
CPAR Uganda Ltd

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Rural Development Innovation Programme

Project 002: Welding apprenticeship for 25 youth in Pader Town Council

Project summary

This project will contribute to youth of a marginalized disadvantaged rural community to attainment sustainable artisanal livelihood skills that are necessary to reverse the poor quality of life their community endures, due to livelihood crisis adduced to effects of the Lord Resistance Army insurgency, climate change and marginalization by the Government of Uganda. It will equip 25 youth with life skills and knowledge to become welders and to earn income which they can use to meet the basic and the genuine needs of their respective households – they will be able to provide their households with food, water, clothing, shelter, as well as to pay fees for healthcare services and schooling.

The Problem

Pader Town Council household incomes are estimated to average less than a dollar a day; making it impossible for many people of the Town Council to meet their basic needs. Indeed, the most recent Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) reported that 21.7% (about 600) of Pader Town Council households, an estimated 3,000 people, consume less than two meals a day. The survey also reported prevalent in Pader Town Council, common preventable poverty diseases like malaria, diarrhoea, TB, skin infections & malnutrition.

Over 13,400 people who claim Pader Town Council their home and majority, 78 percent, of whom are aged 30 years or younger, remain directly affected by the effects of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency. For decades they were forced off their land and lived in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps depending on relief aid for survival.

Pader Town Council is located in one of two counties of Pader District, Aruu County, which has that is 20.1 percent youth, those aged 18 to 30 years. Many of those youths were born as IDPs and are still significantly afflicted with the aid induced dependency syndrome (AID syndrome) – a mentality of expecting livelihoods via handouts.

When the war ended, IDPs free to return “home” to “normal lives” and aid agencies left, the government did not provide sufficient appropriate assistance to former IDPs to transition back to a new normal. The necessary activities were hardly done, if at all, to re-orient attitudes, especially of the youth, from the AID syndrome towards appreciating responsibility for livelihoods via self-reliant participatory rural development.

Elders who knew land ownership boundaries died during the war. And so, for some former IDPs it was difficult for them to re-claim their land; instantly making them landless peasants. According to the UNHS survey, 14.5 percent of Pader District orphans aged 0-17 years, live within the Town Council; as well as 26.7 percent of Pader District youth aged 18-30 years and who are not in school and are not working.

For those former IDPs who were able to reclaim their land, some didn't have the agrarian connection with it; preferring to sell it, which eventually also made them landless peasants. Others, having lived in IDP camps for decades, simply do not have the skill to make a living through agriculture. And, moreover, current negative effects of climate change that are putting agricultural livelihoods in crisis, world over, make matters even worse in Pader.

Livelihood studies estimate the average Pader Town Council household income to be less than a dollar a day. The situation is dire. The UNHS survey, case in point, found that 21.7 percent of households in the Town Council, about 600 households, of an estimated 3,000 people, consume less than two meals a day. That 18.2 percent of Pader school-going-age children aged 6-12 years and not in school live in the Town Council. And that common preventable diseases in Pader - malaria, diarrhoea, respiratory infections - including tuberculosis, skin infections and malnutrition - are associated with poverty.

The situation is further exacerbated by Pader being among the peripheral and marginalized districts. For instance, the UNHS survey reported that for 20.1 percent of households in Pader Town Council, an estimated 550 households of an estimated 2,750 people, the nearest public health facility is five kilometres or more from where they live. Not only are healthcare services inaccessible to thousands of people of Pader Town Council due to poverty - inability to pay; they are also physically inaccessible.

The Solution

CPAR Uganda has property, buildings and land in Pader Town Council, which we will modify & utilize to establish an artisanal skills development centre. We will buy and equip our centre with machines, equipment and material; as well as power & utilities that are necessary for the functioning of our centre. We will deploy our Rural Innovator, a young adult, Jimmy Ezra Okello, who exceptionally completed a welding apprenticeship with an established welder, to work with and to mentor 25 youth to become income earning welders. Attainment of sustainable livelihoods is the necessary solution for the people of Pader Town Council.

Jimmy is among a few innovative young adults in Uganda who utilized the covid-19 pandemic induced lockdowns as an opportunity to learn an artisanal skill for survival. Starting a welding business requires sums of money that many youths in Uganda can't afford. But it is a worthwhile investment with multiple streams of income. For example, when a welder is working on windows or doors for selling, they can also get money from sharpening axes, knives, handheld hoes; and welding motor bikes. And when they sell a finished door or window, they have an assured profit.

Long-Term Impact

Standards of living will improve for households of at least 80 percent of youth who will apprentice with this project. At least 50 percent of benefiting households of the participating youth will earn sufficient incomes from doing welding work to be able to meet their basic & genuine needs, including feeding on balanced diets. And 90 percent of the benefiting youth will testify attaining improved social standing in their wider community, including being voted into & entrusted with leadership.

Author

This project proposal was originated by Jimmy Ezra Okello, a beneficiary of the CPAR Uganda *"Mentoring Young Adults into Innovators Against Poverty in Rural Uganda"* project. Jimmy did all the research and consultation with the relevant technical persons and other leaders, the basis on which he authored this proposal. Ms. Norah Owaraga, CPAR Uganda Managing Director and Lead Mentor, reviewed and approved this proposal for fundraising and implementation by CPAR Uganda.