

# POWERFUL MEANS INITIATIVE INCUBATOR

## *SIX MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE*

The Powerful Means Initiative has continued to make strides in the past three months in the ongoing management of the Incubator, designed to empower the Innovation Scholars of Saint Bakhita Vocational Training Center post-graduation. Key activities during this second phase have been ongoing followup interviews, data collection and evaluation, and beginning to identify potential improvements for the incubator.

### Achievements and Progress:

- **Consistent Participation:** 19 of the 24 participants attended a workshop in late May and have been regularly accessible for follow-up interviews, meaning that engagement has remained largely consistent after initial attrition.
- **Strong Performers:** A few participants are doing very well, consistently restocking their inventory and saving money in their village savings groups.
- **First Completed Repayment:** One participant has done exceptionally well and completely finished repayment of the value of her startup kit.

### Challenges:

- **Lack of Transparency:** Some participants have been resistant to fully disclosing information about their savings, potentially to avoid repayments.
- **Conflicting Priorities:** During the rainy season, some participants have prioritized gardening over running their own business.

These steps continue equipping Saint Bakhita graduates with the essential tools and resources to launch successful businesses, generate employment opportunities, and contribute to the economic vitality of their communities. We are on track to ensure that these alumni remain connected, engaged, and well-supported as they transition into entrepreneurship.



# INVESTMENT

This financial support will continue to be directed towards key activities, which currently include: conducting ongoing followup interviews, organizing skills workshops for the participants and providing phones to those who are demonstrating success. Additionally, collecting and tracking repayments from participants requires consistent management. Repayments are based on the value of the startup kit participants were provided at the start of the program, and entrepreneurs are expected to repay 50% of the value of the startup kit.

**24**

**alumni supported** in this year's incubator, including entrepreneurs in tailoring (13), hairdressing (9) and catering (2).

**1M**

**the average startup kit value** is just above 1M Ugandan shillings, or about \$275 US dollars.

**10%**

**loan repayment rate** as of August 13, as a percentage of the total outstanding loan value across all incubator participants.





# ENGAGEMENT

A core component of this incubator is its commitment to ongoing engagement with the entrepreneurs it supports. Part of this strategy is developing a network designed to provide ongoing peer support and professional development opportunities. Furthermore, the initiative includes field support visits and alumni engagement activities, along with the establishment of class partnerships between Notre Dame students and Saint Bakhita alumni, to ensure continuous interaction and data collection.

**79%**

participation rate in the second workshop in May, which taught further entrepreneurial skills.

**83%**

of entrepreneurs are actively running their business, often alongside other family commitments.

**88%**

of entrepreneurs are in regular contact with students, staff and other participants.



# IMPACT

By empowering alumni to establish sustainable businesses, the incubator seeks to create employment opportunities and stimulate local economies. The incubator program is designed to drive entrepreneurial success, strengthen alumni networks, and develop crucial skills in financial management and entrepreneurship. Ultimately, the initiative envisions a transformative impact, fostering a data-driven model for combating poverty through strategic micro-investments and mentorship.

**75%**

of participants are saving money on a daily or weekly basis, with 54% having saved a total of 50,000 UGX (~\$14 USD) or more.

**63%**

of participants are leveraging a community-based savings group to build accountability and access further capital.

**8%**

of participants have taken on students or trainees, while 50% have purchased additional supplies to further grow their business.