



MID-YEAR REPORT, 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dear Cycle Connect Partner,

Thank you for supporting last mile entrepreneurship in northern Uganda.

We're thrilled to share that since January 2023, we've served almost 500 clients with our productive assets! With our ambitious goal to reach 2000 rural farming entrepreneurs and impact over 10,000 Ugandan lives this year, we believe we're on the right track to achieving that.

One of the first steps we've taken to achieve this goal was partnering with other last mile organizations to snowball our impact (in)directly and inform more farmers faster about our products, to provide financial literacy and asset ownership training. We also added new income-generating assets such as the Maize Thresher which supports farmers to process maize faster, minimize labor costs and reduce post-harvest loss.

The following report takes a look at the success our team has achieved so far in the year and I am excited to see where we're going. We're grateful to have you as a partner in this journey.

All the Best,

Emmy Okkema, CEO

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- SERVED ALMOST 500 FARMERS, INDIRECTLY IMPACTING 2500 LIVES
-
- LAUNCHED PARTNERSHIP WITH LAST MILE ORGANIZATIONS TO REACH MORE FARMERS WITH PRODUCTIVE ASSETS.
-
- ADDED THE MAIZE THRESHER TO OUR PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

KEY IMPACT

500
Clients Served

- 200 Bicycles
- 198 Oxen and Plow
- 70 Motorcycles
- 28 Grinding mills
- 04 Maize thresher

LIFETIME IMPACT

13K

clients served to date of which

40%

are women

65K

rural Ugandans impacted to date

30%

average increase in income



SPOTLIGHT

A VIEW FROM THE GROUND AS SEEN BY SARAH

Sarah Angwenyo, a Field Officer in Oyam, Lira district, sees herself as solutions-oriented: she's proud of leading the wellbeing of farmers in her community, and says she carries their dreams in her work. In this interview, she speaks about her work as a field officer and what makes Cycle Connect unique.



SPOTLIGHT: A VIEW FROM THE GROUND AS SEEN BY SARAH

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT WORKING IN UGANDA'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR?

Uganda's economy rides on agriculture, and it's no different here in northern Uganda. I love being in a space where my efforts help farmers open up more land because they have an asset like oxen. They are able to do more unlike before without an asset.

DESCRIBE A DAY IN YOUR LIFE AS A CREDIT OFFICER IN THE FIELD?

I report to the office by 8AM and get to screen my tasks for the day. I identify which clients to engage with to remind them about payments. I also identify prospects referred to me and I head out in the field on my company motorcycle to go meet them at their residential homes. For prospects, my goal with the first meeting is to do an appraisal where I learn more about their business acumen, character, and acreage before loaning out an asset.

I really love being out in the field as it gives me much exposure to the real work on the ground and lends me experience in handling clients.

WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU GAINED SO FAR THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR WORK?

The more I interact with people on the ground, the more I sharpen my communication skills, study human behavior and become solution oriented. Life is not black and white and that requires you to become more creative with how you approach every client's situation.



WHAT DOES IMPACTING A FARMER AND THEIR FAMILY LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

To me, if a farmer is able to gain an asset that helps them plow more acres, that means they can produce more and gain more income. It's also very important that they have market accessibility. For instance, through the bicycles and motorcycles Cycle Connect provides, farmers are able to easily travel distances to take their produce to market as opposed to walking there. It makes me happy to see them educating their children, and keep building towards reaching their full potential as productive farmers.

ON CYCLE CONNECT'S MISSION AND VALUES, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST DISTINCT PART OF OUR CULTURE?

One thing for sure is our humane approach to handling clients. I keep hearing from community members that the reason they refer clients to us is because they know we are more understanding than most companies and tailor repayment plans. Another aspect I would add is willingness to reach farmers in the last mile, even if it means crossing rivers, we get to them.

PRODUCT PORTFOLIO GROWTH

OUR LOANS CREATE ACCESS & OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FARMERS WE PARTNER WITH.

Our team successfully tested and added a new asset, the **Maize Thresher**. With the thresher, clients no longer need to spend money on hiring physical labor to separate the maize seeds from their cobs with their bare hands.

Usually this process is not only hard but also time consuming but with the thresher, farmers can work more efficiently, process maize faster, minimize labor costs and reduce post-harvest loss.



Alony Eveline operating thresher with her husband

Eveline provides this high demand service to many farmers. Since receiving Cycle Connect's thresher, Eveline threshes 50 bags per day on average which has increased her daily income by \$6. Before she got the thresher, she would hire one from another district, a three hours drive from her farm and because of that, incur high costs limiting how much she would thresh in a day.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



Like many of the farmers that we work with, **Akello Agnes** relied on her hand hoe to farm, limiting how many acres she can utilize. In April 2022, Akello received her first loan from Cycle Connect for a pair of oxen and plow. Ever since acquiring the oxen, Akello's acreage has grown from 5 to using all 12 acres of land she has access to.

For **Akello** and five laborers, it would take a week to complete an acre with hand hoes while a pair of oxen takes only two days to do the same work! Also, before owning oxen, she would spend \$26 per acre on labor hire to have it plowed but today she uses her own oxen and saves this amount to cultivate the extra acreages. Besides plowing her own land, she is loaning out her oxen in the community and earning an extra \$100 per season.

// *I plan to acquire another oxen loan after completing this one to facilitate faster cultivation and loan them out more to increase my earnings.*

Otim Chris is a father of two young children in Gulu district doing both a motorcycle business and farming.

Before acquiring his first motorcycle loan in January 2022 from Cycle Connect, Otim would have to hire one to ride passengers in Gulu town but would earn an average of \$17 weekly. Now having his own motorcycle, Otim's weekly profits increased to \$26, enabling him to service the loan, care for his family and buy his own land!

Otim has now acquired another motorcycle from Cycle Connect that he rides while he rents out the first one to help increase his incomes and build a decent residential house on his new plot of land.





SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS IN MISSION

Extreme poverty is concentrated in one profession - farming - but when farmers have the opportunity to make their farming more productive, they build resilience for their families and communities for years to come. Thank you for helping smallholder farmers achieve just that! We sincerely appreciate your commitment to improving the socio-economic conditions and actively working towards this goal with us.

We envision a world where everyone living in the last mile has the means to thrive, not just survive.

PARTNERS IN OUR MISSION

