



Generating Growth
Opportunities and
Productivity for Women
Enterprises (GROW)

SUCCESS STORIES



Generating Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises

Introduction

The Centenary Bank and Centenary Foundation are implementing the Generating Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises (GROW) project to increase Access to Financial services for Women under the GROW Project. The project is implemented by Centenary Bank in partnership with the Centenary Foundation, Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) and Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) with funding support from the World Bank.

The GROW Project Pillars

- a) Support for Women Empowerment and Enterprise Development Services
- b) Bridging Finance for Supporting Female-owned Enterprise Growth and Transition
- c) Demand-driven Enabling Infrastructure and Facilities for Enterprise Growth and Transition

Centenary Foundation Role

The Foundation's role is to support the Portfolio Expansion Window so as to increase uptake of the GROW SupaWoman loan and other GROW associated products.

In addition, Centenary Foundation is supporting in mainstreaming of Environmental, Social Impact and management into the GROW loan in addition to sustainability, planning and other financial inclusion activities for women including People with Disabilities (PWDs).



A truck from GROW Loans to Expand My Business

WENGO Night's STORY



"I bought a truck and motorbike using a loan from GROW, and it has helped me expand my business and increase my profit margin."

Wengo Night proudly shares a smile, lighting up her face. Wengo Night's business is located in Lira District, Soroti road, Reda East, Lumumba village. Her business has blossomed beyond her wildest dreams, thanks to a fortuitous radio advertisement about the GROW loan facility by Centenary Bank she stumbled upon one day.



WENGO'S BUSINESS

Wengo's business, operating from Reda East along the Soroti Road, focuses on buying and trading produce; soya beans, maize, beans, sunflower, and millet. Every day, she travels far and wide, sourcing fresh produce from local farmers in Uganda and even from neighboring Tanzania. *"I sell retail in Lira and supply markets across the Lango and Acholi subregions, Kamplala, Hoima and extending even to schools in Sudan and South Sudan and Tanzania,"* she explains.



TRANSPORT CHALLENGES

Despite her thriving enterprise, Wengo faced a crippling challenge: transportation. *“Every time I needed to deliver goods, I felt the weight of my losses. Hiring transport vehicles drained my profits, and I was left struggling just to keep my business afloat,”* she recalls, her voice tinged with the memory of past frustrations.



TRANSPORT CHALLENGES

I followed the radio advert to Centenary Bank Lira Branch and spoke with the Manager.

“I felt immediate assurance after the manager confirmed that I qualified, as my business fulfilled the necessary requirements. The verification process was smooth, and before I knew it, my UGX 100 million loan was approved.”

Wengo recounts her excitement in unmistakable.



TRUCK & BODABODA

With capital in hand, Wengo was able to purchase a Lorry (Truck) and a motorbike (Bodaboda), crucial assets in her daily operations.

“Now, I can efficiently handle border-to-border transport and district-to-district deliveries. The Bodaboda also generates income during the off-peak seasons by transporting customers around Lira,” she explains.



GROW Loan

IMPACT ON WENGO

“Before the loan, my business capital was only UGX 1.5 million; now, it’s valued at UGX 200 million,”

Wengo states, pride swelling in her chest. The truck and bodaboda have widened her market reach dramatically, enabling her to supply schools more effectively.

“Now, I earn about UGX 20 million every four months from school sales, spending just UGX 1.5 million on transportation. Previously, I was losing UGX 3 million just to supply schools,” she reflects, illustrating the staggering difference the loan made.

Transporting produce internationally used to cost her UGX 5 million, a hefty sum. *“Now it’s just UGX 2.5 million. GROW’s low-interest rates have been a blessing,”* she adds with a knowing nod.

Wengo’s success has had a ripple effect, creating jobs for ten individuals who now support their families through her thriving business. *“I’ve even been able to buy land and begin building my house. My children are in school, and I feel a sense of stability,”* she shares, her voice filled with gratitude.

Wengo is a single mother supporting not just her two kids but also six extended family members. *“I fully paid back my loan, and I encourage all women to embrace GROW.”*



GROW Loans Boosted Dratia's Poultry Business



Ajdiru Vicky Dratia resides in Bachwawi West Village, Moyo Subcounty, Moyo District. At the beginning of 2025, she secured a loan of UGX 10 million from the GROW Loan Scheme, which she promptly invested in her poultry business.



With the funds, she constructed improved and recommended structures for her birds and expanded her flock by purchasing an additional 10,000 birds, including both broilers and kuroilers.

Understanding the challenges posed by transportation issues that had previously endangered her business and led to losses, she prioritized stocking up on chicken feed. This time, she procured four tons of feed, ensuring that her birds would have enough nourishment to reach maturity before being sold.

Dratia sells her broilers for UGX 10,000 each and the kuroilers for UGX 20,000 each. During the recent festive season, she achieved a remarkable profit of UGX 4 million. As a result of her loan and business acumen, her capital has significantly increased from UGX 5 million to over UGX 10 million.





Dratia can now support her family's health and education expenses while living comfortably. She mentions that she is nearing the completion of her loan repayment and is eager to apply for another loan if the opportunity for a second round arises.

GROW Loans have Empowered My Family's Future

When my husband lost his job, our family faced a devastating blow. The loss of his income created a heavy burden, and we struggled to make ends meet. My own small printing and stationery business was barely making a profit, leaving us in a difficult situation. I learned about the GROW loan scheme through Centenary Bank, thanks to a friend who shared its potential. I decided to take a leap of faith.

I organized my business requirements and applied for an initial loan of UGX 5 million. This infusion of capital allowed me to expand my printing business, but it didn't yield the immediate results I had hoped for.

However, I was diligent in repaying the loan, and soon I returned to apply for a second loan, this time for UGX 10 million. With this funding, I was able to stock my printing business further and even ventured into a new opportunity by starting a car spare parts shop.



NAME

Rachiwu Irene

LOCATION

Nyavavu Sub-county,
Nebbi District

"This car spare parts business I started provided my husband with a job. Having a job has revived my 'his spirits, and has helped him regain hope and motivation to support our family."

Over the past month, both of our businesses; the printing and stationery shop and the car spare parts shop, generated a remarkable UGX 4 million in profit.

Together, we are managing our household bills and ensuring our two children stay in school. We prioritize repaying our loan consistently. My husband contributes UGX 250,000 per month, while I contribute UGX 200,000. We have just a few months left until the loan is fully repaid.

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THANKS TO THE GROW LOAN FACILITY, OUR BUSINESSES HAVE FLOURISHED, AND WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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I urge the government to continue and expand this loan scheme so that many more women can benefit from it as we have.