



*P.O Box 2784 Kampala Uganda East Africa,
Offices on Kayunga YMCA Lane Mukono District*

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Empower and Care Organization

ABOUT EACO

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.

EACO SERVICES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITIES IT WORKS WITH

Vocational and Life Skills Training: Targets vulnerable women, particularly widows and individuals living with HIV/AIDS, OVCs, and grandmothers caring for children. It seeks to address the lack of economic opportunity for these vulnerable populations by providing training and individualized instruction in entrepreneurship, marketing techniques for small businesses, microfinance, and the implementation of income-generating activities (IGAs) including: farming, vegetable growing, coffee growing, cattle keeping, bee-keeping, chicken rearing, piggery, mushroom growing, tailoring and design, arts and crafts, and hair dressing and styling.

Restoring Hope for the Marginalized: This program targets grandmothers and orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) living with their grandmothers. Major activities include: HIV/AIDS sensitization; scholastic materials and midday school meals to OVCs; "Top-up" of school fees as needed through sponsorships.

Sexual/Reproductive Health: This program focuses primarily on counselling and guidance, educational trainings, and community outreach related to HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), family planning, and life skills planning. In order to implement this program, EACO works with HOPACAM at Mukono Health Center to administer free voluntary counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS and other STDs and provides HIV+ individuals with ARV's. EACO volunteers then make regular home visits to those who have tested positive in order to supply them with foodstuffs that have been donated to EACO. Through this program, EACO regularly visits 50 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.

Water and Sanitation: With this programme, EACO looks at the health, water, and sanitation of the community. Here EACO has managed to put up four boreholes for the community of Namanganga, Kasala, Kyabakade and Lugali village all in Kyampisi sub county in Mukono District as well as building a latrine for one of the elderly. We all know how access to clean and safe water

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with increased sanitation will improve the lives of each individual so we involve more women and children.

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.

EACO receives support in several different ways from individual community members. Though EACO contracts professional trainers to conduct its income generation and entrepreneurship training workshops, 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 orphans and vulnerable children (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 income generating activities (IGAs), 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.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

These include:

- International Justice Mission (IJM)
- US Embassy International
- Just A drop
- Vibrant Village
- Volunteers
- Individual Donor Members Contribution
- Income Generating Activities
- Fundraising.

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EACO'S KEY PRINCIPLES ON AND APPROACH TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- The vision and philosophy of EACO is based on the belief that every human being is a unique individual and that we all have a right to good health and basic needs and should access means to a comfortable life in one way or another.
- We believe that the first priority is that people should have a sustainable life. However, almost equally important is that an individual's life should have meaning and that they should develop independence. This is being achieved through care then empowerment and support. But we need to get infrastructure to give our communities clean water and latrines to stop the spread of disease. It's really only then we can bring education so that our people understand the overwhelming benefit to them. With improved health comes the ability to be employable to generate income and escape from poverty.

ORGANIZATION'S OVERALL DIRECTION IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS.

We currently depend entirely on funding from external organizations and donations from individuals. Whilst this is extremely generous income such as this is generally on an ad-hoc basis so we have plans to generate income from projects such as bee keeping, vegetable farming, tourism, added value products by creating sustainable businesses which generate an income for the individuals contributing to the organization.

We want to make clean water accessible within 1 kilometer for 100% of the people in rural Mukono. By constructing fresh water wells throughout rural areas of Mukono, EACO will bring relief to thousands of residents, including those in surrounding communities.

EACO'S PLAN FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

We want to improve on the food security and nutrition for women and children.

Project Objectives:

- Evaluation of indigenous food systems of Mukono community to access nutrition of local foods.
- Develop dietary recommendations from indigenous foods for overall health of Mukono community.
- Sustainable vegetable production for food and nutrition needs of families of Mukono District.
- Assistance for agribusiness development of fresh produce for economic empowerment of small-scale women farmers.

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- Develop a plan for potential school lunch program to ensure nutritional balance in primary school.
- Develop resources to educate pregnant and nursing mothers about nutrition for a healthy mother and child.

Methodology

1. Evaluation of indigenous food systems of Mukono community to assess nutrition of local foods: Develop a survey questionnaire for collection of information about food habits, meals and diet of Mukono community. Perform nutritional evaluation on this data to develop community specific reference booklet for overall nutrition of indigenous foods of Mukono District. Evaluate to see if supplementation of dietary needs is required. Assist to find economically feasible sources of supplementation.
2. Dietary recommendations of indigenous foods for overall health of Mukono community: Based on the data from Objective 1, make dietary recommendations and health charts. Educate community members for meal combinations that will ensure sound health and nutrition.
3. Sustainable vegetable production for food and nutrition needs of families of Mukono District: Use dietary recommendations and evaluation report from Objective 1 & 2 in identifying potential vegetable crops for production. Develop a dual-crop system, with one crop specific for family nutritional needs and other for commercial purposes. Train women farmers for all stages of procurement of seeds, crop production, processing and storage. Find seed donors from public research institutions. In the long-term, establish a seed-bank to ensure sustainable supply of high quality seeds.
4. Assistance for agribusiness development of fresh produce for economic empowerment of small-scale women farmers: Identify potential local and international markets for speciality crops that will ensure financial empowerment. Educate women entrepreneurs for basic skills required for trade, marketing and customer relations.
5. Development of a plan for potential school lunch program to ensure nutritional balance in primary school: The results from Objectives 1 & 2 will be utilized to develop a plan for school lunch program. Assistance will be provided to seek potential funding agencies and donors to support this program.
6. Development of resources to educate pregnant and nursing mothers about nutritional requirements for a healthy mother and child: Develop survey questionnaire to gather information about the current status of care for pregnant and nursing women. Develop resources to educate women about the importance of nutrition and during pregnancy and at the nursing stage. Make dietary and nutritional recommendations to ensure maternal and child health.

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