



# UPLIFT PROJECT PHASE II

Urban Youth Livelihoods in Kampala

**THIS MEANS THE WORLD**



### About this report

This brief summarises the results from an end of project evaluation of World Vision Uganda's UPLIFT Youth Livelihoods in Kampala Phase II project, completed independently by Primehouse Consulting Group, between April and June 2022.

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Front cover photo: HEsther, 21 and her child at the Bukoto World of Fashion tailoring group

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Young people in Uganda face significant barriers to employment and other livelihood opportunities, especially in urban areas.

According to the World Bank, 32% of youth (16-30) living in the capital city Kampala are unemployed. Formal employment opportunities are limited, and many young people – especially young mothers – are burdened with family responsibilities that further limit their options to earn money.

In response to these issues the project set out to improve the economic wellbeing of 5,000 vulnerable youths (target 70% women and 5% people with disabilities aged 16-30 years in Kampala District, Uganda by 2022.



### The project succeeded in providing over 5000 unemployed youth aged 16-30 with marketable skills for formal employment or small business creation, business mentorships and internship placements.

- The project reached 5,959 youth (women 3,712, male 2,247), 19% more than original target of 5,000.
- The majority of project youth report increased incomes, including from more diverse income sources.
- Women and young people with disability reported average increases in income of 42.5% and 42.4%, respectively.
- 492 young people completed TVET trainings.
- 87 youth with disability accessed assistive devices such as wheelchairs. 137 youth with disability established a new livelihood because of skills and training obtained through the project.
- 276 functional savings groups with 5,959 members (3,712f, 2,247m) since 2018, 2,609 of whom are implementing investment plans.
- In 2021-22 alone, the project helped form and train 78 new groups who had aggregated savings of approximately AUD 37,568 by May 2022.

Access to savings and training which in turn lead to employment or self-employment transformed many youths lives.

***“I am no longer a beggar since I can get a big amount of a loan from the group.”***  
***“I found that having a skill was not enough and won’t help me. After training in life skills, I realised that one gets a job but character preserves it.”***

The project succeeded in a difficult environment caused by Covid 19. At one stage most activities were halted and all training suspended due to Covid restrictions.

# EVALUATION OVERVIEW

**In April to June 2022, WV Uganda engaged a local consultancy to evaluate the impact of the project over the previous five years.**

The consultant pulled together a team that employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies consistent with previous baseline and mid-term measurements to evaluate project impact, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability.

Quantitatively, the consultant team conducted a survey with more than 1000 youths randomly selected from youth participant lists. The numbers surveyed exceeded the planned 859 surveys needed to provide statistical significance of results.

In addition to the survey, the evaluation included 58 Key Informant Interviews (KII) and 29 Focus Group Discussions that enabled further exploring of issues with a variety of stakeholders including savings group members, youths receiving technical training, young mothers, recovering drug addicts, former sex workers.

Finally, the evaluation also included 8 case studies of youths participating in the project to provide more in depth personal experience of the project and its impact on youths.



BSLA members meet to discuss group finances, collect interest payments and offer new loans to participants.

# FINDINGS

**Uplift has exceeded its goal of supporting 5000 youth through economic empowerment.**

## 3.1 GOAL

	Women	Men	People with Disabilities	Total
<b>Youth increased incomes</b>	58.2%	62.3%	63.2%	59.7% (+38.1%)

The project surpassed its goal of supporting 5,000 vulnerable youth (70% women and 5% people with disabilities) by reaching 5,959 youth (women 3,712, male 2,247), 19% more than original target.

The evaluation demonstrated significant and large improvement of incomes for these youths (38% increase). Almost 60% of youths surveyed reported increased income in the final evaluation compared with only around 22% at baseline.

## 3.2 OUTCOME 1: INCREASED ACCESS TO SAVINGS AND CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

The project had very high success in improving access to savings and credit through its support of savings groups. Almost all the youths participating in the project had increased their savings by the end of the project (95.5%) People with disabilities had the biggest jump in savings, starting from 45.9% of people with disabilities able to save in the baseline and reaching 98.5% in the end line.

	Women	Men	People with Disabilities	Total
<b>Youth have the means to save money</b>	95.3%	95.8%	98.5%	95.5% (+30.8%)
<b>Youth increase their access to financial services</b>	97.0%	95.0%	94.1%	96.4% (+26.4%)

The project surpassed its goal of supporting 5,000 vulnerable youth (70% women and 5% people with disabilities) by reaching 5,959 youth (women 3,712, male 2,247), 19% more than original target.

Savings by providing psychological security had a transformative effect on many youths.

*“As a single mother, I take these members as my family because we have unity and good communication amongst each other. Some years back on Christmas day, I did not have money to afford a decent meal for my children but I can now afford a decent meal for my children at the end of year because of my savings. I can even buy myself new clothes and a small television for my children.” – A female FGD participant in Kawempe.*

*“We never used to save but now we do and these savings bail us out during emergencies. As PwDs, we also got to know each other in this area.” – A female PwD FGD participant in Mulago, Kawempe.*

*“It is all about financial discipline. For example, having around 15 AUD and not eating all of it. I am always open minded to people who are beyond and above me. I am honest to myself.” – A male FGD participant in Bukoto, Nakawa.*

Savings also enabled youths to access financial service providers and access credit for small enterprises.

Youths saved on average around 52 AUD per member per annum. They borrowed about around 111 AUD per annum to support small enterprises such as retail shops, poultry keeping, charcoal selling, salon, bakery, restaurant.

*“Because of this group, we are now able to get quick, easy and affordable loans which are used to boost our businesses and cater for emergencies.” – A male FGD participant in Kawempe.*

*“Now days our members save, in the past they just used to eat. We improved planning and saving culture, and discuss the different fields and abilities of different people.” – A male FGD participant in Bukoto, Nakawa.*

### 3.3 OUTCOME 2: INCREASED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The evaluation affirms that the project has made significant progress in increasing employment opportunities for youth in Uganda. Employment reached 78.7% of youth surveyed up 10.4% from the baseline. Almost 70% surveyed felt they had learning opportunities to improve their productive capacity. This is up 34.4% since baseline.

Almost 500 young people completed TVET trainings. 87 youth with disability accessed assistive devices such as wheelchairs. 137 youth with disability established a new livelihood because of skills and training obtained through the project. These results were achieved despite the backdrop of Covid which severely interrupted technical training programmes.

#### Evaluation Results for key indicators for outcome 2 – increased employment opportunities

	Women	Men	People with Disabilities	Total
<b>Youth (18-30 years) engaged in employment</b>	74.6%	85.5%	77.9%	78.7% (+10.4%)
<b>Youth possessing entrepreneurial and employment skills</b>	57.3%	64.7%	63.2%	60.0% (+9.2%)
<b>Youth (18-30 years) with learning opportunities</b>	65.5%	71.9%	69.1%	67.9% (+34.4%)

Training in business also made youths more resilient to employment shocks. Many youths engaged in starting their own small enterprises.

*"I used to be employed but now I am self-employed."* – A male FGD participant in Makindye.

*"I used to be employed in town where I would sit outside with customers which was inconvenient. Now, I have my own saloon."* – A male FGD participant in Kawempe.

*"We have learnt a lot from our friends and fellow group members. For example, I can also try farming."* – A male FGD participant in Kawempe.

*"I used to move building to building to look for who would eat food in town but now I can make my fries and get customers."* – A female FGD participant in Makindye.

*"For me, I have learnt how to plait hair and have been approached by people to work in their saloons."* – A female FGD participant in Nakawa.

### 3.4 OUTCOME 3: ENHANCED CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECT STAFF TO IMPLEMENT AND LEARN FROM THE PROJECT

	Women	Men	People with Disabilities	Total
<b>Youth satisfied with the project</b>	83.0%	84.7%	78.0%	83.7%
<b>Youths benefited from the project</b>	92.5%	91.1%	85.9%	92.0%
<b>Youths involved in project decision-making processes</b>	72.1%	77.7%	69.1%	74.2%

Youths expressed high satisfaction with the project. 83.7% of youth surveyed reported high levels of satisfaction regarding their engagement with the project. Over 90% reported that they benefited from the project through trainings, membership of savings group and access to affordable business credit.

**74.2%** of youth reported involvement in various decision-making areas (planning, monitoring, implementation and reporting) of the project.

**14 Partner organisations** also reported increased capacity as a result of participating in the project.

*"Listen! UPLIFT was good. Some of us joined the project when we were 25 but we have grown into it over the years."* – A female FGD participant, Makindye.

*"There are many benefits like friendship, having the required skill. Discipline is also another important benefit."* – A male FGD participant in Bbina, Nakawa division.

# CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

World Vision Uganda rigorously integrated the cross-cutting issues of gender, disability, child protection into its approach. At the strategic level gender and disability were integrated into the design, monitoring and evaluation reporting systems. Staff underwent training regular gender, disability and child protection.

The project particularly targeted the vulnerable and made activities accessible to them. More female than male youths participated (3,712 female youths compared with 2,247 male youths). 640 people with disability also participated. Deaf youths were supported with the availability of a sign language volunteer which enabled them to actively participate in savings groups. About 87 children were supported with wheelchairs to improve their mobility.

Evaluation results showed that all groups including women and people with disability made large and significant improvements in increasing income and savings. People with disability had lower than average gains in employment (6.6% compared with 10.4%). More people with disability were self-employed. People with disability had higher than average gains in self-reported 'thriving'.

## Change in key indicators comparing End Line to Baseline

	Overall	People with Disabilities	Women
<b>Increase in income</b>	+38.1%	+42.4%	+42.5%
<b>Savings</b>	+30.8%	+52.6%	+31.4%
<b>Employment</b>	+10.4%	+6.6%	+8.9%
<b>Thriving</b>	+3.9%	+7.6%	+2.2%

Women and people with disability still face obstacles. Qualitative data collected for this evaluation contained instances of community abuse and degradation of people with disability, which serves to disempower and contribute to social exclusion. Female youth's self reported 'thriving' was lower than average. The evaluation noted Covid hit female business owners harder than male business owners because females still had heavier responsibilities looking after ill family members. Some female youths in savings groups experienced gender-based violence as their partners as the females became economically empowered.



'Ggaba Vision' Business, Savings and Loan Group (BSLA). The project helped form and train over 270 functional BSLA groups whose members are now involved in a range of income generating activities. Many started their own businesses using low interest loans from their BSLA groups.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation made key recommendations in two domains: Sustainability of groups, and future programming recommendations

## SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAVINGS GROUPS

1. **Support pro-active healthy groups transform into more sustainable Cooperatives or Savings and Credit Society Cooperative Society (SACCOs).** Link and register these groups with government bodies.
2. **Support groups to acquire and benefit from government programmes** to remain viable.
3. **Embrace and support CBTs for group sustainability** because they have played a catalytic role within groups.
4. **Encourage continuous training and refresher training for youth groups** to avoid regressing after UPLIFT exit. The departments of Entrepreneurship and Trade and Community Development could strive to provide refresher trainings for youth to ensure smooth operations.

## FUTURE PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Conduct a thorough risk analysis at design phase.** The lack of risk analysis lead to significant delays with activities not completed and targets unmet.
2. **Involve all key project stakeholders in the participant selection process** as this is a critical catalyst for sustainability.
3. **Develop and communicate exit strategy for mature savings groups.** Interviews revealed groups expected WVU support in perpetuity.
4. **Involve private sector in marketable employable skills development programmes** from the design stage.
5. **Conduct a gap assessment for youth** before any intervention is implemented aimed at improving employable skills.
6. **Choose enterprises with ready markets** or quick moving such as food processing (Juice, food, water) and cosmetics. For future programming, such sectors be prioritised due to value addition, marketability and sustainability.
7. **Encourage more women to join groups** as women proved to be more resilient and loyal.
8. **Promote business plan competition.** In the project these competitions gave opportunity for youth to share experiences, showcase presentation skills, and exhibit knowledge and skills acquired from the project.
9. **Create role models/change agents within youth** to instil good practices like optimal behaviours including; joint decision making and support in household business management.
10. **Promote exchange and learning visits** to expose participants to new ideas and see concrete solutions to challenges they face.
11. **Strength activities** to change negative perceptions of community towards people with disability



# LESSONS LEARNED



## **Providing avenues for youths to share experience is critical.**

Business competitions and exchange visits were great ways for the youths to learn from one another and others.



## **Dealing with Risks.**

Project activities and the youths themselves faced many risks over the five years of the project including riots, demonstrations and disruptions, not to mention covid. Urban projects require a comprehensive analysis and planning to identify inherent risks.



## **Working and planning with the private sector.**

Building the capacity of youth and their businesses requires both supply- and demand-side interventions. A job market assessment focusing on availability of the market for the skills being developed is necessary to enable job matching and directly link them for apprenticeship/Internship.




**Community Based Trainers** were catalytic in mobilising, training and building capacity of group members for success.



## **Addressing gender issues and women and girls participation.**

The evaluation found that men's violence against women stemmed from feelings of being 'left out' of project activities. Male engagement activities that address the root causes of gender-based violence and provide opportunities for partner's participation may help to reduce gender-based violence.



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UPLIFT2 has helped young people learn employable trades through formal vocational training.

## For more information, contact:

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