



## GENERATING GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AND PRODUCTIVITY FOR WOMEN ENTERPRISES

# DIGEST

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# MALAIKA VOCATIONAL AND BUSINESS INSTITUTE GRADUATION 2024



*“Do not get excited with financial independence, to break your marriages” - Hon. Thomas Teyebwa*



The Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Thomas Teyebwa, presided over the graduation ceremony of 144 women entrepreneurs who received training under the GROW project by Malaika Vocational Business Institute. The women entrepreneurs were trained in cosmetology, fashion and design, catering and bakery, as well as Business Development Services.

The Deputy Speaker stated that the Government of Uganda is redefining GDP growth to include tangible income growth for individuals and households. This new approach aims to bring more Ugandans into the formal economy and improve their purchasing power, thereby contributing to the growth of the local economy.

According to the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Thomas Teyebwa, the GROW project is working to create a people-centric GDP by enhancing

women's entrepreneurial skills and providing access to affordable finance. By fostering the growth of individuals alongside GDP figures, the burden of unproductive individuals is expected to decrease, allowing for collective growth and development. The GROW project is specifically tailored to empower women in business to thrive and drive national social development, recognizing women's strong passion for business.

The speaker emphasized the importance of consistency and focusing on the primary duty of building homes even as economic empowerment is achieved. The GROW project is intended to enhance household incomes, thereby contributing to home building rather than becoming a cause for family disruption following women's financial independence and exposure.

Women were encouraged to exhibit integrity, leverage networks and collaborations, maintain hygiene in their workplaces and enhance their professional appearance.

Deputy Speaker Thomas Teyebwa urged women to prioritize learning and practicing saving and investment. He used the analogy of a local woman in western Uganda who plants groundnuts using her mouth but refrains from consuming the seeds, even when hungry.

The same discipline should be applied when capital expansion funds are provided by the GROW project, with the aim of preventing misappropriation and extravagance, thereby enabling the growth and expansion of their enterprises





*“Integrity and handwork accelerate business growth and transformation” - Hon. Betty Kanya IGG*

Betty Kanya, the Inspector General of Government, commended the women entrepreneurs for prioritizing their participation in a month-long training despite having family commitments back home. She encouraged them to leverage the knowledge gained from the training to enhance their businesses and personal professional conduct.

The IGG urged the women entrepreneurs to actively seek opportunities for exposure, networking, and collaborations during the training, emphasizing that these attributes are essential for entrepreneurial growth and development for businesswomen.

Hon. Betty stressed the importance of consistency in saving, regardless of the amount saved, as this consistency leads to accumulating resources for reinvestment and diversification. She also challenges women to do business with integrity and hard work because integrity is collateral for profitable collaborations, while hard work creates discipline.





*“GROW is a game-changer for women entrepreneurs” - Hon. Flavia Kabahenda*

The government of Uganda has initiated several projects to promote growth and development, including GROW, Emyoga, and the Parish Development Model. The GROW project is specifically aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs.

Maliaka Vocational Business Institute has played a crucial role in equipping women with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in business, including developing a business vision and financial plan and formalizing their operations to remain competitive.

GROW is a game-changer for women entrepreneurs, particularly those in rural areas and the micro-scale sector. Despite facing numerous challenges, these women have shown remarkable resilience and determination to succeed.

However, they often struggle to find the resources and support they need to grow their businesses, such as the appropriate training specific to their business and financing.

GROW aims to address these issues by providing tailored support and resources to help women entrepreneurs thrive. The skills and knowledge the women acquired during the month-long training at Malaika will kick-start their ability to compete and improve their work quality.

With the right skills, women entrepreneurs have the confidence and the zeal to go out of routine, unprofitable comfort zones and explore their abilities to excel not only as individuals but also in their enterprises

The government of Uganda should be commended for partnering with the World Bank to acquire the GROW exclusive women entrepreneur’s facility and the parliamentary committee on gender for working around the clock to make sure that the project is actualized.

Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development as well as the Private Sector Foundation Uganda are the most appropriate implementers of the project, giving their expertise niche with the ability to source the most appropriate service providers.



The Woman Member of Parliament representing Kyegegwa district stressed the importance of the one-month training program at Malaika Vocational Business Institute, highlighting the valuable skills and knowledge gained in soft and technical areas. It was noted that 36 women entrepreneurs from Kyegegwa district were among those who received the training. I am optimistic that the skill set attained will accelerate the growth and transformation of individual women and their businesses, families, and communities.

The GROW project is distinct from other government socio-economic empowerment initiatives because it supports existing women entrepreneurs and guides them towards growth and transformation. The project works with these entrepreneurs by equipping them with the necessary business skills and tools before providing them with funds, in order to prevent mismanagement.

Women spend much time doing unpaid child-caregiving chores, which hinders their effective participation in the money economy. This often leads to their businesses struggling and collapsing within the first year of operation. The child centres and caregivers' support provided under the GROW project is an exceptional resource for women entrepreneurs, enabling them to access the necessary support for their enterprises.

Several other childcare centres will be established in all the common user facilities in all regions and districts across the country, enabling women entrepreneurs to conduct businesses with minimal disruption from their younger children.

The GROW project is uniquely designed to uplift women's lives by tackling their specific challenges through comprehensive training, skill development, and access to capital. Our collaboration with a diverse range of service providers ensures that women from all corners of the country, across various trades, receive the necessary training and support..

One of the key strengths of the GROW project is its strategic partnerships with reputable financial institutions. This collaboration allows us to provide women with affordable capital, with an interest rate of 10% annually. This credit facility and the business competition grant will empower women to elevate their businesses to new heights.



*Margarita Puert Gomez*  
World Bank Representative

It is clear that after acquiring skills, women will require equipment, such as machines and tools, to help them use the acquired skills to add value and improve productivity and production.

GROW will also foster the establishment of Women's Entrepreneurial Platforms in different regions and districts across the country. These platforms are not just about individual success, but about a group of entrepreneurial women coming together for the common goal of collective business growth and transformation. They are a testament to the power of networking and collaboration, where women get to know different entrepreneurs in the production value chain from the same region and establish possible collaborations.

We believe that as women entrepreneurs, you know and understand your challenges. Together, you can work out the solution to unleash your growth potential as individuals and as a team. The fact that women commit to and diligently attend training and skilling programs that take them away from their routine confirms resilience and the determination to grow and transform.

The GROW project is unwavering in its commitment to providing comprehensive support to women entrepreneurs. Our program offers mentorship, inspiration, and job coaching, serving as a steadfast companion on their growth journey. We are not just a guide but a dedicated partner, ensuring their transformation from one level to the next and instilling confidence in their potential.

This project is aimed at women who have taken the first step in owning a business, regardless of size or state. Whatever stage they may be at, GROW is here to support business growth and help women entrepreneurs expand and transform to the next level. Most women's businesses operate informally, which limits their access to most opportunities, such as markets beyond their local. Still, the project is in partnership with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau to ensure the businesses are facilitated with all the necessary benchmarks for formalization through registration.







*“Local governments should support GROW project activities in their respective locations.”  
Dr. Ruth Biyinzika Kasolo*

The journey to increase access to entrepreneurial services that enable female entrepreneurs to grow their enterprises requires full support from local governments in all locations where the GROW project is being implemented.

Dr. Ruth Biyinzika Kasolo, the Project Coordinator for GROW/PSFU, is optimistic that many women across the country will be able to realize growth and transformation by the end of the five-year project period.

The project's target beneficiaries are those women who already have a business in place but are held back by a number of barriers to growth and transformation. It is clear that most of these women's businesses are operating informally. Therefore, the project is structured to facilitate the skilling, formalization, quality mark acquisition, financing, and access to markets

The women entrepreneurs who receive training under the GROW project will access the lowest credit facilities, with not more than 10% annual interest, from selected financial institutions nationwide. The credit facility is extended to individual women entrepreneurs or formal enterprises where women have at least 51% shares. The beneficiaries of this credit facility would have a 50% interest waiver if they diligently pay back for half of the loan period.

Ms Donnah Masolo, the Director of Malaika Vocational Business Institute, clarified that the right and appropriate technical and business development skill set is essential for the growth and transformation of businesses, both for enterprises and individual entrepreneurs. It is a benchmark for achieving the GROW project's objective of increasing access to entrepreneurial services, enabling women entrepreneurs to grow their enterprises.

At Malaika, we conduct personal assessments and practical evaluations to identify each woman's training needs and determine the training duration required to meet the project's expectations.

In this cohort, we have trained and commissioned 144 women entrepreneurs from Kyegegwa, Isingiro, Kikube, and Kamwenge in fashion and design, catering and baking, cosmetology, and Business Development Services.

Women received comprehensive training in fashion and design, equipping them with the skills to create a wide range of garments for women, men, children, and adults, spanning both corporate and casual attire.

The training also encompassed equipment proficiency, catering to the specific needs of women from rural areas, where access to modern electrical sewing machines is limited. Proficiency in equipment operation is pivotal for enhancing productivity and the quality and quantity of garments produced.



*"Skills development and training are the bedrock to business growth and transformation" - Ms Donnah Masolo*

For instance, a manual sewing machine may require at least two days to complete a dress. In contrast, an electrical machine could facilitate the completion of at least three dresses in a single day. Proficiency in machinery operation prepares these women for mass production and entry into foreign markets, with a focus on standardized fabric design. Emphasizing personalized clothing holds limited appeal within the industry; therefore, the fabrics produced should garner universal appreciation.



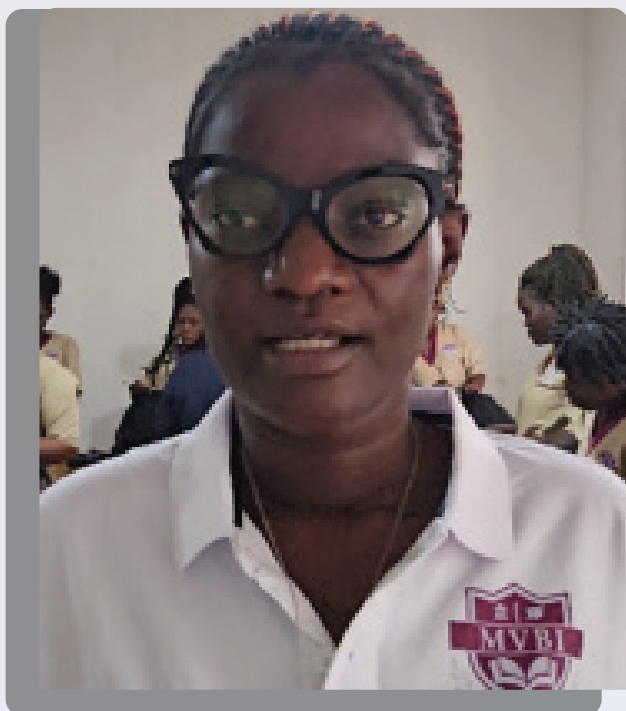
In the catering and baking industry, we seek women entrepreneurs eager to expand their businesses. We help them transition from cooking for small gatherings to catering for larger events like weddings. Our training program teaches them how to optimize their meals' nutritional content and understand their target audience's dietary preferences, including considerations for carbohydrates, proteins, and other essential nutrients.

Some women are also trained in cosmetology, which focuses on beautification, improving one's image, and establishing identity. The women are trained to expand their businesses so that clients can hire them for larger events instead of relying on service providers from distant cities.

All 144 women entrepreneurs were trained in Business Development Services to complement the technical skills acquisition.

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## PARTICIPANTS TESTIMONIES



### *Victoria Mukisa Instructor*

*I'm a cosmetology instructor. In my GROW project class, I trained 64 women entrepreneurs in hair treatment, plaiting, braiding, relaxing, beauty cosmetics, massage, and nail technology, among many other industry-related skills.*

*The trainees in the GROW project are unique because most of them already own or work in salons. It's challenging to train them because they already possess skills, but we focus on improving their existing abilities.*

*During the one-month training, using equipment was crucial as many of them had little experience with high-productivity tools and equipment.*

*Dealing with trainees already in business presents challenges, as each has different learning interests. Some are hesitant to acquire new skills, preferring to focus on specific aspects of the cosmetology value chain.*

*Convincing them to take classes in new areas can be challenging, as they have other responsibilities demanding their attention.*



### **Nambito Prossy**

*"I have completed training in cosmetology. I am from the Kyegegwa district, where I own a small hair salon offering basic hair treatment and plaiting. Due to my limited capital and basic skills, I usually serve walk-in clients from the local community.*

*However, I have acquired new skills, and I am looking to enhance the quality of services offered at my salon by refining my existing skills and expanding my range of services.*

*I can now create various hair plaiting styles, offer bridal hair styling, and provide professional facial makeup tailored to meet the specific needs of clients using professional techniques.*

*Additionally, I have learned nail painting, filling, extensions, and massage during a one-month training at Malaika Vocational Training Institute. I want to express my gratitude to the owner and staff of Malaika Vocational Training Institute for providing a conducive training environment, for their patience in guiding us through the training, and for the opportunity to connect and collaborate with other female entrepreneurs from different districts. Through this experience, I have not only made new friends but also gained valuable knowledge from others.*

*I extend my thanks to the Government of Uganda and the World Bank for making this training possible through the GROW project. However, I need support for my business as it currently lacks the resources to utilize the skills I have gained fully.*

*Operating in a small area without the necessary tools and equipment, I am reaching out for assistance in the form of an affordable loan of at least ten million Uganda shillings to help me revitalize my business.*



*Kensima Rita*

*I come from the Kikube district and received cosmetology training at the Malaika vocational Training Institute. I currently operate a small salon that I established a year ago.*

*Through a one-month training program, I gained valuable insights into the independent specialties within a salon, such as nail technology, beauty, and hairdressing.*

*I also learned the importance of developing a business plan to enhance operations. The training equipped me with essential skills including income and*

*expenditure calculation, business debt management, business planning, leadership and management improvement, and effective record-keeping for business transactions.*

*I am confident that these newly acquired skills will greatly contribute to the growth of my business in my hometown. The training has significantly transformed my business mindset. I am immensely grateful to the GROW project, Malaika Training Business School, the government of Uganda, and the World Bank for providing us with this invaluable opportunity to enhance ourselves and our enterprises.*





### **Kyomugisha Teddy**

*For the past ten years, I have worked as a tailor in my district with only basic knowledge to get by. However, I have significantly improved my skills after completing the GROW training at Malaika Vocational Business Institute.*

*Previously, I could only make simple local garments like gomesi, trousers, dresses, and basic shirts. Now, after spending a month at Malaika Vocational Business Training Institute in Fashion and Design,*

*I have learned to stitch trousers with back pockets, and shirts with intricate designs.*

*I have also gained proficiency in using various sewing machines including the button machine. I am very excited about these new skills and can't wait to apply them to my home-based business. I feel privileged to have been selected for this training and I am eager to share my knowledge with other tailors in my community who did not have the opportunity to attend Malaika.*

*My business is situated along the oil road, and I believe that with these improved skills, my business will thrive. I hope my business will grow with better business skills and improved quality. I urge the GROW project team to continue training us in our districts, as the fashion and design industry has great potential, and many women in our local communities could benefit from it.*

*In our rural districts, electricity and expensive machinery are significant challenges for small tailors like myself. We need guidance in applying these new skills, acquiring tools and machinery, and continued support through assessment, training, and monitoring. I am grateful to the project designers and partners for the support and facilities provided during the training period.*





## **Sumaya Muhamad**

*I am a resident of the Rwamanja settlement camp in the Kamwenge district, where I operate a small eatery. My menu primarily consists of tea, mandazi, and chapatti, and I only prepare meals on request with advanced payment due to limited capital and uncertain customer turnout. Currently, my capital stands at 20,000/= (Twenty thousand shil-*



*lings), and my clientele comprises individuals*

*I serve tea and simple snacks to. Following a one-month training at Malaika Vocational Business Institute, I have realized the significance of specialized skills and a business-oriented mindset for any enterprise. The training equipped me with the necessary knowledge and expertise to elevate my eatery business. I acquired proficiency in crafting cakes, bread, and various rice dishes and preparing seasoned roasted meat, fish, and chicken.*

*This training has inspired me to enhance and secure a better future for my three children and my entire family. I gained valuable insights into effective business management, including meticulous record-keeping, profit calculation, and delineating business finances from personal expenses. Given that I deal with food preparation, upholding hygiene standards is paramount. The training enlightened me on understanding the nutritional content of each meal and catering to customer preferences.*

*Upon returning home, my intention is to commence with a modest establishment while being intentional at every stage. To initiate this plan, I estimate requiring a capital of approximately One Million Uganda Shillings to secure a suitable operating space, cover three months' rent at 100,000/= per month, purchase essential furniture, food supplies, and utensils, and initially operate with one assistant.*

*I reside in close proximity to a mosque where individuals often seek prepared meals. If successful at this initial phase, I aim to maintain comprehensive business records to present for potential funding and further expand my enterprise.*

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*This venture holds significant importance in my life. As a 23-year-old mother of three boys aged 4, 3, and 7 months, I currently reside with my accommodating parents and siblings in a household of ten members within the camp. With this business, I strive to secure a promising future for my children and contribute to supporting my gracious family.*

*I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to participate in this training and extend my sincere appreciation to the childcare centre and its caregivers. Their support enables me to focus on my training without concern for my child's welfare, as the caretakers attentively tend to the baby. This allows me to fully engage in my classes and take the necessary intervals for breastfeeding.*

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