



## WOMEN EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES



Unity Foundation

ONG DEPUIS 1991

Created in 1991, **Unity Foundation** is a Luxembourgish NGO officially recognized by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

Unity Foundation collaborates with a network of **local partners** in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Our main objective is to provide financial resources to our partner organisations that carry out educational projects within the framework of three lines of action: **Community Schools**, the **Preparation for Social Action (PSA)** program and **Training Centers**.

All projects supported by Unity Foundation are co-financed by the **Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs** of Luxembourg.

Discover our framework of development !

[www.unityfoundation.lu](http://www.unityfoundation.lu)



# PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN OUR PROJECTS

## PSA PROGRAM

### STUDENTS



### TUTORS



## OUR FRAMEWORK OF DEVELOPMENT

## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

### STUDENTS



### TEACHERS



At the core of the framework of development that we share with our partner organisations lies the belief that women and men are equal and that humanity is one. The implementation of this principle at all levels of society is critical for changing prevalent injustices and bringing about material and moral development for all. Therefore, all our partners are committed to offer educational and training opportunities that promote the participation of women and are concerned with the generation and dissemination of knowledge that reflects this principle. Through a methodology that combines study and acts of service, **men and women together, learn how to trace the path of their communities' development.**

Women often feel more acutely the need to work for the betterment of their community, but are not always given the opportunity to express it. As a consequence of our partners' efforts, it is very encouraging to see that their participation in Community Schools and in the PSA program is very high (see graph).

The following accounts will give you insight into how our educational programs empower women to become protagonists of social change in their communities.





# A STRONG COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION



*The world of humanity is possessed of two wings — the male and the female. So long as these two wings are not equivalent in strength, the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the same degree as man, until she enjoys the same arena of activity, extraordinary attainment for humanity will not be realized”.*

*From the Bahá’í writings*

**“I love education! My education is not over. For me this is a life-long process.”**, says Mrs. Vanthorn, one of the very few women who continued her education in spite of being married. Most women in Cambodia, once they are married, give up their education to take care of the household tasks.

It all started when Mrs. Vanthorn attended a training on personal and community development organized by the Cambodian Organization for Research, Development and Education (CORDE). Her initial hope was that the seminar would help her to develop the necessary skills to start a business. Inspired by CORDE’s educational programs, her initial plan changed into a strong commitment to education: she started teaching children and youth in her community and talking with parents about the importance of girls’ education.

When Mrs. Vanthorn joined the program, she was still a single woman. Once she got married, many expected her stop her activities. However, she continued teaching at her local school even when she was pregnant of her first child. With the support of her parents and her husband, she later enrolled in CORDE’s University for Education and Development and graduated as one of the best students in her class. As a mother of two boys and a community teacher, she always thinks about how to improve the quality of the education and is more than ever convinced that this is the best way she can serve her community.

## THE PARTNER



**Cambodian Organization for Research, Development and Education (CORDE)**

## PSA PROGRAM

- 155 students
- 68% women
- 20 tutors
- 25% women

## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- 557 students
- 58% girls
- 27 teachers
- 96% women



*In my community people have an old mindset about the role of women. They think women don’t need to be educated because once they get married, they will stay at home and take care of their husband and other household tasks. This is what motivated me to join CORDE’s programs. It builds capacities in the community, helps women to move forward and to think about their education.”*

Mrs. Vanthorn



## GROUP OF WOMEN MOBILIZES THE COMMUNITY



### THE PARTNER



Fundación para la Aplicación y Enseñanza de las Ciencias (FUNDAEC)

### PSA PROGRAM

- 433 students
- 71% women
- 45 tutors
- 78% women

The following account of a PSA group of 7 women from the El Sinai neighborhood in Colombia illustrates well the level of empowerment that women can achieve. The PSA group, which was about to graduate, stood out for its drive, dedication and love for its community, and for carrying out important actions for its advancement.

After several joint discussions between the tutor, the participants and some members of the community, the group decided to pave the two main access roads to the neighborhood. The community members as well as its leaders pledged their support to the project. The group also carried out fundraising activities to purchase the materials needed for the road.

50 members of the community, including adults, children and junior youth participated in this act of service. The group was delighted by the community's response and commitment. Even a few days after the act of service took place, the people living along each of the two streets continued the pavement work.

## WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF CITY GARDENING

"I do not regret my time in the PSA class, although friends used to say that I am wasting my time."

Ruth Aliyinza is a mother of three children residing in Danida, Uganda, with her husband. While in high school, she got pregnant of her first child and decided to get married. As a consequence, she had to put an end to her education.

In April 2016, she heard about the PSA program and was happy to enrol as it teaches agricultural techniques. She joined a group of 30 participants and during the afternoons of the following two years, she studied 18 units of the PSA curriculum. As the group advanced through the program, they started a Diversified High Efficiency garden plot which gave them a new zeal for farming.

Back home, Ruth started her own city garden and started talking with other women in her community about her newly gained knowledge: "I have been talking with some people in the community about growing their own food so they don't need to buy greens every day in the market." As a consequence, another woman from the community, Mrs Owor Florence approached her after her speech at a gathering and asked her to support her in setting up a city garden at her home.

Thanks to the training offered by the Kimanya-Ngeyo foundation, she and her family were able to raise 3 million Shillings (about 715 EUR) and buy 1 acre of land in Bugiri. "I am planning to do my small business and start a farm where I can work because I have all the knowledge I need."

### THE PARTNER



Kimanya-Ngeyo foundation for science and education

### PSA PROGRAM

- 603 students
- 56% women
- 29 tutors
- 28% women

From the left: Mrs. Owor Florence, a coordinator from Kimanya-Ngeyo and Mrs. Ruth Aliyinza



"I acquired the knowledge of city gardening and I am now able to grow food for my family. During my training, I improved my spoken English, developed confidence to talk in public and start my own business."

Ruth Aliyinza





## THE JOY OF GIVING

As Unity Foundation is an NGO accredited by the MFEA, **all donations made in our favour are tax deductible.**

Each contribution, no matter how small or large, helps us to support our partners in carrying out their education projects.

### OUR BANK ACCOUNT

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