express my appreciation to ARUWE staff, donors and various stakeholders who together supported empowerment of rural communities especially women and children. I am also grateful to the Board of Directors who have supported ARUWE to reach thus far in the previous year. Through close collaboration with communities and local leadership, ARUWE has learnt a lot about the needs of communities in ARUWE operational areas. I extend my appreciation to all those authorities and partners without whom we would not have registered all the remarkable achievements registered in this report. In the previous year, ARUWE has many achievements to talk about. My special thanks goes to the Executive Director and her team for a job well done amidst different challenges. ARUWE with support from her partners will continue raise her efforts towards addressing all the issues that affect women, children and youth in order for them to realize their full social, economic and civic potential. I am optimistic ARUWE has and will continue to build capacity for our staff and communities to measure to challenges as they unfold.
We are greatly indebted to all our partners. The respective District Local Governments where we implement our projects and the community we serve have been very cooperative in 2019/2020. I also wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the BOD who have continued to provide support and guidance to the staff. Special thanks to the staff for the tremendous work done during the past year in terms of implementing the different programs. We have reached out to a lot more women and youths. These have managed to access credit, incomes have increased and access to health care services improved. Women have been empowered in business startup, financial management, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, property and land rights. Better sanitary facilities have been provided to schools hence creating conducive learning environment. ARUWE has strengthened her presence on different platforms and Networks. We commit to steer ARUWE to greater heights.
WHO WE ARE

Action for Rural Women Empowerment is a non-profit organization working with marginalized groups of people. We envision a world in which women and children are able to realize their social, economic, and civic potential. Our mission is to empower women to initiate and manage their socio-economic development processes through strengthening community participation, advocacy, and service delivery.

WHERE WE WORK

- Arua
- Nebbi
- Kyankwanzi
- Kiboga
- Sembabule
- Wakiso
CORE OPERATIONS

Women social Economic strengthening

Sustainable health communities

Education and Lifelong Learning

Climate Change Resilience and adaptation

Organisational development
Community Women energy ambassadors

Women social economic strengthening

Food and Nutrition guarantees women’s well being
• ARUWE has enhanced farmers’ capacity for increased agricultural productivity, strengthened farmers’ institutions, increased farmers’ access to financial services, promoting utilization of land rights, income generation and women in leadership.

• ARUWE employed a Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) model to build the capacity of women. The GALS approach recommends involving men and leaders during project implementation as women’s allies in supporting women empowerment.

• Farmers formed 30 self-help VSLAs, which have provided immediate community banking solutions to rural communities – enabling members to develop a saving culture and access to revolving microcredits (given from the savings) in order to meet quick domestic needs and investments; currently owning total saving portfolio worth Ush97,000,000 an average of 107,777 per farmer.
• ARUWE has 3 farmer cooperative associations with a full-fledged store supporting collective bulking and marketing which has enabled the members to enjoy the economies of scale.

• ARUWE has built the capacity of 38 Community Agriculture Trainers (CATs) who remain a strong community structure for provision of support to the farmers in best farm practices as well as mobilizing individual farmers to bulk and sell in the cooperative

• Through the trainings in saving, leadership and decision making, 200 women have taken up leaderships positions and influence decision making both within the project structures and beyond. As a result of the intervention, 71% of the women who participated in the project gained confidence to influence household and community decisions.

• We supported over 900 farmers with improved seed to enable them increase their production. Farmers received an average of 10kgs of maize and 25kgs of beans each. They were also supported with on farm extension services by the agricultural officers.

• As a result of training in best agronomic practices, farmers have consistently produced in excess. This has enabled them to have adequate food for household consumption and sold off the excess through cooperative associations. The sales have further enabled them to buy other foods they do not produce at their homes so as to supplement their diets. Training in farmers in nutrition has also further supported them to grow as much food as they and limit purchases from the market to the food items that they cannot produce in their homes. Farmers have adopted kitchen gardening and are producing vegetables (for vitamins and fibre) in addition to maize (for carbohydrates) and beans (for proteins).
Namukasa Edith is a 49 year old widow living in Kitwara East village in Kitabona Sub County. She has 5 dependants and solely depends on farming. Edith was supported with harvesting materials i.e. tarpaulins to manage her harvest well and avoid losses usually registered during drying and sorting. During one of the monitoring visits, She said,"Managing crop harvest can be a challenge if one does not have a good harvesting material like tarpaulins and quality sacks to store grain. This was my case before I got the harvesting materials and trainings in proper harvest management through this project. She added, During off rainy seasons, part of my crop harvest was usually destroyed by sudden pours when I was drying it on the ground. It not only got dirty but also mould and part of it became rotten. Edith said that the time she spent in drying and sorting her harvests always tripled. She earned little pay for her grain because it weighed less due to poor handling. Namukasa said, "The quality of my maize and beans has improved to kilos and the beans don’t get weevils. I spend less time to dry the grain which enables me to focus on other work. In addition, I have less back aches because I don’t do the intensive labour work of bending and picking the scattered grain from the ground for drying. I have less losses harvest now."
Access to Microfinance institutions

- Increasing women’s access to user friendly credit services provided them with opportunities to invest in agriculture and also set income generating activities from which they get daily income to take care of their families.

- Community Fund MFI reached out to the farmers and disbursed the loans to 617 farmers. 8 farmers received individual/personal loans from the MFI. Our field officers worked hand in hand MFI to recover the loans and revolve them among other farms. Currently, the revolving fund has circulated among 65% of the farmers, giving out an average of Ush300,000 (Ush100,000 smallest loan, Ush1,000,000 biggest loan).
Sustainable Health Communities

We believe in health as a human right which should be enjoyed by all without any form of discrimination. Therefore, we empower communities to demand, access and utilize affordable, available and quality health services, WASH structures and menstrual hygiene resources. We are also ensuring that no individual is a victim of gender based violence through human rights awareness and case management support.
Strategic Objectives

To improve accessibility, availability and quality of sexual reproductive health services by 2021

To improve accessibility to safe water, sanitation facilities and hygiene practices for schools, households and communities

To contribute to reduction of malnutrition among children under five years, pregnant and lactating women and older persons by 2021

To contribute to the reduction of HIV/AIDS especially in women and children
Promoting rights to reproductive health services and HIV/AIDS awareness

**Advanced of 2 petitions about SRHR violations to Kyankwanzi District council**

ARUWE alongside people living with disability in Kyankwanzi District petitioned the District council about their wellbeing. The two petitions revolved were; Petition for increased Access to justice for sexually abused girls with disabilities and Petition for access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services for girls with disabilities.

- **160 PWDs and PLHIV participating in ARUWE’s projects**

The movement has continued to provide a platform for PWDs and PLHIV to come on board and join the efforts towards better SRHR and services for youth and taking up leadership roles in the movement.

- **Overall increased number of direct and indirect project beneficiaries**

The number of direct and indirect beneficiaries has grown from the previous reporting period. On average, through radio talk shows, campaigns, outreaches we have reached over 3061 direct and 18340 indirect beneficiaries.

  - Over 1500 young women and 200 men reached through SRH campaigns in Wakiso and Sembabule
  - There are currently two community Drug Distribution points being supported which the clients access once a month.
  - ARUWE with support from health facilities offers Home Based Counselling Testing services to clients with unknown HIV status and through this over 200 clients have had their sero status known.
The movement developed and started implementing advocacy and community empowerment plan. The activities are equitably representative of the SRHR issues of Young Mothers, PWDs, PLHIV and the wider community. This signifies that the movement leaders have successfully taken on the mantle to demand better SRHR and services for their community. It’s is a key sign of community project ownership and sustainability.

A coalition of community members has been successfully established and trained in advocacy and maternal health rights. It has over 180 individuals including village health teams, health unit management committee members, young people among others. The coalition identified the need for further expansion and furnishing of the maternity ward and the need to raise community awareness about domestic violence.

217 community members in Gayaza Sub-county have been sensitized about domestic violence and its adverse effects on maternal and child health with support of the community development officer and the police.

The district council resolved to include a budget for the expansion and furnishing of the maternity ward in the FY20/21. The coalition members are participating in the budget planning meetings to follow up on this issue.
CSO Capacity building and Sub-granting

- ARUWE has continued to expand its capacity in terms of sub-granting. During this reporting period, ARUWE is now sub-granting to 3 CSOs tCEHURD, FLEP and EDU Child foundation. This has been an opportunity to increase its capacity in handling finances as well as empowering other CSOs.

Support group formation

- ARUWE has 6 adherence groups amongst its clients and here clients meet to get psychosocial support in form of guidance and counseling through facility counselors, where they share matters of common concern, successes and challenges as far as adherence is concerned.

- 150 grandmothers have been trained in VSLA through their adherence support groups. They have been supported with VSLA kits to encourage them to save. They have also been linked to Community Fund microfinance to access loans to enable them start or expand their business.
• CHILDREN, ADOLOSCENT GIRLS, WOMEN AND YOUTH.

ARUWE has been certified to ensure that is able to provide certificates to the youth that it trains. This is a big achievement because ARUWE has used this opportunity to provide training certificates to all its participants thus increase their opportunity to employment.

• training centers have been established i.e. tailoring Centre in Vvumba, school of beauty in Kiboga, penalta carpentry Centre in Kiboga, Bake Hub in Wakiso
Provision of vocational and MHM skills

- Equipped over 500 youth/AGYW with business, life and vocational skills in hairdressing, tailoring, bakery, food value addition, seed variety multiplication, briquettes making, liquid/bar soap, reusable pads, beading among others a form of providing opportunity for employment for the youth.

- 195 girls have been trained in menstrual hygiene management and also provided with skills in making reusable pads. This has also provided confidence to the girls in managing their menstrual hygiene. The trainings targeted girls both in school and out of school.

- Over 10 girls’ clubs were formed in schools to be able to pass on the knowledge and skills to other girls in school. Girls should not fail to attend school just because they are not confident enough to manage their menstruation while attending school.

*The pictures above show the youth being trained in the menstrual cycle tracking*
Provision of a conducive learning environment

- ARUWE aims at ensuring that the children’s learning environment is conducive and safe for the children. In relation to this, ARUWE has supported the constriction of 2 dormitories at St Joseph Vumba SS, 2 staff quarters i.e. 1 at St Joseph Vumba SS and 1 at Kasubi P/S, established WASH facilities in schools i.e. constructed 3 latrines in 3 schools (St Joseph Vumba, Kasoolo and Kitwala P/S), constructed 2 boreholes in 2 schools (Kitwala and Kasoolo P/S), supported 3 schools in Mulagi with water tanks (St Paul P/S, Bumbiri P/S, Vumba), constructed classrooms blocks 2 in Katula Gap, 1 in Kasubi Community/Mango School, 2 in Vumba and renovated 3 classroom blocks in Kasubi Community School.

The pictures above show the youth being trained in the making of reusable sanitary pads as a way of ensuring that they manage their menstruation hygiene.
2 girls running reusable pads enterprises received a resiliency grant fund with support from ARUWE from Days for Girls to support their enterprises during the COVID-19 crisis. Each of the girls was given $325 (Ugx860, 000) to get materials that has enabled them to produce pads, liquid soap and face masks in their communities.

Nankasi Hajjara-running an enterprise entitled, "Bukasa youth enterprise in Wakiso reported to have made 100 face masks, 100 liters of liquid soap (5 jerry cans), 5 pieces of bar soap and 120 reusable pads. She sold 96 face masks each at Ugx1500, 5 jerry cans of liquid soap each at Ugx35,000, 4 bars of soap at Ugx3500, and 94 pods/reusable pads (1shield and 2 liners) each at Ugx5000 raising an income of Ugx803,000. Out of the money earned, Hajjara reported to have started up a business in frying/making samosas with Ugx30,000. She also started up a market stall where she sells vegetables along with the samosas to the community members. Hajjara said that, "I am very grateful to be part of the Girls Emerge program because through it my life has changed. The support I got from Days for Girls has really helped me and my family to cope up with life during the outbreak of covid-19." Hajjara reported that since the month of MAY her income has been increasing as her products are quickly sold out in the community. She has plans of getting another place for operation in order to provide employment to my fellow youth.
• Rose Gayana, one of the project beneficiaries that participated in the mask making program. She said,

“Making face masks has been a very big experience for me as well as the girls I worked with. We have acquired more skills and knowledge that we hope to continue using. This program has given us an opportunity to be engaged, to work during this difficulty time when everyone is at home under lockdown. We are so grateful because we have also earned ourselves an income to support us and our families. But still we had an opportunity to participate in the fight of COV-19.

• ARUWE has successfully formed at least 10 partnerships and networks i.e. Days for Girls, Work for Life, NutriFood Tech, DIT (Directorate of Industrial training) among others that have continued to provide mentorship and technical support to the organization as well the youth.

*Girls receiving certificates after the MHM training*
Climate change resilience and adaptation

Strategic Objectives

- To improve access to appropriate renewable energy technologies among 1000 households by 2021.
- To influence local governments to integrate climate change measures into district policies, strategies and plans.
- To support communities to adopt climate smart agriculture.

Key Achievements

Additionally ARUWE participated in policy development and monitoring, mobilize citizen’s support, and share best practices. For example, ARUWE was among the Women major group representatives at the United Nations Environment Assembly 3rd where we contributed to the theme ‘Towards a pollution free planet and at UNEA 4th on the theme ‘Innovative solutions for Environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production’.

Ms. Affi from ARUWE speaking at the Cities Summit during the 4th UN Environment Assembly 2019
• 100 participants equipped with knowledge in the green technologies (bamboo biogas, charcoal briquettes, watertanks, solar photo voltaic, ecosantoilet)

• 31 women energy ambassadors acquired skills in marketing green technologies skills.

• 4CSOs were trained, sub-granted and mentored in climate change and gender mainstreaming in their internal structures as well as in their program implementation.

• Over 1000 persons reached with information on improved energy solutions and better agriculture practices. e.g. 10 cooperatives (7 in Kiboga/Kyankwanzi, 3 in Luwero) with membership of over 30 persons.

• International visibility of ARUWE’s work in renewable energy for example Women 2030 that provided ARUWE an opportunity to participate in climate related international projects.

Women making energy stoves and Briquettes
ARUWE is very passionate about growing the capacity of its staff as a strategy for staff development as well as organizational growth. ARUWE conducts leadership training among its staff in order to enhance their leadership skills both at organizational level and community level.

Organizational development
Child Safe-guarding

Policy review development. ARUWE has continued to streamline her programming by revising existing policies and developing new policies that is child safe guarding policy to empower communities to meet their need.

GALs Training

ARUWE with the support from Send A cow Uganda (SACU) conducted a training of trainers’ workshop for Action for Rural Women Empowerment (ARUWE) staff on gender action learning systems (GALS). The staff participated in the workshop to introduce the GALS methodology in Kiboga and thereafter carried out practical demonstration on how to use the GALS tools in the field with the community in Kyankwanzi.
The staff conducted two field visits for practical illustration of the GALS methodology to 5 groups; 3 groups in Gayaza and 2 groups in Ntwentwesub counties in Kyankwanzi district.
In response to the world wide COVID-19 pandemic, ARUWE with the support from different funding partners such as Global Friends Foundation-Canada, Osea, signpost international. ARUWE supported the community members with masks and hand sanitizers as a way of ensuring prevention for the spread of COVID-19.

The Resident District Commissioner (at the front on the left side) receiving face masks on behalf of the government in Kyankwanzi
KEY LEARNINGS

• Inclusion of men and local leaders during project delivery has been a key milestone in fostering buy-in on the part of the men and local leaders. Men and local leaders who participated in this project have appreciated the importance of women empowerment, and have become great allies and ambassadors in sensitising communities to further promote women’s rights and economic empowerment.

• Communities have appreciated that when women acquire incomes, the standards of living for their homes and marital relationships improve if both the husbands and wife are counselled to clearly appreciate the concept of women economic empowerment. Men whose women have participated in the project have confided that their wives have bridged many gaps and relieved men in household financing, including providing some personal support to men such as buying clothes for them.

• As VSLA savings are growing, the amounts may overwhelm and risk the safety of the treasurers. Hence, we need to rethink on VSLA approach and possibly link them to mobile banking services, which are currently implemented by the formal banking institutions.

• It is important to engage women farmers in agricultural insurance schemes to guard against production losses due to climate change.

PUBLICATIONS

• Gender shadow report
• Gender market survey
• Violation of SHRH of young girls in Kyankwanzi district
## Organization Income

### Income from 1st May, 2019 to 30th April, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXPENDITURE</td>
<td>1,661,928,332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Image of women working in a field, pouring grain]

ARUWE ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020
Percentage expenditure

- Sustainable health communities: 43.24%
- Climate change and adaptation: 19.47%
- Administrative Costs: 19.40%
- Education and life long learning: 11.13%
- Women Economic and Social strengthening: 6.76%

Total: 100%
Our Funding partners
Action for Rural Women’s Empowerment

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