



Habitat
for Humanity®
Uganda



We build Strength, Stability, Self-reliance and Shelter

Newsletter *March 2024*

Our Stories



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Building Skills Capacity *For mothers in informal settlements*



Over 300 mothers within the Kamwokya Informal Settlement have undergone skills training in embroidery, soap making and door mat making. As part of the 'Mothers in Need' intervention, Habitat for Humanity Uganda (HFHU) collaborated with community leaders, Inspire Youth for Development, Kampala City Council Authority and National Water and Sewerage Corporation.

Mothers were also sensitized in menstrual hygiene management and water and sanitation safe practices. These sensitizations are targeted to impact household wellbeing as the settlement is prone to flooding during rainy season.

Those trained also received equipment for making various items that they can sell to earn money to contribute to their household income.

Empowering the differently abled through shelter

Cecilia is a severely physically disabled single mother and a caregiver to two children; a 17-year-old son and 1 year-old granddaughter. She also stays with her 28-year-old niece. Cecilia as a family caretaker provides for the needs of the dependants while attending to her needs which is challenging based on the nature of her disability. Amid this challenging situation, she largely relies on support from well-wishers, her extended family and friends. Her house was destroyed in 2023 following heavy rains forcing Cecilia to abandon her house and stay with a relative.



Before



After

At her place of refuge, Cecilia stayed with her relative's family in a single room which was too small for all of them. Her son, Adolf, relocated to stay with another relative thus separating the family. This transition hindered Adolf's participation in school due to the long distance. It became difficult for him to regularly attend classes and eventually dropped out.

Cecilia's case was later brought to the attention of Habitat for Humanity Uganda from where she was assessed and became a partner family. Cecilia now owns a new house where she stays with her family. Adolf, who previously had temporarily dropped out of school has resumed regular classes at Kabende Primary School.

With less than 20% documented land across communities in Uganda, vulnerable families and groups such as the elderly, women headed households and orphans face the threat of evictions. Despite the government establishing mechanisms and structures such as Area Land Committees (ALCs) to oversee land governance at community level, their work is hampered with limited awareness of land policies, accessibility to information and general lack of interest from the public. Habitat for Humanity Uganda is building the capacity of ALCs to ensure provision of quality land governance and leadership services to communities in Kumi district. The capacity is aimed at training the ALCs in basic land policies, demonstrating processes and availing tools that will make land ownership quicker. To ensure complementary process, all leaders (cultural, religious and political) have been brought on board to facilitate the process. "We need to solve these small challenges in the process of getting land ownership. People are not coming because everything is based at the district", observed the district chairperson; later making an executive order decentralising the application process at community level. "You can't spend more than five times the costs of an Application Form in transport just to come and pick the Form when the paper itself can be received online", remarked Rev. James Ebilo, a religious leader. "Why should I come to pick a Form from the district; take it home and later come to submit it; then keep following up at the district?", he added.

Strengthening systems for land governance and leadership



The costs incurred in travel costs in the application process were one of the prohibiting factors to the people seeking to own their land. By decentralising this at the sub county level, intending landowners do not have to travel long distances to the districts thus saving on the transport costs. The training initially targeting two sub counties with 30 leaders has been expanded to cover 14 ALCs with over 70 leaders trained to massively mobilise their communities to acquire Customary Certificates of Ownership (CCOs) as part of the Home Equals Campaign.

Connecting with young people for impact



HFHU connects with youths through school clubs, events and outreaches. Rainbow International School Kampala students have contributed towards building a house by raising funds and taking part in a build activity.

As part of the commemoration of the International Volunteers Day, the students held an outreach at the Kamwokya Islamic Primary School repainting the walls to provide a conducive learning class environment for the 300+ learners who attend the school. The students were joined by their teachers, HFHU management team and volunteer youths from the HFHU Mayuge Youth Hub.

During the Uganda National Housing Symposium 2023, a convening of major stakeholders and partners in the country's housing sector, the students handed over USD 1,000 to HFHU as contribution towards housing.



Susan Yow, the then Director, Affiliate Tithe and Global Engagement from Habitat for Humanity International embraces Irene Peace Alupo, a primary school pupil and leading advocate for girl-friendly school sanitation facilities in Kumi district. Irene's school, Ariet Primary had received a modern sanitation facility with girl-friendly points. The girls at the girls used to share sanitation facilities after the girl's facility was damaged and rendered unsafe for access. Susan had visited the school to witness the work of Tithers in the field.

***“You can never live peacefully and decently, unless your neighbours also live decently”,
Esther Mbamirembe, Mt. St. Mary's Namagunga***

HFHU is intensifying engagement with students to increase appreciation and participation of young people in housing matters. Collaborating with schools such as Namagunga, Taibah International, Green Hill Academies, Agha Kan and Kabojja International School, HFHU will establish a strong force of volunteers and housing advocates. The students will mobilise inkind items for vulnerable households, donations towards housing and conduct outreaches in the community.



Breaking gender barriers into the constructions sector

Evelyn surprised her community and peers when she decided to undertake training in bricklaying and concrete practice. She continues to cause surprise with the zeal of practicing her skill.



"As a girl who is studying house construction, men undermine me and so do the villagers because it is hard imagining, for a girl child to be seen climbing buildings", says Evelyn.

Evelyn is a 30-year-old girl and mother to a 13-year-old living with her widowed mother. She comes from Namalele Village in Mayuge District.

Evelyn's whole life turned upside down when she got pregnant while still at school. She had a daughter whom she named Precious. Evelyn had to look for a source of living to support her daughter and five extra siblings at home. She did a lot of casual work in people's shambas and restaurants in order to put food on the table.

While attending an HIV/AIDS sensitization organized by Habitat for Humanity Uganda, Evelyn learnt of the existing opportunities for youth who had never attended or had dropped out of school. Evelyn expressed interest in learning a skill and chose constructions.

"It was around August when I got selected to be part of the program and it was the same period I lost my dad. The Habitat team gave me emotional support besides giving me an opportunity to attain a skill I desired."

Evelyn is studying BCP (Brick Laying and Concrete Practices) at Pioneer Technical Institute, in the country's eastern town of Iganga. Evelyn became the first female to undertake the course in her community attracting a lot of attention not just from the community but from her fellow learners.

"I knew I was joining something that many of my friends would not approve. Actually some shared how they would like to see me carrying bricks and laying the foundation of the houses", she says.

Besides desiring to have a skill that would make her sustainable, Evelyn was also motivated by the work she had witnessed from other builders.

"I also admired the passion and zeal builders portrayed at construction sites." She adds.

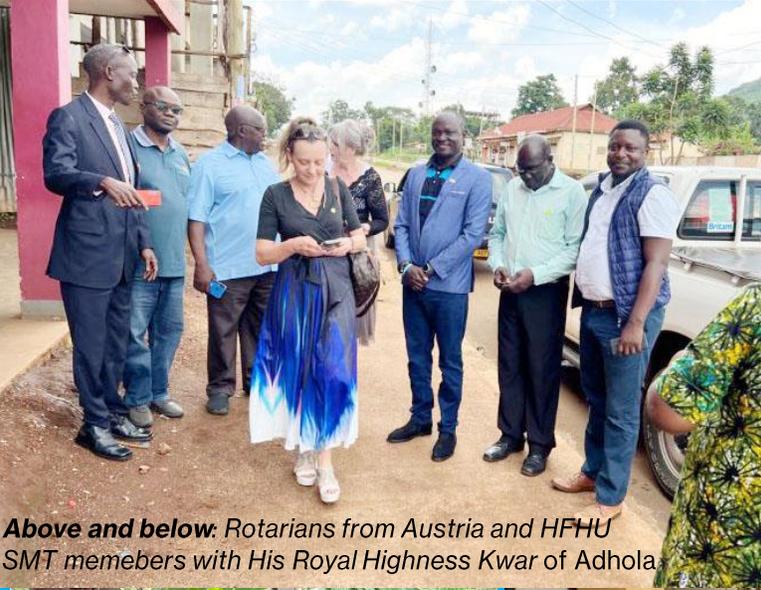
Evelyn is very pleased with her new skills and is now a member of the Youth Hub where she continues to work with her peers to sharpen her skill. She also sees a lot of personal growth in herself ever since she started attaining the building skills.

"Girls should know that we are all capable of doing the same jobs as men. There's nothing impossible for women in this day and era despite the barriers." This feeling drives Evelyn's resilience in the male-dominated construction's sector.



Habitat for Humanity Uganda
Plot 91, Kira Road, Kamwokya
P.O Box 9873 Kampala-Uganda
E-Mail: noffice@hfhuganda.org
Website: www.habitat.ug

Pictorial



Participants at the Tithers Conference pose for a group photograph with the CEO, Habitat for Humanity International, Jonathan Reckford

Above and below: Rotarians from Austria and HFHU SMT members with His Royal Highness Kwar of Adhola



Participants that included HFHU founder members, former and current Board of Directors, senior staff members and key partners during the Annual General Meeting



Vivian Asio (right) during her farewell dinner. Vivian has been the Human Resources Manager and one of the longest staff in service. She leaves behind a solid team which she has greatly supported to put in place. Bravo Vivian