

Bridge of Hope

Uganda

IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

March | 2024



Overview of this Children's Home

Background & Mission

Bridge of Hope was established in 2011 by the charity organization Bridge of Hope Children Ministry based in the UK. It is a fully registered and approved home for homeless and abandoned children, boys and girls ages 2 to 7 years old. The home is located in the Kabashaki eastern division, Kebisoni T.C Rukungiri District. Their overall mission is to provide a caring and safe environment for homeless and abandoned children. The vision of the home is to provide holistic care for these vulnerable children, regardless of their social or religious background.

Recent Accomplishments

- The home purchased two computers and has introduced computer lessons

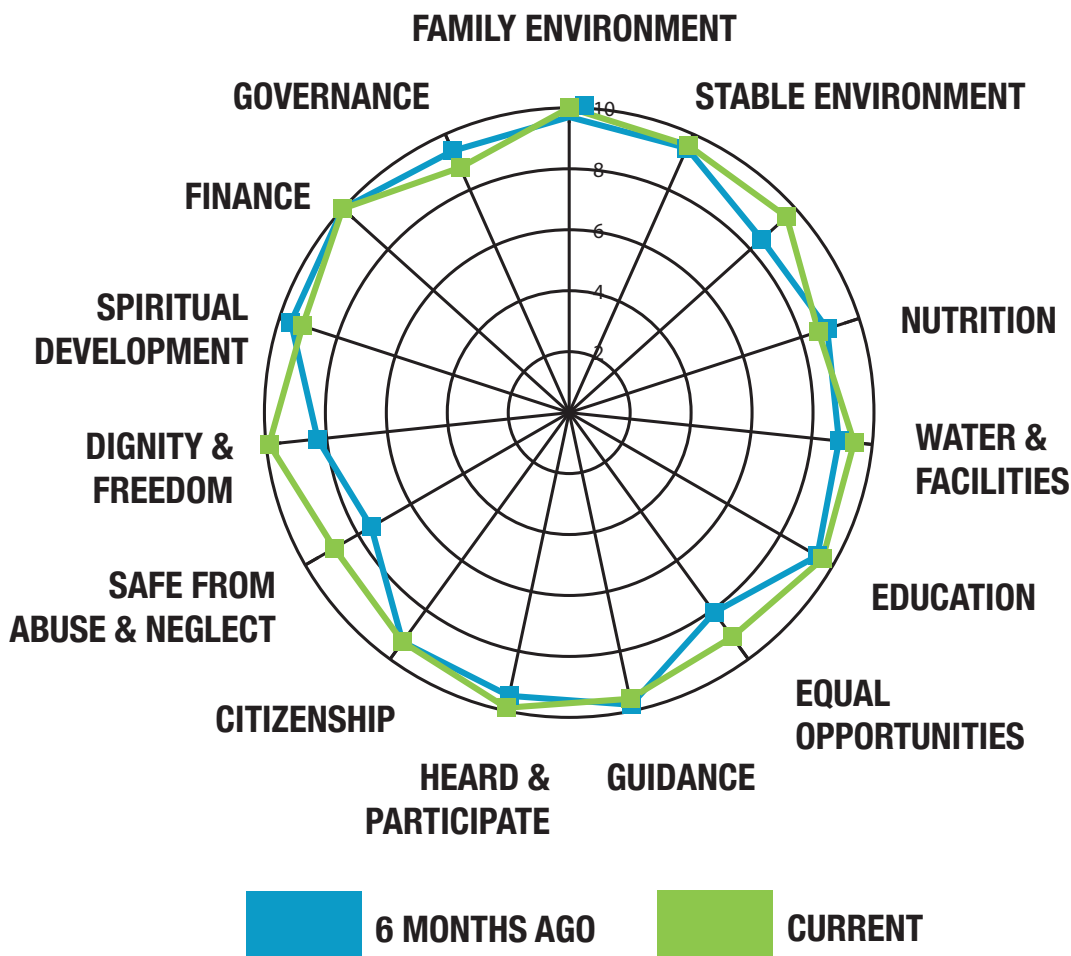


The Thrive Assessment

What is the Thrive Assessment?

In 1959, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, nutrition and more. We have codified all 13 Rights, as well as a Finance Standard and a Governance and Human Resource Standard, resulting in a total of 15 standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future. The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months with each partner home to chart the progress of each standard. Our team works with caregivers to outline next steps which are compiled into an Improvement Roadmap.

Current Thrive Scale



Strategic Initiatives

PURCHASE ADDITIONAL COMPUTERS

PROJECT SUMMARY	The home currently has two computers which are not enough for all the children. They would like to purchase more computers so that more children can learn basic computer skills.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	2,000,000 UGX \$525 USD

INSTALL CHAIN LINK FENCE

PROJECT SUMMARY	The property currently has a barbed wire fence which has been there for a long time and is worn out. They would like to replace the wire with a chain link fence to help enhance security at the home.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	5,000,000 UGX \$1312 USD

PURCHASE A PRINTER

PROJECT SUMMARY	Previously the hom had a printer, but it is currently not functional. Purchasing a two in one printer and photocopier would help make administration work much easier for the home.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	1,800,000 UGX \$472 USD



Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has 24 children with 7 caretakers who are around throughout the week. The home has a file and a record book where records and photos are kept for each child. Caregivers receive training on trauma and how to take good care of children monthly, and they are given refresher trainings whenever possible. There is an established plan where caregivers are interviewed and background information checked before they are oriented to the job. Sibling bonding is encouraged and the home works hand in hand with the probation officers who later help trace the background of the children. Caregivers are evaluated by probation officers and social workers on the care they provide, and family visitations are encouraged.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

House rules are clearly explained to children and they are cautioned on bad behavior e.g escaping from the home, stealing etc. The home discourages corporal punishment in instead consequences are enforced such as little children having to watch while others play and are denied participation. There is time set aside for children to to engage in there own play e.g football. Family groups are encouraged to play together according to their age and under the guidance of their caretakers. Caregivers meet monthly with social workers to discuss each child's behavior and challenges. Caregivers receive one day off per week and there are substitutes or standby caregivers who step in once one caretaker is off. Caregivers are given three year contracts and all have worked for more than 2 years. Caregivers sit with wardens monthly to discuss strategies on how to create a good environment and incorporate family values. Caregivers play with the children at least thrice a week, but not daily. The home also celebrates birthdays of the children.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children receive annual well checks, vaccinations are done, and records are kept in individual files. Water is available for dining areas and bathrooms, and children are reminded to wash their hands after eating or using the toilet. There is an identified health center, Kebisoni, with an identified pediatrician for emergencies. All girls receive feminine hygiene products sufficiently as well as the basics of hygienic menstrual cycle, care and disposal. Children brush their teeth daily and young children are cleaned quickly after soiling. Annual vision and dental exams are not done, but children are given medication when the need arises. The home doesn't have any lice cases. Each child has a medical file and first aid kits are available. All children receive medical treatment and there is an emergency fund, although not limited to medical care. Special medical arrangements are made for children with HIV and proper care is given. Children receive orthodontic treatment when cases arise as well.

- Ensure that children receive dental and vision exams annually.



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children receive enough calories daily with proteins, carbohydrates etc. Food is kept in a hygienic manner. The kitchen and dining area are well ventilated, clean, orderly, and free from toxic substances or pests. Food is appetizing and tasty, with vegetables and fruits emphasized. Proteins are provided daily as children eat beans and have milk everyday. Fruits are served once per day and vegetables two times per day since the home grows their own vegetables. No nutritionist is used, but the home trains cooks on how to prepare nutritious meals. Cooks are not trained annually on food safety or nutrition, but they are guided by caretakers and the director.

- Involve a nutritionist to ensure that children receive appropriate nutrients daily.
- Train cooks on food safety and nutrition annually.



Right to Safe & Adequate Water & Facilities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home has been inspected by probation officers from the Ministry of Gender as well as health inspectors. The home has water safe for drinking and free from chemicals, and staff have been trained on the importance of clean water and its relation to health. The dining and bathroom all have functioning bulbs. The home has solar power as a substitute to hydro power. There are also constructed springs, in case of outage, and fire extinguishers are available. A plumber and an electrician are available in case of an emergency, and safety concerns have been addressed by construction of a simple fence and lighting arresters. Children have access to enough drinking water and sink faucets are functional. The home premises are adequately lit. There are no smoke alarms, but children are cautions to alert caretakers in case of fires and telephone numbers are put up for emergency. There isn't an annual written plan, but children are cautioned to maintain the home property. The home has an approved license with ministry of gender as well.

- Mobilize resources to purchase smoke alarms.



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

All children are able to attend school. Children over 7 are assessed, able to identify letters of alphabet, and can articulate sounds. Children 11 and above are able to read and write, whereas children above 9 are able to add, subtract and multiply. Evaluations are done by teachers and the director to identify children with learning disabilities. Children have enough time to read. Younger children are handled by nursery teachers and age appropriate books are available in their library with some books in local languages. The home has internet and computer access with three computers, but group tutoring isn't common due to limited time. Funding is available on the condition that the child meets standards of the home e.g. how the child behaves. Toys and supplies are available, as well as art materials. Children who are not doing well in class are evaluated by their teachers and coached to perform better. Computer lessons have been started recently after the purchase of two new computers. One on one dedicated tutoring isn't available due to the education schedule, but the caretakers take on the children one on one in their free time.

- Engage children in group tutoring for additional education.

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Each child has a personal suitcase and space where to keep their belongings. They all have the opportunity to go to school. There are no cases of physical disabilities in the home. There is a transitional plan for all children, regardless of gender, disability, or family history and the home has built a structure where children are first taken before they are integrated back into the community. Both female and male mentors are available for the children to emulate. Children with disabilities are referred to other homes. Resources have been identified for children with special conditions such as eye defects e.g. buying glasses.

- Continue with current practices.

Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home advertises and interviews suitable candidates and a job description is given. Caregivers model respectful behavior and children are educated about body changes. The home has clear guidelines that are communicated. Children receive counseling monthly and caretakers are evaluated through interview by the director and social workers to determine if they are quality mentors. Children receive sexual education with the help of caretakers. There is a policy that addresses sexual behaviour and caregivers are trained on how to manage sexual behaviour with the help of counselors and social workers. Psychological healing and therapeutic resources are provided when needed but not on a weekly basis. Strength and weaknesses are evaluated and vocational studies are available for children in preparation for their future. There is a life skills program that includes learning hand crafts, carpentry, and baking, but it is not documented. Support for children enrolled in vocational or university courses is provided through tuition, housing facilitation, and medical coverage.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children can decide what they want to do in their free time and their needs are acknowledged as long as they are in within the means of the home. They do participate in the menu planning and are able to pick out what they want to wear, but with the guidance of caretakers to avoid indecent dressing. Healthcare procedures are communicated and information is given to children before administration. They can opt out of non-essential activities if they have a valid reason. Individual development plans are updated monthly or as soon as information is available. There are leadership roles available such as library leaders, leading prayers, etc.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Birth certificates and other documents like health and education records are kept. Caregivers are trained and prepared on the care they give and refresher sessions are provided. Age-appropriate chores such as washing dishes or taking care of goats are encouraged. National and local holidays are observed e.g. Easter, Day of the African Child, etc. The home is free from litter and there is a store where bikes are kept. Non-routine activities like sports or visiting the game park are carried out, but not multiple times a week due to expenses. Life skills like shopping are taught and the home ensures that children are well behaved and that values are taught. Community service is not encouraged for security purposes, apart from church activities. Major current events are communicated with the children and they are allowed to watch TV, especially on weekends.

- Get children more involved in community service.



Right to Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

There is adequate security around the home. Separate facilities are provided for boys and girls, but all ages are mixed up. All staff receive training on corporal punishment and alternatives. There is a policy that restricts one-on-one time between individuals, and it's also stated in the home rules and regulations. There is a child protection policy that prevents child exploitation and abuse. Caregivers are trained quarterly on how to prevent and recognise abuse. Caregivers evaluate children for signs of abuse and neglect regularly and findings are reported. Children are accompanied off campus by the caretakers and there is a visitor policy in place. Background checks for staff is done before they are enrolled and visitors are supervised. All children go out of their rooms daily. Intake assessments are done by social workers and probation officers so that children receive counseling and are able to work through trauma.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Dignity and Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children bathe daily. They are kind to each other, and bullying or belittling isn't allowed at the home. Each child has access to their own bed and have adequate clothings and undergarments. Children are allowed to do as much for themselves as possible such as bathing, washing their clothes, and cooking. They are guided in the right way how to behave and punishments are communicated clearly as soon as the child enters the home. Sheets are washed daily, so they wear out fast, but each child also has their own toothbrushes and towels. The outdoor area is adequate and appropriate for all ages to play and age appropriate toys are available. Children are allowed to use their native language. Additionally, children can make handcrafts or other items to sell and keep what they earn, but they are guided on how to spend the money. Teenagers do not work in the community, but instead work from the home.

- Continue with current practices.



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Children participate in church activities such as singing in the church choir. They also practice communal prayers daily. Children participate in religious holidays and Christmas shows. Religious books are provided as well and children can pray from anywhere e.g. under trees, sitting room, etc.

- Continue with current practices.



Financial Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home makes financial reports monthly to limit over-expenditures and records are available. Receipts are kept and available for review. There are no profit and loss statements since the organisation is a charity. Controls are available to ensure that money isn't misused and the home operates on an agreed budget by the board and funders. Bank accounts are reconciled monthly and a financial statement is made. There are people in charge of school fees and home expenditures, and the director approves the funds to be spent. Internal reviews are made by the board and an external auditor comes in quarterly. There is also a budget and detailed plan for all expenses.

- Continue with current practices.



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home land is surveyed and has a lease of 98 years. New caregivers shadow old caregivers and there is a written organisational chart. Staff meetings are held weekly and when a need arises. Caregivers are given written documents that detail their terms of employment. The home is fully licenced, approved and complies with all government requirements. There is a board of directors present. While caretakers are trained on how to care for sick children and oriented on good hygiene, it is not done annually, but rather monitored often. Workers take leave and staff documents are updated regularly. Training on child participation is provided to staff through seminars and workshops.

- Conduct annual training on caring for sick children and promoting good hygiene.



Current Improvement Partners



Both Ends Believing - Uganda

Both Ends Believing (BEB) is an organization with a global presence. They offer an incredible case management software (Children First Software) that helps governments create digital identities for vulnerable children, a pivotal step in placing kids in families. Our partnership with BEB Uganda looks like training members of their team in the Thrive Certification Program so they can enhance the support they give to the children's homes they work with. Learn more at www.bebglobal.org.

For a list of projects and opportunities to coordinate on go to www.achf.org/projects

