



UGA-JEN-EEW-P01, Uganda
Reporting Period: October 2017 – March 2018

Enabling and Empowering Women – Mbale, Uganda

Budget: \$7,000 needed. (\$22,150 total for a one-year project which began 1 October)

Update:

This project continues the good work following a women's empowerment project with our partners in 2016-17. The first initiative is to expand the Women's Savings and Loan groups into new areas. These are a mainstay of our partner's work in fighting poverty. Over 100 groups are in action! The second is to introduce a new revolving seed capital fund where 25 of the better-performing groups will be provided with a small injection of capital to take their business start-ups or expansion to the next level. These funds are repaid to provide a revolving fund. The third is to build on the quality tailoring and craft activities that have been successfully selling products and crafts (and selling out!). The fourth is to provide specific job training for young mums (such as hairdressing and sewing) who are struggling to provide for themselves and their young children.



Women's Savings and Loans Groups – our partners report these are continuing to grow from strength-to-strength and they are struggling to keep up with demand! They say, *"It is so encouraging to see the impact that a relatively simple – and cheap – intervention can have in a community."* Our partners are training trainers to further expand the project and to avoid over-extending themselves. Another six groups have been started in this period, continuing a natural expansion of work in key communities. The end-of-the-year marks a time when many of the savings groups complete their annual savings cycle and share out what has been saved. *"Savings initiative, without doubt, is one of the most successful projects in the area and these mark a time of celebration for loan groups."*

Women's Community Groups and Training – several sessions have been held in two key communities with an enthusiastic and excellent attendance of over 200 each time. Topics, which are not discussed openly in Uganda, included family planning and marriage/family relationships. Other sessions focussed on making wise choices and reproductive health. One recipient said, *"I feel so energised and I want to pass this onto my neighbours and older children."* Participants are wanting to invite their husbands to attend, a great step forward! Christmas get-togethers were a highlight with many women testifying to the positive impact through the groups.

Tailoring Project – our partners are thrilled that demand for their *quality* items is increasing and that it pays a wage back to those being trained through the program and provides on-going employment for some graduates. Training for 30 women in jewellery-making has also been added. Graduated tailors are developing their business skills thanks to the start they received through our partners.

Young Mum's Vocational School – 55 young, excited mum's graduated in March in hairdressing, catering or tailoring. Our partners say, *"Against the odds, in such difficult personal circumstances and in such a poor community, these women have acquired a tangible skill which will better equip them to take steps out of poverty."*

Thank you for your partnership to enable thousands of women to expand their horizons through these initiatives. It is making a huge difference in the lives of these women and the flow-on effects to families and communities.