



INTEGRATED RURAL COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

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I. ABBREVIATIONS

IRUCE	Integrated Rural Community Empowerment
MiRWo	Microfinance for Rural Women
FTFW	Football for the World Foundation
CRAP	Children Rights Advocacy Project
FACE	Family Action Community Empowerment
DLG	District Local Government
UNRA	Uganda National Roads Authority
CTPH	Conservation through Public Health
K-Talent	Kigezi Talents
LADA	Literacy Action Development Agency
NSC	Network for Social Change
MOU	Memorandum of Undertaking
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CHICO	China International Cooperation Group
APS	Africa Primatological Society
AfDB	African Development Bank
CSBAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group
AIFE Uganda	Africa Initiative on Food Security and Environment
BUP	Budget 4 us Project
NFA	National Forestry Authority

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is with particular pleasure that we are able to share with you again the tremendous work we are doing with the rural communities. Together in 2019, with countless effort from every stakeholder we put a spirited fight to create an impact in advocacy and empowerment of our people. This effort was profound enough to be felt communally.

This has certainly been a very important year for us and the IRUCE communities. It fills us with joy, but mostly with zeal that we celebrate another successful year, marks a phenomenal journey of navigating and defying barriers to service delivery in the rural communities.

The prowess to break new ground and create a clear future for communities will never be a simple task, but we are determined to take it on.

Our goal to deliver tangible impact to the rural communities continued unfettered during this year. The Board of Directors reconstituted the Board Committees to provide effective strategic oversight to management. In its implementation of the organizations' core programmes, they have remapped focus areas to create a clear direction for successful work.

The key streamlines are Empowerment for Women and children, Advocacy for Human rights and Good Governance and Justice in use of natural resources and development.

There have been several undertakings of major importance to growth of the organization carried out with support from Family Action Community Empowerment (FACE-UK), which helped to earmark significant priorities like governance review framework, enabling the board members to strengthen their capacity and streamline institutional roles.

I would like to congratulate the Board of Directors led by the chairperson, Mr. John Baptist Imokola for the eminent tasks achieved and a job well done.

The chairperson and his Board members - Mrs. Kabandize Newlife Nabimanya - Vice Chairperson, Eng. Jude Benda - chairperson of the projects & planning committee, Ms. Kyomugasho Christine - Member, Mr. Arans Tabaruka -Board Secretary (MD), Ms. Vickie Kobusinge- Director Finance, Audit and Administration, Yusto Muhereza (Bishop) Trustee and

Mr. Christopher Turyatema dedicated their time to accomplish the most enduring task of giving life to the organisation through their supervisory role.

While several discussions with our partners have opened focus on our vision and objectives to address capacity needs, it has also discussed opportunities to harness our targets and goals and ensure great strides in improving financial systems and controls.

Sensitization and engagement with children through our annual amateur kids programme - the Children's Rights Advocacy (CRAP) through the game camps, equipped children with life and footballing skills with support from the Football for the World Foundation (FFTW). We hope for stronger partnerships in this regard in the New Year.

The rural community women empowerment project roll-out through the micro-finance for rural women supported up to 154 women in 11 groups in different enterprise projects with free interest capital to support household income. The underlying factor has been the overwhelming number of women in the community that need more financial uplifting despite insufficient support.

Training and nurturing of the women groups' and management are still desired to keep our zeal and build trust and sustainability.

We appreciate all efforts in a series of charitable activities by our incredible board, donors, partners, staff and volunteers who have especially devoted to address community concerns in the rural spaces of Uganda.

Looking to the future, we hope we can count on your continued support to strengthen advocacy for the rural communities.

ARANS TABARUKA

Executive Director| IRUCE



ARANS TABARUKA
Executive Director
IRUCE

III. NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MR. JOHN BAPTIST IMOKOLA- CHAIRPERSON BOARD

Mr Imokola is dedicated to teaching as a lecturer at Makerere University, an astute career journalist with fond personality of hard work, commitment and result oriented.

MRS. NEWLIFE NABIMANYA KABANDIZE -VICE CHAIRPERSON

Her zeal is to work to perfection and love for humanity and brings a different view of how to empower communities. She cherishes values.

ENG JUDE BENDA MATSIKO CHAIRPERSON PROJECTS & PLANNING COMMITTEE

A community development enthusiast, Mr Matsiko is a senior engineer with Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA) who has tirelessly worked with several local and national government agencies.

MS. KYOMUGASHO CHRISTINE -MEMBER

She is an enthusiast of children and women development, a researcher, trained banker and graduate in Business Administration and gender mainstreaming expert.

MR. ARANS TABARUKA -BOARD SECRETARY

Mr Tabaruka is a social worker and advocate for human and community rights and empowerment. He is a founding director of Integrated Rural Community Empowerment.

MS. VICKIE KOBUSINGE- CHAIRPERSON FINANCE AUDIT & ADMINISTRATION

A professional in finance with over 10 years experience in financial management, grants administration, procurement, and project management for non-profit organizations.

BISHOP YUSTO MUHEREZA- MEMBER

An opinion leader and founding member of the organization, Yusto has been committed to community work over the years in a bid to empower the rural communities.



MR. JOHN BAPTIST IMOKOLA



ENG. JUDE BENDA MATSIKO



MS. KYOMUGASHO CHRISTINE



MR. ARANS TABARUKA



MS. VICKIE KOBUSINGE



BISHOP. YUSTO MUHEREZA



IV. BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

It gives me a lot of pleasure and honor, in the first place, to give a commendation on the historical success of Integrated Rural Community Empowerment, especially the milestones made in 2019.

Integrated Rural Community Empowerment (IRUCE) is the first of its kind in the hard-to-reach district of Kanungu, to offer non-interest (free) startup capital for women groups. There is no other group or non-governmental organization, in the district that has attempted this. I am very confident indeed, that we are the beacon of hope for rural women and children in eradication of poverty at the homestead level.

IRUCE has been able to circumvent one of the critical hurdles, in operation and management of microfinance industry by guaranteeing 100% start-up capital recovery rate. Not even government-backed interventions have been able to achieve this. This implies a lot of potential in investing in small micro women enterprises.

The only challenge, I have witnessed and which needs to be overcome, is urgently ensuring prompt mobilization of more funds. The disbursed funds appeared insignificant and could not be marched with available demand.

As we continue to work on this deliberate cause, we pledge individual and corporate support to the organization and communities, more than we are already giving and sharing expertise, financial resources, and non-financial resources, to uphold activities in the communities.

It is our intention to interact with the community and other stakeholders so that we can learn and reach out better with support, as our efforts are premised on a holistic approach to empower community women and children.

We all look forward to a great 2020 in our mission of Bringing Hope to Our Rural Communities.

VICKIE KOBUSINGE

For BOARD CHAIRPERSON/ IRUCE



VICKIE KOBUSINGE
BOARD CHAIRPERSON
IRUCE

V. KEY STRIDES

“Assisting communities to attain adequate and sustainable income”

Our goal remains to empower and support less-privileged communities in Uganda to access support, and quality service delivery.

This is propagated through our **values** of Action for the less-privileged, **Inclusiveness** in decision making, **Integrity** and **Accountability**.

In all we do, we have concentrated on community critical areas for people to thrive: incomes, livelihoods, and environmental justice. To maximize learning, we are intentionally out there to measure our potential to reach out to the rural areas, hard-to-reach and hard-to-stay.

In the face of severe poverty and fragile livelihoods, made even more vulnerable and worse by depreciating social amenities, low incomes and population growth, we have been left with no option but to intervene with the little we can. Hence our story is one of voluntarism and optimism, a philosophy, as set forth by Leibniz that “this world is the best of all possible worlds”.

This initiative has grown and supported and trained women and children in empowerment, skills and entrepreneurship their futures.

It is evident the situation is changing as communities appreciate our messaging and hope for women to take an effective role in shaping the societies’ social and economic attitudes.

Fast forward, through the years we have worked tirelessly to enroll a comprehensive plan to sensitize the communities’ women and children on the importance of remaining steadfast, get access to information for empowerment and protect and defend their communal rights.

Through support from the FACE UK with funding from Network for Social Change, (NSC)we are strengthening this niche, support and empowerment to women groups with a total of over 154 women benefiting in Ruyeyo, Rutenga, and Kanyantorogo and Kambuga sub-counties.

These women groups received interest-free capital for selected business enterprises and financial literacy for the period of 12 months. They successfully repaid

and the funds were re-loaned to them once more and continue the cycle to other groups. Despite a meager resource envelope, 11 groups have already benefited.

We have continuously rolled out an annual voluntary children’s rights advocacy program through the game. This initiative dubbed K-Talent with support from Football for the World Foundation has enabled children in and out of school to participate in an amateur football league for the U-14 in Kanungu for the last three years. Our gratitude to both parents and children for the unwavering support we have received from the communities and schools like Karuhinda Primary School, Kirima Parents School, Makiro Model and Mother Care Primary Schools whose participation in the annual league has been amazing.

We congratulate Kirima Parents School for their excellence and participation in the National Primary Schools League.



A) VOLUNTARY CONTRACTS FOR STAFF

The organisation has a lean team of three staff who are currently working on voluntary contracts. This followed a voluntary contract for the Executive Director, Mr. Arans Tabaruka with subsequent approval by the Board as part of efforts to facilitate decision-making and accountability.

Voluntary contracts for other staff - Mr. Andrew Akampurira, the project officer and Ms. Audrey Akampurira, the administrator have been completed to create and guide an enabling work environment for better work outputs.

B) MICROFINANCE FOR RURAL WOMEN (MIRWO) PROJECT ROLLOUT

In September 2019, our project partner Lauren Watters visited for a third time this year on a supervisory visit to draw plans for a major project roll out. We discussed and agreed on the key requirements for IRUCE-FACE Partnership to receive funding for the proposed MirWo project roll out.

This included a robust loan tracker, risk management framework and an MOU until 2023.

C) 2ND AFRICA PRIMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE (APS)

On invitation from Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH), IRUCE was asked to co-organise along several other civil society organisations and government agencies a scientific 2nd Africa primatological society conference in Entebbe from 2nd -5th September 2019. This was an opportunity to highlight our efforts in conservation of natural resources in Uganda. The conference was a success.

We were privileged to facilitate and chair the publicity committee of the 2nd Africa Primatological Society conference, but most importantly interact with regional CSOs and governments on conservation of the great apes and primates in Africa.

D) RAPID ASSESSMENT OF RUKUNGIRI-ISHASHA-KANUNGU ROAD PROJECT

As community activists, we set out on a voluntary

community rights assessment to find out unintended consequences in the ongoing road project in the communities of Rukungiri and Kanungu districts, along a 78km road project by a Chinese contractor M/s China Henan International Corporation Group (CHICO).

This was after community outcry with evidence of threat to major human rights and information gaps on the environmental, social, and economic aspects of the project.

As a major highlight, we remain optimistic to achieve a successful effort to support communities to demand for their rights on land, health and safety at work.

This evaluation was made possible through an immense support and sacrifices of Luca Fellini, our major donor and promoter, members of Board and staff, both financially and materially.

Using the findings, we recommended for compliance and adherence to the standard practices of government project implementation through a petition to the Speaker of Parliament of Uganda and implementing agencies UNRA, CHICO and AfDB to remedy concerns arising from the project.

E) HULT PRIZE AWARDS

IRUCE featured in 2019 Hult Prize on Campus Awards pitching, where the Executive Director, Mr. Arans Tabaruka was honored with an invitation as a judge and IRUCE as a mentor and sponsor of an ECO team that pitched and qualified to represent the country at regional level in Nairobi-Kenya.

Hult Prize was established by Bertil Hult, and is an annual, year-long competition that crowd-sources ideas from college students after challenging them to solve pressing social issues around topics such as food security, water access, energy, and education.

Hult Prize on Campus gives students an opportunity to deliver social change at the university and community. The 2019-2020 social challenge was to “Develop a business that will reach a million consumers in the next decade, but also reduce gas emission and have a positive impact on the environment. “The team with the most outstanding idea on how to combat the challenge wins the prize of one million USD as a startup seed at the global level.



F) IRUCE WEBSITE

After a successful reconstruction, our website www.iruce.org has been re-launched for effective information sharing and communication, in addition to the existing communication channels. We are online with social media presence on twitter @IRUCEcommunities, Facebook IRUCE and Instagram @irucecommunities and webmail info@iruce.org. Please follow, like and share our pages for promotional purposes and digital utilisation.

These efforts have been made possible through partnerships with the local governments in Kanungu and Rukungiri districts, CSBAG, The Purple Ray,

Literacy Advocacy Development Agency (LADA), and Football for the World Foundation (FFTW), AIFE Uganda, Conservation through Public Health (CTPH) and Africa Primatological Society (APS), all with a valuable contribution to our work.

Through these initiatives, young women and children in rural communities will overcome poverty through self-employment, education and community action and create sustainable livelihoods

VI. ABOUT IRUCE

Integrated Rural Community Empowerment, (IRUCE) is an indigenous not for-profit Organization working with the rural communities to strengthen their potential to advocate for improved Livelihoods, Environment justice and reduction of Poverty Levels in the South West Uganda.

Integrated Rural Community Empowerment (IRUCE) operates on 3 -Fold Approach to address rural community challenges in Child and Women Empowerment, Good governance and human rights advocacy, Natural resources Justice and Development.

This is achieved through a Working Promise:

“Bringing hope and prospect to our rural communities”

IRUCE intends to buttress on individual hope and prospect in communities that present socio-economic situations and challenges, affecting youth and women to change tremendously.

VISION: An Integrated, and self-reliant rural community, working as change agents to achieve sustainable livelihoods.

MISSION: To improve the quality of life of people living in rural communities through empowerment of individuals and families

GOAL: To empower and support the less privileged in the most rural communities in Uganda, access support, quality services.

VII. VALUES

Our Values are inculcated in;

- Action
- Inclusiveness
- Integrity
- Accountability

VIII. PROGRAMME FOCUS

Integrated Rural Community Empowerment (IRUCE) operates a “3-Fold Approach” to programming;

1. CHILDREN AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

This programme looks at positive aspects of ensuring good health, education as well as social and economic empowerment among children and women. It emphasises aspects of promoting talents of children, through use of sports as a flagship for children empowerment and women rights and income generation at the household level. 530 children enrolled (412 boys 118 girls reached through the game while 154 women empowered with microfinance skills and starter capital.

2. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY

This program looks at rights education, awareness creation and citizen’s participation and campaign against violation of women and vulnerable children’s property rights. Through the CSBAG network we are engaging districts and lower local governments to account sufficiently.

3. NATURAL RESOURCE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT

This program aims majorly at advocating for mitigating effects of climate change through



information campaigns against wanton destruction of environment, destructive agricultural and mining practices and poor exploitation of natural resources. It also aims at promotion of energy saving technologies in rural communities.

IX. PROJECTS

A). CHILDREN RIGHTS ADVOCACY PROJECT

The children rights advocacy project addresses the plight of rural community children through the game in coordination with the Football for the World Foundation. The project runs K-Talent as a flagship team to engage the community opportunities for children to remain in school and homes. Equality and children welfare is paramount. Our plan is to expand empowerment to the communities and engage more with teachers and parents about our children to provide assistance with knowledge of children upbringing in and out of school. Children in our rural communities to be specific need more support in understanding the choices they make.

We are now proud to associate with you in supporting the vulnerable rural community children through the game.

Our team of local trainers and volunteering coaches headed by Andrew Akampurira assemble a skillful K-Talent team.



B) BUDGET FOR US PROJECT (BUP)

This program aims at guiding the planning and budgeting processes, in order to ensure that resources are properly mobilized, allocated and utilized in an efficient, equitable and gender-sensitive manner to promote sustainable development at both higher and lower local governments, through use of available platforms and networks that we subscribe to both at national and district level.

We engage legislators and stakeholders with sufficient opportunity to debate national, district and lower local government's budget framework papers for each F/Y in order to get "a people centered budget that dignifies humanity" and to use it to meaningfully, influence final decision budgets for that particular F/Y.

This will be achieved through giving snapshot analysis on both higher and lower local government budgets for every F/Y. It also aims at establishing budget monitoring and accountability committees (at district, town councils and sub-counties) for purposes of effectively making citizen's voice central in the budgeting making, compliance and discipline.

C) MICRO FINANCE FOR RURAL WOMEN PROJECT (MIRWO)

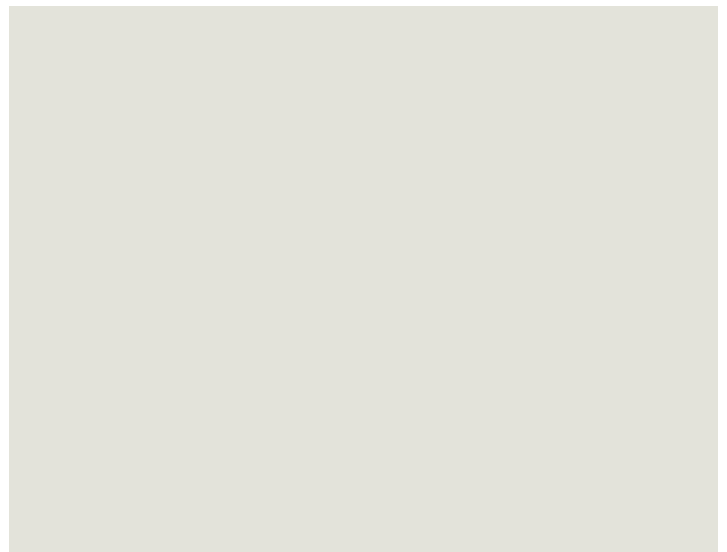
This project aims at improving community livelihoods and household incomes through provision of interest-free loans to rural women groups and teenage mothers for purposes of promoting production, business and in farming of short gestation crops. In August 2016, Integrated Rural community Empowerment (IRUCE) received funding from the Family Action Community Empowerment in UK to implement a project titled, "Microfinance for Rural Women in the South West Uganda. This project was developed against a backdrop of improving community livelihoods and household incomes through providing free interest loans to rural women groups and teenage mothers for purposes of promoting production, business and in farming for household income generation.



D) ADAPTIVE RURAL COMMUNITY HORIZON (ACH)

This majorly has had captivating impacts through the “adapt a million trees campaign” in our society. The emphasis is on mitigating effects of climate change by campaigning against wanton destruction of environments and greenery belts, poor garbage disposal, destructive mining practices and poor exploitation of natural resources. We undertook tree planting with assistance of the district local government in Kanungu and NFA in rural communities. Through community awareness campaigns on positive impacts of biodiversity and mineral development, we made citizen engagements mainly in creating awareness among rural communities on the peripheral of the gazette conservation and forestry areas with potential to extinction, to salvage the future exploitation of such a mineral resource.

The above program zeros on people participation and shedding of light through information sharing on policies and development, and on how rural communities in this area can effectively tap into the new upcoming opportunities of natural resources conservation.





AransTabaruka
ED of Iruce

X. CONCLUSION

We have aligned our work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals agenda that aims at transforming the world through ending poverty, improving health, reducing inequality and addressing climate change by 2030.

IRUCE therefore commits to strengthening the rural communities through advocacy and empowerment. We are more invigorated in a quest to continue making a contribution to changing the status quo and challenging barriers of service delivery and undesirable social constraints that continue to discriminate people in the society especially women and children.

Our 3-fold approach to community empowerment and development tackles these gaps that remain a nightmare to the communities.



Work



Out reaches



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