HuSA
FOUNDATION
FOR SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION

A Known Problem is not a Problem

How to read this poster

Top to bottom: the order of the process, from the question we respond to, through six human-centred design steps, to the solutions they produced.
Left to right: from evidence to design decision.
Companion posters: **The Iceberg Beneath** (systems thinking) and **How HuSA Works as One System**.
Each figure carries its source beside it.

How HuSA Was Designed

A systems transformation organisation built with the households of Kyangwali through human-centred design, systems thinking and solutions thinking: listening, testing and adjusting every year.

HuSA makes sure children facing the biggest barriers read, stay in school and leave able to earn. We do it through the school and the home together.

The question we respond to: how can every child facing the biggest barriers stay in school, stay safe and leave able to earn, with support that keeps working after a project ends?

LENS 1 Human-centred design: six steps, repeated every year

What we did and heard		What it produced in the design
• 2020: emergency food response to 137 households when lockdown stopped casual work. *HuSA founder record* • 2022 to 2025: community focus groups and household visits across Kyangwali. *HuSA School Design Blueprint* • Households had not given up on education. They could not meet the conditions the school system assumed: a steady income, a caregiver free in the morning, a settled child. • Children aged 13 and 14 out of class for three to seven years; children as young as seven working at dawn. *HuSA focus groups and household visits* • 32% of settlement refugee households report a school-aged child not enrolled or not attending regularly. *UNHCR and IMPACT Initiatives, 2022 Participatory Assessment*	**1 EMPATHISE**	• **Design starts at the household, not the classroom.** • Caregivers are co-designers of the response, not recipients of it.
• Core problem: children attend school without learning to read, and leave early, because the household cannot hold them there. *HuSA analysis from its work in Kyangwali* • Root cause: household poverty feeds learning poverty, and learning poverty feeds household poverty. When poverty deepens, a child is withdrawn to dig in gardens, care for siblings or earn, and out of school faces child labour, exploitation, early marriage and the streets. *HuSA analysis* • 82% of Ugandan children at late primary age cannot read and understand a simple text. *World Bank, Uganda Learning Poverty Brief, 2024* • Primary survival rate 32.0% and Primary Seven completion 61.5% across refugee-hosting districts. *Ministry of Education and Sports, Education Response Plan, EMIS 2016 data*	**2 DEFINE**	• **Design question: "How might we keep children facing the biggest barriers reading, in school and able to earn, when the household cannot carry the cost?"** • Insight: a child can be enrolled today and pulled out tomorrow if the household behind them has not changed.
Ideas that came out of the root cause • Use the school as the way into the household. • One delivery system: teachers plus community teaching assistants carrying five thematic areas. • Tie household support to the child being in school, with visits and support, not cut-offs, when attendance falls. • Teach each child at the level they have reached (TaRL). • Pay fees step by step from household garden and savings income, deducted at source (E4Rs, VSLA, SGALP). • Ask parents open questions in PTC+ sessions so each parent reaches their own conclusion (Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory). • Certified skill from Primary Four to Primary Six, for every road after Primary Seven (designed, not yet operating).	**3 IDEATE**	• **The HCTL model across four layers: School, Household, Community, System.** • The sequence a household moves through: Heal, Connect, Transform, Lead. • MHPSS and WASH are woven through every part, shown as the teal and blue strip along the spine.
Small tests before scaling • 2026: poultry support for 15 parents of enrolled children, with chicks given to their households. *HuSA records, 2026* • Out of their own conviction, these 15 parents were the first to pay school fees at the end of this term. *HuSA fee records, 2026* • 2023 to 2024: UNHCR-supported GBV awareness work reaching 936 people. *HuSA project record* • 2025: school opened with 59 children; daily Healing Circle introduced. *HuSA records* • 2025: Safe Water Project by the Primary Four project-based learning cohort with A Ripple International. • 2026: parent savings groups and the first PTC+ protection cohort. *HuSA records*	**4 PROTOTYPE**	• **The school as the test bed.** • A parent who sees income from chicks chooses to pay fees first, which tests the idea that household income keeps the child in school. • HuSA runs one school to hold a model other schools can run.
What the tests showed • 18 learners taught from Primary One in 2025 moved from three-letter words to reading stories. *HuSA teacher assessment, 2026* • HuSA reaches 197 children: 167 enrolled and 30 in community reading sessions. *HuSA enrolment records, 2026* • Baselines: class attendance 65%; fee payment 23% before deduction at source. *HuSA registers and fee ledger, 2026* • Community teaching assistants make 5+ home visits a week, reaching at least 15 households. *HuSA home visit records, 2026* • Community teaching assistants identified 27 child neglect cases and referred 7 GBV cases in household visits in 2026. *HuSA case records, 2026*	**5 TEST**	• **Results decide what changes next.** • Baselines are never revised after the fact. • Protection concerns are reported the same day, and serious cases reach the Executive Director the same day. *HuSA Organisational Structure and How It Works, 2026*
What changed because of testing • Poultry support to be widened to more households, using what the first 15 parents showed. • M&E: monthly data review, termly review with parents and committees, and a reading baseline with independent enumerators (EGRA) planned for February 2027 across HuSA and two neighbouring schools. *HuSA Theory of Change, 2026*	**6 ITERATE**	• **Next cycle: partner schools run the same design with their own teachers.** • Four schools in discussion at Stage 1, no written agreement yet. *HuSA Scale and Partnership Thesis, 2026* • Next test: a proposed pilot with NRC and partners for 30 to 40 children already under case management.

LENS 2 Solutions thinking: where design and systems thinking meet



Human-centred design starts with people: the barriers each child and household face, in their own words. Systems thinking starts with the whole: the loops that bring a problem back, and the leverage point where a change holds. **Solutions thinking joins the two: each solution answers a real household need and sits at a leverage point, so it keeps working after a project ends.**

	Insight	Solution	What it changes
Design	Parents act on what they conclude for themselves	**PTC+ reflection questions and a household plan the parent makes**	**Conviction grows at home**
Design	A child needs trusted adults who see them every day	**Community teaching assistants in class daily and at home weekly**	**Risk seen early, referred the same day**
Systems	Household poverty is the root cause	**SGALP gardens, savings groups, SAVER and E4Rs fee steps**	**The household carries the child**
Systems	The school and the home are the leverage point	**One channel for every sector, with support tied to the child in school**	**Each partner's support goes further**
Systems	Barriers can outlast a project period	**Support channelled through HuSA, which stays for 7 years and beyond**	**Cases close with their goals met**

Insights from HuSA household findings and casework, 2020 to 2026.

Every child leaves primary school able to read, write, do maths and earn.

Nursery, 3 years free
School readiness, early reading, daily Healing Circle

Primary One to Three
Reading, writing and maths at the child's level

Primary Four to Six
A chosen skill, guided by what the local market pays for (designed)

Primary Seven
The Primary Leaving Examination and a plan for the next road

→ **Secondary school** | **Technical school** | **Earning within the law for their age**

The design goal has three parts: 1. The child learns and stays. 2. The household can carry the child. 3. A school HuSA does not run can do the same.

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