



UJAMAA EMPOWERMENT NETWORK

Enriching Communities

UJAMAA EMPOWERMENT NETWORK UGANDA

ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT 2024.

Introduction.

The Ujamaa Empowerment Network is a registered Non-Governmental Organization in Uganda (File No. MIA/NB/2024/09/6369) focused on building relationships with people and communities to promote food security and increase household income among small holder farmers using organic farming practices which are cost and environment friendly. To ensure a healthy and productive population, the organization also prioritizes access to good health, emphasizing on proper nutrition, addressing maternal health needs for women and tackling the devastating challenges related to access to clean water and sanitation facilities in vulnerable communities.

Institutional Development.

Advisory Board of Directors:

After the formation of Ujamaa, in January 2024, it was necessary to first identify Advisory Board members with great passion and experience in entrepreneurship and community development. They include: **Dr. Niwagaba Kennedy**, Lecturer and Researcher (Makerere University School of Public Health, Director Arrow Research Consult Limited) with experience in management and implementation of health and livelihood programs, **Ms. Mwesigwa Elizabeth** (Badminton player, Advocate for Women Rights and People with Disabilities) with great experience in Social justice related projects **CPA Namanya Brian** (Accountant) to support Ujamaa staff in building financial systems for proper accountability and **Sheila Turyahabwe** (ICT expert, Monitoring and Evaluation and advocate for Women Rights).

The board supported the Executive Director on registration of the entity with government in January 2024 and by 8th February, the Certificate of incorporation was issued making Ujamaa registered Organisation with government. The Board immediately started on the process of registering the organisation with National NGO Bureau a process which was completed in September with registration Certificate and operational permit valid for the next 3 years.

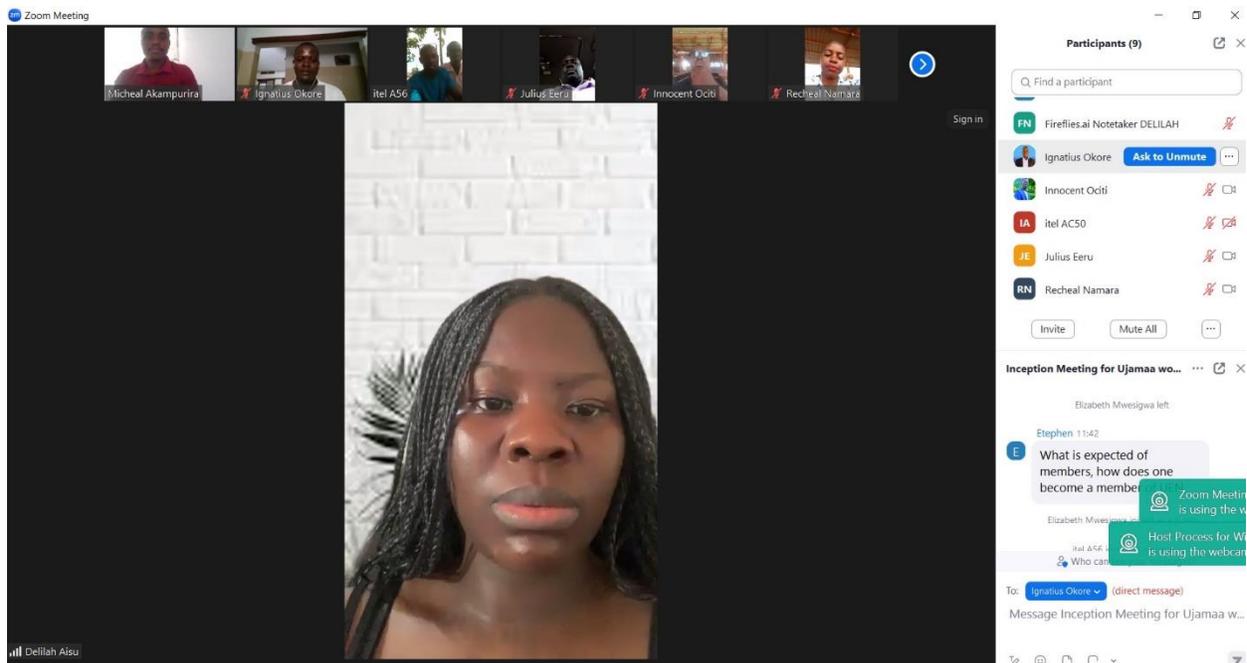
The board has significantly supported staff in fundraising for projects which have been implemented in 2024 as highlighted below.

Ujamaa Staff.

Due to demand for experienced staff to support members, a team of 7 staff who are working on part time and on voluntary basis were recruited to run Ujamaa Secretariat. These include, Executive Director, Program Manager, Finance and administration Officer, Regional Coordinator (Eastern Uganda), Forestry Officer and an Agronomist. More staff expected to be recruited as the organisation grows.

Staff Capacity building .

One of Ujamaa's core objectives is to build the capacity staff in topics related to program implementation, fundraising, communication and entrepreneurship. Since April 2024, a quarterly online workshop is organised to train staff in the any of the above topics.



One of the Capacity Building Sessions on team building.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

In Ujamaa's first year of work (2024), Ujamaa together with her partners were able to implement programs and a number of remarkable achievements were registered as follows.

Ujamaa Seed program.

Under “**Our Seed our heritage campaign**” Ujamaa aimed at supporting local farmers, one farmer per household with indigenous seed for crop production where a group of 45 farmers (30 women and 15 youth) were supported. Farmers were also supported with training in agronomic practices which included, seed selection, planting, Weeding, organic pest management techniques like preparation of organic pesticides using local materials like ash, red pepper, Urea, local herbs), training in harvesting, post harvest handling and marketing of the harvests. This program was implemented in partnership with Youth Effort for Sustainable Rural Development a grassroot organisation located in Kumi district, Eastern Uganda whose role was to mobilise farmers, monitor farmer gardens and support farmers in harvesting and marketing their harvests. Skills attained were to be transferred to other 5 members of the household to ensure that each family is sustainably supported to get out of poverty. This would bring the total number of secondary beneficiaries to 225 people.

By end of the season, farmers were able to produce enough food for home consumption but also preserve part of the harvests for sale. As advised during training, farmers were able to store 40% of the harvests for home consumption to ensure food security and sale 60% to support other family expenses like education of children, medical cares, clothes, renovation of the house and other urgent needs. In conclusion, the program has been welcomed by farmers in Kumi district as it has supported the livelihood of the participants as well as supporting soils and environment eco systems.



A group of farmers with local seed provided for planting.



Soybean garden owned by five women who participated in the program.

Lessons learnt under this program.

- There is need to support more farmers in the area. At the inception of the program, many farmers desired to take part but due to limited resources only 45 farmers were selected.
- Many people are ready to embrace organic farming as it is cheap for a small holder farmer compared to inorganic farming where farmers buy inorganic seed from Agro input companies which has to be planted once and the harvest can not be replanted, inorganic herbicides and pesticides are also expensive. Farmers have also given testimonies on how their soils have been affected by inorganic pesticides after applying them in three consecutive seasons

Ujamaa Tree Project/ Environmental Conservation..

Ujamaa Tree program is a tree planting program aimed at reforestation degradable areas in Teso subregion, Eastern Uganda. The pilot project was implemented in Ngora district where indigenous tree species and fruit trees like Calliandra, grevillea and Mango seedlings were distributed to 50 farmers and 4 schools in the district. Under the campaign “**Every Tree Matter**”, a total 3550 seedlings were distributed; the project was focussing on indigenous species to restore the species which have been cut down due to human activities like charcoal burning, clearing land for farming and animal rearing. Local species can also be intercropped with crops under an agroforestry system.



School Girls planting a mango tree in school compound.



Each student at Agirigiroi primary school given a tree seedling to plant at home.

Lessons Learnt under this program.

- Youth have developed great passion for tree planting. This has resulted from the campaigns on climate change in the area. Youth have also witnessed the ever-increasing effects of climate change like prolonged drought, change in seasons which has negatively affected the area.
- Due to limited land for farming, farmers have embraced indigenous tree seedlings as they can be intercropped with other food crops. Such an agroforestry system favours small holder farmers who do not have enough land reserved for tree planting.

HerPad Project.

Due to inadequate access to menstrual hygiene facilities, girls miss 3-4 days of school as women also lose days of productive work making them remain vulnerable to social and economic shocks.

Menstrual hygiene project pilot project was implemented in Naigobya Luuka district, Eastern Uganda where 120 participants (93 school going girls and 17 women) were equipped with information on menstruation and skills in making reusable sanitary pads. The project also supported 15 disabled people who included the lame, deaf and dumb. By the end of the training each participant was able to make a pad and given material to make other 3 pads to take them through out menstruation period. This project was implemented in partnership with **Mwesigwa International School and Homecare for the Disabled** a grassroot organisation founded by one of our Board members.





CONCLUSION.

The three projects implemented in the first year of operation have given Ujamaa remarkable success. As the world faces challenges of food insecurity, lack of sustainable income by most under privileged communities, environmental shocks and inadequate access to maternal health needs, Ujamaa Empowerment Network comes in to add on the efforts of other players to address those constraints.

Reported by:

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Sign: 

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