

# PROJECT EVALUATION

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# REPORT

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Assessing Progress and Impact



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# INTRODUCTION



In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, the intersection of women and entrepreneurship represents a compelling frontier in the fight against generational poverty. We are all acutely aware of the multifaceted challenges that persist within our societies, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage and limiting opportunities for economic mobility.

However, amidst these challenges lies an opportunity for transformative change. By empowering women to become entrepreneurs, we not only address the immediate symptoms of poverty but also strike at its root causes, creating a ripple effect of empowerment and prosperity that extends far beyond individual lifetimes. Through entrepreneurship, women gain not only economic independence but also agency, dignity, and the ability to shape their own destinies—a potent combination that has the power to break the cycle of poverty and pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

Business for Better Society (BBS) in collaboration with Activate Action has opened a microbusiness incubator in Homa Bay, Kenya. This initiative is focused on empowering vulnerable women in Homa Bay County, addressing the root causes of generational poverty through entrepreneurship training, coaching and business start-up grants. The incubator's core objective is to equip women at the base of the economic pyramid with the skills and support needed to establish sustainable businesses within the local economy, fostering long-term economic stability and self-sufficiency

The incubator utilises the highly effective Street Business School (SBS) because of the unique design of this program, which has been crafted specifically for participants that have little or no formal education.

To date, the incubator has successfully launched 140 new businesses.



# METHODOLOGY



## **BUSINESS SKILLS WORKSHOPS**

The formal business skills training leverages the Street Business School (SBS) program, for which Activate Action is certified to administer. These modules are deeply interactive, featuring group activities and chances for participants to present their group discussions to the cohort. Presenting before the group serves as an opportunity for individuals to enhance their confidence and step outside their comfort zones.

Module 1: Getting out of Your Comfort Zone

Module 2: Business Opportunity Identification & Market Research

Module 3: Finding Capital and Starting Small

Module 4: Bookkeeping

Module 5: Business Planning

Module 6: Money Management

## **GRANTS & COACHING**

Upon completing the SBS business skills program with success, every participant becomes eligible for a modest start-up grant aimed at bolstering the initiation of their entrepreneurial endeavor. Subsequently, the incubator transitions into the coaching phase, during which certified SBS coaches conduct on-site visits to each participant's business establishment. These coaching sessions are instrumental in refining their entrepreneurial aptitude, nurturing personal growth, and ultimately, advancing the prosperity of their enterprises. Key benefits encompass:

- Building confidence and self-esteem
- Tailored support and guidance
- Increased resilience
- Celebrate achievements



# PROGRESS ASSESSMENT



To date, the microbusiness incubator has initiated 140 businesses within the Homa Bay region, with 150 women engaged across 5 cohorts. The primary factors hindering business commencement are linked to personal health challenges or responsibilities such as caring for family members. The enterprises established by participants are deeply entrenched in the local economy and comprise:

- Tailoring
- Selling charcoal
- Fresh produce stands
- Selling second hand clothes
- Selling the local fish
- Making and selling snacks such as samosas and chips
- Popcorn and cold drink snack shops
- Selling eggs
- Dry goods and cereal vendors

A central theme guiding the allocation of profits is their reinvestment into the business or directed towards two primary expenditures: healthcare and school fees.

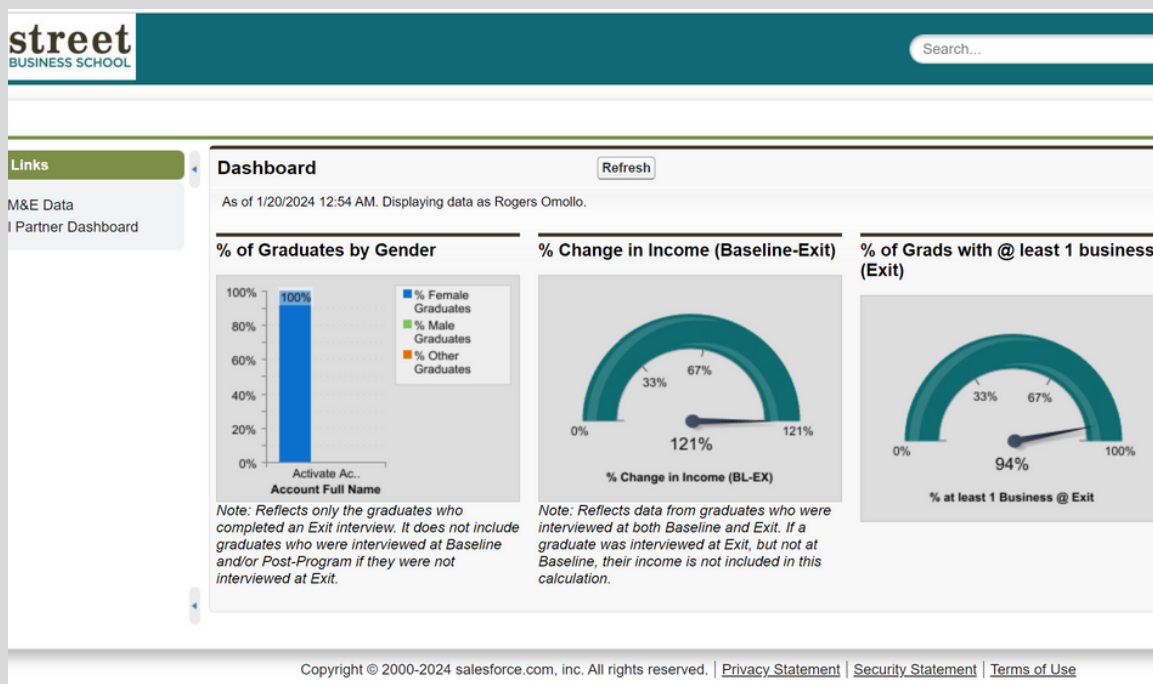
# IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## METRICS FOR ASSESSING IMPACT

Embedded within the framework of the Street Business School program is a tailored evaluation system designed to meticulously gather and present SBS impact data. This system facilitates informed decision-making, rigorous impact assessment, and methodical stakeholder reporting.

Upon participants' initial enrollment in the incubator, baseline measurements are meticulously recorded and inputted into the SBS tracker, accessible via Activate Action's dashboard. Throughout the coaching phase of the program, as business visits occur, new data is consistently added to the tracker, enabling the monitoring of changes in income and other crucial metrics.

Data compiled through the impact tool has revealed a remarkable 121% increase in income from participants' entry into the incubator to their exit.



# RECOGNITION



RSA

In 2023, Business for Better Society received one of the ten esteemed Catalyst Scale-Up Grants from The Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.

These grants, which are bestowed annually upon Fellows of The RSA, are designated for expanding projects that have already demonstrated tangible impact. When referring to scale, The RSA emphasizes the importance of "reaching new beneficiaries, enhancing impact among current beneficiaries, or investigating methods for greater financial sustainability."

The funding obtained through this grant was specifically allocated towards conducting additional cohorts of the incubator program, thereby generating further evidence of the concept's viability and potential for scalability.

# LESSONS LEARNED



In our ongoing efforts to enhance the effectiveness of our programs, we've made significant improvements based on insights gained from our pilot phase. One key enhancement introduced in subsequent cohorts is the establishment of a standardized agreement between participants and Business for Better Society and Activate Action.

This agreement serves as a roadmap, outlining the specific requirements for grant eligibility, such as attendance and active participation in the business skills workshops, as well as guidelines on how the grant funds are to be utilised.

By implementing this agreement, we've fostered a greater level of clarity and mutual understanding among all stakeholders involved. It underscores the importance of professionalism and sets clear expectations for the new business owners regarding their responsibilities towards both suppliers and customers.

# NEXT STEPS



## EXPANDING THE INCUBATOR

The upcoming stage of the microbusiness incubator entails extending our presence into Northern Uganda and Malawi. This expansion signifies a noteworthy advancement in our mission to alleviate generational poverty. Our dedication to empowering individuals at the lowest rungs of the economic hierarchy remains steadfast, and we are enthusiastic about perpetuating our collaboration with female entrepreneurs, furnishing them with the necessary tools, resources, and assistance to flourish. By broadening the scope of our incubator, our objective is to unlock fresh avenues for sustainable development and enduring positive transformation within these communities.



# THANK YOU

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FURTHER INQUIRIES**

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