

# SEED EFFECT UGANDA

## PLAN FOR BETTER BUSINESS (PBB)

### PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

**Prepared by:** Sharon Jacklyn Aol

**Organization:** Seed Effect Uganda

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seed Effect Uganda, with support from Seed Effect US, implemented the Plan for Better Business (PBB) project to improve livelihoods of refugees and host community members by

equipping them with practical business skills. The project complemented the Savings for Life (SFL) program, enabling participants to apply knowledge and access group loans to start or grow small businesses.

The evaluation covered eight field offices:

Adjumani, Moyo, Yumbe, Arua, Rhino Camp, Lamwo, Kiryandongo, and Omoro.

Mixed methods were used (KOBO surveys, interviews, and staff feedback). Ethical standards were followed, and 698 out of 720 participants responded (96% response rate).

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## 2. KEY FINDINGS

### Understanding & Relevance

- 89% easily understood the training
- 74% found it highly relevant to their business needs

### Knowledge Gains

- 78% reported improved skills in:
  - Profit calculation
  - Customer care
  - Product diversification
  - Business organization

### Business Creation

- 259 participants (37%) established businesses
- 58% accessed start-up loans from SFL groups

### Income Impact

- Average monthly income: UGX 217,200
- 67% reported increased earnings

### Business Sustainability

- 86% of businesses remained operational six months post-start-up
- 92% intend to continue applying PBB skills

### Training Duration

- Longer sessions (5–6 days) correlated with higher business start-up rates
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### **3. CHALLENGES**

- Language barriers (materials in English)
  - Limited training duration and condensed content
  - Lack of start-up capital and basic stationery
  - Hunger during sessions
  - Age-related difficulties and hearing impairments
  - Difficulty mobilizing participants for 6 sessions in 6 weeks
  - Insufficient mentorship (39% reported no follow-up)
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### **4. BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT**

Seed Effect Uganda secured funding from Seed Effect US to implement the Plan for Better Business project. The project aims to improve livelihoods of refugee and host community members by equipping them with essential business knowledge.

It is designed to help participants start and manage small businesses and to complement the Savings for Life program, allowing participants to apply the skills gained and borrow from their groups to establish or grow enterprises.

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### **5. OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION**

The evaluation aimed at establishing the progress made as a result of the Plan for Better Business trainings conducted across field offices in:

Adjumani, Moyo, Yumbe, Arua, Rhino Camp, Lamwo, Kiryandongo, and Omoro.

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### **6. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation used mixed methods of data collection, including:

- Direct interviews
- Staff feedback
- KOBO Collect platform surveys
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis
- Excel data analysis

Findings were disseminated through email, Google Drive, WhatsApp groups, and meetings.

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## **7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Purpose of the survey was clearly explained
  - Consent was obtained before interviews
  - Confidentiality was maintained
  - Ethical and professional standards were followed throughout
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## **8. LIMITATIONS**

The total number of participants trained under the PBB project was not clearly documented, limiting the ability to determine an accurate sample size.

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## **9. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS – DEMOGRAPHICS**

### **Response Rate**

698 out of 720 participants responded (96%), indicating robust and reliable data.

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### **Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	144	21%
Female	554	79%
Total	698	100%

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single	32	5%
Married	594	85%
Divorced	28	4%
Widowed	44	6%
Total	698	100%

<b>Residential Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Refugee	282	40%
Host	416	60%
Total	698	100%

<b>Disability Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Has Disability	82	12%
No Disability	616	88%
Total	698	100%

**Average Age:** 41 years  
**Average Household Size:** 7 members

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## 10. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS – MAIN FINDINGS

### Understanding of Training

The PBB evaluation showed that 89% of participants reported understanding the training content easily. This high level of comprehension is likely attributable to the delivery of sessions in local languages familiar to the participants, simple stories, etc. In contrast, 11% indicated difficulty understanding the material, highlighting a small segment that may require additional support or adapted facilitation approaches.

- 89% reported easily understanding the content
  - 11% reported difficulty understanding.
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### Analysis of PBB Training Approaches

Training Aspect	Very Clear	Clear	Unclear	Very Unclear	Total
Training Materials	326	294	58	20	698
Examples Given	298	325	34	41	698
Instructions	229	338	123	8	698
Language Used	339	228	122	9	698
Method Used	290	332	7	69	698

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### Knowledge Gained

Findings revealed that 546 out of 698 participants (78%) gained knowledge as a result of the training. Participants reported learning in areas such as calculating profit, improving customer care, diversifying their products, and enhancing product quality. For example, one participant

who sells clothes shared that she previously sold un-ironed items, which resulted in low sales. After the training, she began ironing her clothes, and her sales have since increased.

- 546 out of 698 participants (78%) gained knowledge.

Examples of improvements:

- Profit calculation
  - Customer care
  - Product diversification
  - Product quality improvement
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## Relevance of PBB Training

Findings indicate that the Plan for Better Business (PBB) training is highly valued by participants. A majority (74%) reported that the training is relevant to their business needs. An additional 24% found it somewhat relevant, while only 2% considered the training not relevant to their business needs.

The sessions on 'What Makes a Good Business' and 'Talking with Customers to Test Ideas' were considered the most useful by 80% of the participants.

- 74% highly relevant
- 24% somewhat relevant
- 2% not relevant

Most useful sessions:

- "What Makes a Good Business"
  - "Talking with Customers to Test Ideas" (80%)
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# BUSINESS CREATION RESULTS

## Businesses Established by Field Office

Position	Field Office	# of Participants Interviewed	# of Participants with Businesses	Percentage
1	Omoró	67	46	68.7%

2	Lamwo	90	42	46.7%
3	Adjumani	90	31	34.4%
4	Yumbe	94	30	31.9%
5	Arua	92	29	31.5%
6	Moyo	84	29	34.5%
7	Kiryandongo	91	27	29.7%
8	Rhino Camp	90	25	27.8%
Total		698	259	

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## Sources of Start-up Capital

The PBB evaluation found that of the 259 participants who established businesses, 149 (58%) accessed start-up loans through their Seed Effect Savings for Life (SFL) groups, while 42 (16%) used their own savings. These businesses include clothing sales, retail, sand mining, the sale of agricultural materials, the sale of goats, phone accessories, mobile money services, food vending, poultry keeping, tailoring, cassava milling machine businesses, among others.

The remaining 68 participants (26%) received start-up capital from relatives. These findings highlight a strong link between the SFL program and the Plan for Better Business intervention, with most participants using SFL financial services to put their acquired business skills into practice.

- 58% SFL group loans
- 16% Own savings
- 26% Relatives

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## Income Findings

On average, each participant earns 217,200 UGX from their business ventures. It is important to note that the highest participant earns 800,000 UGX from their business, while the lowest earns 7,000 UGX.

- Average income: UGX 217,200
- Highest income: UGX 800,000
- Lowest income: UGX 7,000
- 67% reported increased income after applying what they had learned

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## **Business Practice Changes**

A significant proportion of participants (71%) reported changing their business practices as a result of the PBB training. This included both those who already owned businesses before the training and those who started new businesses after participating. The key business practice changes reported included diversification, planning business costs, organizing production, improving customer care, calculating business profits, and tracking credit extended to customers. Participants also noted improvements, such as opening their businesses earlier. As a result of these changes, many reported increased sales and profits, business growth, and an improved ability to pay school fees.

71% reported changes in business practices, including:

- Diversification
- Planning costs
- Customer care
- Profit calculation
- Credit tracking
- Opening businesses earlier

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## **Direct Quotes**

“Back then, I used not to inquire what customers needed. I am now in a better position because I am able to meet customer needs.” – Participant, Rhino Camp

“Savings in the group has increased from 2000 to 10000.” – Participant, Rhino Camp

“I used not to iron the clothes, but the training I do iron and people are buying it.” – Participant

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# **TRAINING DURATION ANALYSIS**

On average, the PBB training was delivered in 3 days. Most of the training sessions were delivered over several days, rather than within the 6-week timeline prescribed in the curriculum.

22% of participants said the allocated training time was insufficient to understand the content.

The findings showed that participants had varying levels of awareness regarding the intended duration of the PBB training. Of the 698 respondents, 58 did not know how long the training was meant to last. Among those who provided an answer, 17 believed it lasted one day, 93 thought it lasted two days, 146 indicated three days, 144 assumed four days, 48 estimated five days, and only 192 correctly identified the full six-day duration.

The findings indicate a strong positive relationship between the number of days allocated to delivering the PBB training and the number of businesses subsequently established.

Field offices such as Omoro and Adjumani, where participants reported the training lasted five to six days, also recorded a higher proportion of individuals who went on to start businesses. This pattern suggests that extended training duration may enhance participants' ability to internalize and apply the content.

In contrast, districts including Lamwo, Kiryandongo, Yumbe, Rhino Camp, Moyo, and Arua delivered most of their PBB sessions within one to three days. These areas generally reported fewer participants starting businesses.

It is important to note, however, that the relatively higher number of start-ups observed in Lamwo may be influenced by additional contextual factors not captured in the training duration variable.

Regression results further show that the number of days used to deliver the training explains approximately 45% of the variation in business start-ups.

The remaining 55% is influenced by other determinants such as participant interest and motivation, access to start-up capital, market opportunities, and ongoing monitoring and support.

This underscores the importance of considering both training design and broader enabling conditions when assessing business development outcomes.

- Average delivery: 3 days
- 22% said time was insufficient
- Strong positive relationship between longer duration and business creation
- Regression shows training days explain 45% of business start-up variation

Remaining 55% influenced by:

- Motivation
  - Capital access
  - Market opportunity
  - Monitoring & support
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# BUSINESS SURVIVAL (6 Months Post-Start-Up)

86% of the businesses established have remained operational 6 months after start-up.

Survival Period	Active Businesses
Over 2 years	56
1-2 Years	106
6-12 months	62
Less than 6 months	35
Total	259

The findings show that 92% of participants intend to continue applying the skills and practices gained from the PBB training to improve their businesses even after the project has ended. This strong intention to sustain learned practices suggests a high likelihood of continued impact beyond the project period, indicating potential for sustainability in business management and growth.

The remaining 8% reported that they may be unable to apply the skills gained after the project ends due to limited access to start-up capital.

Furthermore, 512 of 698 participants reported sharing the knowledge gained from the PBB training with individuals outside the program. These had spoken to 2366 members of the community. This level of knowledge diffusion demonstrates positive spillover effects and further strengthens the project's potential for sustained and expanded impact within the community.

- 92% intend to continue applying PBB skills.
- 512 participants shared knowledge with 2,366 community members.

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## FAITH-BASED INTEGRATION

98% reported that the inclusion of faith-based concepts improved comprehension.

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## 11. KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- Business skills training can materially improve livelihoods when combined with access to financial resources and ongoing support.
  - Training alone is not sufficient; post-training mentorship and reinforcement are key for sustained impact.
  - Tailoring content to the participants' context, language, and culture improves comprehension and relevance.
  - Practical, skills-based training enables participants to apply what they learn and creates wider community impact.
  - Adequate training duration, access to start-up capital, and ongoing support are critical for translating knowledge into sustainable business ventures.
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## 12. PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK – CHALLENGES

- Many (about 80%) mentioned that the training materials were in English, which made it difficult to interpret them into the local languages spoken in the community, the trainers face a similar challenge too.
  - Some older participants said they struggled to follow the content due to age-related difficulties.
  - A few participants with hearing impairments found it hard to fully understand the sessions.
  - Several participants also noted that attending training while hungry made it harder to concentrate and absorb information.
  - Several mentioned that they lacked basic stationery, such as notebooks, which made it difficult to take notes for future reference.
  - A lack of start-up capital was highlighted as a major barrier to putting the training into practice and starting a business.
  - Others felt the training was too condensed, with too much content packed into a single day, making it difficult to fully grasp everything.
  - 39% of the participants could not access mentorship and support due to infrequent monitoring visits.
  - Price fluctuations affected the businesses.
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## 13. PARTICIPANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand the training content to include additional topics such as record-keeping, business analysis, and financial literacy.
  - Allocate a separate day for the training rather than conducting it on the savings day.
  - Provide cash grants or start-up capital to help participants apply the skills they have gained.
  - Improve the training materials by incorporating charts and more visual aids.
  - Translate and provide training materials in local languages.
  - Offer mentorship and refresher training to reinforce learning after the initial sessions.
  - Extend the training to groups that are in other savings cycles.
  - Provide food or refreshments during training sessions to improve concentration and participation.
  - Include practical sessions on developing business plans.
  - Allocate more time for delivering the training content.
  - Supply participants with basic writing materials.
  - Strengthen lessons on record keeping.
  - Continue offering mentorship support after the training.
  - Deliver training sessions using local languages to enhance comprehension.
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## 14. CONCLUSIONS

The inclusion of Plan for a Better Business has successfully enhanced business knowledge, facilitated enterprise creation, and improved income among refugee and host communities. High comprehension, relevance, and sustainability rates indicate positive and lasting impact. Implementing the recommendations, particularly on training duration, mentorship, and access to capital, will further strengthen outcomes and ensure long-term growth for participants' businesses

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## 15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Translate training materials into local languages and include more visual aids.
- Incorporate sessions on business plan development, ensuring participants produce a completed business plan as a tangible outcome by the end of the training.
- Conduct refresher sessions and continuous mentorship to reinforce learning.
- Strengthen training on record-keeping, financial literacy, and business planning.
- Ensure participants have basic stationery and refreshments during sessions if possible.

- Schedule training on separate days rather than during savings meetings.
- Encourage participants to use savings and/or loans from their groups as start-up capital.
- Make sure trainings are delivered as scheduled to address the challenges of too little time allocated for the training.
- Run the training over consecutive days (e.g., Monday to Friday) and include practical sessions to help participants fully understand the content.
- Use hands-on exercises and real-life case studies, such as taking participants to the market to interact with customers, rather than just teaching concepts in the “classroom.”
- Do pre- and post-training assessments to spot any gaps early and adjust the training as needed.