



SAG-SEED AWARD
WINNER 2016

SEED Case Studies



YICE Uganda

Improving access to training, funding and markets for rural farmers



SEED

promoting entrepreneurship for sustainable development

Founding Partners



About SEED

SEED promotes eco-inclusive solutions of small and growing enterprises in support of sustainable development by increasing their organisational resilience in local, national and regional markets and shaping an enabling environment.

SEED was founded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and is hosted by adelphi research gGmbH, based in Berlin, Germany.

adelphi research (AR) is a leading think-and-do tank for policy analysis and strategy consulting. The institution offers creative solutions and services regarding global environment and development challenges for policy, business, and civil society communities.



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About SWITCH Africa Green

The overall objective of SWITCH Africa Green (SAG) is to support 6 countries in Africa to achieve sustainable development by engaging in transition towards an inclusive green economy, based on sustainable consumption and production patterns, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty. The objective will be achieved through support to private sector led inclusive green growth. SAG is implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme with the assistance of the European Union.

LOCAL CHALLENGES

Poverty

The poverty rate in Uganda has declined in recent years, from 31.1% in 2006 to 19.7% by 2013.¹ Despite a decreasing poverty rate - the ratio of the number of people whose income is below the poverty line, defined as half the median household income of the total population - the total number of the Ugandans living below the national poverty line has not yet declined.² Uganda's performance on non-monetary poverty indicators, such as education, water, housing and health, reveals that many people continue to live in extreme need. Sanitation, access to electricity and education are persistent challenges. Moreover, poverty rates differ vastly from region to region. Particularly affected by poverty are Northern and Eastern Uganda. In these regions, the total number of people living in poverty rose from 68% to 84% between 2006 and 2013.¹ Access to electricity in these regions is limited to only 3.7% of the population in Northern, 5.8% in the Eastern and 8.6% in the Western Uganda.

Food Insecurity

Along with poverty often comes food insecurity. Although food production levels in Uganda are sufficient to feed all, many people lack adequate and nutritious food. People generally consume 400 calories less per day than required for a healthy diet and one in three children have no food during school hours. Food security in Uganda depends on changes to the country's agricultural system that around 77% of the population depends on for their livelihoods. Despite the importance of agriculture to the Ugandan economy, many smallholder farmers lack the funds to afford proper farming equipment or storage facilities.³ This causes harvest losses of around 30%, and further exacerbates the country's food insecurity.

HOW THE BUSINESS WORKS

Based in Western Uganda, the Youth Initiative for Community Empowerment (YICE) is an eco-inclusive enterprise that provides a variety of agricultural services to smallholder farmers to improve their livelihoods. These smallholder farmers are often located in difficult to access communities and constrained by a lack of agricultural knowledge – on crop spacing, pest control, water management, and fair market rates –, insufficient capital, and limited market access.

To address this problem, YICE has trained a group of farm agents to act as YICE representatives and community leaders. The enterprise specifically targets youth and women to be trained as representatives. Innovative mobile technology developed by YICE's partners provides smallholder farmers with access to key information on trainings, quality farm inputs, and fair market prices for produce. YICE aims to use this information and the provision of microloans to empower the local community to make better, more informed decisions at various levels of the farming value chain.

Key Facts:

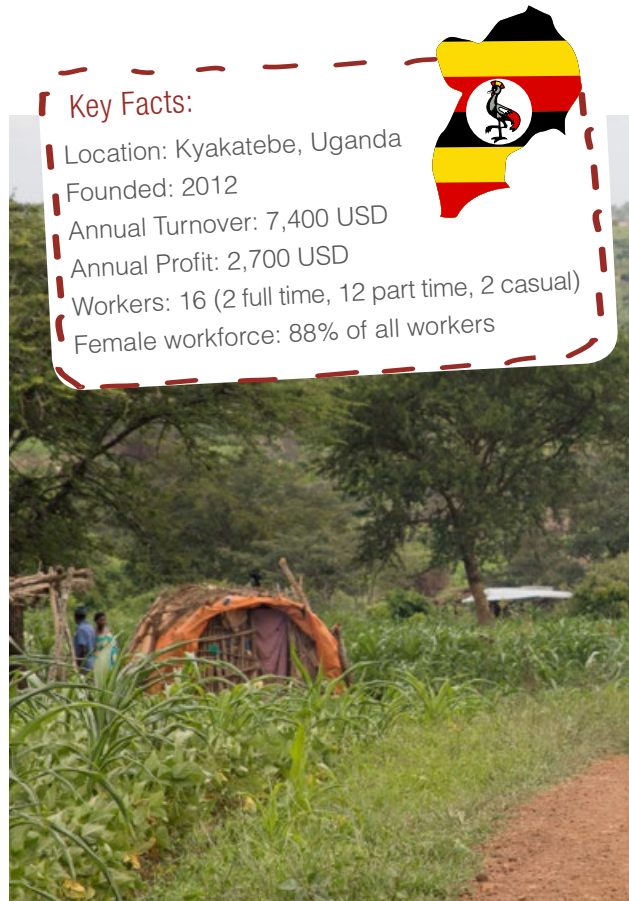
- Location: Kyakatebe, Uganda
- Founded: 2012
- Annual Turnover: 7,400 USD
- Annual Profit: 2,700 USD
- Workers: 16 (2 full time, 12 part time, 2 casual)
- Female workforce: 88% of all workers



¹ Worldbank 2016. www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/brief/uganda-poverty-assessment-2016-fact-sheet

² OECD 2018. <https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm>

³ UN World Food Programm 2017. www1.wfp.org/countries/uganda



Solutions to local challenges

Watch how we do it!



” Generally women and youth smallholder farmers are faced with big challenges around access to capital, agricultural information and markets which often leads to them making a loss. The aim of YICE is to help remove those challenges. “

Noah Ssempijja, Founder & CEO



The power of partnerships



National business

Agro Market Days is a local enterprise located in the Ugandan capital of Kampala. The enterprise has developed an innovative technology that provides market and agricultural information, including on farming inputs, input dealers and trustworthy buyers, using a mobile phone application. Through its partnership with YICE, Agro Market Days provides smartphones and training to YICE farm agents on how to use the platform. These agents are then better able to explain the tool to groups of farmers, resulting in a greater reach in the community.

The partnership with YICE has allowed Agro Market Days to deliver its tool to a higher number of smallholder farmers and more efficiently interact with communities. Agro Market Days receives financial returns from a small subscription fee paid by farmers and benefits from an increased number of users on its platform, which improves the accuracy of the service. In collaboration with Agro Market Days, YICE provides agricultural information through its agents to local farmers. This information exchange ensures that farmers have a better understanding of current market prices and fluctuations. It also helps farmers to receive high quality agricultural inputs from tried and trusted providers.



National business

Gutsinda Development Group, located in Kampala, delivers information communication systems to design and manage rural agricultural development. Through their *Kulima Content Platform*, Gutsinda disseminates information and acts as a knowledge-sharing platform for farmers. The database shares best practice for production and post-harvest handling, strategies to fight common pests, and recommendations based on local knowledge and traditional methods.

Gutsinda's use of mobile technology serves as a valuable tool for YICE to more accurately understand participating farmers, collect data and manage its system. Furthermore, the group provides YICE public visibility to showcase the project's achievements; and helps YICE to understand who their farmers are, where they are located and in what activities they are involved.

Gutsinda provides YICE with the technology that they disseminate to farmers. Gutsinda benefits from the partnership with YICE by increasing the number of individuals and groups using their platform and from the additional service fees collected. This contributes to Gutsinda achieving its goal to integrate technology into traditional farming practice.

Learn more about the partnership!





International non-profit organisation

Kiva

Access to capital is a major challenge for smallholder farmers. Insufficient finance limits farmers' ability to access land and buy seeds or agricultural inputs, such as fertilisers. **Kiva** has partnered with YICE to provide zero interest loans through Kiva's online micro-lending website. YICE distributes flexible loans to farmers at a nominal interest rate on a six month time frame, thereby allowing farmers time to establish and maintain their crops. The loan is repaid following harvest. YICE is able to fund its activities using the nominal interest that they charge to farmers. Additionally, Kiva supports YICE to develop tools, such as loan repayment templates.

Kiva's partnership with YICE enables it greater access to farmers, which helps Kiva to reach its objective to alleviate poverty and empower women. Furthermore, YICE acts as a pilot partner on an experimental basis to generate new ideas and concepts.

“ Partnerships have been really helpful for us as an enterprise, to help us grow and help farmers achieve more. ”

*Noah Ssempijja,
Founder & CEO*

Discover the partnership with SEED!



“ SEED helped us get a clear business plan which we were able to share with potential investors. They provided us with networking opportunities, and we have been able to market our enterprise across the globe. ”

*Noah Ssempijja,
Founder & CEO*

Creating impact



SOCIAL IMPACT

YICE aims to reduce hunger, illness and poverty among smallholder farmers in Uganda by facilitating farmers' access to demand-oriented agricultural information and training, flexible financial services and quality agricultural inputs.

The information and training provided allows farmers to increase their income by ensuring that smallholders receive fair market prices and have the knowledge required to increase their crop yields. Accordingly, the enterprise's activities contribute to both employment opportunities and more efficient agricultural practices. YICE's focus on female smallholder farmers, evidenced in the training of female farm agents, contributes to female empowerment in Uganda. YICE thus establishes social capital and improves the livelihoods and nutrition of Uganda's more deprived communities.

Key impacts

- Over 100 households have received food security training through the YICE program
- 60% increase in food production for households working with YICE
- 60% of the farmers working with YICE reported having at least 2 meals per day
- 90% of smallholder farmers, and 100 % of the farm agents are women



ECONOMIC IMPACT

The main economic objective of YICE is to empower smallholder farmers to achieve sustainable incomes by improving their productivity and reducing spending. This is accomplished through the implementation of sustainable farming practices. The technology offered by YICE provides farmers with accurate market information so that smallholders can demand and receive a fair price for their produce. Smallholder farmers can also access purchasing information on quality farm inputs from trusted and vetted dealers. This results in higher yields and more efficient and sustainable agricultural production. Many farm groups have been encouraged to start group savings plans and collaborative actions, which - as a form social capital - allow smallholders to leverage collective bargaining and receive small loans and capital.

Key impacts

- Hired and trained 7 new farm agents in 2017, who received a stable income
- Increased profits for smallholder farmers

Sustainable development goals

SGD 1 - No Poverty

YICE provides agricultural information to smallholder farmers, which empowers them to make better decisions that improve their income and livelihoods. YICE focuses on youth and women smallholder farmers to generate additional income and instill confidence and leadership skills in the farm agents.

SGD 2 - Zero Hunger

By providing agricultural information and training, flexible financial services and quality farm inputs, YICE increases food productivity and helps its participants to generate additional income. In conjunction, these factors contribute to food security and incentives for long-term practice of sustainable farming.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

YICE and their partners inform and promote sustainable farming practices.

Sustainable agriculture aims at establishing an ecological balance to prevent soil fertility or pest problems. Soil building practices such as crop rotations or organic fertilisers encourage soil and fauna and improve soil formation and structure. Further, the replacement of synthetic by organic fertilisers reduce the risk of groundwater pollution and contributes to mitigating climate change.

YICE provides access to information to support farmers to improve land management, thus increasing yields, preserving soil ecosystems and positively impacting soil and water quality. The additional income from increased yields allows farmers to reinvest into their land.

Key impacts

- Promoted organic farming practices
- Trained over 500 smallholder farmers on good farming practices
- Encouraged the planting of trees on farmland, resulting in over 50 trees planted



SGD 10 - Reduced Inequalities

YICE contributes to reduced inequalities in Uganda by providing hard-to-reach communities - such as smallholder farmers without land or other collateral required for micro loans - with access to agricultural loans; and targeting and empowering the most deprived groups, namely youth and women.

See how we create impact!



“ Since joining I have learned how to get more yields from my fields. I used to not know about crop spacing and maintaining soil fertility to help with yields. I get new information every time I open my phone, and can help fellow farmers with this information. ”

Mary Nanyonga, Farm Agent

FUTURE PLANS

- Raise \$10,000 USD in funding for the establishment of new micro loans
- Increase revenue generated by the provision of micro loans
- Produce and sell organic fertiliser as an alternative revenue stream
- Continue to improve the bundled services provided to the smallholder farmers
- Increase the number of farm agents



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SEED Case Studies Series

Demonstrating Sustainable Development on the Ground through Locally-Driven Eco-Inclusive Enterprises

Eco-inclusive enterprises, also known as green and social enterprises, have a critical role to play in achieving a global Green and Inclusive Economy, tackling the Sustainable Development Goals or implementing the Paris Agreement. By embracing the added values of social improvement and resource management eco-inclusive enterprises that have won a SEED Award are living proof that entrepreneurial partnerships between various stakeholders can create innovative and novel solutions for delivering sustainable development at the grassroots level and be economically sustainable.

Since 2005, SEED has supported over **240 Award Winners in 37 countries**. While the value of eco-inclusive enterprises in delivering sustainable development is increasingly recognised and harnessed in the development sphere, there is still very little data available on the triple bottom line impact of these enterprises and their contribution to sustainable development. The SEED Case Studies are designed to help fill that gap by generating insights for policy and decision-makers on the role of green and inclusive enterprises in achieving sustainable development, and on enabling factors that can help them overcome barriers, reach scale and replicate.

YICE Uganda
Empowering Rural Women



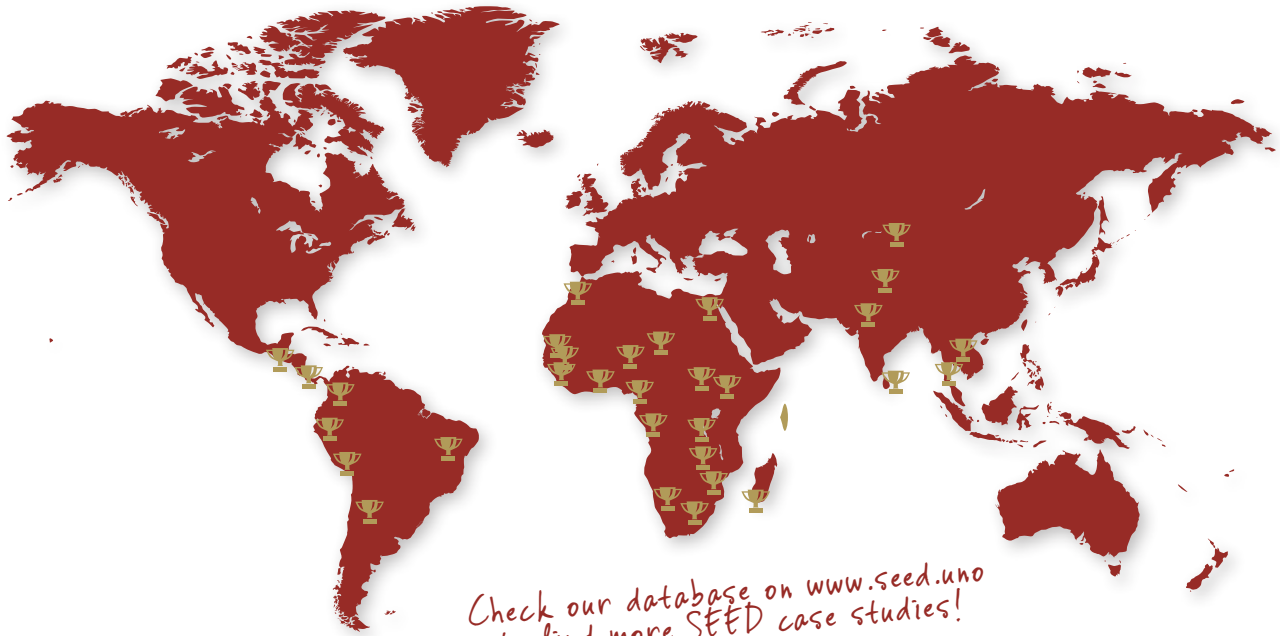
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