



## **Empower And Care Organization (EACO)**

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*"For the millions of children across Africa who have been orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, the promise of the future lies in the compassionate response of families and community members taking action of their behalf. Investing in community-based organizations that strengthen the capacity of families to support children in need is one of the most effective ways a donor can make a direct and real difference. We must never forget the importance of family and community in the life of a child."*

## **END OF THIRD QUARTER REPORT DECEMBER 2015**

### **HISTORY AND MISSION**

Empower and Care Organization (EACO) was founded in 2004 at the community level and was registered as a Community Based Organization (CBO) in 2006 (registration number MG/2006/10/294). EACO was established to address the limited educational and economic opportunities that exist for vulnerable groups of women and children in Mukono County. EACO's vision is that, by implementing activities that provide these opportunities, it will contribute to the reduction of poverty and HIV/AIDS in the Mukono community.

Accordingly, EACO's mission is to reduce poverty and HIV/AIDS in and around Mukono County through the creation of economic empowerment and educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups of people. EACO's activities are targeted toward vulnerable women, particularly widows and those living with HIV/AIDS, as well as vulnerable children, youth, and the elderly.

### **LOCATION**

EACO is located on Kayunga Road in Ggulu A Kitete, a rural village located within Mukono Town Council, Mukono County, Mukono District, Central Uganda Region. The community in which EACO is situated is largely rural, with most people making very low incomes through agricultural activities.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

1. To stimulate, promote, and support economic activities in rural communities that improve quality of life for disadvantaged and marginalized persons;
2. To prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigate its effects;
3. To improve agricultural production by making necessary resources available;
4. To build and strengthen the capacity of community groups in order to improve upon management and planning at the local level;
5. To build and strengthen strategic partnerships to maximize and effect change; and
6. To mobilize resources and facilities from key stakeholders, government, and donors so as to implement community programs.

## **EACO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY**

EACO supports the community in which it operates through programming that addresses some of its most pervasive needs. Through its *Restoring Hope for the Marginalized Program*, EACO has provided 60 grandmothers and 230 OVCs with support tailored to their specific needs. This has included activities such as “top-up” of school fees and funding midday meals for school children, construction of houses for the elderly, and providing gardening supplies so that families are able to grow their own food.



Through its *Sexual/Reproductive Health Program*, EACO regularly visits 16 HIV+ individuals in the community and provides them with donated foodstuffs so they are able to consume nutritious foods that will help them to stay healthy and strong.

Through the *Vocational and Life Skills Training Program* EACO facilitates the development of economic sustainability for previously destitute individuals with little or no income. Considering that in EACO's community, 74% of members of the general public earn less than two dollars a day, 71% of widows earn less than one dollar a day, and most orphans generate no income at all<sup>1</sup>, the Vocational Life Skills Program meets an urgent need in the community – and has succeeded in making 40 community members financially independent.

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO EACO**

EACO is grateful for the tremendous amount of support it receives from the community, including Local Council Leaders (LCs), churches, other organizations, and individual community members. The LC II openly acknowledges the positive impact EACO has made in the community in relation to poverty alleviation and HIV/AIDS and is eager to lend her support to the organization.

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Further, EACO has received support from several churches in the community. This includes Zion Church's donation of space to hold a 3-day income generation and entrepreneurship training workshop for widows and Good Shepherd Church's multiple donations to EACO, such as clothes and scholastic materials for OVCs, office furniture, and monetary donations to improve EACO's office and demonstration site.

EACO has also developed supportive relationships with other organizations. Through its partnership with Hopacom, HIV+ community members receive more comprehensive services: they are not only able to receive counseling and ARVs, but also the nutrition they need to live successfully with the disease. Further, EACO partners with the Small Grants Embassy and IJM to provide vulnerable widows in the community with the knowledge, skills, and material tools to begin their own microenterprises. While IJM provided EACO with funds and logistical support to implement the project, EACO carried out the activities under its *Vocational and Life Skills Training Program*.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

- Allowing Beneficiaries input in any of the activities ensured ownership and all Beneficiaries have ensured their chosen activity is operational according to plan.
- Each Beneficiary has a book in which they keep records of input items and periodic update of yields from their income activity.
- Many of the beneficiaries have picked up on the management skills they were trained in and are applying these skills to their projects.

Below are pictures of some Beneficiaries at the site of their Income project.

**Namukasa Regina at her Poultry house in Lubugumu.**



**Nakazi Getrida's poultry in Kyampisi**



**Nabatanzi's children at the piggery shade.**



**Annet Nakiwala at the seedling nursery for her vegetable garden.**



**Annet's Cabbage, Spinach and Sukuma wiki seedlings.**



**Teopista Nakawalya in her potato garden**



EACO receives support in several different ways from individual community members. EACO contracts professional trainers to conduct its income generation and entrepreneurship training workshops, as seen in the photographs.

During the work-shop Beneficiaries were taught the qualities an entrepreneur must have and the challenges and risks he must take in order to achieve his objectives as seen in the photograph.

**Bamuta Jespa trainer training the Beneficiarys at Zion-church-Mukono**



Among the enterprises these Beneficiaries were advised to engage in were the Banana growing as seen in the photograph

**In the Middle photograph, town council Mukono District.**



**Shadrak Kyobe leading the group to the demonstration sites in Kitete village Mukono**



The one on the left hand side is one of the farmers in Kitete village at his banana plantation so he taught the Beneficiaries on how to manage these bananas and talked about. Vegetable growing, local bird rearing, Mushroom growing and piggery rearing as seen in other photographs at the demonstration sites



**Mushroom project at one of the farmers in kitete village**



**Piggery rearing project at one of the Farm projects in kitete village**



So training on the above as carried out and demonstration sites for illustration were visited. In addition to the above Beneficiaries were also taught hygiene/ sanitation in their homes and how to keep the environment very favorable to their work. Record-keeping too was taught. Photography during the workshop was taken to further illustrate what took place during that time.

## Beekeeping Project in Uganda - Practical Action

### Uganda beekeeping

Bee-keeping is an important seasonal activity in almost of all the parts of Uganda where traditionally bee hives are constructed either from timber, bamboo palms or woven from forest climbers. Honey is usually taken from hives twice a year.

Bee hunters and keepers prefer placing their hives in forests rather than in open fields for three reasons.

Hives hidden in forests are protected from smoke caused by bush fires, from the heat and the wind and from unscrupulous honey stealing or hive destruction.



Figure 1 - Top Bar Beehive honey comb

### Summary

The primary purpose of the Honey Beekeepers Project (HBP) is to provide Empower and Care Organization (EACO) beneficiaries with new skills that would allow them to improve their income generating capabilities and gradually become income self-sufficient allowing them to escape the poverty trap and achieve more humane and dignified living conditions.

The secondary goal of the project is to provide EACO with a source of revenue with which it would supplement donor provided funding for its continued operation and socially oriented projects.

EACO has identified a population of about 200 potential beneficiaries who could benefit from the program and who would be interested in producing natural honey and wax as a means of income.

### Beekeeping in the Mukono district

The market for locally produced honey in the Mukono district is profitable even though beekeeping is not well understood. Honey is either gathered from wild honey bee colonies or is produced by local beekeepers and sold through local shops and super markets. The industry is limited by production yield and honey sales are not meeting demand. As a result a viable industry has emerged in the last decade, Local people/farmers have driven this success and the industry continues to attract strong support from all levels within communities.

EACO has set out to take advantage of this situation and in a sustainable manner wants to participate and assist in the growth of the Uganda honey bee industry. The project is teaching people to construct their own honey bee hives and to produce their own protective head veils and clothing, tools, and hive smokers.



Figure 2- Mukono district, Uganda

## Beneficiaries

EACO's activities are targeted towards vulnerable women, particularly widows, people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as vulnerable children, youth, and the elderly. There are around 200 beneficiaries in rural and urban areas of which 80% are women.

## Project objectives

The fundamental **objectives** of this project are to introduce beekeeping as a means of providing personal income for vulnerable people, the alleviation of poverty in rural areas of Uganda and the provision of an ongoing source of local income for EACO as a social enterprise

## Project implementation

The Honey Beekeepers Project (HBP) is being implemented through a **value added chain** of honey and wax production, processing, packaging, marketing, distribution and sales program activities that will engage existing and future beekeepers as well as other beneficiaries. The HBP project will accomplish its goals through a phased implementation.

### Phase One

During this phase the project emphasis was on promotion of the concept that beekeeping is a very viable source of income and that the training necessary to be successful will be available through EACO. The primary sources of honey and wax production were the existing beehives operated by existing rural beekeepers that joined the program.



Figure 3 - Women building traditional vine beehive

Some traditional hives made with local reeds and vines were manufactured and people learned how to make them.

Processing was done using simple homemade tools and equipment. Distribution was achieved through direct sales by beneficiaries in street and town markets. Product quality was not at an export product level. This phase started in early 2013.

### Phase Two

The primary objective of this second phase was to expand production and improve quality. EACO engaged local carpenters to build a number of KTBH (Kenya Top Bar Hives), purchased suits and smokers and made them available to selected producers.

During this phase EACO built KTBH hives using a proven design, trained selected beekeepers, beekeeper suits and smokers were purchased to be



Figure 4 - Kenya Top Bar beehives

available to beekeepers on loan basis. This phase started in late 2013.

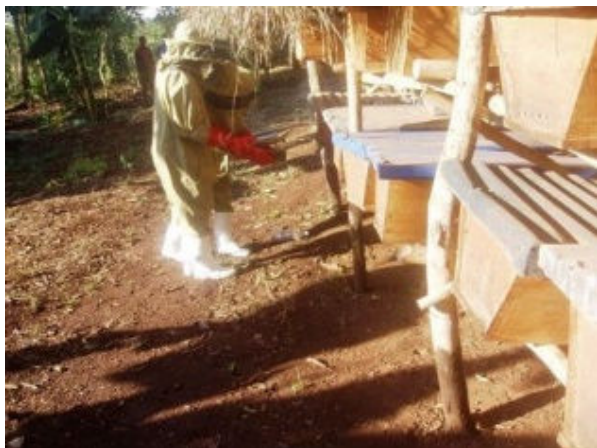


Figure 5 - Operator in beekeeper's suit with smoker

### Phase Three

To address the increased demand EACO expanded its honey and wax production by building more **top bar beehives**, by adding some high productivity **Langstroth** beehives to the inventory, obtained additional suits and smokers. EACO obtained a location where to build a storage and production facility to house the expanding processing and packaging operations.



Figure 6 - Centrifuge equipment and packing supplies

Centrifuge equipment for the removal of honey from the new beehive types and honey packing supplies were purchased and kept in a safe new building.

With a higher production EACO plans to expand its marketing activities in Uganda and in other countries through *fair-trade marketing* organizations. This phase will start around July 2015.

### Future activities

With the acquired know-how and skills there is an opportunity for EACO to become a beehive manufacturer and distributor. Good ones are expensive, have a limited life and need to be replaced. This implies carpentry training for some local young people.

At EACO we are creating a project that establishes a vocational education program to provide a learning environment for young people at risk, in the 15-35 age groups, with life skills that will enable them to be professionally competent and strive for a financial self sufficient future, a gateway to exit the poverty trap where many find themselves.



Figure 7 - New Langstroth beehives



Figure 8 - Honey processing and storage building

Official education programs do not reach all children in Uganda, and are designed to bring up young people capable of being employed by existing businesses and companies.

When these young people leave school they are faced with a severe shortage of employment opportunities in the Uganda economy, in urban areas and more so in rural areas, and some cannot afford to cater for themselves when it comes to job seeking.

These young people need a different type of training that will enable them create their own jobs, employ others and be good entrepreneurs at all levels, from the small street vendor and small artifact maker to the independent professional in the trades.

EACO seeks to create and conduct a training program that will better prepare young people for the difficult employment reality they will face in Uganda. This is to be a resource centre where young people can learn useful entrepreneurship and economic empowerment skills in bee keeping.

### Measuring success

The **success** of the beekeeping program is being **measured** by an increased number of people who keep bees rather than collect honey from wild bee colonies, an improvement on the trade of bee products on the domestic market, increased food security and the alleviation of poverty.

Many of the people who joined the program are now capable of building their own traditional beehives and some have now the knowledge to build KTBH beehives.

### EACO

Empower and Care Organization (EACO) has been registered since 2006 as a Community Based Organization. It operates in the Mukono District, Central Uganda. Its mission is to reduce poverty and the incidence of HIV/AIDS through the creation of economic empowerment and educational opportunities. Its activities are targeted toward vulnerable women, particularly widows, those living with HIV/AIDS, vulnerable children, youth, and the elderly. EACO is committed to a development process that promotes equality.

### ShadrakKyobe

Shadrak Kyobe has Eight years' experience in community-based project management and implementation with orphans, vulnerable children, vulnerable women, and refugees. Shadrak has worked with families, communities, and children affected by poverty, HIV/AIDS, conflict related displacement in Africa.



## Our Access to Safe Clean Water and Sanitation Project

Under this project EACO has been able to get funds from Just A Drop. This project was sponsored by Travel 2 and aimed at providing accessible clean and safe water for everyone in the community of Kyampisi Namanganga village for a better and healthy life. The water is serving over 3000 people in the community of Namanganga Kyampisi sub county.



## EACO has developed supportive relationships with other organizations

In the Mukono District, during periods of low rainfall when shallow water wells dry out, women and children walk up to 10 kilometers in search of clean water. More often than not, this results in children not attending school and women having less time to engage in income-generating activities.

With funding from Vibrant Village Foundation, EACO has constructed and repair boreholes in the villages of Namasumbi, Nabale and Nyanja and trained residents in borehole maintenance and repair to ensure sustainability. EACO will also conduct sanitation and hygiene education classes for villagers.

The goal of this project is to make clean water accessible within 1 kilometer for 100% of the people in rural Mukono and bring relief to thousands of residents, including those in surrounding communities.



Volunteer trainers from the community work alongside the professional trainers to make participant home visits where participants are provided with materials, instruction, and support in implementing income generating activities. EACO currently has seven permanent volunteers serving in this role, all of whom are retirees with a professional background in agriculture. EACO also receives volunteers on a seasonal basis who help with tasks that do not require specialized professional skills, such as sorting and distributing donated clothes to OVCs.

Other support EACO receives from individual community members includes project participant contribution of the labor necessary to construct the structures needed to implement their IGA, such as pig pens and chicken coups. EACO also receives donations from individuals in the community, both in-kind – for instance, user rights to the kibanja used for the EACO demonstration site and foodstuffs for HIV+ community members – as well as monetary donations.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **SUMMARY**

In Recap of all what EACO does like, Microfinance training, provision of basic needs and scholastic materials to OVCs, Psychosocial support to the vulnerable members of society. It is therefore right to say that all the activities done are done for the good of the vulnerable members of society.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion therefore, EACO has done and is still doing a great work to help in the betterment of lives of the vulnerable members in the community.

### **The follow-up activities after project completion**

The already established capacity in the organization and the community will help in the continuity of prevention campaign. Our trained staff and the increased number of volunteers will continue to support the already established work for continuity with resource mobilization and also seek partnership with other Organizations with similar objectives.

### **An Invitation**

Stemming the tide of Poverty and HIV/AIDS requires a broad response, from large international agencies and nations to small assemblies of concerned neighbors and community members. This report discusses the important and widespread work that is happening at the community level, at the frontlines of Poverty and AIDS, often invisible to outside founders and reporters. National and international efforts fare much better when they are coupled with grassroots activism. Investing in grassroots

Programs are one of the most powerful ways that a donor can make a difference in the lives of women and children and in the battle against Poverty and HIV/AIDS. Solutions that strengthen the capacity of the family and the community to care for children help ensure that fewer children will be abandoned, neglected, or placed within institutional care. Equally important, community-based solutions mobilize individuals to action, building hope and increasing the local capacity of community members to address their own needs. We invite you to join us in building a better future for Women and children orphaned and made vulnerable by Poverty and HIV/AIDS. There are thousands of diligent community-based organizations working to support families in their efforts to provide Women and children with the loving care, basic material support, and educational opportunities that every one deserves. What these groups lack most are the resources to do so adequately.

*“For the millions of Vulnerable Women Vulnerable children and Children across Uganda who have been Abused, Orphaned and made vulnerable by Poverty and HIV/AIDS, the promise of the future lies in the compassionate response of families and community members taking action on their behalf. Investing in Community-Based Organizations that strengthen the capacity of families*

*to support Women and children in need is one of the most effective ways a donor can make a direct and real difference.*

***By EACO Staff and Volunteers***

Compiled by Shadrak Kyobe project coordinator

*We must never forget the importance of family and community in the life of a child.”*