



ANNUAL **Report**

2025
• Financial Year •



Content

1

Remarks from
the Country
Director

30

Annex

2

About Heifer
International

49

Heifer in the
Media

6

The Signature
Program

51

Financial
Highlights

10

Project
Specific
Achievements

54

Our Partners

Ending poverty begins with
agriculture

Heifer International is on a mission
to end hunger and poverty in a
sustainable way by supporting and
investing alongside local farmers and
their communities.

Foreword



Heifer International has evolved over the last 80 years, but remained steadfast in its mission of fighting hunger and poverty across the world. In Uganda, Heifer was founded in 1982, and has since commenced work in 57 districts of Uganda and reached more than 35 million people with millions on a pathway to improved living income.

HPI has supported families of smallholder farmers, particularly youth, women, and girls/young women to attain a sustainable living income. This has been achieved by creating jobs and unlocking their potential to participate meaningfully in the local economy, and by supporting young entrepreneurs to drive innovation in agribusiness while embracing technology.

Throughout the year, Heifer worked through six projects to address bottlenecks within the agricultural sector that hinder farmers from attaining maximum returns from agriculture and eventually to close the living income gap. As a result, 331,600 smallholder farmers were reached, 55,000 agribusiness jobs were created, 1,800 enterprises and 125 farmer cooperatives were supported. Further, the Farmer cooperatives that were supported ammersed an average turnover of Shs2.25 billion, and attracted investment from private sector actors and commercial banks worth Shs1billion. In the same year, Shs222million was invested in young agri-tech innovators and agriprenuers with eye-catching businesses in the agriculture sector.

We pledge to carry on with investment in innovative and transformative interventions, while working with likeminded partners to create decent and dignifying jobs for women and youth in agriculture.I take this opportunity to recognize and appreciate our partners and the private sector players who choose to walk with us on our journey of learning, adoption, and scalability.

William Matovu
Country Director



About Heifer International Uganda

Heifer International started work in Uganda in 1982 and has since reached and helped over One million smallholder families across the country through agriculture and environmentally sound economic development programs. Heifer has worked in 57 districts of Uganda in the Central, Eastern, West Nile and Northern regions. Currently, we work in 20 districts namely Bugiri, Namayingo, Bugweri, Namutumba, Iganga, Mayuge, Jinja, Luuka, Kamuli, Kaliro, Buyende, Sembabule, Kiboga,

Wakiso, Masaka, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Dokolo, Lira and Gulu.

Heifer International Uganda's portfolio has since grown to support farming communities from a base of 100,000 smallholder farmers in 2020 to 450,000 smallholder farmers in 2025. The goal is to reach 800,000 smallholder farmers by 2030. The country program boosts of projects aimed at stimulating access to productive use of renewable energy, employment/ Job creation for youth, women empowerment and driving incomes for stallholder farmers through value chain development.

While working with farmers and their communities to identify and invest in business opportunities that deliver living incomes, we create solutions to local challenges designed to build inclusive and resilient economies. HPI has built a pro-poor value chain that integrates gender, women's empowerment, and environmental sustainability with the aim of unlocking the potential of young entrepreneurs to engage and drive innovation in agribusiness, while integrating technology and finance as enablers.

HPI also positions itself as an important partner with the Government of Uganda in its development agenda, especially in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and Uganda's vision 2040. Heifer Uganda's innovative Values-Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD) training approach is based on Heifer International's 12 cornerstones - a set of values and principles that guide communities to self-reliance. The 12 cornerstones include passing on the gift; accountability; sharing and caring; sustainability and self-reliance; improved animal and resource management; nutrition and income; gender and family focus; genuine need and justice; improving the environment; full participation; training, education

OUR VISION

A world of communities living together in peace and equitably sharing the resources of a healthy planet.

OUR MISSION

Heifer International is on a mission to end hunger and poverty in a sustainable way by supporting and investing alongside local farmers and their communities while caring for the Earth.

OUR GOAL

To enhance the competitiveness, employability, and resilience of 800,000 smallholder farmers (60% women and youth) to achieve a sustainable living income by 2030.





OUR VALUES

Our values are coined out of the 12 cornerstones that represent Heifer's culture globally. Heifer International Uganda identifies itself with five values: inclusiveness, integrity, accountability, humility and professional excellence.

Accountability: It is the ability of employees to, with integrity, take responsibility for their actions and decisions; gracefully take steps to mitigate negative consequences allowing them to fail forward and learn fast while celebrating the positive consequences of those actions.

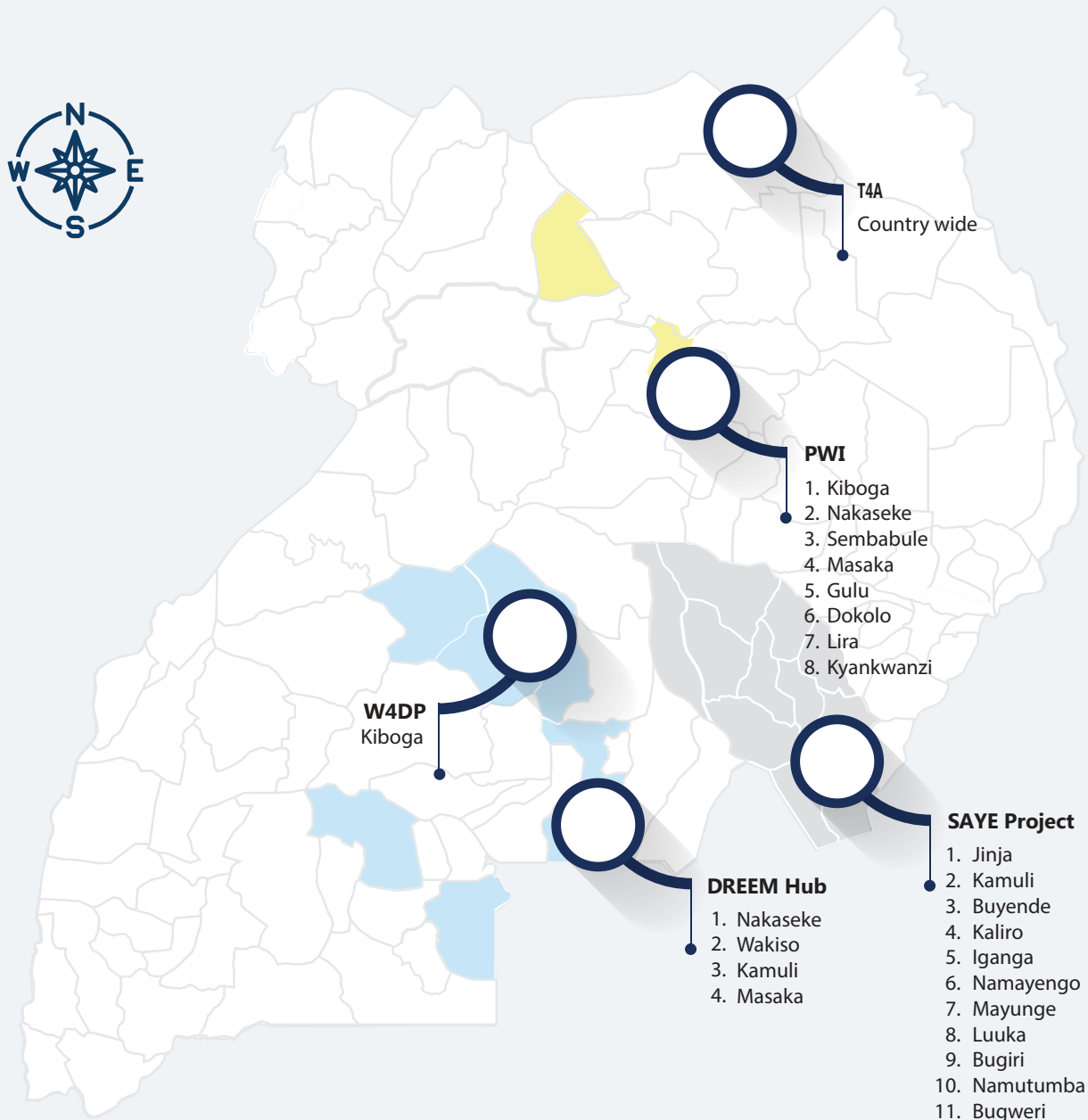
Humility: Humility as a value, at its highest, allows selflessness and dignity for a better world. A person with humility listens to and accepts others. Humility is staying stable and maintaining power on the inside and not needing to control others on the outside. Humility helps one extend more compassion and empathy to others. Those who practice humility are more likely to consider others' beliefs and opinions.

Inclusion: Inclusion refers to the practice of creating an environment where all individuals including the small holder farmers that we work with feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive environment embraces differences and encourages respect in words and actions for all people. Behaving in a manner that is characterized by sincerity, truthfulness, and fairness.

Integrity: Integral individuals act in accordance with their beliefs and values even when faced with challenges or temptations that might compromise their principles. Because integral people choose to do what is right and are always accountable for their actions, they have good working relationships with their supervisors and their colleagues and subsequently contribute towards a positive working environment.

Professional Excellence: Being professional helps you achieve high-quality results while impressing and inspiring others - and feeling good about yourself. The eight core characteristics of professionalism are Competence, Knowledge, Conscientiousness, Integrity, Respect, Emotional Intelligence, Appropriateness and Confidence.

WHERE WE WORK



Heifer International Uganda has had presence in 57 districts of Uganda in the Central, Eastern, West Nile and Northern regions. In FY 2025, Heifer was active in 20 districts namely Bugiri, Namayingo, Bugweri, Namutumba, Iganga, Mayuge, Jinja, Luuka, Kamuli, Kaliro, Buyende, Sembabule, Kiboga,

Wakiso, Masaka, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Dokolo, Lira and Gulu. The map below shows districts where HPI-Uganda has footing, of the active and past projects as at end of June 2025.

THE SIGNATURE PROGRAM

Through the signature programming, Heifer projects that by 2030, 10 million families globally and 40,000 families in Uganda will reach or be on the pathway towards attaining a sustainable living income. To attain this, we shall focus on implementing signature programs that have scale, partnership, and permanence.

Our Approach

Heifer Uganda organizes work into large-scale programs and projects that consist of strategic initiatives that aim to meet the long-term needs of communities in many parts of the country. We create a deeper impact in the lives of our project partners by improving access to income, education, sanitation, water sources, health care, and infrastructure. Heifer Signature programs are designed and implemented alongside local communities and are part of the HPI Sustainable Locally Led Development -SLLD values-based holistic community development (VBHCD) blended with demand-driven development methodologies.

Core Program Areas

Value Chain Development for smallholder farmers



We work with smallholder farmers to strategically address local demand in select agri value chains, enhance competitiveness, to drive sustainable living incomes and food self sufficiency.

Women and Youth



We work to address the bottlenecks hindering women farmers, creating jobs and unlocking the potential of young entrepreneurs to drive innovation in agri-business, to achieving a living income.

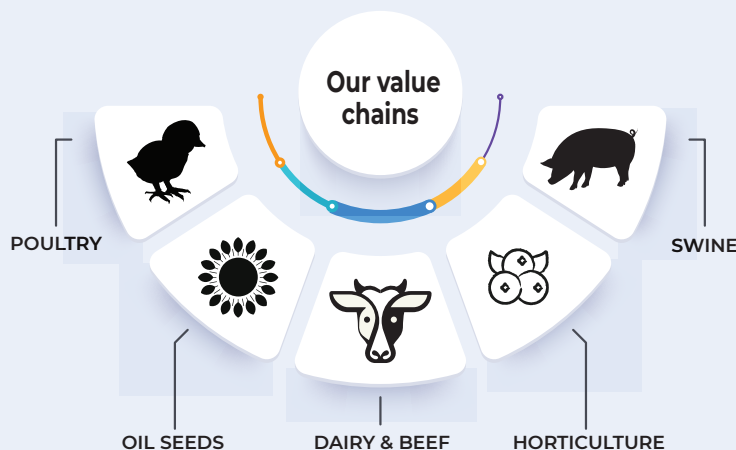
Technology: Power, Water and Internet as enablers



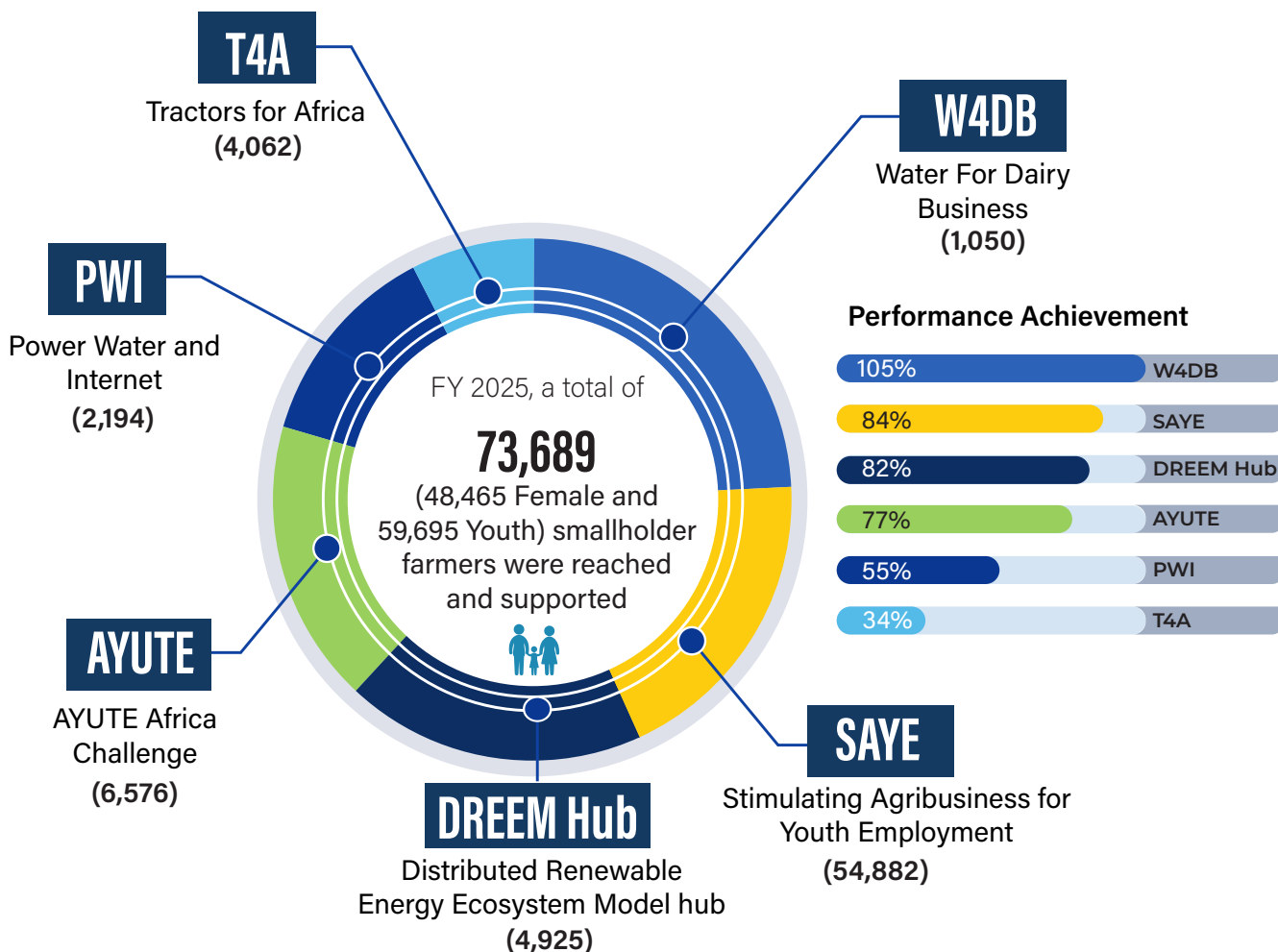
We partner with farmers, public and private sector to address energy deficiencies and water for production to improve enterprise performance.

Our anchor value chains

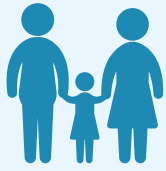
We focus on 6 integrated anchor value chains that offer higher economic and social benefits for smallholder farmers, aligned to Heifer's capacity and experience and with potential to leverage and integrate private and public sector.



FY 2025 Impact in Numbers



PROJECT NAME	FY2025 COUNTRY PERFORMANCE				ACHIEVEMENTS BY GENDER		
	Target	Actual	Percent	Cumulative	Male	Female	Youth
AYuTe Africa Challenge	8,500	6,576	77%	6,576	1,842	4,734	2,500
Tractors for Africa (T4A)	12,000	4,062	34%	7,562	571	3,491	1,807
DREEM Hub	6,000	4,925	82%	4,925	2,491	2,434	71
Power Water & Internet (PWI)	4,000	2,194	55%	2,194	1,380	814	200
Water For Dairy Business (W4DB)	1,000	1,050	105%	1,050	590	460	120
Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment (SAYE)	65,000	54,882	84%	54,882	18,350	36,532	54,882
TOTAL	96,500	73,689	76.4%	77,189	25,224	48,465	59,580
Households reached by Heifer Uganda Country Program in FY2025							



331,600

Total Number of
Smallholder Farmers
Reached



4,800

Self Help Groups
Formed



55,000

(64% Women & 3% PwDs)

Agribusiness Jobs
Created



1,800

(30% Women-Led)

Total Enterprises
Supported



82,903

Total Number
of Families reached

Acres

9,000

Acreage planted

478 MTs

Production volumes
over the year



2.25 Billion

Cooperatives Average Turnover



125

Farmer Cooperatives
established



3.5 Billion

Leveraged Resources



2.5 Billion

Revenue/income



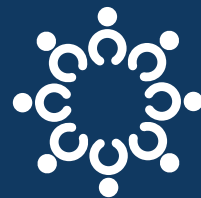
14.6 Billion

Value of Savings



660 Million

Value of loans



2,350

Saving Groups Formed

PROJECT SPECIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS



Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment (SAYE) Program

The SAYE project is a 5-year project implemented by Heifer International in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation and four other local organizations namely: ASIGMA Group, Consortium for Enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development Ltd (CURAD), Federation of Small and Medium Enterprises (FSME), and Financial Sector Deepening Uganda (FSDU).

SAYE is built on the learnings from the 'East Africa Youth Inclusion Program – EAYIP' implemented by Heifer Project International from July 2016-March 2022. SAYE is aimed at unlocking market system barriers to enable youth transition into dignified and fulfilling work.

The goal of SAYE is to improve the socio-economic well-being and resilience of young people in Busoga sub-region by 2029. The intervention is implemented in 11 districts in Busoga sub-region, Eastern Uganda: Jinja, Mayuge, Iganga, Kamuli, Kaliro, Namutumba, Bugweri, Luka, Buyende, Namayengo and Bugiri.

The intervention targets to reach 250,000 young people 16-35 years (70% females and 30% male, among which 3% youth are with disabilities). 175,000 of the targeted young people will transition into dignified and fulfilling work within the agribusiness enterprises. The target value chains include poultry, horticulture, oilseeds, dairy, and beef.

Achievements

During FY25, the SAYE project kickstarted implementation (in July 2024) and scaled up major project implementation models and approaches developed and piloted with proof of concept. The project mobilized and reached a total of 54,882 (Female 36,532) youth through three pathways 1) the incubations services to 2,509 (Female 1,508) youth with new ideas in the urban areas, 2) the Business Development Services (BDS) through the MSME pathway working with new and existing businesses to create employment for 18,722 (Female 13,326) youth in the peri-urban and urban areas and 3) the agri hub model working with 33,651 (20,966) youth organized in 1,143 self-help groups (SHGs) engaged in on-farm production in the rural areas. The project also rolled out the credit fund with 4 SACCOs approved for disbursement to accelerate on-farm and off-farm production, as well as enterprise growth for young incubates. The Private Sector Partnership Model, Block farm approach, community-based satellite incubation, and Women and Youth-led Enterprise approaches guided the implementation approaches with the community, PSAs and other stakeholders.

FY25 Performance Analysis

Outreach:

54,882 (Female 36,532) youth were reached representing 84% of the FY25 target of 65,000 youth. The project will onboard the existing and newly profiled youth through the adjusted implementation models for FSME and CURAD, as well as scaling up the tested block farm production with the current and additional private sector companies in season B, in FY26 starting in August 2025. The project has also signed a partnership with JEKA Poultry Farm to engage 8,000 young people in Poultry production in collaboration with FSME to drive the end of the value chain (production to consumption of eggs and chicken). Currently, the project stands at 25% of the overall target of reaching 250,000 youth over the life of the project.

Youth in Work:

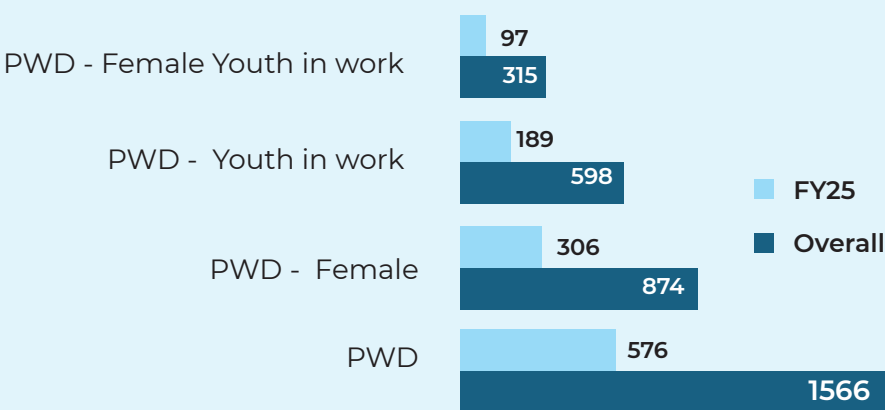
27,941 (18,877 Female; 662 PWDs) youth were transitioned and/or supported to get into work representing 60% of the FY25 target of 45,500 jobs. With the onboarding of secondary jobs and the adjusted implementation models of FSME and CURAD, the project has high prospects for achieving the remaining 40% jobs by September 2025. Currently, the project stands at 16% of the project overall target of 175,000 jobs.

Female and PWD engagement

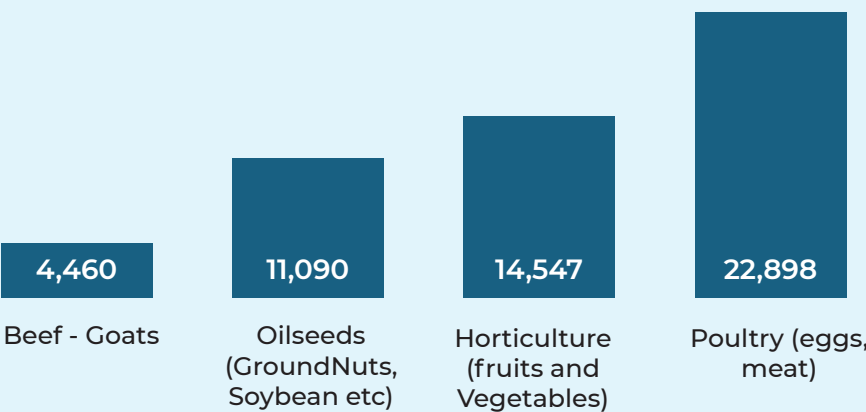
A total of 36,532 females were reached during the reporting period achieving 80% female participants on the project. Therefore, the project surpassed the target of having 70% women enrolled on the project. The project has been able to mobilize at least 3 Self Help Groups that are 100% composed of young women and has the potential to mobilize and engage more young women using the community structure to create more women focused groups.

Regarding the PWDs target of 3%, the project has engaged a total of 1,553 PWDs since inception representing 2.8% of the 54,882 -youth reached to-date. The project is on target for PWDs with at least one (1) Self Help Group that is 100% PWDs. However, there is deliberate effort to identify, mobilize and engage more PWDs, especially in the MSME pathway.

PWDs Participation in SAYE



SAYE - Youths in Value Chain



Value chain engagement

The project has so far rolled out 4 out of the 5 mapped value chains i.e. poultry (to 22,898 youths), horticulture (to 14,547 youths), oil seeds (to 11,090 youths), and beef-goats (to 4,460 youths), except for dairy. Linkages with the Private Sector Actors were established through formal MoUs that resulted into young people accessing 54,385 KGs of ground nuts and fertilizers from Crown Seeds Company, 59,250 KGs of soybean and fertilizers from Soybean Africa Ltd, 5,715 KGs of soybean from Mabeere Seed Company, 539,000 tomato seedlings, 9,600 passion fruit seedlings and 280 water-melon tins of 250g and fertilizers from TRAFFORD company and 309 goats (300 female; 9 bucks) from Ham Breeding Farm. The total area of land planted is 6,944 acres with the estimate production volumes at 35,000 MTs and estimated sales value of UGX 2.3 billion at the end of the season. Majority of the youth will harvest in July.

Note: Majority of the youth are integrated in nature, running multiple enterprises even though the project supports them in one enterprise.

Enterprise Development

- ◆ 583 enterprises supported, with 363 women-led and 570 youth-led.
- ◆ 335 youth developed mango juice products, 194 developed yoghurt brands, and 144 engaged in bakery production.
- ◆ CURAD supported decentralized product development and market linkages.

Training & Capacity Building

- ◆ Over 22,699 youth trained in Values-Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD).
- ◆ 1,636 youth trained in ideation and product refinement.
- ◆ 1,550 youth trained in savings and lending (ISLA methodology).
- ◆ Power BI training delivered to 16 MEL staff for real-time data visualization.

Financial Inclusion

- ◆ UGX 750 million approved for 4 SACCOs under the SAYE Credit Fund.
- ◆ SACCOs supported with governance, safeguarding, and youth-friendly loan product design.

Digital Innovation

- ◆ EzyAgric platform onboarded 66 Digital Agriculture Champions and 33 agri-hubs.
- ◆ Agro-input transactions reached UGX 19.3 million in April, with growing merchant engagement.

Policy & Advocacy

- ◆ Finalized Policy, Legal, and Regulatory Framework Report.
- ◆ Planned 3 district-level policy dialogues to promote youth inclusion and access to resources.

Learnings and adaptations

- ◆ Onboarding youth who come with new or untested business ideas takes longer before tangible job outcomes are realized.
- ◆ Supporting existing SMEs and youth with refinable business ideas enables quicker transition into viable enterprise development and job creation.
- ◆ Prioritizing youth-led enterprises demonstrated higher potential for direct job creation and stronger alignment with development goals.
- ◆ Strengthening PSA -led technical supervision ensured better production outcomes and quality control.
- ◆ Emerging issues around gender dynamics, GBV cases, and conflicts within SHGs required active response mechanisms to ensure equitable participation of youth.

Priorities for FY 2026

- ◆ Train 33,000 youth in soft, technical, and agribusiness skills.
- ◆ Develop 44 youth-led agri-hubs to deliver BDS and market access.
- ◆ Roll out credit fund to SACCOs and monitor fund utilization.
- ◆ Incubate 1,500 youth in horticulture, beverages, and coffee value chains.
- ◆ Conduct MEL training and integrate Power BI dashboards for real-time monitoring.
- ◆ Support policy engagement to address youth access barriers.
- ◆ Operationalize SME Academy and strengthen informal savings groups.
- ◆ Track and document progressive impact stories across all pathways

Distributed Renewable Energy Ecosystem Model hub (DREEM HUB Project)

The DREEM Hub project is a three-year (2024-2027) scale-up of Heifer Uganda's demonstrated work in the productive use of renewable energy in the dairy sector. The overall goal of the DREEM Hub project is to strengthen the Productive Use of Renewable Energy (PUSE) Ecosystem for reduced greenhouse gas emissions,

by stimulating access to productive use of solar energy services in agricultural value chains. This will result in the realization of sustainable incomes and strengthen the resilience of smallholder farmers and other value chain actors to climate change impacts and shocks by 2027.





To achieve this goal, the project is focusing on; Improving access to solar skills, jobs, and entrepreneurship development opportunities across Uganda's dairy sector value chains for 1000 underserved youth and women entrepreneurs; Expanding access to affordable financial and business development services for dairy cooperatives and other value-chain participants to accelerate access to productive use of solar energy services at priority sites; and Strengthening the capacity, collaboration, and coordination among key players by establishing a well-governed and self-sustaining Distributed Renewable Energy Ecosystem Model hub in Uganda.

The Project is implemented by Heifer International Uganda in partnership with Kabaka Foundation, Enterprise Uganda, Advocate Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) and Joint Energy and Environment Projects (JEEP).



The project spokes partners and their roles are briefly discussed below;

- ◆ Nakaseke District, the project host district, has taken the lead in farmer group mobilization, training on pasture lot establishment, distribution of pasture seeds, and monitoring project implementation.
- ◆ Makerere University is the oldest University in Uganda and through its College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences it has offered university the students for a service-learning program that combines internship, community extension services, and innovation and research.
- ◆ Enterprise Uganda provides business development services through training youth and women in business setup and management and mentorship for established enterprises.
- ◆ Kabaka Foundation is a foundation of the King of the largest Kingdom in Uganda, Buganda Kingdom. It is leading in community awareness training for PUSE and the setting up of a demonstration center.
- ◆ Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) is a civil society organization that has convened multistakeholder platforms to discuss financing and the

policy implementation environment for the promotion of productive use of solar energy in agriculture, built the capacity of sub-national actors in integrating PUSE in their plans and budgets, developed knowledge products, and supported exchange learning visits for farmers and Cooperatives.

- ◆ Joint Energy Environment Projects (JEEP) is a local NGO with a focus on environment and energy projects. It is running a service-learning program, a training and demonstration center for productive use of solar and conducting community mobilizations and awareness trainings for PUSE.

Achievements

Increase the adoption of productive use of solar energy services through improved access to solar skills and entrepreneurship development opportunities across Uganda's dairy sector value chains.

- ◆ A total of 29 PUSE solutions were installed (5 electric bikes, 7 solar sprayers, 7 deep freezers, 5 chaff cutters, and 5 water pumping systems) at 7 model farms in Nakaseke District.
- ◆ The total annual CO₂ emission saved annually is 22 tons. The emission reductions are from 5 electric motorcycles with

annual savings of 5 tons (average daily distance covered per motorcycle is 50km and emissions are 7kg/100km; estimate is for 300 days use in a year); 7 solar sprayers save 1 ton per year; 7 DC deep freezers (of 315 liters each) saving 0.7 tons annually; 5 chaff cutters saving 5.3 tons annually; and 5 water pumping systems saving 10 tons annually. In addition, 140 tons of CO₂ savings are expected annually from the four 20 kW solar systems that are being installed for milk collection centers in Nakaseke District.

- ◆ 10 solar-powered irrigation systems and solar dryers were installed in Mpigi, Mukono, and Wakiso Districts at model farms. These model farms serve as learning centers for surrounding communities.
- ◆ A total of 1,203 (589 Female; 614 Male) participants were trained in enterprise / business development and productive use of solar in agriculture. Out of these, 982 (of the 1,000 targeted) were women and youth and 221 were men. In addition, 71 Makerere University students (21 Female, 50 Male) completed a 10-week service-learning program organized at JEEP with a focus on integrating PUSE in agriculture. In total 1,053 youth and women were trained including the university students.

- ◆ A total of 82 jobs were created including 12 full time and 70 part time jobs along the water and solar value chains. The part-time jobs were created during the construction of the water sources in form of labour and 10 community members were trained to carry out operation and maintenance of the water sources to sustain the water systems.



Expand access to affordable financial services for PUSE solutions at key project sites.

- ◆ A total sum of UGX 8.3 billion additional funding was secured for PUSE initiatives. This includes UGX 45 million from model farmer co-funding contributions; prospective grant funding of UGX 7.5 billion from a partnership with aBi Development Ltd to scale up this work in Southwestern Uganda; and commercial funding of UGX 720 million for the installation of the four solar systems for cooperatives' milk cooling centers.
- ◆ A total of 7 PUSE solutions were installed (2 irrigation systems, 4 solar dryers, and 1 cold room). The total annual CO2 emission saved annually is 22 tons (2 irrigation system saves 4 tons; 4 solar dryers that save 10 tons; and 1 cold room of 480 cubic feet save 8 tons per year).
- ◆ These include solar water pumping and storage facilities and demonstration of six types of irrigation systems (laser sprinkle, inline drip, online drop, tornado, and rain gun sprinkler), cold room, and solar dryers at the DREEM hub implementing partner, JEEP. In addition, the same productive use of solar solutions including were installed for the Kabaka Foundation model farm in Bukalango, Wakiso District.
- ◆ A total of 5,521 (2,612 Female; 2,909 Male) actors were registered and served.
- ◆ 3,681 (1,761 Female; 1,920 Male) farmers attended PUSE awareness seminars while 379 (109 Female; 270 Male) external participants attended the national and District dialogue on PUSE policy implementation
- environment. ACODE also organised an exchange visit for 30 farmers (12 Female; 18 Male). JEEP trained 420 (193 Female; 227 Male) small holder farmers on the use, maintenance, and benefits of solar technologies with hands-on experience on solar-powered irrigation systems, Enterprise Uganda trained 1,203 (589 Female; 614 Male) youth, women and men on business and entrepreneurship, 45 farmers (7 Female; 38 Male) were trained on the productive use of solar energy in 4 cooperatives by Heifer International and 142 (50 Female; 92 Male) small holder livestock farmers in Nakaseke District were supported with seeds to establish pasture gardens to increase dairy productivity.

Establish a well-governed and self-sustaining distributed renewable energy ecosystem model hub organization in Uganda.

A total of six (6) spoke partners were engaged: Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between Heifer International and Nakaseke District, Makerere University, Kabaka Foundation and Enterprise Uganda. Sub-grant agreements have been signed with Enterprise Uganda, Kabaka Foundation, ACODE and JEEP.



Learnings and adaptations

- ◆ The business model for a water supply system is strengthened if the water is used for productive use for it enables the community to afford it through the income streams, they receive.
- ◆ Participation and collaboration of local and district leadership is essential to the success of the project.
- ◆ Ecosystem financing works—when de-risked. A blended approach that combines commercial debt with risk mitigants and technical assistance unlocks capital for off-grid dairy systems.
- ◆ Youth pipelines through service-learning: University placements meaningfully augment technical capacity and create a future workforce with Wider skills base thereby smoothening O&M processes of solar farm productive equipment hence increasing PUSE adaptation on farm and cooperative levels.

Water for Dairy Business Project (W4DB)

This intervention aims to provide equal access to water for all and therefore targets both members (dairy farmers) and non-members (neighboring communities) in Kiboga district under two selected cooperatives. The target group comprises 1,500 households (HH)³ in the wet season and 2,000 HHs⁴ in the dry season. This intervention is unique and innovative because;

- ◆ It connects the problems and opportunities of the farmers and the cooperatives such a safe water supply chain by a cooperative is new to Uganda
- ◆ W4DB combines the logistics of the water delivery with that of the milk collection in an innovative manner.





Achievements

The project completed the construction and installation of two water supply systems in March 2025 in Dwaniro Subcounty, Kiboga District. Supervision of both the Dwaniro and Muyenje water systems construction was conducted regularly in close coordination with the Kiboga District Water Office, cooperative leadership, community representatives, and other local government officials to ensure full compliance with technical and operational standards.

The Muyenje water supply system has a groundwater source and support structures (including a pump and guard house, Eco-SAN toilet, perimeter fencing, and landscaping to enhance operational efficiency and security). The system is equipped with a submersible pump set coupled with a 5.5kW motor installed at a depth of 130 meters that can abstract 5,000 liters per hour for a total of 40,000 liters per day during 8 hours of sunshine. The energy source is an 18kW solar array, arranged in an 18x3 string configuration. Water is pumped through a 2,500-meter OD63 PN 16 transmission pipeline to a 30,000-liter elevated tank which is constructed on a hill to allow for gravity-fed distribution over a 2,800-meter span to utilization points. The Dwaniro water supply system has a submersible pump installed

at a depth of 100 meters with a daily abstraction capacity of 20,000 liters. The water is pumped to a 20,000-liter tank that is elevated to a height of 6 meters.

The water from these systems is already being used by the cooperative and local community for multiple purposes. It supports cleaning of milk equipment (e.g., chillers and milk cans), on-farm hygiene, and domestic needs. At the cooperative, after delivering milk, farmers and transporters wash their cans at designated wash points, then refill the cans with clean water before returning to their farms. This reverse supply chain model allows farmers to carry water back home for on-farm use or resale, instead of returning with empty containers.

This innovative system has significantly improved milk quality at the cooperative and the availability of clean water for hygiene has led to a 98% reduction in milk rejections by processors, which were previously linked to contamination from unsafe water.

Both water systems are equipped with remote monitoring and control technologies, enabling real-time tracking of pumping performance and distribution efficiency across utilization points.

The Cooperative ensures transparent and sustainable financial management of the water supply system by using a prepaid water dispensing system. This

promotes accessibility and accountability as each kiosk is fitted with this system that is operational day and night. Households use user tags to access water, while registered vendors with vendor tags load credit onto user tags in exchange for cash. The collected funds are deposited into a dedicated water account managed by the cooperative. Vendors request system administrators to deposit credit only after reconciling sales records with the collected cash. This management system has reinforced the sustainability and the long-term viability of the water systems.

Learnings and adaptations

- ◆ The viability of the project business model is greatly dependent on the willingness of the community to pay for the improved water services. Therefore, the support of the community leadership team is critical to inculcate a behavioral change in the community to pay for services.
- ◆ The production capacity of water sources greatly contributes to the water demand behavior patterns of the community. For example, communities utilize more water in the wet season due to its availability compared to the dry season. This therefore needs to be considered in the development of the business models.

- ◆ Education of communities about the importance of water conservation can lead to significant reductions in water consumption and promote a culture of water sustainability.
- ◆ Reliable, clean and safe water access is key for Dairy productivity: A regular and sufficient supply of clean water directly influences milk quality. The cooperative now uses clean water to wash milk chilling machines and transport trucks, resulting in premium-grade milk received by off-takers. Transporters have also played a role in improving quality by returning clean milk cans, which are reused at the farm level for both dairy and household needs. This shift has significantly enhanced milk hygiene and reduced rejection rates at the cooperative by 98%.
- ◆ Infrastructure without community ownership often fails; The success of this project stems from active community involvement from inception through planning, implementation, and now ongoing management. Communities contributed land and labor during construction, signaling strong ownership and buy-in.
- ◆ Local governance structures, especially the Water Management Committees (WMCs), have played a key role in the project's sustainability. Strengthening these structures, providing ongoing training, and integrating them into local governance systems is crucial for long-term success.
- ◆ Climate variability significantly influences revenue from water sales. Demand for project-constructed water systems peaks in dry seasons due to scarcity but declines during wet seasons when alternative sources (e.g., valley tanks and rainwater harvesting) are temporarily available. However, during droughts and irregular rainfall, these alternatives fail—making the project-built systems the only reliable and sustainable option.
- ◆ Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) enhance long-term sustainability; The W4DB project relies heavily on cooperative structures and WMCs as service providers. However, post-project sustainability remains a challenge. Strong partnerships with local service providers and contractors have already proven beneficial in ensuring system maintenance and infrastructure support. Expanding and institutionalizing such public-private collaborations is key to sustaining and scaling the water systems beyond the project lifecycle.



Power Water Internet Project (PWI)



The PWI project started with a focus on increasing small holder farmers' access to Power, Water, and Internet services. The project goal was to improve the incomes and resilience of 5,000 farmers engaged in dairy, beef, oilseeds, and horticulture value chains.

The project objective was to improve productivity, quality in the farming system, the efficiency of the agri-enterprises, and strengthen the capacity of farmer cooperatives to run the productive asset/equipment scheme.

Heifer Uganda launched the Power Water and Internet Initiative in June 2022. The program started with seven cooperatives across Central and Northern Uganda building on Heifer's dairy and oilseeds projects.



Achievements

During the reporting period the project contracted ASIGMA Capital Advisory Services (ASIGMA) to undertake a consultancy to Design a Productive Asset Financing Scheme and to Train Cooperatives.

The objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of the current productive asset financing scheme, address its challenges, and propose an approach to enhance its operational efficiency and impact for smallholder farmers. Additionally, the consultancy was to support Heifer International to optimise fund management processes and to build the capacity of cooperatives through training them on effective scheme management, sustainability, and risk management practices.

A total of 28 cooperative staff and board members (4 women, 24 men) were trained in operations and financial management. The training successfully:

- ◆ **Strengthened financial management & cash flow planning:** Equipped representatives with skills to design and implement effective budgets, cash flow plans, and financial strategies for sustainable operations.
- ◆ **Enhanced credit & risk management:** Built capacity to structure credit, assess borrower creditworthiness, and apply risk mitigation measures to reduce defaults and improve stability.
- ◆ **Improved revolving fund management:** Supported cooperatives to manage the revolving fund through structured credit allocation, flexible repayment schedules aligned to agricultural cycles, and prudent fund utilization.
- ◆ **Developed effective monitoring systems:** Strengthened performance tracking via M&E frameworks, standardized data collection, and robust reporting mechanisms.
- ◆ **Enhanced debt recovery:** Introduced structured recovery strategies and performance review processes to monitor repayment, address challenges, and drive continuous improvement.
- ◆ **Ensured scheme sustainability:** Enabled cooperatives to institutionalize governance, financial management, and risk mitigation practices to sustain the scheme and ensure long-term benefits for members.

Learnings and adaptations

- ◆ PEP Vendors need to serve as partners – not just equipment suppliers. This will ensure reliable after-sales services support for the clients.
- ◆ Effective management of Solar home system credit and customer payment information requires integration of payment technology platforms such as PAY AS YOU GO. This ensures that payments and disconnections are managed by the private sector equipment supplier as the cooperatives focus on their core areas of strength, of awareness raising and customers' acquisition.
- ◆ Asset financing needs to be combined with training in financial literacy, equipment operation and maintenance and Agri enterprise management. Therefore, a holistic approach is key.
- ◆ Flexible repayment models that take into consideration the seasonal variation in the value chain the farmers are in will yield more benefits.





AYuTe

AFRICA CHALLENGE

AYuTe Africa Challenge is an annual challenge that identifies and funds breakthrough agritech innovations and agri-preneur ideas with an aim of improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

During this reporting period, Heifer International Uganda successfully concluded the third edition of the AYuTe Africa Challenge (Season 3) on September 19, 2024, attracting a record of 261 youth submissions, including 83 female innovators (32%).



The

Top 15 finalists were awarded UGX 112 million

in prizes along with incubation and capacity-building opportunities, while 19 innovators participated in a 5-day bootcamp facilitated by HiveColab and International Labour Organization (ILO) certified trainers, focusing on commercialization, financial modelling, and pitching. The challenge also achieved significant public engagement through extensive media coverage across TV, radio, print, and online platforms, a social media campaign that reached over 3 million users, and a gala event attended by more than 600 students and key stakeholders.

S/N	Position	Innovator	Innovation	Prize (UGX)
1	Overall, Winner	Nakalema Assumpta	Solar Egg Incubator	50,000,000
2	1st Runner-Up	Uwera Angel	MAK Agrometer (soil testing)	25,000,000
3	2nd Runner-Up	Olivia Nakiwanuka	Axis Solar (sun-tracking pump)	10,000,000
4	Special Category	Stella Nakirija	Solar-powered Tick Detector	3,500,000
5	Special Category	Patricia Ninsiima	Nanex (grain preservation tech)	3,500,000

In addition, the MEL team conducted the April–June 2025 Program Quality Assessment (PQA) with two AYuTe project awardees: Divine Empowerment and Development Skills (DEEDS), a manufacturer of solar water pumps using recycled materials, and Freza Nanotech, a producer of PHH sachets that extend the shelf life of vegetables. The assessment reviewed progress against the work plans and included key informant interviews (KIIs) with adopters in the field of these innovations to assess their impact. The two PQA reports were approved by the Country Director and shared with the regional MEL team. To date, DEEDS has created 50 jobs (20 males and 30 females) in areas such as solar pump installation, trench digging, and pipe connection and maintenance, and trained 333 participants (70 males and 263 females) on the use of solar water pumps for irrigation in Kabarole and Kamwenge districts. Similarly, Freza Nanotech has created 15 jobs (eight males and seven females) and trained 215 participants (80 males and 135 females) on the application of PHH sachets for vegetable preservation.



Number of Participants Reached

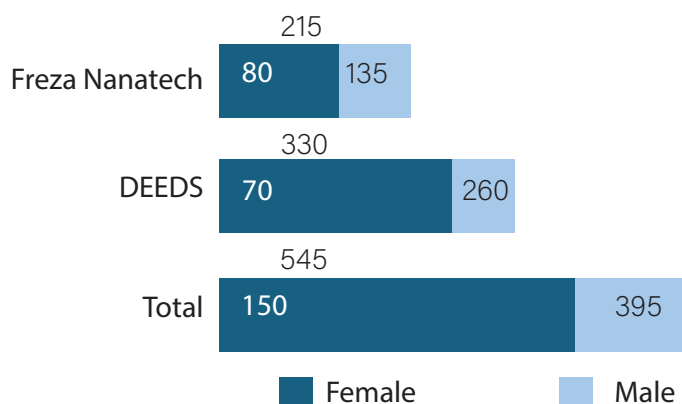
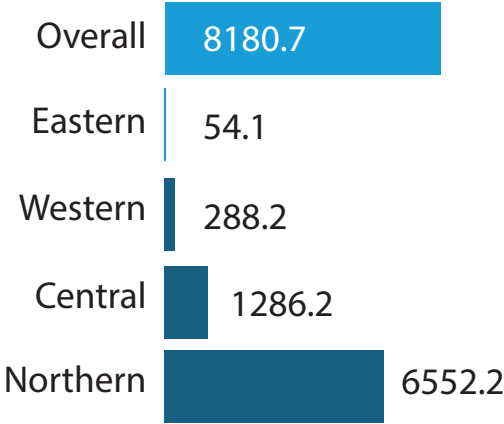


Figure above: Number of beneficiaries reached by the two AYuTe Innovators.

Tractors for Africa Project (T4A)



Acres Serviced by Tractor Africa Project by Region in Uganda.

This is a transformational intervention targeted to contribute to Heifer’s goal of moving 10 million smallholder farmers towards sustainable living income by 2030. The project aims at addressing food security in Africa by enabling access to 50,000 tractors and creating 500,000 jobs in 10 years.

During this reporting period, the T4A project serviced a total of 8,180.7 acres across 21 districts. The highest coverage was recorded in Gulu (2,725.5 acres), Apac (2,532.8 acres), and Luwero (898.7 acres), which together accounted for more than 70% of the total acreage. Moderate coverage was achieved in

Lira (624.1 acres), Mubende (298.5 acres), and Kotido (231 acres), while smaller acreages were serviced in districts such as Busia (16.3 acres), Mukono (20.2 acres), and Wakiso (0.5 acres).

This demonstrates both wide geographical reach and varying levels of uptake, with Northern Uganda districts registering the largest share of serviced land.





In addition, the Tractor Africa project serviced a total of 8,180.7 acres across 21 districts, with a clear variation in gender participation across regions. Female farmers cultivated 1,306.1 acres (16%), while male farmers cultivated 6,860.9 acres (84%). The highest female participation was recorded in Gulu (782.4 acres), Apac (197.8 acres), and Lira (86.9 acres), demonstrating that Northern Uganda districts had both high overall coverage and notable female involvement. In contrast, several districts such as Mukono, Wakiso,

and Yumbe recorded only male participation, while Kampala and Mbarara registered exclusively female acreage. Overall, these data highlight significant regional disparities, with Northern and Central districts receiving the largest share of services and indicate the need for targeted strategies to increase women's equitable access to mechanization.

Furthermore, the Tractor Africa project serviced a total of 4,062 (571 Female; 1,807 Youth) farmers across 21 districts. Of these, 254

were females (14%), 1,553 males (86%). The highest outreach was recorded in Apac (616 farmers: 51 females and 565 males), Gulu (387 farmers: 113 females, 271 males), and Luwero (283 farmers: 11 females and 272 males). Other districts with notable participation included Lira (139 farmers) and Arua (105 farmers). While female participation was evident in most districts, it remained significantly lower compared to men, with some districts such as Kampala, Mbarara, Mukono, Wakiso, and Yumbe registering either only male or very minimal female beneficiaries. This underscores the importance of deliberate efforts to increase women's access to tractor services and promote gender equity in mechanization.

IMPACT STORIES

Impact Beyond Numbers: The Story of Annet Nampumo



Impact will not always look like a million dollars; it will not always look like thousands/ millions reached or headline numbers splashed across glossy reports. Sometimes, impact takes on its own quiet form, unmeasured by grand figures but deeply etched into the life of one individual. If impact had a name, in one of the villages in Bugiri district, it would be Annet Nampumo

Annet, a young woman and mother living with a disability, may not speak for all the 250,000 young people the Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment (SAYE) project intends to reach by 2029. But she does not need to. Her life itself has become a testimony, one that speaks volumes.

“Before joining the SAYE project, I had lost hope,” Annet recalls. Living with a disability, she had been pushed to the margins of her community. Ideas dismissed before they were spoken, her voice silenced before it was heard.



“They saw no value in me,” she says, her words heavy with memories of rejection.

For years, she relied entirely on her husband to meet even the most basic needs. In a culture where being a woman often meant second place, her disability placed her further outside the circle of respect. Decisions were made around her, never with her. Yet in that silence, Annet’s dreams still lived, waiting for a chance to be taken seriously.

That chance came with the SAYE project.

Through SAYE, a project implemented by Heifer International and other consortium partners including ASIGMA, CURAD, FSME and FSDU, Annet and members of the Nankoma Frontliners Youth Farmers Association received training in group dynamics, agribusiness, gender

inclusion, and safeguarding. For the first time, her peers began to listen. They noticed the brilliance in her contributions. Her ideas stood out.

“Through the ideas I shared and the confidence I demonstrated in stepping into a leadership role, I contested and was elected the Association’s Vice Chairperson” she says with pride.

This trust transformed more than just Annet’s position. It restored her dignity, proving to her community that disability is not inability, and that leadership wears many faces.

With SAYE’s guidance, Annet’s group ventured into soybean farming, gaining access to 36 acres of land. Their initial investment of about 20 million Uganda shillings has blossomed into projected earnings of over 108 million. What started as casual saving among friends is today a powerful agribusiness engine in Nankoma village.

Beyond financial growth, the association has formed an Agri-hub that is uniting several other youth groups the SAYE project is supporting to grow Soybean in Bugiri district to bulk, market, and sell soybean seeds across the district and beyond.

Breaking barriers.

But Annet's journey is not without its shadows. Deep-rooted cultural beliefs still whisper that women especially those with disabilities — do not belong at decision-making tables. Many still resist seeing her in leadership. Yet the tide has shifted. Today, her presence commands respect that was once denied. Annet is not just a leader in her group in Nankoma village, she recently represented all SAYE participants at the 2025 Mastercard Foundation Young Africa Work partner convening where in her sharing she highlighted what being part of the SAYE project means to her

“Joining this program has not only improved my financial situation but has also helped me grow in confidence. And today, here I am, speaking at a Mastercard Foundation event, on a big stage, in a bright and beautiful room.”

The woman who once felt invisible now spoke to the world



The SAYE project has already reached nearly 70,000 young people, including 1,868 living with disabilities. Of these, 754 are already in work, rewriting narratives that for too long excluded them. Annet stands among these young people and especially women with disabilities in Busoga who are redefining what agribusiness, leadership, and hope look like.

Her story is not just about soybeans or savings groups. It is about dignity restored, leadership reclaimed, and communities learning to see beyond limitations.

Impact may not always look like a million dollars. Sometimes, it looks like one woman, once overlooked now standing tall, her voice carrying the weight of countless others who dare to dream. Impact looks like Annet.



From Sunlight to Safe Water

Scovia Kalegeya's life is her land and, more specifically, her animals — the dairy cows she and her husband raise, alongside goats, sheep and hens, on their wide tract of pastureland in central Uganda's Kiboga District.

The milk the couple sells to their nearby cooperative provides most of their income for managing their farm and providing for their 12 children. But over the two decades Scovia has lived and farmed here, it hasn't been easy, and the income has rarely been reliable.

Year after year, in a remote community marked both by a lack of infrastructure and recurring droughts, every day, and each new dry spell, has brought with it another struggle to find clean water — one vital resource neither her family nor her farm can do without.

“When the animals aren't healthy ... we don't have enough to eat,” she stressed, “we can't pay school fees and we also can't take milk to the dairy cooperative.”

Here, in this landscape, the solution lies not on the ground, but in the sky.

Because although the region has a scarcity of surface water, it does have a wellspring of natural resources, including the sun and the deep underground reserves of water. And by tapping solar power, Heifer and its partners have brought this clean water to Scovia and thousands of others, with ripple effects on farming communities' health, well-being and income.

Kiboga District is located squarely in the aptly named “Cattle Corridor,” a traditionally pastoral region stretching from southwestern to northeastern Uganda where livestock livelihoods reign.



Like the rest of the corridor, Kiboga is a hub of dairy production and plays a significant role in the country's food security, though its potential is limited by underdevelopment and environmental challenges.

"In Kiboga, it's actually a dry category of Uganda, so you find that the place is really water stressed," explained Kennedy Okuu, project coordinator for Heifer Uganda.

"Most of the farms in this category lack safe and clean water, both for animals and household."

More than a quarter of the district's population does not have access to a sanitary water point, with many families either depending on natural reservoirs that are prone to contamination or traveling long distances to purchase the clean water that they need for drinking, cooking, cleaning and farming.

Weather shocks exacerbate the water crisis, as the region's semi-arid climate makes it prone to irregular rains and droughts that parch pastures and water sources alike.

"We used to move

long distances to find [water]," recalled Scovia. "During the dry season, we often couldn't get any."

"Some days, we would spend the whole day without getting water," she added.

In addition to having devastating consequences on human health, the shortage of clean water jeopardizes dairy productivity in the region and, with it, farmers' earning potential.

"Clean water is, of course, a vital component in farming and in production," Kennedy said, pointing out the direct correlation between proper sanitation and a farm's yield.

"The quality of milk partly is influenced by the dirty water people use in the milking processes and milk handling," he continued. "To break that chain, clean and safe water has to be used in all activities."

In 2022, with support from

Aqua for All, Heifer launched the Water for Dairy Business project to provide safe water to families and farmers in Kiboga, aiming to strengthen household health and resilience and improve milk quality among members and the local dairy cooperative — advancements that would all be driven by the sun.

"Electricity access [in Uganda] is really, really low," described Enock Mutinga, Heifer Uganda renewable energy coordinator. "The challenge for the farmers is that electricity won't reach them probably in the next 30, 40, 50 years."

"Even though the grid is expanding, it won't reach," he added. "The investment needed to reach the rest of Uganda, it's just still too big."

Countrywide, a scant 14 percent of the rural population has access to electricity, making solar power not only a promising energy alternative in areas like Kiboga, but a necessary one.

Solar consequently is the bedrock of the Water for Dairy Business project: two solar-powered water supply

systems built in dairy farming communities in Kiboga and managed by Dwaniro Dairy Cooperative and a supervising water management committee composed of district water department staff, local leaders, cooperative management and board, and community members..

Each water supply system includes an array of solar panels and a pump that draws 5,000litres of naturally filtered and safe groundwater per hour to overhead tanks of 30,000litres. This water is supplied to users , including cooperatives, farmers, a hospital, a primary school, and community water kiosks that serve hundreds of families.

“Before we had access to this water, we faced many challenges, mainly due to the distance we had to travel to collect water,” said Ssali Ashiraf, secretary of the water management committee for the water supply systems. “Many of us didn’t have access to transport, which made it even harder to obtain water, even though it was something we couldn’t live without.”

In addition to his roles on

the water management committee, Ssali also serves as a vendor for the water kiosk located in his community. Residents who would like to purchase low-cost water from the kiosk — replacing the existing faraway, expensive and often unsanitary sources they relied on before — receive a small key fob and buy credits through Ssali, who loads them onto the device. At the kiosks, the water is accessed through a water dispensing system (the water ATM), where users are

supplied with user tags that can be credited to access water by the vendorThe vendor receives credit in exchange from the system administrator in exchange for cash collected from the users.

At the kiosk, a swipe of the fob turns the spout on, and the value of water taken is deducted from their credit balance. The payments Ssali and others collect from the community are delivered to the Cooperative accounts team and later transferred to the dedicated bank account



for the project to fund operation and maintenance of the system and, in future for scale up or expansion. This is how the Cooperative works together to ensure the water supply is affordable and sustainable — and progress grows.

“We hope to extend water access to the household level because, currently, there are individuals who are interested

in having water in their homes,” he said.

Having clean water so close to their families and farms has been transformational, he emphasized, noting a significant decrease in waterborne illnesses among the community; improved safety for women and children, who are often tasked with fetching water; and ease with which small-scale livestock keepers can now care for their animals.

“These kiosks have greatly reduced the long distances and transport costs farmers used to face when collecting water,” he remarked. “The time we used to spend walking long distances to fetch water is now used to go to our farms.”

“It has been a huge support,” he added.

Scovia and her family were one of the first households to have water piped to their property through the Water for Dairy Business project, with more connections for other farmers on the way.

“When I found out I had this opportunity, I felt very happy,” she said.

“Water was very expensive [before],” she continued. “We ended up spending more than we were earning, and it was difficult to sustain.”



With a new tap just steps outside her front door, Scovia is saving considerable time and resources, and her children aren't getting sick as often. The family has gained a priceless chance to prosper, too.

"Since we got the water, the animals are healthier and they look good," she explained. "This has allowed us to produce milk to take to the cooperative, which has helped us earn money and pay school fees on time."

Communitywide, as Scovia and other farmers have improved the well-being of their livestock and the sanitation of their farming, the cooperative has seen milk quality go up and, with it, profits and widespread potential — for healthier families, thriving farms, greater economic stability and more enduring futures.

"I have found peace," beamed Scovia, "with the water being close by."



From Despair to

Agribusiness Powerhouse:

The Rise of the Nankoma Frontliners Youth Group

For many young people today, the drive to build a brighter future is not just a dream, it's a daunting reality. This reality often comes with immense pressure. For some, it pushes them out of character; for others, it becomes the crucible in which character

is formed. In Nankoma, a rural community in Bugiri District, youth faced a blend of both, until they encountered the transformative power of the SAYE (Stimulating Agribusiness For Youth Employment) project.



“Our group began almost as a joke,” recalls Waiswa Isma, chairman of the Nankoma Frontliners Youth Group. “There were eight of us. We were simply tired of our circumstances. Though we didn’t have a clear vision, we knew we wanted something better. So we started saving, hoping the path would become clearer.”

At the time, hopelessness was widespread among Nankoma’s youth. With no opportunities and no direction, many turned to petty crime, drug abuse, gambling, and idleness.

“You’d find young people wandering the village, stealing, or wasting away on substances,” Isma reflects.

The Turning Point: SAYE Arrives

As the old saying goes, luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. Through a friend of Isma’s, the group learned about the Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment (SAYE) project,



an initiative designed to empower youth in Busoga by promoting sustainable and dignified employment through agribusiness. For Isma and his group, it was the chance they had been waiting for.

There was only one requirement: groups had to be formally organized with at least 25–30 members. Realizing the potential of this opportunity, the friends reached out to fellow youth in their community. They rallied others who shared the same frustration and hunger for change eventually forming a group of 31 members, comprising 25 females, 6 males, and 2 persons with disabilities (PWDs).

The Nankoma Frontliners Youth Group has benefited from a series of intensive trainings aimed at rewiring their mindset around agriculture, entrepreneurship,

and financial discipline. These included modules on ISLA, group dynamics, and good agronomic practices, among others.

The impact has been profound. Armed with newfound confidence and knowledge, the group has gone on to lease 35 acres of farmland within their community, now under cultivation with soybean a significant step toward self-reliance and agribusiness success.

“If it weren’t for SAYE, things could have turned out very differently,” says Isma. “Before, we were saving without direction. At best, we might

have pooled together UGX 50,000. But SAYE taught us to save with purpose and intention and today our savings have accumulated to over UGX 8 million.”

From First Harvest to First Breakthrough

In their first production season, the group invested UGX 21 million—covering land leases, ploughing, seed and fertilizer purchase, spraying, and labor. The return? An anticipated harvest of over 36 tons of soybeans, translating to approximately UGX 108 million in revenue. Notably, the group has strategically positioned itself in the production of foundation seed, a niche that caters to farmers across Bugiri and neighbouring districts.



“What began as eight friends is now a UGX 100 million agribusiness,” shares Byaruhanga Abdu-Ka-Hal, the group’s Production Officer. “Next season, we’re targeting 100 acres. We want to acquire our own land, and we’re eyeing a tractor through a hire-purchase agreement to mechanize our operations.”

Their vision doesn’t stop there.

Recognizing the power of collective action, the group has launched the Nankoma Youth Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited, an Agri hub designed to aggregate soybeans from

across the region. This centralized model enables bulk marketing and better negotiation power.

“Soybean Africa is already interested in our foundation seed,” says Annet Babirye, a passionate group member. “But we see bigger opportunities. We want to sell to local farmer groups who can produce certified seed, which we can buy back for processing and value addition. This way, we create a business cycle within ourselves and generate jobs across the region.”

Empowering Communities through Nutrition

In the heart of Uganda's Busoga region, where poverty casts long shadows and malnutrition remain a persistent foe, a young woman named Mercy Chepkurui is rewriting the narrative, one pack of nutritious flour at a time.

Growing up in a community heavily burdened by poverty, Chepkurui's early years were marked by the stark reality of children suffering from malnutrition. This haunting exposure ignited a lifelong mission: to eradicate malnutrition, not just in her village, but across Uganda.

"Members of my community need more than just food, they need knowledge, access, and affordable nutrition," Mercy explains. "That's why I envisioned a composite flour rich in nutrients, yet affordable for the everyday family."



This vision became the seed of Golden sip—a fortified flour blend of millet, soybean, oats, and milk powder, designed to provide essential nutrients to children and adults alike. But for Mercy, turning this idea into a viable business was no small feat.

From Dream to Action **The SAYE Project Breakthrough**

After completing her degree in Business Administration in 2023, Chepkurui, like many young Ugandans, found herself jobless, with a dream but no capital. Her breakthrough came when a friend introduced her to the SAYE (Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment) project, implemented a game-changing initiative focused on empowering 250,000 youth in Busoga through agribusiness enterprise development.

“I saw it as my one shot,” she recalls. “I applied with nothing but an idea and faith.”

To her delight, her concept aligned perfectly with SAYE’s focus and through a robust bootcamp, Chepkurui received mentorship in product ideation, business modelling, and prototyping transforming Goldensip from a rough concept into a tested, high-quality product ready for the market.

“The SAYE Project through CURAD helped translate my product into actuality,”

Thanks to SAYE’s support, Mercy underwent intensive training in branding, financial literacy, packaging, and food safety. She now leads the end-to-end production of Goldensip, from sourcing raw materials from smallholder farmers, blending the formula, packaging, to distributing across shops and homes in her community.

Her first production batch, supported by the project, sold out—earning her UGX 300,000. Reinspired, she reinvested her profits and doubled her efforts, producing and selling 200 packs that generated UGX 800,000 in revenue. With the market showing promising demand, she is now preparing for her third production run—targeting 500 packs, and hopes to reap UGX2,000,000 .

Mercy’s success has begun to ripple beyond her personal journey. Today, she employs four young people in her growing enterprise, fostering job creation in sourcing, production, and sales. Her initiative strengthens local supply chains by sourcing ingredients from nearby farmers, creating a mini ecosystem of empowerment.

Despite her remarkable progress, Mercy’s journey has not been without hurdles. Regulatory requirements





like acquiring the URSB seal and navigating a competitive market have posed significant challenges. Yet, her resilience remains unshaken. Participation in national expos such as the Women's Katale Expo in Jinja and the 31st National Agricultural Show has given her product visibility, customer insights, and connections with potential investors. "Every expo, every stall, every conversation is an opportunity to learn, improve and scale," Mercy reflects.

The Vision Ahead

Chepkurui's entrepreneurial journey addresses two of Uganda's most pressing issues: malnutrition and youth unemployment. But she sees her mission as just beginning. "In the next 3-5 years, I want Goldensip to be among Uganda's most celebrated composite flour brands. Our dream is simple, to improve the nutrition standards of every child in Uganda, one child at a time."

She envisions a production scale of 4-6 tonnes a month, valued at over UGX 7 million per tonne, and ultimately establishing a dedicated production plant to meet growing demand.

"I want to keep feeding people, empowering communities, and proving that with the right support, young people can transform Uganda's food future," she says, her eyes gleaming with purpose.

Chepkurui's journey is a shining example of what happens when vision meets opportunity. With unwavering commitment and the transformative support of the SAYE Project, she has not only launched a promising agribusiness but has also become a beacon of hope for other youth across Uganda.



A Family that works together, Grows together: A young couple in Iganga shares their experience

“Working with my wife has accelerated our business growth threefold compared to what it would have been if I hadn’t partnered with her,”

says Bashir Kisambira, walking with confidence.

“As I move around attending to other matters, I am assured that she is capably managing the poultry farm and everything else at home.”

A diploma graduate in Animal Husbandry and Animal Surgery, Bashir refused to let circumstances determine his destiny. Rather than sit at home waiting for a job, he chose to take charge of his future. Together with his wife, Salima, they are not just business partners, they are dreamers rewriting their own story in Iganga District.

Their story began long before their business did.

They grew up as childhood friends under the same village skies, attending the same primary school and playing together. Over time, friendship grew into love, and matured into marriage. Today, they do not just stay together, they as well work together.

“When my wife became pregnant with our first child, life took on new

meaning. I realized that it was not enough to simply survive—we needed to build something lasting,” narrates Bashir.

At the time, he was working as a poultry farm manager in Nakasongola, where he discovered the transformative power of agribusiness. The experience opened his eyes to a new vision, a future in farming, one he could build hand in hand with Salima.

Bashir didn’t have a bank account then, but he had very strong faith in his wife. Each time he earned, he sent the money to Salima, who carefully saved every shilling. When their savings accumulated, the couple returned home to Iganga, built a modest house, and decided to convert one of the unfinished rooms into a small poultry shelter.

They bought 30 birds as their very first investment. Three



months later, all the birds had survived. When they sold them for UGX 750,000, their dream started to take shape.

Encouraged, they reinvested and bought 100 more birds, but this time, half of them died. Although it was painful they did not give up. They earned UGX 1,100,000 from the remaining birds, proof that they were on the right path.

Like many young farmers, the couple faced challenges that tested their resolve. Feed prices went up. Diseases spread quickly. They lost birds and sometimes, hope.

But their faith kept them grounded

“Every hardship,” says Bashir softly, **“comes with a blessing if you don’t give up.”**

To them, the blessing came in form of the Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Employment (SAYE) Project or, as Bashir calls it, **“a Gift.”**

Through Salima’s involvement, they were profiled and selected to join the project. In March 2025, they received 150 Kroiler F1 birds. Using the small brooding system they had built, they raised 125 healthy birds. By July, they sold 95 of them, earning more than UGX 1.8 million.

It was their breakthrough moment, and a turning point for their family.



With their new income, the couple took another bold step: they bought a lactating mixed-breed cow and named her **“Gift.”**

“She came as a blessing,” Salima smiles, her eyes softening. **“A gift from Allah and from the project that believed in us.”**

Today, **“Gift”** provides milk for the family and a little extra income. Bashir also works as a Community Agro Vet Entrepreneur under the SAYE project, teaching other farmer groups good agronomic practices and helping them take good care of their animals. Meanwhile, Salima oversees their poultry enterprise, which continues to grow. They have already ordered 100 more birds.

Their dreams are bigger now. By June 2026, Bashir and Salima hope their farm will earn at least UGX 5 million per month. Their plans are very clear:

- ◆ Buy a high-yield dairy cow to produce up to 20 litres of milk a day.
- ◆ Expand their poultry operation to sell 50 birds a month and collect 10 trays of eggs daily.
- ◆ Split their flock into layers and broilers to reach more markets.
- ◆ Open a local agro-feed store to help fellow farmers access affordable feed.
- ◆ Host training sessions to inspire other youth to join agriculture.
- ◆ And most importantly, support Salima’s dream of going back to school to study Fashion Design a passion she has held since childhood.

Water for Dairy Business: New Beginnings for Kiboga Residents

Background

Dairy farming is one of the most lucrative agricultural enterprises in Uganda, and the dairy sector contributes about 4% of the country's gross domestic product. However, the sector is operating below its full capacity and one of the challenges is access to water which is a critical input for livestock, particularly in the water-stressed cattle corridor, where many dairy farmers operate. The challenge is not the absence of water, but the lack of clean, accessible and reliable water sources for domestic, agricultural, and productive use along the dairy value chain. This paradox exists despite Uganda being a water-rich country.

Context and Challenges

For decades, residents of Kiboga District, especially in Muyenje and Dwaniro, have struggled to access safe and clean water. Temiteo Ssemakalu, a 69-year-old dairy farmer, shares:

“Living in Muyenje was difficult. We fetched water from a source 2 kilometers away, shared with

animals, and drank it unboiled. We were constantly sick, and dairy farming was nearly impossible.”

Similar experiences were shared by other residents. Tusabe Peace, a 50-year-old mother of nine and grandmother of four, recalls spending up to UGX 1,000 per jerrycan of water, often delivered by motorbike. Despite the high cost, the water was contaminated, leading to frequent outbreaks of waterborne diseases.

The Dwaniro Dairy Farmers Cooperative was also severely affected. Most farmers used unsafe water from ponds to clean milk handling equipment. According to Charles Ibona, the General Manager of the Cooperative: “We spent up to UGX 100,000 per truckload of water, using 3–4 trucks daily. This expense reduced profits significantly. We lost up to

UGX 15 million weekly due to milk rejections blamed on poor hygiene.”

The Government excavated a distant hilltop dam to help alleviate the situation and provide water to the community; however, this could not solve the challenges due to difficulties in accessing the site.

The W4DB project and its objectives

Heifer International, with funding from Aqua for All, launched the Water for Dairy Business (W4DB) in 2022 project to address the water crisis in Muyenje and Dwaniro in Kiboga District. The objective was to demonstrate that improving access to clean water would enhance milk quality and increase business turnover for farmers and Cooperatives in the dairy sector.

The project adopted a market-driven model to promote sustainable access to safe water for over 1,500 individuals through the Dwaniro Dairy Cooperative. It aimed to enhance both domestic wellbeing and economic productivity through reliable water supply.



Transformation Through the W4DB Project

Over the last three years, the project has completed two water supply systems that have revolutionized water access for the communities in Muyenje and Dwaniro. Solar-powered submersible pumps were installed at water sources and the water is pumped to large-capacity storage tanks located at elevated points, then gravity-fed through pipelines to community water access points.

Community members use prepaid water tokens, managed by local leaders, to access clean water at just UGX 100 per jerrycan—significantly reducing cost and improving convenience.

Ashraf Ssali, the LC1 Chairperson of Muyenje Village and also a member of the water management committee remarks: “Gone are the days of sharing dirty water with animals and paying UGX 1,000 per jerrycan. The community no longer fights over water at dams.”

In the same village, Mzee Ssemakalu now spends UGX 30,000 monthly on clean water for his household and livestock. His grandchildren fetch water from a nearby tap, just five minutes away.

Impact on Cooperatives, Schools, and Health Centers

The project has had a profound impact on businesses and institutions. At Dwaniro Dairy Cooperative, milk quality has significantly improved. A dedicated water tank ensures reliable supply for cleaning and sanitation. Charles Ibona notes:

“Previously, every week Jessa Dairies rejected on average three 10,000-liter trucks due to poor milk quality. Today, rejections are down to 1%, mostly due to non-water-related factors.”

The Cooperative now uses about 10,000 liters of clean water weekly, benefiting over 800 dairy farmers. With the improved water hygiene and improved milk quality and quantity, the Cooperative’s profit margins have improved. This has resulted in higher payments for the farmers’ milk and improved livelihoods for the dairy farmers of Dwaniro Cooperative.

Muyenje Primary School has also seen improvements. Deputy Headteacher Mr. Hagenimana Denis explains that previously, students were charged UGX 2,000 each for clean water, contributing to a 35-student dropout. Now, with



free access to clean water, girls remain enrolled and facilities are cleaner.

At Muyenje Health Center III, the impact is equally striking. In-charge Byakagaba Henry reports a sharp decline in diarrheal and typhoid cases—from 20 to just 2 per month.



About the Project

The Water for Dairy Business (W4DB) project, has since 2022, been implemented by Heifer International and funded by Aqua for All. The project has transformed communities of Muyenje and Dwaniro in Kiboga District bby using solar energy to power the water distribution systems. The project serves over 2,000 community members, including farmers, students, and healthcare providers.

The project is using a market-driven approach to stimulate and commercialize access to safe and clean water. The project's business model demonstrates how the availability of safe and clean water increases volumes and quality of milk bulked by the Cooperatives and results in increased productivity and business turnover. At the same time, the project has provided clean and safe water for domestic use for the residents of the two communities.

The initiative aligns with Heifer International's mission to improve livelihoods through sustainable agricultural development. Access to clean water has not only improved health but also increased productivity and income for dairy farmers—marking a new beginning for the people of Kiboga.

The Water for Dairy Business project has transformed the narrative in Kiboga—from the paradox of water scarcity that leads to small volumes and poor milk quality to improved quality and higher milk volumes and improved livelihoods and cleaner, safer communities. Through thoughtful collaboration, infrastructure, and business-oriented solutions, Heifer International and Aqua for All have demonstrated that rural water infrastructures can be sustainably built and maintained and made a lasting impact in Uganda's dairy sector.

Heifer in the Media

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Solar Power Delivers Clean water to Kiboga Dairy Farmers <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/magazines/farming/solar-power-delivers-clean-water-to-kiboga-dairy-farmers-5098916>

Financials

Highlights

Total Net funds (Ushs)

1.556B

Non- Current Assets (Ushs)

1.460B

Current Assets (Ushs)

5.780B

Current Liabilities (Ushs)

5.687B

Net Assets (Ushs)

1.556B

The country programme operated with total revenue of

Ugx
27,263,605,890

(2024: Ushs 9,609,746,967)

and continued to position itself for future generation with large donors like MasterCard Foundation, Japan International Cooperation Foundation, aBi development, Carbon Trust, Aqua 4 All, MOTT Foundation, Hilton Foundation among others. During the year ended 30 June 2025, Heifer reached out to

73,689

beneficiaries

(59,695 Male and 48,465 Female)

through the active projects spread in four regions of the country. The projects were implemented by a team of 56 technical and support staff (27 male and 29 female) led by the Country Director.

Heifer continued to pursue partnerships with public and private sector organisations in order to scale up its programmes and deepen its impact. The country program has also widened its scope focusing on anchor value chains both crop and livestock leveraging technology and innovation to improve enterprise performance and efficiency, while empowering women and youth. Heifer Uganda has continued to implement the various initiatives, Green Dairy Project supported by Carbon Trust, Water for Dairy Business supported by Aqua for All, SAYE Project founded by MasterCard Foundation, DREEM Hub funded by MOTT Foundation, Hilton Foundation and Heifer International and the Stimulating Agribusiness for Youth Empowerment project (SAYE) funded by the MasterCard Foundation were the new projects started in 2024.

Financial Statements

For the Year ended 30 June 2025

Statement of financial position

	Notes	2025 Ushs	2024 Ushs
Fund balance			
Accumulated fund		1,555,757,006	1,555,757,006
Total net funds		1,555,757,006	1,555,757,006
Represented by			
Non-current assets			
Property and equipment	6	1,371,370,044	1,379,327,808
Intangible Assets	7	88,684,133	-
		<u>1,460,054,177</u>	<u>1,379,327,808</u>
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	2,264,364,643	2,445,539,525
Receivables	9	3,515,946,247	1,390,107,187
		<u>5,780,310,890</u>	<u>3,835,646,712</u>
Current liabilities			
Payables	10	5,684,608,061	3,659,217,514
		<u>95,702,829</u>	<u>176,429,198</u>
Net assets		1,555,757,006	1,555,757,006

The financial statements on pages 8 to 19 were approved by the authorised representatives and programme management on August 29, 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Signed by:

William Matoru

Country Director



Director, Finance and Administration

Financial Statements

For the Year ended 30 June 2025

Statement of financial position

	Notes	2025 Ushs	2024 Ushs
Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	2,264,364,643	2,445,539,525
Receivables	9	85,918,367	21,452,030
Advance to projects	9	2,241,869,472	586,458,762
Prepaid expenses	9	91,893,324	727,110,106
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	6	1,460,054,177	1,379,327,808
Grant receivable	9	166,539,198	11,338,304
Receivable HQ	9	929,725,886	43,747,985
Total assets		7,240,365,067	5,214,974,520
Liabilities			
Accounts payable	10	620,423,537	300,585
Accrued expenses	10	96,387,259	129,295,491
Deferred revenue	10	4,967,797,265	3,529,621,438
Total liabilities		5,684,608,061	3,659,217,514
Total net assets		1,555,757,006	1,555,757,006
Total liabilities and net assets		7,240,365,067	5,214,974,520

Our Partners

Heifer's values-based partnerships connecting smallholder farmers to markets, capital and technology.

In partnership with





HCU
FRUIT JUICE



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