



**First African Bicycle
Information Organisation**

FABIO

JUNE 2023

NEWSLETTER
SIX MONTHS DOWN THE ROAD



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We Envisage an empowered society where all people are healthy, active and enjoying socio-economic services.

With gratitude, we thank our benevolent partners for continuously supporting us. It's because of you that we thrive. We dearly value you and hope to further walk this journey together.

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Awareness

“Moving slowly but reaching far.”

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT.

Self Help Groups (SHG)

More lives transformed through the Self Help Groups

FABIO has continued to use the Self Help Groups to instill a sustainability spirit amongst the vulnerable communities. Since inception (2021), the Self Help Group project has proven to be a sustainable and life changing strategy in the lives of a number of people. Apparently, 315 beneficiaries from 16 communities in Butagaya Sub-county, Jinja District have benefited from this project.



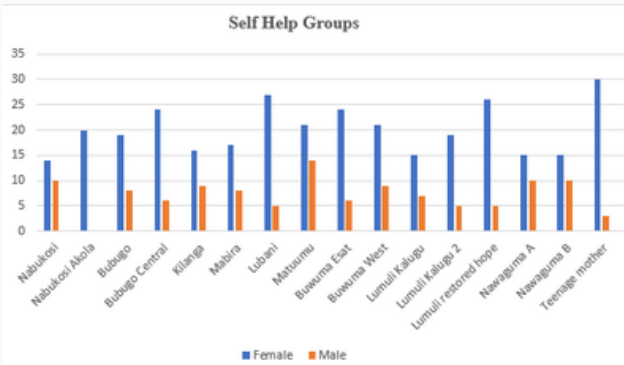
Fatuma, a beneficiary of the SHG group running her a fish stall

Nabirye Fatuma, a beneficiary of Bubugo Self Help Group narrated her mind-blowing journey.



I joined the group in 2021 but by then, my life was quite miserable, because my husband had left me with 5 children (2 girls and 3 boys), whom I had to take care of. Now that I make more money and live a better life, he begs to return.

Fatuma said that before she joined the group, she was running a fish business with a capital of shs,50,000. The money she earned from this business was not enough to pay rent, buy food and educate her children. However, Fatuma says due to continuous saving, her capital increased from shs50,000 to shs200,000. In 2022, Fatuma saved with the group and at the end of the cycle, she was able to increase her capital to shs500,000. Her life has gradually improved, her children go to better schools, she bought land and plans to build her own house.



Graph showing the 16 Self Help Groups in terms of Gender

Although FABIO provides start up kits for saving, bicycles for accessibility, knowledge and skills on saving among other things in these groups, the beneficiaries have not been reluctant. They have rather gone ahead to expand and create projects that are sustainable enough to not only enhance their saving but also improve their livability. Upon visiting our beneficiaries earlier this year, we were enthused to find that many of them have been able to start up income generating activities such as poultry, cattle keeping, fish farming, goat keeping among others. They also reported that accessibility was no longer a challenge.



Irene, a beneficiary of Buwuma East Self Help group, feeding her heifer which she bought after acquiring a loan from the Saving group.

Irene was able to acquire a loan from the Self Help Group to buy a heifer. In the course of our interaction with Irene, she said;

“I expect to sell this heifer soon and purchase a female one from which I can extract milk for sale. I'm also glad that I have a bicycle which also makes it easy for my children to bring water and feeds for the heifer, and I'm sure the good feeding will quicken its growth.”



Palasa paul, a beneficiary of Buwuma Self Hep Group feeding his piglets

“Being a member of this group has made me think big in terms of investments. I acquired a loan of shs 160,000 and onto it I topped up shs 40,000 which I used to buy a pig and I am happy to say that it gave birth to 8 piglets. With this start, I envisage a huge project ahead. To me being part of this group is a golden opportunity.”



Shakira, a beneficiary of Bubugo Self Help Group, using the FABIO bicycle to access the water source.

“My worry of accessing the borehole, which is 7 miles away from my home was flushed away when I received this bicycle. said Fatuma.”

Teenage parents receive bicycles, tailoring machines, saving equipments to enhance their livability.



Handover ceremony of bicycles, startup kits for saving and sowing machines to teenage parents under the newly formed Self Help Group in Mabira village, Butagaya subcounty.

Following the baseline survey that was carried out by FABIO in 2022 on the impact of COVID19 to school going children in Busoga region specifically Kamuli and Jinja, it was discovered that many girls between the ages of 14 to 17 had fallen victim of early pregnancies. Most of the parents to these girls had disowned them claiming that early pregnancy is a taboo. The offenders were also not available to support these girls which had left them miserable and hopeless.

In the bid to retrieve their lost dignity, hope and talent, FABIO introduced a Self Help Group in Mabira village, Butagaya subcounty- Jinja District amongst 34 teenage parents (32 boys, 4 girls), with the aim of empowering the teenage mothers with different skills especially in saving and tailoring.



Teenage mothers during a tailoring training.

To spark off the training, bicycles, sowing machines, and saving equipment were provided in the group and apparently, beneficiaries are undergoing a 3 months training in tailoring.

FABIO ascertains that with the skills attained from the trainings, beneficiaries can be able to make different products, use the bicycles to access market for their products, save a portion of their income in the Self Help Group, acquire loans with ease to cater for any emergencies, startup income generating activities and also have an increased ability to take care of their lives and those of their families. .



Excited teenage mothers layoff their first products.

EDUCATION.

Cycle to School

Cycle to School beneficiaries are now very passionate about attending school because of eased access.



Cycle to School students using the FABIO bicycle

Accessibility to schools has overtime been a great challenge faced by most of the school going children in Busoga rural communities. Most of them travel 7-10 miles to school, which not only demotivates them but also drains their energy to actively concentrate in class. The long distance has also been one of the causes of the many registered early pregnancy cases which has often caused school discontinuity.

Through the cycle to school project, FABIO has been able to reach out to a number of these communities with a bicycle, to enhance their accessibility to schools and So far about 5000 bicycles have been distributed to different beneficiaries(girls and boys).

Apparently, this project is operating in Jinja and Kamuli Districts in the schools; Kiraview SS , Lubani SS, Hillside SS, Magogo SS and Matuumu SS

It has been noticed that because of this intervention, the retention and performance levels of students in the beneficiary schools has gradually improved. This is because upon acquisition of bicycles, they have not only been motivated to attend school but can also use the bicycles as a supporting tool to cater for numerous needs, including attainment of school fees.

During one of FABIO's monitoring visits to the beneficiary schools earlier this year, Namugere Vivian, a S2 student at Matuumu Secondary School expressed how the FABIO bicycle has ignited her spirit to study.

“ I always came late to school and my performance was alarming. Because of the pain I felt at heart, my interest in studying had reduced. However, when I received the FABIO bicycle, everything changed. I now come early to school. This bicycle has not only helped me at school but also my family. Recently, my brother convulsed and he needed urgent medical attention. Amazingly, its this bicycle that saved us, so we easily accessed the health center. My father uses the same bicycle to trade coffee from where my school fees is got. With the same bicycle, we are able to fetch firewood, water and feeds for the animals.

Solving accessibility challenges and increasing retention of students in schools

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Strengthening Citizens' Engagement in Elections. (SCENE)

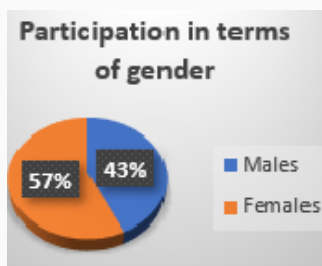
Communities and stakeholders contribute to the requisite constitutional, legal and electoral reforms.



Community consultation meeting in Bulubandi village-Iganga District

Good governance is a key aspect in the development of a country. However, numerous questions have emerged on whether Uganda's governance system is credible enough.

Earlier this year, FABIO in partnership with USAID and Uganda National NGO Forum conducted a number of engagements with different communities to retrospect on Uganda's democracy journey and devise the requisite constitutional, legal and electoral reforms. This exercise reached 1304 (742males and 562females) in 36 communities of Jinja, Iganga and Kamuli Districts.



“There is insufficient voter education, which has affected their participation in elections, a high number of legislators which strains tax payer's money.

Therefore;

Term limits should be reinstated

Voter education should be prioritized.

A campaign financing regulation should be enacted to stipulate standard expenditure limit for Members of Parliament. Said participants during the community consultations.

The community consultations were followed by District level and Regional stakeholders engagements in Iganga, Jinja and Kamuli Districts.



During the District level stakeholder engagement in Jinja.

According to stakeholders, **the qualifications provided by contestants aren't enough to qualify them to stand for some political positions.**

They therefore proposed that; **Some political positions require higher qualifications. For instance, for the position of Member of Parliament, one should have a degree, LC5 and Mayor should have acquired a S6 certificate, LC3 and District Councilors should have at least a Senior Four certificate.**



Hon David Agha- the Member Parliament of Jinja Northern Division, during the regional stakeholders engagement encouraged FABIO to go ahead with such consultations because he believes that some amendments will be made since a budget has been allocated towards constitutional reforms.

NON MOTORISED TRANSPORT POLICY ADVOCACY.

Motivation Mobility.(MoMo)

German students under the FABIO-EURIST joint exchange program come to Uganda -Jinja to work together with their Ugandan counterparts on activities oriented towards attaining sustainable cities and human settlement.



MoMo students at KCCA after a workshop on Kampala's sustainability journey at KCCA

FABIO in partnership with EURIST has been able to successfully implement the Mobility-(MoMo), an exchange program that is oriented towards attaining sustainable cities and human settlement. (SDG-11). Under this program, 10 Ugandan students of St Noa Mawaggali SS in Njeru municipality in Buikwe District were able to travel to Germany for 16 days to basically attain exposure and acquire knowledge to enable them implement projects in support of sustainable and livable cities.

Earlier this year, in April, German students from Sachsenwaldeshule Gymnasim and Wentorf Gymnasium visited Uganda for 16 days. In this period, they carried out a number of excursions and projects in line with the project aim. Among these were excursions to KCCA, NMT corridor, the railway museum, workshops on Upcycling and recycling of plastic materials, green cities among others.



MoMo students after the press conference at Jinja City council chambers

During the press conference, one of the Ugandan students from St Noa Mawaggali students expressed:

“**The program has empowered me- I had social anxiety, now I can confidently speak and relate with other people.**

While in Germany, I discovered the beauty of having a sustainable city where all people have equal rights on the road: Pedestrians, cyclists and alike- I realized that a livable city should be green.

I have decided to be a change agent. I have started to execute what I learnt out of this program; planting trees, embracing cycling- among other things..

Said Lawrence Luswata- A senior 2 student.

INNOVATIONS AND TRAINING

FABIO innovates and hands over cargo and irrigation bikes to beneficiaries under the Self Help Group.

FABIO has continued to venture into designing bicycles that can best fit the needs of the communities they serve. It was discovered that accessibility is an outstanding challenge that many communities in Busoga region face.

Considering that farming is the commonest economic activity practiced by beneficiaries in these communities, it was imperative to think of the designs that can simplify and make them appreciate the kind of work they do.

FABIO earlier this year, designed two prototypes; a cargo and an irrigation bike. These were delivered to one of the Self Help Groups; Mabira SHG in Butagaya Subcounty, Jinja District. The bicycle designs are to act as prototypes which will guide FABIO on making the communities' best design.



Mayor of Namagera town council and SHG group members receiving the irrigation and Cargo bikes.



Cargo bike



Bicycle for Irrigation.

The African Ebike

FABIO Improves the image of a bicycle through innovation of e-bikes

Since last year, the E-bike project has been operating. This project was initiated by FABIO in partnership with EURIST with the aim of improving the image of a bicycle, enhancing accessibility and sustainability, providing employment to the vulnerable communities.

Since it operates around two components; the business(e-taxi, e-water, e-delivery) and social component,(e-ambulance) the ebike has served the community both economically and socially.

The e-bicycle ambulance serving as a linking tool between community members and health centers.

The bicycle ambulance has enabled patients under critical conditions, for instance pregnant women to easily access health centers.

As narrated by the Village Health Teams, to whom responsibility of these bicycles was given, more lives are being saved due to eased access to health centers



The e-ambulance carrying a pregnant woman to the health center during an emergency.

Under the business component are; E-taxi, E-delivery and E-water.

The e-bike has contributed to the elevated incomes amongst beneficiaries hence improving their lives.

According to Onen Peter, an e-taxi beneficiary and a "**bodaboda**" rider, Life has really got better with the e-bike. Previously, Onen was riding a manual bike known as "**Manyigakifuba**," now he owns an e-bike from which he is able to earn two times more than what he previously earned; From a daily income of shs 5000 to about shs15000, from which he is able to save a reasonable amount of at least shs 7000 daily



Onen Peter using the e-bike to transport silver fish to the market

“From my savings, I was able to open a silver fish business for my wife. We use the bicycle to transport the silver fish from the source and bring it closer to people. This has however got us a number of customers since the entire area is now aware that we supply silver fish.

We are also planning to venture in more profitable projects as time as goes by.

Trainings

FABIO technicians offering hands on training in bicycle repair and maintenance, to youths.

As it is FABIO's culture to empower, trainings in bicycle technology and maintenance have been offered to different people; men, women and youths. This is done to equip them with skills to enhance their competence in the business world.

FABIO this year recruited two interns(a boy and a girl). These are being acquainted with exclusive knowledge and skills on how to operate innovate and repair bicycles.



FABIO interns at work.

AWARENESS.



One of FABIO staff during a radio talk show.

FABIO has continued to use different vessels to extend awareness and encouraging sessions to the local populace on a number of topics; the merits of using bicycles, sexual reproductive health, the value of education, safeguarding strategies and good governance among others, with the aim of enhancing a positive mindset amongst citizens, towards education, cycling culture, building a culture of social responsibility and accountability among others.

Recently, FABIO held a talk show on Busoga One radio to make an extensive discussion with the community on the requisite constitutional, legal and electoral reforms.

This has enabled FABIO to feed some of the reforms in the yet - to be compiled National position paper.

“Cycling is free, fun and healthy”



*We want to see a change, so we act....Lets do it together.
The Journey continues.....*

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