

Advance
—• A F R I K A •—

Where Dignity Matters



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Our Vision:

A safe and free society where young people live with dignity and realise their full potential.

Our Mission:

We address the root causes of vulnerability by developing opportunities for economic empowerment and transforming the social functionality of communities.

Our Values:

Courageous Leadership, Passion, Appreciation and Professionalism.

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Foreword

As we move forward, we shall continue to be at the forefront of transforming highly vulnerable individuals and communities, by identifying who and where they are, and proactively identifying and addressing the root causes to bring about positive change.

Warm greetings from Advance Afrika.

It is my great pleasure to present to you our 2021 Annual Report highlighting the activities and achievements of 2021. Despite the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic and unforeseen challenges, the projects implemented were timely and significant in responding to the immediate needs of the beneficiaries, including vulnerable women, children, youth and communities (specifically smallholder farmers, young entrepreneurs, truck drivers, prison inmates and ex-inmates) affected by the intensified impact of the restrictive COVID-19 measures, including restrictions on movement, interactions and economic activity.

During the reporting period, different actions/projects have continued to demonstrate notable potential for the economic empowerment and transformation of communities. These included training beneficiary women and their spouses in VSLA methodology, formal registration of strengthened groups, training of business mentors, training of VHTs and HCIII, conducting a market assessment of the current business environment as well as a needs assessment of health facilities and existing support structures, facilitating learning visits to model farmers and private sector actors, organising and promoting sub-county farmer markets, and holding engagement meetings with duty bearers and private actors, to mention but a few. The projects have progressed well along their specific objectives, leading to very positive feedback from all stakeholders, who consider the interventions as relevant, something further affirmed by the studies conducted and evaluations. At the same time, there is still a great need to strengthen the capacities of local structures at the grass roots, enhance partnerships with community-based organisations as well as undertake more efforts to engage in gender

equality and youth inclusion through empowerment and participation in policy development processes.

Relations among project stakeholders have been positive, receptive and generally of high quality. These stakeholders include the grant holders, the target groups – women's groups and their households, smallholder farmers, young entrepreneurs, the truck drivers' association, school administrations and senior teachers, community structures, Uganda Prisons Service, the private sector –, the communities (final beneficiaries) as well as other actors involved, such as the local governments in the respective target districts. The various stakeholders have participated actively in the project activities and pledged continuous support. Advance Afrika and the implementing partners have maintained open communication and ensured that there is participation in all their relevant discussions with stakeholders.

As we move forward, we shall continue to be at the forefront of transforming highly vulnerable individuals and communities, by identifying who and where they are, and proactively identifying and addressing the root causes to bring about positive change.

I wish to thank our donors for the continued cooperation and constructive engagement in the work of Advance Afrika. We are deeply grateful for this support. I thank our Board of Directors for their strategic and technical guidance to the organisation. In a special way, I appreciate our staff for their remarkable dedication, and commitment to make a difference as well as add lasting value to our society.

Sincerely,

Ms Sharon Atukunda
Chief Executive Officer

Our reach in 2021

We are happy to present a few key highlights on the project progresses and achievements realised and aligned to the strategic goals of the organisation for 2021.

S01 TRANSFORMING VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES



40

women's groups

received training in VSLA methodology, including content on income-generating activities and financial literacy. The women's groups now adhere to the VSLA standards and requirements, thus improving their standards of living. In addition, 4 groups in Irimya parish, Kicuzi sub-county and Mpasha parish, Rukiri sub-county have been linked to the Parish Community Association Model (PCAM) and the Luweero Rwenzori Development Programme, a grant that comes from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).



1,075

Female



126

Male



60

community structures

were trained in child protection, ways to support victims of domestic violence and case management, and how to protect the rights of women and children and offering counselling to victims and survivors of violence in Ibanda and Buhweju Districts.



28

Female



52

Male

12 LC1 Chairpersons 40 Para-socials
08 Champions of change



62%

community members

in the five selected sub-counties in Arua (River Oli Division, Arua Hill Division, Vurra Sub-County) and Zombo (Goli-Jangokoro and Alangi Sub-Counties) had positively changed their perceptions about the needs and concerns of the truck drivers and young entrepreneurs. Also, in the course of the action, the majority of the young entrepreneurs reported that they had a positive attitude towards the COVID-19 guidelines and that they followed the guidelines voluntarily. This was because they felt that the guidelines were intended to protect them from contracting COVID-19.



08

in-prison projects

in the Acholi sub-region were established in Gulu Main Prison, Gulu Women's Prison, Pece Prison and Lugore Farm Prison in Gulu District; Amuru Main Prison and Kaladima Farm Prison in Amuru District; and Kitgum Main and Orom Tikao Farm Prison in Kitgum District. The in-prison projects supported included 3 tailoring projects, 1 beauty salon, 2 carpentry projects, 1 barbershop, 1 piggery and vegetable growing. Whereas in West Nile, in-prison projects involving vegetable growing and urban gardening were promoted in all the 4 prison units (Arua Main, Arua Women, Nebbi and Paidha Prisons) to support food security and nutrition among the inmates and to provide inmates with a beneficial skill for life after prison.



55

prison inmates

were attended to by a team of 10 advocates (4 females, 3 males) from Uganda Law Society (ULS) (3 from Kitgum, 7 from Gulu and Amuru) during the reporting period. The advocates offered pro bono services to inmates from 5 prisons units (Gulu Main, Gulu Women's and Pece Prisons in Gulu District; Kitgum Main Prison in Kitgum District and Amuru Main Prison in Amuru District). It is important to note that the prison leadership highly recommended that priority and focus should be given to reception centres where remandees are kept.



14

Female



41

Male



13

land-related cases or resource conflict cases

have been identified and addressed through the Police Office Land Desk and Community Liaison Officer. Furthermore, 14 prison social workers (PSWs) of Amuru, Kitgum and Gulu received training in mediation, mediating land disputes and land laws and rights with particular focus on Northern Uganda.

SO2 BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION



young entrepreneurs

were trained in entrepreneurship and life skills as well as alternative livelihoods and visited private actors, and this contributed towards a positive mindset and skills to support them in their socio-economic resilience. 15 young entrepreneurs were provided with alternative kits to make liquid soap and doormats, and to grow herbs and vegetables, among others, to improve their household food security and livelihoods.

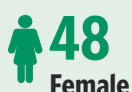


In addition,



young entrepreneurs

were supported with booster kits to improve on their economic resilience and performance.



exposure visits

were organised to the Lango sub-region targeting a total of 135 (24 female, 111 male) beneficiaries and project stakeholders. Out of these, 86 (19 female, 67 male) participants were from the Acholi sub-region (Agago – 26, Amuru – 6, Omoro – 54) and 49 (5 female, 44 male) participants from West Nile (Pakwach – 10, Nebbi – 24, Zombo – 15). The participants included selected 109 (17 female, 92 male) lead farmers, 8 sub-county extension officers and 18 (5 female, 13 male) project staff. The focus of the visits was production (agronomy) and markets (value addition) for grains (soya and beans), tomatoes, onions and local poultry. Three actors that specialised in production (agronomy), local poultry and grain processing were identified, and these were Ngetta Zonal Agriculture Research Institute (ZARDI), Akolodong Mixed Farm – a private poultry farm – and OTIS Seeds. As a result, linkages between small holder farmers, agro-processors and market actors within the value chains were fostered.



value addition activities

were facilitated, including processing, packaging, apiary and standards control. Farmers received processing equipment such as groundnut shellers (70 manual shellers, 5 motorised shellers), Irish potato processing equipment, including peeling machines, slicing machines/cutters, blanching machines, dewatering machines and fryers. For apiary, what was provided included product diversification equipment/items for making propolis tincture, candles, wax, soap, jelly and shoe polish, besides modern (Langstroth) hives, honey extractors (1 per farmer group (FG)), catch boxes, uncapping trays and forks. In addition, honey processing tanks and product diversification equipment/items for bee venom collection as well as value addition products for making propolis tincture, candles, soap, jelly and tailoring were provided. FGs were also supported with airtight buckets for packaging. For storage, farmers were given Purdue Improved Crop Storage (PICS) bags and standards/quality control equipment (each of the 200 FGs received certified UNBS Hanson and counter weighing scales).



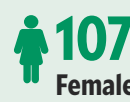
market opportunities

were identified and accessed under the DINU-ALENU action. 6 market opportunities – for apiary FGs – have been identified in making soap, jelly, candles, wax, propolis tincture, tailoring and garment making, shoe polish and bee venom in collaboration with Bee House and Kicar Ber Ltd. Also, 2 opportunities have been identified for Irish potatoes FGs in post-harvest handling and value addition through making crisps and chips in compliance with market requirements for commercial production.



farmers

were supported to access markets during the sub-county farmer markets. At least 63 (10 female, 53 male) stakeholders from the project districts, sub-counties and private market were also engaged in this activity. Approximately 24 linkages were created with the local buyers.



SO3 ADVOCACY AND CREATIVE COMMUNICATION



A market research assessment

of the business environment for micro- and small enterprises as well as a participatory assessment of the health needs and existing support structures were conducted in West Nile in the districts of Arua and Zombo. The studies focused on an in-depth analysis of the current market dynamics and risk factors, determined the impact of the restrictive COVID-19 measures on the businesses and livelihoods of young entrepreneurs and truck drivers, and identified the key occupational health issues/challenges in keeping safe and healthy and in protecting others from infectious diseases. In addition, a position paper on the relevance of community structures in the reintegration process of ex-prison inmates in Northern Uganda was conducted to analyse policy issues as reflected in the research reports and our intervention in the light of the factors that hinder the successful reintegration of ex-prison inmates into their societies and how to overcome them.



Community dialogues

were held – four dialogues in the sub-counties of Rukiri, Kicuzi in Ibanda and Burere, Bihanga in Buhweju. The dialogues focused on the crisis of gender-based violence against women and children in the face of COVID -19. This was also aligned with the theme of the 16 Days against GBV Campaign 2021: “End Violence against Women and Girls Now!”. In total, 143 community members (61female, 82 male) participated in the dialogues. In Northern Uganda, 3 dialogues were conducted in Awach, Orom and Pogo Sub-Counties in Gulu, Kitgum and Amuru, respectively. These focused on the role of UPS, community involvement in rehabilitation, reintegration and promoting access to justice (dispensing court cases) by (ex-)inmates and victims of crime as a contribution to reducing recidivism among (ex-)inmates in their communities; and raising awareness about the issues of welfare and reintegration. A total of 114 community members (21 female, 92 male) participated in the community dialogues.



European Union political advisors & member states

visited the BOPLYN action implemented by Advance Afrika and Edukans in the context of our collaboration and programmes with Uganda Prisons Service (UPS) in the areas of socio-economic rehabilitation, access to justice and reintegration of prison inmates.



outreach visits

by 50 Village Health Teams (VHTs) to young entrepreneurs in their areas as well as \ truck hubs were conducted during this reporting period. During the outreach visits, 23 referrals were made for people showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19, 123 pregnant mothers were advised to go for antenatal care at the health facilities and 73 families in Arua (including youth – 32 male, 45 female) and 47 families in Zombo (with youth – 64 male, 18 female) were counselled and guided to visit their nearest health centres to access family planning as well as test for HIV/AIDS to know their status. The MTR established that 72% (39% in Arua, 33% in Zombo) of the young entrepreneurs and 67% of the truck drivers had accessed health centres (HCIIIs) in the previous 6 months.



duty bearers

were actively engaged in a dialogue session to strengthen community structures and present the challenges that women and children face with regard to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in their communities.



Female



Male

SO4 GROWTH OF ADVANCE AFRIKA



With funding from the European Union (EU) and GIZ under the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP), **Advance Afrika organised a three-day online training on public expenditure, monitoring and lobbying that ran from 5 to 7 July 2021.** The main purpose of the training was to enhance the capacity of staff and cluster members to enable them to engage constructively in budget-related issues and to foster their informed participation in the monitoring of public expenditures and advocating for change in budget planning and public expenditure monitoring processes. A total of 30 participants, including representatives from community-based organisations (CBOs) (KIWEPI, Care Community Organisation and Alliance for Sustainable Development), staff of Advance Africa, Community Development Officers (CDOs) and political leaders from the districts of Amuru and Kitgum were trained.



NOREC participants also organised in-house training on cognitive behaviour and rebuilding identity. The staff of Advance Afrika and PSWs who were trained appreciated the training, and noted the need to integrate the concepts into the rehabilitation and reintegration model in our work with UPS.



Advance Afrika has also established a partnership with a German organisation – Bread for the World –, which resulted in the secondment of an advisor on public relations and advocacy activities, now integrated into the organisation. His role is to develop communication strategies, tools and procedures; conduct trainings for management and staff on collecting and writing best practices, and writing success stories and producing short videos for social media, newsletters, websites or reports with the aim of enhancing advertising, fundraising and public awareness. He will also support participatory and action-oriented research studies in cooperation with Advance Afrika.



Through the cooperation and support of AGIAMONDO, **a training was held on overall conflict resolution and mediation to strengthen the capacity of the Advance Afrika staff.** The staff have thus been better equipped to resolve all manner of disputes, including land disputes. As a result, the staff have knowledge of mediation theory and proactivity, as well as are able to address disputes as and when they arise.



The Advance Afrika CEO went through a three-month-long Thriving Leadership Program supported by the Ford Foundation. The program was delivered by Thrive Worldwide to enable leadership growth of partner organisations from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This was tailored to their wellbeing learning and development needs and, therefore, aimed to enhance the wellbeing of staff. During the course, key sessions on leadership circles, leadership wellbeing, co-creating organisational culture, raising and strengthening teams and leadership catalysts were taught and discussed. Also, leadership coaching sessions and reflective spaces were held with groups of professionals. The sessions provided an opportunity for the leaders in the Ford Foundation partner organisations to experience a sense of hope and support in these uncertain and unpredictable times. The leaders were all awarded with certificates. Ms Sharon Atukunda appreciated the course for strengthening her leadership sense of wellbeing.

SN	Project	Location	Implementing partner	Donor
1	Action for Livelihood Enhancement in Northern Uganda (ALENU)	Amuru, Agago, Omoro, Pakwach, Nebbi, Zombo	Caritas Switzerland with Advance Afrika, Agency for Accelerated Regional Development, and Gulu Women Economic Development and Globalisation supervised by Office of the Prime Minister	European Union
2	Bridging Opportunities for Effective and Productive Livelihoods of Youth Inmates and ex-Inmates in Northern Uganda (BOPLYN)	Gulu, Kitgum, Amuru	Advance Afrika and Edukans in partnership with Uganda Prisons Service	European Union
3	Protecting the Dignity of Women and Children in Ibanda and Buhweju Districts (PDWC)	Ibanda and Buhweju	Advance Afrika in partnership with Centre for Integrated Community Development	European Union
4	Improving the Economic Resilience of West Nile Youth in the Face of COVID-19 (IERC)	Arua and Zombo	Advance Afrika in partnership with Faraja Africa Foundation	European Union
5	Strengthening Community Dispute Resolution Structures to Resolve Land Disputes in Northern Uganda	Northern Uganda	AGIAMONDO and Advance Afrika	AGIAMONDO
6	UMUNTHU – Education and Skilling	Exchange programme	Chance for Change and Advance Afrika	Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC)
7	Working Together for Change – Strengthening CSO Engagement in the Justice Sector through <i>Baraza</i> and Planning in Amuru District	Amuru and Gulu	Advance Afrika	Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP) - EU/ GIZ
8	Support for Network of Young People to Push Back against Constraints on Civic Space through Art and Technology in Uganda	Gulu, Mbarara and Kampala	Advance Afrika	Ford Foundation



Achievements

Description & success stories

Strategic Goal 1

Transforming Vulnerable Individuals and Communities



Training of women groups in VSLA methodology

20 additional women's groups (10 groups each from Ibanda and Buhweju) were formed, profiled and trained at the beginning of the year. A 4-day training session was conducted by the business mentors and counselling sessions/remarks delivered by a para-social worker and a member of the area LC1. The training was followed by continuous mentorship as part of the usual meetings of the groups with business mentors. The training covered the following content: recordkeeping, budgeting, managing customers, borrowing and saving. After completion of the training, the participants received VSLA kits that included cash boxes, cashbooks, rulers, pens, saving bags, calculators and spring files branded with the name and logos of the EU and the partners to the action. So far, the VSLA groups have been saving on a weekly basis and about 4 groups have been saving monthly. 90% of group members have already benefitted since the groups started by acquiring loans and setting up small businesses, among others. The groups testify that all members who have so far acquired loans from the groups have paid them back and others are still paying in accordance with the agreed terms.

Formal registration of strengthened women groups

In addition, 40 women's groups were formally registered at sub-county level with support from the DCDOs' and CDOs' offices. The groups were required to conduct meetings and take minutes showing their interest in registration. Advance Afrika, in close collaboration with business mentors, mobilised the groups, mentored and guided them on the constitution template. Also, group registration fees were paid under the PDWC action. The registration process was coordinated and followed up by Advance Afrika Project Officers. This has since sufficiently strengthened the women's groups to access economic opportunities at the sub-county, district and national levels. The

groups received certificates of registration from the districts to certify their operations as community-based associations.

Strengthening in-prison projects

During this reporting period, 8 in-prison projects in Acholi sub-region were established in Gulu Main Prison, Gulu Women's Prison, Pece Prison, Lugore Farm Prison in Gulu District; Amuru Main Prison and Kaladima Farm Prison in Amuru District; and Kitgum Main Prison and Orom Tikao Farm Prison in Kitgum District. The in-prison projects supported included 3 tailoring projects; 1 beauty salon; 2 carpentry; 1 barbershop; 1 piggery; and vegetable growing. Whereas in West Nile, in-prison projects involving vegetable growing and urban gardening were promoted in all the 4 prison units (Arua Main, Arua Women's Prison, Nebbi and Paidha Prisons) to support food security and nutrition among the inmates and to provide inmates with a beneficial skill for life after prison.

So far, the in-prison projects set up in Acholi prison units have started training the inmates. While in West Nile, 100 inmates (35 female, 65 male) were trained in 25 per prison unit. The inmates were trained in different forms of vegetable growing such as using sacks or containers and ways to set up and manage a nursery bed, and the growing of vegetables and herbs such as collard greens (*sukuma wiki*), spinach, tomatoes, carrots, coriander, Amaranthus, lemongrass, rosemary and aloe vera. Experienced agronomists from Arua and Nebbi conducted the practical sessions with close supervision and monitoring by Officers in Charge and Project Officers. The trainings were held in 2 phases, and carried out in Lugbarati and Alur to ensure better understanding among the inmates. The trainer took inmates through the process of transplanting the vegetables or herbs from the nursery beds to poly and white sacks for further growth, management and care. During this session, the inmates actively participated in the practical ses-



Handover of training material for in prison projects in Gulu, Kitgum and Amuru



AA project officer at Gulu Women with the Regional Prisons Commander ACP Margret Orik, Gulu women OC and a prison social worker.

▶
Inmates prepare
a nursery
bed and men
involved in
backyard
gardening at
Arua women
prison and Arua
main prisons
respectively.
◀



sions. After 21 days, the facilitators made follow-up visits and reported good progress. In addition, seeds and other inputs were provided to each prison unit to enable continuation of the project.

Inmates have highly appreciated the new methods of vegetable growing, including how to sterilise the soil, measurement of spacing in a nursery bed, how to control termites locally, watering seedlings in a nursery bed and controlling the spread of diseases through washing hands. The inmates acquired hands-on experience and new knowledge about how to take care of vegetables. The Officers in Charge applauded Advance Afrika for the training in urban gardening as those inmates who have HIV/AIDS will benefit from the variety of vegetables that they can eat and have a balanced diet and thus improve their immunity. Advance Afrika will further identify experts in the respective fields of the in-prison projects to offer additional capacity-building to the responsible inmates and officers managing the in-prison projects for sustainability. There is also need to link the trained prison inmates who will benefit from the project to other private sector actors for job opportunities or apprenticeship. In addition, inmates who have undergone training in these in-prison projects need to be certified by the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) up to the end of the project period for easy follow-up. At Gulu Main Prison, the project team has ascertained that the Welfare Department is already in touch with the DIT to register for certification of the inmates. This is an opportunity for all the other units to have those of their inmates who have undergone training to be certified by DIT, particularly the units that have chosen vocational programmes.

Training VHTs and HCIII

50 VHTs – stable, experienced and willing to contribute to the action – from the five sub-counties of Arua Hill, River Oli Division, Vurra in Arua, and Alangi and Jangokoro in Zombo District were selected with the

assistance of the District Health Educators (DHEs). A total of 50 VHTs (22 female, 28 male) were trained, 30 from Arua and 20 from Zombo, including representatives from the health centres III (HCIIIs) from each district. 2 trainings were conducted over a period of three days in July 2021, Arua and Zombo Districts. The objective was to improve on the services provided by VHTs to their communities, especially in times of crisis. Trainers from the District Health Department and medical practitioners with knowledge of and experience in working with communities on sensitive issues of HIV/AIDS, hygiene, COVID-19 and other disease facilitated the sessions. The VHTs were equipped with knowledge about how to address anxiety, fear and rumours related to these diseases and health concerns. As a result, the VHTs are now able to approach communities in a sensitive way and also to keep the information of the community members confidential. The training was also highly applauded by officials from the District Health Department of Arua and Zombo who attended the certificate handover ceremony, including the Assistant District Health Officer (DHO), Arua District Local Government (DLG), who appreciated Advance Afrika for the great partnership and making consultations with the DLG. He further noted that the department had given Advance Afrika information, education and communication (IEC) materials to create awareness about different diseases, and that these have been distributed by VHTs during their outreach. The DHO Zombo commended the action for training VHTs and equipping them with knowledge and skills to sensitise communities with regard to health. The DHE Zombo District, in her remarks, requested the intervention to expand to other sub-counties and stated that the fact that out of the 13 sub-counties, 8 border the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), puts the district at risk of contracting infectious diseases. At the end of the training, the VHTs received notebooks, pens, temperature guns, face masks, a project T-shirt and a bag.

Strategic Goal 2

Business growth and job creation



Training in alternative livelihoods

71 young entrepreneurs received training in practical skills relevant to their business environment. Advance Afrika collaborated with Uganda Small Scale Industries Association (USSIA) and Uganda Fruits and Vegetables Exporters and Producers Association (UFVEPA) to organise exposure visits to model private sector actors and small-scale enterprises so as to facilitate learning from best practices. 6 private actors and small-scale businesses, among others, were identified; these included Hamran Chemical Ltd and Page Logistics Uganda, Rubaga, which make liquid soap; Wage Farm, Gayaza and Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (Mukono ZARDI), which are engaged in making spices and vegetable growing, respectively; Kinawataka Women Initiative, Kinawataka, which makes mats and baskets locally from used straws; and Nellie Sallie's Enterprise, Luzira, which focuses on tailor-

ing and making toilet bags and tablemats. The actors demonstrated and facilitated learning to the young entrepreneurs on best practices, value addition and innovative approaches to urban gardening, arts and crafts, and on making herbal spices and liquid soap. This provided an opportunity for the participants to experience good practices and models in practice, in areas such as production, post-harvest, use of local cultures, processing and value creation, branding and benefit-sharing (integrative business models). Through the training and exposure visit, the young entrepreneurs connected with relevant actors in their value chain, fostering exchanges and the formation of fruitful partnerships. The visits enabled them to learn how to access alternative income and, at the same time, maintain good hygiene in their businesses. The young entrepreneurs now play an active role in their communities to demonstrate good agricultural practices and high growth potential.





Trainees being taught on making of liquid soap at Hamran Chemical Ltd and urban gardening during the exposure visit at Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research Institute (ZARDI)



Business boosters

During 2021, out of 350 young entrepreneurs, 100 (48 female, 52 male) were provided with booster kits (in-kind support) in Arua and Zombo Districts. The small businesses that were facilitated included bakery, boda-boda riding, carpentry, fish-vending, motorcycle repair, phone repair and electronics, produce selling, vegetable farming, retail business, machine repair (motorcycles and bicycles), vending of second-hand clothes, salon business, tailoring, vending/hawking and welding and metal fabrication. The businesses were supported with booster kits such as hand-washing stations, liquid soap, protective wear (helmets, safety jackets), bicycles, smartphones, tarpaulins, PICS bags for storage, as well as tailoring machines and hair driers, among others, to improve production, processing, storage as well as hygiene practices at the workplaces. These have also improved efficiency and eased access to work.

A mini handover ceremony was conducted in the sub-counties of River Oli Division, Arua Hill Division, Vurra in Arua, Alangi, Jangokoro Sub-Counties in Zombo and witnessed by representatives from the community, including the representatives of local government structures such as the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Zombo, the District

Internal Security Officer (Arua), District Commercial Officers (DCOs), Local Council I (LCI) and Local Council III (LCIII) officials, the business mentors, family members and the community at large. Each young entrepreneur acknowledged receipt of the booster kit and committed him/herself to using it according to its intended purpose. The booster kit distribution approach has both enhanced the visibility of the action and increased awareness of the economic resilience of the young entrepreneurs in running the businesses established or in coping with difficult situations. The RDC Zombo emphasised to the young entrepreneurs that the business booster kit is intended to enable them to move a step forward in business. He stated, "If you have one pair of shoes today, then tomorrow I should get you with two pairs of shoes. In other words, your business should not remain the same." The DISO Arua encouraged the young entrepreneurs to utilise the equipment received and to register their businesses, pay for trading licences and pay tax so as to operate legally and avoid conflicting with the authorities. The district leadership commended the action and requested that more young entrepreneurs struggling in such times be supported with skills as well as resources or kits that can keep their businesses running.



◀ A young entrepreneur, Ms Scovia Ongiera receives her booster kit of a mobile money phone and container witnessed by the RDC Zombo, Andrew Kajoyingi in center, the District Commercial Officer far right, LC3 Jangokoro Sub County and CEO Advance Afrika on the left.

Munguleni Jilda is a young entrepreneur from Arua Hill who sells women's and babies' clothes. She received a bale of ladies' and babies' clothes. She appreciates the support offered by Advance Afrika to her as an entrepreneur. Her business collapsed during the lockdown as she wasn't able to travel to Kampala to buy more clothes to sell due to the restricted movement. From the knowledge and skills she acquired from the trainings organised by Advance Afrika, she managed to start making doormats as an alternative source of livelihood. She learnt that to be resilient in the current situation, one has to create a number of income sources so that when one income source is affected, the alternative continues generating money.

Awekomungu Joseline is a young entrepreneur who makes and repairs shoes. She operates her business in Vurra Sub-County. She got an umbrella, apron, sewing blades, nylon thread, shoe soles (inner and outer), a bench, glue and a black polythene bag. The business suffered during the lockdown as she used the business capital to finance household needs. After receiving booster kits she has gained the confidence that her business is going to grow as she intends to use the materials given to her to make shoes in order to attract customers.

Promotion of digital marketing

10 young digital ambassadors trained as a team of digital facilitators responded to the digital needs and concerns of the young entrepreneurs. A total of 100 entrepreneurs (each digital ambassador reached out to 10 pre-selected young business entrepreneurs) were reached individually and responded to their unique digital needs in an effort to help young businesses thrive through the COVID-19 pandemic and continue driving productivity. The outreach took place in September 2021. The activity promoted e-commerce for the young entrepreneurs in West Nile through digital marketing, linkages, access as well as business development services (BDS) using online platforms. The digital ambassadors engaged the young entrepreneurs on a number of social media sites/platforms such as Facebook Business Manager, WhatsApp and Twitter to access market information and link up with market actors. The digital sessions focused on the benefits of digitalisation for businesses, how to create an online presence, and how

to create customer relations and linkages using online platforms. During the sessions, most businesses were encouraged to install or activate digital marketing apps on their mobile phones or laptops to promote and market their products and services, access market information or opportunities, and continue using online services /social media sites on which their businesses are active.

During the digital marketing sessions, it was observed that most of the young entrepreneurs were not using social media platforms for doing business, the reason being that some did not have smartphones and others did not view their business as one that should be advertised on social media. However, some young entrepreneurs who had smartphones were able to use different social media platforms for business, especially Facebook. Those who used Facebook for doing business appreciated it as they were able to access a large number of potential customers, starting with the people they knew, and then moving on to people whom they got to meet because of having a mutual friend.



The DCDO
 Arua, AA
 Project Officer
 and digital
 ambassadors
 pose for a group
 photo after
 a training at
 Heritage courts
 hotel, Arua
 district.

Facilitating learning visits to model farmers and private sector actors

2 exposure visits were organised to the Lango sub-region targeting a total of 135 (24 female, 111 male) beneficiaries and project stakeholders. Out of those, 86 (19 female, 67 male) were from Acholi and 49 (5 female, 44 male) from West Nile. The participants included 109 (17 female, 92 male) selected lead farmers (from both PY1 and PY2 FGs), eight (8 male) sub-county extension officers, 18 (5 female, 13 male) project staff and 3 private sector participants. The objective of the visit was to foster linkages between the farmers, agro-processors and market actors along the project value chains.

Accordingly, the focus of the visits was on production (agronomy) and markets (value addition) for grains (soya and beans), tomatoes, onions and local poultry. Three actors that are specialised in production (agronomy), local poultry and grain processing were identified, and these were Ngetta Zonal Agriculture Research Institute (ZARDI), Akolodong Mixed Farming – a private poultry farm – and OTIS Seeds, respectively.

During the visits, the farmers were able to see practically some of the best agronomic

practices being carried out in the region in relation to soya, beans, tomatoes and onions. These included identification of the various seed types for soya, beans, tomatoes and onions, land preparation, nursery bed establishment, when to plant, the best planting method (row planting) including spacing, weeding and pest and disease control. For all practices, climate smart agriculture (mulching) was encouraged. For poultry, farmers were able to learn about low-cost modern poultry housing, poultry feeds, pest and disease control, security of the farm, value addition (slaughtering, packaging and roasting) and a potential market for poultry. In terms of value addition, the beneficiaries visited OTIS Seeds, a grain processing plant that does primary value addition for all grains. They were able to appreciate post-harvest handling and post-harvest losses, grain processing (cleaning, sorting, drying, packaging, grading and branding). They also learnt about modern storage facilities like PICS bags and silos and were trained on how to use them.

As a result of the visits, the lead farmers organised knowledge-sharing sessions for their FG members with support from the POs and Agriculture Extension Officers. So far 20 sessions (Acholi – 15, West Nile – 5) were organised in 20/81 FGs. The ses-

sions were attended by 361 (94 female, 267 male) farmers, of whom 270 (89 female, 181 male) farmers actively participated in Acholi and 91 (30 female, 60 male) in West Nile. The sessions focused on relevant topics like post-harvest handling and primary grain processing (cleaning, sorting, drying,

packaging, grading and branding) as most FG members had started harvesting their crops from the gardens and were preparing to sell. The lead farmers also encouraged their FG members to adopt the modern storage facilities like PICS bags and silos and trained them on how to use the bags.

The Managing Director of OTIS Seeds Lira explaining to Farmers the modern storage facilities using Silos and PICS bags during the exposure visit to grain processing plant in Lira.



Lot 2 of ALENU FG members visit a tomatoes garden at Ngetta ZARDI during the exposure learning visit to learn about agronomy of the enterprises.



Organise and promote sub-county farmer markets

At the beginning of PY2, a total of 12 sub-county farmer markets were organised in each of the project sub-counties. The markets were deliberately scheduled on the market days to tap into the potential buyers from the general market. A total of 197(107 female, 90 male) farmers were selected and supported with incentives like transport, market space rent and market dues in order to access markets. At least 63 (10 female, 53 male) stakeholders from the project districts and sub-counties as well

as private market actors were also engaged in this activity. The objective of the activity was to promote the commodities being produced under the project, restore the functionality of the sub-county markets, create linkages between the ALENU beneficiaries and other market actors and create awareness about the ALENU project. The selected farmers were identified from the 100 FGs, However, priority was given to those farmers that had engaged in production of the action's commodities in addition to other commodities not under the action.

Commodities brought to the sub-county farmer market by farmers and their quantities as well as total sales by the farmers that participated

Items	Description	Qty brought	Qty sold	Current market price	Selling price	Total sales
Unshelled groundnuts	Bags	251	70	110,000	130,000	9,100,000
Shelled groundnuts	Kg	350	70	2,300	2,500	175,000
Local hen		36	28	15,000	15,000	420,000
Local cock		55	50	25,000	25,000	1,250,000
Soya	Kg	270	125	2,000	2,200	275,000
Beans	Kg	400	40	3500	4,000	160,000
Onions	Kg	130	10	2,500	2,500	25,000
Irish	Basins	3	3	32,000	30,000	90,000
Tomatoes	Basins	8	6	35000	43,000	258,000
Others (non-project commodities)	Kg	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL FARMER MARKET SALES						11,753,000

Approximately 24 linkages were created with the local buyers. At least 1FG, Rec-kiceke FG in Amuru District, was able to collectively sell 44 bags of groundnuts, each at UGX 130,000, to a bulk buyer out of the linkages created. The farmers also obtained the contacts of produce dealers such as Mr. Ojara Michael, a produce dealer in groundnuts at Amuru trading centre, while at Akaba Market in Nebbi, Mama Edisa, a food produce retailer (tomatoes)

at Nebbi Main Market, was able to buy all the tomatoes from farmers. Most of the farmers attested that they were excited to be selling in the markets. For example, *Mr. Yonibat Ijini from Mungyjakisa FG in Atego Sub-County, confessed that the farmer market broadened his access to market for tomatoes. He used to sell in small quantities but during the farmer markets, he was able to sell four basins at a better price.*



Mr. Opiyo Charles the District Commercial Officer of Amuru district buying from a female beneficiary under ALENU project during the sub-county farmer market at Amuru Trading Center market



ALENU beneficiary measuring for a local retail buyer groundnuts at Panyimur Market during the farmer market.

Creating added value for the action's commodities

During the reporting period, 100 PY 2 FGs received value addition equipment and materials: 100 Hanson spring balance scales and 100 counter weighing scales; 3 motorised groundnut shellers; and 38 manual shellers. These were distributed to 38 FGs that selected groundnuts for commercial purposes. Additionally, small-scale processing equipment for Irish potatoes, including manual peelers, chips cutters, crisps cutters, potato blanching machines, manual dewatering machines and fryers were procured and distributed to farmers in Zombo to enhance value addition by the 27 FGs producing Irish potatoes. Also, 5 apiary FGs formed in PY2 received value addition products for making propolis tincture, candles, soap and jelly. During the distributions, the DCOs were engaged in the verification process for this equipment and in efforts to ensure local government participation.

A total of 350 (143female, 207male) farmers benefitted from the training on equipment usage. Out of these, 323 (142 female, 181 male) FG members in groundnut production were trained on how to operate the manual and motorised threshers at their FG level. Out of these, 76(34 female, 42 male) were from Pakwach, 92 (47 female, 45 male) from Amuru, 116 (45 female, 71 male) from Omoro and 39 (16 female, 23 male) from Agago Districts. While 27 (1 female, 26 male) FG members in Irish potato production in Nebbi and Zombo were trained in value addition for Irish and equipment usage and maintenance. In total, the action engaged 6) BDS providers and private actors, including market consultants in the areas of agro-machinery, bee keeping and management and agribusiness development to support the farmers with training on the usage of improved or modern technologies and equipment, maintenance as well as market requirements and practices



Members of Irish potatoes FGs in Nebbi and Zombo during the practical training session on Irish potatoes processing, making crisps and chips.



▲ Members of Irish potatoes FGs in Nebbi and Zombo during the practical training session on Irish potatoes processing, making crisps and chips.



The Sub
 County Chief
 of Lakwana
 sub-county in
 Omoro District
 during the
 hand over of
 Value Addition
 Equipment to
 FGs in Lakwana
 Sub County



Four FG members in Wol Sub County, Agago District posing for a group photo after receiving Value addition
 Equipment support from the action .

Strategic Goal 3

Advocacy & creative communication



Forum theatre/performing arts

Participatory forum theatre events were conducted during community outreach activities on violence against women and children (VAW/C) as a way of fostering discussions and debates about experiences of violence in the communities. 4 theatre events were organised, themed *“Enabling communities to fight violence against women and children”*. The forum theatre events attracted a broad variety of participants directly or indirectly linked to the action. Some of the key stakeholders included the Senior Assistant Secretaries, District Woman Councillors, District Councillors and LC3 Chairpersons of the respective sub-counties, the media, the police, business communities, and community members, including men, women, youth and children in Ibanda and Buhweju Districts. Responses from the community indicated that in cases where men hold power over women, the women are not aware of their rights. Children expressed the need for them to stay in school so that this could help them keep away from early marriages and also have a bright and better future. Alcoholism was recognised as the

biggest cause of violence in communities and homes. Also, peer influence/bad friends were recognised as leading to violence in homes. The leaders urged the people to regulate or even get off alcohol consumption altogether. Religious leaders realised from the plays that they should take the lead in the fight against VAW/C and, if possible, always give a hand whenever they can. Community members were urged to utilise the available structures to report cases of violence in communities. The outreach and forum theatre performances have been used to raise awareness about violence in homes, and women were able to build confidence in themselves by sharing their experiences. They promised not to hide and keep quiet about issues of violence in their homes. Furthermore, community members were able to identify the root causes and consequences of GBV in their homes and communities. Community structures and leaders appreciated the EU and the action for upholding the rights of women and children. They continued to pledge their support and be a voice for the voiceless within their communities and also promised to invite Advance Afrika to community meetings to sensitise people on VAW/C.

District Councillor addressing the community after the performances in Kicuzi sub-county, Ibanda



Kigunga Rukiri women's club from Rukiri, Ibanda performing artists at Kicuzi sub-county during forum theatre.



Research studies conducted under different projects

During the reporting period, the organisation conducted 3 research studies under the actions IERC and ALENU and a position paper under the Working Together for Change Project with funding from the European Union and the CUSP Programme, respectively. The findings continue to inform the best practices and action steps to be taken during implementation.

Under IERC, a participatory assessment of the health needs and existing support structures was conducted. The main aim of the study was to determine the impact of the restrictive COVID-19 measures on the businesses and livelihoods of young entrepreneurs and truck drivers, identify the key occupational health issues/challenges to keeping safe and healthy and to protecting others from infectious diseases, and to determine the level of preparedness of the sub-county health facilities and sub-county remand homes/district prisons/VHTs to respond to health crises and other natural disasters in Arua and Zombo Districts. A number of **key recommendations** were made, such as: Advance Afrika should work together with the local governments and other partners to support the young entrepreneurs to acquire business skills so that they can recover from the COVID-19 lockdown disaster. The young people should be involved right from the beginning. Where possible, also, the young

entrepreneurs should be supported with starting capital because some of them have lost capital and are not able to pick themselves up. There is need to use traditional channels and new innovative approaches to deliver health messages to the young entrepreneurs, truck drivers and prison inmates, given the nature of their work/living conditions. There is need to sensitise young entrepreneurs, truck drivers, prison inmates, health workers, CDOs and police and prisons officers regarding occupational health challenges/hazards in relation to their jobs, and infectious diseases in general.

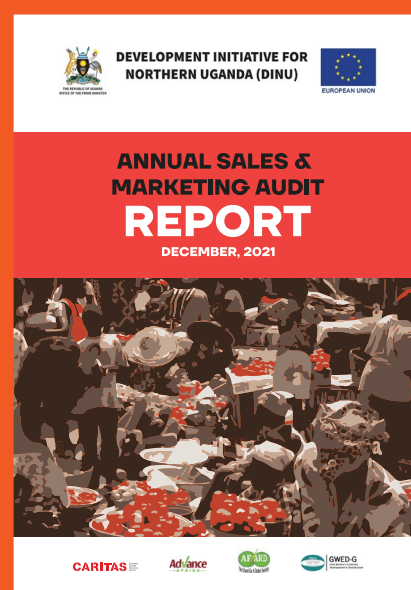
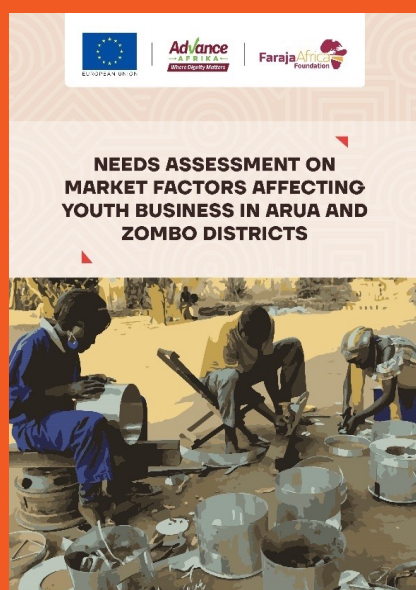
A market research assessment of the business environment for micro- and small enterprises in West Nile was also conducted in the districts of Arua and Zombo. The intention of the research was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the current market dynamics and risk factors and provide concrete recommendations for the young people in business under the action with a focus on project-specific objectives. The market assessment portrayed a further need for the action to reach out to more young entrepreneurs in the region to realise their full potential and to tap into new opportunities. There is need to continue skilling and mentoring the young entrepreneurs as well as to boost their businesses. Copies of the study were printed and shared with the various stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the action, including the District Community Development Officers

(DCDOs), District Commercial Officers (DCOs) and the business mentors.

Under ALENU, an annual sales and marketing audit was conducted to collect data on the action commodities in order to assess problem areas in terms of market penetration, covering all the major marketing activities of the commodities such as an examination of the commodities' total marketing environment, the marketing mix, competitive advantage, and evaluation of product success. The marketing audit was carried out for the selected agro-commodities, namely apiary, local poultry, groundnuts, Irish potatoes, beans and soybeans, onions, tomatoes, moringa and vegetables/fruits. The findings reveal the production and yield, marketing strategy, consumption and utilisation, profitability analysis, and SWOT analysis for each commodity. The study points out major challenges faced in marketing the commodities, the strategies and recommendations to be followed, which are tailored to the market demands, the quality of commodities that can attract good prices, and the need for a constant supply of commodities to the target market within the project areas. Some of the recommendations included the following: It is critical to adopt and use standardised weights and measures in order to improve market performance

for the various action commodities. Also, there is need for farmers to receive continuous skills training for effective production and marketing of the various commodities. Furthermore, farmer groups can benefit from increased production volumes if they adopt good agriculture practices, increase production and engage in bulking and aggregation.

Finally, a position paper on the relevance of community structures in the reintegration of ex-prison inmates in northern Uganda was conducted under the CUSP Project. It was pointed out that the following actions should be undertaken by the Government of Uganda, UPS, DLGs and stakeholders at all levels to strengthen community structures and the overall reintegration process of ex-prisoners in Northern Uganda: Strengthening and supporting the sustainability of community structures to support the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners in their respective communities; involving community structures from the pre-release stage of prisoners to ensure successful reintegration of ex-prisoners in their respective communities; and strengthening the community structures to coordinate and collaborate with other stakeholders to change the community perception towards ex-prisoners for successful reintegration in the community.



Courtesy visit by EU political advisors and representatives of member states to Gulu Main Prison

On 20 May 2021, EU political advisors and member states in Uganda visited the Acholi sub-region, Gulu District in particular, with the purpose of meeting local stakeholders and visiting EU-funded programmes. The BOPLYN action, which was implemented by Advance Afrika, was selected in the context of our collaboration and programmes with UPS in the socio-economic rehabilitation, access to justice and reintegration of prison inmates. A team of 10 diplomats from the EU Delegation – who came from the Dutch, Belgian, Irish, Austrian, Danish, Swedish, French and German embassies – visited Gulu Main Prison. During the visit, the District Prisons Commander, Mr. Emmanuel Mucunguzi, and the Advance Afrika CEO made presentations indicating the challenges faced by inmates such as congestion and limited access to legal representation, besides those faced by ex-inmates in the reintegration process, such as difficulty in mending family and community relationships, unemployment linked to lack of a national ID, the incarceration period,

limited marketability of work experience and social contact.

Feedback from the member states pointed out the overcrowding of the prison in Gulu (capacity 446; occupation 1,365), characterised by more than half of the inmates being on remand, i.e. awaiting trial. The visit highlighted the value of supporting reintegration efforts in prisons, since two-thirds of persons who do not go through a rehabilitation programme are re-arrested within 2 years of their release. The team appreciated the efforts undertaken by the BOPLYN action in promoting the economic empowerment and participation of youth prison inmates and ex-inmates in Gulu. They also appreciated the EU visibility in the project.

Links and synergies developed with others

During the reporting period, the Working Together for Change Project supported under the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme complemented the ongoing BOPLYN action by bringing together duty bearers in the three districts of Amuru, Gulu and Kitgum with a focus on strengthening

Advance Afrika CEO, EU political advisors and member states representatives during the visit at Gulu main prison.



their capacities and creating a platform for dialogues with key strategic local authorities, including the JLOS actors. The project has also trained more additional community leaders like LCIs, LCIIIs, religious leaders, the police and cultural leaders on basic conflict transformation skills and counselling. This synergy has enriched the efforts towards working together with other structures at the grass-roots level for change in the reintegration of youth prison (ex-)inmates.

Additionally, at the beginning of 2022, Advance Afrika participated in the CUSP Steering Committee, which was comprised of the EU Delegation to Uganda, the German Embassy, representatives from the Government of Uganda Ministries or Departments, GIZ CUSP and representatives of national NGOs, among others. We presented our work with prisons, demonstrated how the CUSP programme added more value to other existing projects in the organisation, and shared experiences of the plea bargain programme from victims and ex-inmates as well as their perception of the programme.

Some of the noted challenges that still exist included: stigma in communities; lack of disaggregation of inmates; sharing of relevant data with the DLGs and other local structures at the grass roots to ease programming; and a limited UPS budget for improved rehabilitation and reintegration services. An EU Delegate, Mr Nicholas Gauss, emphasised the aspect of advocacy which can ensure that some of the emerging issues under the programmes become visible to different policy actors and duty bearers. On the aspect of PWDs, another EU Delegate, Elizabeth Ongom, commented that there must be a deliberate effort to support PWDs, otherwise they would be left out. This encouraged other supporting partners to be actively engaged. Partners were appreciated for their efforts under the CUSP Programme, and the Steering Committee also acknowledged and expressed awareness of the numerous pressing challenges the partners are facing in implementing the actions and committed to supporting and discussing them further in the future.

A reflection session with the Steering Committee delegation from CUSP at GIZ CUSP Gulu office.



Strategic Goal 4

Growth of Advance Afrika



Training in public expenditure and lobbying

Advance Afrika organised a three-day online training on public expenditure, monitoring and lobbying which ran from 5 to 7 July 2021 with funding from GIZ under the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP). A total of 30 participants took part, including representatives from community-based organisations (KIWEPI, Care Community Organisation and Alliance for Sustainable Development), the staff of Advance Africa, CDOs and political leaders from the districts of Amuru and Kitgum. The main purpose of the training was to enhance the capacity of Advance Afrika staff and cluster members to enable them to engage constructively on budget-related issues and to foster their informed participation in the monitoring of public expenditures and advocating for change in budget planning and public expenditure monitoring processes. Secondly, it was aimed at providing participants with the knowledge, skills and techniques required for tracking budget inputs, outputs and outcomes and at building the capacity of CSOs and community actors to influence budget priorities. Thirdly, the training was intended to enable participants to engage effectively and from an informed position during the subsequent *baraza* and budget conference activities. The training was facilitated by Patrick Rubangakene, who works with the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG).

Training in mediation as a form of conflict resolution

The staff were taking through training on mediation as a form of conflict resolution. The training was conducted in Gulu District and supported by AGIAMONDO. This training used a problem-based learning approach to learning mediation with

mainly practical approaches and several training instances being used to impart and apply the different techniques. By the end of the training, staff demonstrated the ability to intervene in conflicts and to apply tools of conflict transformation to help communities to address land and resource conflicts in a non-violent way and also use the skills acquired in their day-to-day work.

Education and skills training under NOREC exchange project

Advance Afrika appreciates the nature and uniqueness of the NOREC exchange programme, which majorly focused on online participation and engagement. The exchange improved Advance Afrika's digital competencies by increasing awareness of and interest in the use of digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom for professional development, the use of video-sharing and other forms of graphic illustration to demonstrate the stories of change during their presentations, improved the communication skills of the participants, for example, through virtual interactions with facilitators and other stakeholders, writing emails and content creation, and improved responsible use of digital gadgets such as laptops and smartphones.

The NOREC participants in Uganda demonstrated a high degree of flexibility to allow for adaptations, and revealed a lot of optimism and willingness to learn. This continued to enhance the organisation's culture of learning. The participants also organised in-house training on cognitive behaviour and rebuilding identity, which those staff of Advance Afrika and PSWs who were trained appreciated, noting the need to integrate the concepts into the rehabilitation and reintegration model in our work with UPS.



▲
CPS worker and AA staff pose for a group photo after the training in Gulu

Stories of Change

The background is a warm, orange-toned abstract design. It features several large, overlapping circular and semi-circular shapes. Some of these shapes contain patterns of small dots, while others have radial lines emanating from a central point, resembling stylized sunbursts or film reels. A winding film strip pattern is also visible, adding a sense of motion and storytelling to the composition.

A) Ainebyona Leonadis – Child Neglect

I am Natukunda Grace Mary, mother to Leonadis. I was married to Mr. Turyabebwa Deogratus and we were living in Mirambi II cell, Bwenda parish. I got pregnant and later gave birth to a healthy son called Ainebyona Leonidas. When my pregnancy was eight months old, misunderstandings arose between my husband and me. He chased me out of the house so I went to live with my mother.

When my baby had made one year, my husband and mother-in-law claimed I was not taking good care of the child and so they wanted him to live with the father in his new home. One day, they came home and took the child away by force. I tried to get the baby back but the clan leaders decided he should live with his father and grandmother. After some time, I heard that the grandmother had locked up the child in the house and left him there because she had no money to look after him.

My son's health condition became poor; he fell sick because he was lacking basic needs. He was malnourished. I asked a social worker from Advance Afrika to visit my mother-in-law and get back my child. One day the social worker visited and found the child doing very badly. My mother-in-law said the father had agreed to send some money to support the child but he had left the whole responsibility to her and she could not manage, so she had abandoned the child. The social worker reported this issue to the Community Development Officer, who visited the home of the child's father. They had a discussion; it was decided that I take back my child but the father should send home 30,000 shillings for the child every month. We agreed that the social worker should visit us again to see how the child was doing after three months. A follow-up visit was made and the team from Advance Afrika appreciated the efforts we were making as parents; the child was healthier and in good shape now.

“

He was malnourished. I asked a social worker from Advance Afrika to visit my mother-in-law and get back my child.



▲
L-R, Project officer, Grace and her 1-year-old Leonidas after he had just been identified by parasocial worker in Ibanda.

Advance Afrika project officers and parasocial workers during follow-up visit to Leonidas, 3 months after the intervention of the office of the DCDO on responsible parenting of the father.



B) Kapondo Eric – Truck Driver (Public Health Communication Efforts on Potential Risks and Conflicts)



◀ Eric, during a training on Occupational Health and safety at Heritage courts in Arua

I am Kapondo Eric, a truck driver and a member of Alangi Brokers Drivers Association. I reside in Alangi Sub-County, Zombo District. I was a turn boy at first for four years and that is where I took an interest in learning how to drive a truck. After gaining the experience and acquiring my driving licence, I started my driving career in 2018. I drive a Fuso truck and mainly transport timber, produce and other goods. The challenges faced are the poor roads which are worse and impassable during the rainy season. Another setback I face is the pressure from my boss to remit the money made during the trips. Furthermore, the owner of the truck is reluctant to have the truck serviced, which puts my life and the those of the rest of the road users at risk.

Before the lockdown, there was free movement and there were many orders from customers to deliver their goods and I would work from Monday to Saturday. I benefited a lot from this period because I managed to have weekly savings and to provide basic needs to my family.

The situation changed for the worse when the country was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and business came to a standstill. Movement of people was restricted and business transactions declined. This generally affected my welfare since I would go for days without getting an order to transport goods. As a way to deal with the shocks that came with COVID-19, I resorted to farming, mainly growing crops that grow quickly, to feed the family and supplement my income. During this period a lot of emphasis was put on how to survive without my main job and I ended up coming with a solution. I set up a grocery business from my savings for my wife to avoid overdependence on the sole provider of the family – me.

After the lockdown was lifted, the business resumed and I now go on long trips to deliver my goods to my clients without any obstacles. As a driver I have learnt a lot of lessons on how to save in case of emergencies and observe the standard operating procedures put in place by Ministry of Health to protect me from contracting COVID-19. I have benefited a lot from this training on occupational health with regard to our concerns, how to protect ourselves from diseases, how to cope with stress and deal with fatigue, and I'm committed to transferring this knowledge to my fellow truck drivers as an advocate of change in the community.

C) Lagada Yil Kiwadi Farmer Group (FG) Success in Collective Bulking and Marketing



Farmer group members verify their stock quantities before the arrival of the buyer.

Lagada Yil Kiwadi FG in Apotokitoo village, Lamogi Sub-County, Amuru District is one of the farmer groups formed under the ALENU-DINU action. This group was formed in January 2021 from among the 100 FGs (13 FGs in Amuru). It comprises 25 members (8 male, 17 female). In March 2021, we supported the farmer group with 30 kg of groundnut seeds for a one-acre demonstration garden and 15 kg for each of the members (375 kg in all) to plant in their individual gardens. From the second season production, the group harvested 10,650 kg (213 bags) of groundnuts, out of which 274 kg (6bags) were from the demonstration garden and 10,376 kgs were from individual members' gardens.

Training on collective bulk marketing

Mr. Moses Opio, the Chairperson of the group Marketing Committee (MC) who represented Lagada Yil Kawadi FG, says that “the training empowered him to mobilise his group members to bulk, and he learnt the importance of selling in a group, record keeping as well as negotiation skills”. After the training he, together with the Marketing Committee members, called a meeting to sensitise the members on how to sell as a group. “From the time we formed our group, we have been wanting to sell as a group but have never conducted any sale in group.” This is because we did not know how to organise the members to do it and also some members do not want to bulk. After the training, the networking level between the Marketing Committee and the market actors improved, with nearby and faraway produce buyers involved. The group members also agreed to bulk and each member stored their produce in their homes. Only statistics on quantities was shared with the MCs.

Benefit of collective bulk marketing

In total, the group managed to bulk 3,595 kg (96 bags) of unshelled groundnuts from the demonstration garden, FG members and one non-ALENU group member, Ms. Florence

Akuro, who had 500 kg (10 bags). Through networking, we approached Mr. Anthony Nyero, a local wholesale buyer in Amuru who did not, at the time, have enough money to buy what the farmers had in stock. However, he connected us to Mr. Joseph Athuma, a wholesale buyer from Kampala. Using the mobile phones provided by the project, we called the buyer and told him about the quantity of the groundnuts we had in stock and negotiated a price per kilogram of UGX 2,000. He agreed to come to Amuru, where the group usually meets, at his own cost. The bags of groundnuts were verified, confirmed in terms of quality and quantity using the project weighing scales through an agent, and later the buyer paid the total amount of money to the Chairperson of the Marketing Committee in cash.

The group sold 96 bags of unshelled groundnuts weighing 3,595 kg at UGX 2,000 per kg and earned UGX 7,173,400. Out of this, Ms. Akuro Florence, the non-ALENU group member, sold 500 kg (10 bags) and got UGX 1,000,000. At the time of the sale, the prevailing market price for unshelled groundnuts was between UGX 1,600 and UGX 1,800 for red beauty groundnuts and white groundnuts, respectively. The group was able to sell at no or lower transport cost and earned an extra UGX 200 from each kilogram sold, which is much better than proceeds from the usual individual sales.

The Chairperson Marketing Committee, Mr. Moses Opio, attributed this success to high commitment and willingness of the group to implement the new skills they learnt during the collective bulking and marketing training. Mr. Opio says, “We are happy that the group adopted the idea and allowed their grain to be brought in one place and sold as a group, which has never happened before.” The sale also strengthened their relationship with the local buyer who connected the group to the buyer and the FG members. As a result, the local community now believes that the collective bulking and marketing approach will enable them to sell out other grains like beans, maize and soya beans at a better price and very conveniently.

Members of the Market committee, farmer group during collective sales in Apotokitoo village, Lamogi sub-county in Amuru district.



D) “Kacel Watwero Group”- Youth Advocacy



Our group is called Kacel Watwero Group. We formed the group in 2021. At first it was the three of us ex-inmates and then we decided we should involve the community to have more ideas of developing the group. And also, there is higher productivity when the group has many members. This group was started to show unity. As an ex-inmate, I used to visit inmates in prison and when they returned home so that we transform our lives to avoid engaging in crime. I went to prison in 2008, but up to now I still suffer stigma from the community. People are not happy but because of the life skills we acquired from prison training. We keep quiet and even teach them some of these skills. This is one of the reasons we were motivated as ex-inmates to form a group with fellow community members and they gladly welcomed the idea.

However, since we returned to the community, we want to see some changes in our lives. We are not segregating anyone using the skills we learnt from prison and we encourage new members to join our group. I was in prison but after my release, I knew I needed only discipline and unity. If you leave your fellow ex-inmates and discriminate against them, it is not good. The community is suffering from a lot of hunger and poverty. Even those who have not been to prison are suffering. In our small group we started an agricultural project to promote development in our community. One of the members of the group provided the land for farming. We conducted exchange visits and exposure visits to farms in Amuru before we returned and started by growing sugarcane and vegetables such as eggplants, beans and cowpeas.

**Group members
in a meeting to
discuss the key
issues of their
group.**

“

Forming the group will provide an opportunity for us to easily mobilise the ex-inmates and jointly advocate for our issues to be attended to here in our community.

Forming the group will provide an opportunity for us to easily mobilise the ex-inmates and jointly advocate for our issues to be attended to here in our community. We started the group well. We have some challenges, we are struggling, we need support to develop a constitution of the group to make the registration process easy since we already have a Local Councillor III as a member of the group. Our doors are still open. We want to have at least 20 members who are committed in our group.







We are facing the challenge of water shortage because we have no proper irrigation system and water pump. Animals usually encroach on the fields and destroy crops. Pests affect the crops. We need good-quality seeds for planting, a granary to store our produce after harvesting. Also, we would like to be linked to the market so that our produce does not get spoilt.

We hope to work with other groups in Cwero Sub-County because when you leave prisons, we become brothers and sisters in the community. There is need to build and maintain good relationships.



Cwero-group of ex-inmates' leaders at their sugarcane farm in Cwero-subcounty, Amuru.

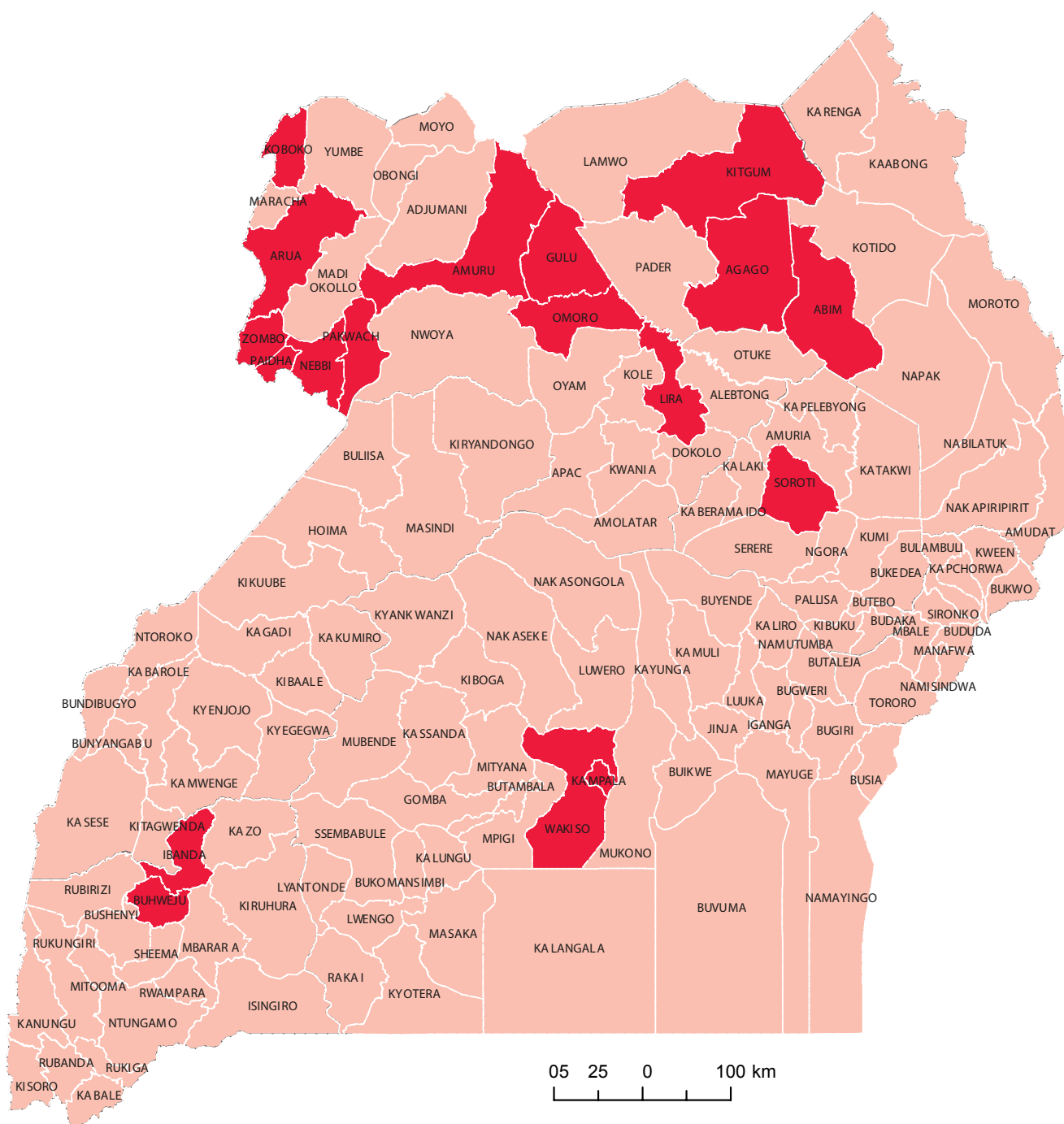
Financial Performance

RESTRICTED GRANT		
 AGIAMONDO 91,363,600 AGIAMONDO Civil Peace Service - CPS	 European Union Action For Livelihood Enhancement in Northern Uganda(ALENU) Project	European Union Improving the Economic Resilience of West Nile Youth in the face of COVID-19 (IERC)
 FORD FOUNDATION 8,708,000 Ford Foundation To amplify young peoples' voices in decision making and public affairs in Uganda	European Union Protecting the dignity of women and children in Ibanda and Buhweju districts (PDWC)	European Union Bridging opportunities for effective and productive livelihoods of youth prison inmates and ex-inmates in northern Uganda (BOPLYN)
 NORÆC NORWEGIAN AGENCY FOR EXCHANGE COOPERATION 76,816,230 NOREC Umunthu - Education and Skilling	 german cooperation DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT Implemented by giz CUSP GIZ Working together for Change	 43,079,393 Implementing Partners Co-funding
TOTAL RESTRICTED GRANTS		2,972,583,047
UNRESTRICTED GRANT		117,497,858
TOTAL INCOME		3,090,080,906

Our Donors & Partners

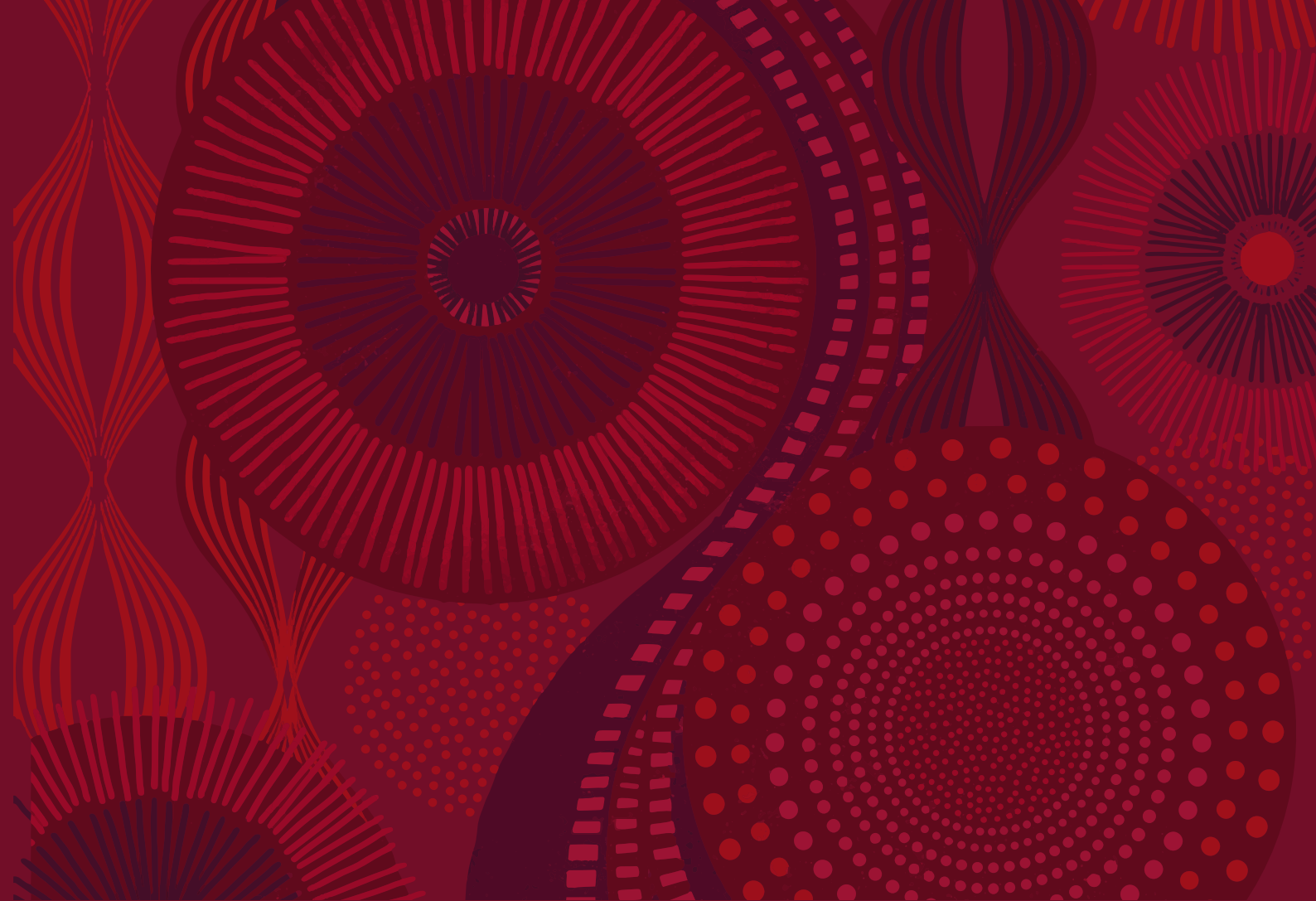


Where we work



Advance Afrika presence

Central region- Kampala and Wakiso Districts; **Northern** - Gulu, Amuru, Omoro, Agago, Kitgum, Lira, Abim; **Eastern** - Soroti; **West Nile** - Arua, Koboko, Zombo, Paidha, Nebbi and Pakwach; **Southern** - Ibanda, and Buhweju Districts



Kampala: Plot No. 4258, Sunday Close, Mulawa,
Kiira Municipality, Wakiso District
Gulu: Plot 29, Acholi Road, Pece Housing Estate
Ibanda: Main Street, Kagongo, Division, Ibanda Minicipality,
Arua: Room A112, KKT Center, Plot 16 - 22 Duka Road
P.O. Box 36888 Kampala, Uganda
Email: admin@advanceafrika.org
Web: www.advanceafrika.org