



MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

International Youth Day 2018

Theme: Safe Spaces for the Youth



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Youth Livelihood Program recovery rate reaches 66%

The International Youth day is celebrated every August 12, in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution 54/120 of the 1999. This year's theme is 'Safe spaces for the youth', and the national celebrations will be held at Kampiringisa, Mpigi district.

The day provides an opportunity for the world to focus and reflect on issues affecting the youth and the various interventions being made in respect to them. And Uganda is no exception because a number of interventions have been made and one of these is the Youth Livelihood Programme

BACKGROUND

The Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) is Government of Uganda rolling programme, targeting the unemployed and poor youth in the country. It was designed in response to the high unemployment rate and poverty level among the youth in the country.

Following an official launch by President Yoweri Museveni on January 24, 2014, the programme commenced that same financial year of 2013/14. It is implemented under the ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. It currently covers all the present 122 districts (including Kampala City) and 41 municipalities. The initial budget for the first five years is Shs 265 billion.

The design and implementation of the programme is based on the community demand-driven development (CDD) model. The youth receive the support in form of revolving funds advanced through youth interest groups (YIGs).

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

The programme development objective (PDO) of YLP is to empower the target youth in Uganda to harness their socio-economic potential and increase their self-employment opportunities and income levels.

- The key specific objectives are to provide:
- The youth with marketable vocational skills and tool kits for self-employment and job creation.
 - Financial support to enable the youth establish

income-generating activities.

- The youth with entrepreneurship and life skills as an integral part of their livelihoods.
- The youth with relevant knowledge and information for attitudinal change (positive mindset change).

TARGET BENEFICIARIES

The primary target group of the programme is the unemployed and poor youth, aged 18 to 30. This target group includes the following vulnerable categories of youth:

- Drop-outs from schools and training institutions.
- Youth living in slums, urban streets, and high-risk and impoverished communities.
- Youth who have not had the opportunity to attend formal education.
- Single parent youth.
- Youth with disability.
- Youth living with HIV/Aids.
- Youth who have completed secondary school or tertiary institutions (including university) but remain unemployed.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

The main focus in the implementation of YLP at its inception in FY 2013/14 was in the establishment of systems and structures to create a firm foundation for roll-out to the 27 participating districts under Phase I. Full-scale implementation, covering the rest of the remaining districts and municipalities was done in the FY 2014/15. Remarkable achievements have since been registered as indicated below:

The programme has to date disbursed a cumulative figure of **Shs 123,970,260,586** to support **16,169** projects benefiting **197,728** youths, of whom **107,717** are male and **90,011** female.

To date, **Shs 19,970,961,722** has been recovered from **7,151** groups, representing **66%** of **Shs 30bn**, the amount due for recovery. On average, **Shs 150m to 200m** is recovered weekly. A total of **208** projects have made 100% recovery. Of the recovered amount, **Shs 7bn** has been revolved to their respective districts.

(See below, selected case studies of a few YLP success stories.)



Eric Senyonjo, the sales manager

Kirimanyaga youth expand stone cutting venture

Kirimanyaga Youth Stone Cutting Group last year received a loan through Youth Livelihood Programme in order to boost their business and also empower their members economically.

The group, located in Kirimanyaga zone, Zana, Wakiso district, has 10 members although over time some members have been leaving and being replaced.

ORIGINS

Eric Senyonjo, the sales manager, explained that Kirimanyaga Youth Stone Cutting Group was founded by two members in 2013. With time, other members were recruited as more youth showed interest.

"As a school dropout, I had to find something to do; so, I got employment with some businessman who taught me how to cut and design stones," he explains.

After acquiring the skills, Senyonjo said, they started small with a few stones because they did not have capital and yet the stone cutting needed a lot of resources.

Other members were later recruited after paying from Shs 200,000 to Shs 500,000; this money was used as training fee for the new members.

He says although the business was booming at the time, they

could not meet the demand because they did not have capital to buy the stones let alone pay for the stones which are acquired from as far as Mbarara district.

"People used to come here [their site is located along Entebbe road], with huge trucks but we could hardly fill one with the stones we had, hence we ended up losing business," he said.

Senyonjo added: "There was also the challenge of lack of variety; stones come in white, purple, brown and black, but we could not afford to stock enough of each of the four categories and this made us lose too."

They also lacked machinery as they had old-fashioned trimming machines; so, the work was somehow slow.

GOING COMMERCIAL

Things took a drastic change when they received a loan from the Youth Livelihood Programme, a government initiative aimed at empowering the youth economically.

In 2017, the Kirimanyaga Youth Stone Cutting Group received Shs 10.2m; the money was used to buy generators,

Youth Livelihood Program transforms the lives of the youth

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Faisal Mayengo, the group's treasurer, and Hanisha Namubiru, the secretary, demonstrate how to make candles

YLP loan helps Para Akezimbira Group diversify

Faisal Mayengo, the group's treasurer, explained that in order to make more money, they had to vend the candles themselves; taking them to the shops.

"Each member had targets; the candles were divided equally and once the sales were made, a percentage was taken off and it was put in the group's savings scheme," he said.

At the time of the interview, the group's savings are worth Shs 13 million and their plans are to hit the billion mark.

THE YLF LOAN

Mayengo says the group last year received Shs 6 million from the Youth Livelihood Programme, which helped them expand the candle business, and also

ventured into making sandals, liquid soap and charcoal briquettes.

"More people realized that there are some profits in candle making and they have started the same; so, after seeing serious competition, we decided to diversify," she said.

Namubiru added: "This is working; the sandals bring good returns although we are still operating on small scale. But we will get there."

At Para Akezimbira Youth Candle Making Group, the profits are not shared out, but used as loans to the members.

"We save our profits which we in turn give out as loans to the members; in fact all our members have other businesses of their own," Namubiru explained.

CHALLENGES

Mayengo said one of the biggest challenges is workers who are not reliable; the group has to recruit every time, and train workers who soon leave.

"Workers are neither consistent nor loyal; they steal and run away. Imagine, the training costs us resources but, anyway, we keep recruiting until we get trustworthy ones," he said.

Namubiru, who is now a 'trainer', said the group has also taken up training others for a fee; each candle-making training costs Shs 300,000 and Shs 150,000 for making liquid soap.

"We train others; secondary and vocational schools. The income part of it goes to the savings scheme; this has kept us afloat," she explained.

ABOUT THE FUND

The Youth Livelihood Programme is an interest-free revolving fund that gives loans of up to Shs 25m depending on the nature of the enterprise and basing on the community demand-driven development (CDD) model. It targets youth-formed groups of 10 to 15 members, of whom 30 per cent must be females to ensure gender equity.



Candles made by Para Akezimbira Youth Candle Making Group

A few years ago, the government through the ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development launched the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) with an aim of empowering the youth.

One of the groups that confess to have benefitted is Para Akezimbira Youth Candle Making Group.

Located in Para Zone, Namasuba, Makindye Ssabagabo, Wakiso district, the group has 10 members; five females and five males.

When The Observer visited the group members were all busy at work. Interestingly, apart from the main project of candle making, the group has broadened its horizons and is making other products.

Hanisha Namubiru, the secretary, explained that the group started as a means of empowering themselves economically and also providing what she

termed a 'day job'. She said there is a lot of trauma when one finishes university and finds they are jobless. The members felt the need to start something that is paying, but not capital-intensive.

"I had just finished university, the course I did was a bit tricky as regards getting a job; so, with others, we decided to form this group so that we would get some income," she said.

Namubiru holds a bachelor's degree in Adult and Continuing Education from Makerere University.

HOW THEY STARTED

Para Akezimbira Group started with a paltry capital of Shs 200,000 back in 2015, with one molder and a carton of wax.

"At that time, our target was one carton from which we would get only 30 packets of candles. We would sell a packet at Shs 2, 100," she said.

Kirimanyaga youth expand stone cutting venture



Eric Senyonjo at their demonstration site

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machinery, personal protection equipment such as boots, and to lease the place where they display their products along the road.

"We were also able to purchase other colours of stones; black stone is got from Mbarara, white from Busunju, Hoima road, brown and purple from Nakaseke district," he said.

"The loan is for three years but we don't find any difficulty in paying back the money," Senyonjo added.

BENEFITS

He said although not much money has gone into their pockets, the business is doing well and they are able to sustain their families as well as pay land rent and other utilities at their workplace.

"At least we are now busy; there is some source of income and we do appreciate the government's effort for helping the youth gain some income," he said. "We are optimistic that after

the loan, we will have saved more money to start something like a Sacco where we can lend to others and also build our own home."

CHALLENGES

Although the competition is very high, with good marketing strategy, the group has been able to stay afloat.

"Sometimes the season is bad, especially when children are going to school; but generally, business is not that bad.... Also there is a lot of undercutting of prices," he said. Though group members are always leaving and they have to be replaced, the current members are optimistic that the group will grow.

Senyonjo, said their future plans include clearing the loan and then save to open new sites across the country as well as give their members money to start side businesses.

Other members are Ronald Kigundu, Vincent Kakooza, Sophie Namutebi, Prossy Nagawa, Derrick Setuba, Derrick Yawe, Richard Senkumba, Alex Kizito and Ritah Nakiganda.



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When Rachael Namirimu completed her studies at Makerere University Business School (Mubs) in 2016, one of her worries was how she would get a job.

Like most youth in Uganda, getting a dream job was just a nightmare; so, her worries increased each day after graduation since she did not know where to start from.

"I did not have a job, I was just sitting at home and feeling very bad because I had the papers but no job," she says.

But with time, she and a few former course mates decided to start 'something small', a business just to keep them going as they looked for jobs.

"We needed something just to keep us in Kampala, let alone allowing us to leave home and also facilitate our movements. Hence we came together and formed a group," she said.

With only Shs 600,000, they formed Nakawa East Village Bakery and Confectionery Group. The group has 11 members; six males and five females.

The group is trading under the name Royale Dinerz, dealing in cakes for all functions and other confectionery products.

Edwin Bulonge, 24, the chairperson, explained that they had to learn how to bake before venturing into the business and with the help of one of their lecturers, they started the business.

Bulonge, who had previously tried petty jobs here and there, said the youth have to find their footing rather than waiting for government to give them jobs.

TURNING POINT

Bulonge explained that the turning point came when they received some capital in form of a loan from Youth Livelihood Programme last year.

"We were not earning much; with only Shs 600,000, you can't expect much but we are

Royale Dinerz expands outlets, skills non-member youths



Rachael Namirimu cuts a cake made by their group as Edwin Bulonge looks on

proud to announce that we are now on course since government moved to help us. We are grateful," he said.

They have received a Shs 9.5 million from YLP. The money was released in two phases;

Shs 2m in September and Shs 7.5m in October.

"The programme is very good because it has pushed us up; we have expanded our production and we are comfortably paying back the

loans," Namirimu said.

BENEFITS

According to the group members, within the short period, they have been able to expand their business; some members talk of having been 'liberated'. "We now have six outlets; we don't have to crowd in one place. I can say we are liberating ourselves slowly," Bugole said. Two of the outlets are located in Kireka, three in Mukono and another in Mubs area.

A part from expansion, Royale Dinerz is employing other youth to do the sales and marketing of their products.

"My baking skills have improved, I have been economically empowered and I have saved some money. Also due to the business skills I acquired before receiving the loan, I can start business on my own," Namirimu said.

The group has diversified; they have a gift shop as well as selling soft drinks to accompany their cakes and confectioneries.

Bugole, however, says the seasonality of the business around Mubs is a challenge; when the university closes, sales drop. But Royale Dinerz plan to continue skilling other youth and also expanding their business to other areas.

Other members of the group are Issa Ntege, Ritah Agaba, Edwin Ndungu, Derrick Kalyowa, Jamirah Nabale, Allen Nantongo, Annet Nakibondwe, John Bosco Matovu and Johnson Tumwebaze.

Upper Konge Youth Project proud to make affordable handbags

As we approach Upper Konge Youth Project premises deep in Makindye division of Kampala, the one thing that stands out is that there are more women than men in the group.

Anthony Kawuki, the chairperson of the project, said there are more women because some of their male colleagues walked away after realizing that the money got from the Youth Livelihood Programme is not for 'splitting'.

"Our friends lost interest after they realized this is not free money; we the leaders were not willing to play around with government money which was intended to get us out of poverty," he smilingly said.

Upper Konge Youth Project was started in 2014 by four men and six women but currently has seven women and two men.

Although it started as a community-based organisation (CBO), in 2015 it was fully incorporated as a youth group.

The group specializes in making handbags which are then sold to traders on wholesale around Kampala's Kikuubo area.

"One of the benefits of the Youth Livelihood Programme loan is that it has helped us stand against the test of time despite the shortfalls. We have exhibited both in Uganda and Kigali [Rwanda]; this

was a good exposure," he said.

Kawuki said such exposure has enabled them to get clientele in Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan who are their biggest customers.

The loan has enable the project to expand their training and skilling programme to the youth around the area.

Kawuki, who works fulltime at Upper Konge Youth Project but also a volunteer at a church, said the business is very promising as the group gears to complete their loan payments later this year.

One of the challenges the group had was that they did not have enough sewing machines but in 2015, the group got Shs 12.3m which they used to purchase machines and other materials.

"The money was used to buy two sewing machines at a cost of Shs 1.5 million each; we also bought the leathers, resins and glue, among other things," he said. "We are now large and work more efficiently."

CHALLENGES

Upper Konge Youth Project members complain about the high cost of materials like gum, leather skins, soft and hard boards. "The South Sudan wars that broke out greatly affected our business because South Sudan was our biggest market; this greatly ate



Anthony Kawuki (L), the chairperson of Upper Konge Youth Project, demonstrate how to make a handbag

into our profits," he said.

The project also suffers manpower shortages since some members thought the YLP money was for sharing; they just walked away. Kawuki says his friends deserted, leaving the works in few hands.

The group members are Anthony Kawuki, Allen Nakigoba, Sylvester Kisakye, Mariam Nanyondo, Perus Namwasa, Justine Nairuba, Saidat Namugalu, Ronald Tumwesigye, Sula Kato and Loice Nakagolo; the last three are said not to be active.