

# **INVESTIGATION OF LIGHTNING MASS CASUALTY INCIDENT AT OWEKO PRIMARY SCHOOL, NEBBI DISTRICT, UGANDA**

**Akantambira Barnabas**

**17 September 2024**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

On July 31, 2024, at approximately 1 PM, a lightning strike occurred at Oweko Primary School in Nebbi District, Uganda, during a football match involving multiple schools. The incident resulted in injuries to 77 pupils, one teacher, and one support staff member, totalling 79 affected individuals. This report provides a detailed account of the incident, the school's location, and the subsequent investigation and recommendations.

## **II. INCIDENT DETAILS**

**Date and Time:** July 31, 2024, at 1 PM

**Location:** Oweko Primary School, Nebbi District, Uganda, 2.416925, 31.100613

During a football match, it began to rain around midday. As the rain intensified, learners sought shelter in classrooms and on the veranda of the school building. The majority of those affected were standing outside on the veranda when the lightning struck.

## **III. INVESTIGATIVE TEAM**

As in prior multiple casualty events at schools, ACLENet determined they should investigate. A special appeals for funds was made through the newsletter and several donors stepped forward to fund the travel and team expenses. Contact was made with the head teachers, district officials, and police in the Nebbi area to ask their aid in the investigation.

On 13 August, the ACLENet investigative team of Akantambira Barnabas, Country Coordinator, Omara Martin, Accounts and Project Manager who was fluent in the local language used in Nebbi, and Tumuhimbise Isaac, Chief LPS Installer, met with Ken Nixon, PhD, ACLENet Board member and lightning researcher (UWits), and Mary Ann Cooper, MD, by zoom to prepare for the investigation. The aspects of the investigation were reviewed as was the questionnaire, the emotional impact expected to the team, how to do the scene investigation, other aspects, and questions answered.

The team traveled to Nebbi the following week, 19-23 August, interviewed witnesses, survivors, and community members, and met with the guest schools and district officials.

A debrief was held with Ken Nixon, MACooper and the team on Tuesday 27 August to go over findings and give the team support for the emotional impact of the interviews..

#### **IV. SCHOOL LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT**

Oweko Primary School is situated in Oweko Centre village, Oweko Parish, Ndhew Sub-County, Padyere County, Nebbi District, in the northwestern region of Uganda. The school is surrounded by hills and rocky terrain, with many stones visible both within and outside the school compound. It is a government-aided day school for both boys and girls, with a student population of 1,502 and 17 teaching staff at the time of the incident.

#### **V. CASUALTY DETAILS**

Before interviewing the survivors and others, consents were signed for use of the information and.

Out of the 79 individuals affected, 18 pupils were hospitalized. Seven of these pupils were admitted for several days until they regained their strength. The African Centres for Lightning and Electromagnetics Network (ACLENet) conducted interviews with all seven admitted pupils, as well as an additional 43 learners, one teacher, and the school chef, totalling 50 interviews.

#### **VI. INVESTIGATION FINDINGS**

According to news reports and the ACLENet investigation, the lightning strike injured 77 pupils and two adults, with no fatalities. Eighteen pupils were initially admitted to Oweko Health Centre II, and seven were later transferred to Nebbi Referral Hospital for further treatment.

This incident was unprecedented at Oweko Primary School, although villagers reported a previous lightning strike at a nearby hospital that damaged electrical equipment but did not cause injuries.

#### **VII. IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY**

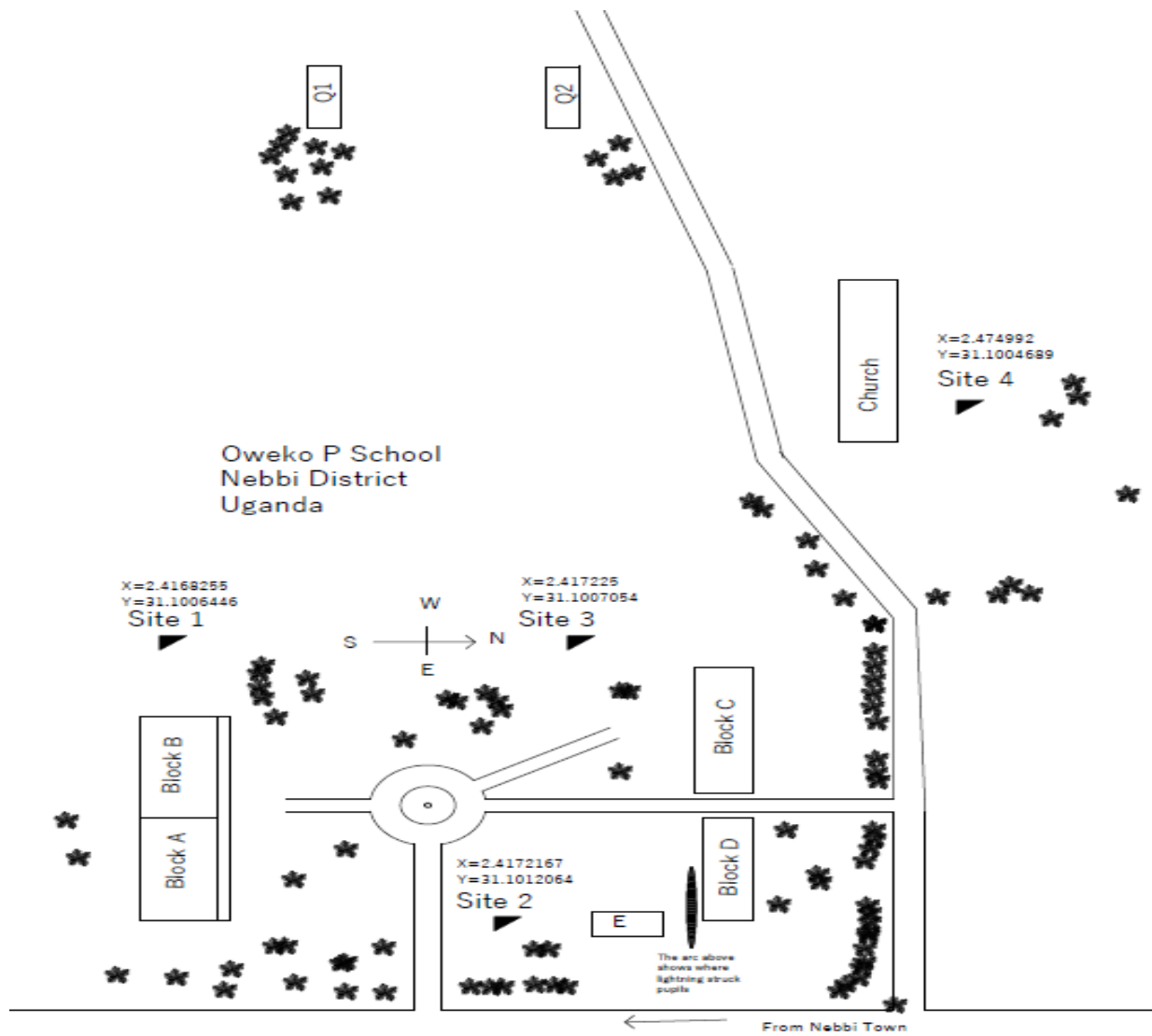
The incident has raised feelings of hopelessness and frustration within the Oweko community. The lack of lightning protection measures in over ten government and several private schools in the area has heightened concerns about safety and well-being.

#### **VIII. TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Education and Awareness:** Conduct educational sessions on lightning safety for students, staff, and the community to raise awareness and preparedness.

2. **Lightning Protection Systems:** Install lightning protection systems in all schools within the region to prevent future incidents.
3. **Emergency Response Training:** Provide training for school staff and local health workers on emergency response procedures for lightning strikes.
4. **Mental Health Support:** Offer counselling and mental health support to affected individuals to address trauma and prevent long-term psychological effects.
5. **Funding and Resources:** Seek funding and resources from government and non-governmental organizations to implement these recommendations and ensure the safety of all students and staff.

**The Map/ Sketch below shows Oweko primary school**



## PICTORIAL OVERVIEW

### Oweko School – scene of lightning incident



This is the classroom block where the children were sheltering from the rain when the incident occurred. The red marks indicate where most of the children were standing.



Front view of Oweko Primary School, showing the building where the children were sheltering during the lightning incident.



Rocks around the school, most of the area is covered with these rocks.



View of the staff houses at Oweko primary School.



Kids of Oweko Primary School gathered for a talk by the ACLENet country coordinator, who addressed the children to provide comfort and support following the lightning incident. Despite the large number of attendees, the coordinator managed to engage with the learners, offering words of encouragement and discussing safety measures to prevent future incidents. The children listened attentively and expressed their gratitude for the support.

### **VISIT TO OMOYO PRIMARY SCHOOL**



Kids from Omooyo who were affected gathered in one class.



The headteacher of Omoyo primary School addressing the survivors with other political officials watching.



Chairperson Local council Omoyo subcounty who works as parents teacher association chair person with the headteacher of Omoyo primary School together with the country coordinator ACLENet after counselling the learners of Omoyo primary school.

## **ADULTS INJURED**



### **TEACHER injured**

Ayio Rose, a teacher at Owilo Primary School in her early forties, took her schoolchildren to a foot ball competition at Oweko Primary School. During the event, as she was organising the children in one of the classrooms at Oweko primary school she was struck by lightning. Rose recalls nothing of the incident, and even now, her memory fails her quickly. She experiences memory loss, body heat, and internal burning, causing her great pain and discomfort to the point where she does not want to wear clothes. This pain has persisted, and she has not fully recovered. On one occasion, she forgot her shoes at the entrance of the pit latrine and was reminded by her daughter after leaving.

Rose was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for five days and continues to take medication there after. Following her hospital treatment, she returned home, where she remains, resting and receiving medication under her family's care.





A teacher who was affected by lightning and is facing the challenge of memory loss standing together with her husband at their home when ACLENet team had visited them.



A team of leaders posing for a photo with a teacher who suffered the lightning strike.



Barnabas (ACLENet) team with the family of the affected teacher.

#### **School chef - Otwikende Donald**



Aged 44 years old working as School Chef or cook witnessed a bright light before finding himself on the ground. He was transported to Oweko Health Centre II, received

treatment, and was discharged after shock recovery. He experiences occasional intense heat on the right side of his body.

Donald had a similar shock in his youth, with no injuries. During the recent event, he lost consciousness for a short period but came to at school amidst the chaos.

Symptoms:

Right Side Weakness: Since the lightning strike, Donald's right hand and leg show weakness, yet he retains normal function for walking and handling objects.

Donald reports being thrown to the ground from the veranda where he stood. Despite his right side's weakness, he manages his daily tasks.

### **VISIT TO OWILO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Owilo primary School is one of the schools that were affected by lightning incident that took place at Oweko primary School.



A heartfelt group photo of the resilient pupils from Owilo Primary School, who were tragically affected by the recent lightning strike.



The children of Owilo Primary School gathered for an assembly dedicated to lightning safety. During this session, Barnabas, the ACLENet Country Coordinator, addressed the pupils, offering comfort and guidance. He provided valuable information on what lightning is, ensuring the children felt reassured and informed.



This is the type of life the children in the village where the school is located lead. Many of these children are unable to attend school due to the high levels of poverty in the area.

#### **Types of desk and materials used at school.**



Currently, over 70 learners are crammed into a single classroom block at Owilo Primary School, a space originally designed to accommodate only 30 to 45 students. This severe overcrowding not only makes it difficult for the children to concentrate and learn effectively but also poses significant safety risks. The lack of adequate space can lead to increased stress

and discomfort among the students, and in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or another lightning incident, the overcrowded conditions could hinder a swift and safe evacuation.

## **SUMMARY OF STUDENTS INTERVIEWED**

### **From OWEKO P/S**

#### **1. OPAKRWOTH HOWARD**



#### **Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Opakrwoth Howard
- **Age:** 13 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Kwicwinyi Trinity

**Incident Details:** Howard was taking shelter under the veranda of Oweko Primary School when the lightning struck. He recalls seeing a very bright light before finding himself lying on the ground. The lightning strike caused paralysis in his left arm.

**Medical Treatment:** Howard was admitted to Oweko Health Centre II (HCII) for treatment. Fortunately, he was discharged on the same day.

#### **Current Symptoms:**

- **Eye Issues:** Howard sometimes feels that his eyes are blinking continuously.
- **Sleep Disturbances:** He experiences body pain upon waking, which was not the case before the incident.
- **Persistent Pain:** He continues to feel pain in his left arm.

**Personal Account:** Howard shared his experience and the ongoing challenges he faces since the incident. He mentioned that the paralysis in his left arm has not fully resolved, and he still experiences pain. Additionally, the continuous blinking of his eyes and the body pain upon

waking are new symptoms that have emerged post-incident. These symptoms have affected his daily life and well-being.

## 2. YIKPARWOTH HAPPY



### **Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Yikparwoth Happy
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Okwerjok Eric

**Incident Details:** Happy was taking shelter under the veranda of Oweko Primary School when the lightning struck. She recalls seeing a very bright light and then finding herself lying on the ground. She realized that she couldn't raise her legs as they were paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Happy was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital and discharged after three days.

### **Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** She still feels pain in her right leg while walking.
- **Eye Issues:** She has a problem with her eyes; whenever she sees light, it reminds her of the incident, causing her body to shiver.
- **Sleep Disturbances:** The fear of lightning striking again affects her sleep at night.

**Personal Account:** Happy shared that the incident has left her with ongoing pain in her right leg and a fear of light, which triggers shivering. This fear has also disrupted her sleep, as she worries about another lightning strike.

## 3. OBEYO JEREMY



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Obeyo Jeremy
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Kasamba Kenneth

**Incident Details:** Jeremy remembers dark clouds forming and strong winds before it started raining heavily. He ran to take shelter under the veranda and saw a very bright light before finding himself on the ground. He was wearing sandals at the time.

**Medical Treatment:** Jeremy's right shoulder was paralyzed and felt very cold. He was taken to a nearby Health Centre II for treatment and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Shoulder Pain:** He feels slight pain in his right shoulder when sleeping at night.

**Personal Account:** Jeremy mentioned that he feels normal now, but the slight pain in his right shoulder persists, especially at night.

**4. AGENRWOTH PATRICIA**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Agenrwoth Patricia



- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Maureen

**Incident Details:** Before it started raining, Patricia noticed a very dark cloud and heard a lot of thunder. While taking shelter under the veranda, she saw a bright light and then found herself on the ground with everyone around her lying down. She was wearing sandals at the time.

**Medical Treatment:** Her right arm was paralyzed. Patricia was taken to Nebbi Referral Hospital and discharged after four days.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Pain:** She still feels occasional pain in her right arm.
- **Eye Issues:** Her eyes start blinking whenever she sees light.
- **Sleep Disturbances:** She sleeps well at night but starts imagining lightning strikes when it rains.

**Personal Account:** Patricia shared that the incident has left her with occasional pain in her right arm and eye issues. The fear of lightning strikes during rain affects her mental state.

**5. MUNGOROMO MOSES**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Mungoromo Moses
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 4
- **Parent's Name:** Beatrice Giramiya

**Incident Details:** Moses was taking shelter under the veranda when he saw a very bright light and then found himself on the ground. He was not wearing any shoes at the time.

**Medical Treatment:** His right arm was paralyzed. Moses was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital and discharged after four days of treatment.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Pain:** He feels pain in his right arm and general body weakness.
- **Eye Issues:** Sometimes tears come out of his eyes.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night without challenges.

**Personal Account:** Moses mentioned that he still experiences pain in his right arm and general body weakness. His eyes sometimes tear up, but he does not have sleep issues.

## 6. ALOCIPARWOTH EUNICE



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Alociparwoth Eunice
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6
- **Parent's Name:** Warirwoth Cosmas

**Incident Details:** Eunice was watching football when it started raining heavily. She ran to take shelter under the veranda and then found herself on the ground. She was wearing sandals at the time.

**Medical Treatment:** Her right thigh was paralyzed, and she couldn't walk. Eunice was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital and discharged after three days.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Thigh Pain:** She still feels slight pain in her right upper thigh when standing and walking.
- **Vision Issues:** She fears seeing white things, which makes her eyes tear up.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Eunice shared that she still experiences slight pain in her right thigh and has vision issues that cause her eyes to tear up. Despite these challenges, she sleeps normally at night.

## 7. OMARWOT PIUS



### **Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Omarwot Pius
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Agenonga Francis

**Incident Details:** Pius was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when the lightning struck. He recalls seeing a very bright light and suddenly finding himself on the ground. He felt an electric shock throughout his body, which was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Pius was taken to a nearby Health Centre II (HCII) and discharged the same day.

### **Current Symptoms:**

- **Hearing Issues:** He hears imaginary sounds frequently.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night.
- **Eyes:** His eyes are functioning normally.

**Personal Account:** Pius shared that the incident felt like an electric shock, and although he has recovered physically, he continues to experience auditory hallucinations.

## 8. KWICWINY MILDRED



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Kwicwiny Mildred
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Kermundu Doreen

**Incident Details:** Mildred was watching a football match when heavy clouds and wind formed, followed by heavy rain. She took shelter under the classroom veranda and saw a bright light and heard a loud sound before finding herself on the ground. Her right side was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Mildred was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for four days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Pain:** She sometimes feels slight pain in her right side when sleeping at night.
- **Eye Issues:** Her eyes sometimes hurt and tear up.

**Personal Account:** Mildred mentioned that she feels normal now but occasionally experiences pain in her right side and eye discomfort.

**9. VANDALTON KEITH VITALLY**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Vandalton Keith Vitally
- **Age:** 14 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Ayirwoth Brandy

**Incident Details:** Keith was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when he saw a bright light and heard a loud sound. He noticed that almost everyone around him was lying on the ground, but he remained standing, leaning against the wall. His left thigh was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Keith was taken to Oweko HCII for treatment and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Thigh Pain:** He sometimes feels pain in his thigh.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally.

**Personal Account:** Keith shared that he feels normal now but occasionally experiences pain in his thigh.

**10. AYOMRWOTH SCOVIA**

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Ayomrwoth Scovia
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6
- **Parent's Name:** Cikawun Jesca

**Incident Details:** Scovia was taking shelter under the classroom veranda when she saw a bright light and found everyone around her lying on the ground. Her left leg was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Scovia was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for four days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** She feels pain when sitting for long periods.
- **Eye Issues:** Her eyes tear up occasionally.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Scovia mentioned that she still experiences pain in her left leg and eye issues, but she sleeps normally.

**11. MUNGUNGEYO IVAN**

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Mungungeyo Ivan
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Aromborach Santana

**Incident Details:** Ivan was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when he suddenly found himself on the ground. His right shoulder was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Ivan was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for two days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Shoulder Pain:** He feels normal now.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Ivan shared that he has recovered and feels normal, with no ongoing symptoms.

**12. ARON OKURBOTH**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Aron Okurboth
- **Age:** 12 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 3
- **Parent's Name:** Patrick

**Incident Details:** Aron was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when he saw a bright light and found himself on the ground. His left leg was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Aron was taken to Oweko HCII and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** He feels normal now.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night with no challenges.

**Personal Account:** Aron shared that he has fully recovered and feels normal, with no ongoing symptoms.

**13. KAYENYPARWOTH BRIDGET**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Kayenyparwoth Bridget
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Mawa Alfred

**Incident Details:** Bridget was taking shelter under the classroom veranda when she heard a loud thunder and saw a bright light. She only remembers lying on the ground. Her right leg was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Bridget was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for three days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Eye Pain:** She often feels pain in her eyes.
- **Leg Pain:** She sometimes feels pain in her right leg.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Bridget shared that she feels normal now but occasionally experiences pain in her eyes and right leg.

**14. AFOYORWOT WHITNEY**

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Afoyorwot Whitney
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Acan Joyce

**Incident Details:** Whitney was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when the lightning struck. She recalls seeing a very bright light and then noticing that most people around her were lying on the ground. Her right arm was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Whitney was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for three days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Pain:** She always feels pain in her right arm when it's cold.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Whitney shared that the incident has left her with ongoing pain in her right arm, especially when it's cold. Despite this, she sleeps normally at night.

**15. OMARWOTH RYAN**



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Omarwoth Ryan
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Mauar Hope

**Incident Details:** Ryan ran to take shelter under a classroom veranda when it started raining heavily. He recalls seeing a very bright light and hearing loud thunder before finding himself on the ground. His eyes and ears were severely affected.

**Medical Treatment:** Ryan was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for three days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Vision Issues:** He almost loses his vision when he sees bright light.
- **Hearing Issues:** He hears strange noises frequently.
- **Body Pain:** He feels cold and pain all over his body.
- **Sleep:** He doesn't sleep well at night.

**Personal Account:** Ryan shared that the incident has left him with severe vision and hearing issues. He also experiences body pain and coldness, which disrupt his sleep.

**16. KWICWINY LYDIA**

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Kwicwiny Lydia
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Aromborac Collins

**Incident Details:** Lydia was taking shelter under a classroom veranda when it started raining heavily. She saw a very bright light and heard a loud sound before finding herself on the ground. Her right leg was in pain.

**Medical Treatment:** Lydia was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for three days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** She still feels pain in her right leg.
- **Eye Pain:** Her eyes keep paining at night when she is sleeping.

**Personal Account:** Lydia shared that the incident has left her with ongoing pain in her right leg and eyes, especially at night. Despite these challenges, she continues to attend school.

**From OMOYO P/S**

Casualties

**17. OTWIKENDE DONALD****Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Otwikende Donald
- **Age:** 44 years old
- **Occupation:** School Chef

**Incident Details:** Donald saw a bright light and then found himself lying on the ground. He was taken to Oweko Health Centre II, where he received medication and was sent home after

recovering from shock. He felt intense heat on the right side of his body, which he still occasionally feels.

**Medical History:** Donald had experienced a similar shock when he was young, but no one was injured at that time. He was unconscious for a few minutes during the recent incident but regained consciousness at school amidst the confusion.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Right Side Weakness:** His right hand and leg have been weak since the lightning strike, although he can walk and use his hand normally.

**Personal Account:** Donald shared that he was thrown to the ground from the veranda where he was standing. Despite the weakness in his right side, he can perform his daily activities.

## 18. PIRWO PARWOTH FANCY

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Pirwo Parwoth Fancy
- **Age:** 14 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Mr. Wapokurwa Denis and Kacwiny Parwoth

**Incident Details:** Fancy was unconscious after the lightning strike and was carried to the hospital, where she regained consciousness. She had body pains and a small mark on her back, which she attributes to the lightning.

**Medical Treatment:** Fancy was paralyzed for 2-3 hours but later regained strength. She has lost her appetite since the incident.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Pain:** She still experiences body pain.
- **Appetite Loss:** She has lost her appetite for food.

**Personal Account:** Fancy was worried about dying and couldn't understand why the incident happened to her. She mentioned a superstition that God punishes sinners with lightning.

## 19. YIKPARWOTH GOFFIN

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Yikparwoth Goffin
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 7
- **Parent's Name:** Mr. Ogen Rwoth Simon

**Incident Details:** Goffin fell after the lightning strike and experienced pain in his right hand due to the fall. He was thrown about half a meter from the veranda to the ground.

**Medical Treatment:** Goffin was taken to Oweko Health Centre II for treatment and was sent home the next day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Hand Pain:** He experienced pain in his right hand from the fall.

**Personal Account:** Goffin shared that he had never experienced such a shock or seen anyone hit by lightning before. He quickly recovered from the shock and is now doing well.

## 20. MUNGUNGEYO BRENDA

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Mungungeyo Brenda
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6
- **Living Situation:** Lives with extended grandfather

**Incident Details:** Brenda was in a classroom with about 60 pupils when the lightning struck. She fell and was paralyzed for several hours, unable to walk or feel her body.

**Medical Treatment:** Brenda did not receive any physical harm or burns but felt her body burning and in pain.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Pain:** She still feels pain on the left side of her body, including her arm and leg.

**Personal Account:** Brenda shared that she was full of fear after the thunder and could not move for hours. She continues to experience pain on her left side.

## 21. KAYENY PARWOTH SIFA

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Kayeny Parwoth Sifa
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Jamony Moses

**Incident Details:** Sifa was affected by the lightning strike on July 31, 2024. She initially had body pains, especially in her right leg.

**Medical Treatment:** Sifa was treated at Oweko Health Centre II and recovered after a few minutes of unconsciousness.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** She initially had pain in her right leg, which has since healed.

**Personal Account:** Sifa shared that she was unconscious for a few minutes but later stabilized and recovered from the incident.

## 22. PIMER PARWOTH TOPISTER

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Pimer Parwoth Topister
- **Age:** 13 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 4

**Incident Details:** Topister experienced pain and a burning sensation inside her body after the lightning strike. She was treated and recovered.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Fear of Rain:** She developed a fear of rain and feels uncomfortable whenever it rains or drizzles.
- **Body Pain:** She had body pain after being thrown down but has since recovered.

**Personal Account:** Topister shared that she has no burns or bruises and continues her studies. However, she avoids going outside when it rains due to the fear developed from the incident.

## 23. YIK PARWOTH MAVELINE



**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Yik Parwoth Maveline
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6

**Incident Details:** Maveline was seriously affected by the lightning strike but did not sustain any burns. She lost consciousness and began vomiting immediately after waking up. The vomiting continued for two days until she received treatment.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Burning Sensation:** She feels burns unconditionally and cannot explain why.
- **Paralysis and Scratches:** She was paralysed and could not move even after regaining consciousness. She also had scratches on her left leg.

**Personal Account:** Maveline has recovered and is now in good health. She expressed gratitude for her recovery.

**24. OFOY RWOTH SAVIOUR****Personal Information:**

- **Name:** OfoyRwoth Saviour
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Mr. Kiza Emanuel

**Incident Details:** Saviour was standing on the veranda when the lightning struck. He saw a bright light and then found himself lying in the rain. He quickly regained consciousness and saw his friends being carried by teachers and others.

**Medical Treatment:** Saviour was taken to the hospital, where he was found safe and given painkillers.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Weakness:** He felt weak for a few days but has since regained his strength.

**Personal Account:** Saviour shared that he is now doing well and has recovered from the incident.

**25. MUNGUNGEYO HILLARY****Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Mungungeyo Hillary



- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6
- **Parent's Name:** Opira Stephen

**Incident Details:** Hillary was struck by lightning on July 31, 2024. He saw a bright light and then found himself lying on the ground in the classroom. He fell on his stomach and experienced body pain for a few days.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Internal Burning Sensation:** He felt a burning sensation inside his body.

**Personal Account:** Hillary shared that he experienced pain all over his body but has since recovered.

## 26. GWOKPARWOTH FRANCIS

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Gwokparwoth Francis
- **Age:** 15 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 4
- **Parent's Name:** Mr. Ogenrwoth Simon

**Incident Details:** Francis found himself lying in the classroom amidst commotion after the lightning strike. He experienced body pain, which continues unpredictably.

**Medical Treatment:** Francis was taken to Oweko Health Centre II for treatment and was sent home immediately after.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Pain:** He still experiences body pain.

**Personal Account:** Francis shared that he remained conscious during the incident and saw other learners hiding under tables, which scared him. Despite the ongoing pain, he looks healthy and continues his studies.

## 27. MAXWELL OYIRWOTH

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Maxwell Oyirwoth
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6
- **Parent's Name:** Lawrence

**Incident Details:** Maxwell was seated in the classroom, leaning on the wall when the lightning struck. He saw a bright light and then found himself lying on the ground. Both his legs were in pain, but he was not injured.

**Medical Treatment:** Maxwell was taken to Oweko Health Centre II (HCII), where he received medication and was discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Pain:** He experienced pain in both legs but has since recovered.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps well at night and feels well nowadays.

**Personal Account:** Maxwell shared that he was wearing closed shoes at the time of the incident and has no other health conditions resulting from the lightning strike.

## 28. KAYENYPARWOTH PROSY

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Kayenyparwoth Prosy
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Kennedy

**Incident Details:** Prosy was standing on the veranda when the lightning struck. She saw a bright light and then found herself on the ground. Her left arm was paralysed.

**Medical Treatment:** Prosy was admitted to Oweko HCII, where she received medication and was discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Paralysis:** Her left arm was paralysed but has since improved.
- **Headache:** She experiences slight headaches at times.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Prosy shared that she was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and feels better nowadays with no lasting effects from the lightning strike.

## 29. MADITKWO UNITY

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Maditkwo Unity
- **Age:** 14 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5

- **Parent's Name:** Foster Piurath

**Incident Details:** Unity was taking shelter on the veranda when the lightning struck. He found himself on the ground and later woke up in a nearby hospital.

**Medical Treatment:** Unity was admitted to the hospital and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Chest Pain:** He experienced significant pain on the left side of his chest.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Unity shared that he was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and has no other effects from the lightning strike, such as problems with his eyes or ears.

### 30. LENGCWINY KETTY

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Lengcwiny Ketty
- **Age:** 12 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 3
- **Parent's Name:** Ceasar

**Incident Details:** Ketty was taking shelter inside a classroom and remembers holding her friend tightly when the lightning struck. Her right arm was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Ketty was admitted to a nearby HCII and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Paralysis:** Her right arm was paralyzed but has since improved.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Ketty shared that she was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and feels normal now, with no effects on her eyes or ears.

### 31. NYAMUTORO HAMLET

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Nyamutoro Hamlet
- **Age:** 14 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 4
- **Parent's Name:** Ajoba Ariem

**Incident Details:** Hamlet was taking shelter on the veranda when the lightning struck. She saw a bright light and then found herself lying on the ground inside the classroom. Her right arm was paralysed.

**Medical Treatment:** Hamlet was admitted to a nearby HCII, where she was treated and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Paralysis:** Her right arm was paralysed but has since improved.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Hamlet shared that she was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and feels better now, with no problems with her hearing or vision.

### 32. NYAMUTORO KAREN

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Nyamutoro Karen
- **Age:** 12 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 4
- **Parent's Name:** Anena Palma

**Incident Details:** Karen was taking shelter on the veranda when the lightning struck. She doesn't remember the exact moment but found herself paralyzed and lying inside a classroom. Her left arm was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Karen was admitted to a nearby Health Centre II (HCII), given medication, and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Paralysis:** Her left arm was paralyzed but has since improved.
- **Headache and Eye Pain:** She sometimes experiences slight headaches and minor pain in her eyes.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Karen shared that she was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and feels normal nowadays, with no issues with her ears.

### 33. AMARORWOTH MARVIS

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Amarorwoth Marvis
- **Age:** 12 years old

- **Grade:** Primary 2
- **Parent's Name:** Wilfred Okuya

**Incident Details:** Marvis was taking shelter under the veranda when she saw a very bright light. And fell on the ground from their, her right side of the body was paralysed.

**Medical Treatment:** Marvis was admitted to a nearby HCII for treatment and discharged the same day.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Paralysis:** Her right side was paralysed but has since improved.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Marvis shared that she was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and has no other adverse effects, such as problems with her vision or hearing.

### 34. PIMUNGU JOHN BAPTIST

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Pimungu John Baptist
- **Age:** 14 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 5
- **Parent's Name:** Orwodi Martina

**Incident Details:** John Baptist was seated inside the classroom when he saw a very bright light and then found himself lying on the desk. His left leg was paralysed.

**Medical Treatment:** John Baptist was not taken to the hospital but received first aid from their game's teacher.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Leg Paralysis:** His left leg was paralyzed but has since improved.
- **Eye Pain:** He sometimes feels pain in his eyes when he sees light.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** John Baptist shared that he was wearing sandals at the time of the incident and feels normal nowadays, with no issues with his ears.

### 35. RODRICK JAKONYPARWOTH

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Rodrick Jakonyparwoth

- **Age:** 12 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 3
- **Parent's Name:** Ogenrwoth Joram

**Incident Details:** Rodrick was taking shelter inside the classroom when the lightning struck. He doesn't remember the exact moment but found himself lying under the desk. His right arm was in pain.

**Medical Treatment:** Rodrick received first aid at the school.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Arm Pain:** His right arm was in pain but has since improved.
- **Sleep:** He sleeps normally at night.

**Personal Account:** Rodrick shared that he was barefoot at the time of the incident and has no issues with his hearing or vision.

### 36. BRIDGET

**Personal Information:**

- **Name:** Bridget
- **Age:** 16 years old
- **Grade:** Primary 6

**Incident Details:** Bridget was taking shelter under the veranda with about 30 others when the lightning struck. She doesn't remember the exact moment because she was tying her shoelaces and later found herself on the ground. Her whole body was paralyzed.

**Medical Treatment:** Bridget was admitted to Nebbi Referral Hospital for two days and then discharged.

**Current Symptoms:**

- **Body Paralysis:** Her whole body was paralyzed but has since improved.
- **Leg Pain and Headache:** She still feels pain in both her legs and sometimes experiences slight headaches.
- **Sleep:** She sleeps well at night but sometimes feels her body itching.

**Personal Account:** Bridget shared that she has no issues with her hearing or vision and feels better nowadays.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

The lightning strike at Oweko Primary School was a tragic event that highlighted the urgent need for improved lightning protection and emergency preparedness in schools. By implementing the recommended measures, the community can better protect its children and prevent similar incidents in the future.

## **STAFF ROLES DURING THE INVESTIGATION VISIT.**

Names and Positions:

1. Akantambira Barnabas - Country Coordinator.
2. Omara Martin - Finance Officer / School LPS project manager, Translator for this investigation.
3. Isaac Tumuhimbise - Chief Installer.

The ACLENet staff visited the affected school, and each member made significant contributions to the visit and the compilation of this report.

The team was led by the Country Coordinator, Akantambira Barnabas, whose role was to coordinate all activities including meetings with government officials, school staff, parents, and well-wishers. He also provided counseling and comfort to the school children, both affected and unaffected.

Omara Martin, the Finance Officer and Project Manager, performed outstanding work by interviewing the casualties and interpreting for the rest of the staff, as he is fluent in the local language.

Isaac Tumuhimbise, the Chief Installer, did an excellent job surveying the entire school, taking measurements, testing soil resistivity, and compiling a survey report. Special thanks to Isaac. The report of the scene physical characteristics, building measurements, and soil resistivity at Oweko School are available on request

Additional thanks to Ken Nixon and Mary Ann, who supported the staff in successfully conducting the investigation.

Guidance was provided to the staff during the pre-departure meeting, and a debriefing was also conducted to assess and support the staff emotionally.

Thank you very much.

Akantambira Barnabas.