

# Strengthening the government's efforts to boost youth livelihoods in Uganda

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## Highlights

### Evidence impact

- Following the research team's collaboration on a 3ie-supported evaluation with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), Uganda's cabinet approved major changes in the design of the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP).
- The ministry's experience of collaborating on the process evaluation and the impact evaluation, as well as participating in 3ie's capacity development programme, contributed to its decision to develop a process evaluation proposal for the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme.

### Factors that contributed to impact

- 3ie's multi-year Policy Evidence Programme supported demand-driven evaluations of priority programmes that the implementing ministries prioritised.
- The Policy Evidence Programme team organised meetings and workshops that enhanced the capacity of Uganda's Office of the Prime Minister, monitoring and evaluation officials, and MoGLSD to commission and use evaluation evidence.

## Impact evaluation details

Title: [Do revolving funds generate self-employment and increase incomes for the poor? ...](#)

Authors: Badru Bukenya, Saint Kizito Omala, Rogers Kasirye, Jeanne Miranda

Status : Completed April 2019



## Context

Uganda has one of the highest youth populations in the world, with more than three-quarters of the population below 30 years, and a large proportion of these youth struggle to find jobs. In 2015, the [International Labour Organization](#) reported that nearly a fifth (18 per cent) of Uganda's youth were unemployed and that two in five unemployed young people had to look for jobs for longer than a year. [Consultations](#) conducted by Uganda's Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the World Bank in 2019 revealed that though youth find jobs difficult to secure and consider entrepreneurship an option, they lack the required networks, skills and access to finance.

YLP is the Ugandan government's flagship five-year development programme, providing skills and affordable start-up credit to poor and unemployed youth between the ages of 18 and 30 years. Under the programme, which MoGLSD started in 2013–2014, youth groups receive orientation on financial management, bookkeeping, procurement and managing group dynamics through a standardised two-day workshop. They also receive a grant worth UGX 9.2 million (US\$2,500) on average, without any collateral, at an interest rate of 5 per cent from the thirteenth month onward.

Under the Uganda Policy Evidence Programme, 3ie supported the evaluation of priority government programmes and also built the capacity of government officials, particularly monitoring and evaluation officers, to generate and use evaluative evidence. In 2017, 3ie supported MoGLSD and researchers from Uganda Youth Development Link, Uganda's

Makerere University and the University of California to conduct process and impact evaluations of YLP and assess its impacts on youth employment, income and empowerment.

The researchers compiled a pool of 1,556 eligible youth applicants in 402 groups from 16 districts across all of Uganda's regions and randomly assigned them into treatment or control/comparison arms for at least one financial year.

## Evidence

After 12 months of implementation, YLP had no statistically significant effect on the socio-economic outcomes of the intervention group as compared to the control group. While measures of direct income show that youth in the intervention group lag behind their counterparts in the control group, the former's asset portfolio increased faster. The study found that YLP beneficiaries are moving from unskilled to skilled, and unpaid to paid occupations, and report that they experience greater access to credit facilities. The YLP intervention also positively impacted employment for people outside the programme: youth in the intervention group employed more people (both relatives and non-family members) in their businesses compared to youth in the control group.

Process evaluation findings showed that implementers focused on disbursement and recovery of funds, while downplaying complementary activities to support the novice entrepreneurs through the entire business cycle. Findings also showed that a group size of over 10 members reduced the per capita funding share, complicated group dynamics and increased attrition.

## Evidence impacts

“When you do these evaluations, they help you to inwardly reflect and look at what is working, what is not working and generate sufficient evidence to inform policy.”

**Paul Onappa**

*National Programme Manager  
Youth Livelihood Programme*

### **Cabinet approved evidence-informed changes to YLP's design**

Uganda's cabinet approved the recommendations from the YLP impact evaluation studies and the YLP annual reviews included in policy briefs prepared by MoGLSD. Based on study recommendations, the cabinet decided to reduce the group size from 10 to 5 members. The findings also informed the decision to increase the budget for institutional support from 10 to 20 per cent. The additional resources will be used for training, technical support and youth group supervision. In line with study recommendations, the government will also be strengthening programme implementation monitoring, as well as adding components for enterprise building and skill development.

### **Enhanced the ministry's capacity to drive subsequent evaluation**

In addition to facilitating the collaboration on the process and impact evaluations of YLP, 3ie increased the ministry's capacity to commission and manage its own evaluations. According to Tonnie Stieve Luyimbazi, the monitoring and evaluation officer for YLP, MoGLSD recently concluded an evaluability assessment of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme and put together a process evaluation proposal.

## Suggested citation

**International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), 2020.** *Strengthening the government's efforts to boost youth livelihoods in Uganda* [online summary], Evidence Impact Summaries. New Delhi: 3ie.

## Related

### [Uganda Evaluation Week 2019: from evidence generation to utilisation](#)

This website highlights the discussions held during a 2019 meeting at which government representatives in Uganda highlighted their experience with evaluations, including that of the YLP

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