



YOUTH EFFORT FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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Introduction:

This report presents the progress of our community development projects in Kumi District Eastern Uganda for selected beneficiaries. The topics explained in this report include; Projects implemented Beneficiaries, Outcomes, Training methods, lessons learned and follow up action plan acknowledgement of sponsors and supporters and pictorials.

Background:

Rural communities are mostly used to growing food crops for home consumption and very little for sale. They are also used to using kerosene lamps for lighting and a three stone arrangement for cooking with firewood.

This has kept them poor and increased the cases of gender-based violence as women are mostly over burdened with household work. However, with the introduction of the S.M Catalyst project that aims at empowering women and youth through farming as a business, and the Switch to Clean Energy program that aims at providing affordable renewable energy solutions for all, these communities have been provided with a lucrative business opportunities. This helps to increase household income and savings through the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

Projects:

We have engaged communities in Kumi District in two main projects i.e;

1. S.M Catalyst Project:

The S.M Catalyst project aims at ending poverty everywhere through farming as a business. Initiated in 2019, the project has directly supported **700** households and **4,600** individuals with high adoption rate. The project was designed to support smallholder farmers with knowledge, skills and resources to scale up their production from subsistence to commercial farming. This has led to increased household income and savings evidenced by established and operational Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). Currently the project has supported the formation and capacity building of 20 VSLAs. Each households saves an average of **Ugx 7,000** (\$2 USD) weekly.



2. The Switch to Clean Energy program.

Officially launched in 2017, the program continues to support rural communities with access to affordable renewable energy solutions. The project attracted support from **ENVenture** in August 2019 and got financial support inform of seed capital. **ENVenture** has since supported us with technical support and resources needed for our program to

run successfully. We also attended a Boot Camp organized by **ENVenture** in Kampala. The project has supported over **3,000** households since 2017.



Beneficiaries:

Our programs have been majorly supporting women and youth because we believe and know that “to empower a community, you have to empower women and youth” as they perform almost 85% of the household duties in our community. However, we also support men in a small scale but engage them as a household when running our projects. About 85% of our beneficiaries are women and youth irrespective of any disability.

Outcomes:

1. **20** farmer groups fully registered at the sub county level with 35 members with at least **20** being women, members know their roles and responsibilities and willing to work together with clear bye laws, good governance and clear records.
20 vibrant groups using developed and functional business plans to conduct farm business.
2. **700** farmers able to use knowledge and skills gained to increase production.
700 farmers able to use and adopt technologies demonstrated on the learning platform with a **25%** improvement in production.
3. Community members able to access affordable renewable energy solutions for lighting and cooking.
4. **700** farmers report increase in market opportunities and able to sell through established bulking centers with increased prices.
5. **20** VSLAs procure the kits to start savings with results showing the recommended practices followed.
6. Reported increased internal savings.

Lessons learned and recommendations:

- a) The beneficiaries appreciated the programs and encouraged non beneficiaries to adopt skills from their farms and **VSLAs**.
- b) There was an increasing demand to increase the number of group members which calls for formation and registration of farmer cooperatives.
- c) Women appreciated the use of improved cook stoves saying, they are healthy (no smoke), save time and use little charcoal compared to three stone arrangements.

- d) There was a need to form and register more farmer groups to scale up the program.

Acknowledgements of sponsors and supporters:

Great thanks to [Latek Stay Alliance Uganda](#) for the financial support and resources provided for implementing the S.M Catalyst project. We would also like to appreciate [STINA FOODS](#) for joining hands with us to contract farmers to produce for them raw materials for producing *Amelia baby porridge*.



We also appreciate [ENVenture](#) for providing us with resources and technical support for running our Switch to Clean Energy program.



Annex1. Pictorials:

