

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ON YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT IN COMMUNITIES, A CASE STUDY OF MITYANA
CENTRAL DIVISION, MITYANA DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at assessing the impact of government programs on youth empowerment in communities with a case study of mityana central division, mityana district and it was guided by the following objectives: To analyze how financial literacy trainings influence livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities ,to evaluate how the provision of start-up capital influence the livelihood of youth in Mityana Central Communities and to examine how market linkages influences livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities. From the findings, 29.9% of the respondents thought that education level indeed hindered understanding of training offered to a very great extent. These views were conveyed by those youths who had secondary school (15.6%) and primary school 11.7%). Other response was at 11.7 % who thought it hindered to a great extent, 14.3% were undecided, another 15.6% said it was on a small extent while 28.6% said it hindered to a very small extent. On financial literacy training, the study recommends that financial literacy is a vital training that should be conducted to help entrepreneurs save enough to provide adequate capital to invest in their businesses.

Key words: *government programs and youth empowerment*

Background of the Study

The number of today's young people generation is slightly below 1.8 billion against a world's population of 7.5 billion (World population prospects UN report, 2017). The emergence of a sudden increase in large population of the youth can have an unprecedented effect on any country. This largely depends on governments' response to either the positive or

negative effect of this growing population by laying out means of taking care of the young people's needs and assisting them to engage fully and responsibly in their economic and civic affairs (UNFPA report, 2014). There is limitation that are often experienced by the rural youth while accessing the Livelihood opportunities which include high highly dependence on the services and networks which enable entry into work and help to support youth at work. There is a broad requirement for multiple livelihood strategies in rural areas which encompass the search of white-collar jobs (Gina Porter, 2018).

The access to sustain rural livelihoods is necessitated by the Natural Resource management and agricultural information, knowledge and public services which are of crucial significance in supporting natural resource-based livelihoods, predominantly in the aspect of environmental, climatic, and market changes that command adaptation of new solutions. The existing power relations often marginalized the rural poor are from accessing knowledge, production activities to improved technology. Importantly, the main aim of research and technology development in natural resource management and agriculture is to attend to the wealthy or large-scale farmers and livestock producers, while the inadequacy in acknowledging and backing the formal research & development for the smallholder-led technology and knowledge production remains unrecognized (OECD, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

In Uganda, the youth face a series of challenges which include lack of employment opportunities; every year a total number of 500,000 youth graduate from diverse tertiary institutions, but due to slow economic growth, corruption, nepotism and demand for experience, 75% of these youth remain unemployed. The other greatest challenge is based on youth empowerment and participation which encompasses the involvement of youth in transformative activities. In Uganda, the youth are side lined in participating in public forums as they are seen as idle, immature, disrespectful and not concerned about the community's well-being. These young people need to be branded in platforms where they can speak and express themselves and inspire belief that can

catalyze impact through youth led development initiatives (Liebrandt and Mlatsheni, 2004).

Objectives of the study

1. *To analyze how financial literacy trainings influence livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities*
2. *To evaluate how the provision of start-up capital influence the livelihood of youth in Mityana Central Communities.*
3. *To examine how market linkages influences livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities.*

Research Questions

1. *How do financial literacy trainings influence livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities?*
2. *How does the provision of start-up capital influence the livelihood of youth in Mityana Central Communities?*
3. *How do market linkages influence livelihoods of youth in Mityana Central Communities?*

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a research design called descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research design was employed in exploratory and preliminary studies to permit the study to collect information, summarize, present and construe for the principal reason of clarification (Orodho, 2002). Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and also give the reason for descriptive research as reporting and determining the state in which things are.

Target Population

The target population for this project consisted of all the registered youth groups in Mityana district. According to the statistics from the Youths Livelihood Program office, there are 99 registered youth groups. The target population for this study was 2,024 members of the groups.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Data Collection Instruments

The data sources employed in this research project were primary data. The study employed the use of questionnaires for primary data collection. The questionnaires were preferred because they were straight forward and less time consuming for both the researcher and the participants (Owens, 2002). Since questionnaires collected information that was not directly observable, they were considered appropriate for the project as they inquired about experiences, feelings, attitudes, motivations as well as accomplishments of individuals (Borg and Gall, 1996).

Data Analysis and Presentation

The researcher conducted data cleaning after all data was collected and analyzed using SPSS. The data cleaning involved identification of inaccurate or incomplete responses, which were rectified to improve the quality of the responses. After data cleaning, the data was coded and entered in the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22. This research produced both quantitative and qualitative data. The data was analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. Qualitative data was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondent's information and documented data.

The regression model will assume the following equation:

$$Y = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon.$$

Where Y = Livelihood

X_1 = Financial Literacy Training

X_2 = Startup Capital

X_3 = Market Linkages

X_4 = Horticulture Enterprises

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ are coefficients of determination

ε is the error term.

RESULTS

Response Rate

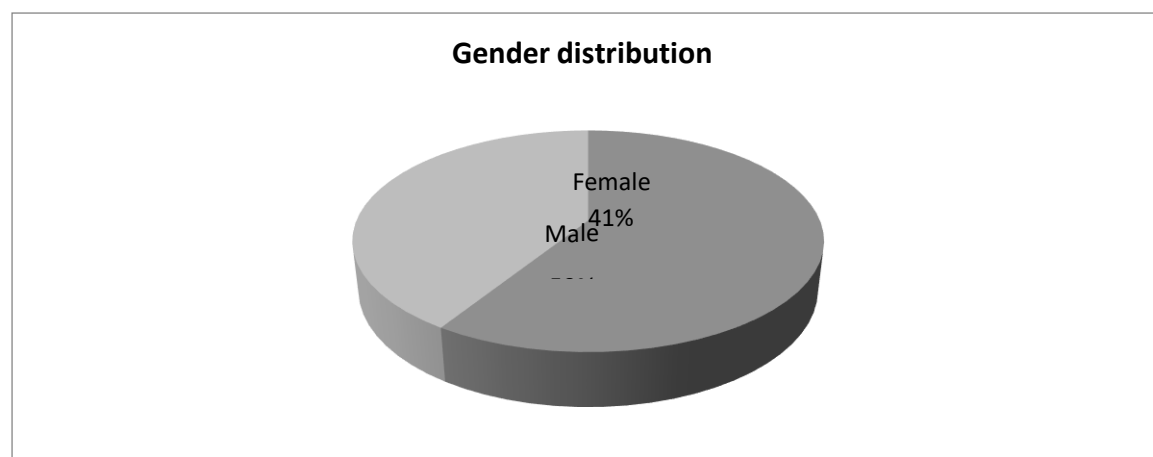
A total of 110 questionnaires were distributed to the sampled respondents. Amongst these, 101 respondents were able to respond to the questionnaires. The study achieved a response rate of 91.8% (N=110)

Table 1 Response Rate

<i>Sample</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Rate</i>
<i>110</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>91.8%</i>
<i>110</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>91.8%</i>

Source: Primary Data (2022)

The response rate is greatly creditable since it was far above the threshold of 75% that is proposed for analysis of the data by Mugenda (2008) who states that the response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting while a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and above is excellent. This high rate was achieved since questionnaires were administered under close supervision of the researcher thus satisfactory to make conclusions of the study.



Demographics Characteristics

Gender Distribution

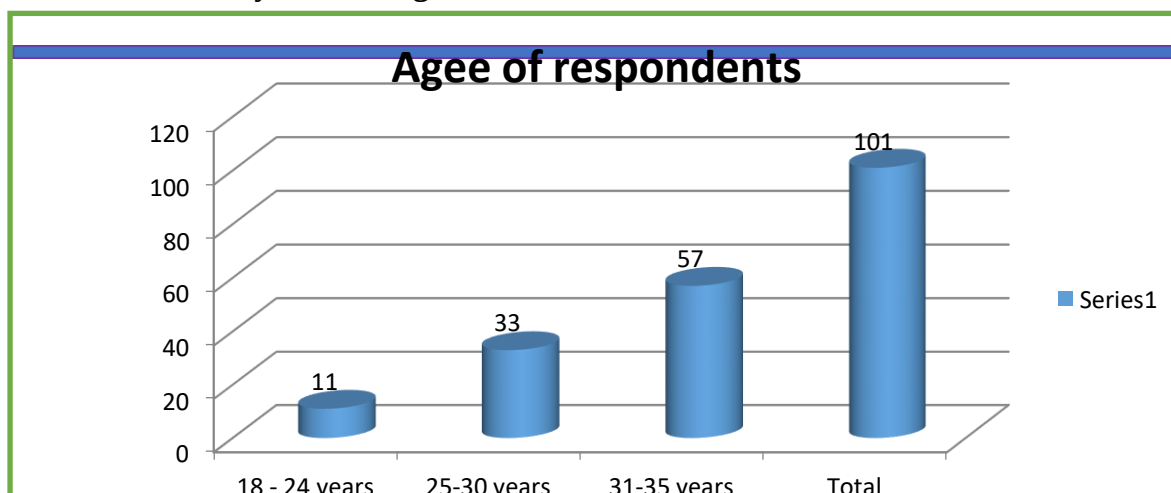
The researcher sought to establish the gender of the respondents.

Figure 1: Gender distribution

As shown in the results from Figure 1, the majorities (59.0%) of the respondents were male and 41% were female. The analysis showed that there was almost an equal participation of the males and females in the horticulture production activities.

Composition of Respondents by Age

The researcher sought to establish the age of the respondents.



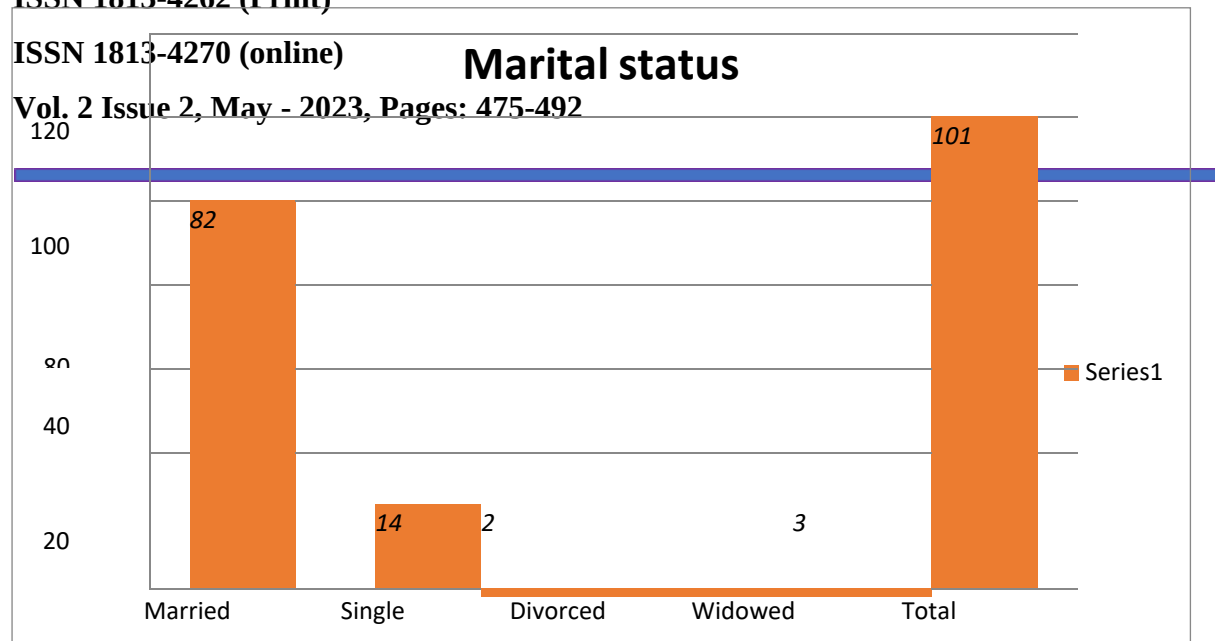
Source; Primary data (2022)

Figure 2 showed that majority of male and female who were empowered government empowerment programs are between the age of 31-35 which indicates 57% of the respondents, while those under the age of 25-30 years had 33 %, and the remaining 11% were of ages between 18-24.

Marital Status

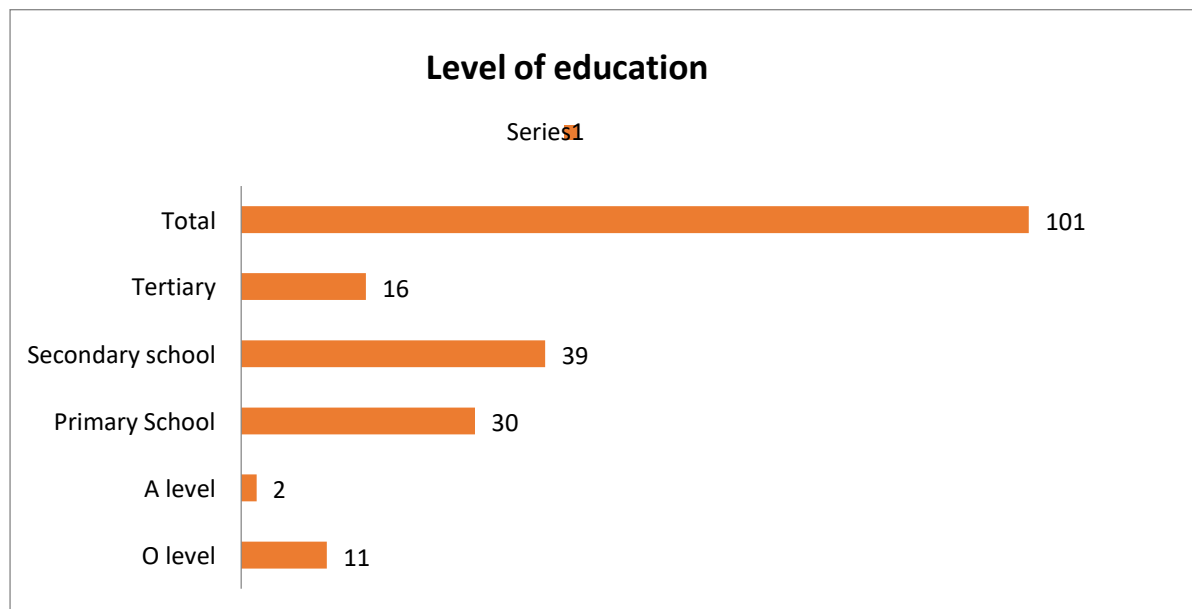
The researcher sought to establish the marital status of the respondents.

Figure 3: Marital status



Source; Survey data (2022)

From Figure 3, the study found out that 82% of the respondents were married, only 14% were single, 2% divorced and 3% widowed.



Level of Education

The researcher sought to establish the level of education of the respondents.

Figure 4 Level of Education

Source: Survey data (2022)

From figure 4, the results from the project found that most of the respondents engaged in horticulture enterprise farming were not highly educated as only 16% had schooled up to tertiary level, 39% of the youth respondents had reached secondary level, and 30% had reached primary level while O level and A level had 11% and 2% respondents. The results show that the highest level of education reached by the youth is secondary school level compared to primary, tertiary, O level and A level.

Education and Financial Literacy Training

The researcher sought to establish the extent to which education level hindered the provision of the financial literacy trainings to the respondents.

Table 2: Education and financial Literacy training

		Level of education					Total	
		O level	Primary School	Secondary school	Tertiary	None		
							F	%
Extent to which education hinder understanding of these trainings	Strongly Agree	0	9	12	1	1	23	29.9%
	Agree	1	4	4	0	0	9	11.7%
	Undecided	2	6	2	1	0	11	14.3%
	Disagree	3	1	6	2	0	12	15.6%
	Strongly disagree	4	6	9	3	0	22	28.6%
Total	Count	10	26	33	7	1	77	
% of Total		13.0%	33.8%	42.9%	9.1%	1.3%	100.0%	

Source: Survey data (2022)

Table 2 shows that 29.9% of the respondents thought that education level indeed hindered understanding of training offered to a very great extent. These views were conveyed by those youths who had secondary school (15.6%) and primary school 11.7%). Other response was at 11.7 % who thought it hindered to a great extent, 14.3% were undecided, another 15.6% said it was on a small extent while 28.6% said it hindered to a very small extent.

Descriptive Statistics for the Research Variables

This section presents the findings based on the research objectives of this study. The study used descriptive and inferential statistics in the analysis and discussion

Financial Literacy Training and livelihood

The section sought to assess the literacy levels of the youth's groups and the running of their business since the main aim of the engagement in the activity is to get income. Financial literacy among youths Mityana Municipality is hindered by the level education as per table 4.8

Table 2: Financial Literacy Trainings

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Financial record challenges	98	1.38	0.487
Any financial literacy training	101	1.31	1.056
Whether financial literacy training was useful	88	1.85	0.878
Whether level of education is a hindrance to understanding these training	91	1.69	0.464
Extent to which education hinders understanding of these trainings	83	3	1.631
Training benefits	90	1.7	0.8
Valid N (list wise)	70		

Source: Primary Data (2022)

Table 2 shows that the mean for financial records challenges was 1.38 with a standard deviation of 0.487 which is further away from the mean indicating that there was a greater variation in the responses from most of the respondents.

The respondents agreed that they all received some financial literacy training as the findings show that the mean was at 1.31 and standard deviation was at 1.056 which is closer to the

mean indicating that there were very little variations in the responses from the respondents.

The respondents found the trainings to be useful according at different levels as the standard deviation at 0.878 is further away from the mean of 1.85 indicating that there were varied responses to the usefulness of the financial literacy trainings. According to Stone (2012), training has the clear task in the attainment of an institutional goal by including the interests of the workforce and organization.

The respondents also had a small variation in their responses to how they felt that their level of education did not hinder their level of understanding the financial literacy trainings as shown by the mean at 1.69 and the standard deviation at 0.464. At a mean of 3.00 and standard deviation of 1.631 clearly shows that the respondents had different views on to the extent at which the level of education hindered them from understanding the financial literacy trainings despite the fact that most of them had not gotten any further training apart for the basic secondary education as shown in the demographics. The findings further indicate that the respondents benefited from the trainings as indicated by the mean on training benefits at 1.7 and standard deviation at 0.8.

The study analyzed the relation between financial records challenges and provision of any financial training as shown in table 4.9.

Table 3: Financial records challenges

			Any financial literacy training		Total
			Yes	No	
Financial record challenges	Yes	Count	46	15	61
					62.2%
	No	Count	31	6	37
					37.8%
Total		Count	77	21	98
		% of Total	78.6%	21.4%	100.0%

Source; Survey data (2022)

Table 3 shows that 62.2% of the respondents faced challenges in keeping financial record despite having received financial trainings.

These results show that 78.6% of the respondents received financial trainings and 21.4% of the respondents did not receive any financial literacy trainings.

Provision of start-up capital and livelihood

Table 4: Provision of start-up capital

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Whether providing startup capital is good for youth's empowerment	99	1.10	1.005
Capital empowerment with Youths in Mityana Municipality	101	1.42	.604
Government support programs support useful	96	1.10	.307
Always be provided with government support programs	100	1.93	.924
Rate government programs support	99	1.60	.669
Whether startup capital enabled you work productively	99	1.04	.198
Valid N (list wise)	92		

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Provision of startup capital seems to be a good business strategy as the respondents felt that it was a good based on the mean at 1.1 and standard deviation at 1.005 which is closer to the mean indicating that there was very little variation in the responses.

The findings from the descriptive analysis show that the capital empowerment of Youths in

Mityana Municipality was highly appreciated with little variation in their responses as shown by the means 1.42 on capital empowerment of Youths in Mityana Municipality, 1.93 on always be provided with Government Support Programs and 1.6 on government support programs rate which had standard deviations of 0.6.4, 0.924 and 0.669 respectively.

Table 5: Income generated**Descriptive statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<i>If monthly income has increased since start of farming</i>	99	1.01	.101
<i>Range of income per month before government support programs intervention</i>	101	1.93	.711
<i>Range of income per month after government support programs intervention</i>	101	2.67	1.106
<i>Having access to different food types influenced your health status</i>	99	1.09	.289
<i>Whether income improved your housing</i>	97	1.07	.260
<i>Income influenced number of meals taken in a day</i>	96	1.29	.457
<i>Valid n (list wise)</i>	91		

Source: primary data (2022)

These findings show that the start-up capital provided to Youths in Mityana Municipality's project has seen a tremendous increase in the youths' monthly income at a mean of 1.01 and a standard deviation of 1.01 indicating that there were no variations in the responses. An improvement on the incomes generated on a monthly basis can be seen by the means of 1.93 and 2.67 for incomes generated before government support programs' interventions and after government support programs' interventions with standard deviations of 0.711 and 1.106 respectively indicating slight variations in the responses. To some extent the incomes have enabled the youths in Mityana Municipality to access different types of foods, increased the

number of meals per day and seen an improvement in their housing as per the means 1.09, 1.29 and 1.07 respectively and standard deviations at 0.209, 0.457 and 0.26 respectively.

Market Linkage and livelihood

Table 6: Engagement of market supplied

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Through personal marketsearch	7	6.9	7.1	7.1
	By organizations	56	55.4	56.6	63.6
	Through other youths in Mityana Municipality	35	34.7	35.4	99.0
	By chance	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	99	98.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.0		
Total		101	100.0		

Source: primary data (2022)

These findings show that most respondents got involved with the current markets they supply through a linkage by an organization depicted by 56.6% response. The other respondents interacted with the market through information from other youths in Mityana Municipality and personal market search indicated by 35.4% and 7.1% respectively. Only 1% of the respondents engaged with the market by chance

Horticulture empowerment and livelihood

This study sought to assess the importance of savings and credit to rural youth engagement and empowerment through ~~hottu~~ activities.

Table 7: Savings and credit

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std.
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			Deviation
<i>Do age limit exist for participation in savings and credit activities</i>	101	1.94	2.063
<i>Participate in savings and credit activities</i>	101	1.17	.376
<i>Whether credit or loan is a source of capital for business</i>	94	1.50	2.184
<i>Is age a hindrance to accessing loans in credit institutions</i>	101	1.35	1.062
<i>Whether you have ever accessed credit for your horticulture</i>	99	1.34	.477
<i>Pay loan consistently without defaulting</i>	88	1.03	.183
<i>Pay from horticulture enterprise income</i>	89	1.08	.271
<i>Borrowed credit in form of farm inputs</i>	99	1.67	1.069
<i>Would you recommend a saving culture to fellow youth</i>	99	1.03	.172
<i>Valid N (list wise)</i>	80		

Source: Primary data (2022)

The standard deviation 2.063 for age limit for participation in savings and credit and 2.184 for whether savings and credit are as source of capital are larger than their means which are 1.94 and 1.5 respectively. These results indicate that age may not be a limiting factor for one to participate in savings activities and that indeed savings are a source of capital for the youth to take part in the horticulture enterprises. Savings and credit activities are particularly popular amongst these rural youth as seen by the means of 1.17 and standard deviation on 0.376 for the participation of youth in savings and credit and 1.34 and standard deviation on 0.477 which show a small variation in response, therefore indicating that age is not a hindrance on accessing credit. This shows that if well trained in savings and credit more youth are able to participate and create wealth which can be used for investment in small businesses.

The findings show that the youth have been able to borrow loans both in cash and kind as seen by the mean of 1.67 and standard deviation of 1.069.

Conclusions

From the findings, the research concludes that the youth empowerment positively influenced the rural youth's livelihoods. On financial literacy training, the study concludes that financial literacy training programs for the youths contributed heavily to the establishment of sustainable horticultural production enterprises Mityana Municipality. However, these trainings did not have a positive impact as the youths in Mityana Municipality had a challenge in keeping proper records to which they could gauge their businesses with. It was noted that the education level was one of the key issues that contributed to the slow rate of uptake of any trainings on business skills and entrepreneurship thus bringing out that gap on record keeping. These trainings on financial literacy were intended to equip the youths with knowledge and skills to manage their business successfully, and make sound financial decisions.

Recommendations of the Study

On financial literacy training, the study recommends that financial literacy is a vital training that should be conducted to help entrepreneurs save enough to provide adequate capital to invest in their businesses.

Financial literacy training should be based on income and education levels because highly educated consumers with high incomes can be just as ignorant about financial issues as less educated, lower income consumers.

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