

Advance
— A F R I K A —
Where Dignity Matters

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



ADVANCE AFRIKA PROFILE

Who we are

Advance Afrika is a national NGO incorporated in 2012 as a not-for-profit entity and fully registered as an NGO at the National Bureau for NGOs in 2016. The organisation was founded on the premise that it is critical to elevate people's desire and aspirations to take responsibility for advancing their rights. We seek innovative approaches to creating sustainable sources of livelihood in order to foster resilience among vulnerable people and social justice.

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.

Core values:

Courageous leadership, Passion, Appreciation and Professionalism

Courageous Leadership. In Advance Afrika we are leaders of change. We are courageous in tackling difficult challenges; we boldly inspire, innovate and break new ground. We are quick to explore new ways of doing things, learn and grow; and we influence others to do the same.

Passion. We are all committed to making a difference. We want to transform the lives of vulnerable people, adding lasting value to our society. This means that we care deeply about making a positive impact – we are engaged, results-focused, and deliver our promises.

Appreciation. We respect and value all who we work with. We seek to recognise and affirm each other's differing gifts and insights; celebrating diversity. We champion human dignity. We are optimistic, behaving kindly and respectfully; in times of conflict, we seek to reconcile different interests.

Professionalism. We aim for high standards of quality and excellence in all that we do; and we seek to discover and deliver best practice. We are disciplined, honest, accountable and transparent so that we can build trust with our stakeholders. We are good stewards of the resources entrusted to us, aiming to give value for money.

What we do – thematic focus

The organisation thematic strategic objectives (SO) mainly are:

SO1: Transforming vulnerable individuals and communities

SO2: Business and job creation

SO3: Advocacy and creative communications

SO4: Institutional growth and capacity-building

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FOREWORD

I am pleased to present our annual report for 2022. The report highlights the progress we have made in the economic empowerment of young men and women and transforming the social functionality of communities at district and regional levels. Several actions have been taken to deliver on our strategy and to respond to the new challenges we face.

Projects such as Action for Livelihood Enhancement in Northern Uganda (ALENU), Bridging Opportunities for Effective and Productive Livelihoods of Youth Prison Inmates and ex-Inmates in Northern Uganda (BOPLYN) and Protecting the Dignity of Women and Children in Ibanda and Buhweju districts (PDWC), among others, that are reflected in the annual report, show the efforts in complementing the work of the government, criminal justice system and private sector with a focus on promoting youth employment opportunities and agency, increasing food security, and enhancing household incomes through supporting commercial agriculture and through improving household resilience and women's empowerment. It gives us hope that we are on the right path to build a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient organisation in the future.

However, we can see some problems and challenges caused by the worsening climate change and the upcoming general election campaigns (2024–2025), which continue to be warning signs, but also changes in donor interests. These trends remind us that hard work on our part is necessary, and that we must continue fundraising through a variety of different avenues, broaden our donor base as well as create new partnerships and, most importantly, begin the new strategic plan (2024 – 2028) review process at the end of 2023 to capture the diversity of ideas, besides being aligned with the

“It gives us hope that we are on the right path to build a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient organisation in the future.”

changes in the post-pandemic financial and economic landscape. In 2023, we will also leverage the use of social media platforms to increase our exposure and enhance awareness of the organisation's mission. Finally, Advance Afrika has built strong and trusted relationships with a variety of stakeholders. Thus, the level of involvement of relevant key stakeholders will be maintained with donors and partners, including the private sector, authorities and communities, in connection with the latest developments, potential new initiatives and ongoing interventions.

Once again, we attribute the achievements attained over the past year to the main beneficiaries, including youth entrepreneurs, smallholder farmers, women and their households, children in schools, as well as prison inmates and ex-inmates, who were very willing to participate in our projects.

I would like to express my gratitude to our donors for their support and funding, whose impact has been demonstrated in our growth. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of our Board of Directors as well as our partners, community structures and staff for their strong cooperation, professionalism and dedication to work. We look forward to a progressive and productive 2023.

Sharon Atukunda,
Chief Executive Officer

OUR REACH IN 2022

This section shows a list of projects implemented and targets reached in 2022.

1 UMUNTHU – EDUCATION AND SKILLING

Location

Gulu, Kitgum,
Amuru



Implementing partner

Gulu



Donor

Norwegian Agency for
Exchange Cooperation
(NOREC)

2 INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TOWARDS ADVANCE AFRIKA'S COMMUNICATION AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Location

Kampala



Implementing partner

Advance Afrika



Donor

Bread for the World

3 ACTION FOR LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT IN NORTHERN UGANDA (ALENU)

Location

Agago, Amuru,
Nebbi, Pakwach,
Omoró and Zombo



Implementing partner

Caritas Switzerland with Advance
Afrika, Agency for Accelerated Re-
gional Development (AFARD), and
Gulu Women Economic Development
and Globalisation (GWED-G)



Donor

European Union and su-
pervised by the Office
of the Prime Minister
(OPM)

4 BRIDGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EFFECTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE LIVELIHOODS OF YOUTH PRISON INMATES AND EX-INMATES IN NORTHERN UGANDA (BOPLYN)

Location

Gulu, Kitgum and
Amuru



Implementing partner

Advance Afrika and Edukans in part-
nership with the Uganda Prisons Service
(UPS)



Donor

European Union

5 PROTECTING THE DIGNITY OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IBANDA AND BUHWEJU DISTRICTS (PDWC)

Location

Ibanda and Buhweju



Implementing partner

Advance Afrika with Centre for Integrat-
ed Community Development



Donor

European Union

6 IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF WEST NILE YOUTH IN THE FACE OF COVID-19 (IERC)

Location

Arua and Zombo



Implementing partner

Advance Afrika and Faraja Africa Foun-
dation



Donor

European Union

S01 TRANSFORMING VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES



32

educational debates on gender equality and life skills were held in 8 secondary schools in Buhweju and Ibanda districts.



373

total cases of violence against women and children (VAW/C) were identified, reported and followed up by the para-social workers, LCs and project staff. Follow-up visits were held in the sub-counties of Kicuzi, Rukiri in Ibanda and Burere, Bihanga in Buhweju in an effort to address VAW/C.



Continuous VHT outreach activities were conducted during and after the lockdown period on improved access to health services, public health concerns and escalating GBV/teenage pregnancies connected to COVID-19.



472

truck drivers



450

homes



256

young entrepreneurs

were reached and empowered on occupation health, including the spread and management of COVID-19 in their working environments as well as the home set-up.

308

male prison inmates were trained on entrepreneurship and life skills by Prison social workers (PSWs) under the BOPLYN action. These included;



163

Gulu Main

11

Amuru Main

56

Orom Tikao

80

Lugore

In addition,



183

youth ex-inmates were supported in their reintegration process by para-social workers, PSWs and the Advance Afrika team in Amuru, Gulu and Kitgum districts.



04

in-prison projects were supported in Arua Women's, Arua Main and Nebbi Prisons and Paidha Farm Prison. These included knitting and weaving, arts and crafts, tailoring and bakery projects.



100

prison inmates (25 per prison) were trained and actively involved in the in-prison projects, enabling them to generate income and save while still serving their sentences.

S02 BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION



Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), in collaboration with the DINU-ALENU action, launched the simplified and translated 26 food standards to ease the uptake and implementation of standards by smallholders and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

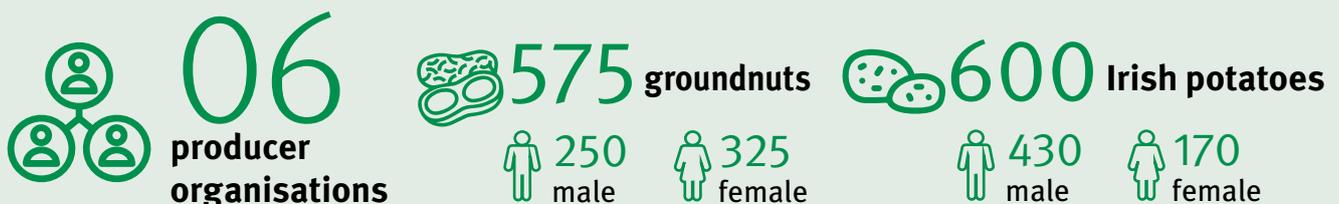
Additionally, 78 trainers, comprised of 50 (30 M, 20 F) farmer group members (FGs), 12 (8 M, 4 F) LG extension officers and 16 (11 M, 5 F) project officers (POs) were trained on market standards, with the training being conducted by UNBS standards officers. The trainer-of-trainers (ToT) activity focused on four modules of storage, packaging, handling techniques and quality standards. The modules were later cascaded to group level, reaching all the 200 FGs comprising 5,000 farmers (2,135 M, 2,865 F) in the Acholi and West Nile sub-regions.



Regarding access to market opportunities, the ALENU action involved 116 (27 institutions and 89 individuals) BDS actors actively engaged in providing tailor-made business development services to cater for the needs and enterprises of the FGs. Out of the institutions, 10 were public sector actors and 17 private sector actors. Overall, 2,975 (1,350 M, 1,625 F) farmers were reached with the different BDS packages.



Furthermore, during the farmer markets at sub-county level, at least 85 direct links were created with market actors, including bulk buyers (10), buyers (46), agro-processors (5), transporters (12) and market regulators (12) for continued marketing of their produce. 93 FGs comprised of 2,325 (1,350 M, 975 F) farmers in Amuru (49), Omoro (19), Agago (3), Zombo (6), Nebbi (5) and Pakwach (11) districts were able to bulk and collectively sell different project commodities, including groundnuts, Irish potatoes and soya, and some non-project commodities like maize out of the linkages created.



Also, six (6) producer organisations were formed for two (2) commodities, i.e. groundnuts and Irish potatoes, which involved 23 FGs (groundnuts, 575: 250 M, 325 F; and Irish potatoes, 600: 430M, 170F), including: Amuru – ALENU Groundnut Processors, and Lamogi-ALENU Groundnut Processors in Amuru; Wol – ALENU Groundnut Processors in Agago; Lakwana – ALENU Groundnut Processors in Omoro; Panyimur – ALENU Groundnut Processors in Pakwach; and Abajji – Zolume United Farmers' Cooperative (AZUF-Cos) in Zombo district.

S03 ADVOCACY AND CREATIVE COMMUNICATION



**engagement
meetings**



**improved access
to justice**



**reintegration
of ex-inmates**

Advance Afrika staff actively participated in engagement meetings with the JLOS actors during the open day court. Discussions on improved access to justice by inmates and children in conflict with the law (“street children”, commonly known in Acholi as ‘*Aguu*’), as well as the reintegration of ex-inmates were held.



**radio
campaigns**



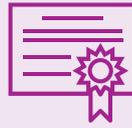
**11
local media houses**

Advance Afrika organised radio campaigns in collaboration with 11 local media houses under various projects. These included 5 in the Acholi sub-region (Mega FM, Favour FM 104.1, Radio Pacis, Radio Rupiny and 91.5 Mighty Fire FM); 4 in West Nile (Pakwach FM, Paidha FM, Arua One Radio and Radio Pacis) and 2 in southwestern Uganda (Eiraka Radio (89.7 FM) and BFM Radio (92.2 FM)). The radio stations contributed to voicing the concerns and needs of the marginalised communities, increased awareness of issues around ex-inmates’ reintegration, access to justice and parenting as well as about public health concerns, and also promoted access to agricultural market information besides boosting entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, the campaigns increased community participation, influenced social norms and improved access to relevant information by the project beneficiaries.

S04 GROWTH OF ADVANCE AFRIKA



**award as the best
rehabilitating NGO**



**certificate of
recognition**

The Visionaries of Uganda nominated and gave Advance Afrika an award as the best rehabilitating NGO that supports prison inmates and ex-inmates with knowledge and skills in decent enterprise development and contributes towards Uganda Vision 2040. Advance Afrika, together with the Uganda Prisons Service, attended the 10th Visionaries of Uganda award ceremony presided over by the Minister of Public Service, the Hon. Wilson Muruli Mukasa, who bestowed on the partners a certificate of recognition.



staff training exercise



mindset change

The National Farmers Leadership Centre, in collaboration with the Advance Afrika management, conducted a staff training exercise on mindset change with a focus on lifestyle for socio-economic transformation, transformative discipline and methods of work, among others. Through the training, staff were empowered at all their levels of governance and inspired to promote mindset change and community development among project beneficiaries.



enhanced the digital competencie

The NOREC exchange project, in partnership with Chance for Change (C4C) in Malawi, enhanced the digital competencies of Advance Afrika and the NOREC participants in terms of online participation/engagement and the use of digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom for professional development.



**02
new projects**

In terms of continuity of our operations, Advance Afrika successfully obtained 2 new projects, including: i.) Community Response Actions to Reduce Teenage Pregnancies in Busoga and West Nile (ATP), a 3-year action implemented by Advance Afrika, Echoes of Children Voices (ECoV, co-applicant) and Help Disabled Children Excel (HEDCHE, associate) with funding from the European Union; and ii.) UMUNTHU – Education and Skilling Offenders, a 2-year project implemented by Chance for Change (C4C) in Malawi and Advance Afrika (AA), with funding from the Norwegian Agency for Exchange Co-operation (NOREC).

4.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES – KEY HIGHLIGHTS

This section highlights some of Advance Afrika’s achievements in the year 2022 directly aligned with the strategic goals of the organisation.



STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Transforming Vulnerable Individuals & Communities

Conducting school educational debates on gender equality and life skills

32 educational debates on gender equality and life skills were held under the PDWC action by Advance Afrika in close collaboration with the District Education Department, school administrations and student councils of 8 secondary schools. The debates were implemented at school campuses in tree shades or in the school main halls while observing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) set by the Ministry of Health (MoH). At least 50 students and 5 teachers at each school were actively involved. During the reporting period, the motions of the debates mainly focused on the *extent to which COVID-19 contributed to early marriage in the districts; whether a child has the right to express their opinion on a marriage arranged by the parents; the extent to which parents, commu-*

nities and leaders were committed to fighting child labour; and the impact of co-curricular activities on academic performance.

Advance Afrika involved competent local radio stations to broadcast debates between schools for public benefit. The debates offered open spaces for critical thinking, and gave the young students an opportunity to share their points of view and experiences on issues of violence against children in homes, schools and the community. Feedback from the students indicated that they had learnt more words and how to speak English confidently, as well as to be more responsible. They also had come to appreciate their rights. Each of the debaters received a certificate and a T-shirt with the logos of the project donors and implementers as well as the action's title.



A student of St Mary's Girls, Burere sub county in Buhweju district receiving a certificate of participation from Advance Afrika.



A group photo of students of Mwamba Secondary School after a debate



373

GBV cases were identified, reported and followed up by the para-social workers, LCLs and project staff.

Outreach activities and follow-up visits

Follow-up visits to women's group

The PDWC final evaluation indicated that strengthening of the community structures and promoting functional systems under the action greatly enhanced the case management and response rate to GBV cases. A total of 373 cases were identified, reported and followed up by the para-social workers, LCLs and project staff. The visits were held in the four sub-counties (Kicuzi, Rukiri, Burere and Bihanga) in an effort to address VAW/C. Case reporting and referrals by community structures improved coordination with relevant offices in addressing cases of VAW/C in Ibanda and Buhweju districts. In addition, 40 women groups were visited and supported at least 3 to 5 times by business mentors, as well as teams from the DLG, CICD and Advance Afrika. The women's groups created platforms for peer support and leverage points for follow-up and support. A number of observations were made during the fol-

low-up visits, one of which was that the 40 women's groups established in August 2021 were all still in existence. The groups received support and guidance from the trained mentors, especially during their weekly and monthly saving sittings/gatherings. Also, through the loans acquired from the group savings, members were able to make better decisions and support their families. Finally, more groups put a lot of effort into joining the Parish Development Model (PDM).

VHTs outreach activities targeting truck driver hubs, young entrepreneurs and communities

The IERC action continued to collaborate with both the community and public health facilities by leveraging their human resources to conduct monthly outreach activities targeted at young entrepreneurs, truck drivers and their communities that aimed at increasing access to preventative health services. The outreach was done by the 50 trained VHTs and 10 senior truck drivers engaged



Ayebazibwe Jackson, a CICD officer with Nyakaziba Bakwara Tweyombekye group during the follow up visit of women groups in Bihanga sub county, Buhweju district.

in the project. During the outreach, discussions focused on topics around escalating GBV connected to COVID-19, but especially on teenage pregnancy and GBV because of the uptake of family planning services, reproductive health, COVID-19, HIV/AIDS and how to address stigma in their communities, as well as how to cope with stress, depression and anxiety. The following results were registered: 472 truck drivers, 450 homes and 256 young entrepreneurs were reached to improve access to health services. One-on-one sessions on counselling services, IEC materials on COVID-19 and other infectious were distributed in the com-

munities, and guidance for referrals provided. The community outreach significantly contributed to a change in behaviour and attitudes. There was increased awareness in the communities about the importance of hand-washing practices, avoiding physical contact in public and other hygiene practices. Relationships with participatory structures at community level stimulated coordinated responses from service providers. The outreach promoted the effectiveness of health programmes implemented by districts through the VHTs, and linked the senior truck drivers engaged to a wide range of sectors.



Trained VHTs and Truck drivers reaching out to their communities



VHTs promote messages on public health concerns and COVID 19 during community radio campaigns at Ediopetrading centre and market in Arua and Zombo districts respectively



Rehabilitation and reintegration of prison inmates and ex-inmates

Training of prison inmates in entrepreneurship and life skills

Under the BOPLYN action, prison inmates approached the Regional Welfare Officer (RWO) and requested an opportunity to benefit from the entrepreneurship training conducted under the action in 2020 and 2021. Thus, the action witnessed efforts by PSWs in some prison units who took the initiative to train a total of 308 male prison inmates on entrepreneurship and life skills. These included Gulu Main (163 male inmates), Amuru Main (11 male inmates), Orom Tikao (56 male inmates) and Lugore (80 male inmates). Similarly, 391 inmates (68 female, 323 male) in 2022 and 292 prison inmates (34 female, 258 male) in 2021 completed training in entrepreneurship and life skills. Methods such as group discussion, brainstorming, presentation, role-play, verbal and non-verbal communication and illustration were used during the training as per the training evaluations by trainees.

The youth prison inmates and ex-inmates continue to appreciate the skills and knowledge obtained from the entrepreneurship and life skill training as some of them have adopted these to start micro-businesses even while still in prison. Those outside prison were able to identify economic opportunities to start income-generating activities (IGAs). This further reduced the high expectations to receive start-up kits under the action. The young inmates were challenged to replicate the knowledge and share it with their fellow peers and those in community on their return.

Follow-up visits to ex-inmates

In addition, a total of 183 ex-inmates were supported in their reintegration process by para-social workers, PSWs and the Advance Afrika team. The follow-up visits were paid to both ex-inmates from the previous DCI-NSA PVD/2015/371-396 action and under the action in Gulu, Amuru and Kitgum districts. The ex-inmates were actively engaged in economic activities relevant to their wellbeing. For example, Usher Ochan, an ex-inmate in Awach trading centre, Gulu district, said, *“I started with borrowing and doing casual work in order to feed my children. Being a change agent in the community opens doors for social reintegration.”* Ex-inmates reported an improvement in relationships with their complainants and the willingness to forgive. Families appreciated the involvement of para-social workers during the pre-visits as this elicited trust from the community. On the other hand, ex-inmates continue to be faced with challenges of dysfunctional families after their release. They often find that their wives have remarried, have left the children behind or have gone with them, and they have to contend with stigma in the communities. However, most of the ex-inmates who underwent the training in life skills and entrepreneurship testified that they were better positioned to deal with their anger and other negative emotions and apply the conflict resolution skills to handle such risks in the community(ies). The follow-up visits improved the coordination of the community structures and also increased confidence and trust between the ex-inmates and their families and the community.



2nd L-AA Project Coordinator and parasocial workers visit Ocan Usher(centre) at his home in Awach sub county, Gulu

Strengthening in-prison projects

4 in-prison projects were supported in Arua Women's, Arua Main and Nebbi Prisons and Paidha Farm Prison under the IERC action. These included knitting and weaving, arts and crafts, tailoring and bakery projects. From the initial stages of this idea, prisons management was engaged to identify suitable projects for the stations and write proposals justifying their choice and how they would benefit the inmates. The items needed for the projects were purchased and officially handed over to the prisons.

Arua Women Prison was further strengthened and boosted through the provision of a knitting machine and materials such as thread, row counter and needles to aid in making sweaters. A trainer was facilitated to train the inmates within a period of 2 months. It was inmates who were about to be released that were mostly considered. These were divided into groups of 10 during the training. The inmates appreciated this initiative and actively participated throughout the training. In **Arua Main Prison**, 25 inmates making crafts in the unit were handed additional items for making baskets, necklaces and earrings, and these included, among others, beads, nylon, zips and polythene bags. **Nebbi Prison** received two sewing machines, African and plain clothing materials, thread, needles, scissors etc., and 25 inmates were equipped with tailoring skills. Finally, **Paidha Farm Prison** built a traditional oven for baking and various items were provided such as baking pans, trays, mixers, aprons and headgear. An experienced and qualified trainer from Bolca Skills

72%

of the surveyed inmates reporting that they had used the acquired skills to train their fellow inmates.

Development Centre in Arua who was fluent in the Alur language trained 25 inmates (5 female, 20 male) to bake ceremonial cakes, cupcakes, bread, chapatti, half-cakes and cookies. The trainer also guided the inmates on the cost-benefit analysis of setting up a small bakery. They appreciated the training as they requested the prison unit leadership to continue engaging the facilitator to provide further lessons.

Some of the trained inmates were later released. However, the few that remained in prison continued to transfer the skills. The in-prison projects have imparted hands-on skills to inmates, enabling them to generate income and save while still serving their sentences. Prison authorities have continued to allow the products made by inmates to be displayed and to encourage more inmates to participate in the in-prison projects. The final review further reports that through the in-prison projects, there was ongoing knowledge transfer between inmates who benefitted and those who did not, as indicated by 72 % of the surveyed inmates reporting that they had used the acquired skills to train their fellow inmates. This demonstrates the ripple effect of the intervention.



Project Coordinator, Daniel Ntende hands over the in-prison project equipment's for tailoring and knitting to OC Nebbi Prison and OC Arua Women Prison respectively.





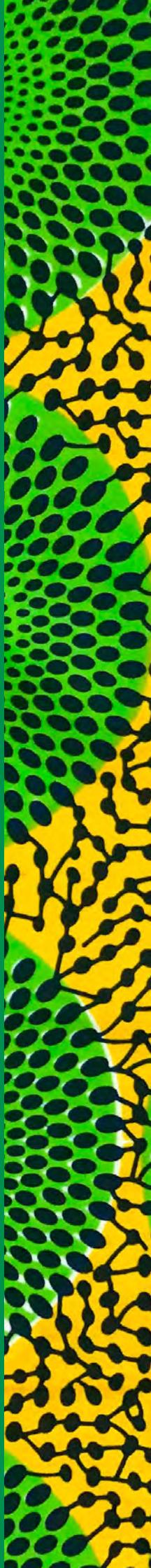
Inmates acquiring skills and displaying the work done on the various in-prison projects



Trained Inmates in Paidha Prison show off a cake and bread produced in prison

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Business Growth & Job Creation



Training farmers on market standards

Under ALENU, Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), in collaboration with the DINU-ALENU action, simplified 26 food standards into easy-to-use guidelines and translated them into local languages (Alur and Acholi) to ease the uptake and implementation of standards by smallholders and MSMEs. The 26 standards included: code of practice for hygiene; and specifications for food items, including apiary, local poultry, beans, soy beans, tomatoes, onions, groundnuts, fresh ware potatoes, moringa and vegetables. The development stages and quality control of the materials were discussed with the guidance of technical staff from UNBS, as well as stakeholders from both the government and the private sector.³ In total, 109 (81M, 28F) actors – *private (42), public (16), smallholder farmers (46) and project staff (5)* – actively participated in and contributed to the simplification of the food market standards into brochures, posters and booklets. On 20 October 2022, the materials were launched with media coverage to enhance the dissemination of the information to the general public. These included 2 TV news bulletins on UBC TV and Bukedde TV, 5 online articles published in the *New Vision*, *Paper Planet Watch*, *PML Daily*, *Codered Uganda* and *Watchdog Uganda*⁴ as well as a press release. The materials were printed and distributed during the training at group level and to the project stakeholders.

Additionally, a pool of trainers consisting of 16 (11 M, 5 F) POs, 50 (30 M, 20 F) FG members and 12 (8 M, 4 F) LG extension officers were trained on the market standards. The ToT training carried out by UNBS standards officers focused on four modules of storage, packaging, handling techniques and quality standards. The trained ToTs were equipped with knowledge and skills about the required standards and practices in food safety, food quality, sustainable post-harvest handling and storage so that they could continue supporting other FG members

to comply with the standard requirements. Furthermore, the ToTs were facilitated and provided with training materials (standards) to cascade the training to the 200 FGs.



Pic 1: The ALENU Project Team L-R (Ms. Egwar Daphne C-Project Coordinator AA, Mr. Akera Dophline Consortium Coordinator and Ms. Sheila Innocent Director Finance and Administration AA) take a picture with UNBS Team (Mr. Andrew Othieno Standards Department and Ms. Pamela Akwap the Senior Standards Officer) during the Launch of IEC materials.

³ Including actors from Makerere University School of Food Science, House of Dauda, MAAIF, Uganda Industrial Research Institute and NARO, Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), Uganda Fruit and Vegetable Exporters and Processors Association (UFVEPA), Consumer Trust, Applied Agribusiness Innovations, Uga Chick and DK Soya Company. The review and pretest of the materials also included transporters, market vendors such as chairpersons of business communities in Nebbi, Zombo and Cereleno markets, processors (like Muzuri Honey), buyers (individual produce dealers), farmers group members and district technical officials (District Commercial Officers and DINU focal persons from Acholi and West Nile sub-regions).

⁴ TV bulletins: <https://youtu.be/TNQzxQCdaOc>; online articles: *New Vision*: <https://www.newvision.co.ug/category/business/northern-uganda-west-nile-get-unbs-literature-145947>, *Paper Planet Watch*: <https://africaplanetwatch.org/2022/11/23/northern-uganda-farmers-get-simplified-food-standards/>, *PML daily*: <https://www.pmldaily.com/business/2022/10/unbs-simplifies-translates-food-standards-to-ease-implementation-by-msmes.html>, *Codered Uganda*: <https://coderedug.com/2022/10/21/unbs-simplified-and-translates-food-standards-into-alur-and-acholi-targets-micro-small-and-medium-enterprises-in-northern-uganda/> and *Watchdog Uganda* <https://www.watchdoguganda.com/news/20221021/144551/unbs-launches-campaign-to-translate-food-standard-guidelines-into-local-languages.html>

Promotion of agriculture market information

Under this activity, 997 (567 M, 430 F) Market Committees (MCs) were trained on market information systems and market intelligence, with 497(259 M, 238 F) being trained in 2020 and 500 (308 M, 192 F) in 2021. Out of these, 547(267 M, 280 F) MCs, approximately 54.9%, were from Acholi and 450 (300 M, 150 F), approximately 45.1%, were from West Nile. The training imparted knowledge about the collection, analysis, use and dissemination of agricultural market information, as well as about the software application that enabled access to market information by the farmers. 400 (307 M, 93 F) MCs equipped with mobile phones were continuously facilitated with transport and data to collect and update market information from 40 markets in the sub-regions in 2022. The data collected such as prices, quantity of commodities and availability of commodities, was uploaded to the market information systems (designed in collaboration with FarmGain). Through the MCs, the development of farmers market systems was promoted because they enhanced farmers group cohesion whilst disseminating market information. This encouraged members to make informed market-related decisions.

The action adopted a FarmGain app used by the trained MCs. Through the digital marketing platform, monthly price reports were generated and ag-

gregated information was circulated to the farmers through the trained MCs and agricultural extension officers. Printouts of the market information were also displayed on the project sub-county noticeboards besides being shared with local FM radio stations, including Radio Rupiny and Mega FM in the Acholi sub-region and Pakwach FM and Paidha FM in the West Nile sub-region. Whereas some of the farmers were illiterate, there was an increased rate of adaptation, usability and functionality of the market information systems among the trained MCs. Thus, the activity enhanced access to market information by the farmers by 94%. It increased their capacity to make relevant market-related decisions. 3 local radio stations were engaged to disseminate market information, advertise and link up the groups. Furthermore, through the app, 21 links were created on the digital platform to facilitate marketing by the farmers groups in the form of direct phone calls and follow-ups to market actors (bulk buyers) and agro-processors, as this eased the marketing efforts of the committees. Also, FarmGain, the market information actor, has retained 30 (25 M, 5 F) trained MCs as their agents in the region for purposes of collecting market information. As a result, the FGs were able to advertise their products on radio, sell their products collectively and get BDS support from the actors as and when they required it.



L-C Market committees of Omoro district and Market committees of Amuru district practicing how to use the Farm Gain App on their mobile phones during the training of market committees on market information system. Pic 8: Trained Market Committees for PY2 Pakwach district (RL)



L-R Market committees from Wakonyeonewa FG in Wol Sub-county Agago district picking market information from Wol Market and Market committees from Ogenwot FG in Amuru Sub-county Amuru district picking market information from Amuru Trading Centre Market.

Providing farmers groups with additional business development services (BDS)

Still under ALENU, 119/65 FGs were supported with and benefitted from business development services under the action. This involved 116 (27 institutions and 89 individuals) BDS actors actively engaged in providing tailor-made BDS services to cater for the needs and enterprises of the FGs. Out of the institutions, 10 were public sector actors and 17 private sector actors. Overall, 2,975 (1,350 M, 1,625 F) farmers were reached with the different BDS packages. The action supported 18 areas of BDS, including ALENU FG participatory and capacity assessment; assessment of the capacity of FGs to undertake potato processing and value addition (final report attached in the annex); mapping of existing agricultural cooperatives in the Acholi and West Nile sub-regions (final report attached in the annex); training on apiary management and value addition; collective bulking and marketing; Irish potato post-harvest handling; processing and value addition; training on equipment management; usage and maintenance; access to financial services; mentorship, advice on leadership and group dynamics; business planning; training in negotiation; use of media (radio) to promote marketing; training on conflict management; and continuous market standards and quality control support.

In the reporting period, an assessment of the farmers group status revealed that 117FGs, approximately 59%, emerged strong and progressive owing to the improved VSLA savings; formal registration with both the sub-county and the district; increased production volumes and the ability to bulk and sell as a group with the support of the Marketing Committees; the opportunity to operate income-generating activities; the ability to mobilise resources/relate externally with value chain actors; as well as the availability of strong leadership. Only 41% were greatly affected by the production seasons. However, the FGs continued to receive mentorship from the trained structures, such as the agroecological champions, Marketing Committees and VSLA mentors. As a result of the BDS efforts, fewer conflicts were registered in the groups trained on conflict management at group level, and an increase in the level of colonisation for apiary FGs was reported. A total of 1,984/2,620 hives distributed were colonised and more honey harvested during the previous two consecutive seasons. Out of these, 630 hives in Omoro, 550 in Agago, 680 in Nebbi and 124 in Zombo were colonised. Also, 65 FGs opened and operationalised VSLA accounts with banks to secure their finances but also to act as security to access credit from the banks. Below is a brief success story on the linkages formed through BDS support:



Bee House Products Ltd, a BDS actor, in collaboration with two apiary farmers from Omoro district – Simon George Ojok, 30 years old, and Ivan Ojok Akena, 29 – members of Rubangatwero FG in Labuje village, Lujorongole parish in Lakwana sub-county, Omoro district put up a demonstration apiary site of 100 modern hives in PY2. The two farmers received intense training on modern beekeeping technologies. Bee House Products provided different beehive technologies to be displayed in the apiary demonstration area. The farmers currently collect and bulk honey and other bee products from ALENU apiary farmers from the district. In addition, they have been contracted by Bee House Products Ltd as agents in the region and to support farmers to access inputs from the private actor. In the partnership, Simon and Ivan will benefit from the profits of the harvests (35% to the farmers and 65% to Bee House).



L-R: Members of Ogenwot FG in Ogali Village, Pamuca Parish, Amuru Sub County, Amuru District responding to Assessment questions during the FG assessment and Members of Lugwan Center FG, Amora village, take a group photo after concluding with the FG assessment.

Establishing market links and achieving progress in certification, quality control and branding

In 2021 and 2022, the action made deliberate efforts to establish sustainable links between farmers group members and financial institutions (formal banks), with cooperatives, processors/buyers and links to BDS support. A total of 523 links were established, and of these 65 FGs were with financial institutions, 400 brought farmers and cooperatives together, 5 were with market information actors, 11 with agro-processors, 24 with potential market buyers and 18 with local governments.

The action organised financial clinics at district level and engaged 3 financial institutions, namely Centenary Bank in Amuru, Omoro, Nebbi and Zombo districts; Bank of Africa in Agago; and Post Bank in Pakwach district. FGs were supported to open bank accounts and operationalise their VSLA accounts. In total, 1,625 (684 M, 941 F) farmers acquired financial literacy, 200 opened individual accounts and 65 FGs opened accounts with banks. At least 15 FGs (Amuru –7; Pakwach –3; Nebbi –2; and Omoro – 3) further benefitted from borrowing from Centenary and Post banks. Furthermore, ALENU conducted a mapping of existing cooperatives in the region and collaborated with 5 cooperatives (Dei-Panyimur in Pakwach, Kulo Otit Cooperative in Omoro, Amuru Progressive Cooperative in Amuru, Omot Cooperative in Agago, and Nyaravu Cooperative in Zombo). FGs were sensitised to the availability of the existing cooperatives, and provided with information and opportunities to join or form cooperatives. As a result, 1,400 (850 M, 550 F) farmers were linked to the cooperatives, 49 FGs were formed into producer groups (Amuru – 11; Agago – 5; Omoro – 5, Pakwach – 4; and Zombo – 24). Out of these, 6 producer organisations were formed for 2 commodities, i.e. groundnuts and Irish potatoes, which involved 23 FGs (groundnuts, 575: 250 M, 325 F; and Irish potatoes, 600: 430M, 170F), including: Amuru – ALENU Groundnut Processors, and Lamogi – ALENU Groundnut Processors in Amuru; Wol– ALENU Groundnut Processors

in Agago; Lakwana-ALENU Groundnut Processors in Omoro; Panyimur-ALENU Groundnut Processors in Pakwach; and Abajji – Zolume United Farmers' Cooperative (AZUF-Cos), in Zombo district. The producer organisations will ensure continuity and functionality of the processing equipment supported under the action. Also, Yoo Kwo FG in Panyimur sub-county, Pakwach district benefitted from tractor hire services, quality seeds and financial support of 3,000,000 Uganda shillings from Dei-Panyimur cooperative scale-up funds.

Under the links created with processors, buyers and other BDS support, 20 apiary FGs comprising 500 (280 M, 220 F) farmers were linked to Muzuri Honey Limited, a private sector actor in Omoro district, to provide them with beehives, training and marketing. Farmers groups were linked to government programmes and other development programmes in their districts. For example, 40 ALENU FGs (Agago – 6; Amuru–7; Omoro –10, Pakwach– 4; Nebbi – 8; and Zombo –6) were linked to the ongoing government intervention under the PDM. These groups have subscribed to the SACCOs and are benefitting from the intervention financially. One FG – Ngeclonyo in Oboko village, Pamora Upper parish in Atego sub-county Nebbi district – was selected to benefit from the Uganda Multi-sectoral Food Security and Nutrition Project implemented by Nebbi district LG under which the group received financial support of up to 10,000,000 Uganda shillings as booster capital for the group to borrow from and invest in their income-generating activity. In Amuru district, at least 2 FGs – Rubangatwero and Reckiceke in Amuru sub-county – were selected to benefit from the Northern Uganda Farmers Livelihood Improvement Project (NUFLIP) vegetable growing project implemented by JICA in partnership with MAAIF and district local governments in the Acholi sub-region. Finally, all the 12 Community Development Officers (CDOs) of the project sub-counties conducted a one-on-one session with groups to strengthen them in the areas of conflict, leadership and sustainability. The LGs will continue to support sustainable linkages between beneficiaries and other actors.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Advocacy & Creative Communication

Engagement meetings with the JLOS actors

Under the BOPLYN project, 5 engagement meetings were held with the JLOS actors at regional level. The JLOS coordination meetings included an open day court and a discussion on children in conflict with the law (“street children”, commonly known in the local language, Acholi, as the ‘*Aguu*’), in which the project team were able to actively participate. The key issues discussed in these meetings directly concerned the ex-inmates and their families. The Chief Justice, the Hon. Justice Chigamoy Owiny-Dollo, who was the guest of honour, commended the public for turning up in big numbers and highlighted:

This was in line with promoting ADR and positive mindset change in the communities, which is a prerequisite for the successful reintegration of ex-inmates. During the meetings, the project team also learnt of the new innovations in the judiciary such as the Electronic Court Case Information Management System (ECHCMIS) and the small claims procedure. Key to the needs of the prison inmates was the purposes of sentencing, and the lawyers were advised to embrace ADR and also support the community to resolve issues among themselves. They were further encouraged to engage the leaders and other structures in the community to embrace this cause, to foster peace and development.



Everyone has a role to play in the administration of justice. The court comes towards the tail end. First of all, all matters that end up at the court start from the community. I therefore urge the community to first seek the immediate alternatives to resolve their issues amicably. If this works, then there will be no disputes in our communities. Try to resolve your dispute and come to court as a place of last resort! Court can't finish all cases. Only two judges can't finish all the cases before them in one year. There is mediation. Negotiate and agree on what is fair in the interest of peace and neighbourhood.



A group photo of participants including Advance Afrika Project Coordinator who attended the District Coordination Committee meeting with JLOS actors in Gulu district

Participation in district coordination meetings

The OPM conducted three coordination meetings in Amuru, Pakwach and Kampala districts under ALENU to provide an update to the district leadership on progress on the implementation of the action as well as create space for the OPM top management, as the supervisory authority of the DINU programme, to interact with key stakeholders and implementing partners, respectively. Advance Afrika participated in all the meetings and gave presentations on the progress of ALENU implementation during the coordination meetings in Amuru and Pakwach. The district requested that the IPs should always share their work plans in a timely manner and also share their reports to keep them informed, but also expressed interest in monitoring the project activities on the ground.

Still in the northern region under BOPLYN, Advance Afrika attended coordination meetings in Gulu, Amuru and Kitgum. The meetings centred around issues of gender-based violence (GBV), child protection (campaign to end child marriage and teenage pregnancy in the aftermath of COVID-19, launch of 16 days' activism to end violence against women and girls) and strengthening the referral mechanisms for collaboration among partners in the district. CSOs shared their areas of work and monthly activities implemented within the districts. They were also requested by the district leadership during the meetings to make financial contributions in the activities specified above.

Finally, in Buhweju district under the PDWC project, Advance Afrika attended the Buhweju District Budget Conference that focused on the performance of sectors, assessed measures and means of improving efficiency and effectiveness in public spending and service delivery, as well as ensuring the effective participation of stakeholders in the planning and budgeting process. The District Chairman and the CAO appreciated interventions by the development partners and CSOs like Advance Afrika for their contribution towards the development of Buhweju district. The meetings have been very instrumental in guiding the project team on the rightful procedures to follow while collaborating with the districts but also, through the engagements, more community concerns have been shared with the authorities.

Radio campaigns

Advance Afrika managed to establish and sustain relationships with major media houses in Acholi, West Nile and southwestern Uganda. Throughout the year, under the BOPLYN action, radio stations, including Favour FM, Radio Pacis, Mighty Fire FM and Rupiny FM in Gulu and Kitgum were actively engaged in sharing issues concerned with the rehabilitation and reintegration of prison inmates and ex-inmates in northern Uganda. Under the ALENU action, local FM radio stations, including Radio Rupiny and Mega FM in the Acholi sub-region and Pakwach FM and Paidha FM in West Nile, disseminated agricultural market information, supported the advertisement of the commodities promoted and linked up farmers groups. The IREC action in West Nile worked with Arua One and Radio Pacis in Arua and Spirit FM in Koboko to report the issues young entrepreneurs and truck drivers were grappling with in the face of COVID-19. The project also organised community radio outreach programmes within trading centres, at truck hubs, bus terminals and markets, and at health centres to create awareness of COVID-19 and promote messages on prevention strategies and hygiene practices. Additionally, in southwestern Uganda under the PDWC project, the project team engaged Radio Eiraka (89.7 FM) and Radio Bushenyi (92.2 FM), regularly reporting on issues of GBV and VAW/C.

The media houses hosted various project stakeholders such the district authorities (RDCs, LCVs, DCDOs, DHO, DCO District Woman Councillors, the District Health Educators (DHE) and Senior Probation and Welfare Officers and Sub-County Chairpersons), UPS, opinion leaders, young entrepreneurs, farmers and school representatives, among others, on talk shows. The radio talk shows provided relevant information on the reintegration of young ex-inmates, access to justice, parenting and psychosocial support, public health concerns (such as hygiene practices), boosting entrepreneurial intentions through alternative livelihoods and introducing digital marketing/online marketing for businesses, as well as agricultural market information. The radio programmes provided an opportunity for project beneficiaries to share their experiences and struggles as well as for district authorities to provide clarity and elaborate on government efforts to respond to the issues raised.



The project team and district leader representatives during radio talk shows held at Favor FM and Might Fire FM in Gulu and Kitgum respectively



A radio talk show session on Radio Pacis in Gulu district, attended by the Regional Prisons Commander, the Senior District Probation Officer, a female ex-inmate and Project staff

Organising and conducting celebrations for the Day of the African Child and the International Women’s Day

The Day of the African Child and the *International* Women’s Day were celebrated in Ibanda and Buhweju districts under the themes, respectively, “Access to a child-friendly justice system in Africa” and “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow”. The themes recognised the contribution of women and girls around the world as leading agents of change on issues of climate change adaptation, mitigation and response to build a more sustainable future for all. The themes also advocated for a child-friendly national legislative, policy and institutional framework to be in place and en-

forced by all states. Advance Afrika, in collaboration with the DCDOs, ensured the visibility of the action in the course of the celebrations and awareness of EU funding contribution to addressing violence against women and children in Ibanda and Buhweju. Radio talk shows were held that disseminated messages responding to the negative effects of COVID-19 on children. Key stakeholders were actively involved, such as the LCV District Chairman, the Senior Probation Officer and the Child and Family Protection Unit of the Uganda Police, students and champions of change. The celebrations served as a platform at district level for the challenges faced by women and children to be listened to and as a springboard for duty-bearers to take action.



Photos taken with Rt Hon. Prime Minister Robinah Nabanja in the centre, MPs of Buhweju, chairman LCV and on the right, women beneficiaries in attendance during the International Women's day in Buhweju and Ibanda districts respectively.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Growth of Advance Afrika



The Visionary of Uganda Award – Best Rehabilitating NGO

In October 2022, the Visionaries of Uganda nominated Advance Afrika as the best rehabilitating NGO supporting prison inmates and ex-inmates with knowledge and skills in decent enterprise development and contributing towards Uganda Vision 2040. Advance Afrika and UPS attended the 10th Visionaries of Uganda Award ceremony on 24 November 2022 at Kampala Serena Hotel. The ceremony was presided over by the Chief Guest, H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, represented by the Minister of Public Service, the Hon. Wilson Muruli Mukasa. Advance Afrika management and the UPS Principal Welfare and Rehabilitation Officer, Mr. Adams Hasiyo, received the award. We attribute this success to the fruitful partnership with UPS, the support from our donors, partners, the district authorities, community structures and leaders, project beneficiaries and Advance Afrika staff for their commitment and the work done.

Advance Afrika staff celebrate completion of the mindset change training at the National Farmers' Leadership Centre (NFLC). In the middle is Mr. Odauk Paul, Director NFLC and Ms. Sharon Atukunda CEO Advance Afrika.

Training on mindset change by the National Farmers Leadership Centre (NFLC)

The Advance Afrika management organised a staff training exercise to run from 27 March to 1 April 2022 on mindset change in collaboration with the National Farmers Leadership Centre. The training was themed “*The Ability to Adapt*”. This aimed at instilling the values of hard work, resilience and leadership in the participants. The staff gained valuable knowledge and skills in terms of the concepts of origins and significance of mindset, community development, the case study of Saemaul Undong, lifestyle for socio-economic transformation, entrepreneurship development and financial literacy, transformative discipline and methods of work. The staff also did practical sessions on farm practice in horticulture, mushroom growing, piggery production (IMO), coffee, dairy production cost-benefit analysis, prospects in agribusiness as well as health exercise. Through the training, staff were empowered at all their levels of governance and their mindsets were transformed. The staff have continued to promote mindset change and community development among project beneficiaries by inculcating the spirit of due diligence, self-reliance and cooperation in modern commercial production.





Advance Afrika receives the award for the Best Rehabilitating NGO from the Minister of State for Energy and Mineral Development (Minerals), Hon. Peter Teko Lokeris (R), the Minister of Public Service, the Hon. Wilson Muruli Mukasa (C), and Board Chairperson National Planning Authority, Prof. Pamela Mbabazi (L)



Capacity-building on communication and digitalisation strategy for Advance Afrika staff

The partnership with Bread for the World (BftW), through the deployment of a public relations and advocacy professional, strengthened the capacity of Advance Afrika staff and project stakeholders in communication and digitalisation strategy. The training was conducted on 10 October 2022, focusing on effective communication with other partners; feedback and clarity; standardised communication with adequate information; digital services for the beneficiaries; data protection policy and privacy; collaborative skills and interpersonal relationship at the workplace and with partners; and written communication and writing rules. This enhanced staff skills in reporting and content development. The training also informed the development and publication of Advance Afrika's digital media and data protection policy.

Complimenting the above activity were efforts initially boosted under the NOREC exchange project in partnership with C4C in Malawi that majorly focused on online participation and engagement. Advance Afrika appreciated the nature and uniqueness of the exchange project. This enhanced the partners' and NOREC participants' digital competencies, including increased awareness and use of digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom for professional development, the computer skills of the participants, the use of video-sharing and other forms of graphic illustrations to demonstrate the stories of change during their presentations, and improved the communication skills of the participants through virtual interactions with facilitators and other stakeholders (such as writing emails and content creation).



Photo taken after the Communication Skills training for Advance Afrika Gulu staff, organised by Dr. Mark Degner, Technical Advisor Advance Afrika.

Researchers, associates and potential partners

Advance Afrika hosted a student associate and delegates interested in our work in the rehabilitation and integration of prison inmates. On 27 February 2022 Advance Afrika welcomed a student associate, Ms. Jamila Kamphuis from Van Hall Larenstein, University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands. The student associate spent 6 months in Gulu and conducted a study on the BOPLYN³ action. The study focused on *identifying the needs of ex-inmates and factors enabling youth ex-inmates to successfully reintegrate into their communities in Gulu district*. The main objective of the research was to formulate recommendations for Advance Afrika to strengthen reintegration interventions. The findings revealed that *Advance Afrika's intervention helped ex-inmates to successfully reintegrate in the communities, and involved training them in entrepreneurial skills to enhance the reintegration and employment opportunities for them. However, regarding other factors such as access to financial resources, options could*

3 Bridging Opportunities for Effective and Productive Livelihoods of Youth Prisons Inmates and Ex-Inmates in Northern Uganda project (BOPLYN).

involve creating a crowdfunding platform and collaborating with microfinance institutions that can provide small loans to ex-inmates. With the small loans they would be able to start their businesses. Also, on 21 October 2022, the action hosted 6 delegates from Austria. The delegates visited the BOPLYN action at Gulu Main and Gulu Women's prison units. They also visited an ex-inmate operating a salon. The delegates were impressed by the touching stories of the project beneficiaries. They appreciated the support of the EU and thanked Advance Afrika for the great work it was doing. Their main focus in the region was to explore the possibility of setting up a bakery in collaboration with a CSO. Discussions on the potential opportunity as a social enterprise are ongoing.

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Monitoring and results measurement is an integral part of project management and implementation. In order to track our progress, capture learnings and steer the project implementation with informed decision-making, routine project monitoring procedures and learning activities were integrated under various projects implemented. The Project Coordinators responsible for the M&E plans worked closely with the project team and partners at project implementation while ensuring learning and knowledge sharing across the projects in line with the result chain and log frames. Project management meetings, monitoring visits and evaluation were conducted. For example, on EU-funded projects, the Operation Advisors consistently followed the progress of the action and offered key guidance and advice to the project teams on areas of strengthening partnership and relations, the power of networks as CSOs, and reporting, among others. The monitoring visits and project management meetings contributed to better coordination and harmonisation of activities under the actions. Under the Improving the Economic Resilience of



The monitoring visits and project management meetings contributed to better coordination and harmonisation of activities under the actions.

West Nile Youth in the Face of COVID-19 (IERC) action, during her visit the Operations Advisor on CSOs of the EU Delegation to Uganda, Ms Elizabeth Ongom, emphasised hygiene practices in business as well as continuous mentorship support to the young entrepreneurs, and also encouraged the partners to promote digital inclusion in their programming and futures interventions.

Fundraising and new projects

Advance Afrika was successful in obtaining two new projects that started in December 2022 and January 2023, respectively. The new projects include: i.) Community Response Actions to Reduce Teenage Pregnancies in Busoga and West Nile (ATP), which is a 3-year action implemented by Advance Afrika, Echoes of Children Voices (ECoV, co-applicant) and Help Disabled Children Excel (HEDCHE, associate) with funding from the European Union; and ii.) UMUNTHU – Education and Skilling Offenders, which is a 2-year project implemented by Chance for Change (C4C) in Malawi and Advance Afrika (AA), with funding from the Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC). The projects directly build on the previous actions implemented in northern Uganda that were financed and supported by the EU and NOREC, who have continued to support the growth of Advance Afrika and its sustenance.

5.

STORIES OF CHANGE



A. BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION

Munguni Gloria, 24 years old, from Alangi sub-county, Zombo district

In 2016, I dropped out of school because I was pregnant, so I started selling onions and tomatoes to earn a living. The business grew gradually. By 2018 my capital had increased from 5000 to 100,000 shillings. In 2020, the lockdown happened, the government put in place tight measures to reduce the spread including restrictions on movements, and yet for my small business, most of my customers were people moving in and out of the sub-county. My business could not stand the test of these hard times, my sales dropped, my stock was getting spoilt since some of them were perishable items, like the onions and tomatoes. Advance Afrika, through the project, equipped me with knowledge of how to run a business through entrepreneurship and life skills, for example record-keeping, financial literacy and also finding alternative sources of livelihood which are sustainable. I have learnt how to separate myself from the business. I have also ventured into farming and grow sweet potatoes. In the near future, I plan to join a tailoring school, learn to sew clothes and also look around for other opportunities that I can do to generate income for myself and to be able to educate my children.

John Manyang, 23-year-old entrepreneur residing in Arua Hill division, Arua district

I am a student at Makerere University Business School and an entrepreneur. For a period of two years, I have been making and selling liquid soap locally to pay my fees at school. I attended the training organised by Advance Afrika on entrepreneurship as well as alternative livelihood. We were taken for an exposure visit session at Page Logistics Uganda in Rubaga. I was particularly interested in value addition as it was emphasised during the visit. I was challenged but more so inspired by the work done in the small companies. This gave me more confidence and I came to believe that it is possible to replicate what is being done in the soap industry in Kampala back home in Arua.

I received a booster kit containing a liquid soap mixing machine that can to mix at least 20 jerry cans in a day, containers and packaging bottles during the distribution of booster kits. My liquid soap quantity and quality produced have greatly increased. The business mentorship and digital marketing sessions broadened my understanding of the business environment, keeping me on the right track. I have now branded my products and post pictures of the liquid soap on WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. There is also improvement in clientele as well as increased profits since customers are able to contact me as I deliver to them. On a small scale, I train other people who are interested in the same business venture to make liquid soap for both home use and sale. I have hired two people to do the work while I attend school. I now pay my tuition fees at school in time and reside in a decent place.

B. INCREASED MARKET ACCESSIBILITY

The power of collective bulking and marketing: The Story of Lagada Yil Kiwadi FG

Lagada Yil Kiwadi FG in Apotokitoo village, Lamogi sub-county, Amuru district is a beneficiary under the ALENU project. The group was formed in January 2021 under the action. It is comprised of 25 (8M, 17F) members. In March 2021, the FG was supported 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 FG harvested 10,650 kg (213 bags) of groundnuts, out of which 274 kg (6bags) were from the demonstration garden and 10,376 kg were from individual members' gardens.

During the training in collective bulking and marketing organised under R.2 in Amuru district, in November 2021, Mr. Moses Opio, the Chairperson of the group MCs represented the group. According to him, *“the training empowered me to mobilise my group members to bulk, 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 regarding how to sell as a group. In his own words, *“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 did not want to bulk.”* After the training, the networking level between the MCs and the market actors improved, with both nearby and faraway produce buyers. The group members also agreed to bulk and each member stored their produce in their homes, with only statistics on quantities being shared with the MCs.

Overall, the group managed to bulk 3,595 kg (96 bags) of unshelled groundnuts, out of which 274 kg (6 bags) were from the demonstration garden and 2,821 kg (80 bags) from FG members and a non-ALENU group member, Ms. Florence Akuro, who had 500 kg (10 bags). Through networking, the group approached Mr. Anthony Nyeru, 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 the group to Mr. Joseph Athuma, a wholesale buyer from Kampala. Using the mobile phones provided by the project, the members called the buyer and told him about the quantity of the groundnuts they had in store and negotiated a price per kilo of 2,000 Uganda shillings. They agreed that the buyer would come to Amuru where the group usually met at his own cost, to which he agreed and an appointment was fixed for 10.00 a.m., 5 January 2022.

On the appointed day, the buyer sent his representative, Mr. Anthony Nyeru, to verify and confirm the available quantity and quality of the groundnuts. All the bags were weighed using the project weighing scale provided to the group and inspected. The agent reported the total number of kilograms to the buyer, who then came on the same day in the afternoon with all the money needed to pay for the confirmed quantities, and paid the MC Chairperson in cash.

From the record, 26 (8M, 18F) farmers participated in the sale of the produce, including 1 non-ALENU group member. The group sold 96 bags of unshelled groundnuts weighing 3,595 kg at 2,000 Uganda shillings per kilo. In total, the group received **7,173,400 Uganda shillings**. Out of this, Ms. Florence Akuro got 1,000,000 Uganda shillings. At the time of the sale, the prevailing market price for unshelled groundnuts was between 1,600 and 1,800 Uganda shillings for red beauty groundnuts and white groundnuts, respectively. The group was able to sell at no or less transport cost and earned an extra 200 Uganda shillings from each kilogram sold, which was much better than the usual individual sales.

The MC Chairperson, Mr. Moses Opio, attributed this success to high commitment and willingness of the group to implement new skills they had learnt during the collective bulking and marketing training. Mr. Opio remarked, *“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 had connected the group to the buyer from Kampala. The FG members and the community around now believe that that the collective bulking and marketing approach will enable them to sell other grains like beans, maize and soya beans at a better price and very conveniently.



Pic 3: Members of the Marketing Committee and some FG members of Lagada Yil Kiwadi FG with the Komakech Denis BDSO Amuru (Extreme Right) during the collective sales in Apotokitoo village, Lamogi Sub county, Amuru district.

B. INCREASED MARKET ACCESSIBILITY

“Reaping big through value addition and innovation”: The story of Panyimur Grinding and Thresher Group

We are a group of farmers who have benefitted from the ALENU project. Our group, named the Panyimur Threshers, was established in August 2021 after receiving a motorised groundnut thresher from the ALENU project. We are located in Panyimur Main Market, Singular Central, Nyakagei parish, Panyimur town council, Pakwach district. Our group has grown into an association consisting of five farmer groups: Kabucan, Yoo Kwo, Wamederakutic, Mungumioree and Anyimber. Each group is represented in the association, collectively managing the threshing machine provided by ALENU. Our leadership positions are held by elected individuals, including the Chairperson, Andere Oyoma from Yoo Kwo Farmers; Vice Chairperson, Patrick Okello from Mungumioree; Secretary, Ozelle Alex from Wamederakutic Farmers Group; Treasurer, Ozelle Juliet from Mungumioree; and Operator, Ocaya Martin Santo from Yoo Kwo Farmers Group.

The vision of our group, Panyimur Threshers, is to support ALENU project members and the broader community in adding value to their products and improving market access. We received diverse support from ALENU, including groundnut seeds for a demonstration garden and individual members, chickens, smartphones for market information collection, certified weighing scales, storage bags, tarpaulins, spray pumps, hoes, solar dryers, stationery and groundnut shellers (both manual and motorised). This support enabled us to establish a demonstration garden where group members learn good agronomic practices before they are replicated at household level. The weighing scales are used at our business centre for weighing bags of groundnuts and other commodities before they are processed and billed. Storage bags are helpful in ensuring that commodities are well stored without losing and compromising their quality, among others.

In addition to the support received, we underwent training in various areas such as market intelligence, IT for marketing, groundnut agronomy, poultry management and vaccination, planting greens/kitchen gardening, a balanced diet, and cooking demonstrations. ALENU also provided us with groundnut shelling machines, with each groundnut-producing farmers group receiving one motorised and one manual machine. The motorised machine is shared with five other farmers groups in Panyimur town council. To contribute to the shelter for the machine, each group of 25 registered members collectively contributed 925,000 Uganda shillings. This money was utilised for constructing the shelter for the machine and purchasing fuel for the machine's operation. From August 2021 to March 2022, we earned 308,000 Uganda shillings from the groundnut thresher. With these savings, the Yoo Kwo Farmers group acquired a maize flour mill for 600,000 Uganda shillings, which is currently being utilised for grinding cassava flour when groundnuts are not available due to the seasonality issue.

Our group benefits from a weekly market that attracts people from various regions, resulting in an average monthly saving of 200,000 Uganda shillings from threshing, with a net profit of around 50,000 Uganda shillings per week. We charge fees for grinding different crops such as maize, cassava, millet and sorghum, and for shell-

ing groundnuts. Currently, we have accumulated savings of 800,000 Uganda shillings with the group treasurer.

During our business operations, we faced two significant challenges: the seasonal nature of groundnut production and the high costs of machine repair and maintenance. To address the seasonality challenge, we purchased an additional cassava mill and integrated it with the existing engine. The management took care of the repair and maintenance expenses, resulting in the machine currently functioning well. Looking ahead, we plan to purchase a paste grinding machine to meet the growing demand for shelling and grinding within the market. Furthermore, we aim to expand our membership by allowing other individuals to register and join the association as an additional source of income. This approach will streamline management and facilitate fair dividend sharing. Additionally, we intend to rent and establish a storage facility for bulk collection and marketing, enabling us to procure stock at lower prices and add value before selling, thereby increasing our profitability.

We express our gratitude for the support received from ALENU and commit to continued collaboration to achieve our goals. Having successfully operated for two years, making profits and overcoming challenges, we remain determined to succeed.



600,000^{UGX}

amount the Yoo Kwo
Farmers group acquired
a maize flour mill.

Photo Captured by Consultant:
Francis, Thresher operator
grinding cassava flour using
miller bought and mounted
to ALENU Engine at Panyumur
Main Market, Panyimur Town
Council, Pakwach District

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



955,324,948

European Union

Community Response
Actions to Reduce Teenage
Pregnancies in Busoga
and West Nile (ATP)

1,316,991,132

European Union

Action For Livelihood
Enhancement in Northern
Uganda (ALENU) Project

325,879,637

European Union

Protecting the dignity
of women and children
in Ibanda and Buhweju
districts (PDWC)

327,900,572

European Union

Bridging opportunities for effective and
productive livelihoods of youth prison inmates
and ex-inmates in northern Uganda (BOPLYN)

273,286,000

European Union

Improving the Economic Resilience
of West Nile Youth in the face of
COVID-19 (IERC)



7,500,600

AGIAMONDO

Civil Peace Service - CPS



76,816,230

NOREC

Umunthu - Education and Skilling

TOTAL RESTRICTED GRANTS

3,232,278,289

UNRESTRICTED GRANT

9,338,682

TOTAL INCOME

3,241,616,971

7

FUTURE GOALS

In our quest to foster social change and transform the lives of vulnerable individuals and communities, Advance Afrika will drive growth and impact through the following set goals for 2023.



Increase our exposure and raise awareness of the organisation's mission on the website and social media channels.



Continue to fundraise through a variety of different avenues.



Broaden our donor base and create new partnerships.



Begin the strategic plan (2018 – 2023) review process at the end of 2023.



Conduct training for management and staff on knowledge management.

OUR DONORS & PARTNERS



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



EUROPEAN UNION

NOR≡C

NORWEGIAN AGENCY FOR EXCHANGE COOPERATION

CARITAS Schweiz Suisse Svizzera Svizra



german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by:
giz
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



FORD FOUNDATION

AGIAMONDO

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EDUKANS



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

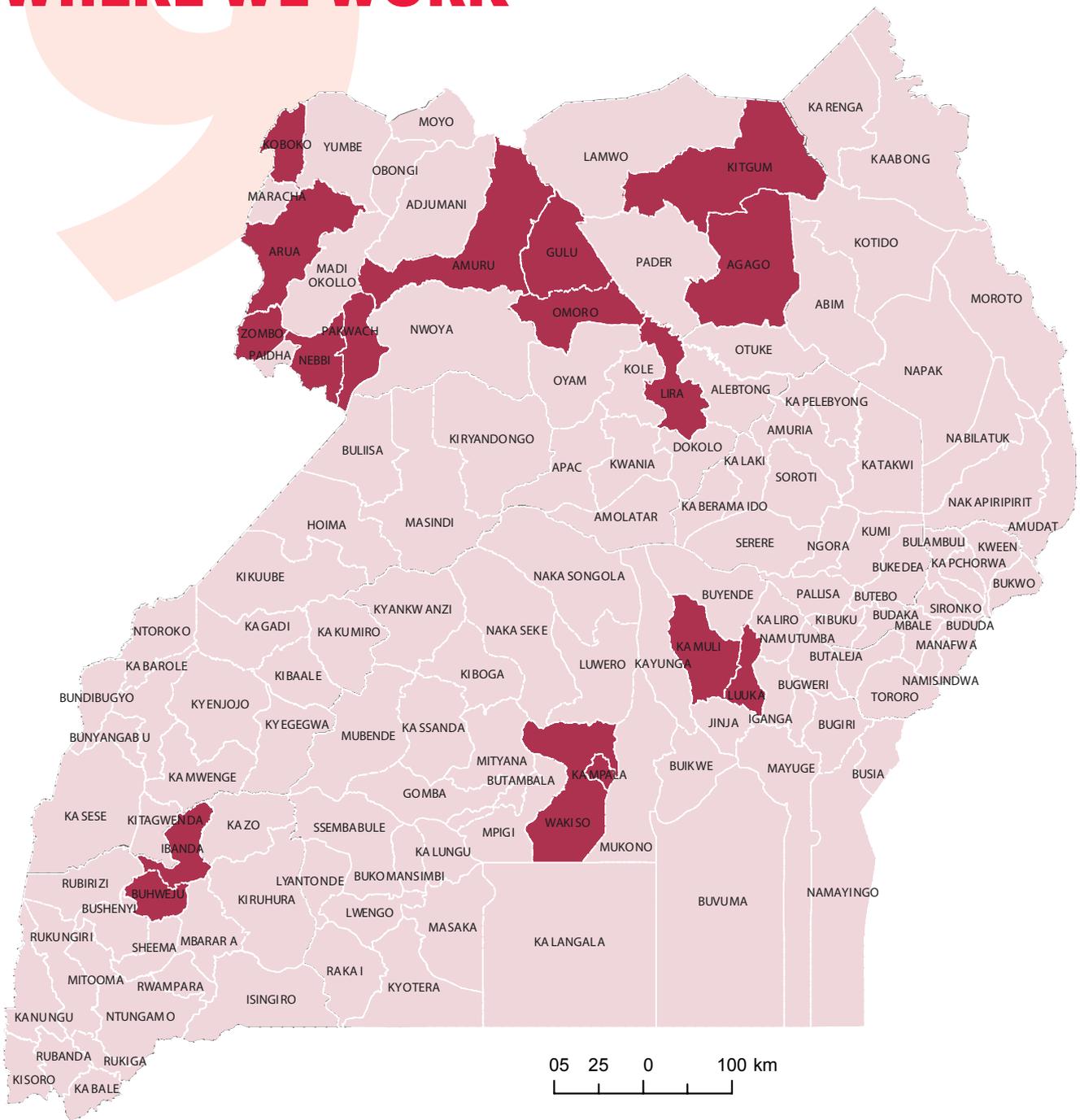


GWED-G
Gulu Women's Economic Development & Globalization

FarajaAfrica
Foundation



WHERE WE WORK



Advance Afrika presence

- **Central region** – Kampala and Wakiso
- **Eastern** – Kamuli and Luuka
- **Northern** – Agago, Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Omoro, and Lira,
- **Southern** – Buhweju and Ibanda
- **West Nile** – Arua, Koboko, Nebbi, Pakwach, and Zombo



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