



Fair & Sustainable  
Consulting



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Final evaluation of “Skilling in  
Agripreneurship for increased  
Youth Employment (SAY)  
Project”  
Final report

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## List of Abbreviations

ATP	Assessment and Training Package
AVSI	AVSI Foundation
BTVET	Business, Technical and Vocational Education Training
C&D	Institute for International Cooperation and Development
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
COWA	Companionship of Works Association
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CURAD	Consortium for enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFCU	Development Finance Company of Uganda
DIT	Directorate of Industrial Training
EAC	East African Community
EDP	Education Development Partners Group Framework
EGO	Enhancing Green Opportunities
EKN	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EUR	Euro
F&S	Fair and Sustainable Consulting
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGG	Inclusive Green Growth (department of Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
IO	Intermediate Objective
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department
IP	Implementing Partner
ISSD	Integrated Seed Sector Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute
KLM	Royal Dutch Airline
FG	Local Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MTRC	Mushroom Training and Resource Centre

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PCP	Pearl Capital Partners
PDM	Parish Development Model
ROI	Return on Investment
SACCO	Savings and Credit Co-operative
SARD-Net	Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development Network
SAY	Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SKY	Skilling Youth for Employment in Agri-business
SNV	Dutch Development Organisation
SO	Specific Objective
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UGAFODE	Uganda Agency for Development Microfinance Limited
UGX	Uganda Shilling
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VC	Value Chain
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
WORUDET	Women and Rural Development Network
YOFA	Young Future Farmers of Africa

## Executive summary

The overall goal of the Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment (SAY) project is to contribute to increased agri-skills level of youth and their gainful employment in the agriculture sector in Uganda through agripreneurship skills and knowledge transfer involving local and international public and private actors as part of efforts to socio-economically spur Uganda to middle-income status.

The project is being implemented in 32 districts, in four regions of Uganda (Northern, Eastern, Western and Central). The project targets 18,800 youths aged 18-30 years for immediate employment, and 6,500 youths aged 13-18 years for increased engagement in agriculture.

The project is implemented by AVSI foundation in the period from 1 November 2020 – 31 December 2024. The project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Kampala and has a budget of EUR 15.5 million, after a top-up in 2021 and upscaling in 2022.

With the project ending in December 2024, EKN commissioned a final evaluation in August 2024 to assess the performance of the project and capture project achievements/results, challenges, and best practises.

### Key Findings

The project enrolled 19,398 youths aged 18-30 for skilling, exceeding the target of 18,800, with 51% of them female. Ninety percent of the enrolled youths completed the skilling cycle.

10,730 youths found employment (self or wage); however, targets for high-income employment ( $\geq$  UGX 500,000/month) and wage employment were not fully met.

The project successfully engaged refugee youths, with 2,653 gaining financial credit access through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA).

Subsidies to female youths helped achieve a balanced male-to-female participation rate, though wage employment and income generation results were lower for women.

Over 2,200 youths received booster packages for start-up or scaling up agribusiness ventures, though challenges and limitations were noted regarding the booster's effectiveness and effect on sustainability.

Infrastructure and capacity-building investments in skilling institutions enhanced their long-term training ability. Partnerships, especially with private sector partners, showed promising outcomes in fostering market linkages and mentorship.

Certification requirements were contentious, with limited perceived value for self-employed youth. Risk management strategies addressed some external challenges, including COVID-19 impacts.

### Conclusions

#### Relevance

The project was well-aligned with Uganda's national strategies for youth employment and agripreneurship, making it a highly relevant initiative. Targeting youth aged 18-30 and emphasising gender parity addressed key gaps in access to agricultural employment opportunities.

### Coherence

The project had a few collaborations with other Dutch funded projects. Coherence could have been higher if more effort was put in collaboration with other projects. Collaboration with government was generally good, as was the link between local implementation and national policy.

### Effectiveness

Skilling initiatives reached the enrolment targets and contributed to skill acquisition, with success in attracting at least 50% female participants. 5,706 school youths were skilled, which is above the target of 5,500. Youth showed a notable change in mindset toward agriculture.

However:

- Employment targets, especially for wage jobs, were not fully realised.
- The target for assessment by DIT/MAAIF of youths 18-30 years only reached 67% of the target for this output. The main reason for underachievement is the decision by the project not to enforce certification as a requirement for participation in the skilling programme.
- The gender strategy was not effective at outcome and specific objective level.

### Sustainability

Effective collaboration with local governments and private partners are important indicators for potential sustainability of project interventions. The approach of liberal handouts to youths, with little or no own contribution, threatens long-term continuity.

## **Recommendations**

### Refine Booster Packages

- Conduct more comprehensive assessments of youth needs and local markets before delivering booster packages.
- Phase the distribution of booster packages, aligning them with demonstrated progress and readiness to optimise their impact.

### Improve Employment Linkages

- Strengthen partnerships with the private sector to create more wage employment opportunities.
- Develop a robust job brokerage platform to connect skilled youth with employers in agribusiness.

### Support for Self-Employment

- Enhance mentorship programs to support youth in navigating challenges in self-employment.
- Expand financial literacy training and access to finance.

### Institutionalisation and local ownership

- Transition project ownership to local governments and partners to embed initiatives in national systems and reduce reliance on donor funding.
- Encourage public-private partnerships to sustain skilling and employment efforts.

### Gender-Sensitive Programming

- Maintain gender-specific incentives, such as subsidies for certification fees for women.
- Integrate ongoing support for female entrepreneurs to address barriers in market access and financial independence.

### Value chain approach

To increase the chances for gainful employment of youth it is recommended to apply a more comprehensive value chain or Market System Development approach. Applying such approach would assess and address bottlenecks in and around value chains.

## **Lessons Learned**

### Importance of local context

Tailoring skilling initiatives to the specific needs and dynamics of local communities improves participation and effectiveness. For example, private sector partners demonstrated greater agility and alignment with business needs than public institutions.

### Gender dynamics

Subsidies for certification fees for female participants were critical to achieving gender balance. However, more strategically targeted support to female youth is needed to overcome systemic gender barriers in agribusiness.

### Certification and employability

While certification was a major programme component, its perceived value was mixed. For self-employed youth, practical skills and market access were often more relevant than formal certification. Asking youths to contribute by paying for certification fees is a good proxy for show of interest and commitment.

### Dependency vs. empowerment

Free inputs and booster packages created some dependency among youth. More focus on cost-sharing or conditional assistance could foster greater self-reliance and long-term sustainability. Group empowerment with booster packages would cause synergistic relationships and leveraging on each other's strength for long term sustainability.

### Mentorship and market linkages

The inclusion of mentorship and exposure visits was highly valued by participants, underscoring the need for these to be integrated into future skilling programs. Links to regional markets improved accrued income from the products and bulking of produce, underscoring the need for group marketing and producer associations.

### Capacity building of partners

Investments in infrastructure and capacity building at skilling institutions have a multiplier effect, benefiting not only current but also future beneficiaries. However, proportionality of investment across partners needs attention to ensure equity and alignment with programme goals.

### Challenges with booster packages

Booster packages were impactful but sometimes mismatched to youth needs or provided before youth were ready. More participatory planning and phased implementation would enhance their effectiveness.

### Public-private synergy

Private sector engagement proved critical in aligning skilling with market demands. Partnerships with agribusiness firms ensured practical, market-relevant skills and created immediate opportunities for employment.

### Integration of climate-smart practices

The inclusion of climate-smart agriculture and financial literacy was highly appreciated by participants, highlighting the importance of integrating contemporary and adaptable skills in future programs.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the evaluation

On 13 August 2024, the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) was selected by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Kampala to carry out the final evaluation of “Skilling in Agripreneurship for increased Youth Employment (SAY) project”, under lot 2 of the Framework Agreement Evaluations of 15 September 2020 with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The evaluation was implemented by the consortium member Fair and Sustainable Consulting (F&S). The evaluation team consisted of Mr. Paul Sijssens (international consultant, team leader), Dr. Andrew Kizito Muganga (national consultant) and Ms Ziwena Nantongo (national consultant).

## 1.2 Objectives of the evaluation

The purpose for the evaluation was to assess the performance of the project and capture project achievements/results, challenges, and best practises. The evaluation should also provide a learning aspect for all stakeholders. The evaluation therefore should identify key lessons learned, challenges, intended & unintended effects of the project, the flexibility of the project to adapt and respond to changes, and sustainability of the project interventions. The outcomes of the evaluation were to help EKN in further developing a new skilling programme.

The Terms of Reference (ToR, Annex 1) listed the following objectives of the evaluation:

1. Assess the **performance** of the project towards achieving the intended project objectives, results, and outcomes as agreed upon in the project document.
2. Assess the **relevance and effectiveness** of the SAY project interventions in enhancing the employability of youths in the agricultural sector; towards achieving the project outcomes/results. What worked (or did not work) and why.
3. Identify and assess critical **lessons learned, challenges, unintended effects** of the project and draw recommendations for future youth skilling in agriculture programs, also from the perspective of the IGG results and objectives.
4. Assess whether the **risks** identified in the project were the most important and appropriate ones. Were the risk management strategies/responses that were adopted by the project adequate?
5. Assess the likely **sustainability** of the project, examining particularly from the beneficiaries' perspective, how much of the project's knowledge and practice transfer efforts has been learned, adopted, used and institutionalised by the beneficiaries (youths) and other stakeholders and partners.

In the ToR, specific questions were formulated with respect to four of the six OECD-DAC criteria for evaluations: relevance, coherence, effectiveness and sustainability. The ToR did not provide specific evaluation questions related to the remaining two criteria: efficiency and impact. The evaluators elaborated and unpacked these questions in an evaluation matrix (Annex 2).

The project had not yet concluded and the ToR did not demarcate the scope of the evaluation in terms of project implementation period. As fieldwork and data collection started October 2024, the scope was

demarcated based on the latest Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) data available, which was up to 15 October 2024.

## **2. Evaluation methodology**

### **2.1 Evaluation approach**

The evaluation team used a Theory of Change (ToC) based approach, making use of a realist evaluation methodology. This approach seeks to understand what worked for whom, to what extent, under what circumstances, and over what duration. A realist evaluation tests how capacities and mechanisms initiated by a project cause desired outcomes. A well-developed ToC and/or a logical framework is the essential basis of a realist evaluation. A ToC-based approach is particularly useful because it identifies the roles of key actors influencing and/or influenced by the programme activities. These are the actors that need to acquire or change their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour to transform project outputs into the envisaged intermediate outcomes, subsequent high-level outcomes and finally impact.

The evaluation team therefore considered the SAY Project ToC impact pathways as an important element of the approach to realising change and achieving impact. SAY's illustrated ToC (Annex 3) was analysed together with the narrative that was provided in the project proposal. The ToC was updated after the Mid-Term Review (MTR) when some indicators were dropped and targets for others were revised. The target for the number of agribusinesses with gender-responsive strategies/policies and climate-smart strategies/ policies were both reduced from 45 to 30, as there was no need to engage more agribusinesses. The target of agribusinesses with at least 40% female employees was reduced from 25 to 20 agribusinesses, apparently based on the nature of some agribusinesses, which could not take on most female youth as employees due to the nature of the workload. The MTR stated that the target is outside the control of the project.

### **2.2 Data collection**

#### **2.2.1 Document review**

The desk review informed the evaluation team on the project implementation strategy and activities, policies, various studies conducted and preliminary results of the SAY project. Besides directly contributing to the evaluation questions, the desk study also informed all other data collection tools.

After the kick-off meeting of 11 September 2024, AVSI started sharing relevant project documents with the evaluation team. These included:

- Original project proposal (August 2020) and the proposal for the scale-up (August 2022)
- Annual workplans (2021, 2022,2023,2024)
- Annual progress report (2021, 2022, 2023)
- Progress report June 2023 – February 2024
- Mid-term review report of September 2023
- A contextual analysis report of April 2021
- Thematic strategies
- Food market systems survey report (2023)
- Project ToC and logical framework

## **2.2.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are qualitative interviews with resource persons who have first-hand knowledge on the topic of interest, allowing for in-depth answers and divergent views that may be difficult to collect in group settings. The purpose of the KIIs was to collect qualitative information from a wide range of people such as beneficiaries of the project activities (youth, schools, remand homes, skills centres, agribusinesses and other implementing partners), stakeholders (local and national level government), project staff and EKN.

The evaluation team ensured that the set of respondents was diverse to ensure that the different groups of stakeholders were covered. Draft interview guides consisting of probing questions regarding the respondent's role in activities related to each outcome of the project were prepared by the evaluation team. The questions focused on the OECD-DAC criteria and specific questions that formed the basis of this evaluation. Being semi-structured the KIIs allowed for free discussion of specific issues deemed relevant to the respondents.

The KIIs were carried out face-to-face as part of the fieldwork spread out over 28 days of primary data collection in the country. Selected locations were identified (see sampling, Section 2.3 below). The evaluation members, international and national, worked independently, but were supported by SAY project staff to facilitate mobilising respondents.

## **2.2.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)**

FGDs (around 3-4 per district, with 10-15 participants each) were carried out with young men and women beneficiaries. The FGDs helped the evaluators understand whether/what the beneficiaries perceived as changes (positive and negative) with respect to agribusiness skills and (self) employment because of their participation in SAY. The FGDs aimed to collect the viewpoints of a diverse group of beneficiaries in various subjects that are relevant to the evaluation; these include relevance, effectiveness, impact and the sustainability of results. The FGDs also contributed to the evaluators' understanding of the extent to which different target groups were able to reap the rewards of the project and why.

## **2.2.4 Debriefing**

At the end of the fieldwork, the evaluation team presented their preliminary findings to the EKN and SAY project team. The objective of the debriefing meeting was to synthesise the information collected and validate the evaluation team's understanding of the situation on the ground. It was to step back, reflect and acknowledge the different viewpoints gathered, and incorporate new perspectives or information, if any.

## **2.2.5 Data Analysis**

The evaluation captured and made use of both qualitative and quantitative data. The former concerns mainly primary data from project beneficiaries and (other) key informants. The latter concerns secondary data that was previously captured by SAY's MEAL system and that was made available to the evaluators.

Qualitative data from beneficiaries and key informants were analysed thematically based on the evaluation questions and the evaluation matrix (see Annex 2). The evaluation matrix served as a checklist as it lists the questions that must be answered or addressed and how to go about that. Relevant quantitative secondary data were analysed with statistical methods that suit the data available. Other methods involved the presentation of graphs and tables of secondary data from the M&E process.

The secondary project data made available were disaggregated according to sex. In the primary data collection, the evaluators ensured that men and women beneficiaries were both represented. Similarly, the evaluators assessed the project's contribution to climate smart agriculture.

## 2.3 Sampling strategy and field work

The sampling strategy for the semi-structured interview and group discussions was based on a mix of stratified and purposeful sampling. First, the country was stratified into the four administrative regions of Central, Eastern, Northern and Western. Secondly, respondents were purposively selected to meet six more selection criteria of (i) ample district representation within regions, (ii) including all types of partners, (iii) including all types of value chain enterprises, (iv) including all types of occupations, (v) including all types of value chain nodes, and (vi) include active partners. This means that the selection of respondents did not follow a probability sampling design nor was sample size determined based on finite population sampling methods<sup>1</sup>.

The evaluators envisage collecting information from many groups of respondents including implementors, beneficiaries, and third- parties based on the following purposeful sampling criterion. That means that respondents who are expected to have in-depth knowledge about the SAY project are identified in each of the four districts per region selected. Additionally, based on the information provided by SAY, key informants were selected considering the following characteristics:

### 1. Selection of project regions

All four regions of Uganda where the project is implemented were visited and are considered as independent strata. Yumbe was classified as belonging to Northern Region as is the case at the national government level.

### 2. Selection of districts within the regions

From each stratum and based on the density of project partners and value chains within the different districts, the top four districts were selected in each region:

- Central Region: Kampala, Wakiso, Mukono, and Mityana.
- Eastern Region; Iganga, Mbale, Kapchorwa, and Soroti.
- Northern Region: Gulu, Lamwo, Pader, and Lira.
- Western Region: Mbarara, Ibanda, Bushenyi and Kabale.

The sample thus drawn, means that the evaluators visited 16 out of 32 districts in which the project was implemented.

### 3. Partner selection (classifications)

The evaluators purposefully selected respondents to ensure that all nine types of partners were represented in the sample. The following categories were included: remand homes, faith-based institutions, third parties, agribusinesses, secondary schools, agri-institutions, NGOs, and universities. Within each of the classifications in each partner institution, the evaluators aimed to conduct a FGD.

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<sup>1</sup> The sample size was not computed based on probability sampling methods that use estimates of variability in the population (i.e., sampling errors), degree of precision, and confidence level, because of the heterogeneous nature of respondents and the characteristics sought from each group. No population parameters such as means and standard errors of random variables were sought to be estimated from this end-of-project evaluation exercise. By implication, there was no pretesting of any questionnaire since this was not a sample survey designed to conduct impact evaluation, but a (mostly qualitative) end-of-project evaluation.

#### 4. Selection of value-chain enterprises

The evaluators purposefully planned to visit at least one of all 17 types of value chain enterprises in the selected districts. In total, 116 value chain enterprises in the 16 selected districts were visited. The sample included 37 value chain enterprises in Central, 15 in Eastern, 39 in Northern, and 25 in Western Uganda. This represents about 59% of the participating value chains. This broad selection of value chain enterprises allowed for assessing which value chains are performing well, average or poorly.

#### 5. Occupations covered

The evaluation plans to purposefully include all types of occupations.

#### 6. Value chain nodes covered

All value chain nodes were represented in the sample, including those that are less common (e.g., extension services, mechanisation and inputs). The major value chain nodes such as production, marketing, post-production handling, and processing are, naturally, included.

#### 7. Status of partner

Only active partners were selected for evaluation.

## 2.4 Process of the evaluation

The evaluation formally started with two separate virtual kick-off meetings with EKN and AVSI, on 5 and 11 September 2024 respectively. These marked the start of the inception period. The inception report was submitted to EKN on 24 September 2024 and formally approved on 24 October 2024.

Data collection in Uganda took place from 17 October until 13 November 2024. A summary of the timeline of the evaluation is given in Table 1 below. A detailed itinerary of the fieldwork is given in Annex 4.

**Table 1: Summary of timeline of SAY evaluation**

Dates	Main activity
5 September 2024	Kick-off meeting with EKN, start of inception period
11 September 2024	Kick-off meeting with AVSI
17 – 19 October 2024	Data collection Central Region
20 – 25 October 2024	Data collection Northern Region
26 – 30 October 2024	Data collection Eastern Region
31 October – 2 November 2024	Data collection Central Region
4 -8 November 2024	Data collection Western Region
11 -12 November 2024	Data Collection Central
12 November 2024	Debrief Preparation
13 November 2024	EKN Debrief
19 November 2024	Data collection Mityana District

### 3. Findings

The overall goal of the SAY project is “to contribute to increased agri-skills level and gainful employment of youth in the agriculture sector in Uganda”. According to the project’s ToC the goal is to be achieved by reaching four specific objectives. In this chapter, the findings of the evaluation are presented per specific objective.

#### 3.1 Skilling of youth aged 18-30

Specific Objective (SO) 1 of the SAY project is: “Employable agribusiness skills levels of 18,800<sup>2</sup> youths 18-30 years old in target areas in Uganda enhanced by 2024”. It is measured by dividing the number of youths who have completed skilling and who have attained a recognised certificate, by the total number of youths trained. This doesn’t seem to be a correct indicator for the number of skilled youths. It simply measures the percentage of skilled youth who got a certificate. It further seems to assume that a certificate of competence is a prerequisite for employability, be it self-employed or wage employed. This is debatable at least, as is discussed later in this section of the report.

The Intermediate Outcome (IO) 1.1 is “Skilled youth demonstrated competence and job-readiness for agribusiness occupations”. This is measured by the percentage of skilled youths who have been assessed and certified by DIT/MAAIF/NDA and the percentage of assessed youths who were successfully certified. The indicator provides an adequate measure for demonstration of competence. As for the SO, it is arguable whether certification is an adequate measurement of job readiness. For self-employment, certification is less of a requirement.

**Table 2: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 1 and Intermediate Outcome 1.1 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SO.1: Employable agribusiness skills levels of 16,000 youths 18-30 years old in target areas in Uganda enhanced by 2024						
Ind 1: % of skilled youths 18-30 years with certified job competencies that are in high demand for agribusiness occupations	37.5%	37.5%	75.0%	32.4%	30.2%	62.7%
IO.1.1: Skilled youths demonstrated competence and job-readiness for agribusiness occupations						
Ind 1.1a: % of skilled youths 18-30 years assessed by DIT/MAAIF	38.5%	38.5%	77.0%	35.6%	33.0%	68.6%
Ind 1.1b: % of assessed youth 18-30 years certified by DIT	47.5%	47.5%	95.0%	42.4%	39.6%	82.0%

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

The data in Table 2, as provided by AVSI, indicate that the targets were not reached. The data, however, have some anomalies. The indicators are defined in percentages. It would be more logical to define the indicators in numbers, as the target is also defined as a number (18,800. The number in the SO.1 provided was not yet updated by AVSI). The percentages of the total goal and achievement are shown as a sum of the percentages for male and female youths, which results in incorrect figures. The data of Table 2, as provided by AVSI, were

<sup>2</sup> Updated target after the project scale-up of 2022

recalculated by the evaluators using the guideline which is used by AVSI for the calculation of indicators. It should be noted, however, that the guideline contains several inconsistencies and contradictions, which makes it challenging to establish the correct data.

**Table 3: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 1 and Intermediate Outcome 1.1 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SO.1: Employable agribusiness skills levels of 18,800 youths 18-30 years old in target areas in Uganda enhanced by 2024						
Ind 1: % of skilled youths 18-30 years with certified job competencies that are in high demand for agribusiness occupations	72.8%	72.8%	72.8%	51.3%	45.3%	48.2%
IO.1.1: Skilled youths demonstrated competence and job-readiness for agribusiness occupations						
Ind 1.1a: % of skilled youths 18-30 years assessed by DIT/MAAIF	72.8%	72.8%	72.8%	51.3%	45.3%	48.2%
Ind 1.1b: % of assessed youth 18-30 years certified by DIT	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%	96.0%	97.8%	96.2%

Source: Own calculations by evaluators

The recalculation of indicators for Specific Objective 1 and Intermediate Outcome 1.1 leads to a significantly lower score for the percentage of trained youths. This is mostly caused by the significance attributed by the indicator to successful certification. The evaluators don't rate certification equally important and rather look at the figures for outputs (Table 4).

**Table 4: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Outputs under Specific Objective 1 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Output 1.1.1: Youth trained in technical climate smart agri-business practices and soft skills						
Ind 1.1.1a: # of youths 18-30 years enrolled for skilling	9,400	9,400	18,800	9,494	9,904	19,398
Ind 1.1.1b: # of youths 18-30 years completed the skilling cycle	8,460	8,460	16,920	8,430	8,880	17,310
Output 1.1.2: Youth job competencies assessed and certified						
Ind 1.1.2a: # of youths 18-30 years assessed by DIT/MAAIF	6,431	6,431	12,862	4,504	4,177	8,681
Ind 1.1.2b: # of youths 18-30 years that passed DIT/MAAIF assessments and certified	6,163	6,163	12,326	4,326	4,025	8,351
Output 1.1.3: Refugee youths acquired agripreneurship and financial literacy knowledge and skills						
Ind 1.1.3: # of refugee context youths trained in financial literacy	3,000	3,000	6,000	2,288	3,511	5,799

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

The output indicators (Table 4) are more straightforward and show a good result. It shows that 19,398 youths were enrolled for skilling, 3% above the target of 18,800 and with 51% being female. Almost 90% of the enrolled youths completed the skilling cycle, which is also within the target. Note however that the target of SO.1 is to provide 18,800 youths aged 18-30 with employable agribusiness skills, while the output target is enrolment of 18,800 youths, with a target of 90% completing the skilling cycle. The number of youths assessed by DIT or MAAIF was 8,681, or 46% of the enrolled youths. This is only two third of the target of 12,862 youths.

### **Skilling of youths in higher level agribusiness occupations in lucrative value chains**

For the skilling of youth under SAY, AVSI made Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with Agri-Institutions, Agribusiness firms, Faith Based Organisations, NGOs and Universities dealing in agricultural value chain(s). The opportunity for skilling was advertised through various media channels including radios, televisions, social media platforms like WhatsApp, as well as through community leaders in churches, and local government.

There was a gender enrolment requirement of 50:50 ratio for males:females, in addition to a particular age bracket (18-30 years) and an education requirement of at least O-level certificate. Various stakeholders (implementing partners, local government representatives and beneficiaries) commented on the criteria for enrolment. It was frequently said that the age bracket was too narrow and that youths up to 35 years old (as recognised by Uganda government structure) should have been allowed to participate. This would lead to more mature beneficiaries, with arguably a higher chance of success of establishing sustainable business or obtaining a steady employment. Since all Ugandan government<sup>3</sup> programmes target youth between 18 and 30 it was appropriate for the SAY project to target that age group.

Likewise, several informants questioned the rationale of requiring O-level certificates for skilling. Especially for simple, hands-on skills, no minimum education should be required, as it excludes potentially good entrepreneurs. A minimum education requirement would only be justifiable for more advanced skills, like input handling or plant doctors and agro-processing machinery fabricators.

Youth were attached to a particular partner for skilling. Each partner had a designated area of operation which was mainly limited to a particular region (Eastern, Western, Northern or Central Uganda), and a target number of youth to skill. Enrolled youth were either already employed in the value chain or enterprise of choice or showed a particular interest to obtain practical skills in a new value chain or value chain node. In several cases, youth already at a particular training institute, following a non-SAY funded course, were enrolled at the same institute to complete a SAY skilling course in parallel. Youth skilled at private sector partners often were already active in the value chain of skilling.

There were other differences observed between (public) training institutes and private sector implementing partners. As could be expected, private businesses showed more emphasis on business aspects of skilling. They installed a stronger focus on making money and gave more attention to marketing.

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<sup>3</sup> The Ugandan National Youth Council Act classifies youths as individuals aged 18-30. The East African Community (EAC) defines youths as those between 15 and 35 years. According to the African Union Youth Charter, young people refer to every person between the ages of 15-35 years.

**The Rugarama Post-Harvest Handling Youth Group in Kabale District**

The group exists since 2017 and has 40 members (24 female and 16 male). The evaluators interacted with 13 female and 11 male members.

The group is active in horticulture and agriculture production. They started working with the SAY project in 2023 upon recommendation by Kigezi potato farmers' cooperative. Before joining the SAY project as a group, ten of their members were skilled at IBO Mixed farm and got DIT certificates. Three members also got a booster package.

For the group, SAY project skilled all members in agribusiness and connected the group to markets. Members also got exposure through exchange visits and were trained on income diversification to include aspects like value addition on their products for better income. They grow Irish potatoes and onions and have also diversified into potato crisps and fresh fruit Juice. In the future, they want to brand their items like the crisps and to get more linkages with other partners in the area. Every season, members in need apply for inputs on credit for own farm production and the pay back after harvesting with a small interest to the group fund.

They received a tricycle, water pump, 2 spraying pumps, seed potatoes and other seeds like onions and cabbage. With the project support they also started digital saving and credit system using a tablet, which also helps them in managing other group records.

They report an increase in monthly savings from UGS 2,000 to UGX 15,000 per person.

**Busitema University in Soroti District**

Busitema is a public university focusing on agriculture. SAY supported the university to add practical skilling to the more theoretical regular training. Whereas the university education is focussing on wage employment, the SAY skilling prepares students for self-employment. The project adds exchange visits, support with business registration and mentoring.

The evaluators had an FGD with seven male and three female students. They mentioned several positive impacts: increased confidence, exposure through visits to trade shows, love for agripreneurship, DIT certificate, and income generation, which made them financially independent. They also reported to have gained public speaking-, financial-, marketing-, life-, and networking skills. The participating university staff also got more practical skills to add to their training methods and the university got better visibility in the community.

**Gulu University in Gulu District**

Gulu University is a public University and started working with the SAY project in 2022 and skilled over 400 youth who are engaged in several small businesses inside and outside the university. The evaluators held an FGD with the skilled youth (6 female and 9 males). They were skilled in several value chains including poultry, agro-processing, horticulture, feeds production, beekeeping, and mushroom production. They also received business and life skills such as financial management, savings, and environmental conservation. They came to know about the project through friends, radio, and noticeboards.

Some challenges reported were: processing skills were limited, it was hard to source raw materials, getting certification from UNBS was complicated, and fish farming was missing.

Some benefits included gain of self-employment, training other youth in some of the skills obtained, they generated employment for some youth, and were happy to interact with other farmers. They wished to increase the duration of the skilling.

### **Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara District**

The university enrolled to SAY project in 2020 after implementing SKY project (2017-2020). 120 students enrolled for SAY project and a FGD was held with 9 male and 3 females. SAY project skilled in value addition (Bakery), poultry, dairy and horticulture. Students were also assisted to register business names with URSB and 12 have completed the process, which increased stability of their businesses. SAY project has impacted the students with several life skills to become more confident, business oriented and self-reliant. The university received value addition equipment, established an agri-business incubation hub and hope to continue a more practical skilling approach. The wish for increased student enrolment into project and partner fellowships to benchmark and learn lessons.



Often, private sector implementing partners saw a business interest in working with the youth, providing a market for youth whom they had skilled. It led to a stronger relationship between the implementing partner and the skilled youth, where youth were mentored after skilling and could approach the partner for advice or even inputs or market outlets. For example, Byeffe foods in Mbale skilled youth in making composite flour and fruit juice and offering a service for flour milling to those in business. In addition, the youth are called upon when there is need for a bigger supply beyond the capacity of the company. The director said she is sure of the quality of their product since most of it is milled at her place and by the people she trained.

### **Ubora Speciality crops Limited in Mbale District**

Ubora is a private company dealing in coffee processing and value addition. With SAY project, 295 youth were skilled coffee quality management and control as well as value addition, in cycles of 45 days from 2021 to 2024. There is great lack of knowledge in the steps necessary along the coffee value chain and the company emphasised skilling youth in all sections from farm production to having high quality processed coffee in the shops. over 70% of trained youth are in self or wage employment. Some youths were retained as quality controllers and barristers for Ubora. The company has become the only training centre on the region for coffee value chain, with a focus on training individuals especially youth already involved in the coffee value chain activities to ensure quality coffee is processed and marketed. Many SAY project trainees are suppliers of coffee to Ubora while others with coffee shops are their customers for already processed products.


### **Byeffe in Mbale District**

Byeffe is a private health food processing company with a focus on using local food products hence the name "Byeffe" literally meaning "Ours". With SAY they skilled 345 youths in value addition to locally produced crops and continued to mentor them after completing the course. The company focused on skilling youth with struggling products on market or those with unique product ideas. According to its director, the company became a better incubation centre with support from SAY. They participated in different public fora, which improved their market linkages and profile, also with government. Interestingly, the biggest challenge is that the demand for skilling is higher than the company can handle. Towards the

end of the project, 150 youth were organised in groups of 10, to receive and utilise scale up equipment as a group, which made it more feasible to give them valuable equipment. Skilled youth are the company's ambassadors and business partners to serve a wide market. Scaled up youth are attached to 30 mentors for continued support to Improve product quality and stabilise their businesses. The youth at Byeffe were skilled for 45 days in flour making or juice processing. The company works with over 3000 farmers across the region and uses its network to supply raw materials to some (90) of its trained youth for production. Byeffe also helps to mill the flours for trained youth to ensure product consistency. one of the female youth was retained after skilling as a staff of the company


The evaluators had a FGD with five male and five female youths who had been skilled by either Byeffe (in horticulture value addition) or Ubora (in coffee processing). Two of them own coffee processing businesses (Darling Coffee and Bayaya coffee). Both existed before SAY but were struggling. After skilling they employed fellow trainees and have better products, equipment and wider market. Darling coffee got coffee grinder as booster package, an espresso machine from the challenge fund, bought own roaster machine and set up a mini training facility. Through exposure visits he established a good marketing network and now gets 60% of his coffee from other SAY trainees. Bayaya coffee owner got a moisture meter and sample huller as the overall winner of challenge fund, she won overall woman entrepreneur under NSSF high Innovator which gave her 20,000 dollars. She has participated at several fora in and out of Uganda having gained confidence and skills in proposal writing and pitching from SAY project life skills training.

Blessed organic in Pader district also offers production service for making cold pressed shear butter to youth she trained. In addition, Blessed Organic is a market for shear nut for the youth and helped them to make a joint product as a group to keep them together and link them to the company. This also helps the youth to reduce on some of their challenges such as lack of capital and machines to for processing shear nuts into shear nut butter, and to some extent transport, storage and marketing costs which are done jointly at Blessed organic.

<b>Blessed Organic Release in Pader District</b>	<b>Blessed Organic Youth Display their products</b>
<p>Blessed Organic is an NGO founded in 2004 and is working on value addition to locally produced oil crops in northern Uganda. The company skilled youth in sesame, hear butter and honey value addition. They are experienced in youth mentorship, running a programme called "mama ponya", where every woman mentors two youths as processors to produce and market a similar product together. the coming of SAY project in 2023 was In line with the company goals.</p> <p>They have skilled 100 youths from 3 sub counties and 94 of them got the DIT certificate, five youths were incubated in the organisation.</p> <p>Blessed Organic also has experience with booster packages. Contrary to SAY, they gave booster packages in the form of inputs on loan to active youth, through a bank. As the programme manager said: we aim to fight poverty and donor dependence in the northern region and the programme slogan is, "stop saying give me, start doing something with what you have". Blessed Organic discourages the free hand outs given by SAY, and the money given for transport and facilitation, which promote the spoon-feeding.</p> <p>The evaluators had a FGD with seven male and four female skilled youths who showcased their individual processed products and a group product. The youth also use waste after processing to make other products</p>	 <p>The photograph shows a group of approximately ten people, including men and women, sitting around a round wooden table outdoors. They are displaying various products, likely the processed goods mentioned in the text, such as jars and containers. The setting appears to be a rural area with trees and a simple building in the background.</p>

like liquid soap and charcoal briquets having been skilled by a fellow youth from Magigy youth in vegetables, a SAY project group in the central region. They very much appreciate the DIT certificate. They reported increased incomes, self-employment and increased business linkages. Some wished for the training time to be increased from 3 months to 6 months. The director also recommended skilling for marriage partners to ease attendance for the female youth

Munyera mixed farm in Kapchorwa skilled youth in horticulture and continues to provide seed for Irish potatoes, even on loan to those who have no money for seed but wish to be in production because he is sure they will pay back. The same youth are a sure market for Munerya Irish potato seed whenever the season starts in addition to marketing with them in case there is bigger demand for the products beyond the capacity of the business. The youth are also happy about the business mentorship and support they always receive at the farm whenever there is need. Private agribusiness skilling partners also appreciated the quality of trainees and retained several of them for wage employment.

<b>Homa Farms in Gulu district</b>	<b>FGD with youth skilled at Homa Farms</b>
<p>The evaluators had a FGD with 8 male and 5 female youth that skilled in Poultry, horticulture and piggery at HOMA farms Limited in Omel Sub county, Gulu district. The farm is a practical training center for interns studying agriculture at different levels, and it also hosts a primary school for the community. Many of the youth that were skilled among those who had applied for internship, the farm staff and community youth. The youth appreciated the chance to; practically skill and get a certificate, earn as they leant, get booster packages and mentorship, which transformed their lives to better income, agribusiness ownership, higher confidence and prestigious connections with various community leaders. HOMA skilled them in poultry, piggery and Horticulture.</p>	
<p><b>Gulu Okong George Farmers Institution in Gulu district</b></p>	
<p>Okwang George is a trainee under SKY project who emerged as the best youth farmer in the region. With the ending of SKY and starting SAY project, he was contacted to transfer the skills he had learnt in horticulture to fellow youth. The first MOU he signed was to skill 50 youth (25 female and 25 male) in 2022 and the number increased to 100 youth (50 male, 50 female) in 2023. Youth were skilled in horticulture, life skills and business skills. 75 youth also received booster packages. George gave out part of his land to the trainees in separate plots to practice the earn as you learn model, and many managed to transform their lives from the income they received. 100 youth are now horticulture business owners.</p>	

**Okong youth in Gulu district****The "Water millions" produced by Okong youth**

All the 150 youth were skilled in production of several horticultural crops including watermelon, tomatoes, Okra, Cabbage, Onions under SAY project. For water melon and tomatoes, the skilled youth were connected to regional markets in South Sudan, Kenya and Rwanda where their customers pick the produce directly from the farms and they earn a good income. Other products are marketed locally and still the demand is good for investment. The Youth appreciate the skilling in quality seed selection, production and management, marketing skills and business planning. Several managed to diversify to other enterprises including livestock, have bought more land for production. They are proud of reduced parent dependency, prestigious community recognition, ability to support family needs. They wished for provision of irrigation systems, continued mentorship, linkage to input dealers especially for quality seed and other inputs. The watermelons have earned them a lot of income and they now call them the "water-millions".



In different districts it was observed that local government appreciated the investments by SAY in implementing partners' infrastructure to the extent that it also started to contribute from local government funds. For example, the Rwampara Farm Institute in Rwampara District received irrigation equipment from the SAY project, which was thereafter expanded with funds from local government. This is a positive spin-off of SAY investment, an unintended positive effect, and an indicator for sustainability.

**Munerya and Maikut Youth Groups trainees in Kapchorwa District**

Munerya and Maikut Youth Groups were mentored in mindset change, and in the production and marketing of vegetables such as cabbage, onions, potatoes, and watermelon. They reported increased production, improved food and nutrition, and the acquisition of new business skills. Many obtained DIT certificates. Since they were recognised as a group they also received local government funds, Both Munerya and Maikut continue as mentors, provide market linkages, storage and loan money. Munerya trained about 300 youth, of which 200 were female. They expressed a desire for the age limit to be raised to 40 years and for the education requirement to be lowered to primary 7. They also felt that the booster package should have been extended to all trainees.



The evaluators saw examples of highly competitive agribusinesses that have emerged after skilling. For example, Darling Coffee, a coffee processor in Mbale, was started by a youth after skilling at UBORA and is now a market for youth coffee producers like Kaptul Coffee Processors Youth Group in Kapchorwa. Other examples include Makarena juice in Mbarara, Magigye youth in vegetables and Bayaya coffee in Mbale.

### **Makarena Juice & Fruit Hub—Mbarara City**

The business started in 2019 in the family kitchen for production and street vending of juice, fruits, and vegetables. They signed an MoU with AVSI in 2021. AVSI assisted the group to move to a new location. They received heavy duty blenders, juice dispensers, a deep freezer, motorised fruit huller.

Makarena trained 50 youth (40 female and 10 male) in 2022, and 30 youth (25 female and 5 male) in 2023. Sixty percent of these youth are reported to be self-employed. The youth feel more exposed through TV and exhibitions attended. The received

equipment such as juice makers and freezers. Other benefits included incomes, DIT certificates and more friends and social networks. Many trained youth reported to have challenges with obtaining space where they can sell their products from. They would like to form an association and to get more exchange visits. They wish that the age limit is extended to between 34 and 35 and the education lowered in terms of qualifications.



### **Kaptul Coffee Processors Youth Group in Kapchorwa District**

The group has 25 members (20 male, 5 female). The evaluators had a FGD with eleven male and one female member. The group started as a VSLA in 2018 and saw opportunities for coffee processing in 2020. They started buying coffee beans, processed them into parchment coffee and sold to local traders.

They were trained by Darling Coffee in Mbale (another beneficiary of SAY), scaled up and started selling to them. At the end of 2023 they contacted SAY, and were onboarded with skilling by Uboru and provision of equipment and inputs (drying bed, solar dryer, fermentation drum, motorised pulper and assessment board).

They have now reached a level where they produce high quality parchment coffee and set their own price. They are ready to diversify and dry other products outside the coffee season.




Enrolled youth attained both practical (80%) and theoretical (20%) skilling. Skilling periods varied across partners, where some were skilled for 21 days, 3 months, 6 months and 1 year. Although many youths attended coming from their homes or place of residence on a daily, others conveniently stayed on boarding sections especially due to distance from their homes or level of commitment to the skilling. All youth were encouraged to start up enterprises for practical training, where produced products were marketed to earn income under the system of "Earn as you learn". The skills were continuously improved with the information from the market and the product quality. Learners also acquired marketing and business management skills. The income from the projects was re-invested in the projects for business growth and some converted into saving system to help the youth start a saving and loan capital for financial access beyond project resources.

<p><b>The Rwamapara Farm Institute in Rwamapara District</b></p>	<p><b>A youth demonstrates how to dry and grind spices</b></p>
<p>The Farm Institute joined the SAY project in 2022. They provide skilling in horticulture, poultry, piggery, and value addition (meat and juice). In 2022, they trained 100 youths and placed them on farms to gain experience. In 2023, they trained 120 youths, and in 2024, they trained seven youth groups in four districts. Other implementing partners visit the institute for benchmarking.</p> <p>Because of the involvement with the SAY project, the district gave an irrigation scheme to the farm to act as a demonstration to the neighbouring farmers. The students now receive more practical training in addition to the theoretical training they predominantly received before participating in the SAY project. They complained about the limited booster packages, low age limits, high education limits, and limitation of DIT subsidies to only females.</p>	

The “Earn as you learn” principal was applied in different ways among partners. By some partners, youths were given a piece of land to practice what they learn and sell the benefit. In other instances, there were agreements that youths would keep a certain percentage of sales while the remainder would go to the implementing partner. At one farm institute, the principle was only applied to some youths. The youths only earn if they get a booster pack. Generally it was rather “Earn after you learned”.

Nearly all implementing partners were supported by SAY with infrastructure support and goods to improve their capacity as skills providers. In some cases, existing value chains were improved, in other cases new value chains were started with project support. In general, this is seen as a positive contribution by the project to increase the capacity for skilling in Uganda.

<p><b>The Ibanda Farm Institute in Ibanda District</b></p>	<p><b>Some of the youth and staff of IFI with the evaluation team</b></p>
<p>The Farm Institute started as a school leavers project in 1972. It has been a partner of AVSI since 2017. Under the SKY project the institute was supported with the construction of learning facilities. With SAY it was further supported with a poultry house, rainwater harvesting tank, shade nets and nursery beds, and there was capacity strengthening of staff. One particular staff attended many trainings and is now a member of the African Agribusiness Incubation Network. Some staff act as mentors to youth groups. Until December 2024 mentors are paid by AVSI. When the payment stops, the institute will stop the mentoring. The institute has MoU with several private sector partners for skilling and linking.</p>	

Under SAY 50-70 youths were skilled annually. All participating youth are already students of the farm institute doing a 2-years course. The 90 days of skilling under SAY are fitted in to add practical skills. Some graduates joined dairy cooperatives and the institute provided booster packages (milking cows, motorcycles, computers, drugs, pastures) to three dairy cooperatives “because it fitted in the budget”. Two youth groups were supported with horticulture inputs.

The infrastructure not only serves the youth being skilled under the project, but will also serve future generations of trainees. The evaluators did see some cases where the investment done in particular implementing partners was not proportionate to the level of skilling provided. Some partners seem to have benefitted excessively. For example, NUCAFE was facilitated to set up a four-story building, although not complete, for training purposes. In other cases, investments were disproportionate in the sense that it would be impossible to replicate by youth starting a new business. An example is the piggery houses constructed at Iganga Secondary School, and Namilyango College.

#### Meeting Point International in Mukono district

Meeting point is an NGO which started working with the SAY project in 2020 up to 2023. They skilled about 94 youth in the areas of horticulture, poultry, cuniculture, urban farming, life-, marketing- and business skills. The training program was flexible to accommodate the working requirements of the youth. Some youth trained for 3 months, others 6 months and some one year (during the weekends). Some of the challenges reported were the low age bracket, high education needs, and not being given DIT level 2. The benefits reported were more exposure and attainment of DIT certificates. In the future, the youth suggest that the program provides more skilling and internships in value addition.

It was also noted that one individual founder organisation benefited from support to various of her enterprises, (Luigi Giussani Research Centre , Luigi Giussani High School and Meeting Point International (MPI)).

#### **Prime Vocational Institute in Iganga District**

The Institute exists since 2012. They were working with PUM, who introduced them to SAY in 2021. Under the project the institute skilled 55 students in horticulture and processing in 2022 added machinery and tractor operation to skill 190 students. Students were supported with booster packages, and were linked to employers. According to the institute’s records, 85% of the skilled youth now gain income. The evaluators had a FGD with eight male and three female youths, most of whom had been retained by the institute after skilling.

The institute benefitted from extensive support by the project: an irrigation system, mushroom unit, greenhouse, oven, processing equipment, poultry piggery, fuel for tractor training and primary material for value addition. It was observed that the project provided for a new greenhouse and a new poultry house, although the institute already had them. The piggery was of an unnecessary large size, impossible for trainees to duplicate.

As a final remark on skilling it should be mentioned that there was a very high degree of satisfaction about the quality of skilling provided by the implementing partners and about the quality of organisation and management by AVSI.

Despite the investments made in capacity building of skilling institutions (training and infrastructure), it is noted that skilling is almost exclusively donor driven. Without external funding, very few youths enrol for skilling.

**Assessment and certification of the competencies and job readiness of skilled youth**

The project targeted to have at least 68% of the enrolled 18-30 year old youths assessed and certified by either DIT or MAAIF. The results per 15 October 2024 show an achievement that is well behind the target with a score of 46%.

There are different views on the importance of formal assessment of competences. Several stakeholders, including EKN and AVSI, question the need for formal certification for youth who are going to be self-employed. They only see added value for youth who seek wage employment. Although certification was part of the project design, and a project output with defined targets, AVSI did not enforce certification, which contributes to the non-achievement of the certification target. The MTR found that some youth get employment without the certificate and that DIT assessment fees inhibits youth from participating in the assessment. The MTR therefore recommended that assessment and certification be made optional for all youth. This was supported by EKN.

Feedback from youth themselves equally varies. Some confirm the views that a certificate is of no use for self-employment. Some expressed "fear of examination" as reason for not registering for certification. On the other hand the evaluators met with self-employed youth who were proud of their certificate and saw it as an important part of their skilling. Some even asked for certification at higher levels.

**Archways Agrofarm in Lira District**

Archways is a registered company dealing in honey (production, sales, equipment, training). They have a long relationship with AVSI (SKY, EGO, SAY). Under SAY they skilled 120 youth, plus an additional 130 as subcontractor in other districts. Comparing the different projects, they value SAY as it targets income generation of youths and requires the youth to pay for DIT certification. That stimulates youth to stand on their own.

The evaluators had a FGD with seven male and 6 female youth, all skilled in apiculture by either Archways or TAF. As many other youths, they mentioned changed mindset and increased self-esteem as important impacts of the skilling. They value the DIT certificate, which gives them confidence to train others. The youth hinted that the DIT fees were high, wanted more high level DIT, and had challenges getting loans to implement some of their desired projects.

It should be noted that certification came with a cost. Male youth had to pay the full amount of UGX 100,000, for female youth the project gave a subsidy of 40%<sup>4</sup>. It is likely that the cost of certification is one of the reasons for youth not to opt for it. Given the fact that apart from the certification costs, skilling by the project is completely free, and for many comes with attractive booster packages, insisting on the certification payment would have been a good means to get an own contribution from the beneficiaries, as a show of motivation.

**Youth Movers in Gulu District**

Youth Movers is an NGO founded on 2009 and operating in Northern Uganda. It has a skilling centre in the Lamwo refugee settlement. They have been working with AVSI since 2021, providing skilling in horticulture, together with life skills, gender and VSLA (which is mandatory for any Youth Movers activity). They skilled 450 youths, the majority female. Skilled youths are assessed for DIT certificate, which they value highly. The certificates used to come shortly after assessment, more recently the certificates don't come at all.

<sup>4</sup> Only for youth in refugee setting and in remand homes the project paid all certification costs.

Several (male) beneficiaries argued that the project subsidy to females was unfair and should have been applied equally to males. The evaluators do not agree and support the project rationale to make skilling more attractive to female youth. Without the subsidy it is unlikely that the 50:50 male:female ratio would have been achieved. The female subsidy is also consistent with the female emancipation policy of government, where female students to public universities are added 1.5 points.

**Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries**  
MAAIF was happy to work with the SAY project because its activities were consistent with its youth strategy and financially complimented many government activities. The SAY project also contributed to the single spine extension system, which requires the state to work with non-state actors in providing skills to farmers, some of whom are youth. Several activities were conducted together, such as a review of the youth strategy, joint planning, exchange visits, coordination, identification of gaps, and monitoring of activities. The ministry reported to have copied many good things from the SAY project into the youth strategy which was seen as very relevant in training the youth for employment and self-employment opportunities.

Skills certificates in the SAY project were issued by DIT or MAAIF. The project assisted DIT in the development of its industrial training curriculum. There are several indications that DIT is presently overburdened with its tasks. There are youth who have completed skilling, have paid for certification, but still await assessment by DIT. Others have been assessed but have not received their certificate.

**C&D in Kole District**  
The Institute for International Cooperation and Development (C&D) training centre provided skilling under SAY between 2020 and 2024. The evaluators had a FGD with six male and four female skilled youths. They reported person growth (“became someone in the community”) and income generation through agribusiness. Several youths have trained and/or employed others. They completed the DIT certification in July 2023, but had not yet received their certificates.

Mobilisation of youth for assessment later after skilling was a challenge for the partners given high youth mobility in search for life opportunities. For example, at Gulu country dairy, 70 youth skilled under the first MoU were not assessed, because it was COVID time and they have never been traced for assessment later on. Another group of 150 youth paid for assessment under the third MoU, but only 75 were assessed, because of short notice for assessment (informed on Saturday about Monday assessment).

**Transition of skills providers from level 1 to 2 and 3**

From 2022, following a project adjustment, capacity building of implementing partners was added as an output, aiming to increase their skilling level. Climate smart and digital compliance of agricultural ventures and occupational processes were identified as areas that required more capacity building. The project intended to engage in facilitating transition of at least 25 skills providers from level 1 to 2 and 3 through:

- Development of Assessment Training Packages (ATPs) for levels 2 and 3 occupations;
- Conducting value chain-specific/tailor-made capacity development interventions for skills providers including school teachers in the areas of life skills, climate-smart agribusiness models and digitalisation.

The project developed five level-2 Assessment Training Packages (ATPs) and provided training of trainers. Trainers across implementing partners enthusiastically reported about these capacity strengthening activities. Especially exposure visits were often reported as beneficial.


### The Kagiira Skills Development Centre in Ibanda District

The Centre started as a farm in 2005. It became a skilling centre in 2021, as well as a production and agri-tourism centre. From the SAY project, since 2022, they received UGX 864.4 million for skilling, incubation and kits, UGX 111.3 million for booster kits. Kagiira reported to have invested over UGX 2 billion for infrastructure and equipment.

The centre skilled 279 youths. See the table below for more details. The figures indicate that enrolment and assessment numbers are equal for male and female youth, but significantly less female youths get scale-up packages and they score lower on wage employment and income level.

The evaluators had a FGD with six male and three female youths. One observation was that, while the youths were all skilled in meat processing, barista, brooding or horticulture, many had chosen a different value chain when they qualified for a booster package (from poultry to honey, from meat to tomato processing, from meat processing to bakery, from horticulture to dairy production). Youths appreciated the business and leadership skills they acquired, which probably made them flexible in changing to more profitable value chains. Several of the interviewed youths had established viable businesses. They face challenges of diseases (poultry as well as horticulture) and market competition.


PROJECT PERFORMANCE			
Indicator	Female	Male	Total
Enrolled and skilled	139	140	279
Assessed by DIT	131	135	266
Passed & certified	131	135	266
Self employment	61	86	147
Wage employment	8	6	14
Scale up	37	50	87
Above 500k	13	25	38
Retained by the Partner	4	2	6
Assessed market through established linkages	17	24	41
Linked and assessed gov't program	1	5	6
Accessed investment capital through established	37	50	87





**Agripreneurship and financial literacy knowledge and skills for refugee youths**

From 2022 the project started working with refugee and hosting communities in Kitgum, Pader, Lamwo District.

<p><b>Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre in Lamwo District</b></p>	<p>FGD with females and males at Don Bosco VTC</p>
<p>The Don Bosco VTC started as response to the refugee influx in Northern Uganda. It’s within the mission of Salesians (members of the congregation of Don Bosco) to develop youth skills. They saw the support by SAY as complementary to their work. AVSI provided all input for the skilling and they appreciated the Earn as you Learn approach. They mentioned the poor enabling environment (agricultural inputs, financial services) as a persistent challenge, as did the interviewed youths. Don Bosco VTC skilled 300 youths in horticulture and poultry. In the refuge settlement, Don Bosco VTC works closely together with SARD-Net (Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development Network). SARD-Net skilled 450 youths in horticulture and rabbit keeping. Skilled youth continue through VSLA and a welfare fund. Two FGD were conducted—one with males and another with females.</p>	

Feedback from interviewed stakeholders showed good cooperation among youths of different communities. Refugees have access to land to practice their agricultural skills and develop businesses. Youths were trained in life skills, financial literacy and VSLA. Local organisations are capacitated. Local government remarked that the project maintains dependency and that inputs shouldn’t be given for free. They also felt the SACCOs are underutilised. Interviewed youth mentioned access to agricultural inputs and finance as main challenges. They value the DIT certificate.

<p><b>WORUDET in Lamwo District</b></p>
<p>The Women and Rural Development Network (WORUDET) is a national women rights NGO operating since 2003 in Northern Uganda. They became an implementing partner of AVSI in 2021. Under SAY they skilled 504 youths (and even more outside the project age bracket) in poultry, horticulture and apiculture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 437 were assessed for DIT certification (199 male, 238 female).</li> <li>• 65 received a booster package (20 male, 45 female)</li> <li>• 137 are now self-employed (67 male, 72 female)</li> <li>• 4 are wage employed (1 male, 3 female)</li> <li>• 7 were retained by WORUDET, 7 were linked to local government</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Boosted employment of youth aged 18 – 30

Specific Objective 2 of the SAY project is: “Skilled youth (aged 18-30 years) employment in well-paying agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship in target project areas of Uganda boosted by the end of the project (2024)”. It is calculated as the percentage of skilled youths earning at least UGX 500,000 per month from (self-) employment in agribusiness/agriculture.

The Intermediate Outcomes are (2.1) “Skilled youth employed in agripreneurships” and (2.2) “Skilled youths showed competitive edge for agribusiness jobs”. They are calculated as the percentage of skilled youths that are self-employed and wage employed respectively.

**Table 5: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 2 and Intermediate Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SO.2: Skilled youths (aged 18-30 years) employment in well-paying agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship in target project areas of Uganda boosted by the end of the project (2024)						
Ind 2: % of employed youths graduates 18-30 years earn at least €120/month	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	13.9%	9.4%	23.3%
IO 2.1: Skilled youths employed in agripreneurships						
Ind 2.1: % of skilled youths 18-30 years self-employed in agribusiness	32.5%	32.5%	65.0%	24.7%	26.9%	51.6%
IO 2.2: Skilled youths showed competitive edge for agribusiness jobs						
IO Ind 2.2: % of skilled youths 18-30 years in wage-employed	6.0%	6.0%	12.0%	4.6%	3.0%	7.7%

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

As indicated by the intermediate outcomes for Specific Objective 2, boosted employment is divided into self-employment and salary-paid employment. The data in Table 5, as provided by AVSI, have the same issues as described for the data in Table 2. Table 6 gives the recalculated results, using the output data and the AVSI guideline for the calculation of indicators. The differences between Tables 5 and 6 are minimal. Either way the employment numbers are below target. The result for self-employment is approaching the target of 65.2%, but the targets for wage employment and for earning at least EUR 120 per months are not achieved. The results for female youths are considerably lower than for male youths for these indicators.

**Table 6: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 2 and Intermediate Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SO.2: Skilled youths (aged 18-30 years) employment in well-paying agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship in target project areas of Uganda boosted by the end of the project (2024)						
Ind 2: % of employed youths graduates 18-30 years earn at least €120/month	44.2%	44.2%	44.2%	29.1%	18.9%	23.9%
IO 2.1: Skilled youths employed in agripreneurships						
Ind 2.1: % of skilled youths 18-30 years self-employed in agribusiness	65.2%	65.2%	65.2%	53.1%	56.0%	54.6%
IO 2.2: Skilled youths showed competitive edge for agribusiness jobs						
IO Ind 2.2: % of skilled youths 18-30 years in wage-employed	11.8%	11.8%	11.8%	9.2%	5.8%	7.4%

Source: Own calculations by evaluators

The output indicators (Table 7) are clearer as they are expressed in numbers, rather than percentages. The employment results are not as high as the skilling results: 9,445 youths self-employed (14% below the target of 11,026) and 1,285 youths wage employed (36% below the target of 2,000).

**Table 7: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Outputs under Specific Objective 2 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Output 2.1.1: Youths started and run their own agribusinesses as full-time employment						
Ind 2.1.1a: # of self-employed youths	5,513	5,513	11,026	4,475	4,970	9,445
Ind 2.1.1b: # of agripreneurs supported with business booster packages (scale up & agribusiness challenge fund)	1,250	1,250	2,500	1,210	1,063	2,273
Output 2.1.2: Youths in refugee context accessed financial credit through VSLA						
Ind 2.1.2: # of refugee context youths who accessed financial credit through VSLAs	1,750	1,750	3,500	1,001	1,652	2,653
Output 2.1.3: Youth with increased knowledge on climate-smart agri-business practices						
Ind 2.1.3a: # of skilled youths 18-30 years who applied at least 1 CSA approach in their agribusiness ventures	3,888	3,888	7,776	4,123	4,613	8,736
Ind 2.1.3b: # of skills providers who applied at least 1 CSA approach in their agribusiness ventures			52			61
Output 2.2.1: Skilled youths hired by agribusinesses for wage employment						
Ind 2.2.1a: # of skilled youths wage employed	1,000	1,000	2,000	774	511	1,285
Ind 2.2.1b: # of skilled youths graduates retained by agribusinesses	300	300	600	223	155	378
Ind 2.2.1c: # of agribusinesses that absorbed skilled youth graduates			40			35

Ind 2.2.1d: # of youth earning at least UGX500,000/= (€120) per month from employment in agribusiness/agriculture	2,880	2,880	5,760	1,525	1,036	2,561
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Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

Combining the results of SO.1 and SO.2, one can conclude that 17,310 youths were skilled in employable agribusinesses, 10,730 of them got employment (self or wage), of whom 2,561 are earning at least the targeted UGX 500,000 per month.

A specific output for youths in a refugee context was to give access to financial credit through VSLAs. This had been tested and proved successful in other AVSI projects. SAY built capacity in financial literacy and digitisation, and linked youths to financial institutions. The target of assisting 3,500 was not reached, because the number of male beneficiaries was lower than expected. The targeted number of female youths in the refugee context was nearly reached (94%).

### Start-up and scale-up support to selected graduates and agripreneurs

Several strategies were used to turn the skilled youth into agripreneurs. One was supporting youth with equipment and/or inputs. Youth who showed to be active in their value chain and who could present a business plan were given a start-up or scale-up package. Beneficiaries of booster packages should also be able to employ other youths. In addition, there was the agribusiness challenge fund competition (see below). Altogether 2,273 youths received a booster package of either sort. In addition, about 2,800 booster packages were distributed to youth groups. Some groups such as Namulonge Youth Apostolate Group, Magigye Youth in Vegetables Group, and Rugarama Post Harvest Handling Youth Group received boosters as groups. They were boosted in transport for vegetable production and marketing.



#### Ribbo Coffee Group in Gulu District

It's a group of 16 female and nine male youths that started in 2022 when they got a loan for a coffee roaster. They have a farm, where they have a community learning centre and train farmers (independent of SAY). They buy additional coffee from farmers, roast, package and sell. They sent a proposal to AVSI and were offered support through SAY where AVSI saw a fit: an electric huller, coffee brewing



machine, technical support, exposure visits and 2,000 Kg of coffee. The coffee beans were not in the plan, but were given anyway. (Observation from evaluators: why would SAY give coffee beans to an enterprise whose business it is to buy coffee?). The coffee brewing machine was also not part of the enterprise's business and simply serves to make coffee in the office.

The primary objective of the booster packages was to assist youths in reaching the UGX 500,000 per month income mark. Of the 2,273 youths receiving a booster package, 1,337 (616 females and 721 males; 58%) are reaching the UGX 500,000 mark. That means that 1,224 youths reach the UGX 500,000 mark without a booster package.

### **The Mushroom Training and Resource Centre (MTRC) in Kabale District**

MTRC started operations in 2007 and was supported by AVSI under the SKY project. Under SAY they skilled 94 female and 52 male youths. All of them were enrolled for DIT certification and passed the assessment. 128 Youths received a booster package and nine benefited from the challenge fund. Five skilled youths got wage employment.

The evaluators interacted with a very active group of beneficiaries. Among them a female youth who expanded her business to poultry, another female youth who set up her own training centre. Several youths had benefitted from support from the Parish Development Model (PDM).

They were quite critical about the booster packages. They indicated that when they were asked to indicate what they wanted as booster package, they didn't have the right experience to make a good decision. So people asked for a dryer, while they actually needed a water tank. Or they were given mushroom spawn, while they hadn't constructed the growing house yet. One youth received an electric oven, although he preferred a charcoal oven. Another one also didn't get what she asked for, but didn't complain since it was all for free. Their advice was to give the booster in a later stage and to give it in phases.

They considered the training too short and would have liked to get more mentoring.

The evaluators met with many recipients of booster packages and there was general appreciation. Many youths explained how the booster package helped them to set-up their respective businesses. There were also some challenges around the booster packages:

- Some youths were allocated booster packages, but they were not prepared to receive them. An example is the youth who were skilled in mushroom growing by MTRC. MTRC had prepared start-up packages for all trainees, but a condition was to have a mushroom growing house. At the time of the evaluation several startup packages were not collected, because the trainees had not constructed a mushroom growing house. This means that in those cases, skilling did not lead to business or self-employment.
- Youth were asked themselves what they wanted to receive from the project as start-up. Some youths claimed they did not receive what they asked for and that project staff adjusted the package without consultation. Project staff explained that it is not always feasible to provide what is asked for, either for technical or for financial reasons. For the youth who had certain expectations to start their business however, it is necessary to know what they receive and what not, to provide for the missing items.
- Some youths asked for certain items, but received similar items of a different quality. For example, youths asked for wood stoves, but received electric stoves, for which they have no use. Cases were reported where the youth sold the received items to replace with the items of their preferred quality.
- One of the implementing partners observed that the boosted packages are not well planned. He gave the example that youths are given 500 chickens, with food for only three weeks, which led to "misery". He said that booster selection was rushed and therefore not accurate.
- Some youths said that the effectiveness of a booster package also depends on the mindset of the receiver. "Some youths simply are not business people".

<b>Toloso Agro Input Youth Group in Kapchorwa District</b>	Group photo after a FGD with the Toloso Group
<p>The group started with SKY in 2016 with five members. Now it has grown to 33 members. The evaluators had a FGD with ten male and seven female members of the group.</p> <p>After SKY, AVSI continued to support the group under SAY from 2023. They were given training, workshops, irrigation equipment, 60 bags of seed potatoes (to plant 6 acres) and 12 bags of fertilizer. The group harvested 233 bags of potatoes and sold them at UGX 100,000 each. Each member was then paid UGX 200,000 and the rest remained for the group. In 2024 they planted five acres of cabbage and two acres of maize. The plan for next year is eight acres of onions.</p> <p>The group is financially sound and do weekly savings, compulsory for each group member. They now want to register the group as a SACCO.</p>	

Discussions with youth revealed a rather high degree of dependency of the project. When asking youth about challenges, they mostly need more input and expect the SAY project (or another donor) to provide more (free) support.

<b>The Nyakakoni Youth Poultry Group in Mbarara District</b>	
<p>The group has been active since 2018, when they got a loan of UGX 7 million (not from the project). The group has 20 members, of whom three are female). The evaluators met with 4 male groups members.</p> <p>The SAY project supported them with 600 birds and some equipment. According to the group members, the drinkers are too small and the feeders are of poor quality and are no longer used.</p> <p>Their main problem is with animal disease, but they do not get support, neither from the project nor from the district.</p>	

### Job connection and brokerage platforms

The project MEAL system shows that 9,445 skilled youth are self-employed, 1,285 wage employed. These are good numbers, but remained below the respective targets of 11,026 and 2,000. When the project was performing below its target to enrol 18,800 youth, extra efforts were made to achieve that target. Those efforts were successful, but possibly the efforts to connect the skilled youth to sustainable jobs stayed behind.

### **Ubora in Mbale District**

Ubora is a private company in coffee processing and marketing. The owner notices the lack of a skilling hub in the region and started skilling youth. With support of SAY, his skilling activities got another push. With SAY, Ubora has skilled 295 youths from 2021. They retained several youths for quality control and an estimated 70% of skilled youth are (self-)employed. An added advantage to the company is that many of the skilled youth become their supplier or client.

The number of youth earning at least UGX 500,000 stayed below 50% of the target of 5,760. Here, especially the targeted income level was too ambitious, given that skilled youth are just entering the market.

### **Job Centre in Lira District**

The Lira Job Centre is owned by the local government, but run by AVSI under SAY. There are 325 youths registered as job seekers. The centre provides assistance to youth, such as internet access. Thus far, 20 youths got wage employment. It is the intention to hand over the management of the centre to the local government, but there is no progress yet.

### **Incubation of agripreneurships**

Another strategy used to turn the skilled youth into agripreneurs was incubation. Incubation centres provide platforms to develop products and maintain contact with skilling centre. It was observed that the link between youth and their private sector implementing partner increased their chances for (self) employment. For example, the Cielo Country Inn Project in Bushenyi provides a road side marketing outlet for skilled youths. Nile Poultry in Eastern Uganda created an association of poultry farmers.



### **Linking youth to critical agribusiness development services**

The project has been linking youth to different kind of business services. To enhance access to finance, youth were encouraged to organise Village Savings and Loaning Associations (VSLAs). Others were linked to UGAFODE or were able to access funding through the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Emerging business were also supported by the project to get the Quality Mark on their products is an assurance of conformity to relevant standards by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS). The UNBS Q mark is a requirement for products to be sold in formal supermarkets markets in Uganda.

### **Nile Poultry in Mbale District**

Nile Poultry started in 2017 a private business, owned and run by a District Veterinary Officer. Apart from poultry production, the farm produces feed, hatchers, gives advice to farmers and provide skilling. His farm has grown from 1,000 to 8,000 birds.

He did some skilling before, but started seriously with SAY. The goal to him was clear: skill youth to increase income. Therefore he not only skills in production, but in profitable value chain nodes, like slaughter & packaging, roasting, selling eggs and extension service.

Nile Poultry skilled 300 youths in two years. The youths are connected in a group and depend on each other. There were several benefits for the skill provider: money for infrastructure repairs (hatchery, feed mill), training in business and climate smart agriculture, trees to plant and cloud based software. But he also saw his business grow, because many of the skilled youths became customers. And he got a good connection with local government and other implementing partners.

The evaluators had a FGD with six male and seven female skilled youths. Key to their learning was to know your business and know where to market. They mentioned they formed an investment club, which is formally registered.

### **Agribusiness challenge fund competition**

The challenge fund competition provided an additional way, apart from the scale-up booster, to access business investment funds. Beneficiaries had to pitch their business plan, which would be subject to a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis, and the plan should provide employment to additional youths.

### **Khayinza Energy "Power for Life" in Mukono District**

Khayinza Energy started in 2015. They previously worked with the SKY project and started with the SAY project in 2022. They trained 267 youth from seven districts in skilling programmes that took between five and eight days. They trained 134 youth in 2022, and 67 youth in 2023.

The evaluators had a FGD with eight male and two female youth who also received DIT certificates in making briquettes, stoves, and pottery. The youth reported to have benefited from booster packages, DIT certificates, mindset change, incomes, business diversification, and exposure through the many exhibitions they attended.

Some of the challenges reported were that the booster packages were small, some of the products in the booster package were not the preferred quality (the project did not adequately trust and did not respond to the needs of the beneficiaries), reduced budgets, and procurement delays.



### Magigye Youth Group in Wakiso District

The group consists of five female and seven male youths of one clan. They grow vegetables (30 acres of local species) and do value adding. They turn waste into bricks and follow a zero-waste farming approach. From SAY they got an irrigation system. Later they got a grant of UGX 4.5 million from the SAY challenge fund. The bricks, that are used for heating on poultry farming, are sold at UGX 2,000 and provide a steady income. The group's team leader mentors youth in the area that were skilled under SAY in business skill.



### 3.3 Increased engagement in agriculture of youth aged 13 < 18

Specific Objective 3 of the SAY project is: "Youth aged 13 < 18 years in target project areas of Uganda increased their engagement in agriculture for long-term career path or key economic venture by the end of project (2024)".

The Intermediate Outcomes are (3.1) "5,000 youth aged 13 < 18 years increased their agripreneurship practical knowledge and skills levels" and (3.2) "Rehabilitated youth chose agriculture as a safe alternative livelihood".

**Table 8: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 3 and Intermediate Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SO.3: Youths aged 13 < 18 years in target project areas of Uganda increased their engagement in agriculture for long-term career path or key economic venture by the end of project (2024)						
Ind 3a: % of targeted youths 13<18 years engaged in the agriculture field	16.5%	26.5%	43.0%	13.2%	21.0%	34.2%
Ind 3b: % of targeted youths 13<18 years engaged in agribusiness ventures after project intervention ventures after exiting the juvenile rehabilitation process	17.0%	2.0%	19.0%	6.6%	0.7%	7.3%
IO 3.1: 5,500 youths aged 13 < 18 years increased their agripreneurship practical knowledge and skills levels						

Ind 3.1a: % of targeted youths 13<18 years who scored at least 70% post-test score in agriprenueurship assessment	24.7%	50.3%	75.0%	20.6%	47.4%	68.0%
Ind 3.1b: % of targeted youths 13<18 years who started own agriprenueurship	7.0%	16.0%	23.0%	1.5%	5.9%	7.5%
<b>IO 3.2: Rehabilitated youths chose agriculture as a safe alternative livelihood</b>						
Ind 3.2: % of rehabilitated youths 13<18 years engaged in agribusiness as a safer livelihoods option	25.2%	3.8%	29.0%	2.9%	0.3%	3.2%

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

The indicators for the Specific Objective 3 of the SAY project, and its respective intermediate outcomes, or even the description of the Specific Objective itself, don't seem to capture the essence of the activities for the youth aged 13-18. According to the project proposal, the activities are primarily to bring about a change in mindset towards agriculture among this category of youths. The objective and indicators speak of engagement in agriculture, starting entrepreneurship and safer livelihoods. For the targeted age group these seem to be over ambitious and unrealistic. It is therefore not surprising that the achievements are well below the target. Besides, the data in Table 6, as provided by AVSI, have the same issues as described for the data in Tables 2 and 5. The evaluators made their own calculations, resulting in the figures of Table 9. The recalculation produces better results for the school youths, but a lower result for the juveniles in remand homes.

**Table 9: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 3 and Intermediate Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>SO.3: Youths aged 13 &lt;18 years in target project areas of Uganda increased their engagement in agriculture for long-term career path or key economic venture by the end of project (2024)</b>						
Ind 3a: % of targeted youths 13<18 years engaged in the agriculture field	39.2%	43.9%	42.3%	40.3%	48.7%	45.9%
Ind 3b: % of targeted youths 13<18 years engaged in agribusiness ventures after project intervention ventures after exiting the juvenile rehabilitation process	20.7%	26.0%	21.0%	2.8%	5.7%	3.0%
<b>IO 3.1: 5,500 youths aged 13 &lt;18 years increased their agriprenueurship practical knowledge and skills levels</b>						
Ind 3.1a: % of targeted youths 13<18 years who scored at least 70% post-test score in agriprenueurship assessment	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%	60.3%	68,1%	65,6%
Ind 3.1b: % of targeted youths 13<18 years who started own agriprenueurship	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>IO 3.2: Rehabilitated youths chose agriculture as a safe alternative livelihood</b>						
Ind 3.2: % of rehabilitated youths 13<18 years engaged in agribusiness as a safer livelihoods option	20,7	26,0	21,0	2,8	5,7	3,0

Source: Own calculations by evaluators

**Table 10: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Outputs under Specific Objective 3 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Output 3.1.1: Students trained in agriculture and entrepreneurship skills						
OP Ind 3.1.1a: # of youths who attended capacity development activities (S4A, Life skills training)	1,900	3,600	5,500	1,880	3,826	5,706
OP Ind 3.1.1b: # of youths who attained at least 70% post-test score in agripreneurship assessment	1,330	2,520	3,850	1,134	2,607	3,741
Output 3.1.2: Students executed self-driven innovative & climate smart agribusiness projects to improve their skills sets						
OP Ind 3.1.2a: # of students who are engaged in climate smart ventures/agripreneurship	744	1,581	2,325	758	1,863	2,621
OP Ind 3.1.2b: # of school-based Agribusiness Clubs with Climate Change committee established			15			15
Output 3.2.1: youths in rehabilitation centres trained in agripreneurship skills						
OP Ind 3.2.1a: # of youths in rehabilitation centres trained in agripreneurship skills	950	50	1,000	1,028	53	1,081
OP Ind 3.2.1b: # of Rehabilitation centres facilitated to skill youths			3			3
OP Ind 3.2.1c: # of rehabilitated youth who started own agripreneurships	197	13	210	29	3	32


Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

As for Specific Objectives 1 and 2, the achievements of the output indicators present a better result than the achievement of outcomes and objective. It shows that more youths, both at secondary schools and remand homes, have been skilled than targeted. It is only the number of youths in agribusiness that is below target, but that was to be expected with this age group.

### Training of students in agriculture and entrepreneurship skills

According to the project MEAL data, 5,706 school youths skilled, which is above the target of 5,500. Skilling took place at 15 secondary school across the country. The evaluators visited ten of the schools and interacted with school managers, teachers and students. Everywhere the evaluators met with only enthusiastic stakeholders about the skilling of this age group. Interaction with the youth showed a notable change in mindset toward agriculture. Youth were not only motivated to engage in agriculture related skills, but had also benefitted from life skills training, shown, for example, by increased confidence of the youth.

The skilling programmes at the secondary schools were organised around sports activities, which served to attract more youth to agricultural skilling. Youth were skilled in combination with sports. An unintended benefit to the schools and the youth is that at some schools new sports were introduced and the project assisted in the establishment of sports grounds. The youth then joined agriculture clubs at their schools where they engaged in hands-on projects in selected value chains.

<p><b>St Kaggwa High School in Bushenyi District</b></p> <p>The district authorities introduced this school to the SAY project in 2023. The school benefitted from several investments, including a biogas installation, a basketball court, a piggery, irrigation equipment and horticulture equipment. In response to the project support, the local government contributed UGX 55 million (with 25% co-financing from the school) for a dam.</p>	<p><b>Youth at St Kaggwa HS Play Basket Ball</b></p> 
<p><b>Maryhill School in Mbarara District</b></p> <p>This girls school started working with SAY in 2022 and skilled a total of 400 students (200 in 2020, 100 in 2023, and 100 in 2024). The school received a green house and skilled students in rabbitry, mushrooms, poultry, horticulture, value addition, urban agriculture, and participated in Sports for Agriculture. They also participated in Farm Camp in Gayaza in 2023 and in Iganga in 2024, and in the challenge fund from which some students received booster packages. Some of the externalities of the project are that even the staff and community members got skilled and started poultry and other agricultural projects due to exposure to the SAY project. The teachers learnt making spices, bonded more with students, and also got a positive attitude towards agriculture.</p> <p>The school management feels that the activities will be sustained because it employed people on school budget, have bigger space for activities, the generated money is placed in account, they use locally available materials, and many people are involved.</p> <p>A FGD was conducted with 12 youth who reported to have benefited from booster packages, improved incomes from learn as you earn, perseverance, self-reliance, and contribution to the lower curriculum which is skill based. The youth feel they need more sensitisation and mind set change skilling. The youth displayed many innovative value addition products including: bakery, yoghurt, tea and avocado spices, bean powder, seed paper, rabbit pallets, egg powder, biodegradable plastics, bee culming sprays, sunscreen enhancers, banana fibre paper, and candle nut oils, pineapple jam, and garbage sorting machines.</p>	
<p><b>St Katherine School in Lira District</b></p> <p>This girls-only school reported a lot of benefits from the SAY project. The value chains skilled included mushrooms, piggery, horticulture, value addition. The school received four water pumps and six water tanks for harvesting rain water and irrigation. The school management reported to have obtained a lot of skills such as marketing skills, financial skills, climate smart agriculture (CSA), exposure meetings and cost sharing. The school also got trophies in the new Basketball sports for Lango and Northern Uganda school sports competitions.</p> <p>Some of the unintended benefits included DIT certificates to three teachers (in addition to DIT certification of 42 students), skills to the community neighbouring the school and to parents. Some of the challenges reported were that due to COVID-19 lockdown, some students became older than 18 years. There was delay in remitting the funds, probably due lack of knowledge on how to report, and the green house has not yet arrived.</p> <p>The evaluators had a focus group discussion with 12 female students who reported to have changed their minds about agriculture (from agriculture being seen as a punishment to being looked at as a profitable</p>	

job). They were happy to have received boosters from winning the business challenges, incomes from their enterprises, self-reliance, and exposure (e.g., at farm camps).

Like the skilled youth in the 18-30 year old age group, school youth participating in the project were assessed and certified by DIT. This was highly appreciated by the youth, and even by some of the teachers who also obtained skills certificates.

Apart from the benefits of skilling, schools and school youth mentioned a positive effect on nutrition, in schools and at students' parents' households. This is caused by the increased knowledge on horticulture and nutritional value of vegetables and fruits, but also by the horticultural production promoted by the project.


A broader positive spillover effect to parents and communities was reported. Several youths talked about the support they got from their parents to develop agricultural projects with the skills they gained from the project.

Exposure visits (e.g. to trade fairs) and exchanges with other schools were part of the skilling programme. All of these were received with much enthusiasm, but probably most mentioned was the annual farm camps of participating schools.

One critical observation is that the project is implemented at mostly affluent schools. Nine out of the ten schools visited were all affluent in their regional locations. A comment from AVSI was that the project aimed to leverage on existing levels.

<b>Iganga Secondary School in Iganga District</b>	<b>Iganga Girls Showing off their value-added products</b>
<p>The school has been a partner of AVSI in SKY and SAY. It has become a benchmark for other schools in the project, especially since it hosted the national farm camp with about 1,300 participants.</p> <p>The evaluators had a FGD with 22 girls, all members of the Young Future Farmers of Africa (YOFA) club. The youth have activity in at least ten different value chains. YOFA is a financially healthy club as they make money with value adding activities. The members have also learned to work as a team.</p> <p>The youth mentioned many benefits of the SAY project: sports (basketball, in "sports for agribusiness"), fish farming and a bigger school farm. But also many soft skills: leadership, marketing, motivation, innovation, self-esteem and confidence building. They learned a lot from study tours and the farm camp.</p>	

It was also observed that some of the schools already participated with AVSI in the SKY project. In itself there is no objection to that, but it was observed that there was also duplication of benefits. One school, for example, had received a poultry unit and an irrigation system under SKY and now received the same again under SAY. For provision of skilling that was not justified, as the skilling could easily be done using the previously donated infrastructure.


<b>Sebei College Tegeres in Kapchorwa District</b>	<b>The Ice Cream Parlour at Sebei College</b>
<p>The school signed the MoU with AVSI in 2021 and skilled 200 youths in 2022 and 100 youths in 2023 (horticulture, soap making, ice-cream making). In addition they enrolled 100 youths in both years for Sport for Agribusiness by Score Beyond. The youths are saving in the agriculture club and are investing in projects.</p> <p>The school benefitted from equipment provided by SAY: ovens, food processors, irrigation system with water tank, sport pavilion and piggery. When the milk production was insufficient for the demand for ice cream, SAY funded Napier grass for a silage project.</p> <p>The production of different value chains helps in cost reduction for the school. For example, liquid soap is made with a profit of 120%.</p> <p>Teachers were trained in entrepreneurship and value addition, and went on an exposure visit to Iganga Secondary School.</p> <p>The evaluators had a FGD with 6 male and 5 female youths. The especially liked the training by Score Beyond, which not only gave them agribusiness skills, but also sports skills, balls, attire and boots.</p> <p>It was it was observed that employing an independent employee in the school value addition enterprises such as in Sebei College and Maryhill could improve efficiency since students have to be in classes and thus have no time to run the enterprises.</p>	 <p>The photograph shows a woman in a patterned dress standing next to a commercial ice cream machine. The machine is a stainless steel unit with a digital display and two dispensing nozzles. It is situated in a room with cardboard boxes stacked in the background, suggesting a storage or preparation area for the parlour.</p>

<b>Archbishop Flynn Secondary School in Pader District</b>	<b>Horticultural Irrigation at Achi Bishop Flynn SS Youth Students-Pader</b>
<p>The school joined the project in 2023. They started skilling 200 youths, with support from Score Beyond, and another 170 in 2024. All 370 skilled youths are together in an entrepreneurship club. 118 youths completed the DIT assessment. The school was supported with two poultry units, a piggery and horticulture inputs.</p> <p>The evaluators had a FGD with 12 male and 11 female students. They mostly chose enterprises that they knew from home and can apply at home. They also learned about urban farming and the importance of investment. They participated in the national farm camp, where they came fourth out of 28 schools.</p> <p>The teachers benefitted from capacity building and study visits. It strengthened their network with other schools.</p>	 <p>The photograph depicts an outdoor agricultural setting. A group of people, including students and staff, are gathered around a field where irrigation equipment is being used. The equipment consists of a long, thin pipe or hose laid out on the ground, with several people standing nearby, possibly demonstrating or discussing the irrigation system. The background shows a clear blue sky and some trees, indicating a rural or semi-rural environment.</p>

Moreover there were issues of exaggerated investments, beyond the needs for the skilling of youths. For example, at Iganga School a very large piggery unit was constructed with project funds. Not only was the size of the construction unnecessary large for the purpose of skilling, it also cannot serve as a replicable investment for the youth.

It was observed that in several locations, for example in Gayaza High School, battery cages were procured with SAY support, while in Europe such systems are illegal. It seems contrary to animal welfare principles of the donor.



<b>Namiylango College in Mukono District</b>	<b>Students in the Rabbitry unit</b>
<p>The school started with the SAY project in 2023 and skilled students in bakery, piggery, poultry, mushrooms, and horticulture (open gardening and climate smart agriculture). They received a piggery, an irrigation system and a fence to some of the horticultural gardens. They also visited Gayaza HS, the farm camp in Iganga Girls SS, and participated in a debate competition. There was delay in the release of funds because of reporting issues. Booster packages were not enough. They believe the activities are sustainable because there is cost sharing by the school. The school also buys the vegetables from the students, and the activities are part of the new curriculum.</p>	

**Training in agriprenurship skills of youth in rehabilitation centres**

The second target group of youth aged 13 < 18 were juveniles in three remand homes. All were visited by the evaluators. At the time of the evaluation, 1,081 juveniles in remand homes skilled, which is above the target of 1,000. The evaluators visited all three supported remand homes and interacted with staff and youths.

The project provided skilling (including life skills) to the youths and material support (irrigation system, greenhouse, kitchen, vertical gardens, rabbitry, poultry, mushroom) to the remand homes. The youths are assessed for DIT certification, which increases their self-esteem and gives them opportunities when they return to their communities. Some juveniles reportedly got employment after leaving the remand home.

Stakeholders gave testimony of how the project has a positive effect on the wellbeing of the youths, providing a positive distraction from the daily routine in the remand homes. There was also a positive effect on nutrition. First at the remand home by the production of healthy food items as part of the project, secondly by the knowledge on healthy food transferred to the youths.

### Gulu Remand Home in Gulu District

The remand home, like other remand homes in the SAY project, collaborates with COWA for skilling juveniles, in this case in horticulture and rabbit keeping. Here 279 juveniles were skilled and 54 (51 male, 3 female) of them got a DIT certificate. Three of the juveniles who got a certificate were later employed. 39 male juveniles got booster packages for self-employment.

Additional benefit to the skilling is the improvement in diet. What is produced for the project supplements the diet in the home. The remand home also benefitted through SAY from renovation of the building and a motorised borehole. The officer in charge further mentioned the exchange among SAY partners and the psychological benefits to the juveniles (distraction and giving purpose).

Staff of the remand home report that the number of repeat offenders has reduced with the implementation of the SAY project. Youth are capacitated and motivated to earn money with agribusiness, which keeps them from criminal activities. The project is also appreciated by the parents of the juveniles, who come to visit the remand homes.

A final positive, and probably un planned, effect of the project is that remand homes become more visible through the project, and in a positive way. This attracts the interest of other donors as well as local government. DIT certification of juveniles is a positive contributor to the positive visibility of the remand homes.

## 3.4 Strengthened enabling environment

Specific Objective 4 of the SAY project is: “Enabling environment for market-responsive agri-skilling and youth gainful engagement in agribusiness in Uganda strengthened by 2024”.

The Intermediate Outcomes are (4.1): “Targeted Government of Uganda Ministries, Departments and Agencies operationalised agri-skilling and job creation policies and systemic reforms”, (4.2) “Private Sector-led initiatives facilitated market responsive agri-skilling and job creation for youths in agriculture” and (4.3) “Evidence-based reforms in agri-skilling and agribusiness management conducted leveraging on action research”.

**Table 11: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Specific Objective 4 and Intermediate Outcomes 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target	Achieved
SO.4: Enabling environment for market-responsive agri-skilling and youths’ gainful engagement in agribusiness in Uganda strengthened by 2024		
Ind 4a: % of supported systemic and policy reforms that have led to quality improvement in market-responsive agri-skilling	60%	70%
Ind 4b: % of private sector-led initiatives that directly facilitated agri-skilling and job creation for youths in agriculture sector	80%	80%
IO 4.1: Targeted Government of Uganda Ministries, Departments and Agencies operationalised agri-skilling and job creation policies and systemic reforms		
Ind 4.1a: % of agri-skilling and job creation reform policies operationalised with support from the project	50%	50%

IO Ind 4.1b: % of supported Government bodies that successfully conducted agri-skilling and job creation policy and systemic reforms	50%	50%
IO 4.2: Youths trainees accessed internship and apprenticeship placements through established schemes		
Ind 4.2: % of private sector-led initiatives that facilitated youths to access market-responsive agri-skilling and job opportunities in the agriculture sector	70%	60%
IO 4.3: Evidence-based reforms in agri-skilling and agribusiness management conducted leveraging on action research		
Ind 4.3: % of developed evidence-based ecosystem (agri-skilling, gender, environment and agribusiness) responsive frameworks mainstreamed and applied by stakeholders	60%	62%

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

The evaluators fail to understand the measurement of the specific objective and intermediate outcome indicators of this project component. Project staff was not able to explain them and the AVSI guideline for the calculation of indicators does not help. For example, one of the indicators for intermediate outcome 4.1 is “% of agri-skilling and job creation reform policies operationalised with support from the project”. The question is how to calculate a percentage of operationalised policies. The AVSI indicator guideline says: “It is calculated by dividing the number of supported policy and systemic reform processes that have resulted in agri-skilling quality improvement divided by the total number of policy and systemic reforms then multiplying by 100 to express the percentage.” The numerator can be defined as the number of policies the project has successfully worked on, and thereby easily obtained. However, what is the denominator? How does one get a total number of policy and systems reforms? And why is the target to get 60% of all policies and systemic reforms operationalised with support from the project? These indicators are impractical and not measurable and will not be further discussed in the evaluation. As in previous sections, the indicators for output are more workable (Table 12):

**Table 12: Achievement of indicator targets for SAY Outputs under Specific Objective 4 per 15 October 2024**

Indicator	Target			Achieved		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Output 4.1.1: Government of Uganda institutions facilitated to operationalise agri-skilling and job creation systemic and policy reforms interventions.						
Ind 4.1.1a: # of Government of Uganda institutions facilitated to operationalise systemic and reform policies			5			6
Ind 4.1.1b: # of Government of Uganda agri-skilling and job creation systemic and policy reforms interventions implemented			5			5
Output 4.1.2: Skilled youth linked to government programs/integrated into agriculture extension labour force.						
Ind 4.1.2a: # of youths linked to government programs/initiatives	1,000	1,000	2,000	1,352	1,370	2,722
Ind 4.1.2b: # of youths absorbed into the Government agriculture extension system	200	200	400	235	147	382
Output 4.2.1: Youth trainees accessed internship and apprenticeship placements through established schemes.						

Indicator 4.2.1a: # of youth trainees who accessed internship with agribusinesses	498	502	1,000	435	524	959
Indicator 4.2.1b: # of youth trainees who accessed apprenticeship placements with agribusinesses	350	350	700	543	407	950
Indicator 4.2.1c: # of private sector-led internship/apprenticeship schemes established			1			1
Output 4.2.2: Youths agripreneurs accessed markets, investment capital and other critical agribusiness services through established private sector-led trade and investment platforms						
Indicator 4.2.2a: # of agripreneurs who accessed markets through established linkages/platforms	3,500	3,500	7,000	3,725	3,681	7,406
Indicator 4.2.2b: # of agripreneurs who accessed investment capital through established linkages/platforms	1,000	1,000	2,000	1,386	1,183	2,569
Indicator 4.2.2c: # of agripreneurs who accessed critical services (e.g. business incubation, product certification) through established platforms/linkages	4,000	4,000	8,000	4,140	3,902	8,042
Output 4.3.1: Gender-responsive and climate-smart agribusiness strategies developed and adopted by all stakeholders for national use						
Ind 4.3.1a: # of agribusinesses with gender-responsive strategies/policies			30			31
Ind 4.3.1b: # of agribusinesses with climate smart strategies/policies			30			31
Ind 4.3.1c: # of agribusinesses with at least 40% female employees			20			19
Output 4.3.2: Assessment and Training Packages for level 2 and 3 occupations reviewed and updated or developed to be market-responsive through multi-stakeholder engagement						
Ind 4.3.2a: # of ATPs reviewed/developed and approved for national use			15			12
Ind 4.3.2b: # of Agri-skilling centers that adopted and operationalised approved ATPs			50			50
Output 4.3.3: Action Research sustainable market-responsive agri-skilling and agribusiness models conducted						
Ind 4.3.3a: # of action researches conducted			4			4
Ind 4.3.3b: # of action research papers published			4			0

Source: AVSI-SAY MEAL project data

### **Engagement of Government line ministries and programmes for policy oversight, technical services provision and linkage to programmes, opportunities and markets; Support to the Agriculture Sector Skills Council**

On the one hand the project engaged the government in the selection of intervention areas and the identification of implementing partners and beneficiaries. On the other hand, the project worked together with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to develop policies & products and strengthen capacity. SAY formed an MDA team for M&E, oversight, capacity building, technical advice and linkages to markets and support, and identified training and skill gaps.

SAY supported the development of the TVET policy, which is now gazetted. The project also supported activities in the workplan of the Agriculture Sector Skilling Council and strengthened capacity of the Council's staff to implement their Skilling Uganda Initiative mandate. SAY further supported the development of ATPs accredited by DIT.

### **Private sector-led internship and entrepreneurship schemes; Market System Strengthening and linkages between agribusinesses and youth agripreneurs**

The project linked 2,722 youths to governmental programmes. Say further facilitated 959 youth in securing internships with private sector enterprises. Under Action Research, sustainable market-responsive agri-skilling and agribusiness models were conducted.

## **4. Evaluation conclusions**

In this chapter conclusions are drawn for relevance, coherence, effectiveness and sustainability. The presentation of conclusions follows the logic of the evaluation questions as formulated by the commissioner in the ToR.

### **4.1 Relevance**

#### **How do different stakeholders (community members of different (socio-economic background, private sector, national and local government at different levels), assess the relevance of the project to their needs and priorities?**

All stakeholders assess the project relevant to their needs and priorities. Starting with the target group of youth aged 18-30, they purposely enrolled in the project looking for new or additional skills in agripreneurship. They generally declare that their needs were addressed. This is particularly valid for those youths who received mentoring and booster packages after the skilling. Youths aged 13-18, secondary school students and juveniles in remand homes, wouldn't have prioritised skilling in agripreneurship. However, once participating in the project they showed enthusiasm and appreciation.

Youth also appreciated that the subject of skilling was "agripreneurship", rather than agriculture. Few youths are attracted to work on the land, or may not have access to land even if they wish. The skilling in different agriculture-related aspects made it more attractive and more applicable to them.

Implementing partners, whether private sector businesses or schools, universities and remand homes, equally regard the project relevant, for the targeted youths as well as for themselves. The project supported these partners with capacity strengthening, infrastructure and inputs that enhance their skilling capacities.

Local government assess the project as relevant, not only because it fits within national and local policies and strategies of youth skilling, but also it contributes to the local governments' own performance of reaching their targets. As one of the district officials said: SAY does activities that the local government would like to do, but for which they don't have the funds. Local government participates in selection of intervention areas, profiling youth, assessments and joint review meetings.

At national level, government agencies and departments also assessed the project as relevant, especially that it targets youth that make the biggest percentage of Uganda's population and uses agripreneurship to attract them to participate at different levels of the food value chain. Involvement of government resulted in aligning with National Development Plans and avoiding duplication of efforts.

### **How did the project take the different needs and priorities of different groups into consideration?**

One of the main priorities of youth in Uganda is to find ways to generate income. Regardless of the level of education, unemployment is very high among youth. Opportunities to generate income from traditional agriculture are limited, especially for women, who do not easily get access to land. By offering skills in different nodes of the value chain, youths are obtaining readily applicable skills to start generating income. Provision of booster packages gives them a head start. Thus young men and women can generate income from, for example, adding value to fruit (making juices), milk (ice cream) and coffee (roasting, brewing).

The above is equally applicable to the youth in remand homes, but their needs even more concern health and nutrition. The project took those needs well into consideration, contributing to improved nutrition while skilling the youth.

The project target of mindset change for youth 13 - 18 years towards agriculture was well thought at that level since they are school going and still exploring their career paths. Exposing them to different nodes of the agriculture value chain allows room for consideration of agripreneurship as a future income generating activity.

The needs of implementing partners were mostly in terms of means to provide skills. This includes infrastructure for horticulture, poultry keeping, piggery, mushroom growing and value addition. The project also provided inputs (seeds, agro-chemicals) and capacity building of staff. The project was quite liberal in supporting implementing partners, often for several value chains.

### **Have the identified constraints/challenges been adequately integrated in the project design?**

The main challenge identified is the high unemployment rate of youth 15 to 30 years old. This is the core problem, which has been adequately addressed by the project, aiming to provide youth with skills that are in demand for either paid jobs or self-employment.

A second identified challenge is limited and constrained access to investment capital for agripreneurship. This is primarily addressed by direct provision of means of production by the project through booster packages. The adequacy of this approach depends on the selection of beneficiaries and level of mentoring given to the youth. There are examples of youth whose business really took off with the help of the booster packages. There are others that had a short-term benefit, but were not able to establish a viable business without further support. Apart from direct support, the project supported youth to access external sources of funding, by linking them to the Parish Development Model or SACCOs, and by stimulating VSLA. Access to finance was identified as a constraint especially for women entrepreneurs.

Another challenge for successful agripreneurship is inadequate management capacity. The project addressed this firstly by the inclusion of soft skills in the skilling programme. Later, more emphasis was given to mentorship, especially by private sector implementing partners and exemplary skilled youth. The project identified 120 capable youths and paid them UGX 30,000 per mentoring visit. The mentorship and/or incubation were seen especially necessary to sustain business, as most entrepreneurship startups in Uganda struggle to remain viable after six months. The project facilitated the engagement of agripreneurs in business relationships with bigger sector players.

The project collaborated with existing national and regional business incubation hubs, like Uganda Industrial Research Institute, Consortium for Enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development Limited (CURAD), and Makerere University Food Science and Technology Incubation Centre to support youth businesses /innovations growth in product development and certification. For example, Kagiira Skills Development Centre reported to have visited and worked together with Makerere University Food Science and Technology Incubation centre to benchmark for equipment for their meat processing incubation hub. CIELO Country Inn Projects Limited reported to have worked with the Uganda Industrial Research Institute to formulate course content for their practical training courses.

COVID-19 had a negative effect on the project's effectiveness in its first two years. In 2022 the project was behind schedule on all indicators. Project management responded by:

1. Calling upon private sector partners to be more committed.
2. More direct implementation with partners (technical support to beneficiaries)
3. Some interventions, beyond the control of the project were dropped.

The intensity of M&E increased, with biweekly technical meetings and more focus on key activities.

The MEAL system is managed through a centralised system for AVSI (Activityinfo). It is a comprehensive system, where partners also enter data, and it contains a feedback mechanism for partners and youths. Regular reports are submitted to EKN, OPM and UNHCR. EKN gives ample constructive feedback on the annual report.

### **How were the objectives, interventions and implementation strategy of SAY project consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, national and local development priorities as well as the policies and objectives of EKN?**

This is covered in Section 4.2, Coherence.

### **How has the context in which the project was implemented changed over time, and how has this influenced the assessment of relevance of the project and its components?**

The project was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in its first two years of implementation. Markets were closed and especially the closure of schools had a direct impact. As a result the project was behind schedule in the first years and had to pick up speed from 2022. In its efforts to compensate for the lost years, the project primarily focused on enrolment of youths.

In 2022, the project was extended to, among other, Lamwo, Kitgum and Pader Districts in the Northern Region of Uganda. This added a refugee context to the project, and the project started to target refugee and host communities in those three districts. For example, 50% of the youth skilled by WURONET in Lamwo were refugees. Most of the refugees got DIT certificates which were found to be very helpful when they returned to their countries. Some refugees received life skills and business skills which helped them become self-employed when they returned to their countries. The project facilitated more interactions which created peaceful coexistence between the refugees and host communities, improved incomes, food and nutrition

status of both the refugees and host communities. These were also hinted on by Youth Movers, SARDNET, and at Don Bosco where refugees participated in the SAY project skilling.

An unexpected, but highly relevant change of context is the new lower secondary education curriculum the Government of Uganda started rolling out in February 2020. One of the most obvious changes in the curriculum is the aim of meeting the learners' needs especially in regard to skills training to meet the demands in the labour market. Thus SAY became an even more welcome partner to the secondary schools as it directly supports the application of the new curriculum.

### **Could the relevance of the project have been made higher? If so, how?**

The project proposal is centred around several agricultural value chains and value chain nodes. "Value chain" is mentioned 46 times in the project proposal. This may give the impression that the project follows a value chain approach, but it does not. "Value chain" in the project proposal is rather synonym to "produce" or "product" and the project provides (isolated) skills in production or value addition. The relevance of the project could have been higher if it had applied a more comprehensive value chain or Market System Development approach. Applying such approach would assess and address bottlenecks in and around value chains.

For example, in Mbarara District a skilling beneficiary mentioned a challenge in transport of produce. A value chain approach would have the project assess the challenge at a value chain level, e.g. valuing the role of transporters. In the case of SAY, the project provided the beneficiary with a motor cycle, which is not regarded an appropriate or sustainable intervention. In another case, in Lira District, a maize growing group was given a milling machine. In the same district, another group producing soy bean was given piglets "to use the waste".

As mentioned above, access to finance is one of the main constraints for viable agripreneurship. The relevance of the project would have been higher if the project had put more effort in linking agripreneurs to sustainable finance. As an indicator: while "value chain" is mentioned 46 times in the project proposal, "finance" is four times.

Relevance would further be enhanced by aligning academic qualifications with the type of skilling for relevance. A minimum education requirement would only be justifiable for more advanced skills, like input handling or plant doctors and agro-processing machinery fabricators.

There are other elements of the business environment where the project could have been more relevant. Business environment, or business development services have been mentioned repeatedly as constraints for sustainable agri-business. The project could have put more effort in organising youth to work together, either informally or in formal groups, to stimulate joint marketing or saving & credit.

## **4.2 Coherence**

### **How was coherence sought and achieved with the broader NL policy, NL strategy for food security, relevant food security projects in the Netherlands embassy portfolio as well as the relevant NL thematic areas (eg refugees, SRHR, gender, climate change, private sector development etc)?**

For EKN, the project is implemented under its Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) programme. Although there are people arguing SAY is more of an education project, it fits well under the food and nutrition security agenda. The long-term goal of the Netherlands FNS program in Uganda is "Ugandans have increased food and nutrient security through more resilient food systems". Agri-skilling of youth is part of the FNS component to improve the agribusiness environment. In line with the project ToC, skilling and mindset change lead to increased employability of youth, hence contributing to income and increased food security. Skills are

essential for a reliable income. Skilling youth means that one reaches aspiring or beginning actors in agricultural value chains, who are mostly vulnerable and not food secure.

Gender, climate smart agriculture and private sector development, all elements of the Dutch multi-annual country strategy for Uganda, are integrated in the project.

Since 2022 the project also works with refugees and refugee hosting communities. Supporting the Government of Uganda (GoU) towards a sustainable refugee response, enabling the country to uphold her progressive refugee policy, is another objective of EKN. The strategy is to strengthen the legal position, social protection and livelihood opportunities as well as improving the economic development and decent work opportunities for refugees and host communities. Education, learning and employment are among the pillars of Dutch development cooperation in Uganda. AVSI already had experience with refugee-related conflict in West Nile and saw the need and opportunity to integrate refugee and host communities in the project.

### **To what extent are the project's achievements in line with policies and plans of the national and local authorities in the targeted areas?**

Skilling of youth is high on the agenda of the national government of Uganda. For example, the government started projects aimed at generating employment, income and food & nutrition security to the youth such as Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), the establishment of Industrial Business Shelters to create jobs for urban youth, and Presidential Initiative on Skilling the Girl/Boy Child. Other government initiatives such as the Parish Development Models have components that specifically aim at helping the youth to get access to start-up capital to invest in income and employment-generating activities. This demonstrates that the SAY project was highly relevant for GoU, targeting youth and creating (self)employment—moreover in the Agricultural sector—which is regarded as backbone of the economy.

The government's objective is to transform farmers from subsistence to business and commercial farmers. SAY is contributing by skilling youth for agribusiness—which helped them to participate in markets as sellers of the products they developed (e.g., dairy-, bee-, coffee-, horticultural- products) and as buyers of the raw materials they used to make the processed products.

Generally, local government implement two types of government support projects: (i) skills development and (ii) livelihood support. In practice these often come down to 1-2 days of training and a handout of inputs. Meaningful practical skills development is often missing, which is why the SAY project is much appreciated by local government.

### **To what extent was coherence sought and achieved with other relevant projects and programs (not funded by NL) in the targeted area?**

AVSI works with many partners in the implementation of its projects and programmes. For coordination and collaboration AVSI is member of coordination structures at different levels. At national level they participate in the Education Development Partners Group Framework (EDP), a formal forum coordinating between all bilateral and multilateral development partners supporting the education sector in Uganda, and its Business, Technical and Vocational Education Training (BTJET) subsector working group. At district level the project is member of the agency coordination structure under the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). There are also coordination structures at parish level. AVSI participates in these fora to look for synergy, joint programming and alignment with relevant policies.

AVSI was also asked by EKN to collaborate or align with other Dutch funded projects. AVSI coordinated with Common Ground, TechnoServe, SNV, ISSD and IFDC. Examples that were given are exchange of information

on climate smart agriculture, validation of gender strategy and participation in the best farmer competition. AVSI also has a long-standing relationship with PUM.

### **Could the coherence of the project have been made higher? If so, how?**

September 2024, IOB published "Synergy in development. Coherence of Dutch policy and the effects on food security, water and climate in developing countries, 2016-2023". The study distinguishes four types of coherence:

- Internal coherence: between different thematic elements and between different Dutch policies and activities.
- External coherence: between different actors, or between Dutch policy and activities on the one hand and the policies and activities of partner country governments or other donor countries on the other.
- Temporal coherence: of short-term interventions in a long-term transition strategy.
- Spatial coherence: between local and national or even global interventions.

An interesting conclusion of the study, which is equally applicable for the SAY project, is that coherence between Dutch-funded projects and projects funded by others is often intended but limited in practice. In that sense it could be concluded that (internal) coherence could have been higher if more effort was put in collaboration with other projects. Collaboration with government was generally good, as was the link between local implementation and national policy.

## **4.3 Effectiveness**

### **To what extent has the SAY project achieved its intended goal and objectives as stated in the project results framework?**

The highest-level goal of the project was "Youth highly skilled and gainfully employed in the agriculture sector in Uganda". Without further quantifying the goal it can be said that the project has achieved the goal, since thousands of youths have found (self) employment through the efforts of the project. More detail, and measurable targets, are obtained by looking at the four specific objectives.

SO.1: "Employable agribusiness skills levels of 18,800 youths 18-30 years old in target areas in Uganda enhanced by 2024": whether this objective was achieved depends on what is meant by "employable". A total of 17,310 youths completed the skilling cycle, which is more than targeted. However, only 8,351 passed the DIT assessment, which is only 68% of the target.

SO.2: "Skilled youths (aged 18-30 years) employment in well-paying agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship in target project areas of Uganda boosted by the end of the project (2024)": the number of self-employed youths reached 9,445 (86% of the target), the number of wage employed youth 1,285 (64% of the target). In project documents, "gainfully" is defined as "earning EUR 120 per month per person". The number of youths that reached that level of income is 2,561, 44% of the target.

SO.3: "Youths aged 13 <18 years in target project areas of Uganda increased their engagement in agriculture for long-term career path or key economic venture by the end of project (2024)": Although the aim for 13-18 year olds to engage in a long-term career path in agriculture seems far-fetched, the targets for this SO were all achieved.

SO.4: “Enabling environment for market-responsive agri-skilling and youths’ gainful engagement in agribusiness in Uganda strengthened by 2024”: the targets for this SO were all achieved.

In summary, the goal and objectives are largely achieved, with some shortcomings in SO1 and SO2. This is also reflected in the achievement of the underlying outcomes and outputs (see next sub-section).

**To what extent did the project achieve its outcomes and outputs, both in terms of quantity and quality? (Analyse reasons for over-/underachievement)**

As one reference for the assessment of effectiveness, the project expenditure vs budget is given in Table 13. It shows, for example, that the expenditure for project activities (excluding general and overhead costs) reached only 7.9% at the end of year 1, the COVID year. Expenditure, this activities, picked up well from year 2. By August 2024, the project had used 91.6 of its total budget.

**Table 13: SAY expenditure versus budget, up to August 2024**

	Budget	Expenditure					Balance
		2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	
General Program Costs	405.239	107.709	100.214	119.260	68.209	395.392	9.847
Specific objective one	5.425.687	517.222	2.119.019	2.134.041	384.467	5.154.749	270.939
Specific objective two	4.117.331	142.619	309.746	1.513.668	1.730.893	3.696.926	420.405
Specific objective three	1.553.574	132.645	298.957	529.243	618.737	1.579.582	26.007
Specific objective four	1.587.689	206.209	228.645	462.319	279.329	1.176.502	411.187
General Support Costs	1.852.686	449.647	446.926	464.309	357.978	1.718.859	133.827
Overheads	488.999	116.363	130.875	119.758	83.613	450.609	38.390
Unforeseen	68.794		29.742			29.742	39.052
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>15.500.000</b>	<b>1.674.434</b>	<b>3.666.146</b>	<b>5.344.621</b>	<b>3.525.250</b>	<b>14.202.361</b>	<b>1.297.640</b>
Third Party Contributions	2.000.000	544.244	853.564	411.525	234.000	2.043.332	43.332
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.500.000</b>	<b>2.218.678</b>	<b>4.519.710</b>	<b>5.756.146</b>	<b>3.759.250</b>	<b>16.245.693</b>	<b>1.254.307</b>

The project is on track to achieve most outcomes and outputs, but is not likely to achieve the following output targets:

- # of youths 18-30 years assessed by DIT/MAAIF: the project has achieved 67% of the target for this output. The main reason for underachievement is the decision by the project not to enforce certification as a requirement for participation in the skilling programme.
- # of wage-employed youths: the project has achieved 65% of the target for this output. Achieving this target is largely outside the influence of the project. It was assumed that a certain percentage of skilled youth would obtain employment, but there are too many external factors that influenced a lower result.

- # of youth earning at least UGX 500,000 per month. the project has achieved 44% of the target for this output. Setting the target at UGX 500,000 was probably too ambitious. MEAL data show that the average income of self-employed youths increased since baseline from UGX 380,000 to UGX 580,000 and for wage-employed from UGX 250,000 to UGX 450,000. So the number of youths reaching UGX 500,000 per month may be below target, but there is a significant gain in income for employed youths.

### **Are outcomes reached entirely attributable to the SAY project?**

Is it fair to say that the outcomes reached can be attributed to the SAY project. Skilled youth show competence through DIT/MAAIF certification. They find (self) employment due to the skilling provided by the project. Interest in agri-business among 13-18 years old youth increased due to the project, and policies were influenced by the project.

### **To what extent was the program logic (particularly the assumptions linking outputs to outcomes, and the risk assessment) adequate?**

The project's ToC does not have assumption at the level of outputs and outcomes. The project proposal contained a more generic matrix of risks and assumptions, but it is quite limited. The risk assessment in the project proposal states that "*many of the assumptions will mainly hold as there is guarantee from the donor on the funding*". The listed assumptions are "continuous funding from EKN, political and economic stability in Uganda, acceptance by partners and youth to participate in the project, schools accept to enrol their students in the project, favourable climatic conditions for engagement in agricultural activities and support from Government of line Ministries, Departments and Agencies". These are all very generic and unlikely risks to materialise.

A description of assumptions linking outputs to outcomes is lacking. Especially the implicit assumption that enrolling 18,800 youths for skilling would lead to 13,026 employed youths, of whom 5,760 would earn at least UGX 500,000 per month, could have been argued better.

### **Has the gender strategy been used in the reaching of gender-specific indicators?**

The basic function of the gender strategy was to support the project team in achieving the SAY target of 50% female enrolment for skilling and employment afterwards. The strategy lists many gender-related (perceived?) constraints for agri-skilling, business and entrepreneurship. The strategy then calls for capacity building on gender and the development of gender sensitive strategies and policies, without elaborating further. The strategy culminates in three "project affirmative actions":

1. 50% of the enrolled beneficiaries to be female
2. 40% of the (Directorate of Industrial Training) DIT assessment fee for female youth shall be contributed by the project.
3. Female led agribusinesses shall be engaged as part of the implementing partners to support and inspire the female youth in agribusiness.

These three actions were indeed successfully implemented. Fifty-one percent of enrolled youth was female, the 40% subsidy of DIT fees for female youth was applied and female led businesses were engaged as role models (E.g. the Entebbe Animal Care Centre, Wakiso District, led by Dr Emma Naluyima). On the other hand, less than 50% female youth were assessed and certified by DIT/MAAIF and 47% of youth supported with

booster packages were female. The percentage of female youth for wage employment, graduates retained by businesses and those earning at least UGX 500,000 per month were around 40%. Only the percentage of female school youth participants was around 67%. Given that percentage it is remarkable that only three female youths started their own agripreneurship, versus 29 male. The number of female youths absorbed in the government extension system, and trainees accessing apprenticeships with agribusiness, stayed far behind the number of male youths.

It can be concluded that the project achieved the 50% female enrolment target as set in the gender strategy. The gender strategy had serious shortcomings targeting the outcome level and there the project scored less on equal gender representation.

### **To what extent was risk management and conflict sensitivity adequate, and to what extent has the implementation of the project been adjusted based on regular assessments of assumptions and risks?**

The SAY team had quarterly meetings with the AVSI Compliance Officer to review identified risks. The team made use of a risk assessment matrix to identify, assess, and prioritise potential risks in the project. The process was described as:

- Identify risks. List potential risks that could affect the project or objective.
- Determine impact (severity.) Assess the potential consequence or impact of each risk if it occurs.
- Determine likelihood (probability). Evaluate the probability of each risk occurring.
- Assign scores. Use a numerical scale to populate the matrix.
- Prioritise risks. High and critical risks need immediate action and mitigation strategies, medium risks need monitoring and contingency plans, and low risks might only require periodic review.
- Develop mitigation strategies.
- Monitor and review.

Risk analysis was reported upon in annual work plans, but not significant changes in risks and assumptions were reported, except a reduction of risks associated with COVID-19. There has been no explicit monitoring of conflict sensitivity.

### **Were there any unintended positive or negative consequences of the project?**

Several unintended effects were noted.

A positive unintended effect was the active engagement of school youth in agriculture. The main objective of the activities with school youth was to bring about a change of mindset and increase interest in agribusiness. Many youths went a few steps further, established agribusinesses and started gaining income, even contributing to their own school fees.

An unexpected positive effect is the improved public image of remand homes. An indicator is that the court now sits at the remand home, as they are seen as suitable and clean places, unlike before the SAY project activities.

There is a multiplier effect noted in the process of skilling. Some beneficiaries of booster packages started employing other youths. Many youths continued to skill others. There is also a multiplier effect on household and community level.

While youths are beneficiaries of skills development by skilling centres, the skilling centres also benefit from the advertisement that skilled youths make for their businesses.

With the skilling of juveniles, staff of the remand homes also learned, and so did the teachers in schools who also started similar enterprises.

Accountability by private sector partners is a challenge. All partners are required to follow good procurement practices, private sector partners are not used to be held accountable by a partner. For example the requirement to produce three quotations for procurement of goods and services.

EKN organises the nation-wide annual "Best Farmers Competition" (in partnership with the media group (Vision Group), DFCU Bank, KLM and Koudijs). It was noted that in recent years youth who passed through the SAY project have been among the participants and winners.

### **How did the project translate the understanding of the context and the political economy in the project strategy and activities?**

The context and political economy are determined by the (recent) historic developments in Uganda. Agriculture is the main economic sector, exporting unprocessed primary products. About 70% of the population work in the agricultural sector, largely in subsistence farming. Nevertheless, economic growth has been consistent, with an annual GDP growth of 5-10%. The main challenge to this economic growth is the very high population. Growth, with a simultaneous pressure on arable land. Climate change is aggravating the challenge. This situation is further complicated by Uganda's demography, with youth representing over 30% of the country's total population in the working age bracket. Studies in Uganda show how economic reforms have undermined the State's capacity to create decent employment opportunities and employment opportunities in the country continue to dwindle.

In this context, the project's strategy has been adequate, not only in skilling youth, but also by focusing on profitable nodes in value chains, such as value addition and marketing.

### **Were the target groups reached? and how well?**

The target groups were well defined and subsequently well reached. Youth is a heterogeneous group, but through an open approach the project was able to attract motivated youths. Youths were targeted through local government and community groups and churches. Selection of youth already working in a targeted value chains allowed for targeting of the right interventions to the right youth category.

### **What has changed for the target groups in relation to employable agribusiness skills, employment in agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship, engagement in agriculture for long-term career paths or key economic ventures, enabling environment for market-responsive agri-skilling and youth gainful engagement in agribusiness?**

The findings described in Sections 3.1 to 3.3 indicate a positive change for target groups in all of the listed areas. Hands-on practical approach improved attitude and uptake of employable agribusiness skills. Specifically for the youth 13-18 years old, SAY was effective in changing mindset and attitude toward agriculture and business.

### **How has SAY's interventions and approach induced positive changes among the businesses of the agribusiness market actors?**

The SAY project facilitated or stimulated the training of skilled employees (labour) for the agribusiness actors. It helped improve and streamlined the production processes of some products. The project involved government and induced attention towards skilling as a tool in the improvement of agribusiness sector. Furthermore, the SAY project interventions provided markets for products as some youth bought raw materials (demand) or sold (supplied) finished products to the market.

The Earn As You Learn model worked and fitted the youth, most of whom could have been limited by financial constraints to attend to the skilling program. It was a source of capital for some youth yet it also served as a practical business training unit for many. Variety in application of was described in Section 3.1.

Beyond the funding that the youth won, the challenge fund was an opportunity to understand the business model, identify relevant needs and interface with funders. Many youths who participated were also able to compete elsewhere. It improved confidence and resilience to sustain their enterprises.

The SAY project helped the education institutions such as universities and skilling centers with the ability to conduct practical skill trainings. The SAY project also built the capacity of government employees to design, analyse and monitor some of the youth agribusiness projects.

### **How well has SAY been inclusive as per the project proposal and as per the interest of different types of youth and agribusinesses?**

The project scores well on the inclusiveness of youths and businesses. All stakeholders praised the participatory approach and high involvement of all stakeholders in different stages of the project. Not all implementing partners subscribed to the free equipment and input given to the skilled youth and the lack of own contribution and sustainable (external) finance. The project was gender inclusive in terms of enrolment, but less attention to equitable gender participation was given when it came to booster packages and employment.

## **4.4 Sustainability**

### **What are the foreseen long-term effects that have resulted from SAY project interventions including contribution towards the intended impact, positive or negative impacts, or intended or unintended changes?**

The main long-term effect of the project is the youth who have taken up (self) employment in agriculture, as this is the future generation for agriculture in Uganda. Another effect is on the next generation, youth aged 15-18 years old, which have gained an interest in agriculture as a(n alternative) source of income. Skills are permanent (lifelong) and can be practiced when the opportunity arises.

The project has achieved sustainable effects with implementing partners. Especially a number of private partners have changed their attitude towards skilling and see positive results for their business in working with youth. All implementing partners, institutional or private, have gained capacity, through material support and training/exposure, to provide better skilling to youth. Valuable investments in fixed assets have been donated by SAY and remain available for skilling future generations. Skilling providers are likely to afford the variable costs of operation.

There has been a direct effect of income generation by participating youth. This was the main objective for the 18-30 age group, but it was also observed at the 15-18 age group. Youth of both groups have reported a promising level of income generation and the capacity to save and invest.

A positive effect is that the project has stimulated networking and visibility, which attracts alternative donors and funding. This is also valid for the collaboration with local governments. District officers commended AVSI for the involvement of all stakeholders. It contributes to sustainability. Youth and implementing partners have become visible to the local authorities, who can support or take over some activities, e.g., job centres, follow-ups, and additional investments like irrigation systems and dams.

The involvement of private sector implementing partners also has a sustainability element. Businesses around the implementing partners help sustainability of the youths businesses, as for example seen with

Maikut. The youths themselves are also advertise for the skilling centres in their community and promote their business.

The introduction of a new lower secondary education curriculum is an unexpected boost for the sustainability of skilling of 15-18-year-olds. Since skilling activities are part of the new curriculum, schools will continue to skill students, and the support given to the participating schools will be well used.

The project has been promoting youth to be assessed and certified by DIT. The government will likely continue to promote DIT certification.

### **Will changes induced by SAY project last? Why or why not? And do we have an effective exit strategy?**

There will be a variance of sustainability of changes induced by SAY. At the level of the youths it firstly depends on the individual. Some youths are better business people than others. It further depends on the opportunity to attract further support. Many starting businesses will need additional investment to become or remain viable. It has been shown that to sustain (self) employment beyond five years is still challenging, or, as one stakeholder stated: nine out of ten new businesses collapse. Especially for self-employed youths it is difficult to keep money in the business as there are always dependents to look after.

Changes brought to implementing skill providers and school are likely to last. Investments (material as well as personal) will continue to be effective in skilling for years to come.

There is no particular exit strategy of the project. The project is set to deliver its outputs and outcomes and will then stop. For AVSI, skilling is a recurrent intervention area, and it is likely that the organisation will continue skilling in the project areas and with many of the same implementing partners.

### **To what extent do relevant stakeholders have a sense of ownership for the different activities?**

The sense of ownership of skilling activities is high among schools and private sector implementing partners.

### **To what extent were the tools and knowledge generated during the project transferred to relevant local actors to ensure sustainability? In which value chains the training institutes have been most and less effective, in the sense that youth is indeed continuing to work in these agri-businesses?**

By definition, the major part of tools and knowledge were transferred to local actors: it is the youth that will continue to apply their gained skills in agri-business. Likewise for implementing partners and schools: the essence of the project was knowledge transfer to local actors. There are no particular value chains that are more effective in retaining youth within the value chain. That is also not really an issue of sustainability. It was observed that it is not uncommon that youths are trained in one value chain and develop business in another. The positive conclusion of that observation is that youths have gained skills that can be universally applied across value chains, like business skills.

### **How are investments triggering new investments and are repeatable without project support?**

There is no unambiguous answer to this question. The evaluators met with successful youths, who were skilled, received booster packages and developed their businesses with new investments. They were able to invest part of their profit or succeeded in accessing new sources of funding.

But the evaluators also met with youth who struggle to keep their businesses going and who primarily look at the project for a next grant. It is seen that for many youths the booster package may have reinforced donor dependency. Booster packages sometimes were excessive, increasing the dependency on the donor. The project tried to provide all necessary input (equipment and materials) as a grant, without any requirement of own contribution (except for labour and land).

## **Overall, what key blockages are foreseen in sustaining the effects of SAY?**

While there is generally a positive assessment of the sustainability of SAY interventions, challenges to sustainability are mostly in the enabling environment for agripreneurship: access to finance, business development support and access to input. Some youth also mentioned marketing challenges. Some business activities need UNBS certification to tap into larger markets. This will remain a major challenge to some start-ups.

## **What are the lessons learned and best practices, and from which stakeholders or beneficiaries**

See Section 5.

## **Was there anything more the project could have done (recommendations) in order to achieve bigger impact than what was achieved?**

As mentioned in Section 4.1, a value chain approach, which looks beyond particular value chain nodes, but assess and address weaknesses along the value chain, including the enabling environment, would have led to a bigger impact.

Further support to youths to work in groups, either as informal marketing groups, or as formal associations or cooperatives, would also have increased impact.

Critical for the sustainability of many enterprises started by skilled youths is a guidance for a significant period of time during implementation. The mentoring system was a good initiative, but it started late in the project timeline and it is likely to stop when the project stops. By making mentoring youths used to getting paid by the project, it is unlikely that the system will be sustained without external support.

Projects come with targets that may not satisfy all the needs of the potential beneficiaries. For example, some beneficiaries suggested lowering the education level, increasing the age limit, increasing the sizes of booster packages, increasing the length and contents of the DIT trainings, and more. The key point is that the projects have to work within specific scopes given the limitations in resources in terms of time and funds.

# **5. Lessons learned and recommendations**

## **5.1 Lessons learned**

A first lesson comes from the difference between the SKY and SAY projects. With SKY start-up packages were given to all skilled youths. That was adjusted in SAY, where youth must start business first. Beneficiaries of booster packages should also be able to employ other youths. That is a step forward, as youth at least show interest to start business before getting the booster package.

During implementation it was learned that mentoring by staff, IPs and LG was not enough to reach the target, therefore some of the skilled youths were engaged to mentor their peers. Mentoring is an important tool to support youth in sustaining their businesses.

It was learned that it is important to involve local government from the start as a key stakeholder. Local government can complement support given by the project and maintain a relationship with beneficiaries when the project comes to an end.

The household and/or community of youths play an important role in achieving results. Take-off of business for skilled youths benefit from support from the household. School youth explained how the support of their parents helped them to start business activities. Involvement of parents in the remand homes also increased their support to the youths.

Including private sector entrepreneurs as implementing partners brought valuable business linkages to the skilled youth.

Access to finance is still weak among the youth for some reasons such as lack of collateral and sensitisation. Some youth are not proactive in getting to the finances provided by the government funds such as Emyooga, Youth Livelihood Project, Parish Development Model and other government youth programmes could fund some of the activities. These youths need more sensitisation.

The youth aged 18-30 is a diverse group, ranging from primary school drop-outs to university graduates. When selecting youth for skilling, the level of education should be taken into account. While lower educated youth might be interested in agricultural production, higher education youth can be attracted by skilling in higher nodes in the value chain.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

For future programmes it is recommended to ensure that the project logic, theory of change and M&E framework are consistent, realistic and practical. Especially the quality of indicators, which equals targets, of the SAY project was below standard and meaningless. Project management and donor need to ensure they get meaningful information from the MEAL system.

As for the M&E system, it is recommended for future programmes to take gender aspects more seriously. The SAY gender strategy was too limited and fell short at outcome level. A gender sensitive approach needs to go far beyond enrolment of equal numbers of male and female youths. It should be more concerned about who finally benefits, in terms of business support, job creation and income generation.

Through a flexible approach, the project targeted a diversity of enterprises and at different nodes of the value chain which allowed the youth variety for selection of the best fitting node and enterprise. Such approach is recommended for similar future projects.

It is recommended to review the system of handing out booster packages to skilled youth. While booster packages are useful to kick-start an enterprise, a balance should be sought between free donations and the recipients' own effort. As a basic rule it is recommended to limit booster packages to investments (tools, equipment) and not to include raw material. For more valuable equipment, a cost share should be considered, and/or it should be given to groups. It is also recommended to give booster packages in phases, depending on performance.

For a new skilling programme it is recommended to give more attention to the organisation of youth, formally or informally, to give opportunity for collective marketing or joint access to finance. It is also recommended to support registration of group business entities for youth skilled in related products instead of individual ones to share benefits and losses.

Asking youth who enrol for skilling to pay for DIT certification is one way to ask at least some financial contribution from the benefiting youth. While there is discussion about whether a certificate is necessary or useful for self-employed youth, it serves well as a selection criterion for entering the skilling programme.

Related to the above, to help reduce the level of free donations, it is recommended that similar project pay more attention to linking youth to (existing) business support services, including input supply and access to finance. In SAY, the mentorship model was introduced, but there are gaps. Linking to business incubators is good, as are business-to-business meetings, trade shows and online platforms. For a new project, it is by all means recommended to pay more attention to business support. Skilling is a first step towards agri-entrepreneurship, but without business support services most youths will not succeed. Training the youth on business management, prior to skilling, will improve their vision and direction of resources and activities for success. It is recommended to continue mentorship and partnership of youth companies with existing private companies dealing in related products.

A logical way to include business development support is for a project to follow a value chain approach. Such an approach not only, or not necessarily, directly support the target beneficiaries but looks at challenges in the value chain that limit benefits for the target beneficiaries. Applying such an approach would, for example, not give means of transport to a youth who faces transport challenges, but look at a sustainable solution for the transport problem in a wider sense. Likewise with finance: instead of direct financial support from the project to the beneficiary, a VC approach would look at the financial landscape and assess where an intervention would alleviate the challenge for the beneficiary sustainably. Overall, a value chain approach, or market systems development approach, would enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

Access to finance needs more attention. For the target group, formal finance (through banks) is virtually impossible. Financing youth in agriculture is seen as a double risk by financing institutions. For youth starting businesses, there is a need for low-cost financing. Supporting VSLA in community groups is a possibility, but the loan amount is often not enough and interest is high. A system of seed money through SACCOs could be explored. And there are some specific youth financing products, like the Dutch-funded initiative implemented by Pearl Capital Partners (PCP). This provides risk capital in agricultural value chains.

Including private sector entrepreneurs as implementing partners was already mentioned as positive lesson learned. It is recommended to keep strengthening the linkage of skilled youth and private sector partners for sustainability.

A specific recommendation for a possible no-cost extension is to focus for a final period of three months on the sustainability aspects of the project at two levels: there where the project is still managing activities for other partners, like a local governmental job centre, accelerate handing over and remain available to advise after handing over. At the level of skilling, focus on the mentoring process. Instead of skilling more youth, focus on supporting skilled youth to sustain their businesses. Quickly reduce payment for mentoring, while looking for sustainable ways for mentoring to continue.

Certification by UBS (getting the Q-mark) has been described as a nightmare. It is expensive and the requirements are very challenging. This challenge could be reduced if certification is done for brands irrespective of sizes (for example, the same brand of processed coffee needed two Q-marks for different weights of packages). Also, UNBS can create a special mark for certification of incubation centers instead of products —so that several products from incubation centers are known to be of good quality.

It is recommended to align academic qualifications with the type of skilling. A minimum education requirement would only be justifiable for more advanced skills, like input handling or plant doctors and agro-processing machinery fabricators.

To achieve better coherence of a project with other (Dutch-funded or other) projects, more deliberate action is required. Once coherence with a particular project is identified, targeted activities should be defined to ensure the coherence is pursued.

## **Annex 1: Terms of Reference**

See separate PDF.

## Annex 2: Evaluation matrix

	Evaluation question	Unpacked question	To whom?
	Relevance		
1	How do different stakeholders (community members of different (socio-economic) background, private sector, national and local government at different levels), assess the relevance of the project to their needs and priorities?	Did the project address your needs and priorities? Did your needs or priorities change during project implementation?	Project beneficiaries Implementing partners Government institutions Private sector actors
2	How did the project take the different needs and priorities of different groups into consideration?	See above. <i>But also: look at project design and progress report.</i>	Project staff Document review
3	Have the identified constraints/challenges been adequately integrated in the project design?	What constraints/challenges were identified at conception, mid-term, during implementation and by the evaluators? How did the project deal with these constraints/challenges?	Project staff EKN Document review
4	How were the objectives, interventions and implementation strategy of SAY project consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, national and local development priorities as well as the policies and objectives of EKN?	<i>Analyse policy documents and project documents.</i>	Project staff EKN Government institutions Document review
5	How has the context in which the project was implemented changed over time, and how has this influenced the assessment of relevance of the project and its components?	What has changed in the context that impacted the relevance of the project? What has the project changed (and why) to continue to be relevant?	Project staff EKN Government institutions Document review
6	Could the relevance of the project have been made higher? If so, how?	<i>Analyse on the basis of data collected with all previous questions on relevance.</i>	See above, and has your participation in the

		<i>Add: How does what the project provided resonate with your expectations?</i>	project met your expectations, why (not)?
<b>Coherence</b>			
7	How was coherence sought and achieved with the broader NL policy, NL strategy for food security, relevant food security projects in the Netherlands embassy portfolio as well as the relevant NL thematic areas (eg refugees, SRHR, gender, climate change, private sector development etc) ?	How coherent was the project with NL policy and strategy? Were there changes in policy/strategy in the course of project implementation? How did this affect the project? <i>Also: analyse relevant policy documents.</i>	Project staff EKN Document review
8	To what extent are the project's achievements in line with policies and plans of the national and local authorities in the targeted areas?	How coherent was the project with UG (national and local) policy and strategy? Were there changes in policy/strategy in the course of project implementation? How did this affect the project? <i>Also: analyse relevant policy documents.</i>	Project staff Government institutions Document review
9	To what extent was coherence sought and achieved with other relevant projects and programs (not funded by NL) in the targeted area?	How was coherence with other relevant projects and programs in the targeted area?	Project staff Document review
10	Could the coherence of the project have been made higher? If so, how?	<i>Analyse on the basis of data collected with all previous questions on coherence.</i> How could coherence be improved?	In addition to the respondents engaged above, National and Local gov't institutions and EKN staff
<b>Effectiveness</b>			
11	To what extent has the SAY project achieved its intended goal and objectives as stated in the project results framework?	What were the goal(s) and objectives of SAY? What are the indicators for achieving those and what evidence is available?	Document review (PMEL framework, annual reports, MTR) Project staff Participants

12	To what extent did the project achieve its outcomes and outputs, both in terms of quantity and quality? (Analyse reasons for over-/underachievement)	What were the outputs and outcomes to which the project committed? What base- and endline data is available? What other evidence is available for the extent to which the outputs and outcomes are reached?	Document review (PMEL framework, annual reports, MTR) Project staff Participants EKN
13	Are outcomes reached entirely attributable to the SAY project?	According to the ToC, what other factors were expected to contribute to the outcomes (policy, projects, developments)? How do respondents (beneficiaries/stakeholders/others?) explain the relationship between the outcomes and the project?	Document review (PMEL framework, ToC, MTR) Project staff Stakeholders Beneficiaries EKN
14	To what extent was the program logic (particularly the assumptions linking outputs to outcomes, and the risk assessment) adequate?	Do the outcomes logically flow from the outputs, assumptions and risks? Do the results (outputs and outcomes) reflect the project logic? Are there any indications that assumptions did not hold (e.g., overachievement on outputs, underachievement on outcomes.)?	Document review (ToC, contextual analysis and PMEL framework)
15	Has the gender strategy been used in the reaching of gender-specific indicators?	What was the gender strategy? How did the project make use of the gender strategy? What were gender specific indicators? Did the programme achieve “gender objectives”?	Document review Project staff
16	To what extent was risk management and conflict sensitivity adequate, and to what extent has the implementation of the project been adjusted based on regular assessments of assumptions and risks?	What was risk and assumption assessment practice in the project? What was done to mitigate identified risks?	Document review Project staff

		Are there examples of conflicts that can be traced back to the project? Could these have been avoided with a more conflict sensitive approach?	
17	Were there any unintended positive or negative consequences of the project?	How has the project impacted your life? Why do you connect that impact to the project? Did you observe any unintended positive/negative consequences of the project, which ones?	Document review (annual reports and MTR) Project staff Beneficiaries
18	How did the project translate the understanding of the context and the political economy in the project strategy and activities;	Look also at question 5	Document review (Project proposal, CAS, Annual reports and plans) Project staff
19	Were the target groups reached? and how well?	What target groups were identified? Look also at question 2	Document review (latest disaggregated PMEL data)
20	What has changed for the target groups in relation to employable agribusiness skills, employment in agribusiness jobs and self-run agripreneurship, engagement in agriculture for long-term career paths or key economic ventures, enabling environment for market-responsive agri-skilling and youth gainful engagement in agribusiness?	Look at question 12 + What unintended outcomes did the programme realise?	Sources for question 12 + Beneficiaries
21	How has SAY's interventions and approach induced positive changes among the businesses of the agribusiness market actors?	Look at question 12 and 20	Implementing partners (agribusinesses)

22	How well has SAY been inclusive as per the project proposal and as per the interest of different types of youth and agribusinesses?	Same as question 19?	
Sustainability			
23	What are the foreseen long-term effects that have resulted from SAY project interventions including contribution towards the intended impact, positive or negative impacts, or intended or unintended changes?	What long-term effects (intended positive/negative impacts) were foreseen? What indications are available for these long-term effects?	Document review Project staff
24	Will changes induced by SAY project last? Why or why not? And do we have an effective exit strategy?	What are the lasting changes the project aims for? Are they likely to last, why (not)? What is the strategy for disengagement, and is that effective in the view of the evaluators?	Document review (proposal, CAS, annual reports, MTR) Project staff Beneficiaries
25	To what extent do relevant stakeholders have a sense of ownership for the different activities?	Can you continue the activity after the project's close?	Relevant stakeholders
26	To what extent were the tools and knowledge generated during the project transferred to relevant local actors to ensure sustainability? In which value chains the training institutes have been most and less effective, in the sense that youth is indeed continuing to work in these agri-businesses?	Check also question 25 How have you transferred tools and knowledge to local actors? What data is available related to job-retention?	Document review Project staff
27	How are investments triggering new investments and are repeatable without project support?	What new investments did you identify? How are these	
28	Overall, what key blockages are foreseen in sustaining the effects of SAY?	What sustainable change is foreseen? What risks to sustainability are identified in the ToC? What other risks to sustainability do respondents identify?	Document review Project staff Relevant stakeholders

30	What are the lessons learned and best practices, and from which stakeholders or beneficiaries	Consider the above questions. Per intervention, what lessons/best-practices did you learn?	Document review (extensively documented in annual reports and in MTR) Project staff
31	Was there anything more the project could have done (recommendations) in order to achieve bigger impact than what was achieved?	Consider the above questions What could the project have done differently in relation to intervention x,y,z to realise a bigger impact.	
Additional, general, questions (evaluation objective)			
32	Assess the performance of the project towards achieving the intended project objectives, results, and outcomes as agreed upon in the project document.	See questions on effectiveness	
33	Assess the relevance and effectiveness of the SAY project interventions (skills development, provision of start-ups/booster packages, linkages to critical agribusiness services, access to finance, DIT assessment and certification, Public-Private Partnerships, co-financing, focusing on priority occupation and value chains, digitalisation and ICT in agriculture, Climate Smart Approaches and Earn as You Learn Model) in enhancing the employability of youths in the agricultural sector; towards achieving the project outcomes/results. What worked (or did not work) and why.	See questions on relevance and effectiveness	
34	Identify and assess critical lessons learned, challenges, unintended effects of the project and draw recommendations for future youth skilling in agriculture programs, also from the perspective of the IGG results and objectives.	See questions: 30	
35	Assess whether the risks identified in the project were the most important and appropriate ones. Were the risk	See question: 14, 16 and 28	

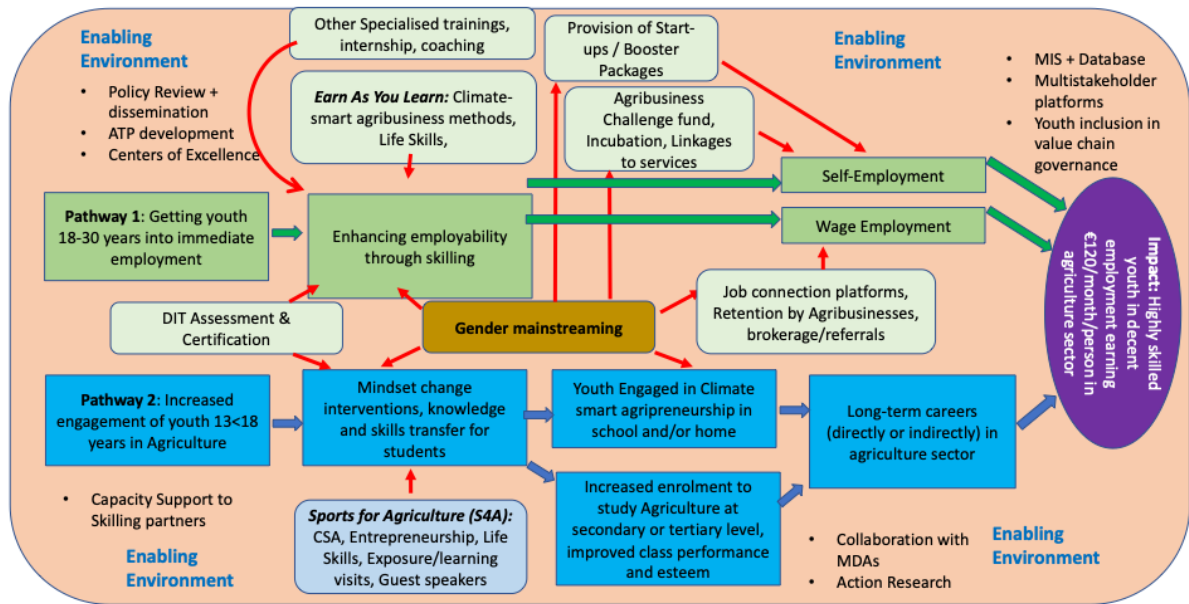
	management strategies/responses that were adopted by the project adequate?		
36	Assess the likely sustainability of the project, examining particularly from the beneficiaries' perspective, how much of the project's knowledge and practice transfer efforts has been learned, adopted, used and institutionalised by the beneficiaries (youths) and other stakeholders and partners.	See question: 23-31,	

# Annex 3: Theory of Change

## Theory of change of Skilling in Agrpreneurship for increased Youth Employment - SAY project



# Theory of Change Pathways



## Annex 4: Itinerary

Date	Activity	People met
Thursday 17 October 2024	Briefing at AVSI office, Kampala	Moses Cik, SAY Chief of Party Dianah Nakasujja, MEAL Manager Ramlah Nabweggamu, Deputy COP Josephine Acholo Enoch Barigye Logase Phoebe Doreen Mohammed Karadha John Paul Nyeko Lanek Eric Kamegisha Rachel (Ronald, Odongo Emmanuel, Agnes and Benson from Nothern Office) (Enock, Julius from Western), and (Sharon and Ronald from Eastern Uganda).
	Meeting with Aumoja, Kampala	Flavia Asiimwe, Manager
	Meeting and FGD with COWA, Wakiso District	Chripina, Director Angwech Oliva Ageno, Youth Coordinator Ewadu Joseph, Gender Officer FGD: 11 male, 4 female
Friday 18 October 2024	Meeting at Naguru remand home	Mary Kyomugisha, Officer in Charge
	FGD with youth at Naguru remand home	
	Meeting at Gayaza High School, Wakiso District	Muhinda Patrick, Farm Manager, SAY coordinator Kyumulabi Priscilla, Student Kemigisha Nabahinda, Student and farm prefect
	Meeting and FGD at Entebbe Animal Care Centre, Wakiso District	Dr Naluhyima Emma FGD: 5 male, 3 female
Saturday 19 October 2024	Meeting and FGD at COWA Centenary Vocational Training Institute-Nsambya, Kampala	Miriam Emecu, Team Leader FGD: 5 male, 6 female
	Meeting with Magigye Youth in Vegetables Group	Musa Hasahya, Team Leader
	FGD with youth at Namulonge Youth Apostolate Group	10 male, 3 female
Sunday 20 October 2024	Travel to Gulu	

Monday 21 October 2024	Meeting at AVSI office, Gulu	Among Agnes, Team Leader AVSI Northern Region Emmanuel Odong Fiona Benson Aketch Christene Patrick Omong Ronald Etc.
	Meeting at Gulu University-Faculty of Agriculture	Collins Okello, Dean of Agriculture @, deputy dean David, Team Leader Tony Aliro, Animal Production
	FGD with Gulu University students	15 students; 5 Females, 10 Males
	Meeting and FGD with youth of Gulu Country Dairy Farm	Dr Kidege Tonny, Director FGD: 2 male, 4 female
	Meeting and FGD at Gulu High School	Robert, Deputy Head James, Project Coordinator Martin, FGD: 10 male, 8 female
	Meeting at Gulu remand home	Rose Etit, Officer in Charge Akemchen Samuel, COWA trainer
	Meeting at Gulu city Office	Mr. Lakwonyero Geoffrey, Gulu city Commercial Officer
Meeting at Ribbo Coffee group	Piloya Innocent, Team Leader Brenda	
Tuesday 22 October 2024	Meeting at AVSI office, Gulu	Agnes, Team Leader AVSI Northern Region
	FGD with Youth of Okwang George Farm, Pader District	Okwang George – Director Komakech Samuel – Trainer Youth (6 male, 2 female)
	FGD with Youth of HOMA Farms LTD, Pader District	Deogratiuous Awi – Youth Coordinator, HOMA farms Youth (7 males, 6 females)
	Gulu District Agricultural Officer	Paul Kilama, Principal Agricultural Officer
Meeting with Youth Movers Uganda	Flora Aling, Director	
Wednesday 23 October 2024	Meeting at Women and Rural Development Network (WORUNET), Lamwo District , Palabek Kal	Okullo Betty, Head Oket Stephen Atim Sharon
	Meeting at Don Bosco, Lamwo District	Fr Amatus, Principal Sr Ziparrah, Project Coordinator SARDNET

	FGD with youth skilled at Don Bosco, WORUDNET, YUMU, SARDNET, HOMA in Palabek, Lamwo District	Separate men and women FGDs
	Meeting with Lamwo District	Patrick Muhenda Agaba, District Production and Marketing Officer
Thursday 24 October 2024	Meeting with Pader District	Michael Ojock, District Commercial Officer
	Meeting and FGD with Blessed Organic, Pader District	Joaquim Okot, Manager Margaret Laloyo, CEO Elizabeth, Finance and Administration FGD: 7 male, 4 female
	Meeting and FGD with Archbishop Flynn Secondary School, Pader District	Benna, Head Teacher William, Teacher/focal point FGD teachers: 4 male, 1 female FGD: 12 male, 11 female
Friday 25 October 2024	Meeting with Lira local government	James Okolla, Entomologist/focal point
	Meetings and FGD with Archways and TAF, Lira	Immaculate, General Manager Archways Moses, Sales manager Archways Josephine, Assistant Archways Tom, Director TAF FGD: 8 male, 6 female
	Meeting with Lira Job Centre	Charles Lwanga, Logistic Officer in Charge
	Meeting and FGD with C and D, Alito, Kole District	Stefano, Director Yuri, Volunteer FGD: 6 male, 4 female
	Meeting and FGD with St Catherine Secondary School, Lira	Rose, Head Teacher Margaret, Deputy Head Teacher Elvis, Teacher FGD: 14 female
Saturday 26 October 2024	Meeting and FGD with Busitema University, Soroti	Julius Olupot, Focal Person FGD: 7 male, 3 female
Monday 28 October 2024	Meeting with AVSI office, Mbale	Golden, Team Leader AVSI Eastern Region Brian Ronald @@
	Meeting and FGD with Byeffe, Mbale	Namutosi Fatuma, Director FGD: 5 male, 5 female
	Meeting with Ubora, Mbale	Mike Okech, Director
	Meeting and FGD with yy, Mbale	John Wanzala, Principle farmer FGD: 6 male, 7 female
	Meeting with DPO Mbale	George Davidson Wanakina, Production and Marketing Officer

Tuesday 29 October 2024	Meeting with Senior Agriculture officer- Kapchorwa	Chemutai Fred
	Meeting and FGD with Sebei College Tegeres, Kapchorwa District	Johnson Limo, Head Teacher Sodo, Coordinator Michael, Deputy Head/Focal Point FGD: 4 male, 5 female
	FGD at Kaptul Coffee Processors Youth Group, Kapchorwa District	FGD: 11 male, 1 female
	Meeting and FGD with Munerya and Maikut, Kapchorwa District	Joseph Munerya, Director FGD: 8 male, 2 female
	FGD with Tolosho agro input youth group, Kapchorwa District	FGD: 10 male, 7 female
Wednesday 30 October 2024	Meeting and FGD with Iganga Secondary School, Iganga District	Sowa Jimmy, Focal Person Basalirwa Moureen, Teacher FGD (YOFFA club): 22 female
	Meeting and FGD with Prime Vocational Institute, Iganga District	Harriet, Principal Michael, Director/focal person Caroline, Head of Training FGD: 9 male, 3 female
	Meeting with Iganga District	Bazalaki Sully Nantatya, District Agricultural Officer
Thursday 31 October 2024	Meetings with AVSI, Kampala	Ramlah, Deputy COP, Team Leader Central Region Faith Mbabazi, Accounts Focal Person Innocent Ogaba Bidong, Senior Programme Adviser Dianah Nakasujja, MEAL Manager
	Meeting with MAAIF & NARO	Consolanta Acayo
	Meeting with DIT, Kampala	Richard Ochwo
	Meeting with Ministry of Education and Sports , Kampala	William Tibyasa
Friday 1 November 2024	Meeting with EKN	Josephat Byaruhanga, Senior Policy Officer Food Security & Agribusiness
	Meeting with Luigi Giussani high school	Komakech Freddy, SAY focal person
	Meeting with Ministry of Trade	Okema Vincent Oketayot
	Meeting with Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Kampala	Sylvia Primer
Saturday 2 November 2024	Meeting with Pentagon Metal fabricators	SSebanakita Joshua

Sunday 3 November 2024	Travel to Mbarara	
Monday 4 November 2024	Meeting at AVSI Western Uganda Office	Julius Turyahebwa, Team Leader AVSI West Emon Kademeri, Climate Smart Agriculture Ampumuza Enock, M&E
	Meeting and FGD with Kagiira skills development centre	Nuwamanya David, Director Production and Marketing Nuwamanya Juliet, Director Finance and Administration Joshua, Programs manager Edna Abigaba, Incubation hub leader FGD: 6 male, 3 female
	Meeting and FGD with Ibanda Farm Institute	Josephat – Institute Principal and SAY contact person Nuwagaba Robert – Academic registrar and SAY Focal person FGD: 11 male, 6 female
	Meeting at Ibanda District local government	Alex Asiimwe Kirabo – Community Development Officer and Secretary for District NGO Monitoring Committee
Tuesday 5 November 2024	Makarena Juice and Fruit Hub, Mbarara District	Mackline Nayebale FGD: 8 Females, 2 Males
	Maryhill School, Mbarara District	Geradine Twebaze Deputy Head Teacher Discipline Nabachwa Mary – SAY Project Coordination Akello Esther—Implementation Winfred Ngabirano-DHT Welfare FGD: 12 Females
	District Community Development Office, Mbarara District	Muhumuza Hilary-DCDO
	Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara District	Makei Namanya-Hub Manager Rose Kwirubakanya-PRO FGD with Students
	JAT Agro-enterprise Project (JAT Mixed Farm)	Julius Agaba-Director Edbert Mugabe—Manager FGD
	Amona Investment Farm	Trained Youth Broiler Farm
Wednesday 6 November 2024	Meeting and FGD with IBO mixed farm, Mbarara District	Innocent Arinitwe, Director and Project Coordinator Musinguzi Samuili- Accountant

		FGD: 5 male, 6 female Turinawe Alex Banana Garden
	Meeting with St Kaggwa High School, Bushenyi District	P.K., Head Master
	Meeting with Nyakakoni Poultry Group	FGD: 4 male
Thursday 7 November 2024	Meeting with Rwampara Farm Institute, Mbarara District	Naboth Muwamanya, Acting Principle Dick Musinguzi, Bursar Muhanji Sebastian, SAY Focal Person Hope Nankunda, Deputy Principle
	Meeting with Rugarama Post Harvest Handling Youth Group, Kabale District	FGD: 12 male, 12 female
	Meeting with Kabale Remand Home	
Friday 8 November 2024	Meeting with Local Government, Kabale District	Erasmus, District Commercial Officer Bruce Atuha, Commercial Officer
	Meeting and FGD with MTRC, Kabale District	James, Manager FGD: 6 male, 6 female
	Meeting with Local Government, Bushenyi District	David, Fisheries Officer
Saturday 9 November 2024	Travel to Kampala	
	Meeting with AVSI	Moses Cik, SAY Chief of Party
Monday 11 November 2024	Meeting Point International	Angela Batuka-Manager Joel Onen FGD: 7 Youth; 4 Females 3 Males
	Khainza Energy	Frederickah Nagitta –Community Mobiliser Athur Woniala—CEO FGD 10 Youth, 2 Female, 8 Male
	AFE	Aloyo Brenda—InCharge of Membership FGD 5: 3 male , 2 female
	Namilyango College	Denis Kakuru-Deputy Head Teacher Bemanywa Alex Kirabo Justine Bakery Coordinator FGD 14 students –all males
Tuesday 12 November 2024	Debriefing presentation at EKN	Josephat Byaruhanga, Senior Policy Officer Food Security & Agribusiness Andrew Byaruhanga, Policy Officer Trade, Investment & Economic Diplomacy Fred van Hese, Controller

		<p>Laurens Lindeboom, intern</p> <p>Timothy Abeikis, Policy Officer Food Security &amp; Nutrition</p> <p>Corinne Abbas, First Secretary Economic Cooperation</p> <p>Joost van Ettro, Head of Development Cooperation</p>
<p>Wednesday 13 November 2024</p>	<p>Debriefing presentation at AVSI</p>	<p>Moses Cik, SAY Chief of Party</p> <p>Dianah Nakasujja, MEAL Manager</p> <p>Ramlah</p> <p>Etc.</p>
<p>Tuesday 20 November 2024</p>	<p>RUCID Mityana</p>	<p>Mr Nyanzi—Director</p> <p>Ms. Sarah -Manager</p>