

# SHARED UNDERSTANDING

A New Way for Couples in Gulu to make happiness not violence



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



Spotlight Initiative



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CDFU

OCITTI JIMMY (33YRS) Business man and community activist from Gulu5

Jimmy Ociti is one of the community activists that were trained by Communication for Development Foundation Uganda (CDFU). He resides in Goan's Quarters village, Kasubi Parish, in Bardege division, Gulu district. The 33-year-old who also doubles as member of the Village Health Team (VHT) in the area is using a two pronged approach to address Gender Based Violence in his community. Jimmy has always helped women to access family planning services, but after being trained by CDFU, Jimmy realized that he had to encourage men to get closer to their wives and seek family planning services together. This move has helped to create peace between couples because men and women are now choosing to spend more time together and get to appreciate the challenges that affect them. They develop a shared understanding as couples, and this has reduced the cases of violence against women and girls.



UN  
WOMEN



Many times, violence in this community stemmed from alcoholism, ignorance, poor parenting, and moral decadence. In the instance of ignorance, for example, the men in this village had been of the mind that family planning methods led to infertility and at best resulted in children with disabilities. In the training the Jimmy received, he learned that men could take an active role in reproductive health services, which is often left to the women. When men join their wives or women in seeking family planning services, it enables them to appreciate the challenges that women encounter, and this has caused many of them to give more of their time to their families.

Jimmy started mobilizing women and men for dialogues and focused

on consent, spacing their children, and having a number that can be fed, schooled, and taken care of in their families. Sharing information concerning sexual and reproductive health rights, in particular the benefits of family planning enabled the people in Jimmy's community to change their mindsets and practices.

“As a result of my interventions in community, men now know the benefits of family planning and appreciate it since most of their wives are still in the youth bracket.”

If one visits Jimmy's village, they will see men accompanying their spouses to the health centers/hospitals to seek family planning services. This is a positive change in the thinking of what is generally a Ugandan mentality.