

Cooperatives: Building Success Together



With over 60 years of experience in building capacity around the world, Global Communities focuses on the five key dimensions of cooperative success to increase incomes, strengthen democratic values and promote equality.

Global Communities cooperative programs are operational in Mongolia, Rwanda, Uganda and urban Kenya. Our in-country teams of technical experts boost the capacity of small-scale farmers and empower them to see their peers and their farms as pathways out of poverty.

Capacity, Self-Sufficiency, Democracy

Participants in Global Communities-mentored cooperatives consistently demonstrate that increased capacity translates into increased self-sufficiency at both the household and community level. Beyond increased income, individuals are more likely to overcome gender barriers and become civically engaged in their local governments.



REAL CHANGE IN RWANDA: “MAKE IT HAPPEN” CAMPAIGN

This Global Communities Cooperative program promotes good governance, member empowerment and gender equity. After completing our 3-month training, 47 men and women program participants were elected into their local governments – **a 9-fold increase** in democratic participation.



Key Technical Expertise

Learning new technologies, including hybrid seeds with enhanced nutrition, helps cooperative members learn to maximize limited natural resources. This means increased quality and quantity of food that requires fewer inputs to grow, helping farmers devote more time and income to their families.



Learning: A Ripple Effect

Each new farmer that learns new agricultural methods, practices improved household finance, and practices empowerment and equity in their household will independently introduce those skills to three of their neighbors. That means every dollar spent building cooperative capacity will triple in spontaneous “ripple effects” that are felt at both the household and community levels. That’s sustainability.



EMIRGE

The Enabling Market Integration through Rural Group Empowerment (EMIRGE) program helps farming cooperatives increase their capacity to produce higher-value products and services, establish links to the private sector, and leverage market-based solutions. Funded by USAID's E3 Bureau, this \$5 million program operates in rural **Rwanda, Mongolia** and, more recently, urban **Kenya**. Beyond building incomes in a sustainable manner, EMIRGE empowers farmers to move from an agri-“culture” mindset to one of agri-“business.”



EMIRGE Mongolia cooperatives have learned how improving production methods can change the entire domestic market. EMIRGE cooperatives have together built more than 40 greenhouses for high value vegetables and 50 improved shelters for dairy cows. They have learned to extend their growing season by an average of 80 days and are able to keep their cows productive in one of most extreme climates on earth.

In Kenya, EMIRGE works with youth who are trained in specialty services such as IT to create worker-owned cooperatives capable of accessing finance, designing marketing campaigns and providing high quality services to an emerging middle class. Youth are empowered to create their own businesses and step into the formal economy by sharing risk and seizing new opportunities of their growing economy.

DESIGN Uganda

The **Developing Economic Strengthening Interventions for Group Production (DESIGN)** Program (\$1.8 million) is a cooperative development and research program that seeks to understand individual motivations for joining a cooperative. In collaboration with economist J.L. Morrow, of Birmingham Southern College, DESIGN explores what drives people to be “willing to cooperate.” This research has illuminated the motivations of a community and allows us to tailor the program to local needs.

Individuals in Uganda were three times more likely to join a cooperative for the expectation of a “social” benefit, rather than strictly financial outcomes. This illustrates the importance of “community” to small-scale farmers, and ***how successful cooperatives play a dramatic role in both household and community resiliency.***



DESIGN cooperative members work together to produce bio-fortified, highly nutritious beans. After only one season of technical instruction, cooperative members increased their profit by 60%. Beyond earning more money for their families, DESIGN's success improved the availability of iron-enriched beans in rural Uganda, boosting the nutritional status of communities and increasing local food security.



Kristin Wilcox, Program Manager
Cooperative Development Programs
kwilcox@globalcommunities.org

Global Communities
8601 Georgia Ave. Suite 300
Silver Spring, MD 20910 USA
301.587.4700

Learn more: www.globalcommunities.org/cooperativedevelopment