



COMMUNITY CONCERNS UGANDA INITIATIVE

2022 Annual Report



Community Concerns Uganda Initiative (CCUg)

Email: concernsuganda@gmail.com

Website: <http://ccuginitiative.org>

P.O. BOX 196, Jinja

Acknowledgement

Community Concerns Uganda Initiative (CCUg) greatly appreciates the entire team for the great work delivered during the year 2022. This was a tough year during which the team grappled with the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are indeed thankful to our partners and donors who have provided funding for the projects to be implemented. Your continued support makes all of our work possible, and on behalf of the CCUg staff and the women and children we serve, we thank you very much for your generosity. We pray that you will keep up with the spirit of giving.

We thank the Executive Board of Trustees (BOT) and Senior Advisor for their advice and follow-up on our work; we are indeed grateful. Not forgetting the members that engage with us throughout the year, thank you for being available and allowing us to serve you.

Message from the Chairperson



Greetings from Community Concerns Uganda Initiative, I take the honor to thank God for the life He offered all of us in the year 2022. At CCUG we are grateful for the strong team of partners, stake holders, the local government, donors and the entire community that made the year a success.

2022 had its set of achievements and hardships, but reckoning on the achievements, we were able to withstand the long-term impact of COVID 19 and had our programs implemented as planned. We are excited to have a new steering board in place that is supporting administration in the implementation of policy, resource mobilization, and network-building. In addition, we are grateful for the staff who persevered with us and together we have weathered the storm.

With this in place, we look forward to realizing the strengths of a more resilient organisation and the opportunity of serving a wider community.

We celebrate the new year and anticipate a full schedule of work ahead.

Warm regards,



.....
KIGERE ROSE
CHAIRPERSON BOARD

Message from the Managing Director



On behalf of CCUG, I thank God who has enabled us to come to the end of 2022 and to register great achievements. I thank Him for the gift of life amidst the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that has taken many lives. He has kept us and you. He has also blessed us with funding to be able to extend our services to the communities where we are serving.

I would like to thank our Consultative Panel, the Senior Advisor and international Partnership Coordinator who support us greatly without getting tired, our Board of Trustees who are always there to guide us, and donors who funded our projects to put a smile on the faces of all those we serve, partners and friends. We are indeed grateful.

I would like to thank, Elevate Partners for Education, Global Giving, Giving Way, and all individual donors for all the gifts contributed to CCUG in 2022. We were able to serve because you entrusted us with your funds. We hope that this partnership continues to grow bigger to better serve our community in the coming year.

I thank so much the entire CCUG team for working tirelessly to see that people's lives change for the better.

It is in this spirit of accountability that I present CCUG's 2022 Annual Report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Nakiryia Brenda Doreen'.

With warm regards,

Nakiryia Brenda Doreen

Message from Our Senior Advisor



In so many ways, 2022 was a watershed year for Community Concerns Uganda Initiative. We entered the year feeling the significant effects of Covid 19. Many of our long-standing programs had been placed on hold for months, we were wrapping up other funded projects that had been long-delayed during the government-imposed lockdown, and we were struggling to generate the financial wherewithal to continue certain basic programs that are essential to the livelihoods of the women and children we serve.

By God’s help and grace, we were successful in meeting all of these challenges, and ended the year in a stronger position than before. Having passed such a “stress test” filled us with a spirit of joy, strength and resilience. Today, that sense of renewal is reflected in the Board, management team, staff and all those who partner with us to bring hope for a better life to many in need.

No doubt, the coming year will bring its own set of challenges, yet we remain confident that God will continue to lead us forward as we strive to fulfill our mission. Through programs that are self-sustaining, financially efficient and make creative use of the resources available, CCUg aims to make a real difference every day. It is our great blessing and privilege to continue to partner with you to achieve lasting results in the lives of many. Truly, nothing is impossible with God! I look forward to another year of joyful service in His name.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Parker', written in a cursive style.

Carol Parker

Senior Advisor to the CCUg Board

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i
Message from the Chairperson	ii
Message from the Managing Director	iii
Message from Our Senior Advisor	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Abbreviations	vi
Background	1
Approaches	1
Project/Program Updates	2
EDUCATION – Positive Deviance	2
Activities Undertaken	
Achievements	
Pedagogical Discussions	
Challenges	
Lessons	
Recommendations / Solutions	
Recommendations to Elevate	
WASH	6
Achievements	
Challenges	
Lessons Learnt	
LIVELIHOOD – Group Savings Project	8
Activities/Achievements	
Challenges	
Growth Trend of GSP Savings, Loans and Interest – 2021 to 2022	
Challenges	
OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT IN 2022	12
Overall Recommendations	12
Success Stories Success Stories and Gallery	

List of Abbreviations

CCUg	Community Concerns Uganda Initiative
BOT	Board of Trustees
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
MHHM	Menstrual Hygiene Health Management
GSP	Group Saving project
SRGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
IEC	Information Education and Communication Materials
IPTG	Interpersonal Group Therapy
VLSA	Village Saving and Loan Association
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
LC	Local Council

Background

Community Concerns Uganda Initiative (CCUg) is a legally-registered Non-Government Organization (NGO) operating in the Busoga Sub-region, specifically in Jinja, Mayuge, Luuka, Buyende, and Kamuli Districts. Our offices are located in Wairaka at Old Kakira Road opposite St. Peter's Church, Jinja District. We envision an educated, healthy and productive community free from poverty. Our mission is to provide education and skills to empower women and girls to acquire the capacity for sustainable income generation and to contribute to the development of their communities. CCUg is governed by a Board of Trustees and an Advisory Committee who provide supervisory support, guidance and direction to support the organization in achieving its goals. In 2022 we had an 8-member staff team, 5 of whom were working full-time and one working part-time; two others are support staff. Their service is had a great impact on the lives of many people in the communities we serve, as explained later in this report.

Strategic Objectives

1. To promote hygiene and increase utilization of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and mental health services in schools.
2. To empower women and girls, including vulnerable children, through literacy development.
3. To provide sustainable livelihoods for women and girls through vocational services and saving and credit schemes.
4. To reduce gender-based violence among women and girls.
5. To develop and strengthen the institutional capacity of CCUg.

Programme Areas

CCUg programs fall under the four major themes listed below shown, with their associated active projects in 2022:

- Education
 - Positive Deviance (Education)
- Health – including WASH,
 - Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)
- Sustainable Livelihood
 - Group Savings (GSP)

Our funding comes largely from grants and donations.

Approaches

Our method of work involves conducting high-quality, relevant research projects in the local communities we serve. The results of these studies inform the development of specific programs to address the needs revealed by the studies. The projects CCUg designs are delivered through sustainable, community-based interaction in one-on-one and group settings, and typically include a

mix of classroom-style instruction, skills training and the delivery of material resources as needed to assist beneficiaries in establishing self-sustaining income-generating activities.

Project/Program Updates

This report mainly presents achievements, challenges, and recommendations regarding these projects.

EDUCATION

Under this theme, we emphasize improving access to quality education and vocational skills – especially among socially and economically disadvantaged children and women. In 2022, we implemented one program and one project under this theme, including activities related to positive deviance projects. Due to COVID-19 effects, we were unable to resume vocation skilling and sponsorship projects, although both of these will resume strongly in 2023.

Positive Deviance

Community Concerns Uganda Initiative (CCUg), in partnership with Elevate Partners for Education, has been implementing positive deviance programs to improve learning in the Busoga region, specifically in the Mayuge District. This program started in 2019 and is ongoing.

In 2022, we started with a midline survey conducted in January, and followed-up with radio talk shows that continued into into December. Other follow-up activities included head teacher engagements enabled via WhatsApp and peer-to-peer learning teacher sessions.

Schools that were randomly selected to participate in peer-to-peer learning teacher sessions were: Bute Primary School, Wamulongo Primary School, Maina Primary School, Buwolya Primary School, Bwiwula Primary School, Bwondha Primary school, Bukatabira Primary School, St Barbra Primary School, Sagitu Primary School and Mayuge Town Council Primary School.

Activities Undertaken

1. **School-level peer support professional development sessions for teachers** – These were held in the participating schools, with a major focus on the lower-level teachers, although we had a few from upper level joining us. Emphasis was on relevant teacher development needs for each school and support needs for lower primary teachers using simple but innovative interaction microstructures (“1-2-4 all”, impromptu networking, user-experience fishbowls, 3Ws, etc.). We had one teacher session, which focused on discussion of the pedagogical challenges.
In addition, we incorporated school activity monitoring, during which we followed-up on the implementation of solutions introduced during phone-based sessions held in Term 2 .
2. **District and regional-level peer support** – Headteacher online networks via WhatsApp were re-activated and strengthened, with a focus was on relevant head teacher support needs (leadership and other). We taught and shared ideas on different topics based on research findings as they might apply in the current work-related context of each participant. The headteachers brainstormed on local solutions using a common cross-district platform.
3. **Radio talk shows** – From June to November, we held six bi-weekly radio talk show programs involving key players. These were broadcast on Busoga One 90.6 FM, and were targeted at

teachers, parents and learners studying at school and at home. We incorporated insights from previous talk shows and other evidence-based learning techniques, involved listeners through direct call-ins, and generated positive deviance (PD) strategies / practices to practice in schools, and in homes. These radio talk shows served to replace the community / parents school dialogue sessions that were paused by the pandemic. We invited different stakeholders to participate in the shows, including District Education officers, the Inspector of Schools, head teachers, teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) leaders, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Leaders, Local Council (LC) chairpersons and parents to share their experiences, knowledge, and wisdom. The topics for discussion were guided by insights from the midline survey, teacher-peer dialogue sessions and current contexts, including an abridged curriculum due to COVID-19, school feeding and absenteeism at school.

Achievements

- We conducted the midline survey in 30 schools in Mayuge District to monitor and evaluate literacy levels in order to improve education in our district and Busoga as a whole.
- We were able to reach all the 10 schools and conducted 20 peer support sessions with the teachers.
- We shared three topics of discussion for the head teachers on their WhatsApp platforms, including the abridged curriculum, the teacher industrial action (sit down strike) that occurred from 15th June to 4th July and teacher workload.
- We conducted 12 talk shows on topics such as children’s behavior post-COVID, understanding the parental role in supporting children’s learning and emotional development after school reopening, understanding the abridged curriculum, and the relevance of home learning now that schools are fully reopened. Other discussions included household strategies for helping children maintain learning, how the SMC and PTA have continued to support improved learning after reopening, how school and parents can work together to improve feeding of children while at school, strengthening parental support to improve learning of the children, how teachers manage larger classrooms for effective children’s learning, the perspective of DEO Mayuge on current concerns affecting local education, the learning support experience, practices that are helping children continue learning at home, and ways to strengthen the role of parents in boosting the education of their children.

Pedagogical Discussions

There are several pedagogical challenges discussed by teachers, some of which were solved in the last term of 2022. These included ways to handle large class sizes and making instructional materials for use in the classroom. Other challenges will be discussed and hopefully solved this coming term (in early 2023). Positive deviance teacher sessions focus on pedagogical issues (classroom instruction), where teachers discuss and identify local-based solutions. Below are the major pedagogical areas of discussion identified during the teacher sessions. Note that some of these challenges were beyond the scope of these participants, and will require district attention to address them.

- Inadequate reference books

- The reference books used for teaching are in limited supply and do not cover all subjects. In addition, the number of books for use by pupils is significantly less than the number of students who need to access the,
- Inadequate classrooms – The number of classrooms in some schools is inadequate, and students have to learn from under the trees, which makes it hard for them to fully engage.
- Inadequate funding – Some teachers found a challenge of inadequate funding, which is not enough to fully manage the school.
- Long distances for teachers without accommodation at school – Many of the teachers face a challenge of physically getting to school on time because they have no accommodation at their schools
- Lack of refresher training – Some of the teachers mentioned that they need refresher training to remind them of what they learnt, especially when new curricula is introduced.
- Over-large class sizes – Class sizes are large and the number of teachers in some schools is inadequate to meet the need, making it hard for one teacher to manage the class.
- Over-populated classrooms – Often, classrooms are overcrowded due to too few classrooms.
- Lack of furniture for teachers – Some schools lack furniture for their teachers, forcing teachers to use desks designed for young pupils.

Challenges

- **Outbreak of Ebola:** An Ebola outbreak interfered with our programs and the terms had to end earlier than expected, this caused the exams to be brought forward, hence pushing our programs to wrap up sooner than expected.
- **Transport challenges:** Some schools were in remote areas and required a boat to access; others required walking for some distance to access a motorcycle to complete the trip.
- **Financial challenges:** A delay in receiving project funding delayed the start of work
- The one-hour allotment for the talk shows always seemed too short; the panelists wanted to have longer discussions
- The WhatsApp engagements had less involvement because many headteachers were not previously active on WhatsApp, requiring frequent reminders to use the resource.

Lessons

- Proper planning is essential; scheduling the sessions and communicating before going to the school enables one to find the teachers ready to participate.
- Peer-to-peer sessions bring out clever and workable solutions. As an example, Bwiwula teachers had two main challenges. The first was the long distance from home to school. In discussing this, they came up with a solution of saving money and acquiring bicycles to make the trip easier. The second problem was of an inadequate number of classrooms. Again, after discussion, they came up with a solution to make bricks to construct a temporary structure for use as a classroom.
- Using liberating structures enables everyone to participate.
- Motivating teachers before and during the sessions encourages participation.
- Voice problems to district education officials (DEO) as they arise. After expressing the problems related to the lack of furniture as a problem to teachers, one DEO immediately

agreed to work on it because it's something they had not previously understood to be a problem.

- The radio talk shows are good because they reach a wider area and enable different stakeholders to freely share their challenges and solutions. It's also good to improve child learning throughout the district.
- It's possible to use local solutions to improve learning – especially when all stakeholders agree to work together as a team.

Recommendations/ Solutions

These are some of the solutions mentioned by the teachers:

- Put up local temporary structures that can be used by pupils without classes as they wait for government intervention (and encouraging parents to participate)
- The district should organize more opportunities for refresher courses as capacity building for teachers.
- Government should send enough resource materials for use by both the teachers and pupils
- Invite government officials to attend parents' meetings and talk to them about some of the challenges, including feeding of children while they are at school.
- Make permanent lines on the blackboards for lower primary classes. Some schools don't have permanent lines in the classrooms of lower primary; adding these would help the children improve their writing.
- Encourage different district officials to listen in on the radio talk shows; different stakeholders discuss different topics concerning improving children's learning.

Recommendations to Elevate

- Provide enough funds to complete the project and take into consideration the change of prices, especially as inflation becomes more significant.
- Organise training for the positive deviance teachers.
- The Community Based Organisation (CBO) should continue building the relationship created with the schools.

WASH



Commissioning of the completed pit latrine & washroom at Mugeya Primary School

With support from EU Can Aid!, CCUG initiated a WASH project in two rural primary schools in Mayuge district. The main project objective was to strengthen school health and learning through better sanitation and hygiene. The project integrated WASH facility construction, community collaboration, capacity building, and life-skills-based hygiene education to improve the sanitation and learning environment for over 2,000 pupils, teachers and other community members associated with Mugeya Primary School in Baitambogwe Sub-County and in Wabulungu Primary Schools in Magamaga Town Board, Mayuge district.

Achievements

- The District Inspector of Schools – Guidance and Counseling, Ms. Tibenda Margaret, commissioned the latrines for use. During the ceremony, she thanked Community Concerns Uganda Initiative for its efforts in improving WASH issues in schools, improving menstrual hygiene and management, and urged the school administrators and governance bodies to ensure the facilities are well-utilized and maintained. She also thanked EU Can Aid! for providing the financial support that facilitated implementation of this project.
- We provided training to ten teachers and PTA / SMC members on WASH using the Ministry of Education and Sports recommended Three-Stars-Approach. The training also covered integrating WASH information into learning and life-skills development, and school administrators and PTA / SMC members were also trained in resource mobilization to build

their capacity to mobilize, account for and monitor WASH-related needs of their schools. The training included:

- Types of resources (financial and non-financial)
 - Resource mobilization according to the school mandate (vision, mission and objectives)
 - Functions of the school PTA / SMC related to resource mobilization
 - Challenges to resource mobilization in primary schools
 - Improving PTA / SMC functioning to undertake resource mobilization for WASH-related needs.
 - Approaches and actions to strengthen local resource mobilization by PTA / SMC.
- We trained 80 pupils of Wabulungu Primary School and 75 pupils of Mugeya Primary School in making liquid soap and 45 pupils of Wabulungu in bar soap making.
 - Wabulungu Primary School together with CCUg participated in cleaning their communities as a sign of promoting sanitation and hygiene throughout their communities during the sanitation and hygiene campaign.

Challenges

- During the capacity-building sessions among teachers, school administrators, and SMC / PTA members, most participants often came late which delayed the start of the training.
- Although both schools have established governance structures, their functionality is greatly impaired due to the inability of the members to perform their roles and responsibilities. From the training, we identified that a significant number of PTA / SMC members have limited knowledge of what roles they are to play in undertaking resource mobilization for their schools. Apart from that, participants reported not being inducted into their positions, having no guidance document (school governance manual / handbook) to provide direction, and lacking basic information about their schools, such as the school's vision, mission, and objectives.

Lessons Learnt

- There is a need to enhance the functionality of governance structures in the participating primary schools to provide support, supervise, monitor and undertake resource mobilization to address identified WASH issues.
- While working with government-aided schools, it is very important to work with the local government at the district level to understand planned support to identified schools with the goal of reducing potential duplication of effort and to determine how the district can best support the sustainability of WASH facilities.

Stories of Change

Story 1: SMC Member, Wabulungu Primary School

“Before the training, I was not actively participating in budgeting, especially for WASH. Now I know that it is my responsibility to participate in budgeting and discuss allocations. I had heard about the issue of poor menstrual hygiene in our school before from the SWT, but I did not know that I was in a position that could enable me to make positive changes for girls through budget allocations. I am also more aware of my role in monitoring school activities and have already done some visits to see how

the school WASH facilities and activities are being managed. I think that training was an eye-opener to all of us (PTA / SMC) members.”

LIVELIHOOD

Group Savings Project

Like a Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA), the GSP is comprised of from ten to fifty individuals (mainly women) living in the same villages, who are known to each other and who regularly meet to save and acquire loans from their pooled savings. The loans from the collective savings provide a means of earned interest on member savings. At the beginning of each saving year, each group agrees on a specific interest rate to be applied to loans in the coming year. CCUg has a stake in each group, as we occasionally inject money into these groups to meet their credit requirements. Over the course of many years, the CCUg GSP has grown in terms of the number of members, the amounts saved, the value of loans financed, the interest earned and number of groups in operation.

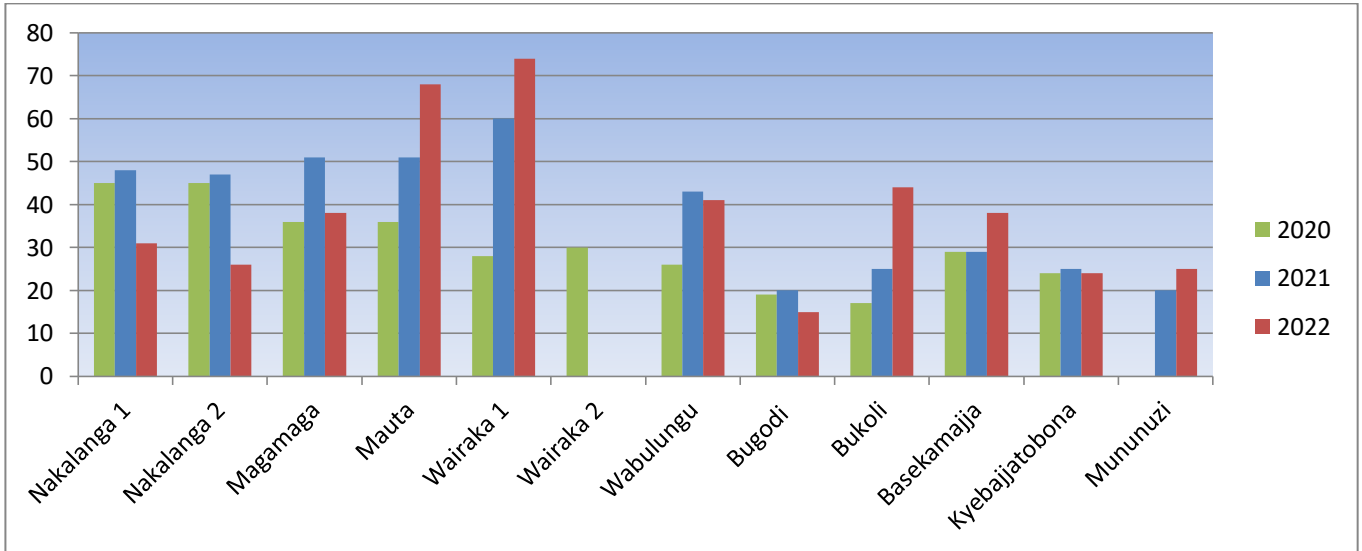
Activities/Achievements

- In 2022, the Group Saving Project added 60 new members; however, these gains were nearly offset by the loss of members due to the effects of COVID-19 as noted below.
 - Wairaka grew from 60 to 70, Mauta increased from 51 to 68, Bukoli increased from 25 to 44, Mununuzi grew from 20 to 25 and Basekanajja increased from 29 to 38.
- The 11 groups received a return of their savings with accumulated interest throughout the year totaling Ugx 16,721,200. Of these, Mauta group earned the lion's share with Ugx 4,389,400 followed by Wairaka at Ugx 3,248,700.
- The interest on their savings has reduced due to a reduction in the number of loans taken.

Challenges

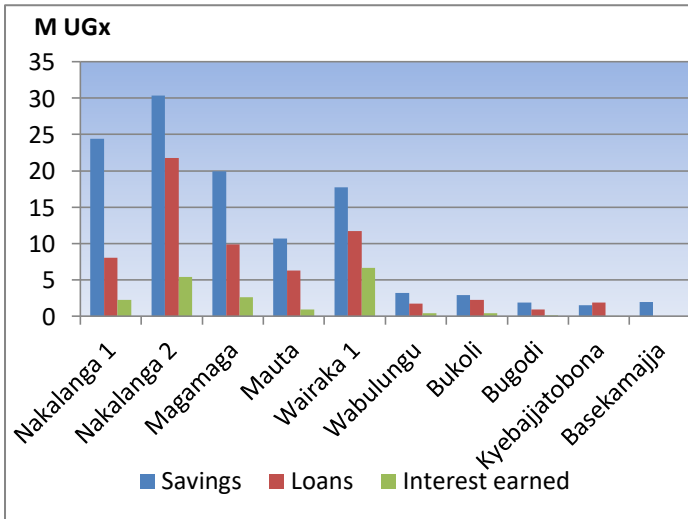
- The pandemic adversely affected members' income as a result of the government-imposed lockdown.
 - There was a decrease in numbers for some groups due to their businesses being affected by the effects of COVID-19. We had Nakalanga 1 decrease from 48 to 31, Nakalanga 2 decreased from 47 to 26, Magamaga decreased from 51 to 38, Wabulungu decreased from 43 to 41, Bugodi decreased from 20 to 15, Tibajjatobona decreased from 25 to 24. In total we had 59 members leaving the groups because their income was too low to be able to save.
- Poor weather conditions affected the crop yield, especially for Nakalanga, and they made loss.
- Loan repayment for some groups was poor due to the losses incurred.

Growth Trend of GSP Members from 2020 to 2022

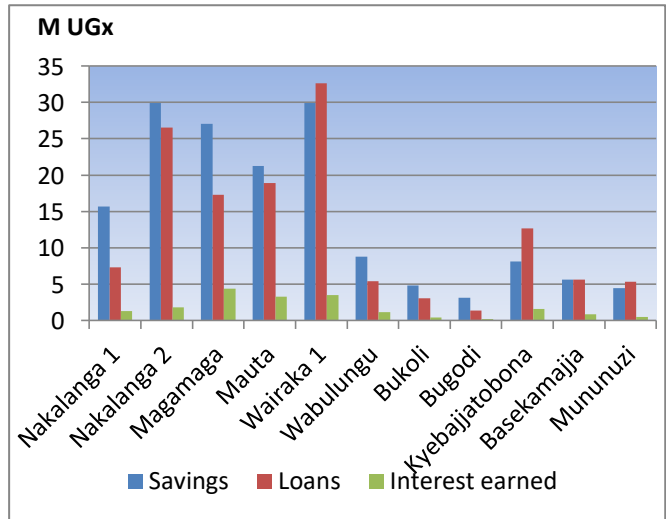


Growth Trend of GSP Savings, Loans and Interest – 2021 to 2022

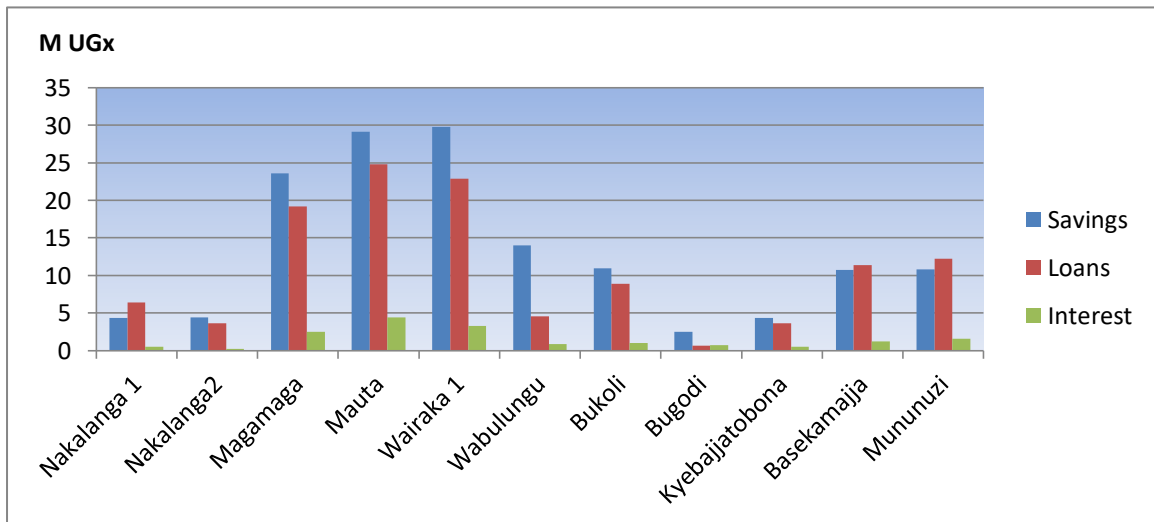
2020



2021



2022



Comparison of Savings – 2021 vs. 2022

Group	2021 Savings	2022 Savings	% Increase
Nakalanga (total)	45,647,400	7,449,000	-84
Magamaga	27,028,000	23,608,500	-13
Mauta	21,222,700	29,105,100	37
Wairaka	29,883,000	29,774,000	0.3
Wabulungu	8,758,300	14,022,500	60
Bukoli	4,829,600	10,921,000	126
Bugodi	3,101,000	2,279,000	-26
Kyebajjatobonna	8,128,600	4,501,700	-45
Basekamajja	5,629,200	10,698,000	90
Mununuzi	5,346,000	10,805,000	102%

OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT IN 2022

- Working together as a team enables great achievements and fosters resource mobilization. It is important to work as a team because that enables greater impact and brings different ideas to bear in solving problems.
- Radio-based messaging reaches many people from different areas. Many people learn from such programs and this impacts their lives positively.

Overall Recommendations

- Talk shows reach a large number of people from different areas, and we should incorporate more of these into our projects.
- Provide business resilience training during emergencies and introduce an emergency fund that members can borrow from so to preserve their own capital in such situations.
- Mobilize financial resources (capital injection) for GSP groups to allow them to expand on their businesses and to start up new businesses for those who don't already have one.

Success Stories and Gallery



One of CCUG staff conducting Group Savings meeting in Bukoli



Commissioning of the pit latrine plus a washroom for girls at Wabulungu Primary School



Positive deviance session, peer-to-peer teacher learning engagements in Bwiwula Primary School



Teachers writing out their pedagogical challenges



Teachers using the 1-2-4 interaction microstructure during peer-to-peer teacher learning sessions



CCUG staff with Wabulungu Primary School participating in a campaign for sanitation and hygiene

Success Story

GSP – SUCCESS STORY FROM BUKOOLI GROUP - NEKESA MARGRET

My name is Margaret Nekesa, a 32-year-old single mother of 2 children and a new member of Bukooli Group Savings Project (GSP) sponsored by Community Concerns Uganda Initiative (CCUg) in Mayuge district, Uganda. My mother (Sarah Namukose) has been a long-time member of this GSP and recommended me to join this group. At first, I was a bit hesitant because I had fear of losing my savings at the end of the year based on my past experience with different groups I had joined in previous years in Iganga district where I used to live.

But my mother managed to convince me by explaining the benefits she had achieved ever since she started saving with Bukooli group since 2019 under Community Concerns Uganda Initiative. I finally joined the group in January 2022 and immediately started saving with the intention of starting a business to sustain myself and my 2 children. During the first 6 months, I took a loan of 700,000 shillings and started up a local brewing business (Waragi Selling), being mentored and monitored by my mother, who introduced it to me. Luckily enough, the business prospered and started making reasonable profits of 15,000 daily. I used the same money to buy food, to pay rent and school fees for my daughter. I also began a small liquid soap making business that pays for my food costs.

In July 2022, I bought a piece of land 60 ft by 30 ft in Bunyiro Village at 3 million shillings with a balance of 1 million due. I got the money from my annual savings in the Bukooli Group Savings Project in December and completed the payment. I am so happy, because soon, I am to be called a landlord. I now have land and my plans are to save more money this coming year (2023) in the group so that I can get a bigger loan to start buying materials to build a house little by little. Thank you CCUg for making my dream come true. Who knew that Margaret Nekesa, poor woman from Bukooli, could also own land? I am very grateful to CCUg for bringing such important trainings in financial literacy and management to me. It really taught me to be empowered economically and to know how to manage my finances very well. May God bless you for the work you do for women like me.



Nekesa her Mother Namukose during the process of making local brew (Waragi) and selling liquid soap as well.

END