

EBENEZER BOYS LEARN LIFE SKILLS

Life skills are an integral element of the Ebenezer Boys programme to ensure positive long-term outcomes for the boys, so that they become self-sufficient and independent. The boys themselves play an active role in the decision making and management of their day-to-day care as well as in planning long term outcomes. We also want to ensure that the boys continue to maintain a connection with their family and community of origin, where possible. We involve their families in all the visitation days that the boarding schools allow, and a parent association of Ebenezer Boys family members has been formed. Below are some of the key highlights.

- To improve the boys' life skills there is a timetable in their house in Luwero which gives them each the opportunity to do chores around the house. They cook and clean, doing things like sweeping the compound, mopping the house, washing dishes or washing their clothes. Racheal, ISIS' house and office assistant in Uganda, is a trained cook. She regularly teaches the boys different cooking skills and helps them to improve. Now, most of the boys are able to cook very delicious meals for themselves and each other. In May when we threw a graduation party for Odongo, it was the boys who cooked all the food for the party, and it was delicious!
- A volunteer service programme has been introduced by the ISIS team for the boys during their school holidays. Richard and Paul bring the boys into the community surrounding Kiwoko Hospital in the Luwero region and they volunteer their time to assist vulnerable people in the community, especially the elderly. We hope this programme instils in the boys a spirit of giving back to their community. We also hope it shows them how to be responsible, and it teaches them the value of working to earn a living. After they complete their volunteer work, they are given a food package in return for their work to take to their family homes for the holidays.
- During the last school holidays, they helped to construct a house for the family of two of the Ebenezer Boys – Isaac Muhozi and Moses Mundende. The family was living in Kampala but was struggling to cover the cost of rent and other expenses with the high prices of the city. The family will be relocating to Bwerampindi near Kiwoko Hospital and into a home with a small plot behind it to grow crops. ISIS supported the purchase of the plot of land in December where the house is being built. The boys did a great job working with local leaders, Paul and each other to help construct the home, cultivate the piece of land and assist the family in growing crops around the house.
- The parents of the boys were given the opportunity to come and visit their children at their schools during the boy's visitation days which were 11, 17 and 18 March. It was very exciting because most of the parents showed up at the schools which made the visitation days extra special. Sadly, not all of the parents could attend due to illness or other complications, however at the end of the term all of the boys were able to go back and stay with their families at home. They were able to bring with them a food package for the good work they did volunteering in the community and are really starting to rebuild their relationships.