

Heifer International, Mastercard Foundation Partner to Expand Employment Opportunities in Agriculture for Ugandan Youth

The partnership will expand access to agribusiness opportunities for over 250,000 young people. Women will make up 70% of the participants

KAMPALA, UGANDA, December 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Heifer International](#) and the [Mastercard Foundation](#) will extend their collaboration in a new partnership to expand access to agribusiness opportunities for over 250,000 young people in Uganda.



Goal is to transform the market ecosystem in Busoga in a way that drives inclusion and economic resilience for the many young people who currently have trouble securing dignified and fulfilling work”

Surita Sandosham

The Stimulating Agriculture for Youth Employment (SAYE) project led by Heifer International and local partners, will run from 2023 to 2029 in the Busoga sub-region of Eastern Uganda. The project aims to empower young people aged 16 to 35 by improving skills, expanding market access, and offering inclusive financing in key sectors including poultry, horticulture, oilseed, dairy, and beef value chains. Young women will make up 70 percent of participants, while three

percent will be young persons with disabilities.

“Our goal is to transform the market ecosystem in Busoga in a way that drives inclusion and economic resilience for the many young people who currently have trouble securing dignified and fulfilling work,” said Heifer International President and CEO Surita Sandosham.

The \$48 million SAYE project will build on the work of Heifer International’s East Africa Youth Inclusion Program (EAYIP), which was also in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, and created 33,000 new jobs for more than 25,000 young people between 2016 and 2022. EAYIP leveraged an agri-hub model to boost young people’s access to technical, business, and financial products, and services.

Under SAYE, Heifer will lead the formation and strengthening of youth- and farmer-led agri-hubs while local partners will focus on business incubation, skills training, promoting micro, small and medium enterprises and improving access to financial services.

The SAYE project will roll out in 11 districts of the Busoga sub-region: Jinja, Mayuge, Iganga, Kamuli, Kaliro, Namutumba, Bugweri, Luka, Buyende, Bugiri, Namayengo. The high rates of poverty in these districts partly stem from an overreliance on low-value crops like sugar cane and limited opportunities for income generation. SAYE is targeting sectors with low entry barriers for young people and high market potential, aiming to boost local income opportunities.

“We are committed to creating opportunities for young people in agriculture as part of our Young Africa Works strategy. Our goal is to enable 4.3 million Ugandan youth, particularly young women, to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030. This initiative will equip them with the necessary skills and resources to engage in various aspects of the agriculture value chain,” said Adrian Bukenya, Country Director for Uganda at the Mastercard Foundation.

The SAYE project will also focus on diversifying value chains, embracing tech solutions, and adopting climate-smart agriculture. These efforts, along with private sector engagement and multiple partners, seek to provide young people with sustainable employment.

Heifer International began working in Uganda in 1982 by delivering cattle to rural communities. To date, Heifer Uganda has supported over six million families across the country through agriculture and environmentally-sound economic development programs. Heifer Uganda is currently present in 19 districts of the Central, Eastern, West Nile, and Northern regions.

-ENDS-

About Heifer International

Since its founding in 1944, Heifer International has worked with more than 46 million people around the world to end hunger and poverty in a sustainable way while caring for the Earth. Heifer currently operates in 19 countries across Africa, Asia, and the Americas, including the United States, supporting farmers and food producers to strengthen local economies and build secure livelihoods that provide a living income. For more information, visit <https://www.heifer.org/our-work/index.html>.



Members of a Youth Saving and Credit Group count their proceeds. The group was started with the support of Heifer International Uganda in partnership with Mastercard Foundation, under the EAYIP project. Photo credit HPI

About the Mastercard Foundation

The Mastercard Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and one of the largest foundations in the world. It works with visionary organizations to advance education and financial inclusion to enable young people in Africa and Indigenous youth in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. Established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company, the Foundation is an independent organization separate from the company, with offices in Toronto, Kigali, Accra, Nairobi, Kampala, Lagos, Dakar, and Addis Ababa. Its policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by the Foundation's Board of Directors and leadership. For more information on the Foundation, please visit www.mastercardfdn.org

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