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# A COMPENDIUM of USAID ICAN STORIES

*“A Continued Strive to Resilience”*

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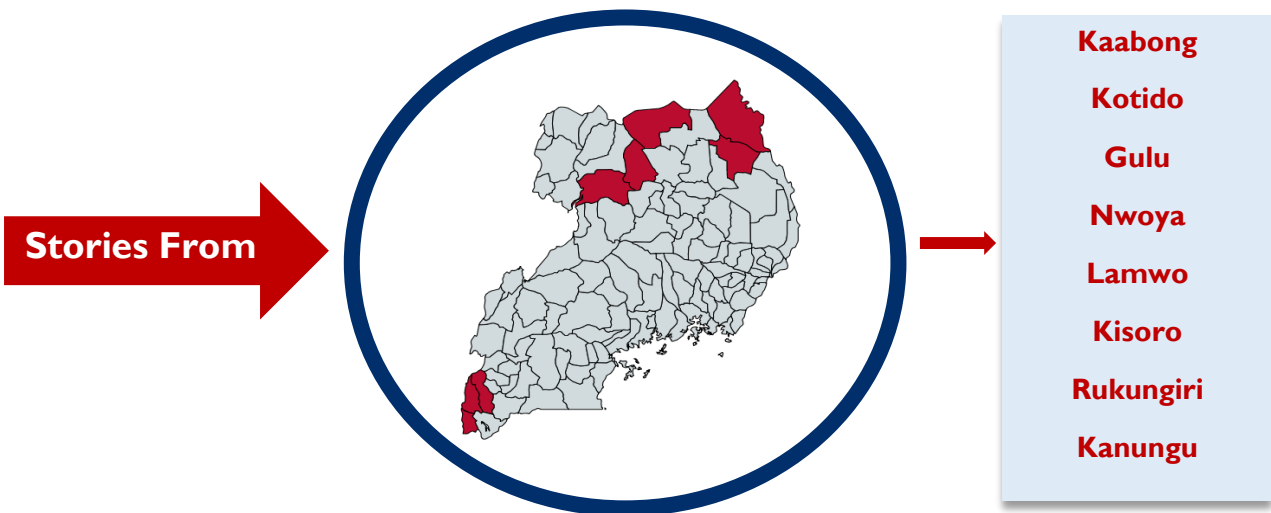
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# BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESILIENT UGANDANS



## INTRODUCTION:

The flagship USAID resilience program's goal is to increase economic opportunities for vulnerable households while improving nutrition for women and children, strengthening community and local governance, and increasing school enrolment and retention. In addition, USAID ICAN works with cultural structures to confront gender and power imbalances that undermine women's economic opportunities and community influence by addressing these significant facets of resilience in the target districts of Kisoro, Kanungu, Rukungiri, Nwoya, Gulu, Lamwo, Kaabong, and Kotido.

USAID ICAN uses existing community structures to enable vulnerable people to improve their lives, livelihoods, and better plan for, anticipate, and survive shocks. Working within community structures also allows USAID ICAN to build local capacity and make sure local communities and the most vulnerable are agents of their change.

In the first half of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, the USAID Integrated Community Agriculture and Nutrition Activity continued to build resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic; preparing communities to weather through. USAID ICAN also intensified efforts to increase coverage of interventions to continue building resilience towards better lives and improved livelihoods for the communities.

As the USAID ICAN activity draws to a close, the facilitative approach employed ensures that the community structures trained, and other beneficiaries continue to apply what they have learnt and adopt the practices they have been taught. Due to this transformation, as shown in these stories, individuals are also continuing to transform the lives of others by teaching fellow members of their communities, resulting into spill over (non-USAID ICAN beneficiaries adopting the behaviors); a process that is crucial in ensuring sustainability after USAID ICAN closes.

This Compendium provides an overview of USAID ICAN's activities through the voices of beneficiaries.

## Some Resilience Milestones



**37,613**

People supported by the USG to adapt to the effects of climate change



**78,564**

Project participants (many of them women) that have gained access to economic livelihoods interventions



**41,380**

Pregnant and lactating women reached with nutrition interventions



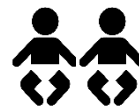
**151,220**

Beneficiaries with U.S. Government Support



**28,090**

Out of School Youth that have gained social, economic, or leadership skills through U.S. Government assistance



**43,713**

Children (0–23 months) reached with community-level nutrition interventions through USG-supported programs

## Sub-purpose: Increased Economic Opportunities and Diversification of Livelihoods for Poor Households:

### From Overfished to Stocked and Loaded! USAID ICAN Restocks Lakes Kayumbu and Chahafi in Kisoro District

By Kiconco Elizabeth

In June 2021, USAID ICAN repopulated lakes Kayumbu and Chahafi in Murora sub-county with 100,000 fingerlings of mirror-carp fish. The initiative was made possible with the help of an in-kind grant from USAID ICAN. Kisoro Integrated Fisheries and Agricultural Cooperative provided the fingerlings.

The community had greatly diminished the fish population by overfishing and using harmful fishing methods like illegal-size fish nets and poison. Restocking the previously overfished lakes is in line with USAID ICAN's environmental component of Natural Resource Management (NRM).

In a meeting with the community after the fingerlings were delivered, the sub-county chief, Mr.

Thembo Stevenson, asked who owned the fish. The local fishermen unanimously replied, "The fish are ours!" exhibiting community ownership and responsibility over the fish.

The fishermen and local authorities pledged to avoid fishing from the restocked lakes for two years to allow the fingerlings to adapt to their new environment, grow, and reproduce. The Sub-County Leadership set up a patrolling committee that included some fishermen, fisheries officers, and the area Local Chairperson One (LC1) to prevent people from fishing the fingerlings.

In two years, the fish population will have grown, and the community will be able to improve their livelihoods through fishing and fish mongering.



Restocked lake Kayumbu



Members of KIFACO on Lake Chahafi inspecting the fingerlings project and checking on the bamboo trees that the fishermen planted to prevent siltation

### Kisoro Farmers Reap Big from Business Service Provider Linkages to Traders

By Komukama Anita

Between October and December 2021, USAID ICAN Business Service Provider (BSP) linked 14 farmers from three livelihood groups of Mugwata Abachara Duterimbere, Kigara 'A' Youth Potato Growers, and Kigarama Women's Groups in Mugwata model village, Kisoro district, to Irish Potato traders. As a result, the groups collectively sold 67 sacks of Irish potatoes at 90,000 UGX (USD \$25.00) per sack, culminating in 6,030,000 UGX (USD \$1,716.00) that consequently led to a collective net profit earning of 670,000 UGX (USD \$190.00). The BSPs link livelihood groups to off-takers and traders to bolster access to markets and enhance economic empowerment. USAID ICAN works through partners to support 878 BSPs across all eight districts with training, business opportunities, and linkage meetings. BSPs earn a commission based on their performance.



## Sylvia Empowers Community Members through Chili Growing

By Kiconco Elizabeth

Through a facilitative approach, USAID ICAN builds capacity of community structures like Business Service Providers (BSPs). These BSPs empower community groups and Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) groups to encourage people to manage their budgets and save money.

Nakiru Sylvia, a mother of two, is one of the USAID ICAN trained Business Service Providers (BSPs) in Rengen, Karamoja sub-region and has been supporting chili growing groups grow and sell chili, gain profits for the group. She makes commissions on the sales she makes for the groups that have enabled her amass savings.

As a BSP, Sylvia supports two VSLA groups: the Lomejen group with 21 members (each saving UGX 27,000 per week [USD \$7.60]) and the Lorgegei VSLA group with 30 members (each saving UGX 2,500 per week [USD \$0.70]).



*Sylvia uses the sun-drying technique to preserve her group members' chilies and packages them for sale*

These groups usually agree to save towards a purpose that will benefit each member.

“As a BSP, I offer guidance about VSLA best practices and growing chili. I also have a solar drier, which my fellow chili growers pay me to use to dry their chili. I support them to find markets for their products with the Northeast Chili Producers Association (NECPA). Each kilogram of chili sells for UGX 15,000 (USD \$4.30). Whenever I help a group member to



*Sylvia takes stock of group purchases in the BSP record keeping book*

find a market, they give me a commission. So far, we have sold 30 kg of chili,” she proudly highlights.

Sylvia plans to continue growing chili, drying it, selling it to NECPA, and supporting chili growing for her group members (through linking them to subsidized agro-input dealers, supporting them with effective chili growing and post-harvest handling methods and linking them to markets).

Sylvia attended a USAID ICAN training on making chili blocks. When burnt, the chili blocks (a combination of chili and dried cow dung), produce smoke that has a repellent effect on wild animals. They are extremely useful in Karamoja because the area is along an elephant corridor and elephants often destroy local gardens and property.

Sylvia helps other farmers identify markets for chili blocks. She also trains them to make local organic pesticides and liquid soap and earns some money from these trainings. She plans to mentor other women and young girls so that she can pass on the knowledge that she has gained.

*“After secondary school, life wasn’t easy. I sat at home and had no job. I then heard about the training of BSPs on the radio and I quickly registered for it. It has changed my life completely. I am a BSP now and get to teach my groups. I also learned about planting chili, looking after livestock, and saving.” Sylvia says*

## From a Grass thatched roof to an Iron roof: Denis Lokapel saves money to support his home and family

By Kiconco Elizabeth

Denis Lokapel is a community health work / Village Health Team (VHT) member in Lomerula east, Karamoja sub-region. Denis learned about perma-gardening, post-harvest handling, storage and even enhancement of economic livelihoods through group money saving from trainings he attended supported by USAID ICAN in the area. He set-up a perma-garden where he grows onions and with harvests, he sells small onions at UGX 500 – 1,000 (USD \$0.14 – \$0.28) each. Denis diversified his income streams and ventured into gold mining as one income option.

Before, his engagement with USAID ICAN, Denis lived in a grass thatched house with four rooms with his wife and their four children, but with this knowledge and diversified income streams, he decided to upgrade his house to an iron roof using his savings. Denis saved UGX 10,000 (USD \$2.85) per week and by mid-2021, he had saved enough to be able to purchase all the iron sheets for the roof.

Denis hopes to be a role model to members in his community so that he can share what he has learned from the trainings with them.



***“As a VHT in this community, I need to practice what I preach. People will not only respect me more and strive to learn what I teach them, but also view me as a role model and imitate what I practice”***



A guarantee of food and money from a good harvest



Denis (seated far right) and the Maternal, Infant, Young Child and Adolescent Nutrition (MIYCAN) group he facilitates as a VHT.

## Underground Tanks Changing Women's Lives in Kigezi Sub-Region By Edgar Tumwine

Many communities in which USAID ICAN works suffer from prolonged dry spells twice a year, on average, during which, women and children walk long distances in search of water for their families and livestock. USAID ICAN makes efforts to encourage communities to adopt tarpaulin walled underground tanks to harvest rainwater during the rainy season as a means of Natural Resource Management (NRM).

Mabel Kyomugisha, the chairperson of Ishasha Community Uplift Group, a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) supported by USAID ICAN in Kazinga Upper village, Kihiihi sub-county in Kanungu District, is one of the beneficiaries of the ICAN underground tarpaulin-walled tanks.

“Our Business Services Provider taught us about saving with a purpose (SWAP) and one of the purposes our group saves for is constructing underground water tanks. USAID ICAN trains community-based artisans to construct these tanks for other people. ICAN. As a group, we decided that we had to support each other to adopt these tanks because one of the biggest challenges in our community is a lack of water. When a member is ready to install a tank, the group contributes UGX 200,000 (USD \$52.63). People can request more funds to buy extra materials if needed,” said Mabel.

With support from her husband, Mabel was able to top up on the initial request from the group to construct the underground tank.

So far, Mabel and three other group members have constructed these underground tanks in their homes. The group members continue supporting each other to adopt the tarpaulin walled underground tanks, harvest water, and be better prepared whenever the dry season starts.



*Mabel demonstrates how she fetches water from her tank at home*



*Tank demonstration*



*“I am very grateful to USAID ICAN for giving us this knowledge. It is because I am a member of this group that I was able to learn from our Business Service Provider (BSP) about harvesting rainwater using these underground tanks. I no longer tire from walking long distances to get the water; I can just fetch it from my courtyard! I can now use all this extra time to work hard and improve my livelihood.” - Mabel Kyomugisha, the chairperson of Ishasha Community Uplift Group*

## Rocket Lorena Stoves Save Both Energy and Time for Women By Kiconco Elizabeth

USAID ICAN encourages beneficiaries to use Rocket Lorena energy saving stoves that consume less firewood than alternative stoves, to minimize the destruction of the environment in line with the activity's Natural Resource Management (NRM) efforts. The Rocket Lorena stoves are popular because they retain heat for longer and are both time and cost efficient.

According to the USAID ICAN Beneficiaries' Survey Report, the adoption rate of Natural Resource Management (NRM) practices was 69 percent in Kisoro district in 2021. Mukaaka Margaret, an 80-year-old resident of Busanza sub-county, Kisoro district, adopted the Rocket Lorena stove in her household. Margaret is a well-respected member of her community because of her age; consequently, many of her neighbors and relatives saw her stove and decided to have Rocket Lorena stoves constructed in their homes as well.



*Margaret prepares to light a fire using her Rocket Lorena stove*

*"I like the stove very much because it has helped me save firewood. It is very easy to use and saves time because I cook two separate dishes at once. Also, when the food is ready, even though I remove the firewood, the heat will still remain" – Mukaaka Margaret, resident of Kisoro district*



*Locals use environmentally friendly Rocket Lorena stoves*

## Good Agronomic Practices Elevate Socio-economic Status of Households By Kabatooro Mayimuna

Rosette Masiko a 44-year-old resident of Kakamba model village in Rukungiri district is a member of a MIYCAN group and a resilience committee that oversees “We Can Do 5” actions in her village. Rosette developed an interest in Natural Resource Management (NRM) and good agronomic practices



*Rosette in her plantation*

(GAP) during the USAID ICAN trainings she attended. Community dialogues also emphasized that NRM and GAP can help prevent poor harvests. Rosette had experienced poor harvests from her banana plantation—her only source of income.

After she attended a USAID ICAN-supported dialogue titled “Ask Your Service Provider for an Instant Reply” that focused on NRM and GAP, she learned about the importance of digging trenches for retaining water in the soil and preventing soil nutrient loss.

Rosette learned how to mulch and how to ensure that her banana (“matooke”) plants were properly spaced. After the

trainings, she went back home and implemented what she had learned, under the close supervision of the resilience committee and other community structures. To her surprise and excitement, the next harvests yielded a lot of “matooke” which she was able to consume at her house and even sell some of the excess. In all the six years that Rosette had grown banana, she has never produced such a high yield.

Rosette has since been harvesting two bunches of “matooke” on a weekly basis and she sells them to a hotel owner in the trading center close to her home. She collects a minimum of UGX 15,000 (USD \$4.20) per week amounting to UGX 60,000 (USD \$17.10) per month.

Rosette and her husband no longer worry or fight about their household finances. She attributes all this positive transformation to the trainings she attended.



*Homes have adapted Good Agronomic Practices that are yielding good harvests on crops*

## Sub-purpose: Improved Nutrition of Children, Adolescents, and Women of Reproductive Age:

### Amanya Creates a Better Life for Her Family Using Good Agronomic Practices By Mayimuna Kabatooro

Amanya Juliet is a 43-year-old mother of six children, and she belongs to a Maternal Infant Young Child and Adolescent Nutrition (MIYCAN) group in Rukungiri district. During one of their group gatherings, the MIYCAN group members learned about different good agronomic practices (GAP), like using fertilizers to improve production. Amanya decided to apply what she had learned during planting season, planting one sachet of onions that harvested one bag of onions (weighing in at about 60kgs).

She also followed what she was taught (perma-gardening) by the BSPs attached to their MIYCAN group and consequently, she was able to sell four basins of onions at UGX 50,000 (USD \$14.25) each. Amanya used this income to buy a pig for UGX 40,000 (USD \$11.40) and a goat for UGX 100,000 (USD \$28.45) to diversify her income streams. She plans to sell off some of the pigs and goats once they have reproduced to gain income and profits.

Six months later, Amanya decided to grow tomatoes and started with a few seedlings from which she was able to harvest about 70kg of tomatoes. (A kilo of tomatoes can be sold at about UGX 80,000 (USD \$22.80).

From the livestock and tomatoes sales, Amanya used some of the income earned to buy more onion and tomato seeds, and rabbits to repeat the process.

Amanya sells some of the food she grows to earn money and keeps some for her family so she can provide a well-balanced diet.

### Cecilia Leads by Example in Loyoro, Kaabong District By Kiconco Elizabeth

Lolem Cecilia is one of the role model mothers (*lead mother that works with and educates other mothers in the community*) in Loyoro sub-county, Kaabong district. Lead mothers are trained with support from USAID ICAN and partners on topics like *Nutrition and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)*. Based on what she learned at her trainings, Cecilia has made many lifestyle changes to improve her family and community's health and livelihood.

Kay-apple tree seedlings that will grow into a lush green fence surround Cecilia's home, an alternative to the common wooden fences in Karamoja made from chopped trees. Cecilia

*"I want everyone to learn from me, that is why I show them my home proudly. Look at my tippy tap, and the drying rack too...this is all knowledge I got from USAID ICAN trainings"*  
**Cecilia says**

also has WASH staples like tippy taps (*locally made handwashing facilities*), latrines, hanging lines, and drying racks at her house.

At the entrance of her home is a large granary that Cecilia built with help from her relatives. This will ensure that her family has a steady supply of food, even in the dry season. The granary contains dried *boo* (*a highly nutritive green vegetable that is a delicacy in Karamoja*). Before storage, the leaves are boiled in water with salt and dried. *Boo* can be added to groundnut paste and eaten with sorghum bread. Cecilia looks after ducks, chickens, and goats, and runs an apiary that provides honey. She sells the honey as an additional source of income. Cecilia also grows onions that she and her family consume, and she sells some of them to her community members. Cecilia inspires others to live an environmentally friendly and sustainable lifestyle.

## Cecilia's Homestead



Storage granary



Pit-Latrine with a hand washing facility



Animal Shed for small ruminants



Animal shed with chickens



The Live fence for environment protection



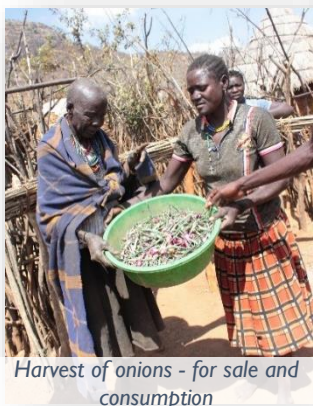
Drying Rack and display of honey



Dried vegetables for consumption even in the dry season



Storage of saving group Green-grams for sale



Harvest of onions - for sale and consumption



Cooking on the Rocket Lorena stove



Group Harvest of pepper

## “I Bought My Wife A Cow After She Delivered Our Baby To Vary Her Diet with Fresh Milk”

By Kiconco Elizabeth

“My name is James Leba Lonya, and I am a resident of Rengen sub-county in Kaabong district. I am a Village Health Team member as well as a Governance Champion and participated in trainings on WASH practices and business education where I learned how to make money from making chili blocks and ropes.

When my wife had a baby, I bought her a cow so that by the time the baby is six months old and ready for complementary feeding, the cow can provide milk. My family's nutrition will be boosted because of this cow. We will also sell milk to other members of the community to get extra income on top of my other small projects.”



## Improving Diets and Income Through Goat Milk Consumption

By Muria Samson and Alumo Viola

My Name is Agnes Nakong, and I am 25 years old and a resident of Poet North in Nakapelimoru sub-county, Kotido district. Previously, I was not convinced of the value of goat's milk. My family preferred cow milk over goat milk, because goat milk is only available in smaller quantities. We did not consider buying it because we were able to get cow milk in larger quantity, but with the on-going \*insecurity in the Karamoja sub-region caused by cattle rustlers, it became more challenging to access cow milk; due to the constant raiding and theft of animals by the rustlers.

When the USAID ICAN Business Service Providers (BSPs) came to our village with experts, they trained my community on goat milk production and good goat management practices. At the time, I was reluctant because I felt that goats did not produce enough milk to meet the needs of my family, but because the training was so close to my house, I decided to participate anyway.



We were trained on goat milk hygiene and safety, benefits of goat, how to boost milk production, the importance of livestock mineral/salt licks (*artificially made block of salt and ash made to provide animals with mineral salts*) in improving the quantity of milk, and other good goat husbandry practices.

These trainings taught me the importance of goat milk in improving the health of my children and my entire household. We now produce a lot of goat milk that we drink at home. All my children are healthier than before because their nutritional status has improved.

The mineral licks have improved the quality and quantity of the milk. I have been able to make some money by selling surplus milk to neighbors in the market. I use the extra funds to purchase household items for my family.

*\*The Karamojong people predominantly herd livestock as a means of livelihoods and often grow crops. However, over the years, the region has suffered armed cattle rustling at the hand of raiders with constant government intervention. In the last two years, the raiders returned, killing hundreds of people, and stealing the people's livestock – largely affecting the people's source of livelihood and nutrition (through milk consumption).*



Agnes with two goats that her family owns



Tereza and other lead mothers feeding children on goat milk.



Tereza feeds her children on goat milk while the molds of mineral lick dry beside them.

In Toroi Village, North Division, Karamoja, lives Keno Tereza, a 33-year-old mother who also attests to the benefits of goat milk and promotes it to other members of her community.

When Tereza attended a USAID ICAN facilitated training on Good goat management practices, she applied what she had learnt in her own home. When Tereza observed that her goats produced more milk than others, she and her husband decided to add goat milk to their family's diet and were happy that their children's nutrition status improved a great deal.

Today, Tereza is a USAID ICAN lead mother and teaches fellow women about good goat management practices and the use of goat milk to improve the diets of children to reduce malnutrition in her community.

Previously, there were three (3) malnourished children from Tereza's neighborhood. She taught their mothers about the use of goat milk and supported them to care for their children back to health. All three children overcame malnutrition and fully recovered. Fellow mothers in Tereza's community see her as a role model and she hopes to keep passing on her knowledge and skills to them.

*"In my experience, one can easily differentiate children who are feeding on goat milk from those who are not. The ones feeding on goat milk look healthier and are stronger than the other children. They will never be found among the malnourished."* **Tereza – USAID ICAN Lead mother**

## MIYCAN Groups Enhance Women's Health and Livelihoods

By Kabatooro Mayimuna

Nyiramugisha Rehema is a member of the *Kyakatarangi '2'* MIYCAN group, which a USAID ICAN-supported group founded in 2019. During group trainings on the benefits of establishing a backyard garden, Rehema decided to embark on backyard gardening as a business and to supplement her food supply at home. She began by acquiring and planting seedlings of vegetables like spinach and cabbages. She harvested the vegetables and began selling them at Kihiihi market, where she can about earn UGX 50,000 (USD \$14.00) each month. Rehema was able to save a portion of her profits on a weekly basis with her Village Loans and Savings Association (VLSA) group and use some of the money to pay her children's school fees and purchase other items for her home.

Rehema began to encourage her neighbors to adopt backyard farming. Her household is now a learning center for other community members. Five other group members of her VLSA also established their own kitchen gardens. Rehema plans to expand her backyard gardening business by buying more land, planting iron rich beans, and constructing water tarpaulin tanks that can store water that will support her to irrigate during the dry seasons.

## Governance Champions Encourage People to Use Latrines in Um-Um South, Karamoja District

By Kiconco Elizabeth

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practices have been a challenge in Karamoja. This is due to harsh climatic conditions that cause water scarcity and from existing behaviors around open defecation, which is preferred over pit latrine usage.

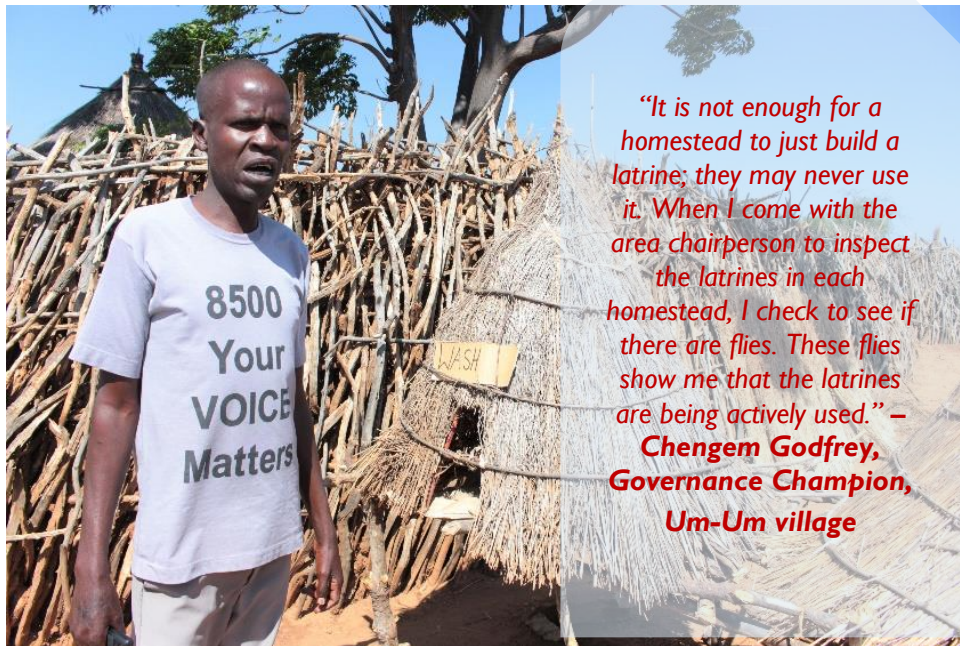
Chengem Godfrey , a Governance Champion (*community opinion leader working with USAID ICAN*) in Um-Um South, Rengen sub-county encourages his community to adopt the USAID ICAN "We Can Do 5" behaviors for model homesteads (i.e., participation in income generating activities, school enrollment, conducting governance meetings, adopting good Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practices, and ensuring food security).

Particularly, Chengem is passionate about teaching his fellow community members to use pit latrines instead of open defecation.

Chengem promotes community dialogues that allow local people to plan to construct pit latrines. In the last two years, communities in his community held 28 community dialogues that included good WASH practices as the main topic. This motivated community members to construct 42 pit latrines across Um-Um South village.

Chengem works with local leaders to encourage people to use the latrines that were built. He is very passionate about promoting good hygiene and wants to ensure that every household is equipped with a latrine.

*"In the community dialogues, we agreed that when we find a household that does not have a latrine, the head of that household has to dig latrine pits for other members of the community who want to construct theirs (to set an example for the community). Open defecation causes illness and is a sign of poor sanitation, a matter that must be taken seriously. I work with Chengem to make sure it is taken seriously," - Lobwoto Simon Peter-LCI chairperson, Um-Um village*



Women in Um-Um village constructing a pit-latrine

## Home Based Remedial Learning Centers: Making Learning Possible During the COVID-19 Lockdowns

By Komukama Anita and Aol Beatrice

In Uganda, the COVID-19 pandemic led to restrictive lockdowns that forced schools to close for almost two years. The lockdowns largely disrupted education and hit the rural community especially hard. In 2020, the government eased the lockdown and opened schools in a staggered manner (starting with a few classes at a time). Whereas some learners missed resuming their studies because their parents could no longer afford school fees, others had to tend to household chores and income generating activities.

USAID ICAN, in close collaboration with the District Education Officers' Office, sub-county Coordinators, Head Teachers, and community leaders—continued to support remedial

learning classes to enable children to continue learning while they were at home. USAID ICAN supported the establishment of 76 remedial learning centers (40 in Acholi, 24 in Karamoja, and 12 in Kigezi) in six out of eight USAID ICAN-supported districts (Rukungiri, Kotido, Kaabong, Gulu, Nwoya, and Lamwo). The Activity also enabled 296 volunteers and resource persons across three regions to work at these centers. The involvement of key stakeholders like parents, community leaders, volunteer teachers, and learners was critical for the successful and the effective delivery of home learning.



Aston and his mother Sarah

*“When he was in P.6 Aston, did not want to go to school. Then, during the lockdown, he kept asking me when he would go back to school. Because of the opportunity that USAID ICAN brought with the remedial school, he became very enthusiastic about going to school every morning. He became happier, and started showing us the new things that he learned. He saw the value of going to school and has promised that once schools re-open, he will go back to school with enthusiasm and work to get better grades.”*

**Nakibuka Sarah, Buhunga Sub-County, Rukungiri**



Davis Ankunda, a USAID ICAN intern in Rukungiri, speaks to pupils at Aston's Remedial Learning Center

*“For two months, USAID ICAN lobbied to roll out Home Based Learning Models, an idea the Education Committee completely rejected. In the long run, I gave them a go-ahead and now we can see that all Education Development Partners should support these parent-led initiatives.”* **District Education Officer, Lamwo, during an Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Education Coordination meeting in Padibe sub-county**



Learners in Class sessions

*“Our children had lost hope in education, but the USAID ICAN approach has rejuvenated the learning spirit in them. That was why I granted permission to start learning centers immediately. I pledge the district's total support to this initiative.”*

**Hon. Emmanuel Orach, LCV Nwoya District**

Parents in many of the communities proactively mobilized to fill in gaps and meet needs. They felt that had an important role ensuring that the centers continued to run.

In Gulu district, Unyama sub-county, Rwot Paicho Odokonyero Alex III, one of the cultural leaders offered to host one of the remedial learning centers at his home and encouraged his councilors to offer rooms to the pupils for their learning sessions. They supported the construction of temporary shelters and latrines to aid both the learners and volunteer teachers.

One of the challenges cited by the *Ker Kwal Kwaro* (cultural leader) was the absence of Early Child Development (ECD) and vocational training centers in Layobo village. Children often had to walk long distances to study. To remedy this, the cultural leadership decided to offer part of their land to construct an ECD center and a vocational training center for the village.

*“As Ker Kal Kwaro, it is our duty to see young generations grow in knowledge and understanding. We shall not stop only at hosting this home-based learning activity under USAID ICAN, but we also pledge to have half of our ten hectares of land to support the education sector here in Acholi land. A vocational training center and an Early Child Development (ECD) center will be established there so that our children are encouraged to study and do not have to walk long distances for school. Our next step is to engage the district leadership, especially the District Education Officer to support us” – Rwot Paicho Odokonyero*

The Rwot expressed his gratitude to USAID ICAN for the home-based learning activity and for all their work done to empower the community.



Learners during a study session under a shed in the Rwot's compound.



Learners of Layobo village in front of the Rwot's home showing off learning materials from USAID ICAN for the home-based learning activity.

## USAID ICAN's Home-based learning and 'Back to School' campaign trigger a return to school for young mothers

By Odongo Charles Okello

For many young adolescent girls, getting pregnant means the end of their education; causing them to drop out of school to get married. Twenty-two-year-old Adongo Sarah is a single mother of two (2) that had dropped out of school too, to get married. Before the start of USAID ICAN, she had left home, after quitting her education. When USAID ICAN started the remedial learning centers in her village, the volunteer teachers convinced her to go back to school.

Sarah is determined to see to it that her own children go to and stay in school, so that they do not make the same mistakes that she made. Now, Sarah encourages other adolescent girls in her village who are idle at home to return to school. Currently, she is a pupil of Primary Seven Class in Toroi Primary School in Loyoro Sub-County Kaabong District.



Sarah, and her classmates attend class

*"I thank USAID ICAN for introducing the Home-based learning and conducting the 'Back -to-school' campaign. The community dialogues transformed the minds of our community members and this increased school enrolment when schools reopened, youth such as myself who had dropped out of school, were also encouraged to return to school,"*

**-Sarah says.**

## Kibimbiri Primary School Delivers a “First Grade” After Five Years of Having None

By Maclean Atulinda

Kibimbiri Primary School in Kanungu district had never had a single Primary Seven (P.7) student appear in the Uganda Primary Leaving Examination (P.L.E) division one rating (*the highest rating to be able to transit to top level secondary school*) in the previous five years, with most students graded in division four. (Note: after P.7, a student is promoted to secondary school). Additionally, the school registered low student enrollment and dropouts because parents could not afford the school dues, the performance of students was not encouraging for the parents, water scarcity in the school and there was food insecurity with parents preferring children to stay home and till gardens.

In 2019, USAID ICAN collaborated with the Kirimbi Primary School Parent and Teachers' Association (PTA) to sensitize local communities on the importance of attending school. As a result, Kirimbi's school enrollment increased from 889 to 1,072 pupils in the span of one month. This bump in enrollments had a ripple effect across other nearby schools as well; they also saw increased student enrollment. Like all other schools in Uganda, the COVID-19 lockdowns that required schools to close also affected Kirimbi P.S. USAID ICAN supported the school during the lockdowns by availing two full time volunteer teachers to support Primary Seven (P.7) candidates prepare for the upcoming Primary Leaving Examinations (P.L.E). These volunteers either walked or rode to the school to ensure classes took place.

USAID ICAN also contracted with Broadway, an exam-setting firm, to supply study materials for learners on a weekly basis to help them revise for exams and build their confidence. The Activity also contracted with Tree Academy Uganda to train pupils that are in the Child Rights Clubs on gardening, specifically potting, preparing nursery beds, and taking care of fruit and feeder tree seedlings. This training equipped them with skills on environment conservation but also ensured that the school has nutritious fruits. The learners planted the fruit seedlings around the school compound and took some seedlings home to plant.

With the hard work of the teachers at Kirimbi Primary School and the extra support from the USAID ICAN volunteer teachers, the school registered its first P.L.E division one rating by one of the students (*first time in five years*). All 27 pupils that sat for the P.L.Es that year passed and were rated within divisions 1, 2 and 3, a great accomplishment for the school.

*“USAID ICAN has really supported us. Our children have passed their exams, our school environment looks pleasant, and students were even able to share with their parents what they learned in the Child Rights Clubs. As a result, parents' engagement in the PTAs greatly improved. We really appreciate USAID ICAN for these great works. Our school is shining” – Medard.H., Head Teacher of Kirimbi*

The head teacher pledges to continue the practice of using study materials to help the pupils prepare for their exams.



Primary Seven Learners enjoying a light moment before class

### To Stop Gender-Based Violence, Governance Champions Stand behind Women and Girls

By Viola Alumo, Sarah Gabeya, and Kabatooro Mayimuna

USAID ICAN and partners joined the rest of the world to commemorate the annual 16 Days of Activism against GBV that run every year from November 25 to December 10. During the 2021 commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), USAID ICAN engaged Governance Champions across the three sub-regions to prompt essential conversations on GBV and practical ways for communities to address it. The theme was “**Orange the World: End Violence against Women and Girls Now**”, and it shed light on the plight of girls and women during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure harmful social norms end.

Commemorative activities occurred across all three ICAN sub-regions of implementation (i.e., Acholi, Kigezi, and Karamoja) that promoted model leadership and social proof for behavior change among beneficiaries. Activities included: 1) Formation of Youth-led GBV activism committees for preventing substance abuse, sensitizing against gender discrimination, and alleviating poverty, 2) Community dialogues that discussed current contentious GBV issues accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and 3) Media engagement through DJ mentions, spot messages, and radio talk shows on six local stations in the three regions.

Further, there were official district launches and orientation of opinion leaders on championing the end of GBV. Campaigns also encouraged teenage girls who got pregnant to go back to school and rallied their parents/guardians to join the cause.

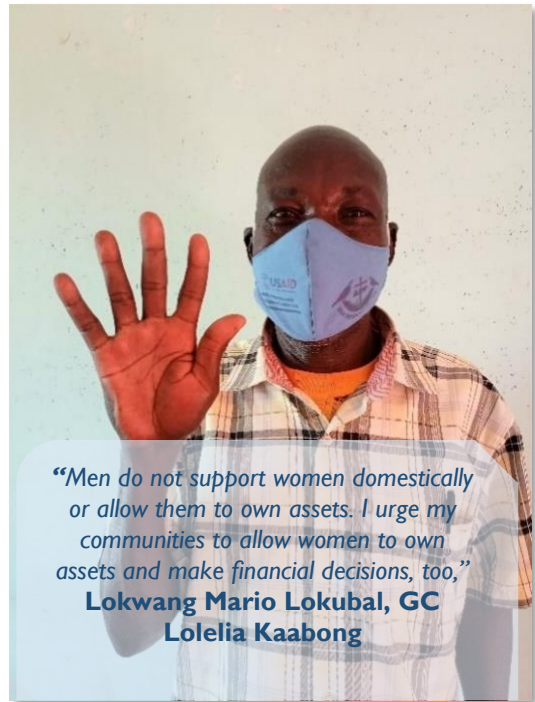
To show their commitment to end GBV, the governance champions and community leaders flashed the ‘Stop’ sign to signal their collective resolve to end GBV against women and shared the following messages to members of their communities;







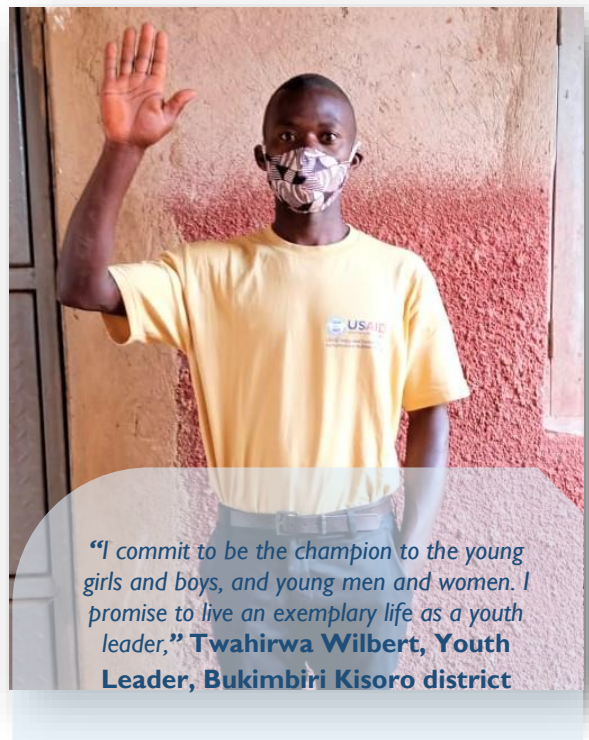
*“Let us encourage the girls to go back to school and also set good examples for them as parents by avoiding any form of violence,”* **Community Leader, Unyama Town Council**



*“Men do not support women domestically or allow them to own assets. I urge my communities to allow women to own assets and make financial decisions, too,”* **Lokwang Mario Lokubal, GC Lolelia Kaabong**



*“Forced marriage is an outrageous act and our communities should stop marrying off girls without their consent. Old men should not marry young girls—it distorts their future,”* **Lele Francis, Governance Champion, Lolelia Kaabong**



*“I commit to be the champion to the young girls and boys, and young men and women. I promise to live an exemplary life as a youth leader,”* **Twahirwa Wilbert, Youth Leader, Bukimbiri Kisoro district**

### Justine gains confidence and uses skills acquired from USAID ICAN mentorship camps to better lives and her community

By Dr. Kampire Pamela



*Justine displays her woven sweaters and secondhand clothes for sale during market day at Kisoro market.*

Chahi sub-county is one of the many sub-counties in which USAID ICAN holds camps to teach and support adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) about the “We Can Do 5” actions. The key themes during these sessions are: “Raising and Using My Voice”, “Taking Control”, and “Making Choices”. In Nyakabingo Parish, 96 girls attended and graduated from the camps. They all received certificates of completion.

Nyirabakunzi Justine, a mother to a one-year-old child, was one of the outstanding graduates. Before attending the camps, she dropped out of school after senior four (S.4) because she could not pay the fees. Justine used the knowledge gained from the camps to apply for a Business Service Provider (BSP) position in her village (Kabuga).

After becoming a BSP, Justine worked tirelessly to transform her community into a model village that observes and practices all the “We Can Do 5” priority behaviors (i.e., income generation, nutrition and food security, WASH, education for all and community participation). She used her position as a BSP to link her group members to markets for subsidized purchase of farm produce and agro-inputs. She collaborated with the Masaka Group Market for vegetables like carrots, cabbage, eggplants, etc., and the Manyakabi Cooperative from Isingiro district.

Today, Justine owns a business, dealing in selling secondhand clothes and school sweaters that she manufactures herself in the Kisoro old market every Monday and Thursday. During market days, Justine sells about six-to-ten trousers from which she earns profits ranging from UGX 12,000 to UGX 20,000 (USD \$3.40-\$5.70). Her business has since expanded, and she can now stock clothes worth UGX 500,000 for resale (USD \$142.50).

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*“I will always be grateful to USAID ICAN for those AGYW camps; they have changed my life for the better. My income has increased, and I am able to take care of my family. It is because of the knowledge I got from USAID ICAN that I started saving with a purpose, and I now have four pigs and a goat” -  
Nyirabakunzi Justine, USAID ICAN AGYW*

## Juliana Learns to Write Her Own Name

By Dr. Kampire Pamela



Juliana writes her name in a book

“My name is Juliana Machar. I am 25 years old, and a resident of Lokiriwo village, Nachakunet, Lolelia sub-county, Kaabong district.

When I was younger, I longed to be one of the educated girls in my community and I was determined to do so. In 2011, my parents shattered my dreams; when they could not afford to take me to school, they decided to marry me off to acquire cows through my bride price.

One day when I was about 13 years old, my parents secretly arranged to marry me off. A

man came up to me and introduced himself as my future husband. I was shocked! I rejected the man I was supposed to marry, but my parents picked up a bow and arrow and threatened to kill me if I refused to marry him. I was married off for a bride price of 41 cows. My husband already had a wife and six children before I married him. Now, he and I have been married for ten years and we have three children (two girls and one boy). We regularly had disagreements and never saw eye to eye on certain issues, so I returned to live with my parents. He continues to visit me there.

When the USAID ICAN Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) mentorship program started in my village early last year, I signed up immediately. I liked the lesson plan because it was very easy to understand even though I had never been to school. I learnt simple vowels and I can now even write my own name! I want to continue learning until I can read, write, and speak English well.

The training on “my life path” has helped me gain confidence and discover opportunities around me. Thanks to my newfound confidence, I met with my husband and encouraged him to join the savings group that I am part of, where we learn about saving money and overcoming Gender-Based Violence. He used to beat me, but now he is a changed man who respects me. I can share ideas with him, and he listens to what I say.”

*“I want all my children to attend school since I missed out. I am not ashamed of starting school with them once schools reopen after the COVID-19 Lockdown. My parents married me off at a young age to get income from the bride price; I could not go to school. However I can now ably spell my name from the lessons we undertook during our camps and through the “my life path” trainings, my confidence grew. I joined a saving with a purpose group with my husband’s encouragement and with my savings, I started a small business where I sell beverages” - Juliana Machar, USAID ICAN AGYW training participant*

## Rosette Elevated to “Bread Winning Status” For Her Family By Godfrey Ndihoabwe

Ninsiima Rosette and her family live in the village of Kazuru located in Kirima sub-county. At 19 years old, Rosette is the fifth out of seven children. Her family struggled to make ends meet and could not pay for their children’s education. Most of Rosette’s siblings dropped out of school, but Rosette was the only one who made it as far as Primary 6. Without a high-level of education, Rosette feared that she would never achieve her dream of starting her own salon.

One day, her mother returned from a village savings group meeting and told Rosette about USAID ICAN’s program for Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW). Rosette learned that ICAN helps empower unemployed young girls and women by training them on various income generating activities.

Rosette enrolled in the course as soon as she could. There, she learned about finding her voice, negotiation skills, and customer service. Through the AGYW program, she even participated in lessons on hairdressing at the Kihiihi Vocational Institute. Coupled with the knowledge she learned from ICAN on saving with a purpose, she was able to save up enough money to launch the salon business she had dreamed of for so long. She offers services like hair braiding for UGX 15,000

(USD \$4.20) per client. In a week, she earns approximately UGX 150,000 (USD \$42.70); a total of UGX 600,000 (USD \$171.00) per month. With this income, Rosette purchases basic items for her siblings and supports her parents in running the home. Through her hairdressing skills, determination, hard work, and attention to customers, she has increased her client base.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, Rosette continued to earn money because she operates out of her own home. Rosette plans to begin renting a salon space so she can market her business more effectively and reach more clients. She is working on increasing her savings to achieve this next goal as she professionalizes her business.



Rosette

*“I thank USAID ICAN so much because it’s through the mentorship training that gave me a mindset change. Every challenge I may face now, I see as a learning experience. The most important things I have learned are ‘do not give up, don’t take anything personally, and don’t take NO for an answer’*

*I am now the bread winner for my family through my Hair Salon business, where I earn UGX 600,000 (USD \$171.000) per month”*

**Ninsiima Rosette, USAID ICAN AGYW training participant, Kirima Sub-County, Kanungu District**

## AGYW Camp Paves Way for Mercy to Start Her First Business

By Aol Beatrice

Before attending the USAID ICAN facilitated Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) trainings, Mercy Akello, a young woman from Lapeta village, Unyama sub-county in Gulu district did not know of the benefits of having a saving culture and being part of a savings group.

After attaining the first camp of the training, she and 29 other girls started a joint savings group that they called “Lapeta Blue Girls” to help them embrace the savings culture and better their livelihoods.



*Mercy at her vegetable stall.*

In the savings group constitution, they agreed to a group saving of UGX 1,000 (USD \$0.30) on a weekly basis, with each member contributing whatever they could towards a collective cause they would agree on and to allow members take loans.

During the second phase of the training AGYW training, Mercy started thinking about launching her own business. She was inspired by one of the facilitators who talked about how to grow a business that can earn over UGX 15,000,000 (USD \$4,276.00).

Mercy obtained a loan of UGX 20,000 (USD \$5.70) from the savings group. She used the loan to open a vegetable stall business in her village where she sells vegetables every day. Mercy earns UGX 20,000 (USD \$5.70) each week from her vegetable stall business. She saves UGX 5,000 (USD \$1.42)—or UGX 4,000 (USD \$1.14) more than what she was saving before. This business has helped improve Mercy’s life and she is hoping to expand and grow her business further.

## Empowering Women, One Tailor at a Time: Nancy Trains Young Women to Become Tailors

By Aol Beatrice



*Nancy and her students during a dress making demonstration.*

Twenty-two-year-old Nancy Apio from Akonybedo village, Unyama sub-county, Gulu district dropped out of school after only Primary 5 (at 13 years old) because her family could not afford her tuition after she got pregnant, this left her feeling discouraged and lowered her self-esteem.

When she heard of the USAID ICAN mentorship camps, she saw these as an opportunity to gain skills and better her life. She attended and graduated from AGYW camps in the area.

After completing her first AGYW training, Nancy understood the importance of knowing oneself and using one’s voice. She quickly picked herself up and joined tailoring training sessions held by one of their mentors from the AYGW camps.

With her new tailoring skills, Nancy decided to open her own tailoring workshop that would not only enable her make money (UGX 10,000 [USD \$2.85] per piece sold) but also

inspire many other young girls and women in her community to take an interest in tailoring and come learn from her. Nancy conducts trainings at her workshop at a fee of UGX 10,000 (USD \$2.85) per person per month and she uses her earnings to improve her workshop facilities and cater to her family's needs.



Nancy shares a light moment with her tailoring students

*“For a long time after I dropped out of school, I stayed at home with no reliable source of income. My husband abandoned me and left me with our two children. I had to learn to look after them by myself.*

*When I heard about USAID ICAN registering adolescent girls and young women for the camps in 2021, I registered and participated in the trainings. In fact, I was one of the most active members!” - Nancy Apio, USAID ICAN AGYW training participant*

## **“I Got Pregnant but It Did Not Deter Me from Going Back to School”** By Gabeya Sarah



Stella in her class room

“My name is Apio Stella and was a student in Aloko Lum Gok Primary School when I got pregnant and had to drop out. My life changed when I attended a community dialogue organized by our community leaders with support from USAID ICAN. Several of the local girls were getting pregnant and not going back to school and this became a concern in my community. The dialogue was very informative; when they mentioned that it was not too late to go back to school even after getting pregnant and having a baby, I decided that I would go back to school. I love education and I know it will make a difference in my life.

I would like to encourage other girls to listen to their parents' advice and avoid peer pressure as it can lead them into compromising situations such as early pregnancy or contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

I have gone back to school, and I am doing my best to be exemplary to my friends, to the girls around me, and in my community. I will continue encouraging all my peers to go back to school now that the schools are fully reopened. I also urge girls who get pregnant to have their children and plan to go back to school. Getting pregnant at a young age might present challenges, but it does not have to be the end of one's education.

### Lawrence of Rukungiri Mobilizes his Peers to Return to School By Kiconco Elizabeth



Lawrence, the new back-to-school peer mobilizer

When the Government of Uganda re-opened schools in January 2022, the USAID ICAN 'Back-to-School' campaign spearheaded by the Governance champions helped increase school enrollment. The USAID CAN Governance Champions conducted community dialogues to encourage parents and other community members to take their children back to school.

During a back-to-school community dialogue in Buhunga sub-county, the Governance Champion called for the community members to appoint representatives to a committee that oversees back-to-school processes. Mujuni



Lawrence makes a submission during a back-to-school community dialogue

Lawrence was the only youth present at the dialogue and impressed the other community members with his confidence and active participation. Members nominated him as the Youth Representative on the community resilience committee, where he serves as a model to his peers.

Mujuni Lawrence is a 21-year-old senior three (S.3) student at St. Joseph's Vocational Secondary School in Rushasa, Rukungiri district. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity, and he pledged to encourage his peers to go back to school.

“My father trained me in carpentry. I now have my own clients who approach me to do their woodwork and I get paid. From the money that I earn, I save in two savings groups, weekly and monthly—UGX 5,000 (USD \$1.43) and UGX 10,000 (USD \$2.85) respectively. I also hope to be able to contribute to paying my school fees so that I stay in school,” said Lawrence during the dialogue.

*“Due to the lockdowns, some of my peers started income generating activities like making “chapatti” and brick laying. As such, they decided that they no longer needed to go back to school. I urge my peers to think about their future because staying in school ensures they will have better work opportunities. Someone who has completed S.4 will have more opportunities than someone who dropped out in S.1 or before P.7. It is easier to get better paying jobs, join vocational training centers, and live better” - Mujuni Lawrence, Youth Representative on the community resilience committee, Buhunga sub-county*

Lawrence's involvement emphasizes the importance of having youth participate in community meetings. This not only puts them at the forefront of community development efforts, but also teaches them that it is their duty as members of these communities to play a role in coming up with solutions to address day-to-day challenges.

## The USAID ICAN Internship Program

### USAID ICAN Internship Program Paves Way for Confident and Competent Young Professionals By Kiconco Elizabeth

One of the major causes of unemployment among the youth in Uganda is the lack of adequate skills. Since March 2020, the USAID's ICAN internship program, a three-year program (March 2020 - March 2023) implemented in partnership with Makerere University's Department of Social Work and Social Administration seeks to improve youth employability.

USAID ICAN recruits fifteen interns each year through a highly competitive process. Within the overall framework of integrated livelihoods, nutrition, and community governance activities, USAID ICAN supports these recent graduates with career-relevant work experience and ongoing professional skills development through a carefully designed curriculum and one-on-one mentoring. Since March 2020, USAID ICAN has recruited thirty interns and program's first cohort graduated in September 2021 while the second one graduated in April 2022.

So far, five interns have acquired jobs through linkages made possible by USAID ICAN. Onen Emmanuel and Achola Alice are now working for the Children of the World (COW) Foundation in Acholi while Bazil Tumwine worked as a field officer of USAID ICAN sub-contractor Yield Harvest Uganda in Rukungiri after the internship and is currently a field officer in Bukimbiri sub-county, Kisoro district. Some of the interns have gained full-time employment with other organizations based on USAID ICAN's recommendation, like Adupa Margaret who is working with the Karamoja Development Agency in the Karamoja sub-region, and Peter Adome, who now works with Mercy Corps in Karamoja.

USAID ICAN continues to engage the current interns in opportunities for career growth in fields such as finance, communications, administration, monitoring, evaluation, adaptation and learning, community development, nutrition, and agriculture. Interns also learn about soft skills such as emotional intelligence, integrity, workplace code of conduct, and interpersonal relations. With these skills, at the end of the internship, each of the young professionals is set to thrive in the work place.

*“One of the major reasons I missed out on professional opportunities is because I wasn't presenting my CV effectively. The USAID ICAN internship helped me enhance my CV new skills, and experience. My confidence in my capabilities makes me stand out and increases my chances of getting a job anywhere.” -Achola Alice, USAID ICAN field officer in Acholi Sub-Region*





*First cohort of interns, technical leads, USAID officials, and Makerere University representatives after the first internship program graduation.*



*Interns listen to their fellow intern, Karungi Julian during a presentation at an engagement meeting in Kampala.*



*Interns speak to learners in Rukungiri District*

USAID ICAN Youth Leadership Curriculum training inspires Lokubura to stop raiding livestock and start legitimate business

Karamoja sub-region, one of USAID ICAN’s implementing areas is a largely pastoral community due to its semi-arid climate, as such; they place a lot of value on livestock, especially cattle. This has resulted in a culture of raids and warfare among the Karimojong tribes. These raids not only lead to loss of livestock and property, but also lives and people’s livelihoods are lost.

Lobukura is a 33-year-old married man with two children; he is a resident of Caicaon village, Rengen sub-county, Kaabong district. Lobukura was a warrior who was actively involved in raiding livestock in his community as a source of livelihood. During one of the raids, his close friends were killed; this loss gave him a reason to look for an alternative source of livelihood.



Lobukura receives his YLC certificate from the LC 3 Councillor

At that time, USAID ICAN was profiling youth at the sub-county to be part of the Youth Leadership Curriculum (YLC) training and when he heard about it, he took keen interest in the program, and he enrolled for the training.

When Lobukura completed and graduated from the training, he decided to live his life differently; he was inspired to start a trading business in a venture he was already familiar with- livestock (i.e., trading in goats and bulls).

He used the goats and bulls which he already owned as his initial investment, and sold seven goats and two bulls that earned him UGX 3,000,000 (USD \$789).

Lokubura later realized that there was a better market for his goats in the neighboring South Sudan livestock markets. He used what he had earned to buy 15 goats which he then transported and sold in South Sudan, earning UGX 7,000,000 (USD \$ 1,842)



Lobukura and his colleagues display their graduation certificates

He used the profits to buy a motorcycle, which he now uses to earn money through “boda-boda” (passenger transportation) work. He also opened a wholesale trading shop and bought a piece of land as well, on which he plans to construct a permanent iron-sheet roof house.

Additionally, through the YLC experience, Lokubura appreciated the value of education and has now pledged to support his niece through school. Lobukura looks forward to educating his own children as well.

## 11-year-old boy plants 700 stems of White tic to pay for his school tuition in the future

By Kenneth Mulondo



Oyoo shows his trees in Laktar village, Gulu district

One of the challenges parents find with educating their children is that it is expensive, especially with post-primary education like secondary and tertiary education. Most of the children drop out of school after Primary seven because their parents fail to support them for secondary education.

Oyoo Francis, an 11-year-old pupil of Aleda primary school in Primary 4 in Awach sub-county, Gulu district has planted 700 stems of white tic to help him save for his education.

One day, when Francis attended Lubanga ber Village Savings and Loans association (VSLA) group's training with his mother, a member of the group. The group's Business Service Provider (BSP) taught the group members of the numerous benefits of planting trees including preserving the environment and helping to pay school fees. When Francis learnt about how the trees are an investment that can enable him to pay his schools fees in the future, it piqued his interest.

After the VSLA achieved all the 'We can do 5' activities, they decided to plant 1,850 trees to commemorate this accomplishment. Francis volunteered to help them to transfer the potted seedlings to the nursery bed.

"He potted over 2,000 seedlings and impressed the group members. As a token of appreciation, they decided to give him 820 seedlings. Unfortunately, he lost about 120 seedlings because our area was hit by termites" said Akongo Beatrice, Francis' mother and chairperson of Lubanga ber VSLA group.

Oyoo has had the full support of his parents, not only did his mother encourage him to plant the trees, but his father also offered him the land on which he planted them.

Oyoo's dream is to become an engineer in the future and now he feels that with his tuition secured, he has the drive to work even harder than before, to excel at his education.

*"I told Oyoo that if he planted trees since he is still young by the time, he reaches senior six his trees would have matured and be ready to pay for his tuition fees at the university." said Akongo Beatrice, his mother.*

*"When he came to me and told me that he wanted to plant, I didn't hesitate because I had already given the group land to plant trees so I just gave him a green light," said Ocaya Michael, Oyoo's father.*





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