



Miller Center
for Social Entrepreneurship



SCALING FOR SUCCESS

How to Accelerate All Across Africa's Impact in Uganda



Sammi Bennett & Huda Navaid

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All Across Africa is seeking to scale its impact in Uganda by mitigating productivity challenges and improving operations at all levels. This can be achieved by addressing internal and external obstacles.

Through qualitative interviews of 66 artisans and co-op leaders, 1 government official, and office staff, we sought to understand local factors that determine success.

After analyzing co-op functioning in Uganda and Rwanda, we found three important aspects of co-op success. These were a formalized leadership structure, accessible financial services, and opportunities for capacity-building

All Across Africa Uganda can scale its impact by implementing transferable aspects of success that help Rwandan co-ops thrive while keeping in mind differences in cultural contexts.

We recommend that All Across Africa pursue a strategic initiative with three elements:

Element 1	Activate capacities of Ugandan women leaders by addressing the cultural norms that exist in communities
Element 2	Provide co-ops with financial tools by seeking out partnerships that can equip Ugandan artisans with enhanced financial literacy and services
Element 3	Formalize a training program for staff members and create a co-op capacity-building position

Prepared by:



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Research Overview	4
Element 1: Enhance Co-op Leadership	5-8
Element 2: Provide Financial Tools for Ugandan Women Groups	9-11
Element 3: Formalized Training Program and Capacity Building	12-14
Conclusion	15
Appendix 1: Materials and Methods	17-23
Appendix 2: Checklists	24-25



Prepared by:



Research Overview

The Company: All Across Africa empowers women artisans economically by channeling their woven products to western markets and providing them with a reliable source of income.

The Research: All Across Africa Uganda faces two different types of problems in efforts to scale its impact: internal problems and expansion problems.

Internal problems refer to challenges that exist within co-ops and AAA's organizational structure. Internal problems are addressable by AAA staff because of their ability to control and confront many of the variables that create these struggles. Internal problems include a lack of formalized leadership structures and staff experience.

Expansion problems refer to efforts to expand and scale AAA Uganda's current size and impact. These include size and productivity of co-ops and the number of co-ops that exist in Uganda. External problems are made up of barriers that not as easily addressable by AAA staff. Examples of expansion barriers include cultural differences in Uganda, such as the extent to which women are supported in their homes and communities to be economic agents of change.

Some of the challenges that exist in both Uganda and Rwanda can be addressed through access to products and services. This will be outlined further in *From Access to Acceleration*.

In this document, we provide a road map to further accelerate AAA Uganda's impact by addressing ways to confront these different problems as AAA continues to grow and transform lives.



Prepared by:



Element 1: Enhance Co-op Leadership **Activating Capacities of Ugandan Women Leaders**

Element 1: Enhance Co-op Leadership

The interview responses we gathered from artisans and co-op leaders in Rwanda illustrate a communal culture that supports and empowers women in leadership roles in their communities. Many artisans and co-op leaders have played, or currently hold, a leadership position in their local government. According to the women we interviewed, leadership roles within local governments equip Rwandan women with an enhanced sense of agency to oversee and lead their co-ops successfully. In Uganda, almost no women artisans or co-op leaders reported previous or current leadership positions in their local government structures. In post-genocide Rwanda, the government has realized the potential of women in the economic development of their country, so government initiatives assist in building strong co-op capacities.

To create a similarly modeled system in Uganda, we propose that AAA staff in Uganda address the lack of government support for women and step in to create an atmosphere that supports Ugandan women to be leaders in their communities through the strategies listed below.

Strategy A: Collective Effort to Address Gender Inequality in Ugandan Weaving Communities

To accelerate the goal of activating the capacities of women leaders in Uganda, All Across Africa Uganda staff can work to address gender inequality in the communities in which AAA is based through a multifaceted approach. A significant number of the artisans in Uganda reported their husbands were jealous that they were making money or that husbands were suspicious when their wife left for the day to go weave with the group.

The first step AAA Uganda can take in addressing gender equality in local villages is to hold casual meetings or open houses in rural villages that engage families and husbands of weavers to learn more about the work artisans do. These meetings can take a variety of different forms, such as simple gatherings, or more formal workshops in economic empowerment or family development, but they must engage both genders. The primary goal of these meetings should serve to involve husbands and males in Ugandan villages in the economic activities of All Across Africa. This involvement may include husbands buying and sourcing materials, transporting materials, or learning other skills that support artisan production. The roadblocks that women are facing in terms of their weaving productivity may lessen when males understand the environment that

Prepared by:

an artisan needs to create her best work. It may help for husbands to see artisans working together in a public space, to lessen suspicion. Jealousy and suspicion among husbands cannot be addressed if only females are working to change the system. All community members must be involved in transforming local social norms with AAA staff as catalysts.

Thus, AAA Uganda can play a crucial role in the weaving communities in Uganda by educating both women and men about how they can improve their own livelihoods. Staff members of AAA in Uganda have the cultural knowledge and skills to begin to transform the norms that exist for women at a grassroots level. Beginning to address cultural norms in Uganda will provide a bottom-up intervention that will increase gender equity in Ugandan communities. As a result of these meetings, women may spend more time weaving and taking on leadership roles in their communities once they feel fully supported by their families, communities, and AAA Uganda staff.

Strategy B: Formalize Ugandan Co-op Leadership Structures Informed by Experience of Successful Rwandan Structures

From our interviews with women artisans and co-op leaders in Rwanda, we observed that leadership structure and leadership quality are crucial aspects of a successful co-op. We asked artisans and co-op leaders what makes their co-op successful, and many of the responses we gathered emphasize the importance of the “exchanging of ideas” and the “sharing of responsibilities.” These strategies of creating a successful co-op are embodied in Rwandan communal leadership teams sitting together and sharing advice on how to better the co-op. Co-ops in Rwanda have a practice in which the co-op leaders share group-specific goals they hope to reach and meet as a general assembly every three months to review their performance and set goals for the future.

Many of the women’s groups we interviewed in Uganda did not display a formal leadership structure. If a structure did exist, it did not distribute power effectively, or the leaders did not know the tasks that their role required. We found that some of the women’s group leaders in Uganda complained that all responsibility fell on one member, and she felt unable to empower her weavers as she felt overwhelmed. Lacking a formalized leadership structure seemed to penalize a group’s ability to distribute tasks and set meaningful goals.

In order for Ugandan weaving groups to be able to self-organize more effectively and set goals for the future, groups should exhibit formalized leadership structures.

Prepared by:

To further AAA Uganda's ability to scale, we recommend that AAA Uganda oversees the implementation of a formalized leadership structure to all groups in Uganda through 5 action steps:

Action Steps for Strategy B

1. Clarify Job Descriptions

To ensure effective distribution of power, AAA Uganda staff should clarify roles of each position before elections by explicitly stating duties of each position to ensure each member feels able to take on the leadership responsibility that best fits her strengths.

2. Foster Leadership Elections for Ugandan Co-ops

AAA staff in Uganda should follow the election process that exists in Rwanda and foster elections within each weaving group in Uganda for all positions, namely President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Advisors and Auditors. A member of AAA staff could facilitate an election training for each weaving group in Uganda to teach groups how to run a fair election. For best practice, women's groups should involve an outsider to oversee the election, such as a male member of the community that is not involved in the weaving group.

3. Train Women on Leadership Skills

To effectively catalyze women's leadership roles once the leadership structure has been implemented clearly in Ugandan women's groups, AAA Uganda staff could provide trainings on leadership skills, such as leading and inspiring others, building one's own leadership style, being decisive, and listening skills, to further guide women on how to be an effective leader.

Trainings may include basic leadership skills as well trainings on women's agency to further inspire women to take on a stronger leadership role in her community apart from her co-op.

4. Evaluate Leadership Trainings

To ensure leadership capacities of women in Uganda, we recommend that AAA staff evaluate leadership trainings through surveys distributed to women on the leadership team and artisans in the co-op to assess the capabilities of the leadership team. It will be important to gain the perspectives of the leaders who have been trained as well as the artisans who operate under the policies of their leaders.

Prepared by:

5. Reward Women for Increased Leadership Capacities

To further enhance co-op leadership in Uganda, AAA staff could incentivize co-op groups by evaluating the groups each year for their leadership structure and enhancement of their leadership skills. AAA staff can award a prize every month for a successful co-op leadership team that exemplifies equal distribution of power within their group. Incentives will boost co-op morale to lead their groups with vigor and enthusiasm.



Element 2: Provide Financial Tools for Ugandan Groups

Element 2: Provide Financial Tools for Ugandan Groups

Most groups in Uganda did not have savings structures in place and this created an unfair profit distribution system. Many artisans complained that money was not distributed equally, and oftentimes, the leader of their group would take off and run with the money the co-op had made. We noted that savings structures are one of the most successful aspects of Rwandan co-ops and contribute a communal aspect to the co-op culture. The ability of the co-op to save money and use that money to support members of the co-op that need assistance is fundamental in enhancing the capabilities of co-op members. In Rwanda, co-ops were trained on savings and investment by government officials and co-ops often provide financial assistance to its members in different circumstances. From our observations in the field, it is our understanding that members must feel confident in managing their own money and the money of their group in order for operations in Uganda to scale. Therefore, we recommend that AAA Uganda evaluates a partnership with an enterprise that offers financial services to manage the co-ops' savings accounts to further enhance co-op capabilities for scaling.

Step 1. Train Ugandan Weaving Groups on Savings

Before AAA Uganda evaluates a partnership with a financial service enterprise, Ugandan leadership teams should be trained on how to start a savings account for their group. Many artisans and co-op leaders we interviewed requested trainings on savings. AAA Uganda staff could meet this need by training artisans and co-op leaders on basic numeracy and financial literacy skills. The leadership teams in each co-op could simultaneously be trained on money management skills and financial leadership.

Step 2. Evaluate a Partnership with a Financially-Focused Social Enterprise

We suggest that AAA Uganda explores financial service options such as micro-financing, and partnerships with enterprises that provide these services in Uganda.

Prepared by:

One enterprise based in Uganda, Numida, a GSBI 2018 Alumni, provides a potentially useful financial service product by helping to improve financial management of small and medium enterprises. The company helps to digitize financial records and helps to improve financial literacy. Partnering with Numida may increase co-op capacities to manage capital and maximize co-op capacities.

Another potential partnership for AAA to investigate is with BRAC Uganda, one of the largest providers of financial services in Africa, to formalize micro-finance lending structures within co-ops. BRAC seeks to distribute financial services to those that lack a formal financial system. Implementing this partnership would enhance co-op's financial abilities and access to useful products and services by helping co-ops manage their savings fairly and effectively.

These potential partnerships may assist artisans and co-ops in making their own choices. Thus, artisans may experience enhanced financial literacy and access to modern services, making operations in Uganda run smoother overall. We focused only on two partnerships that may open doors to further success in Ugandan co-ops, but there are many potential partnerships that could enhance AAA's scaling in Uganda. Further strategies will be detailed in *From Access to Acceleration*.



Prepared by:



Element 3: Implement a Formalized Training Program and a Capacity Building Position

Element 3: Implement a Formalized Training Program and a Capacity Building Position

While in Uganda, we interviewed office staff to better understand their perspective on scaling operations in Uganda. AAA Uganda is much newer than in Rwanda, so staff members said that scaling to achieve a similar level of success as Rwanda is a matter of time and experience. Therefore, to help advance scaling operations in Uganda and beyond, a formalized training program and staff position focused on capacity-building may serve to catalyze AAA Uganda’s ability to accelerate its impact.

Strategy A. Formalize a Training Program for Staff

Through many conversations with AAA staff, we understood that a formalized training process was never implemented in bringing operations from Rwanda to Uganda. While AAA staff have been crucial to building the foundation of AAA’s structure in Rwanda, and helping to bring this expert knowledge to Uganda, staff are a limited resource and can only spend so much time training staff in Uganda.

Therefore, we suggest that AAA implement a formalized training program, based on several modules put forth by Benon, that include modules such as specific-role duties, management skills, and specific policy implementation within co-ops. To enhance the capabilities of AAA staff and the success of AAA Uganda scaling, the formalized training document should bring together all the information that Benon has organized into a formal document. As AAA continues to scale, by moving into new countries, we recommend this formalized training document be implemented through a training from a veteran staff member. We recommend that an employee from Rwanda trains local staff in the new country. An ideal candidate for installing this training program is Agnes because she exhibits a profound knowledge of AAA’s organizational structure and has strong leadership skills.

Strategy B. Implement a Co-op Capacity-Building Position in Uganda

From interviews with office staff in Uganda, we learned that operations in Uganda have struggled both to recruit more co-op groups and to continue to train

Prepared by:

and enhance capacities of existing co-ops. These jobs are crucial in AAA Uganda's scaling, but they cannot be implemented fully without enough staff members to accomplish these tasks successfully. While it is important to expand the number of co-ops, this effort should not take priority over developing the capacities of existing co-ops. Therefore, to scale operations in Uganda, we recommend that AAA hire a new employee on the Ugandan staff focused solely on increasing the capacities of existing co-ops.

This new position will focus on strengthening the capacities of co-ops, by incorporating trainings for artisans and co-op leaders that the artisans requested. A focus on capacity-building of co-ops will be crucial for AAA Uganda to effectively scale because such a position will enhance the functioning of co-ops in terms of leaderships skills, knowledge of savings, loans, and financial management. The position will focus on building up women's skills and abilities while in tandem, implementing policies for artisans and co-op leaders to follow. Specific policies and code of conduct rules need to be enforced in Uganda to ensure successful group functioning. While all Ugandan co-ops may not be registered with Ugandan Revenue Authority, the groups must still pay taxes and understand the policies set in motion by AAA. This capacity-building position will require strong leadership skills, knowledge in workforce management, financial systems, and must have strong people skills, as they will be working closely in the communities that AAA is based. After spending time in the field, we recommend that Douglas would be a particularly strong candidate for a new Capacity-Building position as he has a calm way of interacting with artisans and making them feel comfortable. Douglas also has a background in business management and exhibits strong people skills and would thus do well to facilitate trainings for co-ops in Uganda.

Strategy C. Evaluate Capacity-Building Trainings

To ensure the success of capacity building workshops and trainings, AAA Uganda could implement a system to measure the success of trainings and workshops, beyond just survey measures. The new Capacity-Building Employee (referred to in Strategy B) could create a system that gathers performance based evaluations from artisans rather than self-reporting measures. We have provided a checklist to guide the development of future trainings in the appendix.

Prepared by:



CONCLUSION

While All Across Africa Uganda is still in its beginning stages, it has the potential to scale and accelerate its impact multifold. In incorporating the responses from 60+ interviews with artisans, co-op leaders, government officials, and office staff, we have analyzed the most successful aspects of AAA in Rwanda. While keeping in mind the social contexts that limit transferable practice between countries, we have created this roadmap to accelerate AAA operations in Uganda. We strongly suggest that All Across Africa implements these strategies in order to scale more effectively.



Prepared by:





Appendices

Appendix 1: Methods and Materials

Methods

Given the potential of All Across Africa Uganda's ability to scale, and the barriers preventing artisan productivity, this study explores the successes of Rwandan co-ops and hopes to translate success to scaling operations in Uganda. The best practices for scaling that we identified are outlined in this document and are based on observations and analysis from six weeks of ethnographic field research with All Across Africa's staff, artisans, and co-op leaders in split time between Uganda and Rwanda. We completed a mixed-methods qualitative study through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and surveys. We conducted 66 interviews, 73 surveys, and multiple group interviews. All our surveys and interviews were conducted with the help of local translators.

We traveled to Uganda first to analyze how the co-ops were functioning before traveling to Rwanda. Starting our interviews in Uganda, we identified the barriers that exist for weaving groups in that local context. Next, as we traveled to Rwanda we pinpointed the most successful aspects of AAA Rwanda and analyzed them through a thematic analysis. We then analyzed the functioning of AAA Rwanda and Uganda at differing organizational levels, at the office level and the co-op level, by paying attention to key words and themes that we recorded, and were able to understand best practices that breed success. A qualitative thematic analysis was used to analyze the data after data was sorted out onto a spreadsheet. We inputted the data into a coded format and then discussed the common themes among artisan and co-op leader responses to come to these proposals.

Prepared by:

Photo Credit Huda Navaid for photographs of artisans

Photo Credit Kazi for photographs of baskets

Uganda Interview Guide

Questions Specific to Artisans

1	What is your name?
2	What is your age?
3	What is your marital status?
4	What Community/Tribe/Ethnic Background do you belong to?
5	How long have you been working with your women artisan group through AAA?
6	How did you hear about/join your group of weavers?
7	How long have you been weaving?
8	How did you start weaving?
9	How does your weaving community function? a. How does your co-op leader function as a leader? What is her leadership style?
10	How close is your co-op as a community?
11	To what extent do you find emotional support within your co-op?
12	What challenges do you face in your weaving?
13	How has your life changed through your involvement with All Across Africa? a. Has your income increased? b. Have you taken a greater leadership role in your family
14	Does your husband support your weaving?

Prepared by:

Questions Specific to Co-op Leader

1	How did you become a co-op leader?
2	What is the sense of community in your co-op? a. Are they close? Do they support each other? If so, how? b. To what extent do you see creating and nurturing that community as part of your job as co-op leader?
3	Do the artisans in your co-op weave their products on time?
4	How can artisan production be improved?
5	What additional support would help artisans be more productive?
6	How do the artisans understand their role in being a part of the AAA co-op?
7	How does weather disturb artisan production?

Questions for Group

1	How many of you have trouble with your vision?
2	How many of you have gotten your eyes tested?
3	How many of you have solar lamps in your household?
4	How many if you have access to feminine care products?
5	How many of you have support at home for your weaving?
6	How many of you have access to regular medical services
7	What is the biggest challenge to your productivity that you face as a weaver?
9	What resources that AAA can provide would be most beneficial to you?

Prepared by:

Rwanda Interview Guide

	Interview Date
	Interview Start Time
	Interview End Time
	Data Entry Date
	Transcription Date
	Interviewee Gender
	Interviewee Village Name
	Interviewee Co-Op Name
	Are you willing to participate in this interview?
	Are you willing to have your photo taken, published, and used for the purposes of this project?
	Section 1: Personal Information
1	What is your name?
2	Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your family?
3	Can you tell us the story of how you began weaving?
4	Were you working anywhere before you began weaving with AAA? If so, what was your job?
5	What inspired you to want to become a co-op leader?
6	Tell us about your weaving group/community.
	Section 2: Co-op Success
1	How do you motivate the artisans to work hard and to finish their products on time?
2	Do you reward your weavers with incentives? If so, how?
3	Tell us a story of a time when your co-op was successful
4	Give us an example of a time of a time when your leadership in the co-op helped it become more successful.
5	What are the qualities of a successful co-op leader?

Prepared by:



Global Social
Benefit Fellowship



Santa Clara
University

6	What is the most important factor in determining the success of a co-op?
7	What does it take to make a co-op leadership team successful?
Section 3: Government Involvement	
1	What role does the government play in the success of your co-op?
2	What role does the government play in your co-op elections?
3	Are you or have you been involved in any local government positions? If so, what work did you do in that position?
Section 4: Elections	
1	What is your co-op's election process?
2	How does your co-op ensure fair and successful elections of leadership team members?
Section 5: Leadership Committee	
1	How do you work together with other committee members?
2	How do you and your committee resolve conflicts?
3	What happens at a general assembly meeting?
4	Why do you continue your leadership role with AAA?
Section 6: Co-op Challenges	
1	Tell us about a time when your co-op faced a challenge and had to work together to overcome that challenge?
2	Can you tell us a story about when your co-op supported someone who was struggling?
3	Does your co-op have a savings account that it uses to support its members?
4	How do you work together with other assembly members?
5	What are the challenges your co-op faces in weaving products in time? Please explain the details of these challenges.
Section 7: Family & Support	
1	What does the term "family development" mean to you?

Prepared by:

2	Does your village/community support the artisans?
3	Has the perception/status of artisans changed in your village community since working with All Across Africa?
4	Would you encourage other women to pursue an artisan career with All Across Africa?
5	Does your husband/family support your work? If yes, how does he/they show support?
6	Has your relationship with your husband changed since joining AAA?
Section 8: Mental Health Support	
	Have you or anyone in your weaving community been affected by domestic violence and/or rape?
	Have you or anyone in your weaving community been affected by crime?
	Have you or anyone in your weaving community been affected by the loss of a loved one?
	Do you or anyone in your weaving community still suffer from the after effects of the genocide?
	What resources do you use to cope with these issues within your co-op?
	How can AAA most effectively support your co-op in aiding with these issues?
Section 9: Lighting & Resources	
1	What type of lighting do you have in your home?
2	If you have access to lighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. When did you get access to it? II. How did you finance it? III. What obstacles did you encounter/overcome to obtain this?

3	<p>If you do not have access to lighting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. What do you currently use (i.e. torches/nothing) II. What are the obstacles that you face to access lighting? III. What would it take for you to feel comfortable enough to invest in lighting? IV. If you had more confidence in future orders, would you be more likely to invest your money in lighting or elsewhere? V. What kind of lighting do you want? Solar or electricity? VI. What would be the best way AAA could support you in accessing lighting? (i.e. microfinance, loan, discounted product, etc.)
4	<p>What are your hopes for your future (one year from now; five years from now?) What are your hopes for the future of your co-op (one year from now; five years from now)?</p>
<p>Section 10: Training & Finances</p>	
1	<p>Tell us a story of a time when you used one or more of the skills you learned in a training session by Benon?</p>
2	<p>What weaving/financial would you like more training in?</p>
3	<p>Does your co-op have a savings account? If so, how and when is it used?</p>
<p>Section 11: Demographic Information</p>	
1	<p>What is your age</p>
2	<p>What is your marital status</p>
3	<p>How many people are in your co-op?</p>
4	<p>When did your co-op begin?</p>
5	<p>How many members of your co-op are present today?</p>
6	<p>How many master weavers are in your co-op?</p>

Appendix 2: Checklists

Election Best Practices Checklist

1	Educate members that election is happening
2	Layout what each leadership role ensues
3	Hold meeting where members elect other members for certain positions
4	Set a specific voting date
5	Bring in a staff member to oversee fairness of elections
6	Ensure $\frac{3}{4}$ of co-op is present at voting date
7	Provide artisans with paper and pen and have a box for each position that artisans can put vote in
8	Allow staff member to count votes

Training Checklist

1	Is capacity training specific to co-op requests?	Ask co-ops what types of capacity building they'd like to focus on. Some co-ops requested more weaving trainings, while others wanted financial trainings to be able to manage their savings account successfully.
---	--	--

2	<p>Are artisans engaging with the content deeply?</p>	<p>The trainer should ask for feedback pre-session, mid-session and post-session, to assess the extent to which artisans understand the material. It may be necessary to split the group into two sections as some women may have a faster-paced learning style.</p>
3	<p>How did artisans feel after the training?</p>	<p>Implement a post-session survey and discussion to understand what worked and what did not.</p>
4	<p>Did artisan behavior change as a result of the trainings? If not, what could be done better?</p>	<p>Implement a check-in 2 weeks and 4 weeks after the training to see if artisans are incorporating their new skills into their work and their daily tasks. This check-in can be done in the form of informal conversation or survey response.</p>