

Project Name: U-LEARN 2 (“Learn, Earn, and Save”)

Organization(s): Swisscontact and The MasterCard Foundation

Country: Uganda (Part of a two-country program including Tanzania)

Dates of Implementation: 2016-2021

Partners: Business companies, business support services companies, Directorate of Industrial Training, Ugandan Small Scale Industries Association, Centenary Bank, FINCA Uganda, District local authorities.

Website: <http://www.swisscontact.org/en/country/uganda/projects/projects-uganda/project/-/show/u-learn-learn-earn-and-save.html>

Project Description: U-LEARN 2 is improving opportunities for young women and men with limited education and skills through labor market-relevant skills training, including technical/vocational skills in agribusiness, construction and hospitality; entrepreneurship skills; financial literacy; work readiness; and non-cognitive life skills. It also links youth to larger companies for internship and employment opportunities. There is a strong focus on supporting young entrepreneurs in the informal sector through skills development, market linkages, access to financial services, youth business associations, and mentorship. U-LEARN 2 facilitates access to entrepreneurship and market access training, business coaching, and business plan competitions. It helps build local trade-based youth business associations to facilitate peer-to-peer learning. On the finance side, it helps youth form youth savings groups and provides financial literacy training. It also works with financial service providers and government youth programs to develop, adapt and improve access to savings, credit and micro-leasing products for youth.

Interesting Features & Innovations:

- **Market systems approach to convene young people and market actors,** facilitating linkages between companies, training institutions, financial institutions, and youth associations.
- **Tripartite model of linking youth to agribusiness, hospitality and building and construction companies:** linking youth groups to sector based companies for local and export markets and facilitating access to productive assets.
- **Taping into existing opportunities in the different sectors** The **Learning Group Model** and fostering **peer-to-peer learning and mentorship.**
- **Qualitative M&E tools** such as Jacobs Foundations’ Social and Life Skills Framework; participatory market mapping; outcome mapping; and Qualitative Comparative Analysis. **Active youth role in M&E activities.**

Target Population: The target is youth (18-24) who come from families at or below the international poverty line. Of the 7,500 beneficiaries, 50% will be young women, at least 20% of whom will be young mothers. It works across 11 districts in Uganda. Approximately 70% rural / 30% peri-urban or urban.

Results to-Date and/or Target Results: The goal is to raise 7,500 young people sustainably out of poverty. Improved employment and micro-entrepreneurship opportunities will be available to 5,500 young women and men, and 2,000 additional young entrepreneurs will be supported to grow their small businesses. Key output and outcome indicators, and targets, for U-LEARN 2 include:

- 80% of the direct youth beneficiaries will be engaged in satisfactory self- or wage employment.
- 100% of the benefit outreach increase in net income by at least 65%.
- # of additional jobs created by young entrepreneurs
- % of youth acquiring and using national certification
- # of youth who start & grow their businesses, and # of young entrepreneurs transformed into SMEs
- # of entrepreneurs realizing business profitability
- # of youth who have successfully transitioned to pursue further opportunities, jobs, enterprise