to participate in this study or not.
5. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to either sign or place a thumbprint on this consent form to show that you understand the information provided and that you voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. If you decide to use a thumbprint, this will be done in the presence of an impartial witness.
6. A copy of this form will be given to you if you wish.
7. You are requested not to sign this consent form if it does not have the stamp from the Mildmay Uganda Research and Ethics Committee or if the date in the stamp is expired.

Background: This is a research study that is being commissioned by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to explore the results from their Sustainable, Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families (SCORE) project which was implemented in Uganda from April 2011 to April 2018. SCORE worked across 35 districts to decrease the vulnerability of children and their households through a multisector and family-centered approach, offering different services to beneficiary households, including: socio-economic strengthening, food security and nutrition, child protection and legal services and strengthening families to access critical services. This study will be collecting interview data from SCORE project staff and key informants (15 total), SCORE IP community workers (4 focus groups), and graduated beneficiaries (56 total) from the project to examine and learn how SCORE has affected and sustained outcomes over time and what aspects of the project were the most successful. Through this study USAID hopes to better understand the perceived changes in vulnerable children and their families' wellbeing since SCORE graduation.

You are being invited to participate in this study by being part of a focus group discussion led by the research team with 5 to 8 other participants. Participation is completely voluntary, and you can choose to not answer any question or stop participating at any time. You are not obligated to answer any question that you are not comfortable with. This discussion will last approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. Below is additional information about the study and your participation, please read through and let one of the team members know if you have any questions.

Recruitment and Participation: You have been contacted to participate in the study because you were a community worker that supported the SCORE project through the implementing partner during 2015.

Voluntary withdrawal from the study: You have a right to withdraw from the study at any point in time. You can decide to give your consent to the researchers to use the information gathered to the point of withdrawal in the analysis. However, you also have the right to request that results from your interview should be destroyed and not used at all.

Benefits of participating in the assessment: USAID and implementing partners will use the evaluation to assess the performance and effectiveness of their interventions to support vulnerable populations in Uganda. While there may not be direct benefits to you, your participation will help to improve interventions within your region or community. Participants will receive a token of appreciation for their participation in the study of 20,000 Ugandan shillings.

Risks of participating in the assessment: There is minimal risk to you if you decide to participate in the study. The interview may take longer than expected, however the study team will ensure that any potential discomfort and unease are well managed and minimized.

How confidentiality will be maintained: Participation in this study shall be kept highly confidential. All study materials (questionnaires, consent forms, recorded tapes, transcribed scripts, etc.) will be stored in locked file cabinets by the principal investigators. Study materials will not be labeled, and interviews will be given a unique study identification number for each study participant.

Research sponsor: USAID is the lead United States Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential around the world. Management Systems International (MSI), is a Washington, DC based firm who is leading the study on behalf of USAID.

The results of the study will be used for decision making. Results of the evaluation shall be shared at USAID and will be used to inform and improve the design of future vulnerable children projects and activities that may consider using a graduation model for implementation. USAID/Uganda, other missions, and USAID/Washington will use the findings to understand the factors that explain sustainability of similar vulnerable children interventions.

Contact information for participant questions: This study has been approved by Mildmay Uganda Research Ethics Committee (MUREC), however if you have any questions about this evaluation, if there are things that you do not understand about the evaluation, please contact the study coordinator: Eve Namisango: +256772460536 E-mail: enamisango@gmail.com. In case you have questions related to your rights as a research participant, please address them to members of the Research Ethics Committee: Ms Harriet Chemusto, Chairperson, Mildmay Uganda Ethics Review Committee on 0392174236, email murec@mildmayuganda.org or Uganda National Council for Science and Technology - info@uncst.go.ug

Statement of understanding:

I confirm having read the information sheet. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and any question I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report subsequently produced by the researcher.

I understand the conditions and procedures and know what the possible risks and benefits are for **me** participating in this evaluation written above. **My participation is** voluntary, and I may decide to **discontinue my** participation or to withdraw from the assessment at any time. The evaluation may be discontinued without my consent by the assessment team conducting the study or by the donor of the study.

I consent voluntarily to participate as a subject in this evaluation.

I understand that I do not give up any of our legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this informed consent form to keep my information throughout the assessment.

Participant Name	Date	Signature/thumbprint
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Name of study staff	Date	Signature
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Witness:

I attest that the information in this document was read to the participant and he/she fully understands the purpose of this study, their role, the risks and benefits, as well as their rights regarding the study participation/consent. They are aware participation is voluntary and confidential and they voluntarily accepted to take part in this study.

To those that used thumb print to for consent (Only):

I attest that the participant's name is _____ has put his/her thumbprint on this consent form on this day of _____.

Name of witness (Print)	Date	Signature
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Focus Group Discussion Guide

Date of GD:	Start Time:	End Time:
GD Moderator:		
GD Note taker:		
Community Based Organization:		
District:		
Language:		
Total Number of participants: ____		
Type of contact group (nutrition peer educators, community legal volunteers, farming school facilitators and school educators):		

COMMUNITY WORKER BACKGROUND:

- Please describe your role and how long you worked with the SCORE program
 - *(probe: what is it that you did to support the OVC and households supported by the SCORE program? Make sure they talk about this specific role they serve, and not other community work they have done on other programs).*
- Please tell me about the training you received from SCORE in your service area?
 - What would you change? Why?

SCORE MODEL & APPROACH:

I want to ask you some questions regarding how the program did or did not change the capacity of the graduated households to address their basic needs.

- What do you see as the strengths of the SCORE approach in the area you worked?
 - *Why? Probe for examples: Socioeconomic, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other critical services*
- What do you see as the weaknesses of the SCORE approach in the area you worked?
 - *Why? Probe for examples: Socioeconomic, Nutrition and food security, Protection and legal services, Other critical services*
 - What challenges did you face during your work with SCORE? Please explain.
- Do you feel that the most vulnerable households in the community were included in the SCORE program?
 - *Why? Probe for: differences in sex, age, level of education, head of household, other household characteristics*

SCORE CHANGES IN WELL-BEING:

- In your experience during SCORE, what changes did you see in the capacity of the households to address their needs in the area you worked?
 - *[probe: Can you give specific examples of this?]*
 - Which SCORE services or interventions have led to sustained change in well-being of beneficiary households?
 - To what extent do you think this was the result of other conditions?
- What challenges did families face in improving their well-being in the area you worked?
 - Probe: provide examples
- How well are graduated households able to meet their needs today in the area you worked? Please explain.
 - Probe for: positive & negative examples

- Do you still interact with these graduated households?
- Differences between graduated and non-graduated household abilities to meet needs?
- How well do you feel the graduated households will be able to meet their needs in the future in the area you worked? Please explain.

SCORE RESILIENCE:

Now let's talk about common unexpected hardships that your community experienced and the readiness of the graduated households to respond to these shocks.

- What were the most common unexpected shocks and hardships that households in your community had to respond to in the last year?
 - *[probe: drought, price increases, health/disease outbreaks, etc.]*
- How do members in the community respond to these shocks and hardship?
 - Were these responses effective?
 - Were there community members that could not respond? Please explain.
- Have you noticed a difference between graduated and non-graduated households' ability to respond to unexpected hardships or ongoing challenges?
 - Probe: examples
- How can the SCORE process be improved (e.g. enrollment, assessment, needs mapping, household plan, services, etc.)?
 - Probe: examples

Those are all the questions I have for today. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your involvement with the SCORE program?

Annex VI: Stakeholder Interview List

#	Date Conducted	Title	Organization	Region	District
1	August 15	District Community Development Officer	District Staff	Central	Buikwe
2	August 15	Senior Agriculture Officer – Production Officer	District Staff	Central	Buikwe
3	August 14	Production and Marketing Officer	District Staff	Central	Mukono
4	August 17	Technical Advisor – Socioeconomic Strengthening	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
5	August 15	Town Clerk, Anaka Town Council	District Staff	Northern	Nyowa
6	August 15	District Education Officer	District Staff	Northern	Nyowa
7	August 13	Coordinator OVC Services	MGSLD	Kampala	Kampala
8	August 17	M&E Officer	MGSLD	Kampala	Kampala
9	August 13	Program Officer	AVSI	Northern	Gulu
10	August 14	Deputy Health Director	CARITAS Gulu	Northern	Gulu
11	August 16	OVC Advisor – USAID Program Manager SCORE	USAID Uganda	Kampala	Kampala
12	August 17	Technical Advisor – Food Security	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
13	August 14	Sr. Probation and Social Welfare Officer	District Staff	Central	Mukono
14	August 20	M&E Officer/Coordinator	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
15	August 18	District Community Development Officer	District Staff	Northern	Amuru
16	August 17	District Community Development Officer	District Staff	Northern	Gulu
17	August 16	District Education Officer	District Staff	Northern	Amuru
18	August 16	Probation Officer	District Staff	Northern	Gulu
19	August 17	Program Staff	AVSI	Northern	Gulu
20	August 20	Former Chief of Party, SCORE	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
21	August 20	Country Director	TPO	Kampala	Kampala
22	August 20	Chief of Party, SCORE	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
23	August 20	North Region Manager	AVSI	Kampala	Kampala
24	August 20	Socioeconomic Development Officer	CARE	Kampala	Kampala
25	August 15	Program Staff	St. Francis	Central	Buikwe
26	August 20	Program Staff	AVSI	Northern	Kitgum
27	August 20	Program Staff	Child Advocacy International	Central	Luwero
28	August 20	Program Staff	Child Advocacy International	Central	Luwero
29	August 20	Probation and Social Welfare Officer	District Staff	Central	Luwero
30	August 20	Former Community Development Officer	District Staff	Central	Luwero
31	August 21	M&E Officer	FHI 360	Kampala	Kampala
32	August 22	SCORE COR	USAID	Kampala	Kampala
33	August 22	District Community Development Officer	District Staff	Northern	Kitgum
34	August 22	District Education Officer	District Staff	Northern	Kitgum
35	August 23	District Production Officer	District Staff	Northern	Kitgum
36	August 22	Program Staff	Meeting Point	Northern	Kitgum
37	August 24	District Community Development Officer	District Staff	Northern	Kitgum
38	August 22	Program Staff	Meeting Point	Northern	Kitgum

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Documents and Data Included in the Desk Review

- SCORE VAT database and tracer study database
- SCORE data dictionary
- SCORE list of implementation sites
- SCORE IP points of contact
- SCORE activity reports
- SCORE annual workplans
- SCORE case management and monitoring and evaluation systems
- SCORE research study reports, including:
 - Determinants of household vulnerability and the factors that affect transition from critical, moderate to slight vulnerability: An investigation based on SCORE project's five-year vulnerability assessments
 - Comparing outcomes of the SCORE VAT, National Vulnerability Index and the Child Status Index on same households
- Final performance evaluation report of SCORE
- SCORE tracer studies, documentation, and instrumentation

Annex VIII: NVivo Codebook

Name	Description
Challenges and weakness of SCORE	Reported challenges SCORE faced with implementation or to achieve the project goals. This also includes weaknesses of the implementation and primary programmatic and external factors that facilitate or inhibit the sustainability of SCORE's outcomes (EQ 3)
External factors	Any external factors (challenges & weakness) outside the control of the project that could have an influence on the success of the project outcomes.
Demographics	
Beneficiary Demographics	Beginning section of beneficiary interviews - age, # children, etc.
FGD Demographics	Beginning section of FGD transcript - Number of people, type of group, etc.
Gender and inclusiveness	Comments about gender issues and considerations. As well as comments about inclusion of all types of populations (e.g. youth, elderly, disabled, etc.) (EQ 3)
Graduate vs. non-graduated	Responses on differences between graduated and non-graduated households. (EQ 2)
Graduation Model Approach - General	General comments on graduation model. All specific comments should be coded to the specific components of the model. (EQ 3)
Graduation	Comments related to the understanding of graduation as well as the threshold for graduation and how SCORE determines if a HH graduates (EQ 3)
HH Development Plan and needs mapping	Comments related to the household development plan or the needs mapping with the beneficiaries (EQs 3)
Household identification	Comments related to the household identification process (EQ 3)
VAT tool and assessment	Comments related to the VAT tool or the assessment process of the households (EQ 3)
Interventions - general	Overall and general comments and descriptions about SCORE interventions/services. Specific references to main interventions can be coded to specific code.
Food Security - Nutrition - FFS Interventions	Descriptions/explanations of different food security and nutrition interventions that SCORE supported. Including agricultural interventions - FFS, etc.
Health and health services	Descriptions/explanations of different Health and health services
Legal Services - Child Protection	Descriptions/explanations of different Legal Services - Child Protection
School-based interventions	Descriptions/explanations of different School-based interventions

Name	Description
Socio-economic - VSLA	Descriptions/explanations of socio-economic interventions including VSLA activities supported by SCORE.
Sustainability of project interventions	Responses about the sustainability of the specific interventions. Comments about if beneficiaries are still using services or implementing interventions, including participating in VSLA, growing garden, using skills they learned, etc.
Vocational Skills	Descriptions/explanations of vocational skill trainings supported by SCORE
Other systems or support	Any mention of other available services or interventions that support beneficiaries/community besides or after SCORE– this could be government or community services or interventions.
Perceptions of well-being and needs (KII)	Perceptions of KII and FGD respondents on beneficiaries current and future well-being and ability to meet daily needs (EQ 2)
Positive changes from SCORE (outcomes)	Reported positive changes or improvements from SCORE. Explanation of SCORE's contribution to outcomes (EQ 3)
Resiliency of beneficiaries	Comments related to beneficiary resiliency and their perceived ability to cope and respond to shocks and trauma. (EQ 2)
Roles in SCORE	General comments on how different groups supported or participated in SCORE. Code main stakeholders separately. (EQ 3)
Role of community volunteers	Description of the community volunteers' role in the SCORE project. Includes any support that community volunteers received from SCORE, like training (EQ 3)
Role of Government role in SCORE	Description of governments role in the implementation of SCORE. (EQ 3)
Role of IP	Description of the IPs role in SCORE. (EQ 3)
Shocks and stressors	Examples or explanations of shocks and stressors OR Challenges that effect the households' resiliency or ability to meet their needs (EQ 2).
responses to shocks and stressors	Examples of how beneficiaries respond to shocks and stressor they face.
types of shocks and stresses	Examples of types of shock and stressors beneficiates face.
Strengthens of SCORE Project	Any strength or benefit mentioned by respondent about SCORE's implementation, approach, model, etc. (EQ 3)
External factors	Any external factors (strengthens) outsiders the control of the project that could have an influence on the success of the project outcomes.
Suggestions and recommendations	Any suggestions or recommendations of things that should be changed/adjusted in SCORE to make it a better program (EQ 3)
BEN Changes to current interventions	Beneficiaries suggestions and recommendations for changes to SCORE interventions.
BEN New intervention ideas	Beneficiaries suggestions and recommendations for new/different SCORE interventions.

Name	Description
FGD general program suggestions	FGD general suggestions and recommendations for SCORE.
FGD suggest on interventions	FGD suggestions and recommendations for SCORE interventions.
IP Staff suggestions	IP staff suggestions and recommendations for SCORE.
KII gov program suggestions	KII government suggestions and recommendations for SCORE.
Well-being (Beneficiary responses only)	Responses about household well-being reported by the beneficiaries only (EQ 1)
Challenges to well-being	Challenges reported by beneficiaries that they face when trying to meet their basic needs and take care of the HH (EQ 2)
Future well-being - beneficiary	Self-reported information on FUTURE well-being about and from Beneficiaries' (Evaluation question I)
Well-being Current - beneficiary	Self-reported information on current well-being about and from Beneficiaries' (Evaluation question I)

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