

# Action Research Report

## BTVET Skilling Effectiveness

### A Case of YES Project West Nile, Uganda



**Conducted For:**

Netherlands Development Organization (SNV)  
Agency For Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) and  
Center for Governance and Economic Development (CEGED)

**Conducted By:**

Sow and Grow Foundation



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## List of Acronyms

AFARD	Agency for Accelerated Regional Development
BRAC	Development Organisation that originated from Bangladesh
BTJET	Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training
CEGED	Center for Governance and Economic Development
DIT	Directorate of Industrial Training
DLG(s)	District Local Government(s)
EU	European Union
PAS	Practically Acquired Skills
PNFP	Private Not For Profit
PSE(s)	Private Sector Enterprise(s)
SACCO(s)	Savings and Credit Cooperative Society(ies)
SGF	Sow and Grow Foundation
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
UYVCF	Uganda Youth Venture Capital Fund
VSLA(s)	Village Savings and Lending Association(s)
VTI(s)	Vocational Training Institution(s)
YES	Youth Employability through Enterprise and Skills Development - Project
YLP	Youth Livelihoods Project

## Executive Summary

The Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) in partnership with Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) and Center for Governance and Economic Development (CEGED) have since 2014 been implementing the Youth Employability through Enterprise and Skills Development (YES) Project in West Nile districts of Yumbe, Arua, Nebbi and Moyo. The project seeks to support 5,000 vulnerable youth to acquire relevant skills necessary for them to establish or find gainful self- and paid employment. To achieve this objective, the project among others intended to strengthen the ability of the BTVETs to deliver quality and marketable skilling programmes. Although BTVETs were encumbered with numerous challenges, anecdotal evidence of positive changes observed over the 24 months of implementation called for an action research to systematically interrogate these changes.

The Sow and Grow Foundation (SGF) was therefore contracted to conduct the study with three key questions, namely:

- What values has YES Project's internship placement and learning approach added to BTVETs, PSEs and the Youth in terms of skills development, market responsiveness and job creation?
- What are the constraints and/or challenges impeding effective youth skilling and internship, placement that should be addressed by the government for effective delivery of youth vocational skilling in Uganda? and
- How can this approach be improved and up-scaled in ways that address its systemic challenges?

To answer these questions, information was gathered through both qualitative and quantitative approaches from 41 YES BTVET Graduates, 321 YES Rural Youths, 325 YES Urban Youths and 16 Non-YES BTVET Graduates; 09 BTVETs and 09 PSEs and finally, the SGF team conducted a Stakeholders Workshop in Arua. The findings reveal that:

- On average, 63% for YES graduates were employed (mainly female graduates). More so, the proportion of YES BTVET Graduates completing their assignments on time was significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) in excess of those from the Non-YES BTVET category by 28%. The youth had also created a multiplier effect by informally training 148 other youths.
- BTVET graduates spent about 3.5 months after graduation before either finding formal employment or starting their businesses.
- In terms of monthly incomes earned, urban youths earned four times the income of the rural youth and this difference was statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). (i.e., UGX 70,693 for rural youth versus the urban youth average of UGX 296,752).
- The values added of the BTVET skilling were numerous and multifaceted.
  - ◇ In BTVETs it increased their linkages with PSE and strengthened the institutionalization of their internship management practices.
  - ◇ To the youth, it provided the direly needed skills for self-employment and opportunity for wage employment at PSEs that provided internship placements.

- ◇ For the PSEs, the approach reinforced their access to qualified staff as well as learning from BTVETs.

However, the core constraints to internship placements remains the limited financial resources at BTVETs to place and effectively supervise interns. To the PSEs, it is contained budgets that limit their ability to offer free learning inputs. To the youth, lack of learning kits and financing lowers participation in internship. However, the broader analysis conducted by the regional stakeholders revealed that the key constrains were: Attitude of the youth towards skills training; Parents low literacy levels; Inadequate tools, equipment in VTIs and materials; Poor facilitation for instructors and youth; Limited finances (parents and Institutions); Limited suitable places for internship; The high demands from PSEs; Inadequate facilities for internship from PSEs; Poor linkage between NGOs, government and other stakeholders; and Inadequate sensitization on BTVET skill training programs.

The stakeholders also identified the critical out-and up-scaling solutions to include: opening entrepreneurship and life skills training to non-finalist classes; enhanced facilitation of PSEs to deliver quality hands-on training; and provision of adequate and comprehensive start-up kits, timely.

In conclusion the findings presented herein clearly demonstrates the successes of BTVET component of the YES project notably in enhanced job acquisition, increase in income, and the emerging job opportunity from YES BTVET graduates for other youth. This points to the right direction for the government of Uganda in its drive for youth skilling. Finally, the innovative approach provided by SNV, AFARD and CEGED manifests of their capacity to provide this kind of partnership with government and other development partners in furthering the Skilling Uganda agenda.

## 1.0 Introduction

The European Union provided a 3-year grant to the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV), Agency for Accelerated Rural Development (AFARD) and Center for Governance and Economic Development (CEGED) for the implementation of the Youth Employability through Enterprise and Skills Development Project (YES Project) in West Nile region districts of Yumbe, Arua, Nebbi and Moyo. The project begun in 2014 and will be completed in 2017. The major objective of the project is, “poverty reduction through improved income and sustainable employment prospects for 5,000 vulnerable youth in northern Uganda.” Among other employment pathways, the YES Project intends to strengthen the ability of the Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training Institutions (BTVETs) institutions to deliver market-oriented skilling programmes for the youth.

At the onset of the project, fourteen BTVET institutions were selected to deliver on the vocational skilling component of the project. However, these institutions were faced with numerous challenges including tutors’ instruction in effectiveness, no internship management system and delayed youth transition into self or formal employment. However, over the 24 months of implementation, noticeable changes were recorded from the various performance assessments. For instance, many youth who underwent internship placement secured self-employment as compared to older lots who took longer (some up to one year without jobs). In response, SNV and her partners decided to conduct an action research to validate in-depth how the noted changes occurred and can be replicated. Sow and Grow Foundation (SGF) was contracted to carry out this action research guided by three major questions:

- a. What values has YES Project’s internship placement and learning approach added to BTVETs, PSEs and the youth in terms of skills development, market responsiveness and job creation?
- b. What are the constraints impeding effective youth skilling and internship placement that should be addressed by the government for effective delivery of youth vocational skilling in Uganda?
- c. How can this approach be improved and upscaled in ways that address its systemic challenges?

This report unravels the processes and results of the action research. Below we present a description of the study processes.

## 2.0 The Study Processes

Below we describe how the research was conducted.

### 2.1. Inception meeting and reporting

Upon signing the contract, an inception meeting was held with the YES Project team to develop a common understanding of the assignment. The outcome of this meeting was the refinement of SGF implementation design and approach suggested. A suitable work plan was agreed on and contacts for key persons expected to provide valuable information for the assignment was secured. The study team also got access to all the relevant YES Project documents and reports. Finally, SGF team developed an Inception report with detailed tools that were reviewed and agreed upon.

Important to note is that the BTVET skilling component was clarified to include majorly the following issues in the box below.

BTVET Skilling approach used by YES Project

- Curriculum design for entrepreneurship and life skills development
- Training of Tutors as trainers
- Training of youth in BTVET institutions (especially those in final year)
- Internship placement of trained youth in PSE with Tutor follow ups
- Joint learning meetings for youth interns, PSE managers and BTVET tutors and principals
- Youth business plan development, competition, and provision of start-up kits for winners
- Annual employment fair
- Business mentoring and market linkages

### 2.2. Desk review

The SGF team reviewed the YES project documents which included among others the YES Project Proposal, Baseline Survey report (2015), the Annual Narrative Report (2015), and Youth and Agriculture Action Research Report (Sept 2016). In addition, the SGF team also sourced relevant information from their professional networks, the internet and from the media. Such documents included the Uganda BTVET Strategic Plan 2011-2020 (Ministry of Education and Sports – MoES). The various information guided the development of the data collection tools particularly the semi-structured questionnaires and the checklists (see table 1 below), developing the background to the Action Research, and identification of information relevant to the Action Research.

**Table 1. Information gathering tools**

Respondents	Type of Tool
Project implementation Team and Steering Committee	Checklist
YES Project BTVET Youth	Semi-structured Questionnaire
Non-project BTVET youth	Semi-structured Questionnaire
BTVETs	Checklist and Participatory Tools – Tracking change (specifically developed by SGF)
YES Project Rural Youth	Semi-structured Questionnaire
YES Project Urban Youth	Semi-structured Questionnaire
PSEs	Checklist
Stakeholders Workshop	Pairwise Ranking Matrix Problem-Causal-Solution Tree
Stakeholders Workshop	Change Tracking and Analysis Tool (by Sow and Grow Foundation)

### 2.3 Sampling method

The sample size for respondents for the semi-structured interviews targeted at the female and male youths was determined based on Fishers (1991) sampling approach using the project outreach numbers by the equation below:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot Q}{L^2}$$

where:

$$Q = 1-p$$

Z<sub>α/2</sub> = Confidence level at 95% (standard value of 1.96)

p = Estimated prevalence at 50 % (Proportion)

L = Level of precision at 5% (standard value of 0.05).

$$n = \frac{1.962 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = \frac{384.16}{0.0025} = 384.16 \times 0.25 = 960.4$$

Using our assumption of the study population of 200 from the six parishes, a correction factor calculated the actual sample size as follows:

$n = 1$  which is the reciprocal of  $\frac{1}{n} + \frac{1}{N}$  Where:

n is the actual sample size and N is the study population

From the above, the sample sizes calculated were: 296 YES BTVET Graduates, 356 YES Rural Youths, and 296 for YES Urban Youths. The target number for Non-YES BTVET Graduates was set at 50.

### 2.4 Information gathering, analysis and synthesis

Information was gathered using the 10 tools defined in Table 1. Overall, for youth, the response rate included: 41 YES BTVET Graduates, 321 YES Rural Youths, 325 YES Urban Youths and 16 Non-YES BTVET Graduates. In addition, 09 BTVETs and 09 PSEs (table 2) provided information on internship to YES Project youths. Finally, the SGF team conducted a Stakeholders Workshop in Arua.

The data from the semi-structured questionnaires was entered into a pre-developed excel template subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20) and Stata. Analyses of variance (ANOVA) (or General Linear Models (GLM) were done to understand the effect of the BTVET (i) Training Approach, (ii) Learning Environment, (iii) Tutors and (iv) Training Schedules, as scored by the BTVET Graduates, on (i) monthly incomes, (ii) status of employment or non-employment of other people by the BTVET Graduates and (iii) number or people employed by the BTVET Graduates.

Information from the checklists and participatory tools was synthesized mainly to derive qualitative information on the skilling process challenges prior to YES projects implementation, the changes observed with YES implementation and mechanisms for upscaling the gains.

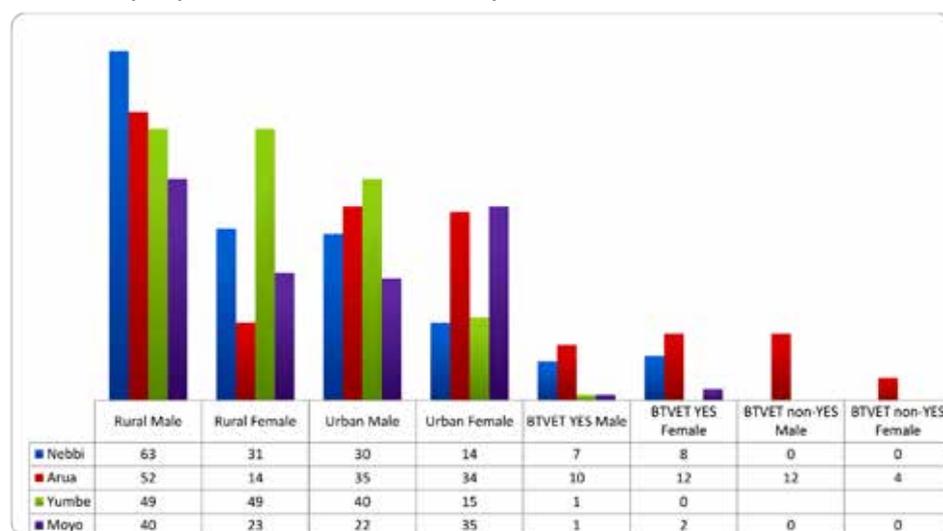
**Table 2. BTVET institutions and PSE Respondents**

<b>Business Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVETs)</b>	<b>District</b>
1. St Timothy Vocational Training Centre	Nebbi
2. Comboni Technical School	Nebbi
3. Pacier Community Polytechnic	Nebbi
4. Flamingo Vocational Training Centre	Arua
5. Zobebe Memorial Vocational Institute	Arua
6. Nile Farm	Arua
7. Odokibo Agricultural Training Centre	Yumbe
8. Lodongo Polytechnic School	Yumbe
9. Moyo Tehnical Institute	Moyo
<b>Private Sector Enterprises (PSEs)</b>	
1. Nyayoo Furniture Palace	Nebbi
2. God’s Grace Vocational training Institute	Nebbi
3. Nile Hardware Garrage	Nebbi
4. Molvis Beauty Saloon	Arua
5. Solar Now	Arua
6. Odikibo Agricultural Training Centre	Yumbe
7. Bishop Federicus Community Center	Yumbe
8. New Looks Desgn	Moyo
9. Steer Technical Services	Moyo

## Results and Discussions

### 3.1 Outreach Summary

The following youth participated in the study: 41 YES BTVET Graduates, 321 YES Rural Youths, 325 YES Urban Youths and 16 Non-YES BTVET Graduates. Overall the YES Project Urban and Rural Youths comprised of the largest proportion of respondents as compared to the Non-YES BTVET graduates (Figure 1). This trend was largely dictated by the ease of access to the different rural and urban YES Project youths. In almost all the BTVETs there were no tracer studies conducted and hence access to a database of old graduates was surmountable within the limited time scope provided for the study.



**Figure 1. Numbers of Female and Male respondents**

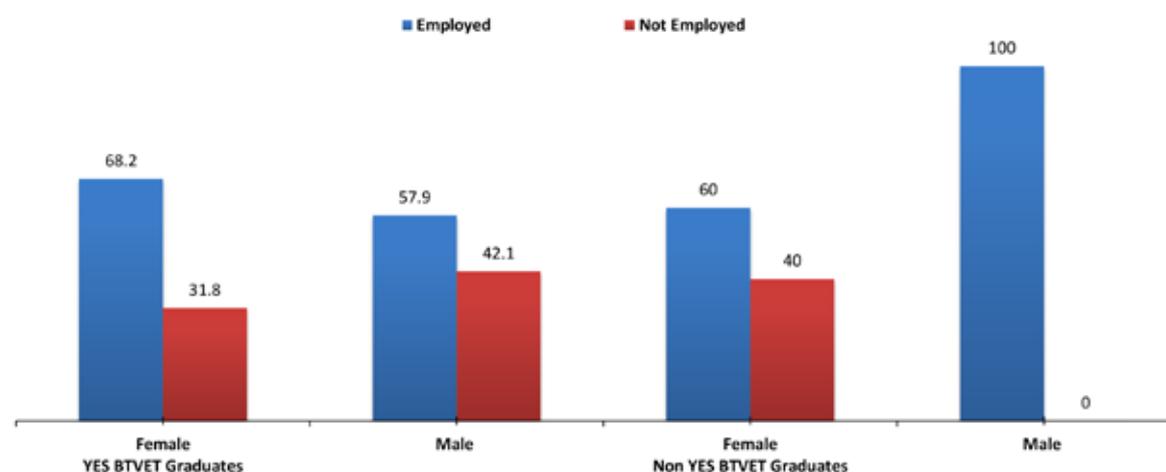
In terms of the courses that were pursued by the graduate youth (table 3 below), the largest enrolment was tailoring for female graduates and carpentry for male graduates for both YES and Non-YES BTVET graduates. The lowest enrolment for women was under bicycle repair and electrical and agriculture for men. Gender biases were rife in how courses were attended by males and female youth. A deeper look at the various courses offered by the BTVETs indicted that there were no graduate enrollment for Brick making, Tourism and Hospitality, Nursery School teaching, Painting, Art and Craft, Pottery, Pump mechanic, Motor cycle mechanic and phone repair. Further studies would be required to establish why these courses have no preference among the youth. Anecdotal evidence shows that many youth enrollments is guided by their local labour market demands, the capital size required to start-up self-employment using their acquired skills, parental guidance, and above all peer influence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lakwo, A. and de Haan, L.J. (2017) "Is Rural Youth Self-employment a Pathway out of Extreme Poverty? Experience from Vocational Skilling in West Nile, Uganda." *Managing Development in Africa*, 2(1): 1-28.

**Table 3. Courses pursued by Female and Male youth**

Courses	Category of Youths			
	YES Graduates		Non-YES Graduates	
	% of Female Graduates	% of Male Graduates	% of Female Graduates	% of Male Graduates
Tailoring	45.5		40	
Carpentry		36.8		36.4
Electrical	4.5	21.1		27.3
Motor Mechanic		21.1		9.1
Bicycle repair	4.5			
Catering/Cookery	9.1		20	
Plumbing				18.2
Civil works/Construction/Brick laying		15.8		9.1
Agriculture	22.7	5.3		
Hairdressing and Salon	18.1		20	
Stenography			20	

### 3.2 Youth Graduate Employment Status



**Figure 2. Percent of employment status of Female and Male Graduates**

As figure 2 above shows, on average more non-YES graduates were employed (80%) as compared to only 63% for YES graduates. By gender, the employment status was higher for male non-YES graduate and female YES graduates. Although these could not be explained entirely by the male-female cohort competence per se, to a greater extent as the FGDs revealed, it emanated from the many years male Non-YES BTVET graduates had in the job market (up to 10 years for some); a factor that meant at the study time they were already fully active in self-employment. In addition, this was due to the labour market entry opportunity that many female youth had. Referring to the course preferences

the male and female youth attended, it is clearly evident that for many females their markets started from within their family members (tailoring, saloon works, etc.)

### 3.3 Values added of internship placement and learning approach

#### 3.3.1 Comparison of performance in skills development, market responsiveness and job creation

Overall the contribution of YES interventions towards skills acquisition, market responsiveness and job creation are clearly shown by specific variables in-built in the semi-structured questionnaire and for which data was collected and results for these and others are summarized in Table 4. In addition, table 5 show results of statistical analyses that tested for relationships between Tutor Effectiveness Learning Environment, Training Approach and Training Schedules at the BTVETs with Monthly Incomes, Employment Status and Number of people employed by the BTVET graduates.

##### 3.3.1.1 Skills Development

The major variables used for providing inference towards skills development were

- proportion of BTVET Graduates completing their employment and/or business assignments on time;
- proportion of BTVET Graduates training other Youths;
- employment status at the time of the interview; and
- monthly incomes.

Proportion of YES Project BTVET Graduates completing their assignments on time was significantly ( $P < 0.05$ ) in excess of those from the Non-YES BTVET category by 28% (Table 4). Overall YES BTVET Graduates unlike their counterparts had created a multiplier effect and had in total altogether informally trained 148 other youths. Clearly in terms of skills development, the YES Project BTVET Youths, who in fact had been in the work environment for a shorter duration than their Non-YES Project counterparts demonstrated higher level of skills development through timely completion of their assignments. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showed a significant positive relationship between a BTVET Student being employed and a high rating Tutor Effectiveness and Training Schedules. This ANOVA result should be considered in the context of the average scores submitted by the YES and Non-YES BTVET Graduates Scores by YES Project BTVET Graduates for Tutor Effectiveness and Training Schedules were 4.08 and 3.43 compared to 3.29 and 3.38 submitted by the Non-YES BTVET Graduates. These relationships provide substantial inference towards the skills development capacity of the YES Project approach.

##### 3.3.1.2 Market Responsiveness

Two major variables were used to provide inference towards Market Responsiveness and these were (i) the duration of time the BTVET Graduates remained jobless after completing their training and (ii) the monthly income per BTVET from their business. Both the YES and Non-YES BTVETs spent just over 3.5 months after graduation before either finding employment or starting their businesses. This is a clear indicator that the Market Responsiveness of the skills pursued by both categories of BTVET Graduates is high. Although the

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) did not show a significant relationship between Monthly Income for any of the BTVET attributes; Tutor Effectiveness, Learning Environment, Training Approach and Training Schedules (Table 5), Monthly income for the YES Project BTVET graduates was significantly higher ( $P < 0.1$ ) and in fact more than triple that for the Non-YES BTVET graduates (Table 4). This demonstrates the market responsiveness of the businesses and services being delivered by the YES Project BTVET graduates possibly resulting from a combination of the skills pursued and their competence.

### **3.3.1.3 Job Creation**

Two variables that were identified as precise indicators of Job Creation were (i) proportion of BTVET Graduates employing other people and (ii) number of women and men employed by each BTVET graduate. Although the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) did not show a significant relationship between number of people employed by the BTVET Graduates and any of the BTVET attributes; (Table 5), the strong ability of the YES Project BTVET graduates in creating employment was clearly demonstrated by the proportion of BTVET graduates employing other people which was over 2 times higher ( $P < 0.1$ ) than that for the Non-YES BTVET graduates (Table 4). Employment of others can only happen when a business is growing and earnings made can support additional labour or human resource and clearly this is credit to the businesses of the YES Project BTVET graduates and their competencies in their various fields of skill.

The YES Project BTVET graduates had lower number of employees per graduate which was approximately 6 times lower than the case for the Non-YES BTVET graduates. However, it is important to remember that all the Non-YES BTVET graduates had been in the field longer than the YES Project BTVET graduates, especially the males who comprised majority of non-project BTVET graduates. In addition, overall the research team accessed less Non-YES BTVET graduates (16) compared to the overall number of YES Project BTVET graduates (41) accessed. This though providing an insight into the status of critical parameters is to some extent not a very fair comparison. Overall, employment of men was 3 times and 7 times higher than employment of women within the businesses of the Non-YES BTVET graduates and the YES Project BTVET graduates respectively. This could probably be owed to the specific fields of business of the BTVET graduates – the largest number of businesses could be largely male oriented e.g. carpentry and mechanics etc. This could call for a more in-depth study of the gender orientation of the market responsive skills to support interventions that seek to target opportunities for women employment in the area of vocational skills.

**Table 4. Comparison of skills development, market responsiveness and job creation**

Critical Result Indicators	Values	YES BVET Youth	Non-YES BVET Graduate	Level of significance of mean difference
<b>Skills Development</b>	Proportion (%) of Graduates Completing assignments on time	59%	31%	Significant Difference (P<0.05; T-Test done using YES/NO scores)
	Proportion (%) of Graduates who have trained other Youths	37%	0%	Significant Difference (P<0.05; T-Test done using YES/NO scores)
	Number of Female Youths trained by BVET graduates	44	0	NA
	Number of Male Youths trained by BVET graduates	104	0	NA
	Proportion (%) of BVET Female Graduates training other Youths	18%	0	NA
	Proportion (%) of Male BVET Graduates Training other Youths	58%	0	NA
<b>Market Responsiveness</b>	Number of months the Youths remained jobless after graduating from the BVET	3.76	3.64	No Significant Difference
	Income Ushs/ (month) from the main business of the BVET Graduate (per BVET Graduate)	83,587	18,750	Significant Difference (P<0.1)
<b>Job Creation</b>	Proportion (%) of BVET Graduates employing other people	14.6%	6.3%	Significant difference (P<0.1; T-test done using YES/NO scores)
	Number of people employed per BVET graduate	0.2	1.3	No significant difference
	Number of men employed per BVET graduate	0.2	1.2	No significant difference
	Number of women employed per BVET graduate	0.02	0.38	No significant difference

**Table 5. Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) test for BTJET Graduates**

	Attributes with inference on success of TVET Graduates		
Factors with potential effect on success of BTJET Graduates	Income (ANOVA Model I)	Employment Status (ANOVA Model II)	Number of People Employed (ANOVA Model III)
Tutor Effectiveness	0.487	0.524	-0.774
Learning Environment	0.181	0.081	0.295
Training Approach	0.354	0.151	0.511
Training Schedules	-0.455	0.249	0.034
R – Squared ANOVA Model)	0.392	0.863	0.362
Statistical Significance (P<0.05) of the ANOVA Model	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant

### 3.3.1.4 Quantitative Information on other factors of BTJET Component

#### Relevance of skills included in the BTJET curriculum

Both the YES Project BTJET graduates and the Non-YES categorized the current relevance of the skills passed on to them during the training as approximately between 60 and 70%. And reasons they gave for not awarding 100% are summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6. Reasons for not awarding the relevance of their training 100% score**

YES Project BTJET Graduates	Recommendations and Comments
Omission in training on certain key designs and styles e.g. in tailoring –no training on making suits, wedding gowns etc and yet these could be key in a successful business	Regular updating of the competencies of trainers through refresher courses and periodic recruitment of new trainers to fill gaps and replace retired trainers.
Failure to train some key issues from first principles – yet such knowledge can give birth to numerous successful innovations at work places and in businesses	
Non-YES BTJET Graduates	Recommendations and Comments
Minimal or no practical training	BTJET Graduates suggested that the Institution establish onsite well equipped workshops and practical sites for hands-on practical training
Omission in training on certain important equipment for some skills e.g. heavy electrical, power tools, over locking machines (tailoring) etc	
No training on accessing capital for business	The Entrepreneurship Manual possibly catered for this because it was not mentioned by the YES Project BTJET Graduates as a gap
No training on business planning	The Entrepreneurship Manual possibly catered for this because it was not mentioned by the YES Project BTJET Graduates as a gap

## Entrepreneurship Manual by YES Project

The Entrepreneurship Manual developed by YES Project was rated as Fair by the YES Project BTVET Graduates. The reasons they gave for not awarding it Good or Very Good was because the Graduates did not receive a personal copy for their own reference in the future as they conduct their work as well as contribute to passing skills to other Youths. It is, therefore, recommended that if SNV, AFARD and CEGED can already make provision for sharing the manual with the YES Project BTVET Graduates it will be a valuable life time resource for their work and businesses. In addition when Government and private BTVETs adopt the Entrepreneurship Manual, arrangements should be made for providing each student with a copy.

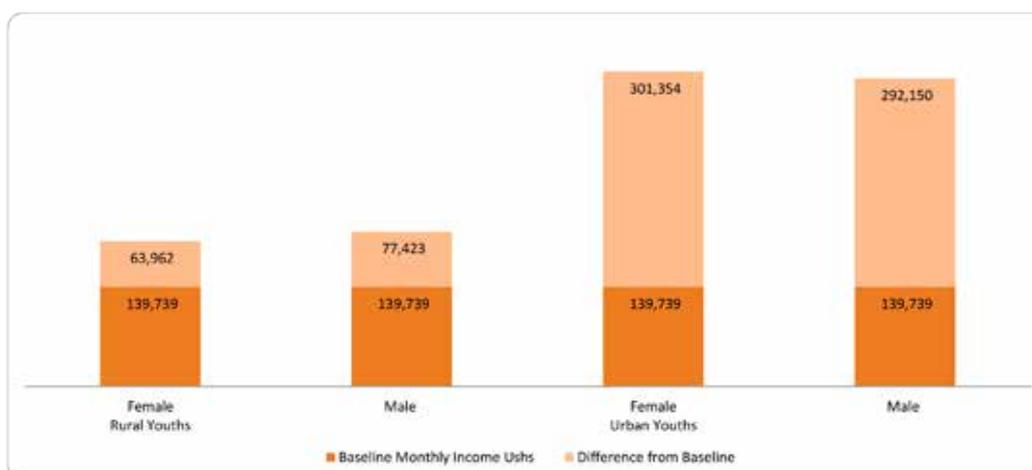
## Relevance of internship

Relevance of internship was rated as Good by the YES Project BTVET Graduates and Poor by the Non –YES BTVET Graduates. Clearly the addition of well structured internship arrangement in the YES project BTVET Training Courses was seen as a highly valuable addition that should be adopted by Government and private BTVETs.

## 3.4 YES Project Rural and Urban Youths Interventions

### Incomes of YES Project Rural and Urban Youths

Foremost, it is evident from figure 3 that both rural and urban youth earned their monthly incomes above the baseline survey levels of UGX 139,739 (SNV; AFARD; CEGED, 2015). Further, the monthly incomes for the urban youths was four times those of the rural youth and this difference was statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). While on average the rural youth earned about UGX 70,693 above the baseline figure, their counterpart the urban youth earned on average UGX 296,752. The highest income was that for the urban female youths (UGX 301,354). While the lowest income was that for the rural female youths (UGX 63,962). These difference in monthly income by gender amidst the fact that both gender prioritized near same courses was attributed by the KIIs to variations in market sizes. It was pointed out that urban areas had larger markets for their products, as well as greater opportunities for tapping into more competitive markets offering higher prices.



### Figure 3. Monthly Income (UGX) of youth graduates

#### YES Project Kits

Overall the youths considered the kits a valuable contributor to their success in business. The female rural youths scored the usefulness of the kits higher than any other category in the ranges of over 70% (Table 7). Similarly, the score by the rural male youths was slightly higher than that by their urban counterparts. Access to equipment, tools, materials and inputs was reported by both FGDs and KIIs as more difficult in rural areas and so this trend of scoring is not so surprising and such in processes of skilling youths provision to address this kind of scarcity for rural youths should be considered.

**Table 7. Contribution of the Kits to the success of YES graduates**

Category of Youths	Gender	Usefulness of Kit (1; 10-30%, 2;31-50%, 3;51-60%, 4; 61-70%, 5; 71-90%, 6;Over 90%)
Rural Youths	Female	4.24
	Male	3.65
Urban Youths	Female	3.43
	Male	3.37

Scores for "Usefulness of Kit": 1; 10-30%, 2;31-50%, 3;51-60%, 4; 61-70%, 5; 71-90%, 6; Over 90%

#### 3.5 Values Added (presented as quotes from YES Participants)

Below we present quotes from statements that were made by the respondents to avoid excessive paraphrasing with the likelihood of distorting the statements and hence altering the message the respondents intended to communicate. Secondly, SNV indicated to us during the inception meeting that they place a lot of value on quotations because they are statements directly from people their work has interfaced with and as such use them a lot in their various reporting documents and visibility materials. The content of these statements, have been integrated where relevant and necessary in the main text of the report.

#### Values added to BTVETs

- An eye opener and a link for BTVETs in instruction
- An ease pathway for linking trainees for placement for internship with PSE's; *"the link with PSE's was a hard rock initially, especially for instructor to get placement for trainees and this has improved"* **[Instructor, BTVET]**
- *"Initially it was even difficult for instructors to reach and speak to PSEs"* **[Instructor, BTVET]**
- Built capacity of the instructors to cope with new technology through in-service trainings; *" We were using old technology, we had no opportunity for in-service training and this is where the YES Project has stepped in"* **[Instructor, BTVET]**
- Improved capacity of the BTVETs to supervise trainees placed for internship; *"It was difficult to know who is where in terms of follow up of trainees. YES easily facilitated tutors financially to follow and supervise trainees."*

*Initially, we had no funds, it was difficult to know where these PSE are. YES was able to map and share locations of the PSEs” [Instructor, BTVET]*

- *Setting up of practical demonstration sites; “we were able to undertake some projects like piggery and we also have a nursery section for crops” [Instructor, BTVET]*
- *Better commitment of instructors due to good supervision by project facilitators; “I think another point is also follow-up of the instructors in the institutions, we have focal persons from the project, especially the facilitators ..... for Yumbe we have Henry from Arua and then there are those for Nebbi, Moyo” [Instructor, BTVET]*

## **Values added to Youths**

### Skills acquisition

- *Access to practical sessions through internship hence better skills; “... As I talk now, I am even preparing the next lot for internship” [Instructor, BTVET]*

### Market Responsiveness

- *Improved employment and income; “those beneficiaries, this time I said communicate to me that they are making money. It has opened for them the way to get to the world of jobs, especially those who had gone for industrial training, many of them had the opportunity of being retained” [Instructor, BTVET]*

### Job creation

- *“YES Project introduced Village Saving and Lending Association (VSLA), which has promoted saving culture among us (the youth), helped in borrowing and this has led to creating businesses for ourselves.” [YES Project Youth, BTVET]*
- *“Source of employment for younger people; it is useful, we are self-reliant, we are fully engaged and we cannot engage in theft.” [YES Project Youth, BTVET]*
- *“Empowered us with business skills, in addition to the starter kits and capital, this has supported us and has helped us to boost our businesses.” [YES Project Urban Youth]*

## **Values added to PSEs**

*Reduced work load; “Yes. Because there was time we had several installations and our man power was not enough and the interns helped us a lot in addressing some of these gaps” [PSE]*



**Belongs to both categories of Urban and BTVET Youths.**

She got a starter kit, a sewing machine that she is using in the picture. She has used the kit to train other youth and also make clothes and bags for sell. The clothes that she sells are shown on the wall in the picture and the bags below. Because of her hard work, BRAC, an NGO selected her to go and train in tailoring at St. Timothy. BRAC paid all her fees. She is very grateful to YES that kick started her progress.

Figure 4. Female Youth who trained at the BTVET under the YES Project



The picture shows some of the bags she makes with the sewing machine given by YES. She sells the bags in Nebbi and other districts. Some of her bags are bought and taken Congo and Southern Sudan. Very grateful to YES Project.

Figure 5. Female Youth displaying the bags she makes



**A rural youth who has progressed on onions seeds (starter kit) given by YES Project.**

He planted the onion seeds and got very good yields. After sell of his onions, he bought two solar panels, one of which he is holding and another on the ground. He is using the solar panels in his kiosk where his standing in his village. Very grateful to YES which kick started his progress

Figure 6. A rural youth who exhibited diversification



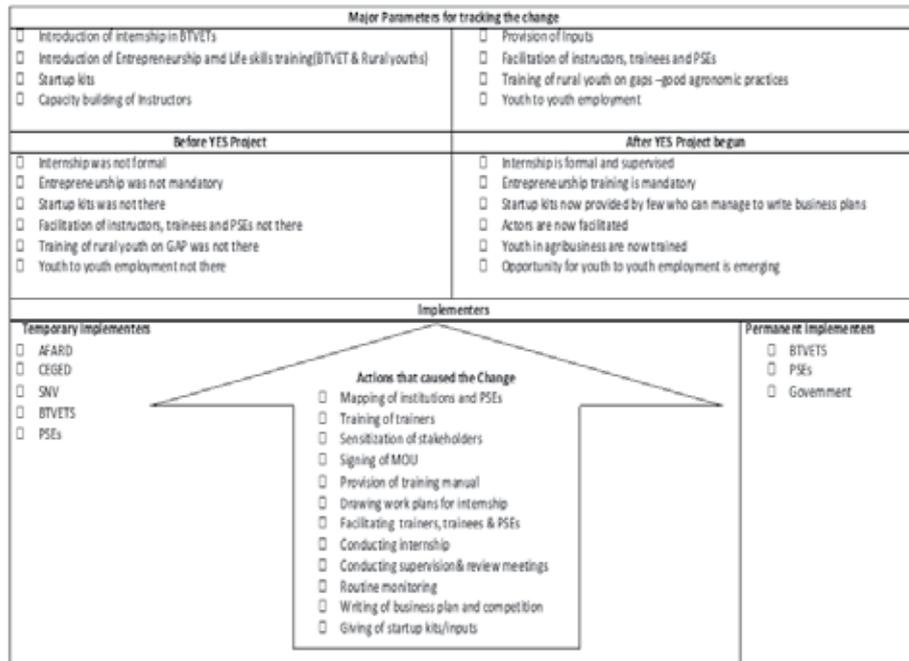
**Two YES BTVET youth who were retained in the PSE as a result of their good and hard work.**

They have become models in Nebbi town and known of making unique fashioned chairs. The picture shows the boys and chairs they have made. The chairs shown were going to be taken and shown in an exhibition in Nebbi. Grateful to YES and the PSE.

Figure 7. Two trainees retained by the PSE where they did their internship

### 3.6 Tracking YES project induced Change

The process and analysis of change resulting from the implementation of the YES Project in West Nile and recommendation for sustainability of the successes was summarized by Stakeholders in Figure 9. This illustration is seen as key in providing guidance to the YES approach upscaling process.



**Figure 8. Analysis of the change caused by the YES Project**

### 3.7 Constraints impending effective youth BTVET skilling

#### 3.7.1 Below we present the similar constraints that were provided by FGDs, KIIs and stake holder workshps.

##### **Skilling Approach**

- a. Delays in supervision of trainees’ due to bureaucracies in the funding agencies.
- b. Theoretical delivery of entrepreneurship lessons.
- c. Inadequate exposure of trainees hence need for farm tours and learning visits to excelling youth.
- d. The kits for BTVET youth does not reach the basic toolkit required for effective start up of business.
- e. In some instances, delivery of kits has been delayed.
- f. Beneficiaries limited to candidate classes for BTVET youth.

##### **BTVETs and Tutors**

- a. Government neglect of BTVET training in-terms of equipment, books etc
- b. Lack of opportunities for in-service training hence tutors are not up-to-date
- c. Persons with non-BTVET-related training and background heading most BTVETS because the institutions are annexed to business institutions.
- d. Poor support supervision by government authorities

### **Internship and PSEs**

- a. Short internship period (3 weeks to 1 month)
- b. Inadequate facilitation of the trainees during internship (transport and lunch) and this limits the variety and number of field sites to which they can be transported and this limits their practical learning experience during internship. The Youths who are not in their home location also have challenges accessing funds for accommodation.

### **Youths**

- a. Difficult access to land for youth entrepreneurs who opt for agriculture
- b. Marketing of products is difficult for the youth

### **Cross-cutting challenges**

- a. Limited access to finance for both the students and the BTVETs
- b. Climate variability

Problem-Causal-Solution Analyses from Stakeholders Workshop in Arua.

In addition to the above, the prioritised list of 10 major challenges within the youth skilling sector in Uganda identified as below;

1. Attitude of the youth towards skills training
2. Parents low literacy levels
3. Inadequate tools, equipment in VTIs and materials
4. Poor facilitation for instructors and youth
5. Limited finances (parents and Institutions)
6. Limited suitable places for internship
7. The high demands from PSEs
8. Inadequate facilities for internship from PSEs
9. Poor linkage between NGOs, government and other stakeholders
10. Inadequate sensitization on BTVET skill training programs.

Next page we present a diagrammatic analysis of two examples (Figure 9 and 10).

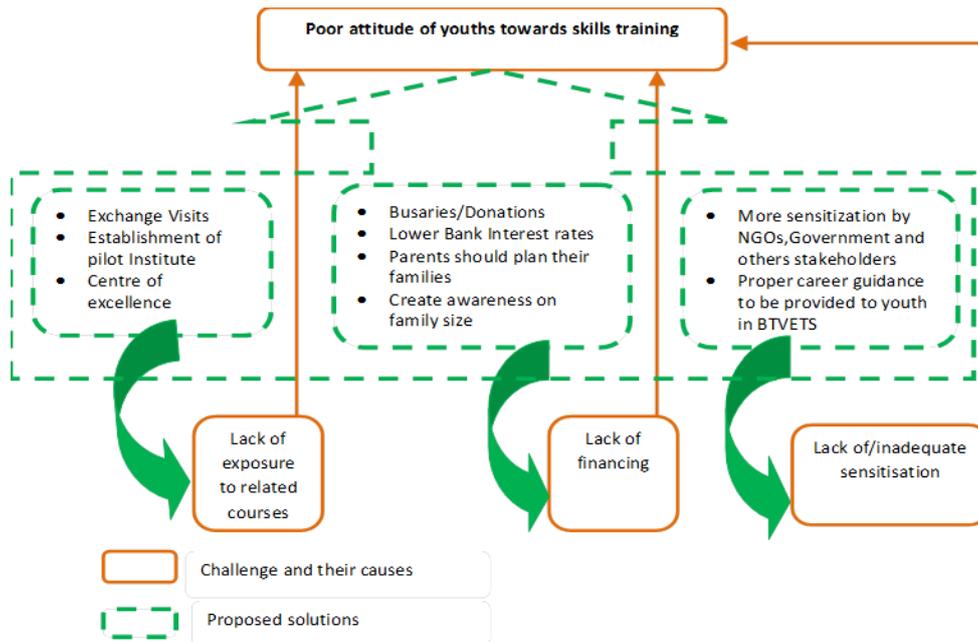


Figure 9. Example 1 of Problem-Causal-Solution Analysis

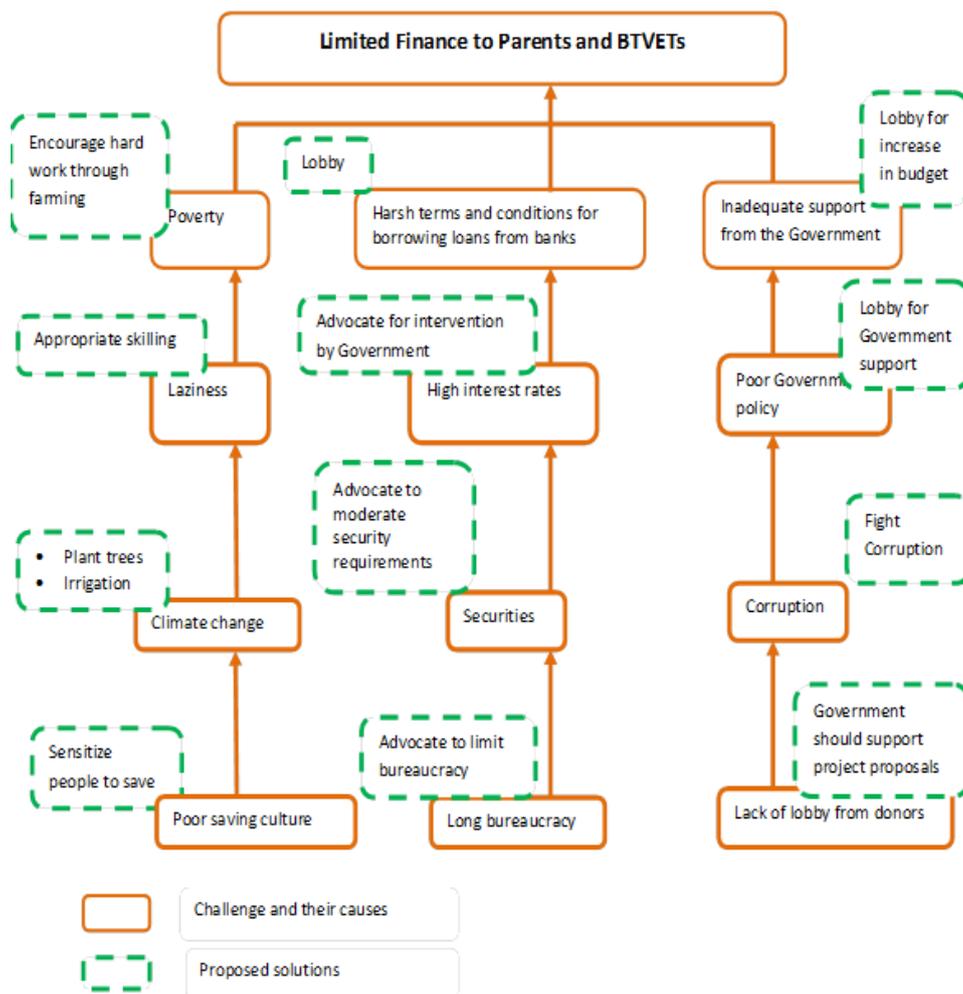


Figure 10. Example 2 of Problem-Causal-Solution Analysis

### 3.8 Options for improvement and Out- and Up-scaling the YES approach

Recommendations made in this section are based on results obtained from the entire Action Research and the synthesis has been based on the results from the analysis of quantitative data specifically where significant results were observed and synthesis of qualitative information based on the frequency of submission of specific views and perspectives. The recommendations directly respond to Action Research Question 3; How can this approach be improved and up-scaled in ways that address its systemic and or design challenges? This Action Research Question is forward-looking and places emphasis on sustainability of the results which will partly relies on effective adoption of fundamental components of the YES approach that were responsible for the Project’s success by permanent institutions in the country responsible for BTVET training.

**Table 8. Approaches to out- and up-scaling YES Project**

Recommendation	Actors
<b>Skilling Approach</b>	
Consider opening up eligibility for YES BTVET youth to include other classes rather than restricting the intervention to only the candidate classes	BTVETs and Govt.
Baseline surveys should be considered before each major skilling initiative and regular surveys to track progress should be institutionalized. Such surveys will also be critical in continuously tracking the dynamics of the labour market and provide precise information required for orienting the skilling programmes towards sustainable market responsiveness. These surveys would provide basis for career guidance for trainees as well as prioritization of courses for a specified period eg years, in response to the survey results	Govt. and BTVETs
Opportunities be opened up to the YES Project Rural and Urban Youths for skills upgrade and with the aim of acquiring certification with a workers PAS (Practically Aquired Skills) under the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) for Micro business and Agri business. These certifications for non-formal skills which were developed in partnership with private sector members will broaden the marketability of the Youths as employees, employers and service providers.	BTVETs
The annual fairs organized for the BTVET graduates should be strengthened and partners should be identified and attracted to join a funding/sponsorship consortium to ensure sustainability eg a consortium of BTVETs, DLGs and PSEs could adopt the event	NGOs, Development Partners, DLGs, PSEs
Business mentoring and coaching should be adopted as an advanced stage of skills enhancement for promising Youths	BTVETs
In-build and institutionalize mechanisms for advertising BTVET courses and following up supported youth as this will motivate them and the field guidance provided will keep them on track	Govt.
Increase numbers, quality and variety of tutors and just recently Abilonino Instructors College in Kole District was opened with a capacity enrollment of over 300 trainee tutors. This is a valuable addition into the skilling sector in Uganda and out- and up- scaling of the YES approach can utilize this as one of the entry points	Govt.

Provision for bursaries for trainees who excel in BTVETs to undertake further studies should be introduced in the programmes. This will create a critical mass of quality human resource in various areas which can provide an active pipeline for Tutors, PSEs and Service Providers	Govt.
Equip the trainees with some minimum skills for training others – having observed from the research results that they are already transferring skills to others. This will contribute to management of the quality of delivery of those who have learnt the skills informally	BTVETs
Provide personal copies of manuals with the training content eg Entrepreneurship manual	BTVETs
<b>Internship structuring, facilitation and partnership with PSEs</b>	
Support towards PSEs to meet minimum standards before placement of trainees. This would apply to those that are found lacking and yet meet many of the other criteria set by the implementers for hosting interns.	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs, BTVETs
Timely facilitation for the PSEs hosting interns to avoid stress which has a negative impact on the learning process	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs, BTVETs
Increase facilitation of instructors to follow-up the trainees more frequently - at least each trainee be visited once a fortnight	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs, BTVETs
Internship arrangement should be upgraded to include a component of providing linkages to employment and business opportunities eg through retention, within an established PSE network and through utilization of the data from the regular labour scans that would have been done by Govt. and BTVETs	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs, BTVETs
<b>Start-up Kits, Grants and Packages</b>	
Enable access to adequate start-up Kits/Grants/Packages by pursuing the following options	
a. Integrate the skilling and Government Youth Financing Programmes such as the Youth Livelihoods Programme and Youth Venture Capital Fund (UYVCF)	Govt. and BTVETs
b. VSLA approach as entry point to financial inclusion component for business startup for those in self-employment	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs and BTVETs
c. Training in youth community savings groups	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners and DLGs
d. Linkage to formal Financial Institutions for business expansion and growth	NGOs and Govt can support establishment of Business Partnerships among Financial Institutions, Equipment and Input Suppliers and the Youths

e. Partner with some SACCOS and banks who can offer asset acquisition facilities tailored towards the target group	NGOs and Govt can support establishment of Business Partnerships among Financial Institutions, Equipment and Input Suppliers and the Youths
f. Strengthen the component of financial literacy skills in the training programmes	BTVETs
Start-up kits for BTVET Youths should be provided before rather than after placement so that the trainees can practice using them and move to their businesses when used to their own tools	BTVETs
Ensure the youth have the complete basic requirements in their kits for the skills they have acquired and options suggested for ensuring this include	BTVETs
Study should be done specifically to follow up on the usefulness of the kits and how kits acquisition, distribution and monitoring can be improved to ensure effective contribution to the work and businesses of the Youths.	Govt., NGOs and Development Partners, DLGs and BTVETs

## Conclusions

This action research sought to answer three major questions: (i) What values has YES Project's internship placement and learning approach added to BTVETs, PSEs and the youth in terms of skills development, market responsiveness and job creation?; (ii) What are the constraints impeding effective youth skilling and internship placement that should be addressed by the government for effective delivery of youth vocational skilling in Uganda?; (iii) How can this approach be improved and upscaled in ways that address its systemic challenges?

The findings presented herein clearly demonstrates the successes of BTVET component of the YES project notably in enhanced job acquisition, increase in income, and the emerging job opportunity from YES Project BTVET graduates for other people. This points to the right direction for the government of Uganda in its drive for youth skilling. Finally, the innovative approach provided by SNV, AFARD and CEGED manifests of their capacity to provide this kind of partnership with government and other development partners in furthering the Skilling Uganda agenda.

## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge, with thanks, the support of SNV, AFARD, CEGED, all Field Staff, Youths, PSEs and BTVET representatives interviewed, our driver and all other service providers who provided us with quality services and enabled the Sow and Grow Foundation Team to carry out this Action Research successfully.

## Annexes

### Annex I. List of BTVETs, PSEs and People Contacted

Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET)	Contact Person	District
St Timothy Vocational Training Centre	Absalom Upenyi Jawor	Nebbi
Comboni Technical School	Opoki Colbert	Nebbi
Pacier Community Polytechnic	Yoacel Okello	Nebbi
Flamingo Vocational Training Centre	Ondoru Alice	Arua
Zobebe Memorial Vocational Institute	Francis Ayikanying	Arua
Nile Farm	Musema Denis Ejoyi	Arua
Odokibo Agricultural Training Centre	Adiru Margret	Yumbe
Lodongo Polytechnic School	Bayo Dicken	Yumbe
Moyo Tehnical Institute	Adubango Meck Yackech	Moyo
PSE	Contact Person	
Nyayoo Furniture Palace	Iwutung Timothy	Nebbi
God's Grace Vocational training Institute	Achanda Agnes	Nebbi
Nile Hardware Garrage	Pitua Rashid	Nebbi
Molvis Beauty Saloon	Opiru Monica	Arua
Solar Now	Kisa Herbert	Arua
Odikibo Agricultural Training Centre	Bro. Nelson Alworonga	Yumbe
Bishop Federicus Community Center	Paul Atama	Yumbe
New Looks Desgn	Minzitia Lawrence Okudi	Moyo
Steer Technical Services	Yama Moses	Moyo



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