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New U.S. -Uganda Program to Serve 250,000 Orphans and Vulnerable Children

JINJA— U.S. Mission Uganda and the Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development marked the 22nd annual *Day of the African Child* by launching a new program to benefit 250,000 orphans and vulnerable children across 80 districts in Uganda. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) at the U.S. Mission is funding the "Strengthening Uganda's National Response for Implementation of Services for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children" (SUNRISE-OVC) program with approximately \$20 million from the American people. The program works with local government and communities to improve the delivery of child welfare services over the next five years.

According to the USAID-funded Uganda's OVC Situation Analysis Report of 2010, an estimated 8.1 million out of 17.5 million children below the age of 18 in Uganda are vulnerable, with an estimated 1.3 million children considered critically vulnerable. SUNRISE-OVC works with the Ugandan Government and civil society to standardize care and support for 250,000 of these children and their families. Program partners will train probation officers and community development officers to identify vulnerable children and connect them to child support services. The program also provides technical assistance to local government officials to collect, analyze and use information about vulnerable children in their communities to improved planning and management of social welfare programs.

Announcing the launch of SUNRISE-OVC, USAID Health Officer Tamika Allen said, "Through this program, we hope to see an empowered social workforce in districts, sub-counties and communities that can champion the safety and protection of children. Today's program is a reflection of our compassion, and we hope these children understand that they are truly loved, cared for and appreciated."

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