



Empowering Communities, Transforming Lives: The Promise of Community-Based Training for Women Entrepreneurs

Imagine doubling women's incomes through entrepreneurship. Now imagine the entire entrepreneurship training and coaching being delivered by a community member at a cost of \$51 per person trained.

To achieve this, Street Business School (SBS) translated its highly impactful entrepreneurship model into something that can be delivered by a Community-Based Trainer (CBT). This innovation transforms the SBS entrepreneurship training by putting the power and agency to create change directly in the hands of local people who live and work within these communities. This approach fosters a cycle of community ownership and empowerment, engaging community members to lead and deliver its powerful entrepreneurship curriculum. The initial results from Uganda are promising; within just three months, CBT-trained women have more than doubled their incomes

By recruiting and training people within the community to serve as SBS trainers, SBS fosters localized support and ownership, which makes this initiative especially effective and sustainable.

It's a model that can redefine access to economic opportunity for ultra-poor women, and it highlights the impact of investing in people's resilience, agency, and potential.

The Power of Community Ownership in Poverty Alleviation

Community-owned programs often lead to greater long-term success because they are more sustainable and better tailored to local needs. When people from the same communities facilitate SBS training sessions, they bring an innate understanding of the unique challenges, customs, and opportunities within those communities. Although the curriculum remains standardized, having local trainers with deep knowledge of their community allows for a delivery approach that truly resonates and engages participants.

Furthermore, when community members lead the training, it creates a sense of collective responsibility and shared success. The impact isn't just on individual incomes but on community-wide resilience. Community ownership in poverty alleviation programs is associated with higher levels of trust and engagement, leading to outcomes that are sustainable and scalable. This approach not only makes the program cost-effective but also builds local capacity, leaving communities more self-reliant and resourceful. CBT trainers remain coaches to the cohort of women they trained, long after the program ends.

Doubling Incomes and Building Resilience: The Real Impact of CBT

Perhaps the most compelling measure of CBT's success is the income increase participants are seeing. *In just three months, women trained by CBTs have more than doubled their incomes.* These results speak volumes about the impact of accessible, community-driven training. Fostering entrepreneurship within communities offers a sustainable pathway out of poverty for women irrespective of location, education level, or access to technology and finance.

Income growth is just one aspect of the broader impact. CBT participants also gain resilience—both personal and economic. They are better equipped to navigate the ups and downs of life, capable of reinvesting in their businesses and facing setbacks with confidence. And, in doing so, they inspire others in their community. It's a powerful ripple effect: when one woman succeeds, others believe that they can too. In a region where economic opportunities are scarce, this sense of possibility is transformative.

Restoring Agency: A Cornerstone of the Approach

A vital component of our CBT model is the focus on agency—giving people the ability to make choices about their future. Agency is at the heart of empowerment, yet many traditional poverty alleviation models overlook it, offering prescriptive solutions without considering the unique strengths, knowledge, and preferences of the people they aim to help.

Equipping local individuals as trainers ensures that the community is not simply a passive recipient of aid but an active agent in the journey out of poverty. This shift restores agency to those who have long been deprived of it, helping them to see themselves as entrepreneurs, leaders, and decision-makers capable of creating a better future for themselves and their families.

Setting a New Standard for Sustainable, Community-Driven Impact

SBS sees the CBT model as a cornerstone in redefining the standard for poverty alleviation programs. The model's focus on community ownership, economic resilience, and agency is proving to be an effective formula, not only for income generation but for creating lasting change that reverberates throughout entire communities.