

## Women Overcoming Poverty

UGA-JEN-WOP-P02



Mbale, Uganda



Economic Empowerment

Budget \$59,000

Project Timeline

FULLY FUNDED

JAN 21

DEC 22



### Overview

This project followed previous empowerment projects impacting vulnerable women in some of the poorest communities in Mbale. It had three arms: (1) Women’s savings/loans groups which have shown great success since they began in 2011 and are growing due to popular demand. Another 30 groups were created along with training and follow-up; (2) Vocational skills/business training to teach young mums income-generating skills to support themselves and their young children. 165 received training each year in sewing, hairdressing and catering. (3) Goat-rearing project for women and orphans in mountain communities. Goats are a simple and reliable animal project and a valuable source of income through breeding of future offspring and supply of meat.

### Objectives

### Impact



30 new savings groups over two years

30 new savings groups were established over two years - that's 10 more than planned! With demand so great another 3 are in the planning stage. There are now 5200 women in savings groups across the whole program.



Vocational training for 330 young mums

The target of 330 young mums training for tailoring and hairdressing has been met - not without its challenges due to economic hardship. Many students cannot afford to attend every session as they are out looking for casual work to survive.



Follow-up of 150 existing groups

Monthly training of group leaders was ongoing, reaching every area where work occurs. 5 training-of-trainer sessions were held over 2 years. Groups members have gathered for Christmas parties and empowerment training to build life skills.



20 recipients of goats

Goats were distributed to 20 beneficiaries. Of those 20, 7 have already given birth and will be passed on to the next recipients. Regular home visits encourage the 2000+ beneficiaries - so important for monitoring and oversight.



### Life change

- Development of resilience to financial shocks, allowing women to climb out of poverty and stay out, also improving health outcomes
- Women acquired skills to earn an income, often through their own businesses or goat-rearing - this helps support children’s schooling
- Women growing in confidence and emotional well-being and developing a range of life-skills



## Destiny and Gift\*

Twins Destiny and Gift were abandoned by their father at a young age and grew up in a crowded home with a single mother who was completely overwhelmed. As teenagers they ended up on the street, doing what they could to survive. Identified by the young mums team, they were trained in tailoring and hairdressing, successfully graduating in August 2021. Destiny now runs her own salon and Gift is sewing bags for our partner's label, which sells its products to visitors and locals. She also sews sanitary pads and underwear for the Every Girl project. Together, they help support their mother and siblings. What a team!



Destiny (centre middle) and Gift (above right) are using their earnings to support their mother and siblings. We are so proud of the way they are using their skills!

\*names changed

## Annet's Story

Annet is a widow with 6 children. When her husband died, she was determined to continue educating her children. She dreamt of building a house too. After joining a savings group in 2011, she used her first loan to start a vegetable stand in her village and also bought seeds for planting. Her hard work in subsistence agriculture and running her small business meant she was able to provide food at home and send her children to school. Little by little she put savings away and 13 years later, she has just built her dream house. Her children have been educated and are now helping to provide for her. Annet says, "I would have been a 'nobody' but because of my savings group, I now have an address!".

