Flagship Projects

A future for teenage mothers and their children
The project enables girls and young mothers to access elementary education and vocational training. To this end, a secondary school, a vocational training centre and a nursery are being set up. As part of an accelerated learning programme, the girls have an opportunity to catch up on missed schooling and get a formal school-leaving qualification, which gives them access to further training. The project is implemented by the Christian Counseling Fellowship.

A future for young prisoners
The project focuses on the socio-economic integration of female and male prison inmates aged 18-35 and equips them with theoretical and practical knowledge of setting up and managing a business, and advises them in developing an effective business idea. After their release, they are supported by established business people in implementing their idea. The project is funded by the EU and implemented by Advance Afrika and Uganda Prisons Service.

Income and food security thanks to Moringa
Moringa is considered as one of the most nutritious plants in the world. The project contributes to food security, the creation of income-generating opportunities and the reintegration of young women and men released from prison into society by informing about Moringa, producing, processing and distributing Moringa, and marketing it profitably. The project is implemented by Advance Afrika and the Teso Enterprise Consulting and Marketing Association.

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Doing the right thing

Uganda
Fields of Activity and Flagship Projects

Uganda has been lauded as an African success story for reducing extreme poverty. However, progress has been uneven across the country, with the north and east currently recording poverty rates as high as 84 per cent.

Agriculture is the most important source of income and livelihoods for the predominantly rural population in northern Uganda. Due to decades of civil unrest and internal displacement as well as the impact of demographic growth, soil degradation and climate change, land access and agricultural productivity have changed. Today, land is disputed and often inefficiently used, with major impacts on food security and overall household welfare. Alternatives to agriculture are rare and access to quality education is a major challenge for almost all children and youth. Uganda has the world’s youngest population, with over 78% of its people being below the age of 30, whereas youth unemployment is the highest on the continent. The optimal contribution of the youth to the development of the county is hampered by their low skill levels and limited economic opportunities.

Challenges obviously become more demanding for those belonging to vulnerable or marginalized groups namely girls, teenage mothers, or ex-prisoners. Therefore, the overall objective of Caritas Switzerland’ programme in Uganda is the socio-economic empowerment and integration of vulnerable youth and other at-risk populations so as to enable genuine human development.
Uganda country programme 2017-2020

Caritas Switzerland’s interventions in Uganda focus on two Fields of Activity: Food Security & Markets, and Education & Income. The geographic scope is mainly but not exclusively on the rural north and east of the country, where poverty is most severe. Methodologically, the programme draws from the Rights-Based Approach and embodies principles of local responsibility, wide-ranging participation and inclusion with respect to the collective that still dominates large parts of the Ugandan society. Caritas Switzerland operates through local implementing partners and places strong emphasis on competence and professionalism by systematically developing organizational capacity. It further promotes multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approaches to benefit from the complementary and reinforcing nature of skills and knowledge of a variety of actors, and to stimulate innovation as well as confidence. In addition to fundraising, coordination and the provision of technical advisory services, Caritas Switzerland is committed to the management for development results and engaged in a continuous monitoring and evaluation process that generates feedback to project interventions and contributes to knowledge creation and management.

Education and Income

The objective of the interventions in the field of education and income supported by Caritas Switzerland is to promote the socio-economic (re)integration of marginalised youth, in particular juvenile offenders and vulnerable girls including teenage mothers. The intention is to promote social justice, sustainable economic development, good governance and social stability. Key elements to realize this include: The development of entrepreneurship and life skills; the establishment of learning and mentoring mechanisms to support young people in the development and set-up of small businesses; access to education and vocational training; the provision of small amounts of capital to start micro-enterprises; income promotion for parents and care takers, awareness-raising, sensitization and advocacy. Implementation is managed by two local non-governmental organisations that work closely with the government, civil society as well as the academic and private sectors.

Food Security and Markets

The strengthening and/or revival of formal and informal management mechanisms in the area of tenure and property rights are crucial to address widespread land conflicts and associated food insecurity. Alongside access to land, food and income securing measures allow small-scale farmers and their families to earn a modest livelihood and get regular and balanced nutrition. Consequently, Caritas Switzerland is working with two local partner organisations to improve community capacities in the areas of land administration, the use of sustainable and climate-resistant agricultural production methods, as well as the production and marketing of agricultural products such as free-range chickens and eggs. Moringa, in addition to local markets, bears an equally high potential for global export as consumer demand namely in Europe and the Americas is increasing, driven by growing awareness of its nutritious benefits. Access to international markets will allow to further enhance smallholder farmers’ resilience and adaptive capacity to address climate change related impacts.

Organisational development of implementing partners

Caritas Switzerland has a deep commitment to strengthening the organisational and institutional capacities of its partner organisations to increase their impact – both in their role as agencies implementing common projects and as independent actors of the local civil society. In the case of Uganda, emphasis is on transforming partners into social enterprises or hybrid organisations by converging their social goals with profit-seeking and business in order to sustain them at both institutional and intervention levels. The defining characteristic of a social enterprise is the pursuit of the dual mission of financial sustainability and social purpose. This model brings a competitive advantage as governments cut back on funding and competition among non-governmental organisations grows. In that sense, partner organisations in Uganda have been assisted by Caritas Switzerland to set up agro-businesses such as the export to Europe of Moringa products by Advance Afrika, including powder, seeds and oil.