



Miller Center

for Social Entrepreneurship

Name of social enterprise: Cycle Connect

Mission statement: Increase income for smallholder farmers in East Africa through productive asset-financing and training. We are focused on moving farmers out of extreme poverty.

Webpage: www.cycleconnect.org

GSBI 2019 business plan presentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SK0FjmPeuNI&list=PLTFApFZek1zpzFm6ysUIA3xZBXOimGDxz&index=18>

Headquarters: Uganda

Locations of research: Gulu, Uganda

Background: Sub-Saharan Africa has 25% of the world's arable land but only produces 10% of agricultural output, in part because of vast inefficiencies throughout the agricultural supply chain. Tilling of land is often performed by hand and can take 30 days for just one acre. Financing for farmers to invest in equipment is limited—with pieces missing from market access to mechanized tilling as well as post-harvest storage. Cycle Connect provides rural farmers with productive assets to increase productivity and close this gap via farmer-centric financing. Productive assets, such as bicycles and ox and plow, increase market access and decrease time to till land. Cycle Connect's solution to move Ugandan farmers out of extreme poverty centers around three components: 1) getting equipment that will increase income for farmers (e.g. productive assets), 2) providing a financing plan to enable them to earn money through the tool while paying it off, and 3) offering training to allow for full utilization of the asset.

The challenge: Develop stronger training curriculum and client-centric processes to deepen social impact for farmers.

Action research products needed:

1. Training curriculum framework, content, methodology and assessment – how and when to deliver this content, with an emphasis on digital trainings via tablet or video hall.
2. Enhance regular customer service survey practices, including push and pull strategies, and survey analysis protocols.

Student skills needed: Market research, customer service, teaching and training, learning assessment, surveys.

Keywords: Customer service, customer feedback, human centered design thinking, market research, smallholder agriculture, agricultural extension.