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Although it is held up as one of the few African success stories of the last decade, a closer look at the situation of poverty and development in Uganda reveals a much less encouraging picture. Overall, the economic situation is severely constrained due to internal conflict, the high prevalence of infectious diseases, environmental degradation, lack of infrastructure, and low capacity for business development. According to international standards, Uganda still ranks among the twenty poorest countries in the world, with over fifty percent of the population living below the official poverty line. These impacts are particularly prevalent in rural areas, where the economy tends to be dominated by low productivity subsistence agriculture. Rural Ugandans have seen very little real growth in crop production over the last decade due to lack of access to agricultural inputs and financial services, declining soil fertility, poor infrastructure, lack of critical information and communication, and the inability to access large markets.

Over the last 25 years, microfinance has emerged as an effective vehicle for poverty reduction in Uganda. Many non-governmental organizations are working to provide the rural poor with an increased access to credit by teaching community members about the benefits of savings, encouraging them to save, and offering loans to start small businesses. FSD works with locally-run non-governmental organizations to support grassroots economic development by providing job skills, micro-enterprise trainings and workshops, and micro-credit opportunities that empower communities to actualize change. Interns have the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of micro-finance and business related activities that will directly assist Ugandans in their struggle against the current economic situation.

### Internship/Volunteer opportunities in micro-enterprise in Uganda include:

- Assist education of community members on sustainable micro-enterprise creation and money management issues.
- Mobilize clients of a micro-credit lending program by educating them on issues related to savings and how to utilize a loan for small business development.
- Aid development of new loan programs that could improve the livelihoods of the rural poor.
- Administer training to farmers who want to start successful micro-enterprises or expand their existing businesses through effective planning and loan usage.
- Support marketing of farmers' crops in order to receive higher prices in the national and international market. Strengthen an FSD project organizing local farmers into a cooperative that centralizes market development.
- Support micro-enterprise training for rural villagers. Programs include organic/sustainable agriculture, brick laying/brick making, beekeeping, poultry management, tree planting, coffee and banana management, business management skills, and produce buying/selling.
- Provide non-formal education to displaced Karamajong migrants in Mbale so that they can sustainably develop income generating activities and job skills.

For more opportunities in micro-enterprise in Uganda, visit our website or contact us directly.