

**AGROECOLOGY
BUSINESS
HUB**



Eastern and Southern Africa
Small Scale Farmers' Forum
ESAFF - UGANDA

THRIVING IN AGROECOLOGY: INSPIRING SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE AGROECOLOGY BUSINESS HUB



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This publication was produced with financial support from Agroecology Fund. It has been produced to highlight some of the success stories for enterprises supported by the Agroecology Business Hub. The publication aims to highlight and disseminate effective practices and models that demonstrate the viability and benefits of agroecological approaches. By showcasing these successes, the publication seeks to inspire and guide other businesses, increase awareness among stakeholders, facilitate knowledge sharing and foster collaboration within the agricultural community. Furthermore, this publication aims to attract investment, advocate for supportive policies and provide educational resources, ultimately promoting sustainable agriculture that enhances biodiversity and food security while building a resilient network of agroecological enterprises.

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This book was compiled by Josephine Hilda Nansubuga and Andrew Adem



ABOUT ESAFF UGANDA

Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) was formed during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in 2002 in South Africa. This was in an effort to create a Forum to bring together small-scale farmers into a social movement to influence favorable agriculture policies and practices at global, continental, regional, national and local levels.

ESAFF Uganda became operational in 2008 and has since become the largest small-scale farmer-led advocacy movement in Uganda. ESAFF Uganda works to enhance the SSFs ability to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in development processes. ESAFF Uganda currently has a membership of 12588 small-scale farmer community organisations in 54 districts representing over 765,560 individual small-scale farmers of which 67 percent are women.

ESAFF Uganda is also part of a bigger network of small-scale farmers in 15 other countries in Eastern and Southern Africa including South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, DR Congo, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mozambique.



VISION

A just and resilient food system led by small-scale farmers.



MISSION

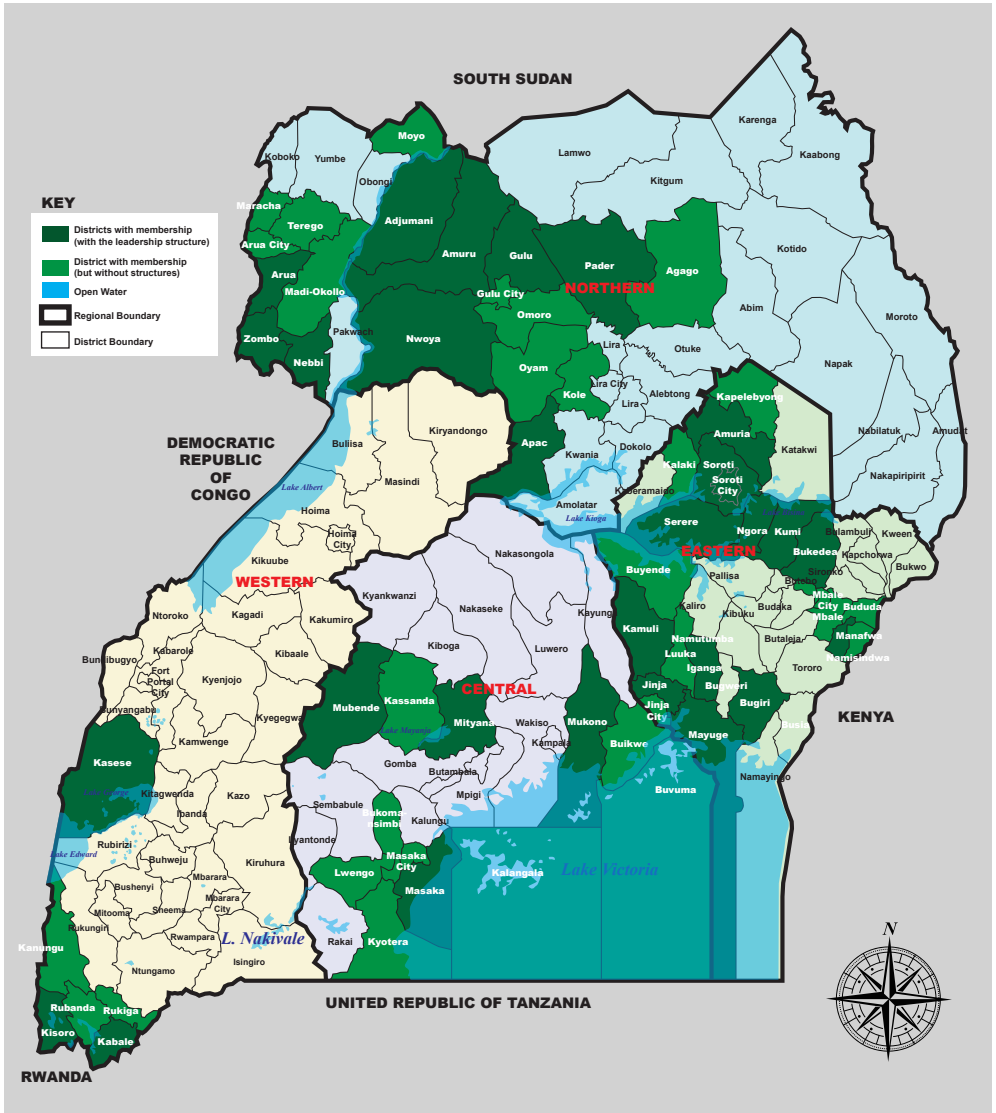
To create an enabling environment where small-scale farmers lead in building a just and resilient food system through advancing agroecology and food sovereignty, securing Small-scale Farmers' rights to productive resources, safeguarding consumer rights, fair economic opportunities for all, promotion of public accountability of resources, and strengthening collaborative social movements at all levels.



STRATEGIC GOAL

Increased political rights, social and economic stability and sustainability of small-scale farmers hence ensuring that small-scale farmers especially women, youths and marginalized groups can thrive and contribute significantly to a just and resilient food system at all levels.

MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING MEMBERSHIP DISTRICTS



ESAFF Uganda is also part of La Via Campesina (LVC) which is the largest peasant organisation in the world.

AGROECOLOGY BUSINESS HUB

THE AGROECOLOGY BUSINESS HUB

BACKGROUND

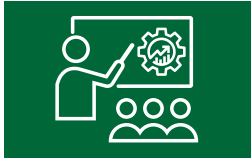
Amidst environmental problems, agricultural practices are transforming into more robust and sustainable patterns. Based on the tenets of agro ecology. Small scale farmers in Uganda cover 80% of the country's agricultural sector implying that they feed most of the country's population but still experience economic challenges in terms of enterprise selection, knowledge and information gap, exploitation from the middlemen, high taxes, limited access to financial resources, limited access to markets, capital, gender inequality among others that prohibit them from operating successful enterprises.

ESAFF Uganda initiated the Agroecology Business Hub to support small scale farmers address these challenges and foster innovation thus improving small scale farmer livelihoods while ensuring food security. The Agroecology Business Hub seeks to revolutionize the agriculture sector by promoting creativity, teamwork, and sustainable methods and empowering small-scale farmers to venture into sustainable agriculture and run profitable enterprises. In the context of climate change, establishing a regenerative and harmonious interaction between agriculture and the environment by fostering biodiversity, soil health, and resource efficiency is crucial for our engagements with small-scale farmers. Our goal is to serve as a spark for the growth of an agroecological community that brings together farmers, scientists, business people, and decision-makers to jointly develop sustainable solutions that support social justice, ecological resilience, and economic viability.

The Agroecology Business Hub currently supports 16 agroecological enterprises across Uganda in the districts of Mayuge, Kasese, Masaka, Mubende, Apac, Adjumani, Gulu, Amuria, Nebbi, Zombo and intends to expand its support to reach as many agroecological farmers as possible.



The Agroecology Business Hub focuses on three pillars:



1. Business Capacity Development

The Agroecology Business Hub uses different business models which are well-proven for building small-scale farmers' capacity to engage in farming as a business.



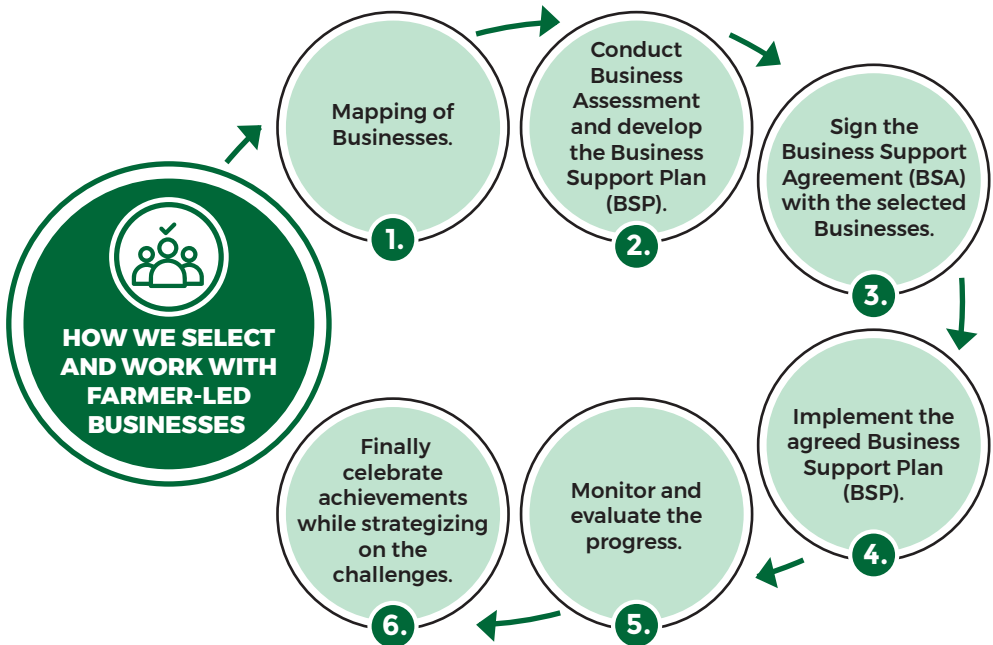
2. Access to Affordable Credit

The Agroecology Business Hub supports small-scale farmers, especially women, to access affordable credit to be able to invest in business.



3. Access to Favorable Markets

The Agroecology Business Hub is addressing the exploitative markets that are keeping small-scale farmers, especially women, in poverty.



THE AGROECOLOGY BUSINESS HUB'S JOURNEY WITH ENTERPRISES

The Agroecology Business Hub nurtures and supports innovative agroecological solutions through research, development, and incubation programs, provides comprehensive training programs and educational resources to empower farmers with the knowledge and skills needed for successful operation of agroecological enterprises, facilitates market access for agroecological products, connecting farmers with conscious consumers and sustainable supply chains, advocates for policies that incentivize and support agroecological practices at local, regional, and national levels, then fosters a vibrant and collaborative community by organizing events, workshops, and networking opportunities for stakeholders in the Agroecology sector.

The Agroecology Business Hub has conducted Business Development Workshops where all the 16 enterprises participated to build their business capacity and business support webinars to share experiences in running agroecological enterprises, conducted several follow ups on these enterprises to ensure that they don't lose truck and together identify rising challenges and possible solutions to ensure effective running of these enterprises, supported these enterprises participate in different agricultural expos and exhibitions to learn from their peers.

The hub has also provided technical support to all its enterprises, supported 13 of these enterprises formalize their operations through registration with the Uganda Registration Service Bureau(URSB) to obtain legal recognition and protect their brand identity, establish credibility and foster trust with customers and partners and has so far supported 8 of these enterprises with value addition equipment in the districts of Masaka, Kasese, Adjumani, Gulu, Mubende, Zombo and Nebbi in order to improve on their production capacity.

Furthermore, the Agroecology Business Hub markets, offers customer referrals to these enterprises and sells the different enterprises products via the KilimoMart platform (www.kilimomart.xyz) an online market platform by ESAFF Uganda to market and sell small-scale farmers' organic products. The Agroecology Business Hub's initiatives have resulted in some intriguing success stories for small-scale farmer enterprises, which are included in the following pages.



Harvesting Hope: Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise's Journey in Cassava Innovation



Nestled in the vibrant Kasese District in the Rwenzori region of Uganda, Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise stands as a beacon of hope and innovation within the cassava value chain. Despite the intensive Chemical use in this region, the introduction of the Community Agroecology School Approach in Kasese, by ESAFF Uganda has created an intense demand for agroecology knowledge, skills and practice among small scale farmers. As a result of this, Mumbuzi Community Agroecology School was founded in 2022 as a platform for small scale farmers to share and devise solution for the different challenges they encountered in Agriculture with a basis on Agroecological farming techniques in addition building their capacity to engage and influence policies especially at the local level. After gaining a bit of knowledge and skills in Agroecology members of Mumbuzi Community Agroecology School found it necessity to participate in the money economy hence leading to the formation of Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise comprising of 25 members with 92% female and 8%male and mainly operates on Member contributions/savings.

A farmer Scola Tushemereirwe noted:

“The training I got at Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise changed my farming methods. I now use organic fertilizers and natural pest control. The quality of my crops has improved so much that I secure better prices at the market.”

Cassava being staple crop of the region, is largely grown by most farmers though frequently sold at low prices hence not realizing its full potential, this coupled with poor postharvest management leading to contamination and low quality produce which really undermined the potential of the crop. With the knowledge gained from the Community Agroecology School, members were able to recognize these issues, and sought the intervention of ESAFF Uganda, through the Agroecology Business Hub. The Agroecology Business Hub supported Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise through extending business development capacity building highlighting the importance of value addition, enterprise management and governance as well as other business aspects. This capacity-building initiative aimed not only to enhance the agricultural skills of the community but also to instill a sense of entrepreneurship among the youth and women small-scale farmers in this enterprise. It is at this point that members flagged off their Cassava value chain by hiring collective land using member savings and jointly tending to this garden that equates to over an acre till the cassava was fully grown and ready for harvest. At this point the Enterprise had reached out to the Agroecology Business Hub for support inform of machinery to process the cassava flour, hence the Enterprise was able to receive a cassava milling machine that allowed farmers to transform raw cassava into flour thus increasing profitability, economic stability and food security within the community. By processing cassava, small-scale farmers could earn up to three times more than selling raw cassava improving their livelihoods significantly. With support of the Agroecology Business Hub, Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise redefined its mission and structure, formalized its operations through registration with Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), and market through the KilimoMart Platform which is currently the leading distributor of the Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise's products.

The transformation of Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise has had profound implications for the local community in Nyamwamba division. Families that once struggled to make ends meet now found new sources of income through enhanced cassava production and processing. The Agroecology Business Hub empowered women who play a crucial role in the cassava value chain, providing them with training and leadership opportunities.

One of the farmers Mbabu Provia, shared her experience:

“Before, we sold our cassava for a little money and we had to struggle to make ends meet. Now, with the support from the Agroecology Business Hub, we can process our cassava and sell it at a better price.”

As Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise continues its journey, it envisions expanding the cassava value chain further (increased quality yields), introducing new products, exploring organic certification and developing marketing strategies that emphasize sustainability and quality. The collaboration with Agroecology Business Hub will remain essential as Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise seeks to secure grants and investments to sustain and grow its operations.

"We wish to introduce new products and pursue organic certification so that we can reach more consumers and build a better future for our enterprise."

Alice Tumusiime an enterprise member.

Over the past 1 year the enterprise has undergone a remarkable transformation fueled by the support of the Agroecology Business Hub (ABH). The story of the Mumbuzi Agroecology School Enterprise is a powerful testament to the impact of agroecology and community-driven initiatives. Through education, community empowerment and a focus on sustainable practices, the cassava value chain is transformed, offering a brighter future for local farmers and ensuring food security and health consumption for the community. The support of the Agroecology Business Hub has been crucial in this journey and the story of change continues to inspire other regions to adopt similar agroecological practices for a sustainable future. This journey of change exemplifies the potential within agroecology to drive social, economic and environmental benefits for all.



Goli Mori Agri Enterprise Revolutionizes the Okra Value Chain in the Refugee Host Community in Adjumani District.



In a vibrant but challenging refugee host community of Ofua in Adjumani District, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise emerged in 2023 from humble beginnings to become a transformative force in the local agricultural landscape in barely a year. The group comprising of 30 Small scale farmers (21 Female and 9 Male) began its journey with a shared vision amongst its dedicated members who recognized the need for economic stability and food security amid adversity. Their focus was the versatile and nutritious okra, a crop they believed could serve as a catalyst for change.

For long Okra has been grown in the region organically though in the recent times the introduction of hybrid okra seeds has seen the adoption of inorganics and chemical use which poses a threat to the health of the soil and human beings. Given the high costs involved in accessing and growing the hybrid seed small scale farmers are opting to maintain the local variety while adding value to it so that it can generate higher returns.

With support of the Agroecology Business Hub, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise embarked on a mission to explore the full potential of the okra value chain. Initial steps included the group conducting a viability study on Okra value chain basing on the knowledge and skills through the Agroecology Business Hub. As they

delved deeper into the okra value chain, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise quickly identified opportunities to diversify their product into powdered okra that can be used in a variety of culinary applications and introduced okra tea, a flavorful and health-conscious beverage option. They began producing powdered okra at a low scale using rudimentary materials. Both products not only tapped into emerging consumer trends but also leveraged the nutritional benefits of okra, providing local residents with healthier choices. In order to meet the growing demand, members of Goli Mori sought Technical support from the Agroecology Business Hub leading to increased production of high quality Okra powder. This included comprehensive training sessions on sustainable farming practices, business management, and product development.

The Agroecology Business Hub's expertise provided essential resources and knowledge, equipping the team with the skills needed to innovate within the agricultural sector. The Agroecology Business Hub also procured an okra grinding machine for this enterprise to ensure efficient production thus enabling the enterprise meet customers' demand for okra products. Furthermore, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise has begun selling high-quality organic okra seeds, empowering local farmers to cultivate this valuable crop and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. By providing access to superior seeds, the enterprise is helping to improve yields and increase food security within the settlement and by aggregating the produce from different members, they are able to sell collectively and bargain for higher prices.

Within months, the impact of Goli Mori Agri Enterprise became evident. Sales from powdered okra and okra tea surged, contributing to the enterprise's financial sustainability as they were able to extend their market base by tapping into the readily available market in the nearby countries like South Sudan. The enterprise has so far created jobs for its members and is starting to offer trainings and skills development opportunities to both refugees and host community members thus promoting economic empowerment in a previously underserved population. In a short time, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise has not only contributed to improved nutrition and availing economic opportunities for its members but has also fostered a sense of community resilience especially among the youth and women. As they continue to cultivate their passion for okra, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise stands poised for even greater success, proving that with innovation and skills development, positive change is possible even in challenging circumstances.

The Agroecology Business Hub's ongoing support has also leveraged the momentum of this enterprise through regular workshops that facilitate networking among local entrepreneurs, enabling Goli Mori Agri enterprise to learn from others and share their own successes. Today, Goli Mori Agri Enterprise stands as a model of resilience and innovation, illustrating how focus on a single crop can yield transformative results for an entire community. The enterprise not only bolstered food security but also fostered a spirit of collaboration, shared knowledge and economic resilience among its members. This story of change reflects the power of sustainable agricultural practices and community-driven initiatives, demonstrating that with the right support and dedication, significant

transformations are possible even in the most challenging environments. Goli Mori Agri Enterprise is not just cultivating okra; it is cultivating hope, opportunity and a brighter future for all involved.



The Empowering Journey of St. Mauritz Women's Enterprise in the Groundnuts Value Chain



Founded in 2012 in the then Gulu district now Gulu city, St.Mauritz Womens' Enterprise was born out of a vision to uplift and inspire women to do activities from which they can earn income by providing them with the skills and resources needed to create sustainable livelihoods. Initially, the women faced numerous challenges, including limited access to income generating opportunities, capital, and markets. Recognizing these barriers, a group of dedicated women set out to create a supportive ecosystem that would enable these women to thrive. St.Mauritz Womens' Enterprise comprises of 15 women equipped with the knowledge to transform their ideas into a viable enterprise. Women joined forces to cultivate crops like groundnuts, simsim and vegetables allowing them to share resources, improve yields and earn income.

"Through St. Mauritz, we have learnt that together we are stronger. Our collective efforts in groundnut production have not just improved our incomes but have also empowered us as women in our community."
Akello Claire Rose, the enterprise manager.

Prior to their collaboration with the Agroecology Business Hub, the women of St. Mauritz faced numerous obstacles in their efforts to cultivate and market groundnuts. These included Limited access to resources, training, and markets

hindered their growth. Many women relied more on farming for food security thus struggling to generate sufficient income to support their families and when they decided to join the money economy, they were being exploited by the middlemen hence not earning enough from their toil this was worsened by poor farming methods which limited their productivity.

After a series of interaction with the Agroecology Business Hub, St. Mauritz Womens' Enterprise was identified as a potential and viable Enterprise hence receiving crucial support including business development training such as comprehensive training on value chain development and enterprise management. The enterprise was able to expand its production of groundnuts targeting a bigger market.

With the dynamic market demands, members of this enterprise realized the need for more advance production techniques hence seeking for technical support from the Agroecology Business Hub, the hub was able to advance a ground nut grinding machine for the enterprise empowering the women to improve their production capacity and quality. The enterprise has continued to market and distribute ground nut paste through the KilimoMart platform a product of the Agroecology Business Hub. They also locally sell and distribute their products to local markets and leading hotels in the region. The Agroecology Business Hub has connected them to other potential customers through referrals and in the same regard the enterprise leadership has been supported to attend Agribusiness expos and exhibitions in other regions for learning, networking and collaboration with potential clients and partners.

The impact of the support rendered by the hub coupled with the commitment and hard work of members of St.Mauritz Womens' Enterprise has been nothing short of transformative. Enterprise members have experienced a substantial increase in their incomes, allowing them to spend on their families' basic, and other essential needs. There is also noticeable community impact where the success of the enterprise has inspired other women in the community to engage in productive agriculture, fostering a culture of collaboration and shared learning. Small scale farmers have also gained leadership skills and knowledge on as they have taken on leadership roles within the enterprise and the community, advocating for sustainable practices and women's rights.

“One of the most exciting developments has been our ability to run our enterprise and produce groundnut paste efficiently. With the guidance of the Agroecology Business Hub, we perfected our processing techniques and now we not only sell whole groundnuts but also delicious nutritious groundnut paste. This value addition has significantly increased our income and allowed us to reach broader markets.”

Irene Sarah Adokorach, the enterprise secretary.

St. Mauritz Womens' Enterprise is not only thriving; it is also looking ahead with ambition. Plans for expansion include; Diversifying Products through exploring additional value-added products from groundnuts and other crops. Offering training opportunities to other women interested in agricultural ventures,

thereby spreading their knowledge and success. St. Mauritz Womens' Enterprise has become a leading example of how targeted support can transform lives and communities. Upon receiving support from ESAFF Uganda through the Agroecology Business Hub, the enterprise embarked on an impactful journey within the groundnuts value chain showcasing the power of sustainable agriculture and women empowerment.

"I never thought that growing groundnuts could change lives. Selling our groundnut paste has opened doors for us and we can access basic needs"

Ajok Pauline, an enterprise member.

The journey of St. Mauritz Womens' Enterprise exemplifies the profound change that can occur when women in agriculture are supported through innovative partnerships like the Agroecology Business Hub. Their story is a powerful testament to the resilience, creativity, and strength of women who are changing the landscape of their communities through sustainable practices. Their success is not just a victory for themselves, but a beacon of hope for future generations, illustrating the impact of empowerment and collaboration in building a sustainable future.



From Waste to Wealth: Kwegatta Gemanyi Community Association (KGCA Enterprise) Empowering Women Small-Scale Farmers through Briquette Innovation.



In the recent times, Uganda’s garbage problem has more than sky rocketed accounting for the death of over 23 people in Kitezi land fill in Kampala District. Despite the existence of more practical solutions and technology that can be embraced to fasten garbage and waste management, the willingness and commitment to such efforts is still lacking within the Governance system of the country. In this regard ESAFF Uganda urges communities to recycle waste in order to reduce on the waste burden.

While in the heart of Masaka city, the flamboyant Kwegatta Gemanyi Community Association (KGCA Enterprise) was established with a mission to conserve the environment through waste management and recycling, women empowerment and social development practices. The group comprises of 17 members (6 Male and 11 Female). Faced with challenges including limited income opportunities and environmental degradation from waste accumulation, the group went through numerous trainings and recognized the need for innovative solutions that not only addressed waste management but also enhanced economic viability. Kwegatta Gemanyi Community Association took a

bold step by launching a project focused on recycling organic waste into environmentally friendly charcoal briquettes for cooking and converting non-organic waste into durable pavers for construction. The briquettes provide a cleaner and more efficient cooking fuel, reducing deforestation while offering a new source of income to the enterprise members. This dual approach targeted two significant issues ie waste disposal and livelihood enhancement for women farmers.

The group collects organic waste from local farms and homes including agricultural residues like maize husks, banana peels and kitchen scraps which they process into high-quality charcoal briquettes an eco-friendly alternative to traditional charcoal.

"Being part of KGCA Enterprise has taught us the value of recycling. We're not just small-scale farmers anymore, we are part of a solution for a healthier environment. Transforming our organic waste into briquettes has not only reduced our garbage but also provided us with a sustainable fuel source that cuts our costs significantly."

Namugunya Zainabu Enterprise marketing personnel.

Women small-scale farmers in this enterprise have seen a significant increase in their household income through the sale of charcoal briquettes and pavers alongside their agricultural production. This extra revenue has allowed families to invest in children's education, healthcare and improve overall quality life.

"With the extra income from selling briquettes, I've been able to invest in advanced tools and expand my farm, improving both my farm's productivity and my family's quality of life as a youth."

Masiga Norah-Enterprise youth leader.

With support from the Agroecology Business Hub, the women small scale farmers gained leadership and business management skills which has enabled it scale up its operation for example it has been able to advance its marketing efforts by tapping into social media spaces to increase on its customer base. The enterprise had also realized that a lot of their would be profits are spent on paying water bills since water is a major resource in the production of charcoal briquettes and sought support from the Agroecology Business Hub, the Agroecology Business Hub supported the enterprise with a 10,000ltrs water tank to aid water harvesting hence reducing on their production expenses.

The enterprise has also been reached out to by other people to offer training on recycling waste at a cost hence earning extra income for the enterprise. The enterprise has created job opportunities not only for the association members but also for other community members who collect and sort rubbish, amplifying the economic impact. This has also contributed to reducing waste in the community, promoting a cleaner environment hence mitigating the effects of waste on local ecosystems and promoting sustainability.

"With KGCA Enterprise, I have learnt that sustainability can lead to profitability. By recycling organic waste, we're not just helping the environment; we're securing a better future for the next generation."

Mirembe Florence the enterprise secretary.

Encouraged by their success, Kwegatta Gemanyi Community Association is looking to expand its operations across the Masaka City scaling up production, exploring new markets for their products and providing training to other communities interested in similar initiatives. They aim to develop partnerships with local businesses and government entities to foster broader change in sustainable waste management practices.

Kwegatta Gemanyi Community Association (KGCA) stands as a testament to the power of community-driven solutions in addressing both environmental and economic challenges. By harnessing local resources and empowering women, they have not only transformed waste into valuable products but have also built a resilient and thriving community. Their success story is an inspiration for other communities seeking sustainable pathways to improved livelihoods.



Transforming Lives of pineapple farmers through Kayijja Pineapple Produce Dealers Enterprise.



Masaka district is known for its fertile soil and favorable climate, making it an ideal region for pineapple cultivation. However, many small-scale farmers in the region struggled with limited market access, inadequate pricing, and inefficient farming practices as they heavily relied on chemical use that is not only cost inefficient but also harmful to human and environmental health. For a long time, members of Kayijja Pineapple Produce Dealers a group of over 20 Small scale farmers (9M/11F) largely grew inorganic pineapples until 2020 when ESAFF Uganda introduced them to organic pineapple farming that marked a revolution in their farming. Later this group evolved and embraced the Participatory Guarantee System to streamline the organic pineapple production amongst group members.

The enterprise underwent business management training by the Agroecology Business Hub and has been continuously monitored and assessed for progress to ensure its growth and sustainability. As a group, members farm and market their organic produce together which minimizes costs hence maximizing profits. Kayijja Enterprise was able to establish a direct market link between farmers and buyers. The enterprise acts as a central hub for pineapple distribution, consolidating produce from numerous farmers and negotiating fair prices with wholesalers and retailers. This reduces the dependency on middlemen allowing farmers to receive better compensation for their hard work.

"Before joining Kayijja Pineapple Produce Dealers Enterprise, I struggled to find reliable buyers for my pineapples. Now, not only do I sell all my produce consistently, but I've also doubled my income. Their support has transformed my farming journey."

Nambooze Viola member.

As a result of these efforts, the livelihood of pineapple growers in Kayijja Village has significantly improved. Farmers report a remarkable increase in their income, allowing them to invest in better education for their children and access to healthcare. For many, the extra income has enabled them to diversify their crops and explore other income-generating activities further enhancing their economic resilience

One of the enterprise members noted

"The accessibility to markets has been a game-changer for us. The enterprise has helped me sell my pineapples at a higher price ensuring that my hard work pays off. I'm now able to invest in my family's future."

Namuwonge Aminah a small-scale farmer and member. Over the seasons, they have realized bumper harvests that sometimes especially during the pineapple season flood the market and lead to a drop in price. So to address these challenges members of Kayijja PGS group sought advice and capacity building from the Agroecology Business Hub. Which has enabled them realize that the best approach to benefit more and consistently from their efforts is to embrace value addition. Currently the group, with support from the business hub has managed to register with Uganda Registration Services Bureau and continues to lobby for technical support from the ABH and other players to venture into pineapple processing and value addition such as dried pineapple, wine and juices which will not only increase the income of farmers but also meet the growing demand for processed fruits in local and international markets hence diversifying their incomes.

"I want to see Kayijja Pineapple grow into a regional brand. With different support, we can explore export opportunities for our high-quality pineapples. It would be incredible to showcase our produce globally."

Kisekka Ibrahim, the enterprise chairperson.

The Members of Kayijja Pineapple Produce Dealers Enterprise have further embraced community driven support as they offer training on best agricultural practices through the Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) including pest control, soil management and the use of organic fertilizers that they acquired earlier on to interested members in their community. So far they have independently empowered and supported 40 Farmers in organic pineapple growing and offered close monitoring to ensure that pineapple farmers can maintain their farms efficiently and sustainably which has significantly improved crop yields and productivity of pineapples in the region and this has fostered a sense of community among farmers.

The cooperative model ie working and selling together has encouraged collaboration and shared learning, strengthening bonds between themselves and fostering a supportive environment. Together, they celebrate successes and tackle challenges, creating a united front against the uncertainties of agriculture which makes its members happy as they learn and grow together.

"Thanks to Kayijja, I have access to information and quality seedlings that I previously couldn't afford. This has not only improved my farm's productivity but has also strengthened my community as we grow and learn together."

Makumbi Yunus the enterprise secretary.

Looking ahead, Kayijja Pineapple Produce Dealers Enterprise aims to expand its impact further.

By improving the livelihoods of pineapple growers in Masaka district, the enterprise has not only transformed individual lives but has also paved the way for a brighter future for the entire community. As they continue their journey, the enterprise stands as a shining example of how innovation and collaboration can lead to sustainable development and economic empowerment.

CONCLUSION

The success stories shared in this booklet illustrate the transformative power of agroecological practices, showcasing how innovation, sustainability, and resilience can drive positive change in our agricultural communities. These enterprises have not only achieved economic viability but have also contributed to environmental health and social well-being. ESAFF Uganda invites readers, farmers, entrepreneurs, CSOs, policymakers and all advocates to draw inspiration from these examples and take action in their own ventures. By embracing agroecology, we can collectively foster a more sustainable and equitable food system. Join us in this movement to promote agroecological practices, support local initiatives and share your own stories of success, as together we pave the way for a brighter, healthier future for all.



Eastern and Southern Africa
Small Scale Farmers' Forum

ESAFF - UGANDA

VISIT OR CONTACT US



Physical Address:

Plot 266, Muvule Avenue
Buye – Ntinda, Kampala
P.O Box 34420 Kampala – Uganda
Telephone: +256 393 247195



Write to the National Coordinator:

Ms. Nancy M. Walimbwa
Email: coordinator@esaffuganda.org



Social Media:

Twitter: @ESAFFUG
Facebook: **ESAFF Uganda**
YouTube: **ESAFF Uganda TV**
Instagram: **esaff_agroecology**
LinkedIn: **ESAFF Uganda**



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