



WOMEN'S
INCOME



GENDER
EQUALITY



CAPACITY
BUILDING



THE GOOGLE.ORG LIVELIHOOD AND GENDER EQUITY FUND

Submitted to:
The Google.org Impact Challenge
for Women and Girls

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Canadian Feed The Children
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Championing economic empowerment and human rights for women in Uganda

Join us in the creation of the NEW **Google.org Livelihood & Gender Equity Fund** to support sustainable economic development for women entrepreneurs in Uganda.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

With your help, CFTC is proposing to develop two model women-focused business incubation hubs in target areas in Uganda - one hub in the Southern Region and one in the Western Region.

Over the three years of funding, these hubs will create a local business ecosystem for women in each region. They will also strengthen up to six existing business hubs to support sustainable business development and better serve the needs of local women entrepreneurs, forming a strong regional network.

AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS:



In addition to initial support, these hubs will strategically link women to the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem. They will network with government agencies, financiers, academia, and private sector entrepreneurs who can strengthen their chances for success.

THE ODDS ARE STACKED AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UGANDA

In Uganda, women and girls face an uphill battle to survive – especially when it comes to exercising their economic power.

Agriculture is the biggest sector of the Ugandan economy, providing food supply, income and livelihood for over 70% of the rural population. However, when women and girls enter agriculture or agribusiness, the odds are stacked against them. Despite doing the majority of agricultural work, they have limited access to land, business opportunities, mentorship, and financial services, and do not get the chance to hone their entrepreneurial skills. They are also unable to access technology and business infrastructure to help their businesses grow.

With few options for economic stability, many girls and young women are forced into early marriage, suffer abuse, suffer from hunger, and experience poverty. But with the creation of the Google.org Livelihood and Gender Equity Fund, we can create change by founding TWO NEW women-focused business incubation hubs, which will help empower a new generation of female entrepreneurs in Uganda.

CHALLENGES TO WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN UGANDA



While **70-80% of female workers** are involved in **agricultural production**, only **0.4% of female-owned businesses** are in the **agricultural sector**, and those make up only **16.3% of all agricultural businesses**.

Ugandan women still do not have equal access to land ownership. **75% of female-headed households** depend on agriculture, but women own only **27% of registered land**. In addition to financial barriers to ownership, women are often **dispossessed of their rights** to matrimonial land upon **divorce or widowhood**.



Women entrepreneurs receive just **9% of available credit** in Uganda, which drops to just **1% in rural areas**.



Female entrepreneurs face a **hostile business environment**.

43% of female-led enterprises report **bribery or harassment** from officials, compared with 25% of all businesses surveyed.



While **women** start businesses at **1.5 times** the rate of men, their businesses are **less likely** than men's to **survive** past 3.5 years.



In Uganda, **1 in 5 girls and women** aged 15-49 have experienced **sexual violence**. The societal expectations of marriage and motherhood coupled with the prevalence of gender-based violence severely limits women's and girls' participation in entrepreneurship or the formal labour force.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS: A SMART INVESTMENT TO REDUCE POVERTY

According to Self Help International, investing in women makes the biggest impact on poverty reduction, because women reinvest 90% of their income into the family, compared to the 30% invested by men.

HOW WE CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN

To achieve our goals, we propose a three-pronged approach. Between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024 The Google.org Livelihood & Gender Equity Fund will support:



Establishing model, women-focused business incubation hubs to support women-led businesses

- Establish new women-run businesses to improve women's economic status
- Provide start-up capital in the form of assets, consumables and equipment
- Build on locally viable business streams like vegetable farming
- Develop women-led social enterprises that reinvest in community development
- Provide financial literacy training for women



Leveraging technology to support women-led businesses

- App development for various needs, including connecting local sellers and buyers
- Develop women-focused cooperative models using tech
- Use tech to remove intermediaries that bar market access
- Climate-smart agricultural solutions
- Virtual agricultural advice



Creating safe spaces for women

- App development for various needs
- Support women's clubs and targeted gender training in each hub
- Connect women to health and legal services through a widely accessible app
- Use business hubs as safe spaces for women providing SGBV
- Strengthen community referral systems including police, legal and healthcare service providers

WHY? Women are typically shut out of current business incubation hubs, and when they do join, services are not tailored to their specific needs. Very few of these businesses survive beyond the first year.

WHY? Climate change and economic instability has made traditional agricultural models unviable. Women need access to new technology and innovations to be competitive in the marketplace.

WHY? In Uganda, 1 in 5 girls and women aged 15-49 have experienced sexual violence. This is a significant barrier to women's economic participation, and needs to be addressed in order for female entrepreneurs to succeed.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

- **Two NEW women-led model business incubation hubs** developed
- **600 new women-owned businesses** created
- **600 local women mentored** through the business hubs
- **1000 women reached** through the SGBV awareness campaigns
- Staff in **six existing business hubs** will have received **gender sensitization training** and assessed how to make their operations **more gender equitable**.
- Local women will have access to **targeted business start-up toolkits**, business incubation tools and materials, institutional development services, and business and entrepreneurship clinics
- Participating **women and girls will receive mentorship and coaching**, and successful women entrepreneurs will go on to become mentors to coach new incubatees in the future
- **Women will leverage information and communication technology (ICT) in their businesses**, and will be able to network, access market linkages, and take advantage of other business opportunities in the local economy.
- **Women-led businesses and economic contributions will be formally recognized** through access to accreditation and registration with the government.



SUSTAINING IMPACT FOR THE FUTURE

Strong female-led entrepreneurship: By Year 3 hubs will be operating sustainability through supported businesses and will start training non-project trainees. CFTC and our partners will maintain program operations for each newly launched hub beyond the life of this project.

Agribusiness driven by innovation and technology: After this project is completed, the wider agricultural economy will be more productive and profitable thanks to innovative climate-smart practices and the widespread use of tailored business technologies.

A barrier-free environment for women's and girls' success: Girls and women, supported by the whole community, will understand their own human rights and be empowered to make choices about their lives and reap the rightful benefits of their contributions to community economic development. CFTC will continue to support girls' education and promote gender equality training in the region.

ABOUT CFTC

Canadian Feed The Children is a non-governmental organization that works to unlock children's potential through community-led action in Canada and around the world. We have been working to help children thrive in Uganda for nearly 30 years, with a focus on supporting the human rights, education and economic success of women and girls.

Thank you for believing in the potential of these communities! Your investment would make a world of difference in the lives of so many girls and women in Uganda.



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"What I keep wondering about is how supermarket owners started. I believe they shared the same idea that I have only that, they had more capital than mine."

Gertrude, produce vendor,
Uganda

GOAL: Establishing TWO NEW model women-focused business incubation hubs to empower a new generation of female entrepreneurs in Uganda.

Marginalized women supported by developing local business ecosystem

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CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TO SUCCEED

Transformed individual and community attitudes, which ensure women's economic and human rights are protected

Provision of women-focused business start-up services



LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES

Connect women entrepreneurs with buyers using technology

At-risk households economically supported by early intervention and local support to prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation



PROMOTE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Use evidence-based women-focused entrepreneurship development models

Women develop skills to succeed in competitive business environment

Strengthen economic resilience for women

Women voices amplified to influence policy and local cultures that affects their wellbeing



SAFE SPACES CREATED FOR WOMEN TO THRIVE IN THE MARKETPLACE