

Creating Opportunities for Youth in Agriculture



Enhancing youth participation in agriculture in Rakai and Kyotera Districts, Uganda



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Who we are

Community Integrated Development Initiatives (CIDI) was founded in 1996 and registered in 1999 as a legal not-for-profit NGO with the Ministry of Internal Affairs under registration certificate No. 2715 and Reference No. S-5914/2868.

Our work mainly focuses on actions that directly transform lives of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized communities in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

In tackling poverty, we continue to invest in community empowerment programs that contribute towards poverty reduction through the provision of sustainable integrated technical and material support, in broad areas of sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, lobbying, health promotion, income generation, water and environmental sanitation, lobbying and advocacy.

Our Vision:

Communities enjoying a decent life free of hunger, poverty and disease.

Our Mission:

Promoting sustainable community livelihoods through; income and food security, water and sanitation, good health and policy advocacy.

Our Key Thematic Areas:

1. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
2. Sustainable Agriculture
3. Health Care Promotion
4. Lobbying and Advocacy
5. CIDI Training Centre for Gardening and Land Scaping

Message from the Executive Director



Amidst the rising youth unemployment in Uganda, evidence reveals that youth engagement in agriculture is declining. This is due to a number of factors including but not limited to; insufficient access to knowledge, information and education; limited access to land; inadequate access to financial services, limited access to markets and limited involvement in policy dialogue.

If this trend continues, it is likely to have negative implications on food security and employment, thereby undermining government efforts to drive economic growth through agriculture.

In response to youth unemployment, Community Integrated Development Initiatives (CIDI) has designed and implemented Community Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihood Project in Rakai and Kyotera Districts, southern Uganda where we support the youth and their associations to engage in productive agriculture as well as get involved in youth policy formulation processes and dialogues at different levels.

In this publication we share our experiences in addressing the bottlenecks that hinder youth effective engagement in agriculture. You will learn about our approach and also read a number of testimonies from the youths on how their lives have been transformed.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you once again to another CIDI youth publication, we hope you will enjoy the message.

Yours truly,
Dr. Fulgencio Jjuuko
Executive Director CIDI

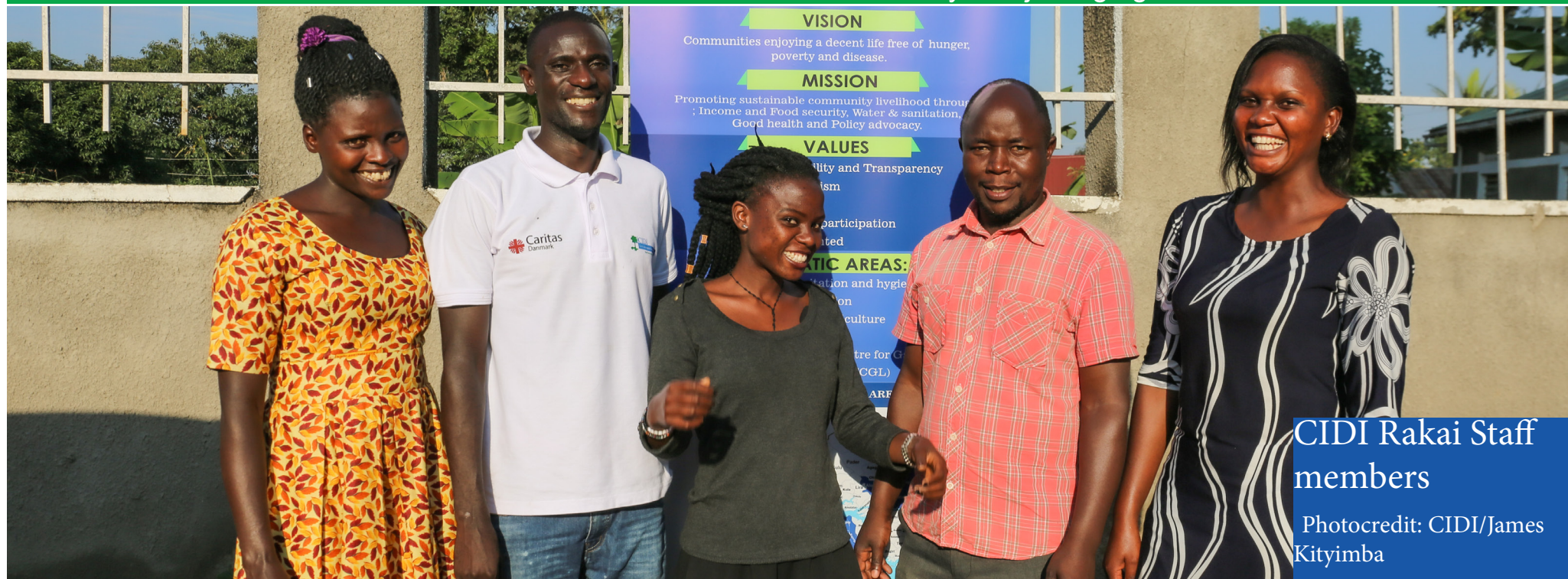
Introduction

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics estimates that seven out of every ten people in Uganda's working population is employed in agriculture. Despite these figures, the youth are shunning away from agriculture.

In 2014, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) study in Uganda titled: "Youth and Agriculture: Key Challenges and Concrete Solution" identified a number of challenges that bar youth from joining agriculture. It cited insufficient access to knowledge, information and education; limited access to

land; inadequate access to financial services; limited access to markets and limited involvement in policy dialogue. The study on the other hand showed how the youths are often interested in fast earning enterprises which are few and difficult to establish, requiring a sizeable amount of start-up capital

At CIDI we believe that if we are to interest the youth into agriculture, we have to find a solution to the challenges faced by the youth, have youth role models in communities who have made it through agriculture. This way we shall have more youth joining agriculture



CIDI Rakai Staff members

Photocredit: CIDI/James Kityimba

Community Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihood (CESL) -Youth Project Overview

The Community Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihood Project (CESL) in Rakai and Kyotera Districts, southern Uganda, started way back in 2006 while working with farmer groups. We realised that few youths (around 5%) had joined the project to engage in agriculture. In 2013, under Uganda Governance and Poverty Alleviation Program (UGOPAP), a baseline study was carried out to understand the barriers and opportunities for youth engagement in productive agriculture. One key finding was that; many youths considered agriculture to be time consuming and not profitable. Majority of the youths wanted quick money and preferred activities like riding BodaBoda (motorcycle taxi) or any other jobs in the urban centres rather than doing farming in the villages.

We used the baseline information to design a youth pilot project which was implemented between 2014-2016. Key activities included mobilisation, education and supporting the youth to engage in agriculture as business through value chain development., The recommendations from the youth pilot project required designing and implementing specific interventions that are now being implemented as an integration under the CESL project to cater for special needs

for the youths. CIDI is taking positive efforts to progressively support the youths to get integrated into farming of traditional and sustainable cash crops. The youth project has supported over 500 beneficiaries from nine youth groups and two associations to achieve social and economic transformation.

The Youth project mainly focuses on;

1. Strengthening the youth groups and as Associations, orientation them about the benefits of Cooperative Societies.
2. Engaging the youths in sustainable agriculture.
3. Integrating policy advocacy and good governance at lower and national levels of decision making.
4. Supporting value chain development and collective marketing.
5. Promoting entrepreneurship skills for alternative sources of income.
6. Integrating climate change adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures



Kiwanuuka Robert
the Chairperson
Aliwamu Naffe Youth
Group displaying their
passion fruit garden

Photocredit: CIDI/Kasujja Ibrahim

Strategic Interventions to Interest the Youth into Agriculture

The baseline study was followed by mobilizing and educating the youth about the economic benefits in agriculture. We are continuously educating the youth about improved farming methods, growing alternative crops that have ready markets, easy to add value so that they can generate quick money. Our baseline findings revealed that youth want quick money. We therefore, encourage them to grow quick maturing crops in addition to high value cash crops like coffee, vanilla and passion fruits which often take long to harvest. We have trained the youth in group dynamics, agriculture as a business focusing on enterprises like coffee, vanilla production, onions, tomatoes passion fruits farming, pineapples and piggery

In the early stages of project implementation, we supported the youth to start their own initiated small businesses with a view of raising initial capital to invest in agriculture. Some of the business ventures identified by the youth included soap making, catering, metal fabrication, bakery, candle making, savings and credit, art and craft and saloon (hair cutting) using solar power.

Teaching the youth better farming methods and value addition practices, led to profitability due to increased farm output both at the household and group level. For example, we have 09 youth groups involved in wine production from fruits they grow, and

another group is making yoghurt. Such initiatives have enabled the youth to get better markets thus high prices for their produce.

In addition to the above, youth capacity building in good governance, policy advocacy and dialogue engagements has been very vital. It has enabled them to become their own advocates, airing their concerns as well as sustaining the achieved advocacy achievements.

We have supported youth groups and associations to engage with the various duty bearers at sub county, district and national levels through the National Youth Advocacy Platform activities thereby lobbying and advocating for their rights and service delivery. This has enabled the youth groups to tap into government programs. We are happy that two youth groups have this year (2019) accessed 16,000,000ugx from the Youth Livelihood Program Funds (YLP) put in place by government to further strengthen their enterprises.

CIDI is advancing to strengthen the youth associations by helping them to register and certify their products like wine, liquid soap and yoghurt so that they are able to collectively bulk and market their produce to get better prices

Individual and Group Perspective Interesting the Youths into Agriculture

Musaayi Muto Youth Group is located in Lutungu village, Lwanda Sub County, Rakai District, is one of the groups that have benefited from CIDI capacity strengthening and agriculture education. The group was formed in 2014. Currently it has 30 active members ranging from 17 to 35 years of age both male and female.

When CIDI through the CESL-Youth component started interesting youths to engage in farming, one of the challenges highlighted as hindering their progress in agriculture was limited access to financial support from bigger financial institutions including banks. The youths found it very difficult to access loans due to the unfriendly terms and conditions for loan access and also travelling long distances to Kyotera town (30 kilometres away) to access loans and saving services. For example, the banks needed security for the loans like land, vehicles



Members of Musaayi Muto Youth group attending a meeting:

Photocredit: CIDI/Kasujja Ibrahim

and motorcycle logbooks among others which majority of youths did not have. CIDI oriented the youth groups to develop a saving culture among them and establish their own Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLA) to act as a village “bank” to offer micro finance services among the members.

A number of trainings were provided to the youths in financial records keeping, drafting of saving guidelines, leadership, accountability practices, loan appraisals, loan application and tips on providing security to the group fund.

As of now the group has drafted guidelines and they are in place to regulate how the savings and loans activities are conducted. The group has a saving kit which includes passbooks to keep tracking individual transactions. The group gazetted the 15th and 30th day of every month as their savings and loans approval and disbursement meeting days.

During the saving meetings Members discuss their development priorities, save money, while those with outstanding loan balances also make their

repayment deposits.

The group members are required to make a minimum saving of 1,000 shillings and a maximum of 50,000 shillings per saving meeting for an individual member and money is kept with the treasurer in a saving box with three padlocks and each key is kept by a different individual as a control measure for un authorised withdraws.

The group’s capital fund has grown from 1,500,000/= in 2015 to 8,000,000/= in 2019. This capital has enabled group members to borrow at lower savings and invest in other income generating activities or businesses.

The VSLA gives loans to for a gross period of three months, when a member fails to pay in the agreed time, he or she is called upon to explain to the group and agree on new payment modalities. By now, 80% of the group members have benefited from this fund through, accessing loans to invest into their individual agricultural enterprises. Below are some of personal stories highlighting how the youth have benefited from the VSLA fund and the entire youth project.

Nangabi Teddy Accessed VSLA fund to Get Land for Farming



Nangabi Teddy, in her vanilla and banana garden. Photocredit: CIDI/Kasujja Ibrahim

Nangabi Teddy is a mother of seven children, member of Musaayi Muto Youth Group, Lwanda Sub county. She has been a member of Musaayi Muto Youth Group for over five years. Being a member engaged in VSLA activities, has enabled her to start saving and also get access to loans and credit facilities to invest in my farming without need of any collateral security. "I have since bought my own piece of land of about 2.5 acres where I have planted coffee, inter cropped with banana and vanilla which I started growing in 2016. Currently I have

planted 160 vines. My first vanilla harvest was in 2017 from which I earned 600,000/=, with in the same garden I have bananas, from which I earn 80,000/= weekly." Said Teddy Nangabi

Teddy said that by her investing in agriculture as a woman has empowered her to give a helping hand to the husband as well as contribute to the development of the family.

Nakalema Harriet Buys Agricultural Inputs using a Loan from VSLA.



Harriet in her tomato garden

Photocredit: CIDI/James Kiyimba

Nakalema Harriet, 37, married and mother of 10 children is a member of Musayi Muto Youth Group which is located in Lutungu village B, Butiti Parish, Lwanda Subcounty, Rakai District. “In 2015, I got a loan of 400,000/ from our VSLA and used the money to buy fertilisers to apply in my tomato garden.

That season, I harvested tomatoes worth 1,800,000/=. Indeed, this was my bumper harvest, after selling the tomatoes I paid back the loan with the required interest of 3%. In 2016, I started growing vanilla on 0.5 acres where I have 150 vanilla plants that have matured, I’m expecting to harvest between 85 to 100 kgs this year, each Kilo is 250,000 shillings based on the current market prices.” Said Nakalema Harriet.

Within the vanilla garden, she also intercropped 600 coffee trees where she harvested three bags and earned 240,000 shillings being the first season of harvest in 2018.

“The biggest challenges I face are the thieves who steal vanilla and the unpredictable climate changes characterised with too much rains prolonged dry spells. All in all, I ‘m grateful to CIDI for equipping youths with skills in agriculture as business. My future is bright and I’m able to contribute school fees for our children. My future dream is to build a self-contained house with a solar panel as well as buying a car.” Said Harriet Nakalema

Kato Marichard a Peer Educator Benefits from VSLA Loan to Boost Agriculture Production



Marichard in his maize garden.

Photocredit: CIDI/Kasujja Ibrahim

In 2015, Kato Marichard borrowed 400,000/= from the VSLA to buy fertilisers to put in the coffee garden. This has helped him to explore more about agriculture as a profit-making enterprise using the skills and knowledge acquired during various trainings by CIDI.

“I have planted 200 vanilla vines expecting to harvest 100kg this year (2019).

I established a banana garden in 2015 where I currently harvest an average of 10 bunches on a weekly that cost between 5,000 and 6,000 shillings each bunch as well as harvesting 20 bags of maize (each bag weighs about 120 kgs).

This has helped me more explore more about agriculture as a profit-making enterprise using the knowledge and skills acquired from the various trainings offered by CIDI since 2014.” Said Kato Marichard.

Kato said that the biggest challenge is the agricultural price fluctuations.

“I am proud that from my agriculture engagements, I have managed to build a permanent house and also paying for tuition for my wife at Kyambogo University pursuing a diploma in primary education.” says Kato Marichard.

Youths Reap Big from Wine Production



Members of Musaayi Muto Youth Group Packing their branded Wine

Photocredit: CIDI/James Kiyimba

Wine Production Among Youths Excites Rakai District Officials for Funding

Musaayi Muto Youth group is one the groups that have been actively involved in all program interventions provided by CIDI since (2014). During the program interventions, a number of short term and early crops were promoted which included; tomatoes, passion fruits, green paper, cabbages, watermelons among others.

In a bid to develop the value chain on a prioritized crop by the youth associations, efforts were diverted to producing wine from fruits like water melon, passion fruits and develop this as common marketing product among the group members since 80% of the youths had adopted passion fruit growing.

When wine production started, youth capacity in branding, packaging and marketing were built because this was the only way they would earn big from their wine production.

In addition, CIDI helped in facilitating the process of certification by Uganda National Bureau of Standards so that the youths' access better markets for their certified products. Between January-June 2019, 1,000litres of wine have been produced and sold by five youth groups generating sales amounting to 15,000,000/= of which 8,000,000/= was the net

profit. The wine was sold under the brand name of Kasasa-Kakuuto-Lwanda (KKL). KKL is a common brand name for the youth groups involved in wine production so that they can target wider market.

During the production process each group has a central production and collection centre. Youths have specific days they meet to produce wine. Marketing is done collectively using youth group marketing agent. Over 70% of the youths under the project are actively involved in wine production and the whole value chain.

The Youth groups have been invited by various organizations to exhibit their products and share the knowledge and experiences in wine production for example; the commissioners from Ministry of Cooperatives in the Buganda Kingdom have also invited the youth groups to participate in the Buganda Expo which is always organized in June every year in Bulange-Mengo.

The government of Uganda has continuously come up with a number of strategies to find employment opportunities that would absorb the youths into productive activities especially

the agricultural sector.

The Chairperson Local Council (LC V) Rakai District was excited by the wine production initiatives among the members of Musayi Muto Youth Group during one of community engagement meetings which was held in August 2018 in Lutungu village, Butiti Parish, Lwanda Sub County. He assisted the Youth Group to access 8,000,000/= from the government project called the Youth Livelihood Fund (YLF) which was accessed early 2019 and it has greatly boosted the enterprise.

It is because of the financial boost that Musaayi Muto Youth Group has been able to increase our wine production from 30litres per month to over 100litresthereby improving group financial sustainability as well as incomes among individual members,50% of the profits are shared on an annual basis.

Katovu-Mayanja Youths Advance their Entrepreneurship Skills into Yoghourt Production

From left: Nalubega Dorothy and Agnes, members of Katovu-Mayanja Youth Group sealing their yoghurt product.

Photocredit: CIDI/James Kiyimba



CIDI over the period of years has been able to establish platforms for youths to engage government in providing necessary services or enablers that interest youths into agriculture as a business through facilitating dialogue engagements both at district and national level.

As a result of the continuous engagement at sub county and district level, the Sub County Speaker Mr. Kayondo Max, and the Community Development Department of Kakuuto were able to link three youth's groups (Omuwubuka Omukozi, Suubi-kakuuto Youth Group and Agali-Awamu Katovu Mayanja Youth Group all in Kakuuto Sub County) to Kakuuto Community Development Project (KACODP) to access skills trainings in yoghurt production which were conducted early 2018.

After the trainings, Agali-Awamu Katovu Mayanja Youth group started using the group VSLA funds to produce 10ltrs of yoghurt per day. Towards August 2018, the group was linked to District Community Department where they

accessed 8,000,000/= under Youth Livelihood Fund (YLP) to boost their project. The group used the funds to access packaging materials, bought a refrigerator, sealing machine and other equipment.

The group also used 3,000,000/= part of YLP fund to establish a passion fruit garden to support easy access of raw materials for their wine production business. The group is well established now with a milk collection and yoghurt distribution centre in Mayanja trading centre. Their production has increased from 10litres to 30litres of yoghurt per day. The yoghurt is packed in two different sizes i.e. 500ml each sold at 2,000/= and 250ml each sold at 1,000/=.

One big challenge that affects the yoghurt business is the un reliable electricity, in the near future they would like to buy a solar panel that can run their refrigerator and also buy ice boxes for preserving their yoghurt during transit to their customers.

Dorothy tells how the group learnt yoghurt production

My name is Nalubega Dorothy, I'm 32 years old and the Chairperson of Agaliawamu Katovu Mayanja Youth group. As a group we started making yoghurt after training from Kakuuto Community Development Project (KACODP). They also helped use to access the services of Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) which trained us in yoghurt production.

CIDI supported us with resource mobilisation skills and capacity building in product certification process by UNBS. Using the advocacy skills acquired during CIDI capacity building trainings, we were able to lobby 8,000,000/= from the YLP. The fund helped us to pay consultant to develop our branded packing materials under "Smile Yoghurt" brand name. In everyone litre of milk we produce two litres of yoghurt.

In the near future we are planning to build a bakery as well to supplement our yoghurt business. As youth engaging in productive work, we have been recognised as responsible people in our community, As an individual I have benefited from the many trainings that I have been provided by CIDI in leadership, in the recent Local Council One (LCI) elections (2018) I was elected the Secretary for Women Affairs in my village and I now work to empower fellow women to improve on their lives." Said Nalubega Dorothy



Katovu-Mayanja Youth Group bought a refrigerator for proper storage of milk and yoghurt.

Photocredit: CIDI/James Kiyimba



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