



**Women Economic and Social Rights  
Development Organization**

**WESDO**

**2022**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

*“Women and their children empowered to live a better life”*

**WESDO**

Advancing Women &  
Children's Rights & Livelihoods

## WORD FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON



We bring you greetings from the board. We are pleased to share with you our annual report of 2022. We have progressed in our work towards our vision of “Women and their children empowered to life a better life”. WESDO has continued to reach more women and children through our programs including Women Economic and Social Programs, women health initiatives, climatic change justice for rural women and youth empowerment program.

All our achievements have been possible by the tireless efforts of our fellow women, funding partners and the key sector players. The Board also appreciates the immense contribution of the management team and staff members. As the WESDO Board we commit to give strategic direction and accountability as we guide the organization in conformity with governance best of practices.

We invite you to read and enjoy this 2022 report. Your feedback through our website and social media handles will be greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stella Sekweyama'.

Stella Sekweyama  
Board Chairperson

## WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

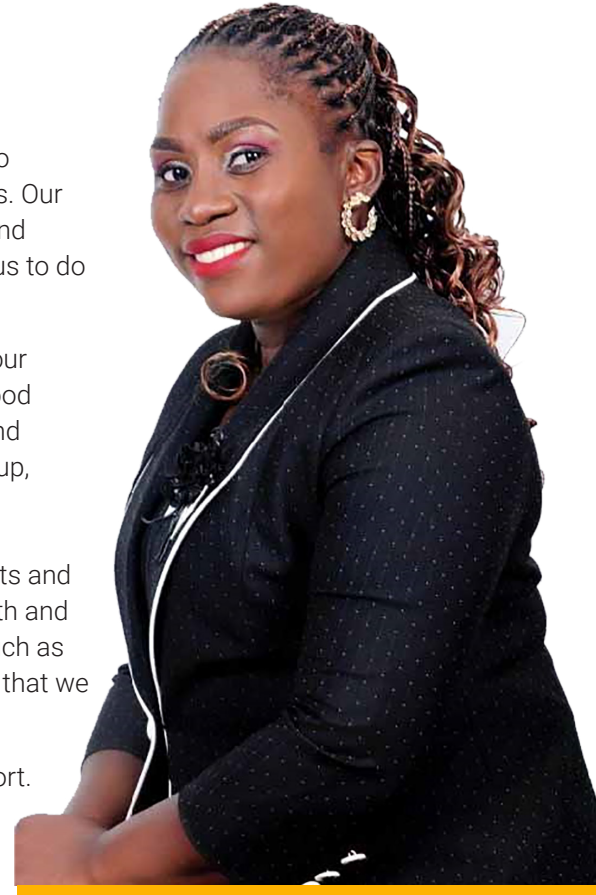
We are delighted to present to you our 2022 annual report. Our gratitude is towards our fellow women, girls, children, local leaders, and key actors who have tenaciously worked to make lives better for families and communities. Our generous partners have tirelessly provided financially, technically, and in-kind support to better the lives of the women and their children while enabling us to do our work.

Our programs, we have reached out to over 500 women households with our programs. These have managed to ensure their household nutrition and food security, access financial services to set up income generating ventures and improve their livelihoods. Women have been empowered in business startup, financial management, and more awareness of their land rights. WESDO also promoted health and wellbeing of women and girls through increased accessibility, availability and utilization of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Services and Maternal Child Health. WESDO gave attention to mental health and emotional well-being for girls, child mothers, young women, and youth. Much as the need was still great, we did what we could for the women and families that we were able to reach. All our programs were integrated for a holistic impact.

We invite you to take this journey with us as you read our 2022 annual report.



Susan Nankinga  
Executive Director



## 1. About the organization

Women Economic and Social Rights Development Organisation (WESDO) is a non –profit non-government founded in 2017 as a Community Based Organization by a team of women with an aim uplifting the dignity of women and children in the community. In 2021, WESDO was registered under the Uganda Registration Bureau (R2000004679508). WESDO currently operates in the central and eastern region of Uganda. WESDO combines technical, financial, collaboration and advocacy to support rural women and children. WESDO supports rural women to organize themselves into collectives/ groups to promote leadership, human rights education, participation, sustainability and advocacy.

Our vision is 'Women and their children empowered to live a better life.'

Our mission is to create opportunities for women and their children to engage in development and advocacy initiatives that improve their social, economic and civic well-being and development.

## Our goals

1. To promote food security and nutrition among women and their children through agriculture and nutrition education.
2. To promote income increase and diversity among women through development of women's collectives, agribusiness and access to finance
3. Advance the socio-economic rights of women through social movement building, leadership development, rights awareness, and advocacy.
4. To promote health and wellbeing through increased accessibility, availability and utilization of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Services and Water Sanitation and Hygiene.
5. Advance climate justice and rights for rural women through innovation, resilience, adoption and advocacy.
6. Enhance decent employment for girls and young women through improved job skills and networks

## Our programs

Women Economic and Social Program. Under this program, our focus is on four initiatives including Food and Nutrition, Agribusiness and farmer institutional development, Access to gender equitable finance, Leadership and women economic rights.

Women health initiatives. Under this, WESDO's objective is to promote health and wellbeing through advocating for increased accessibility, availability and utilization of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Services and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. WESDO also promotes mental health and emotional wellbeing among women through various self-care approaches and support groups.

Climatic change justice for rural women. This program focuses on adoption, resilience, innovation and inclusion in climate change programs for rural women. WESDO supports rural women in adoption of sustainable agriculture practices, renewable energy and other innovative solutions as a gender supportive response to climate changes.

Youth Empowerment Program. WESDO focuses on girls' inclusion in socio-economic development processes through vocational, entrepreneurship and life skills



## 2. Our results in 2022

### 2.1. Women Economic and Social Program

Under this program, WESDO supported 234 women in food and nutrition, 291 in agribusiness and farmer institutional development, 254 in access to gender equitable finance, as well as Leadership and women economic rights. WESDO delivered its programs through forming and establishing 8 women collectives, trainings in sustainable agriculture, agribusiness, value addition and marketing, business and financial management, savings mobilization, and financial security as well as collaborations and advocacy. WESDO also raised awareness among 340 rural women farmers organizing on their land rights and registration processes.

#### Food security and nutrition



*Farmer in her maize garden*

234 women were supported to be more food secure through strengthening their household farm systems for increased supply of food. WESDO focused on promoting indigenous foods that could easily be multiplied within a small farm setting such as women had. WESDO focused on foods that were produced through suckers, stems and cereals/seeds. WESDO provided trainings and seed inputs to the women. Incorporating climatic change and environment friendly agriculture practices, women were able to establish home gardens to enable better supply of food for their houses.

***Woman farmer in her sweet potato garden in Kasanda***

Ensuring that my family members have food on their plates is primarily my role as a mother and a woman. I am glad that through the trainings and seed inputs from WESDO, I have set up an acre of bananas, sweet potatoes, and vegetables. Before the support, I had scanty knowledge on how to grow food crops hence my family was always short of food. Now I know how to multiply the seeds to grow more crops. I can also help my fellow women to increase their crop for food.



## Agribusiness and farmer institutional development

291 women farmers were supported in agribusiness through capacity building in good agronomic practices, post-harvest handling and provision of seed inputs. WESDO further supported women farmers with agriculture loans who repayment was tied to harvests hence were not strenuous to the farmers. 8 farmer groups were established to enable bulking and collective marketing. Farmers increased their production by at least 45% in especially maize and beans production. Women farmers have earned income which has enabled them to improve their shelters, meet the scholastic needs of their children and further diversify their incomes.



*Farmers were supported with small loans to diversify their agriculture activities. Namala farmer from Kasanda invested her small loan in piggery.*





Namukwaya aged 43 is a female, mother of 7 from Kasanda. Namukwaya is married with 7 children. She studied up to primary six and her source of income is farming (maize, beans and cassava). She is a member of Kasanda Women group.

Before the project Namukwaya was cultivating one acre to grow maize and beans and the production was too low (4 bags per acre) coupled with the low prices. Namukwaya could not afford having three meals a day and a day she could not even raise half a dollar. She was living a miserable life and her house was dilapidated. This made her an object of scorn in the community. Her major challenge limited access to relevant information, knowledge and capital.



*Namukwaya with her maize harvest*

In 2021, Namukwaya joined the agriculture program. She was trained in good agronomic practices like line planting, early planting, seed selection, early planting and weeding, soil conservation practices like mulching and use of organic manure in farming as well as saving and financial management.

Namukwaya was supported with improved seed varieties, agriculture loan that helped her to reach her vision to an extent. The farmer benefited from the seed loan of 10kgs and of improved maize seeds. She has also benefited from the agriculture loan getting 250,000 Ugx, 300,000 Ugx and 500,000 Ugx at different times. This helped her to increase on her acreage from one to three.

Namukwaya's life has changed from a miserable life to good life with a vision and hopes of prospering through agriculture. Namukwaya has been able to follow the good agronomic practices, increased on the yield as well as the acreage, from one acre to three acres.

From the sales of her agriculture produce she bought 2,500 bricks a door and 18 iron sheets as contribution and paid labour of 450,000 Ugx. This encouraged her husband to top up and raised a house that had stayed at ring beam for over five years. She now has a decent house with her family though not complete yet.

She attributes her achievement to the skills and the agriculture loan acquired in WESDO. She also managed to buy a new phone which helps her in communication since she is a member on the marketing committee of the women group. Namukwaya has also gained skills in public speaking and training in the group. She can ably train other members in the group as well as the community.

## Access to gender equitable finance



*Women VSLA in Kasanda during their weekly savings activity*

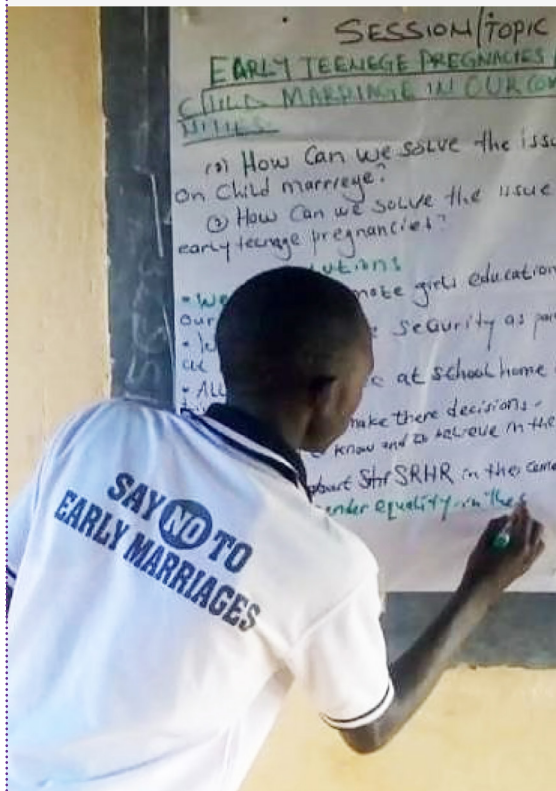
Furthermore, WESDO supported formation of 8 village savings and loans associations making a total of 281 members each. These were equipped with knowledge and skills in financial literacy, records keeping, savings mobilization, credit management and general principles of entrepreneurship. We are also happy to report that some of the groups have moved away from annual share out to an asset-based saving to increase the income within the groups. Kasanda Women's Groups and Mukisa

women groups decided to share out the money but used the accumulated saving to invest in produce, buy tents and buy plots respectively. By close of the year 2022, groups shared out. The best group shared out a total of twelve million and the least shared out three million seven hundred thousand shillings. Moreover, WESDO supported 254 women and youth to acquire gender responsive loans to invest in their businesses and further diversify their incomes.

## Women land rights

WESDO conducted land rights campaigns reaching at least 340 rural women farmers in Luuka district. WESDO promoted access to land services and land registration through popularizing land tenure systems and land registration procedures in the local language among the rural farmers on public and Mailo land tenure. WESDO also supported systematic settlement of land lawsuits, disputes, and conflicts through awareness-raising and right to information including information about complaints mechanisms for women, men and communities about existing legislation and policies. WESDO also advocated the creation of national or regional mechanisms to monitor the enforcement of policies, strategies, and laws on women's right to land through strengthening strategic partnerships.

## 2.2. Women health initiatives



WESDO focused on promoting health and wellbeing of women and girls through increased accessibility, availability and utilization of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Services and Maternal Child Health. WESDO gave attention to mental health and emotional wellbeing among especially girls, teenage mothers, young women and youth through various self-care approaches and support groups.

*Training session on SRHR among young people in Luuka*

## Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Maternal Child Health

**W**ESDO conducted awareness raising on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and Maternal Child Health in Luuka and Mayuge districts. 323 women, youth, and men in Luuka district and 297 people in Mayuge district were equipped with more knowledge on healthy timing, needs and benefits of spacing of pregnancies. Furthermore, 48 community/village health teams (30 female and 18 Male) and 14 private health service providers (12 female and 2 Male) were trained in social marketing approaches of family planning and human rights-based approaches.

Moreover, WESDO conducted sex education talks at community level through group sessions, recreational activities health festivals and cultural events in Luuka district. Community members, girls and youth participated in the traditional dance and drama shows to share their knowledge, talents and skills and worked together to bring the power of interactive drama to change lives for the better. The drama shows addressed reproductive health issues like teenage pregnancies, parenting, family planning, and stigma and discrimination, sexuality, gender, and relationships. These were combined with discussions

to actively engage people in a learning process about what happens in their lives, how to strengthen good behavioral practices and change harmful practices. Moreover, 96 youths (40 female and 56 Male) acquired skills to advocate and demand for comprehensive sex education, respect for their rights and access to health services that are appropriate to their needs and characteristics from the local authorities.

Seven hundred and twelve (712) students (336 Females and 376 Males) knowledge in RH rights and responsibilities increased through group counselling sessions in the targeted schools and communities in Mayuge district. Counselling young people through focus group discussions has greatly helped to correct and clarify collective misconceptions about reproductive health related issues. Young people now make informed decisions about sexual relationships, pregnancy, and marriage. Furthermore, WESDO organized 2 safe spaces for girls, child mothers, young women and youth which enabled the young people to share experiences, learning and healthy relationships.



**Community health  
outreach in Mayuge**

WESDO conducted 8 counseling sessions of girls and child mothers on HIV prevention, STIs and family planning. WESDO collaborated with counselors from the health facilities in the districts. The sessions were done to increase knowledge and awareness of Sexual Reproductive Health and sexual behavior change among girls and child mothers to reduce the HIV and STI infection rate and early unwanted pregnancies. The sessions were organized at the youth centres and during community gathering activities.

9 health service providers acquired more knowledge on the Ministry of Health guidelines and standards of practice including the 2004 national adolescent health policy, management policies and procedures of health service providers and key components of reproductive health. Health workers were equipped with theoretical and practical technical aspects in rendering promotive, preventive, and curative health services to adolescents in Mayuge district. The health service providers pledged to ensure privacy, confidentiality and respect while providing services to adolescents without gender bias, discrimination, stigma and seeking to promote and advance gender equity and provision of high-quality accessible adolescent health services.



## Mental health and emotional well-being

WESDO also employed, participatory and transformative activities using storytelling and joint problem solving to enhance mental health and psychosocial support for teenage mothers and young people with special needs in Luuka district. The activities enabled the teenage mothers and young people to empower themselves and be social change agents who would influence and lead problem solving in their communities.

Similarly, 231 teenage mothers and young people had increased capacity and confidence to meaningfully participate, listen effectively while having control over key decisions that impact their lives. In addition, teenage mothers and young people had increased access to mental health guidelines and support information at community level. Similarly, teenage mothers and young people had increased resilience to deal with life's challenges while earning better livelihoods as they explore their own ideas and interests. Similarly, WESDO collaborated with Community Health Workers to provide psychosocial support to the girls and young people.

### 2.3. Climatic change justice for rural women.

WESDO focused on adoption, resilience, innovation, and inclusion in climate change programs for rural women. WESDO also supported rural women in adoption of sustainable agriculture practices, renewable energy and other innovative solutions as a gender supportive response to climate changes. 28 women households have access to clean energy through solar for lighting and power through the information access and revolving loans scheme. They have reduced the use of paraffin hence saving on the costs as well as limiting the inhaling of paraffin related fumes which are detrimental to health. 54 women able to adopt agro forestry as a sustainable farming practice to address climate changes. These planted boundary trees around their homes and farms as well as small scale orchards. Livestock farmers were able to plant caliantra to supplement the feed for their cattle.



*Women and leaders marching to create awareness on climatic change.*



## 2.4. Youth Empowerment Program



WESDO supported 319 girls, teenage mothers, young women, and youth through vocational skills development in different fields including mechanics, agroecology, energy technologies and crafts making in Kasanda and Luuka districts. Participants were further equipped with soft skills including finance management, marketing, customer care, costing and pricing, decision making, and among others. WESDO further supported 120 participants with startup kits and capital to set up enterprises.



### 3. WESDO's priorities for 2023

- i. Form and strengthen farmer and women collectives including village savings and loans associations, cooperatives and women groups for increased agribusiness, food security and land rights.
- ii. Invest in increased access to gender equitable finance for women and youth to invest in income generating activities.
- iii. Advance rights and implement initiatives for Sexual Reproductive Health, HIV prevention and mental health among women, girls, and youth.
- iv. Promote climate justice with emphasis on agro forestry, energy saving technologies and sustainable agriculture
- v. Strengthen capacity community volunteers and resource persons into project activities to foster community ownership of the project activities.



Women Economic and Social Rights Development Organization (WESDO)  
Kassanda Town Council, Kiwologoma Zone.  
P.O.BOX 103220, Kampala  
Tel: +256705186386  
Emails: [wesdo.uga@gmail.com](mailto:wesdo.uga@gmail.com) / [info@wesdo.org](mailto:info@wesdo.org)  
Web: [www.wesdo.org](http://www.wesdo.org)

**WESDO**  
Advancing Women &  
Children's Rights & Livelihoods