GENERATION CAIRO
Youth Entrepreneurs
Leading Social Change in Uganda
Foreword

Alain Sibenaler
UNFPA Representative, Uganda

2019 marks the 25th anniversary of the landmark International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and which was held in Cairo in 1994. UNFPA, through its global strategy on adolescents and youth – My Body, My Life, My World – considers that young people, including adolescents, become productive change agents if and when their reproductive health is assured.

With a population of over 70 percent below 30 years, the youth in Uganda have a special space in transforming their country. In Uganda, young people are finding rich opportunities to build social capital and to become a leading voice on key societal issues. UNFPA Uganda is therefore delighted to share with you the success stories as told by some of the young people and who are creating and enabling social change in this country. Drawn from various regions in this country the profiled social entrepreneurs are among the very young people that have determined to use the resources within their reach to make a difference in people's lives. As the global community will gather in November 2019 in Nairobi during the Global Summit on ICPD@25, this booklet is a way of celebrating the successes of the young people featured. They have been enjoying their fundamental rights to choose if and when to become pregnant, to be free from HIV and to be free from violence or stigma.

They are ... Generation Cairo!

Young people continue to demonstrate that when they are supported, they can lead the change they want to see.
Putting smart ideas to practice

Jamira Mayanja, 30. Founder, Smart Girls Foundation (Kampala district)

The passing of a mother while at a tender age did not deter Jamira Mayanja from realizing her dream. It was then that she took it upon herself to empower young women and girls in her community to achieve their goals. Through initiating projects like Smart Girls Foundation, Jamira was able to sensitize disadvantaged young girls about HIV prevention; gender based violence, poverty, and poor governance and unemployment, while at the same time skilling them to become today leaders in the male-dominated field of mechanics and engineering. Here is her inspiring story:
How it started

After losing my mother to HIV/AIDS, I realized that women and girls were more vulnerable to HIV, gender based violence, poverty, poor governance and unemployment. So, as a student at Nabisunsa Girls Moslem School, I thought of creating an anti-HIV/AIDS club to empower the underprivileged girls and ourselves. However, nobody turned for the first club meeting, probably because of the stigma associated with it. Later, I realized that people thought I was HIV positive. However, when we changed the name of the club to 'RED RIBBON' this attracted more people. We started creating awareness about HIV through music, dance and drama and dialogues with other schools.

A rocky journey

When I completed my secondary education, I joined Makerere University Business School in 2007 to study Business Administration. In the first semester, I lost my dad and that is when my life changed. He was the breadwinner. I was shattered. I was then 'adopted' by an uncle who paid my tuition. In my second year, I was lucky to be hired by a media firm where I worked as I studied. After graduation in 2011, I left my job and started "Father-Daughter Dance" fundraising events. Activities in our first event focused on building girls' self-esteem through the bond between daughter and father. It was a success and 50 percent of the proceeds was used to buy sanitary towels for rural girls. This was how 'Smart Girls' was born. We visited schools and held empowerment mentorship talks.

Smart ideas

I got married in 2014 and hired a house help to do the laundry. However, after a while, she stopped coming and I later found out she had used her wages to start a vegetable stall. This gave me the idea to start a mobile laundry business. I recruited five young girls and targeted the market of bachelors who needed laundry services. I paid the workers 50 percent of what was earned from every service. From the profit, I moved on to start another initiative called 'Smart Girls' where I organized trainings on entrepreneurship and employable skills for the employees in the laundry business. This was to create start-up capital for the laundry girls to start their own businesses like home salons and market stalls. Within three months, 15 girls benefited from this project and the number shot to 30 after another three months later.

My turning point

In 2015, I was privileged with an invitation to a fellowship of Young African Leaders in USA. Started by former President Obama, the fellowship aimed to train young African leaders in areas of civic leadership, business and public management. The fellowship was coordinated by Dartmouth University in Hanover, New Hampshire. President Obama singled me out for my work in empowering young girls during a presidential summit at the end of the programme. This made me famous and I was featured in the international press.

On return, I started teaching girls how to save and start a business using as little as US$2. In 2016, I launched the "Girls Coffee" talks at the US embassy to promote positive talks among young corporate women. I invited inspiring young women to inspire others. Topics ranged from business, life skills and health. On the side, I also started training girls in fashion and design and corporate women in urban farming.

A year later, I started "Girls with Tools" program at Kyeyunga Vocational School in Kawempe to train girls in mechanical engineering, welding, metal fabrications and driving (big trucks). We launched the programme in March 2018 and 150 turned up but we did not have enough funds to support them. We took on 100 students and got some funding from the US Embassy for administration costs of 50 girls. These girls graduated on October 11, 2018. I plan to start an all-women garage.

'Smart Girls' is also involved in other projects like production of smart bags designed to carry four reusable pads, a menstrual calendar, basic reproductive health information and a menstrual pad making manual and kit. These smart bags help keep girls in school during their menstruation. There are 30 girls doing tailoring. We have also designed a small premium menstrual kit to serve the same purpose at a small fee for those who can afford it.
Anita Beryl living her dream from ‘Needle and thread’

Thirty-two-year-old Anita Beryl is the proud owner and creative director of Beryl Qouture, a luxurious fashion brand that’s won local and international acclaim for embracing creativity, femininity and timelessness. Born and raised in the Ugandan countryside, it’s her passion, drive and hard work that have seen her succeed. Here’s her story.

Childhood
I am the first born of six children, born to Reverend and Mrs. Ahabwe. I grew up in a humble, really happy home in Masheruka, Sheema District. I had this amazing maternal grandmother. Together with my mother, they taught us all how to sew. I actually never really wanted to do fashion. I had no idea what fashion was for starters. But I pretty much could do everything people do with a sewing machine with my hands. At University, I graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Education because my parents insisted on that.

Getting into fashion
I was first introduced to Fashion through Sylvia Owori’s African Woman magazine while at university. My break came when I got an opportunity to model for her. I went to the fittings, photo shoots, the chaos…it was beautiful! At that moment, I knew that that’s where I belonged! Getting to do it (fashion) was a completely different story.

I started in friend’s shop because I didn’t have capital. I struggled through. But I was very excited to have my own shop. But through all this, I knew one thing, I wasn’t going to quit! After about three years in the business, I realized that this wasn’t making sense at all. I was losing money. In 2013, I went back to school. I applied to French fashion University, and this time, got proper knowledge of what I needed.

Advice to young people
For people who want to get into fashion, they have to know that it’s not all glitter. There is a lot of dust and dirt before all the glossy look. A lot of people fear to start small, they don’t want to be embarrassed. Starting small may be painful but that’s the beauty of it. I tell young people that you have to be ready to sincerely work because it’s so visual. You have to be able to invest so much in your craft. It is one thing to be a fashion designer or do amazing clothes in every nice way possible but it’s also completely different to be a business person.

How does her work impact women?
I feel like I have set an example that we all can do it as long as we set our minds on something. I am literally living proof. I did not come from a rich family, but had prayer and belief in myself. For me it was knowing how to stitch, but it could be knowing and loving to cook, it could be as low as needle and thread but it’s here paying my bills!

Have you achieved your dream?
I am not even half halfway to achieving my dream. I think on the journey to your dream, it keeps growing bigger and bigger so when you get somewhere you realize you are still not there. Dreams can’t get finished but there is a satisfaction you get when you realize that one dream. I know that each time I dream something, its achievable.
I didn’t have capital. I struggled through. But I was very excited to have my own shop. Through all this, I knew one thing, I wasn’t going to quit!
After spending a fortune building tourist cars abroad ‘Mzee’ decided to start a home-grown business by building the cars for less from his workshop in Masese, Jinja. He has so far built three vehicles. Mzee is a graduate of Building Economics and Construction Management from Makerere University Faculty of Technology. This is his story:
Mastering a skill

After graduation in 2010, I joined my family business as Operations Manager and as a management trainee at Paragon Hospital in Kampala. From the hospital, I joined Heritage Safari Lodge in Murchison Falls National Park as a director. While at Heritage, we ventured into ground handling and tourist transport under a new concern called Heritage Holiday Safaris. This involved transporting tourists to various attractions using 4x4 vehicles. The vehicles are expensive to buy and to modify. It costs about US$45,000 to buy a Land cruiser and additional US$ 18,000 to US$ 25,000 to convert it into a tourist vehicle. We used to take the vehicles in Kenya for conversion, but it was very expensive. I decided to start building the cars locally. I spent about three months in a vehicle conversion workshop in Kenya while they modified Heritage Holiday Safari vehicles. I used the chance to master the skill.

Setting up the business

On return to Uganda, I started mobilization of inputs that would constitute a safari vehicle. Those I could not get locally, I got from Kenya. These included seats and suspension systems. In Uganda, I identified suppliers of steel and Aluminum products. For work force, I hired skilled fabricators and mechanics and showed them how the modified version was assembled.

In November 2017, I started building the first vehicle in Kampala. At first, we got challenges with dimensions. However, after two weeks, we managed to complete the frame. That gave us the confidence to continue. After another two weeks, we completed the interior and the electrical works. In December the same year, we successfully did our first game drive with my first locally built Panoramic Open Game Drive Vehicle in Murchison Falls National Park. I had built it from a Toyota Land cruiser pickup truck. It was a hit. Riding on the success of the first vehicle, I built and completed the second vehicle in two weeks. Since then, I have assembled three vehicles and I am working on the fourth, which will be the first camper van locally -made in Uganda.

Capturing the market

The camper van, which we are building in the workshop in Masese, Jinja, will have a 30-litre tank of fresh water, a 2KV generator, a 2KV solar inverter and cooking gas cylinders. The camper van will have enough camping materials for 12 people. These will include chairs, tables, tents and mattresses. The vehicle will also have shower screens and portable toilets.

I am also working on other two projects; a 12-seater boat recycled from an abandoned boat that I salvaged from Pakwach in West Nile. Once completed, it will serve for tourist cruises on the River Nile. My other project is the 100 square meter Catamaran (Floating Restaurant) in Murchison Falls National Park. Tourists will be served with meals as they view wildlife along the Nile.

My ambition is to capture the Uganda market for tourist vehicle conversion. For example, it costs a customer only US$600 to covert an existing vehicle as opposed to US$ 25,000 to US$ 18,000 if he does from Kenya or Tanzania. We have the capacity to convert 24 vehicles a year but that can be increased according to demand.
Frank Namaara, 27, Comprehensive Nurse and owner of Pleasured Home Drug shop (Kampala district)

Twenty-seven year old Frank Namaara is a Comprehensive Nurse and owner of Pleasured Home Drug shop and Pleasured Home Clinic located in Makerere and Kisenyi, both located in the outskirts of Kampala city.

Namaara’s goal is to own a hospital in the near future. He has a license for trading class C drugs from the National Drug Authority and a licensed clinic by Uganda Nurses and midwives council.

**My journey**

After completion of my ‘A’ level studies in 2011, I joined a nursing school in 2012, graduating as a Comprehensive Nurse from Mayanja Memorial Nursing School in Mbarara in 2015. I opened my first drug shop ‘Pleasured Home’ shortly after. Apart from a trading license hanged on the wall, the drug shop was empty. I got a loan of Shs 4 million from the youth fund that I started my current journey. Using the loan, I transferred my drug shop to Kampala where I paid the rent, bought furniture and other requirements. To grow my business, I mortgaged my plot of land in Kampala for a bank loan of Shs 5 million to open my second business ‘Pleasured Home Clinic’. Today I employ 13 health workers. At the clinic, we receive about 30 patients a day offering integrated services including testing and treatment of ailments like malaria and provision of sexual and reproductive health services like voluntary HIV counseling and testing, maternal health and family planning. We refer all complicated cases to hospitals.

To grow my business, I mortgaged my plot of land in Kampala for a bank loan of Shs 5 million.

**My dream**

My dream is to own a hospital. I know that will need a lot of money. The hospital will serve the community and help vulnerable children like street kids and the girl child access free treatment. I also want to further my studies to attain the diploma, a degree and a masters in medical field.
Earning from my skills

Lawrence Nsereko, 28, Interior Designer, (Kampala district)

Lawrence Nsereko says right from an early age, art has been his passion. Little wonder that after graduating with a diploma in Interior Design from Kyambogo University in 2009, he started a business in interior design.

Today, Nsereko boasts of a profit about 3 million shillings a month from his "Modern Image Interior Designers" showroom and workshop along Jinja Road in Kampala. Here is his story:

My first job was to repair an old sofa set for a client and made my first profit of Shs 400,000 Shillings in 2014. By then, I was working with a Turkish furniture firm. I was happy and the client was happy. That job still markets my skills because up to today, I still use the picture of my first sofa set in my adverts. The happiness of the client gave me the motivation to start my own business.

I took my first step into business with a capital of Shs 5 million. First, I sub-leased space and used the rest to buy materials and machines. When business picked up, I expanded my working space and services. Today, I pay US$ 1400 (Shs 5,040,000) in rent per month. I have a showroom and a workshop. The truck I have helps me deliver products, while the motorcycles are used to do marketing and check on clients’ sites. We do not only make and repair sofas, but we also design and tailor curtains and beddings. In addition, we do both interior and exterior design for homes.

We also do house painting. I employ five people including a truck driver who makes deliveries, and two young women who do the tailoring. The establishment makes a profit of about Shs 3 million per month. That is after paying salaries and deducting other expenses.

My target is to have the capacity to make and stock 20 sofa sets at any given time. I also want to equip my workshop so that it is multifunctional as we currently do some of the works from other workshops.
James Kaita graduated with a Degree in Education from Makerere University in 2008. He abandoned teaching to start painting houses and trading in paints. Today, he owns a construction Company – Hallmark Construction. Nicknamed Professor of painting, Kaita has so far constructed 105 houses, 18 churches and trained 350 youth in Uganda.

My network was my capital

James Kaita, 35, Founder, Hallmark Construction Company (Kampala district).
**My story**

After graduating as a teacher, I taught for five months and soon quit because the salary of Shs 150,000 a month was not substantial. I then joined a paint company where I worked as a sales executive for three years before crossing over to another. After one year, I resigned and joined another. In 2016, after working as a regional sales manager for five years, I quit to concentrate on my company “Hallmark” which I had formed back in 2008. During my time working with paint companies, I had also done a certificate course in painting.

**Painting houses**

Initially, we traded as Hallmark Agencies where we helped to sell and market anything on commission basis. Business was not good so we changed the company to “Hallmark Designers” and started painting houses. I trained some boys in painting works and the contacts I had made while selling paints helped me get jobs. Customers were happy. I went into construction following the realization that many contractors do shoddy jobs in finishing. This would cost the client more money and materials do surface preparation before we could paint. This inspired my dream, and Hallmark Construction was born. We started constructing houses and painting them to perfection. Customers were happy and big business followed. Soon, I found out that many people want to build houses but lack the money to construct at a ago. To solve that, we came up with a product called “Hallmark Construction Credit Fund Programme.” Under this project, a customer pays 50 percent of the total cost and we do the construction. The project became successful. Under the Hallmark Construction Credit fund programme, we have so far constructed 105 houses and 18 churches.

Since 2017, we have trained over 350 youths. Now, we have 90 students who will finish in September. The project is partly funded by Swiss Contract that provides 40 percent while Hallmark pays 60 percent of the training cost. Each student pays Shs 1.5 million for six months, which includes accommodation and meals. We also meet the training costs for students who cannot afford and they pay back when they start working. We do two training sessions every year.

**My vision**

I want Hallmark to become the biggest painting company in Uganda and the biggest source of trained personnel in the construction industry. Some think you cannot get a job without a degree but we have disproved them. I have students with degrees training with Hallmark to get jobs in the construction industry. We do not train people to look for jobs. We train people to work.

**My capital was my network.**

I started the company with no money but contacts. The certificate in painting and construction I did in six months has proved more useful than my degree. The certificate has enabled me to build houses, buy cars, train people and get money, which my degree could not do. Today, I have a new name which was conferred to me by the 140 clan member of the Uganda Senior Painters Alliance where I am member. I was baptized “Professor of Painting.”

**Empowering youths**

Every successful venture comes with challenges. Ours was the shortage of skilled work force to complete clients’ work on time. This prompted me to start the “Hallmark Youth Empowerment Center”. Under this project, we train the youth in brick laying, painting, construction and fabrication. After training, they get certificates and then we employ them.
My skills are my livelihood

Faridah Namatovu, 28, Owner, Faddy Unisex Saloon (Mukono District)

MY HUMBLE BEGINNING

I started my hairdressing salon in 2010 with only Shs 300,000. This was my savings while I worked for my sister in a food catering business. Before I started my own salon, I enrolled for a six-month certificate course in crafts and skills under the “Skilling Uganda” project. We learnt how to make shoes, tablemats, liquid soap, hair styling, earrings, bags and much more.

To start my salon, I bought a mirror, carpet, hair drier and hired a room in Mukono town for Shs 50,000 a month. Apart from the salon business, I also bake cakes and make shoes, tablemats, earrings and bags. Beads are the main raw materials I use to create these beautiful crafts. I make about Shs 600,000 per month but my dream is to build a school and train more people.

SKILLING GIRLS

Today, I train young girls who have dropped out of school in hairstyling. The course costs between Shs 250,000 and Shs 300,000. The girls get certificates after completion of training. I have so far trained about 30 girls. I employ some while others find jobs elsewhere. I am looking forward to acquiring a big bakery to bake make wedding cakes.
I am a proud employer

Abdul Mutesasira, 30, Owner Metal Masters Workshop, (Mukono District).

Abdul Mutesasira graduated with a degree in Public Administration from Kampala International University in 2014.

He went into farming for one year, spent another two-and-a-half years producing animal feeds, before he settled into metal fabrication using Shs 4 million as capital. This year, he expects to make a net profit of Shillings 45 million.

This is his story:

How it started

After graduating with a University degree in 2014, I went into farming for one year. I grew maize, which I sold to my brother for value addition. He was into animal feeds. After two and a half years, I had made Shs 4 million, which I used to buy a welding and a spraying machine. In February 2017, I started 'Metal Master' my fabrication business making metallic windows, door, and gates. I got many clients but did not have enough money to buy materials. I looked for a credit line from some hardware dealers for materials. In a few months, business picked up and I had to hire a manager and recruit metal fabricators and painters/sprayers. By the end of the first year, I had made a profit of Shs 24 million.

Long-term dream

Currently, I employ 22 people including a cashier and seven students. We have the capacity to make 180 windows, 100 doors, 55 vents, 60 balconies and 100 fences in only six months. My goal is to make a net profit of around Shs 45 million this year. In two years, I want to expand and open up branches in Kampala, Wakiso and Gayaza. This needs about Shs 100 million. I expect to make a profit of Shs 250 million per year in five years. My long-term dream is to have a steel rolling mill.
Pauline Nakalule has a Degree in Social Development and Counselling from Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi. She owns a Poultry farm in Kyabakuza Masaka.

This is a story of how a loan of Shs 5 million got her moving towards her target of earning Shs 380 million in five years.

**My first loan**

Last year, I acquired a loan of Shs 5 million and with that purchased 360 layers. I started a poultry farm in my compound. Today, my hens lay eight trays of eggs a day, an average profit of Shs 720,000 per month. This, after buying food and medicine for the birds. Poultry need a lot of care and attention as they can easily fall sick. Therefore, they take vitamins daily. Feeding them is also costly. For instance, 360 birds need 46 kg of food a day. This translates into an expenditure of Shs 900,000 on food per month.

**Reinvesting my profits**

Nevertheless, using the money from the sale of eggs, I was able to buy an additional 360 birds and bring my stock to 720 layers. This will increase my net profit from Shs 13 million to shs 27 million per year. We sell the eggs locally. However, the prices fluctuates with the seasons and number of eggs laid. For example, we get more eggs during the dry season than during the rainy season. My projections for the year are based on the average number of eggs laid by 720 layers, the average market price and the price I will sell them off once they cease laying eggs.

**Bright prospects**

I will use my earnings to embark on my target, which is to have 2,000 birds in two years’ time and 10,000 birds in five years. My projected income from the 2,000 birds is Shs 76 million. In five years, I will be earning Shs 380 million from the 10,000 layers. As the first step of this ambitious expansion, we have so far bought 1.5 acres of land at Shillings 8 million.
Mixed farming for prosperity

Benjamin Mujurizi, 30, Farmer (Bushenyi district).

Benjamin Mujurizi owns a three-acre farm near Bushenyi town, South Western Uganda where he does mixed farming. He also sells coffee and tea seedlings, rears pigs and is now venturing into poultry, fish farming, bananas and coffee.

He holds an advanced certificate in agriculture from Kitagata Institute, a certificate in Animal Health from Ankole Western University and a Diploma in Agribusiness and Community Development from the same University in 2017. His journey to success started in 2012 when he was in senior four; he made Shillings 70 million from seedlings. He hopes to earn Shs 900 million annually in a few years.

Cash cropping

I started with two nursery beds in 2011; one for coffee, the other for tea. Each nursery had 10,000 trees. A year later, Uganda Coffee Development Authority bought all the coffee seedlings for Shillings 30 million. From that sale, I made a profit of Shs 20 million. Later in the same year I sold all the 10,000 tea seedlings at Shs 40 million. A few years ago, I got motivated and started a piggery project with 20 piglets. Now, two years later, the piglets have multiplied to 100.

Multiplier effect

I use a unique formula to multiply my pigs. I give out one female pig to one particular youth at a time on condition that the pig is returned after seven months with five piglets, which I feed and sell after a few months. Feeding pigs is costly as each one eats at least one Kg of food a day.

That means, I need 100 kg of pig feed every day, a ton of which costs Shs 30,000. I also spend Shs 200,000 on veterinary services monthly. The positive side is that pigs multiply and fatten fast. One pig can produce 13 piglets at a go, which I can sell after three months. So, I make a profit of Shs 6 million per month from pigs alone. I have already recovered my initial costs of constructing the pig house, which cost Shs 15 million.

Setting off

Using the money from pigs, I have constructed four fishponds at a cost of Shillings 4 million. One pond is already stocked with 2,000 tilapia from where I project an income of Shillings 20 million in nine months. I have also ventured into mudfish farming. I am now constructing many small ponds for the mudfish that I expect to give me Shs 5 million a year. My next project is poultry. I have ordered for 750 birds, 200 of which are broilers. I expect to get an additional Shs 15 million from the poultry section. I will soon add eight cows on the farm on zero grazing. I have a water pump, which I use on my farm.

Future targets

I have also planted 490 coffee trees and one acre of passion fruit in addition to Gonja (plantain) trees. I expect to get at least Shs 4 million per month from passion fruits. I also have a stock of coffee and tea seedlings worth Shs 70 million. I employ 20 people and hope to hire more as the business grows. On average, my farm brings in an average of Shs 100 million a month. My goal is to earn Shs 300 million annually in two years, and to build a coffee processing factory worth Shs 1 billion in 3 years to increase my income to Shs 900 million a year.
Following through on aspirations
Joseph Wamani Ogaino, 30, School Director, Masindi Town.

Joseph Wamani Ogaino is a graduate teacher from Kyambogo University. He is the owner of Grammar Nursery and Primary School Lower section and Grammar Annex Kora Hill Top Primary school in Masindi. Today, both schools have 450 pupils. However, his story started with 45 pupils:

Brave decisions
After graduation in 2010, I went into teaching to practice my skills. I was earning a salary of Shs 300,000 per term. Payment was made twice per term at a rate of Shs 150,000 per month. Dissatisfied with the pay, I was prompted me to move to teaching in a second school to increase my income. Again, we were not being paid in time. After three years of teaching, the school owed me an accrued amount of over Shs 3.5 million in unpaid salaries. I decided to quit and using Shs 600,000 as capital, I made the brave decision to open my own nursery school.

In 2014, I leased a 50 x 100 feet plot on the outskirts of Masindi town for Shs 50,000 a month. It had an old building that I used for offices and constructed papyrus structures for classrooms with two classes; a baby class and a top class. I employed a mother and her daughter as my first teachers. To increase enrollment, I made it a community school and enrolled pupils for free, with just a little contribution of Shillings 30,000 towards a school uniform and breakfast that included milk, eggs and bread on Fridays. Soon we enrolled 45 pupils. Some wanted to join primary one but we had no classroom for them. Therefore, they started by studying under a mango tree. After one week, the number of school children shot to 129 and by the end of the term, we had a total of 140 pupils.

Making ends meet
Consequently, the money collected as fees was not enough to fulfill my promise of free uniforms, free breakfast and paying teachers. To compensate, I got a teaching job in another school where I was paid Shs 350,000 a month. A year later, the numbers of enrollment grew to 300 pupils.

As I was pondering on how to accommodate the numbers, someone who was selling his school approached me. I agreed to take it up for Shs 5 million. The school had only 70 pupils. When I took over the school, I reduced the fees by 25 percent, got free advertisement from the local radio station and provided free uniforms.

A breakthrough
In 2016, five pupils out of 18 who completed Primary Leaving Examinations obtained 1st grades, Eleven pupils in 2nd grade and there were two in 3rd grade. It was a good performance. This made the school popular and following year, the numbers increased to 190. Today, I employ 20 teachers in both schools. The number of pupils at both campuses is now 450.

We have broken even and I pay my teachers better and make a small profit. I have built a four-bedroomed house, two rental houses and acquired a grain-milling machine. In two years, using the income from my rental houses and the mill, I want to buy a big piece of land and transfer the schools there.
A school director at 24

Martin Rwotomara, 24, Proprietor, Princess Royal Schools (Awach Sub County, Gulu district)

Martin graduated with a degree in Business Studies (with Education) from Gulu in 2017. However, he realised that the number of young people looking for jobs was much more than the available jobs.

He decided to start a school in Awach Sub county, Gulu district, with the aim of changing his community that was ravaged by many years of war and insecurity. Having little money did not stop him from fulfilling his dream, as he narrates:

**I had a dream**

When I started Princess Royal schools, I had little money. My first step was to buy a plot of land worth Shs 3.6 million that I paid in installments. I started making bricks using savings from teaching ICT in Gulu. I also traded in agricultural produce. It took us a whole year to put up the classroom block and on May 25, 2018, we opened the school with Baby, Middle and Primary one classes. Today, the school boasts of two teachers and 150 pupils. I am the Director of the school. Each pupil pays Shs 40,000 as fees. They are also required to provide 10 kg of beans and 15 kg of maize for their lunch and breakfast.

**Expansion plans**

As we expand to build other classes to primary seven, I want the school to become a leader in quality and affordable education. Next year, we will construct facilities for a boarding section and buy a van to pick and drop pupils who come from distant areas. We want to increase the enrollment to 500 pupils and construct five additional classrooms. By 2020, we will buy more land for expansion. All this is expected to cost Shs 100 million. I am looking for partners and sponsors who can support poor children with school fees. There are so many children out there who cannot go to school due to lack of school fees.
A pumpkin affair

Fatuma Namutosi, 29, Proprietor Byeffe Foods Company Ltd (Mbale District)

Fatuma Namutosi has a degree in Community Development from Islamic University, Mbale. She started Byeffe Foods Company in 2016. Byeffe produces nutritious food products from pumpkins blended with other products like millet and soybeans. 

Her story started from their home:

After completing my studies, I did not bother looking for a job. My family background is in agriculture. I was therefore familiar with the bottlenecks in the industry. The first challenge for farmers is low prices and price fluctuations. To correct that, it forced me into food processing to get money for value after value addition. There was also a lot of food wastage and food was rotting due to low demand.

I saw many children from rural areas where food is grown and yet they were malnourished. This had to change. Something had to be done. That forced me to do a one-and-half-year research. I found that pumpkins were low cost to grow and yet nutritious. However, the problem was that they had no market.

Creating value addition

I started Byeffe Foods Company to enhance food security through value addition, improve nutrition and create sustainable incomes for young farmers. At Byeffe, we make many food products. These include pure pumpkin flour, pumpkin blended with soya for infants and pumpkin with millet for family. We also process pumpkin seeds, which are a good snack for men as it protects young men from prostate cancer. We want to start making pumpkin seed oil, pumpkin leaves for sauce and pumpkin juice.

With support from funders, we produce 20 tons of finished products per year equivalent to 40,000 packets of processed products from 500 tons of pumpkins and cereals. Last year, 2017, our gross income was Shs 300 million. This year, we project to make over Shillings 600 million. I employ 20 permanent staff and buy produce from over 5,000 young farmers. You do not need sophisticated machines to do this. We use manual machines, though we want to upgrade to semi and automated machines to increase production.

The future

In three years, we want to have our own land to house our factory. We want to increase production to 1,500 tons per year. To achieve this, we need to invest Shs 1.8 billion. In order to get that much, we will collaborate with financial institutions and government for financing. Our processing capacity is still low yet there is a lot of demand. The farmers also need to expand production to meet demand. To achieve that, we are working with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in capacity building.
Ending poverty among youth

Joseph Ocara, 28, Trainer of young people in Motor vehicle mechanics, tailoring and leather works (Lira district).

Joseph Ocara is the founder of “Youth Initiate to Eradicate Poverty” (YIEP), a community based organization in Lira town. YIEP targets out-of-school youth and trains them in tailoring, sweater knitting, leather works and motor vehicle mechanics. Since 2016, YIEP has trained 28 youth in various fields. He shares his story:

Building skills

After completing senior four, I joined Human Technical College in Lira and got a certificate in Crafts before joining St Joseph’s Technical Institute in Kisubi for an advanced Certificate in Motor Vehicle Engineering. Later, I enrolled for a course in Motor Vehicle wiring but did not complete the course due to financial hardships.

In 2016, I started a motor garage in Lira, which prompted me to start YIEP the following year after discovering that there were many unskilled and unemployed youth. At YIEP, we train young people in a six-month’s course in tailoring. The sweater-knitting course takes three months while motor vehicle mechanics takes two years. Soon, we will start teaching the youth in metal fabrication and welding. We get money to do the trainings from selling the products by our students.

We make open shoes, sweaters and clothes. Last year, we trained 28 students in motor vehicle repair, leather production and sweater knitting. We currently do not charge them any fees, but will start charging next year to support our operations. Last year, we spent about Shs 15 million to buy sewing machines, office equipment and leather production equipment.

We also bought raw materials for leather production. Our target next year is to train 100 students and produce 9,000 sweaters, 6,000 pairs of shoes and 10,000 different cloth designs. We will use the money from the sale of the products to buy land and build our own premises so that we can stop renting.

Last year, we trained 28 students in motor vehicle repair, leather production and sweater knitting.
Step by step to greater heights

Sheila Emily Amulu, 28, Proprietor, Businesswoman and politician (Soroti District)

Sheila owns ‘Jime’ enterprises, a business dealing in agricultural produce and Cholima millers. She is also the youth counselor Soroti Municipality and the Deputy Speaker Soroti Municipal Council. Today, Sheila makes Shs 270 million a year from selling and milling produce. She has now entered into poultry business. **Her story started in 2015 with a capital of Shs 150,000:**

**Inspired by my father**

After graduating with a degree in Business Administration from Makerere Business School, I could not find a job. I started working with my parents who were running a business in agricultural produce. We bought and sold cereals. My father had a truck that used to transport produce like maize flour, beans and other stuff. My father inspired me and in 2015, I started Jime enterprise with only Shs 150,000.

**Reinvesting my profits**

I bought a few bags of maize at Shs 200 per kilogram and stored them for three months. From the sale, I made Shs 1,000,000. I was happy. I invested the money in three tons of maize, which earned me Shs 2.3 million a few months later. I kept reinvesting the money in the same way until I bought 21 tonnes of cassava at Shs 200 per Kg. When I milled the cassava into flour and sold it, I got a profit of Shs 10.5 million. That inspired me to go into the milling business. This required a lot of money so I decided to buy the machinery in bits over an extended period. I first bought a motor, then the milling machine before I spent more money on getting a three-phase electricity connection. By the time I started milling, I had spent about Shs 20 million including rent of Shs 300,000 a month. That was how Cholima millers was born.

Today, Jime Enterprise sells about 12 tonnes of produce per week on average and brings in about Shillings 90 million a year. The mill employs eight workers. I plan to expand into maize and rice processing and packaging. Using the money from my business, I have gone into a hatchery business. I have already bought the machinery with a capacity to hatch 840 chicks every 21 days. I have also bought a piece of land where to build the hatchery. Now I am making bricks to start construction work. I have no regret of going into business after school. I call upon all the youth to stop looking for jobs and start-up something of their own.

I was inspired to go into the milling business but it required a lot of money so I decided to buy the machinery in bits over an extended period.
Phyllis Kyomuhendo is turning her dream into reality

In her own words, Phyllis Kyomuhendo, is “a young social entrepreneur innovator”. A medical radiographer by profession, the 25 year old is the brain child behind MSCAN, a low cost ultrasound device that works using a smart phone, suitable for low resource settings.

Born to Dr. Jane Bemugisha, Phyllis is the last born of three girls.

The Turning Point

In second year of medical school, I was posted to Amach Health Centre IV in Lira District, a very rural health centre with no electricity, water was at the borehole, and we slept on the floor. We were posted there as student dentists, doctors, radiographers. All the other students went on with their work but I couldn’t because my work required electricity and equipment which was not available.

Unfortunately mothers kept dying due to conditions I knew would have been scanned and prevented. I was there for two months. That’s when the bulb clicked and I said I had to do something. That was in 2015.

Going past the naysayers

It started as a small idea with me and my classmate Innocent Menyo. Most people told us that ‘come on, you are students in a third world country, Uganda has never made even a mouse, who do you think you are?’

We were very discouraged. But then we found out about UpAccelerate, funded by UNFPA. In 2017, we applied and we won the $10k!

Good enough the programme was tailored in a way that they give you access to the resources you need. We were introduced to financial advisors, lawyers, and the Uganda Industrial Research Institute where we did the first prototype.

Hitting a dead end

With our first prototype, the money was finished. We felt like giving up. Different engineers we consulted asked us to give them five, 12 years to develop what we wanted.

But then we read about outsourcing. I found a company that was already manufacturing ultrasound devices, signed a few NDAs (Non-Disclosure Agreements) and exactly one month later, we had our second prototype.

MSCAN Version 2 wasn’t perfect too. Again, we needed money at that point. I applied for a competition in South Africa called YHer, open to only female entrepreneurs across Africa to compete for two prizes. MSCAN won both prizes! It was a huge breakthrough. We made the iterations, and MSCAN version three came out! It was perfect. It could do everything that we wanted it to do and that’s where we are. That was in March 2018.
Impact

As MSCAN, we do what we call Mama camps. This is where we go to different villages and offer free ultrasound services to pregnant women who are most in need.

Advice to young people

What set me apart was the passion I had for MSCAN, as a medical worker that has gone to the field, seen the problem and identified a solution. That’s what makes human centered design golden because you are basing your innovation on an actual need. You do not innovate and then start thinking of where to fit your innovation.

It also matters how you handle your innovation, if you want results, you will find a way.

Would you say you have achieved your dream?

Not yet, I don’t know if it’s the way my mom raised us but I am a very ambitious person, I have so many other things I am looking at doing, besides innovation and saving lives. My mom has a PhD so she set the bar really high. I am currently pursuing a Master’s in Public Health because over time I realized that it makes no sense to keep receiving people in the hospital and treating them. You could prevent the problem before it even happens.

Our next phase for MSCAN is going into mass production of the devices so they can reach every part of Uganda and even beyond.
Exploring all business opportunities

Margaret Etilu, 26, Proprietor Soflyn Hotel (Soroti District)

Margaret Etilu has a degree in community Psychology. She started selling produce in 2014 even before graduating in 2016. In 2018, she ventured into the hospitality business by taking over Soflyn, a hotel in Soroti. Etilu is also a director in DENMAG Company that deals in supplies and construction work. Now her plan is to invest Shs 275 million in a sunflower oil factory.

Here, she shares her business experience:

After graduating in 2016, I started managing my father’s produce store located in Soroti. The following year, I took over the business. I got many contracts and the business grew. We used the profits to buy four plots of land and build some rentals. The following year, due to price fluctuations in produce, I entered into hotel business alongside produce. I took over SOFLYN Hotel in Soroti and I have so far invested 30 million.

The hotel has 19 rooms and a conference facility with a capacity of 200-300 people. We do food-catering service for a conference of 500 people. We get about 30 visitors a day.

Good progress

In seven months after taking over, we are making a profit and renovating the hotel. Because we have to use some of the income for renovation, we get a profit of Shs 2.5 million per month. In two years, I want to start a factory for manufacturing sunflower oil. The total cost will be Shs 275 million.

The money is expected to come from the three businesses, but mostly from DENMAG Company, which deals in construction and supplies. Although DENMAG started in 2014, it lay dormant for two years until 2016 that we started getting sub-contracts for construction work in schools. We also started supplies of cereals. We hope to supply cassava cuttings and seedlings to the government.
Youth Entrepreneurs Leading Social Change in Uganda (2018)

United Nations Population Fund
Plot 12A Baskerville Avenue, Kololo
P.O. BOX 7184, Kampala, Uganda
O: +256-4177-44500
F: +256-414-236445
http://uganda.unfpa.org/