ORGANISATION PROFILE

2015

RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT
THE YOUTH-LED DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
WHY WE EXIST

Uganda is one of the youngest countries in the world, with 78% of the population under 30 years old. Young people are disproportionately affected by the country’s problems such as poverty, poor health and lack of economic opportunities. They are consistently excluded from important decision-making processes that affect them.

Restless Development Uganda believes that young people have the energy, creativity and will to do things differently in their lifetime. They are an asset to the development of their countries and communities and with the right guidance and support can become influential leaders of positive change.

OUR VALUES

HEART VOICE HEAD HANDS

Find out more about our values: restlessdevelopment.org/our-values
ABOUT US

Restless Development has operated in Uganda since 1997, where we are the leading youth-led development agency. Each year we train and support 150–200 young peer educators to lead community development initiatives engaging 25–30,000 young people. Our vision is to see young people taking a leadership role in addressing the most urgent issues facing the world, supported by their communities, civil society, government and businesses. Our mission is to place young people at the forefront of development. We aim to achieve our mission in three goal areas:

- **Civic Participation:** young people and the broader youth sector are significant contributors to development processes, resulting in public policy and practice that both supports and is accountable to young people.

- **Livelihoods and Employment:** young people are taking up productive livelihoods and employment opportunities that contribute to their household income and the economies of their communities.

- **Sexual and Reproductive Health:** young people are making informed decisions and engaging in safe sexual and reproductive health practices that lead to healthy lives.
OUR APPROACH

Is bottom-up and holistic, focusing on individual behaviour change amongst young people as well as systematic change in policy and practice towards a more supportive environment for youth-led development. We deliver grassroots programmes in some of the most hard to reach and underserved areas. Leveraging the impact of our former volunteers we are creating a network of young leaders, supporting them to progress in their careers and be champions of youth-led development. We also support governments and policymakers to engage young people in the decisions that affect them. In addition, we build the capacity of other organisations to work more effectively with and for young people. We also produce research, toolkits, guidance and generate evidence to share our experience with the global youth sector to ensure we are serving youth in the most coordinated and impactful way possible.

Restless Development’s Head Office is in Jinja, and four Field Offices are based in Moroto & Kotido (Northern Region), Mayuge (Eastern Region) and Kampala (Central Region). The organisation directly delivers programmes in nine districts and we expect to significantly expand our reach over the coming year.
OUR TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Peer to Peer Education:

All of our programmes are delivered through our youth-led peer to peer education model which enables the transfer of knowledge and skills to high numbers of young people working through youth groups, as well as schools and other training institutions. Peer educators are based in target communities over a period of six to twelve months, where they are able to provide intensive support to youth. Peer educators play a brokering role, linking youth groups to local service providers, government, the business community and civil society organisations.

The model is implemented year on year with new groups to achieve scale. In Uganda each peer educator reaches approximately 150 youth and, through our network of 150 to 200 peer educators, we typically reach around 25-30,000 young people every year. The model enables us to reach young people in the most remote areas, such as mobile cattle camps in the North and fishing communities in the East. In addition to engaging and connecting youth, peer educators work closely with government, business leaders and service providers to support them to better reach young people. This increased capacity amongst local stakeholders, as well as the group structures and local networks fostered, remain beyond the programme cycle. Therefore a relatively short but intense period of investment through the peer education model can achieve long term impact.
Youth-lead Research:

The organisation has built strong experience in youth-led research highlighting the challenges faced by youth and potential solutions. This includes partnering with the UK Institute of Development Studies to train a team of young researchers to investigate livelihood issues in their communities, leading to the publication of *Strength, Creativity and Livelihoods of Karimojong Youth* (2011) and *Ekoi and Etem in Karamoja* (2013). In 2013 we conducted youth-led research on behalf of Plan Uganda, International Rescue Committee and Enterprise Uganda to inform design of their youth livelihoods programmes.

Youth Mobilisation:

Restless Development Uganda has a unique understanding of the challenges facing young people and how to best mobilise, engage and motivate youth to lead change in their communities. The peer educator model can be used to engage and inform young people from a range of backgrounds and is particularly effective in linking youth in remote rural contexts to services. It has been successfully adapted to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged groups including orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), people living with HIV, people with disabilities, people affected by conflict, young women, transport workers and fishing communities.
Youth Engagement:

We also work with a range of institutions and service-providers to promote effective youth engagement strategies. This includes health workers, NAADS officials, teachers, community liaison officers, and CSO representatives. We have also supported major INGOs and development agencies to develop their youth programmes and policies as well as supported private and public sector service-providers to reach young people more effectively.

Convening the Youth Sector:

Restless Development coordinates the National Youth Working Group, an active sector forum that meets bi-monthly and has over 300 individual members. At local level, we coordinate a District Youth Working Group in Moroto and Napak with several more being set up in districts across the north and east of Uganda.

Policy & Practice:

Restless Development Uganda also achieves reach through efforts to influence the policy debates shaping young people’s lives. Our focus is ensuring policy, programming and resource allocations better respond to youth concerns through bringing together youth and policy makers for dialogue and joint decision-making. For example, in Uganda we have supported youth participation in the design of the National Development Plan, the development of the Youth Enterprise Development bill, and the ongoing review of the national curriculum on comprehensive sexuality education.
OUR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES:

Over the past four years Restless Development Uganda has reached 106,700 young people through integrated youth livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health, and civic participation programmes. Restless Development has worked with young people in Eastern, Northern and Central Regions targeting rural in and out-of-school youth. We have specific strategies for targeting most-at-risk populations, including young people with disabilities, young mothers and young people living with HIV. While we typically deliver an integrated programme, the below summarises our approach under each of our goal areas.

Civic participation:

We train young people to understand and engage with government structures at local and national level. We support young people to track service availability in their communities and report their findings to decision-makers. We organise forums through which young people can have a voice in key national and international debates – for example we organised consultations on the National Development Plans, facilitated a Ground Level Panel to gather views from Uganda’s most disadvantaged communities on the Sustainable Development Goals, and organised young people to feedback to decision-makers to inform revisions to the National Youth Venture Capital Fund.
Livelihoods:

Our livelihoods and employment programmes support young people to pursue one of two pathways: self-employment or employment. Restless Development uses a step-by-step approach to supporting youth to build and grow market-driven enterprises. We identify existing, or establish new, youth groups and support them to register and develop strong governance structures. We provide training in core life-skills (e.g. leadership, teamwork, and effective communication) and enterprise development (e.g. business planning, networking, and marketing) to the youth groups on a weekly basis through our network of peer educators based in the community. Training is co-delivered with government and local entrepreneurs. As part of their training, we support the youth groups to undertake a rapid market assessment and draw on this to identify a market-driven enterprise.

We then link the groups to relevant stakeholders to access technical training and mentoring support tailored to their particular enterprise. For example, for agricultural enterprises this could include linking youth groups to National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) for advisory services. We support all groups to access the financial support required by providing training in financial literacy, supporting them to establish savings groups, and connecting them to financial institutions such as Savings And Credit Co-operative (SACCOs) as well as local government funds.
Livelihoods:

As part of our dual approach to our livelihoods goal area, we also provide intensive training and mentorship to graduates to support their transition into formal employment. Due to shortcomings in the Ugandan education system, graduates leave university with strong technical skills but often lack the essential soft skills that employers are looking for. In response to this, Restless Development equips graduates with supplementary life skills and workplace readiness skills to be able to compete effectively in the labour market. Basic training on topics such as how to write a CV, how to prepare for an interview, how to set career goals, how to conduct oneself in a formal workplace have transformed the lives of the graduates we work with.

Young people report increased confidence, greater motivation and positive feedback on their performance at work. Similarly employers are impressed by the unprecedented calibre of intern Restless Development nurtures. This is illustrated by the fact that over 80% of our graduates are retained through permanent contracts with their host employers. Through the programme, Restless Development has developed a comprehensive employability curriculum and guidance for employers on recruiting, training and supporting young employees. The programme has fostered a platform for dialogue on youth unemployment which includes government, employers, private sector, parliamentarians and youth. The success of the Youth Internship Programme provides a potential solution to this high profile issue and we will now focus our efforts on advocating for the large-scale adoption of the model amongst employers.
**Sexual and Reproductive Health**

Restless Development raises young people’s awareness of sexual and reproductive health issues through our peer educator model, using youth-friendly facilitation techniques including drama, music, dance, role play and trigger videos.

We build capacity of health workers to deliver youth-friendly services, including establishing Youth-Friendly Corners at health centres, and joint delivery of awareness-raising events in the communities. We partner directly with public and private health service providers to increase the quality of the services available for young people and increase service uptake.

We also train CSOs to deliver youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health programmes, including on behalf of Save the Children. We support young people to assess the quality of services available in their local area and engage directly with local government to make recommendations for improvements.
OUR IMPACT:

During 2014, 2,483 young people went through livelihoods training and 21,073 took part in sexual and reproductive health workshops. Some specific achievements from our programmes include:

**Youth Empowerment Programme in Karamoja**

An external evaluation conducted by Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in 2013 highlighted the value of the peer education model in linking young people in remote locations to services and local government, as well as the key role played by Restless Development Uganda in coordinating the youth sector in Karamoja.

Key results included:

- **54%** increase in target young people adopting safe sexual health practices
- **94%** of young people and adult stakeholders reporting increased household food security (61% point increase)
- **85%** of youth groups reporting generating a profit (45% point increase)
- **65%** of young people reporting participating in decision-making processes over the past three months (57% point increase)
- **87%** of young people reporting adopting safe sexual health practices (48% point increase)
- We have mobilised 31 employers from across the private, NGO and government
OUR IMPACT:

Youth Internship Programme:

Through our graduate internship programme, many interns secured permanent employment, established successful businesses and reported increased income:

- **75%** of interns placed with employers have successfully transitioned into permanent employment
- **15%** of interns are generating income from their own businesses
- **80%** of interns are satisfied with their current employment
- Average monthly earnings of interns is 700,000 UGX (£160)
- Interns have experienced increased independence as a result of their income; **35%** now identify as heads of households
- The majority of interns are saving money and very few have applied for loans
WHERE WE WORK

KAMPALA

Our HIV Prevention Programme targets Mayuge’s most at risk youth, including those living with disabilities, living with HIV, fishing communities and young mothers. The aim is to increase access to HIV information and services, and promote coordination of service providers.

In Kampala we coordinate the youth sector through the National Youth Working Group. We work with government, NGOs and civil society organisations to share best practice and build capacity for effective youth engagement.

MAYUGE

We reach young people in schools with key HIV and sexual health messages, supporting them to become activists by conducting their own awareness-raising activities and establishing school clubs.

NATIONALLY

Our internship programme based in six districts across Uganda exposes young people to professional work experience in private companies, government and NGOs, enabling them to transition to employment or further education.

NWOYA & AGAGO

The Keep it Real programme in partnership with Save provides youth-centred age appropriate and comprehensive information on SRH and HIV/AIDS to young people in the Nwoya, Agago and Kampala. It aims to enable adolescents and youth to make better choices about their sexual and reproductive health.

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KOTIDO

We support youth groups to established small agri-businesses, give youth skills to fill up roles in the emerging job sector, link the gap between key players and young people to enable them access services required to establish sustainable livelihood and support youth advocates to voice out young people’s concerns.

MOROTO & NAPAK

We increase demand and supply of SRH information and services for Karamojong youth. We support youth livelihoods development, recognising it as a key driver of transactional sex and input in government planning to ensure youth needs are met.

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For more information about Restless Development Uganda, please contact Sabina Basi, Partnerships Manager on sabina@restlessdevelopment.org