

ISER Photo Essay

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Big Dreams, Limited Opportunities:

The dilemma of disadvantaged children in uganda



ISER

Facilitating Social Justice

INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Big Dreams, Limited Opportunities: The Dilemma Of Disadvantaged Children In Uganda

Introduction

Speaking to a group of randomly selected children in Uganda about their aspirations and future dreams, they will all happily tell how they would like to become doctors, engineers, pilots, lawyers, athletes, footballers, musicians and so on. They talk with a lot of excitement and often say “I go to school to study to become...” The majority believe that all it takes to become what they want to be is to go to school, any school. However, as they embark on their journey to fulfill their big dreams, the prevailing social and economic conditions in the country dictate otherwise. In the process, disadvantaged children like those living in rural areas, the disabled, the sick, minorities and girl children are sieved out.

The inequality and discrimination in access to social services, and the lack of accountability for social service delivery in Uganda limits the full development potential of a significant number of children, with many dying in early childhood. Many children are limited by poor quality education, inadequate food and shelter, disease, poverty, child abuse and neglect and are therefore not able to compete favorably with their more privileged counterparts or simply be able to live in dignity.

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) sent out a photo journalist, Muziransa Yusuf to tell the story of the children of Uganda in commemoration of the International Day of the African Child marked on 16th June. This photo essay is a story of children with dreams, but with very limited opportunities to realize their dreams. It is a story calling government to action because social and economic rights are entitlements that are due to every child in Uganda.



A boy takes a nap on a bench at a primary school in Kween District



Even in hard times, many children remain resilient, hoping that the situation will improve very soon.



A street kid begs along Kampala road in Kampala. Hard economic and social conditions in upcountry districts continue to push children to the city.



Karamojong girls relax after collecting firewood in Moroto District. Many do not attend school as they have domestic obligations to fulfill.



A boy suffering from Nodding syndrome carries a dead chicken in Pader District. The cause of the disease remains unknown and many children continue to die from it.



A girl picks seeds which fell off a track in Mbale. Many children have to go out and look for food to supplement their parents' income.



Not lucky to just grow up as a child. A young girl in Mukono District carries a bunch of firewood under the scorching sun.



A boy struggles to carry jerrycans of water in Gulu District. Many children walk very long distances carrying heavy loads.



A Karimojong girl grinding seeds of a wild fruit locally called (Ekoret) in Kaabong District. Due to extreme hunger, people feed on this wild fruit in Karamoja.



A boy carries his sibling at Budondo in Jinja District. Many children stay at home to take care of their siblings while their parents go to work.



A boy relaxes in Gulu District. For many children, hope for a better future is what motivates them.



A child feeds on raw Mangoes in Pader District. During times of scarcity, anything can serve as meal.



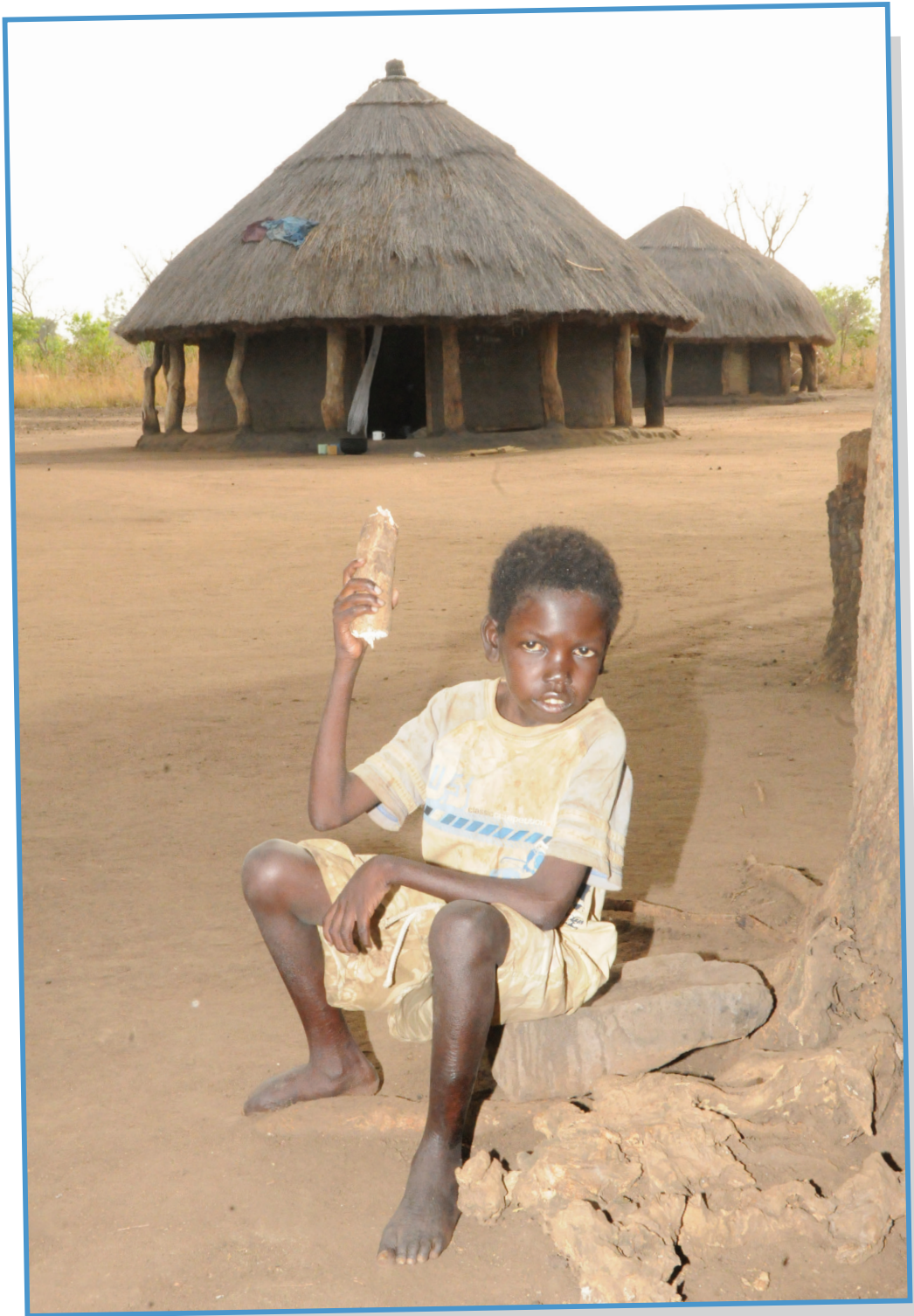
This piece of cloth is what this child in Pader District has to cover her body. For many children, adequate clothing is a far dream.



A child carries her sibling at Atanga Health Centre II in Pader District. Many children in Uganda have not had the luxury of enjoying their childhood. Some are orphaned at a tender age.



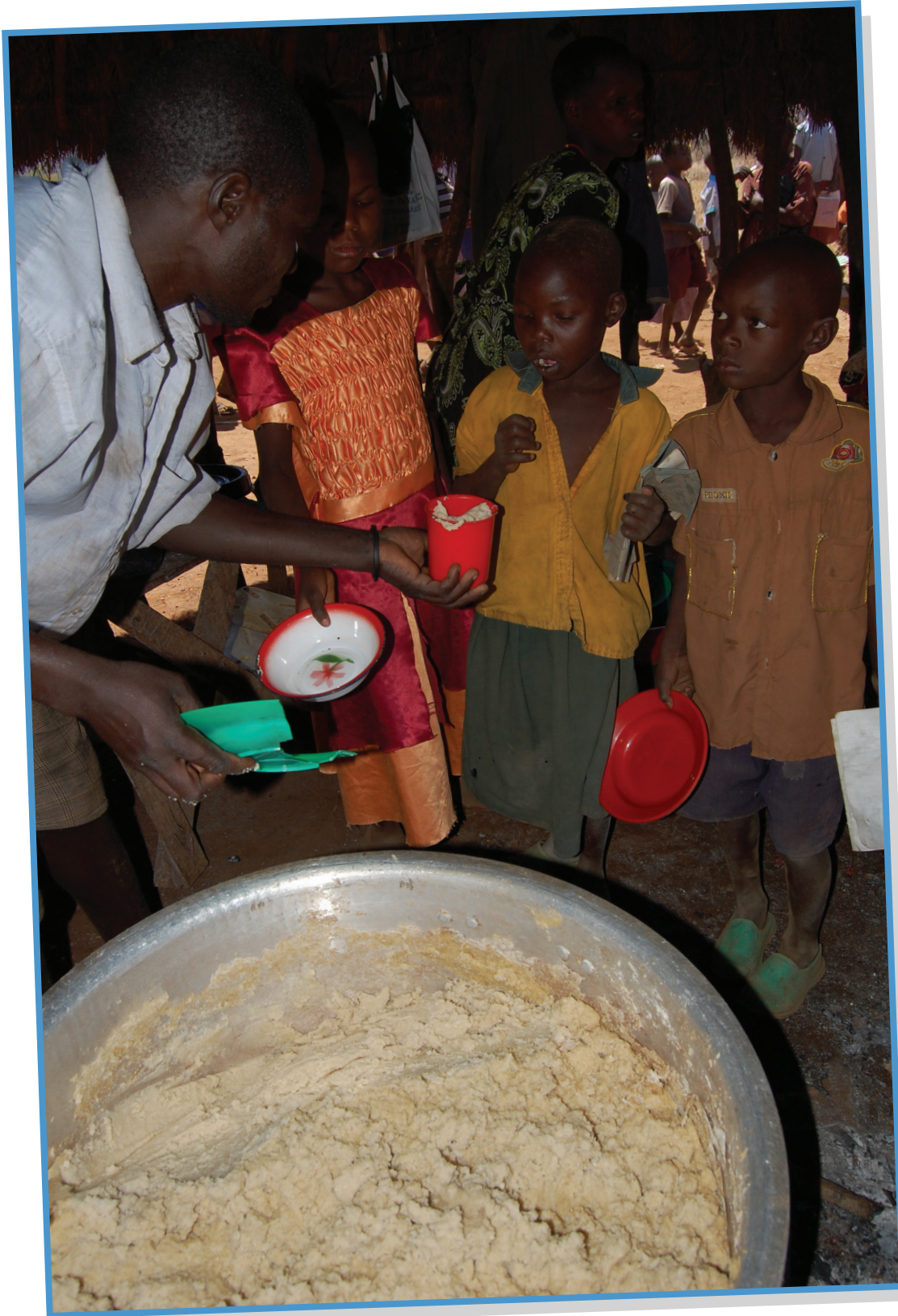
A boy rides a young one from a hospital in Pader District. Many people travel long distances to access health facilities where they can get treatment.



A piece of raw cassava is what this boy with nodding syndrome in Pader District got to eat. Good nutrition is key for the management of the disease.



Mango season in Gulu District is a blessing for many people including these boys



School being served lunch at a primary school in Kumi District. A balanced diet is key for child development.



Pupils outside their classroom in Kapchorwa District. Children without shoes have fallen victims to lightening strikes.



Like this family in Packwach District; many struggle with food and shelter



Pupils attending classes at a primary school in Kween District. Dusty floors expose children to infections like jiggers.



Children walk to school in Hoima District. Many children in Uganda walk very long distances to and from school. Many fall prey to sexual abuse, kidnap and child sacrifice in their quest for education.



A boy in Kimombasa, a Kampala City slum. Many children are exposed to poor sanitation environments.



It is lunch time at Giriki Primary school in Kween District. For some of these children, this is the last meal of the day.



A Karamojong boy grazing animals in Moroto District. Such children have limited education opportunities because the system can not accomodate their lifestyle.



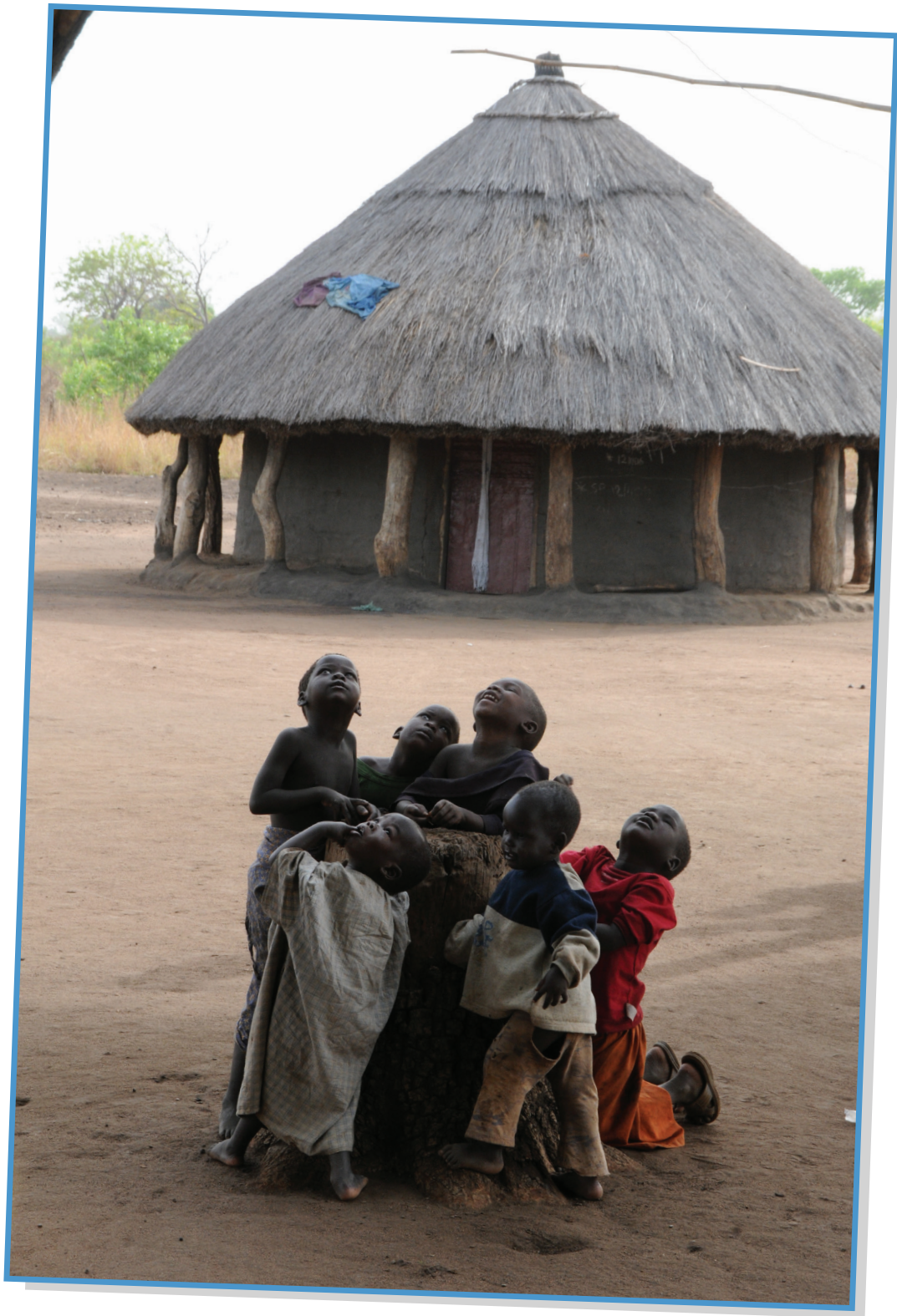
Children living in Kimombasa, a Kampala City slum. Slums are densely populated with limited service provision. The environment predisposes children to constant illnesses.



Pupils attending classes in an incomplete building in Kween District. Such structures disrupt learning whenever it rains.



Sick, tired and hungry. Children wait to access treatment in Pader District.



Can the sky be the limit for these children. It is hard for this group of six to compete with their counterparts later in life.



A boy goes to fetch water in Pader District. Many children spend long hours on household chores instead of attending school.



A boy fetches water from the lake at Katosi landing site in Mukono District. Lack of access to clean and safe water is a danger for many children in Uganda.



Children playing a board game in Gulu District. Many are very intelligent and innovative, but the system does not favour them to develop their talents.



A Karimojong boy drinks some water as he looks after animals in Kotido District. Karimojong children take on this role at a very tender age.



Access to clean and safe water is a big challenge in many areas. In this picture, children fetch water from an unsafe source in Hoima District.



Looking for something to eat , children fishing at Gariki river in Kween District

About the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER)

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) is a registered national not-for-profit human rights non – governmental organization (NGO) in Uganda. ISER was founded in February 2012 to ensure full recognition, accountability and realization of social and economic rights primarily in Uganda but also within the East African Region.

To read more about ISER,
please visit our website www.iser-uganda.org
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