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A Cepcom,Uganda Skills Training Student, putting up a Soil Retaining Wall using Plastic Waste Materials at Seguku Primary School
(photo by Cepcom, Uganda)

Harnessing Alternative Approaches to Managing Solid Waste Promoting Circular-economy Priorities: Recover, Reuse: Recycle

Mission Statement

To Promote Peaceful Coexistence and Unity among Uganda's diverse Communities for Inclusive and Sustained Socio-Economic Improvement.



Vision

Empowered Communities for Sustained Societal Transformation



Who We Are



The Centre for Peace and Conflict Mitigation (CEPCOM -Uganda) is a registered National Non-governmental organization (NGO) working since 2009 to promote peaceful coexistence and unity among Uganda's very diverse communities while creating opportunities for social-economic improvement.
We are passionate about building resilient and empowered self-support communities through enhancing inclusive local support mechanisms to promote sustained and meaningful Coexistence.

Since our inception, we have been implementing project activities around four main thematic areas:

- **Harnessing community livelihoods**
- **Peace building for community coexistence**
- **Promoting circular economy initiatives for a sustainable Environment**
- **Advocacy.**

Key project activities have been carried out in Wakiso district specifically in; Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Kyengera Town Council, Entebbe Municipality and in Kabale District of Kigezi sub-region.

We are inspired by a blend of core values that gives us a unique opportunity of building community capacity to take lead in providing solutions to societal problems. These include:

* **Justice**
* **Transparency**
* **Integrity**
* **Compassion**
* **Excellence**
* **Diversity**

Message From the Executive Director



Successive emerging global uncertainties continues to spill-over, hindering meaningful coexistence and sustainable societal transformation in the long run. Among other indicators, these uncertainties for example, reflect in the form of evident socio-economic induced crises (conflicts, poverty, disease, illiteracy, domestic violence etc), climate change induced crises (hunger, disease, poverty, conflicts etc) all of which, both directly and indirectly affect communities, most of all, the vulnerable poor and marginalized population

Our work approach and strategy roots in the belief that, empowered communities are better placed to solve community problems for sustainable coexistence. We uphold on to our key theme; My Environment, My Identity, incorporated as a cross-cutting blend in all project activities to build resilient and empowered communities conscious of a health and sustainable environment, a key ingredient in achieving meaningful coexistence.

In this Annual report, we are delighted to share with you the implemented activities, achievements and lessons learnt. We acknowledge all our esteemed partners for the working, coordination and support which has tremendously contributed to our successive positive trend of promoting and strengthening community structures for sustained peaceful coexistence. Key activity highlights in this report include:

- Community livelihood support initiatives
- Circular economy initiatives for environmental sustainability.
- Peace building initiatives for community coexistence
- Community Advocacy for environmental sustainability.

I am heartened that, community participation in the various activities with evidence-based achievements and outcomes, has increased especially; in Makindye Ssabagabo municipality, Entebbe municipality, Kyengera town council and Kabale municipality in Kigezi sub-region.

As you read this report, I hope that you will be inspired and be part of our great vision of achieving empowered communities that would drive to Sustained Societal Transformation. As CEPCOM, Uganda, we look forward to building on this experience, adopt the good practices and lessons leant to replicate in other communities across the Country in the following years.

Regards,
Kuteesa Stephen
Executive Director,

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS.

THEMATIC AREA1:

Promoting Circular Economy Initiatives for a Sustainable Environment

Introduction:

The increasing volume of domestic solid waste coupled with poor, climate unfriendly disposal methods by communities such as indiscriminate open burning and littering is a critical environmental dilemma. In Uganda, particularly major cities, for example Kampala Capital City Authority, acknowledges that the amount of Solid waste generated overwhelms its capacity to collect and dispose given the enormous collection costs. Out of an estimated 2000tons of garbage generated per day, only 400-500 tones are collected giving a collection efficiency of only 40%.



A Cepcom member of the Women empowerment group retrieve littered plastic waste from a water source

Rudimentary domestic waste disposal practices such as, open burning, littering, etc are widely practiced right from household level to general community centres like markets, trading centres, schools, public recreation centres among others. This is attributed to the fact that Waste management in communities is hampered by multiple land tenure system with many tenants not having a right to the land and therefore not able to manage waste domestically.

However, indiscriminate domestic solid waste disposal methods do not only directly impact negatively on the general public health, agriculture, water and economic security of the affected communities but also, impacts negatively on the Environment.

Activity Rationale



CEPCOM, Uganda employs strategic innovative pathways leading to prevention and elimination of indiscriminate domestic solid waste disposal practices in communities right from household level by; promoting Circular Economy Priorities of: Recover, Reuse and Recycle. The mult-blended strategy is aimed at strengthening local community initiatives through innovation and creativity, capacity building and skilling, job creation, as well as, advocacy for Policy inclusion on unconventional solid waste disposal methods.

Key Achievements

I.Harnessed Collective Community Responsibility in Promoting a Domestic Solid Waste Free Environment.

a. Cepcom, Uganda conducted tailor-made student skilling and training sessions on creative plastic waste collection,reuse and recycle as a potential income source and as a motivation pathway to creating plastic waste free communities. 100 students of Seguku primary school in Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality of Wakiso district were trained.



Innovative production of assorted items from plastic waste materials:
a Training session at Seguku primary school, conducted by Cepcom, Uganda.

b) Cepcom, Uganda conducted tailor-made student skilling and training sessions on creative collection, reuse and recycle of domestic organic waste to produce liquid manure for farm use. 70 students of the school environment club from Christ the King Town View Secondary School, Rutooma, Kabale District were trained.





c. Cepcom Uganda skilled 5 community clusters composed of 100 members (both women and youth) from Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality and Kyengera Town Council in practical circular economy creatives and innovations for income generation through production of assorted items from reused domestic solid waste (indoor and outdoor decor vessels, flower vessels, kitchen gardens, dust bins, baby carriers, baskets, mats, environment beautifiers etc)



d) Cepcom Uganda organised demonstration expos for training and capacity building on innovative Kitchen gardening using domestic organic waste to produce organic vegetables. 5 community clusters composed of 100 members (both women and youth) from Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality and Kyengera Town Council participated













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e. Participated and emerged second winner of the Einstein Rising organised Ecopreneur Awards during the Kampala Impact Day Expo at; Bugolobi Silver Springs Hotel. Cepcom, Uganda exhibited assorted creatives and innovations in circular economy practices of managing domestic waste.

f. Cepcom, Uganda commissioned its pilot: **Community Biodiversity Conservation Hubs (CBCHs)** for Kigezi Sub Region, with the first one set at Christ the King Town View Secondary School Rutooma, Kabale district. The community Biodiversity Conservation

Hubs are aimed at:

* Promoting collective community awareness on biodiversity conservation for mindset change.
* Promoting innovative and creative practical ecofriendly skills and practices
* Promoting diversified ecofriendly community livelihoods among the youth.
* Creating a pool of biodiversity conservation ambassadors and agents of change for continuity.



Key Activity Outcomes

- Increased student motivation on pioneering a sustainable plastic waste free environment.
- A highly motivated pool of circular economy community Mentors and Ambassadors for sustainable management of domestic solid waste
- Improved Community Attitude Change on domestic waste Disposal and Management
- The Dual Linkage: Increased number of individual community members accessing green jobs in innovative domestic solid waste collection, reuse and recycle.
- Increased community adoption of innovative home-based climate-smart gardening practices using domestic organic waste



THEMATIC AREA 2:
Harnessing Community Livelihoods

Introduction



Communities across regions in Uganda have gaps in realizing inclusive, accessibility to viable livelihoods. Many of the existing livelihood opportunities are selective, giving less participation priority and involvement to women, youth and persons living with disabilities.

Unlike in the rural setting where agriculture provides as the source of livelihoods to the majority, it is critical for the urban communities, presenting a high rate of unemployment and general lack of livelihood means by the dwellers. The general lack of livelihood support mechanisms manifests in: increasing trend of youth involvement in crime to survive, commercial sex, abuse of drugs, school drop outs, poor feeding and health, poor house living conditions, domestic violence and increasing trend of family abandonment by men resulting into women-headed households.

Activity Rationale

Cepcom, Uganda believes that; sustainable livelihoods, strengthens sustainable community peaceful coexistence and that; Livelihood mechanisms are sustainable only if they are inclusive.



Cepcom, Uganda supports this belief with the aim of harnessing inclusive community participation, involvement and access to income generating opportunities for meaningful livelihoods through; sensitization, creation of green employment, vocational training and skilling among other activities in the communities of: Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality, Kyengera Town Council of Wakiso District, and, Kabale Municipality of Kigezi Sub Region.

Key Achievements

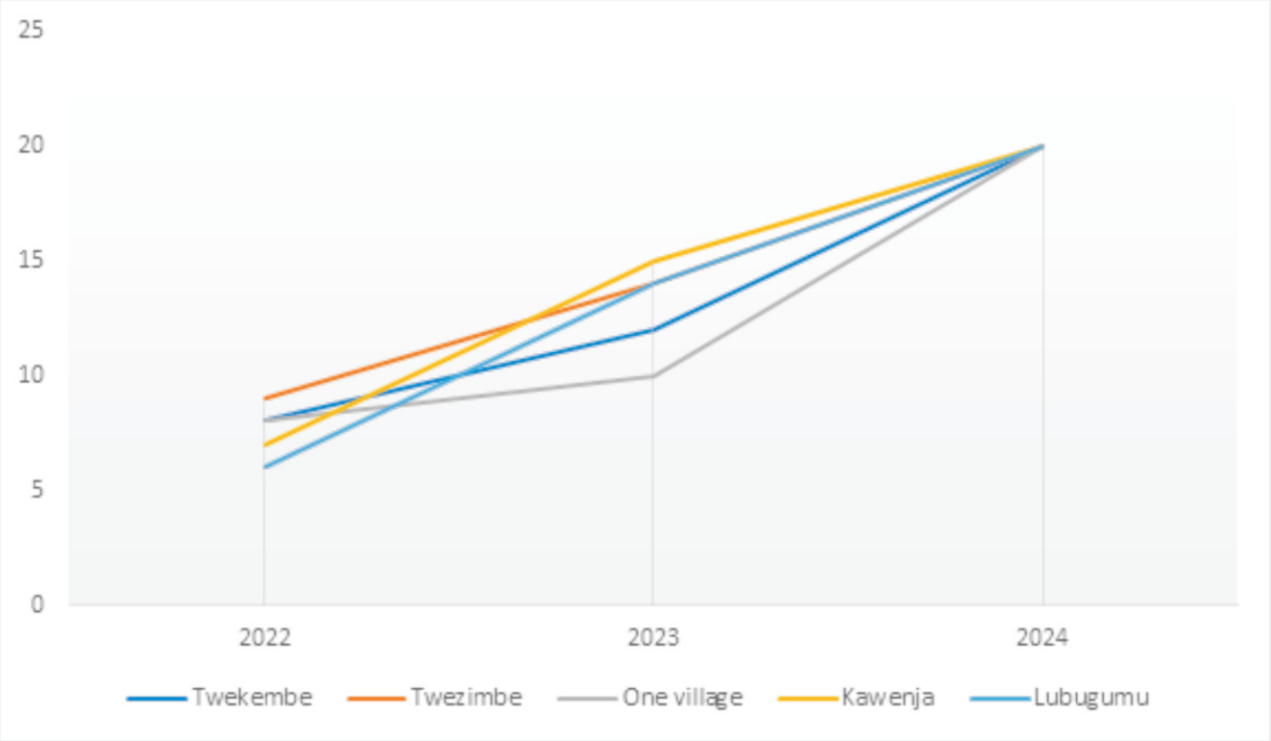
i) Promoted Women Livelihood Empowerment through PET Plastic Waste Collection, Reuse and Recycle for Sale.



CEPCOM, Uganda successively implemented its women livelihood empowernment project in PET plastic waste collection, reuse and recycle for sale. The project aims at harnessing women's contribution towards a clean and healthy environment with significant positive effects on income generation. The activity was implemented in five community clusters with a member composition of 100 participants (20 individuals per each of the five clusters) from Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality and Kyengera Town Council.



Cumulative Access Trend to Green Jobs by Community Cluster Members Engaged in Cepcom's Circular Economy Initiatives



ii) Promoted Community livelihoods through Tailor-made Hands-on Vocational Skills Training and Basic Financial Literacy

Cepcom Uganda organised a graduation event and passed out 20 finalists (all girls) of the 2022/2023 in-house, hands-on vocational skills training. 20 finalists were trained and certified by Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) in courses of; Cosmetology, Fashion and Design, Hotel Management and Institutional Catering





Working in partnership with African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD) in collaboration with VSO, Cepcom, Uganda trained to successful completion 6 sponsored students (all girls) in tailor-made hands-on vocational skills in Cosmetology, Fashion and Design.

Cepcom, Uganda enrolled 30 trainees (25 girls and 5 boys) undergoing a two-year in-house tailor-made vocational skills training program in courses of: Cosmetology, Hotel Management and Institutional Catering, Brick Laying and Concrete Practice, Fashion, Design and Garment Production, Shoe and Crafts Production.









Enrolment Trends for the In-House Vocational Skills Training Program 2022/2023/2024

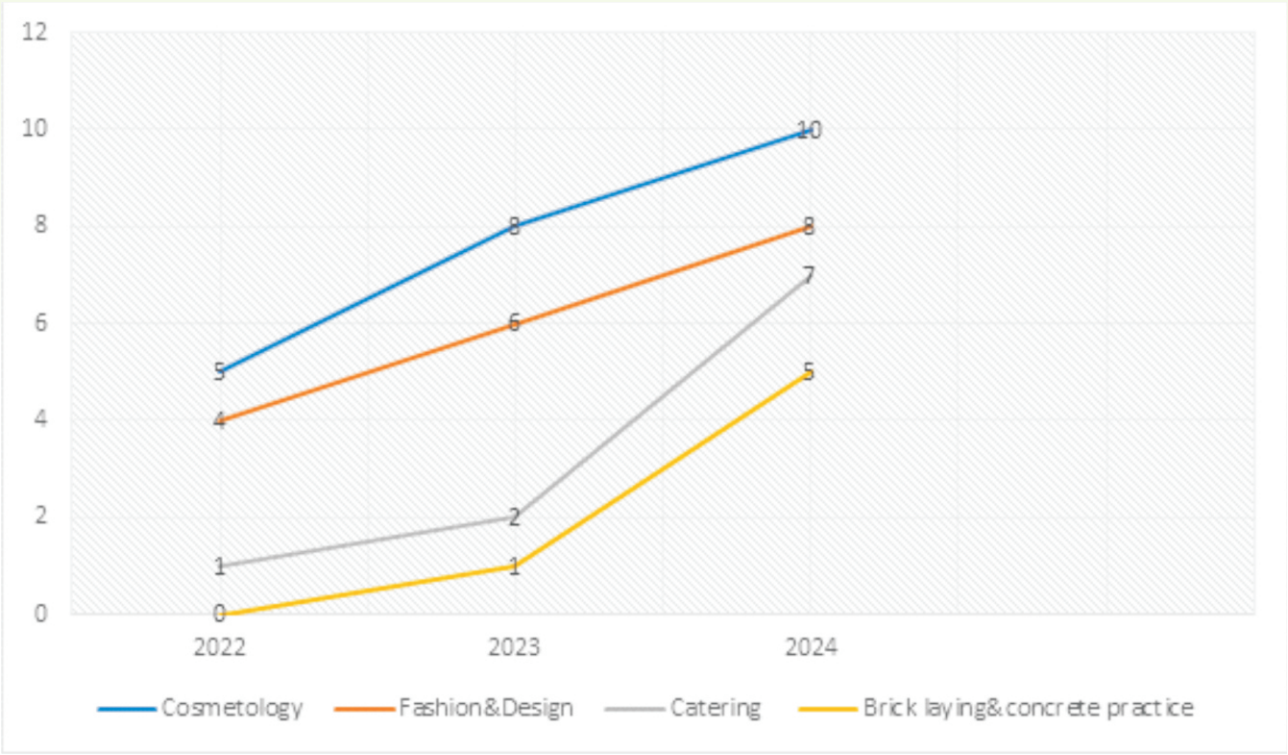


Figure 1 .

iii) Cepcom, Uganda set up Community Agro Clusters

* Two pilot community Agro clusters were commissioned in Mityana and Mukono districts. An agro cluster is a concertation of selected farming activities by selected community members that generates employment opportunities and income for sustained livelihoods.







Key Activity Outcomes

- Increase in the number of individual community members accessing jobs in PET plastic waste collection, reuse, and reccle for sale from 50 in 2023 to 100 in 2024.
- At least 90% of beneficiaries of the Cepcom supported livelihood program, exhibited improved financial management in the form of resouce saving for investment , resource pooling schemes for investment among others
- At least 90% of beneficiary finalists of the Cepcom's tailor -made vocational skills training program are employed in line with their field of skilling.
- Increased production outputs by Community Agro Clusters accruing from resource pulling

THEMATIC AREA 3:

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Cepcom's Doctrine on Environment:
The Universe is the Common 'Home' therefore, it is everyone's Collective Responsibility and Obligation to Sustainably use it for Peaceful Coexistence





A heavily degraded ecosystem due to artisan mining activities in Lake Bunyonyi catchment region, Kabale district (photo by Cepcom Uganda)

CEPCOM's Key Advocacy Theme

"My Environment My Identity:

CEPCOM has a conviction that the major determinant of a community's social behaviour is the environment. Therefore, through CEPCOM's catchphrase, communities have an obligation to foster activities that facilitate protection, conservation and regeneration of the environment".

Activity Rationale

Harnessing a symbiotic relationship between communities and the ecosystem for sustainability through advocating for community participatory approaches and strategies that ensures inclusive responsibility, obligation, ownership and action in all initiatives aimed at protecting, conserving and regenerating the environment.

Key Achievements

i) Community Awareness for Mindset Change on Domestic Solid Waste Disposal and Management

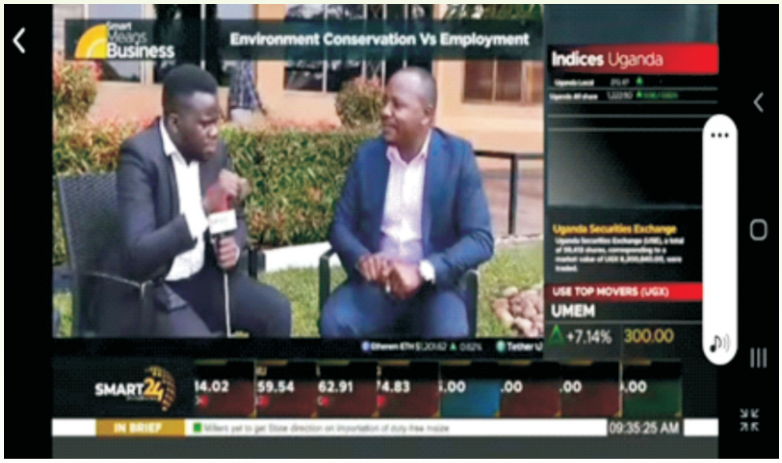


❖Cepcom, Uganda conducted community sensitisation engagements on domestic solid waste disposal and management for five community clusters in Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality, Kyengera Town Council of Wakiso District, and, Kabale Municipality of Kigezi Sub Region.

❖ Conducted out reaches to strengthen awareness on the collective responsibility and participation of local communities concerning good practices for sustainable use of the environment. Outreaches were conducted in Makindye Ssabagabo Municipality, Entebbe Municipality, Kyengera Town Council of Wakiso District, and, Kabale Municipality of Kigezi Sub Region targeting education institutions (primary, secondary, vocational schools etc), local councils, community elder groups, religious institutions, local government structures, local media platforms, community health institutions among others







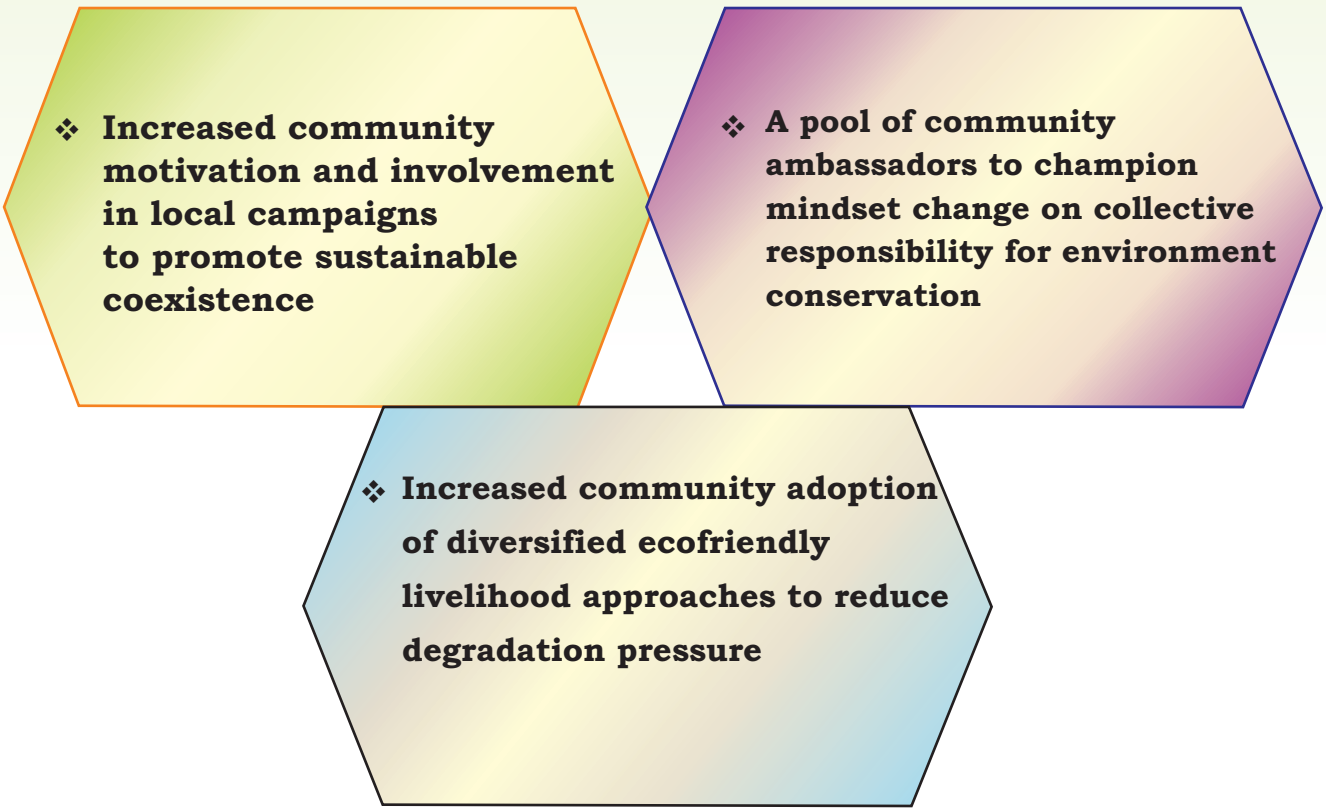
❖ Held 3 Television talk show engagements on SMART24 TV, shared insights on relevant strategies to strengthen the collective responsibility, participation and action of local communities to ensure sustainable and meaningful coexistence.

ii) Under the Theme Save Biodiversity Loss, Save the Prestigious Kigezi Eco Region:

Cepcom, Uganda commissioned its first edition of the Annual Lake Bunyonyi Eco Marathon in Kigezi Sub Region. The marathon is an advocacy pathway through which communities in Kigezi region are mobilised and sensitised of their collective responsibility to save biodiversity loss through sustainable use of the eco system to achieve meaningful coexistence. Honoured by miss Uganda 2024 as chief runner, the 10km marathon brought together over 500 participants from all walks of life and from various regions of the country.



Key Activity Outcomes



Constraints & Mitigation Measures

Constraints	Mitigation Measures
• Financial and human Resource Constraints	• Strengthen local based fundraising strategies through partneships and networking • Open a volunteering window for both local and international volunteers.

A Changed Mindset



Plastic waste collection in Uganda is an activity associated with the desperate need to survive in an informal sector. Collection is often done rudimentary without any prior skills on health and safety. It has always been associated with community individuals assumed to have no clear trace of identity but struggling to survive. This therefore explains the lack of clear trail of documentation among plastic waste collectors since the activity is only done for lack of better choice of means to earn a living. However, Centre for Peace and Conflict Mitigation (CEPCOM-Uganda) together with partners is working on means to elevate the plastic waste bottle collection trade to a more organized and progressive job. CEPCOM Uganda through its operation theme; My Environment My Identity, works with a cross section of community clusters in Makindye Ssabagabo municipality to transform the face of plastic waste bottle collection trade to a more professional and desirable source of livelihoods. In a successfully implemented CEPCOM initiative under partnership with Natural Resources Stewardship Programme (NatuReS) supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), five community clusters of twenty members each were trained on Mind-set change, financial literacy as well as health and safety. The community clusters benefited from the training which transformed plastic waste bottle collection from merely being a filthy job for the desperate to a more dynamic and promising sustainable source of livelihood. Muzanganda (Not real names) a member of Twezimbe community cluster, proudly says, “Plastic waste collection is my office, my salary” At least each of the five clusters trained adopted threshold documentation in their operation where a ledger is filled up with the daily collections, the cost incurred, the sales and other overheads that keep cropping up. Community cluster members have now been able to form roles and responsibilities with assignments done according to interest and potential while sharing strength, challenges, opportunities and best practices. The initiative has been coined out as a “new blessing” within the community clusters. The new mindset on plastic waste collection among communities within Makindye Ssabagabo municipality has transformed the originally filthy job for the desperate to be a highly competitive source of income with many new job entrants. Mugerwa (not real names) confesses, “Had I known of this plastic waste collection business before, my son wouldn't have dropped out of school. Thanks to CEPCOM, Uganda and its partners”.

A Testimony of Hope

My name is Nakijoba Ritah (not real names) aged 14. I Live in Kikajjo - Kasenge town. I grew up with my Grandmother since childhood. At home, we are a family of five. I have never got a chance to meet my biological parents even when I am told they are still alive. We survive by the little earnings from Grandmother's casual work on people's farms.

I joined school at the age of 3, as of March 2020, the time of COVID-19 lock-down, I was in Primary Six at Kisaana Primary School. When schools were re-opened after the lock-down in February 2022, my Grandmother could not afford to continue paying my school fees. Our day- to- day well-being at home became even harder since my 'Jjajja' could not take care of us as before.

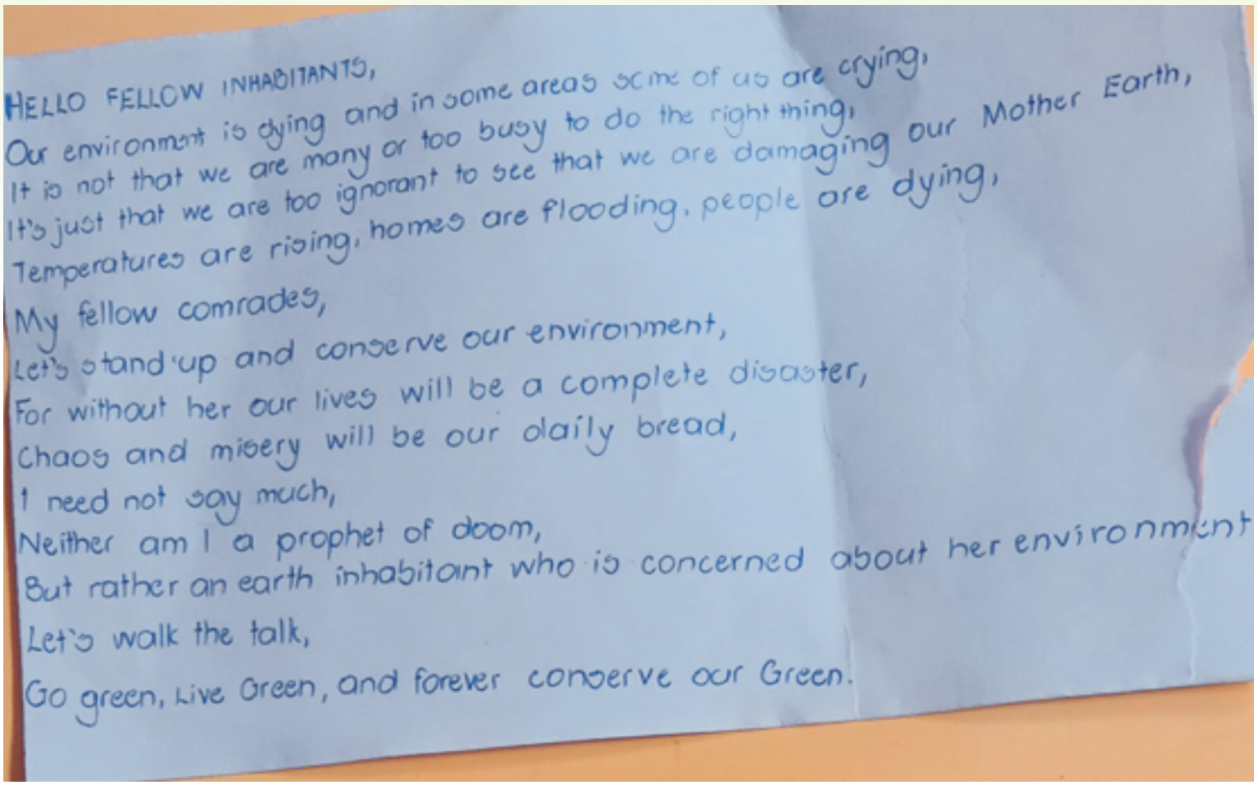
My hopes of finishing Primary Seven(7) collapsed. My future hopes of ever becoming a teacher also faded.

I was forced to drop out of school. I became desperate, 'Jjajja' was restless! Thanks to our neighbor who advised Grandmother to visit CEPCOM, Uganda offices and share my education challenges.



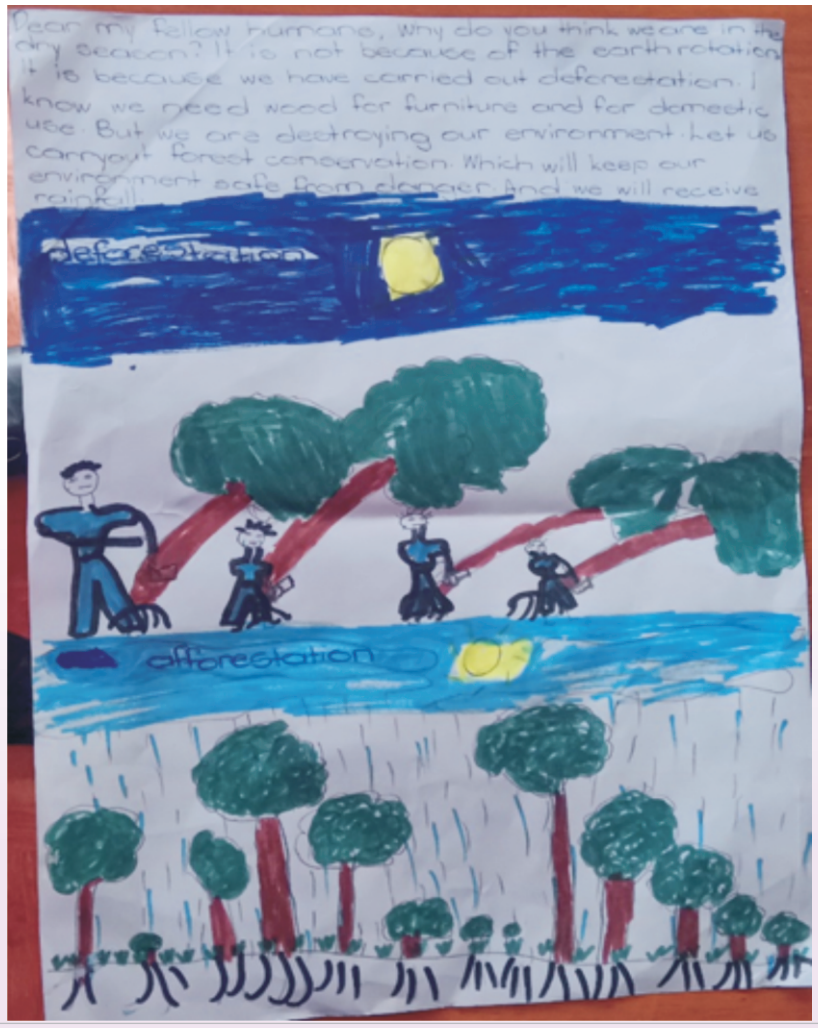
At CEPCOM Uganda, I was counseled and given new hope. I got the opportunity to join the hands-on skills training in Cosmetology. I also got another skill in making creative items for sale from reused plastic waste bottles for example, I can now now make dust bins for sale, flower vessels and kitchen vegetable gardens for small space farming. I am overjoyed and excited.. Even as a trainee, I can get clients to work on. I am determined to use my hair dressing skills to raise money to support my formal education to achieve my future dream of becoming a teacher. I will also support my lovely Grandmother. Besides, with this skill, I hope to become one f the greatest future beauticians in Uganda. Thanks to CEPCOM Uganda for givings us such opportunities to raise our hopes.

A Letter to Us all, by Jolene, 14years, Cepcom



HELLO FELLOW INHABITANTS,
Our environment is dying and in some areas some of us are crying,
It is not that we are many or too busy to do the right thing,
It's just that we are too ignorant to see that we are damaging our Mother Earth,
Temperatures are rising, homes are flooding, people are dying,
My fellow comrades,
Let's stand up and conserve our environment,
For without her our lives will be a complete disaster,
Chaos and misery will be our daily bread,
I need not say much,
Neither am I a prophet of doom,
But rather an earth inhabitant who is concerned about her environment
Let's walk the talk,
Go green, Live Green, and forever conserve our Green.

Dear Fellow Humans, by Blessing 9 Years, Cepcom, Uganda



"Dear my fellow humans, why do you think we are in the dry season? It is not because of the earth rotation. It is because we have carried out deforestation. I know we need wood for furniture and for domestic use. But we are destroying our environment. let us carryout forest conservation which will keep our environment safe from danger and we will receive rainfall".



Harvesting vegetables from a kitchen garden made out of domestic solid waste materials



A section of beneficiaries of the Cepcom in-house vocational skills training program



Cosmetology Students in A Practical Skilling Session

CEPCOM TEAM



MUTONI ANNAH
Head, Finance and Administration



ROSEMARY TUMWEBAZE
Coordinator, Skills Training



ASIIMWE SARAH
Coordinator, Livehoods



BALINDA DANIEL
Program Officer - Circular Economy Initiatives



NUWIMANA KIZITO
Community Trainer



AKANKWASA MARIAM
Community Trainer



KIYAGA WASWA
Community Trainer



KOBUGABE STELLA
Community Trainer



CAROLINE WAGABA
Community Trainer



ABSALOM K. TENDO
IT & Communication