**SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

Title: **“Enhancing Economic Empowerment and Access to Secure Housing in Slums of Fort Portal”**

**Location:** Fort Portal City, Kabarole District

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**Abstract /Summary:** (250 words)

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) project aimed to empower vulnerable youth and single mothers in the slums of Fort Portal through technical and hands-on skills of interest training in salon business, shoe repair, street food vending (rolex, popcorn), trading in agricultural produce (e.g., vegetables and fruits kiosks), laundry services, motorcycle repair, bicycle repair and maintenance, among others based on beneficiaries' interests such as biogas installation, well water drilling, and construction, while addressing challenges related to housing insecurity. The project over the period under review implemented a hands-on approach, training 40 youth artisans (17 females and 23 males) in both biogas technology and well water drilling. Under a partnership with Toro Dairy Cooperative Society Limited and over the project period, four biogas digesters and five water wells were installed for demonstration and practical learning. The youth, upon completion, received technical certificates and some have already secured employment opportunities, contributing to the reduction of unemployment rates in the community.

Despite the successes, the project encountered financing challenges that led to delays, extending the implementation beyond the university’s allocated timeframe. The project team lobbied the Rotary Club of Kabarole to take over the SCI; however, bureaucratic hurdles have slowed further financing, particularly for soft skills training.

Key lessons include the impact of practical training in creating immediate job opportunities and the need for continuous community engagement to build trust and encourage participation. Trainees’ feedback emphasized the positive transformation brought about by the skills learned. However, aligning the project timeline with its impact remains a challenge. Moving forward, follow-up with the trained youth and securing additional funding are necessary to implement other aspects of the project like affordable housing and to sustain the project's objectives.

This report outlines the SCI’s key findings, challenges, and future action plans to ensure the sustainability and continued success of the initiative.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction and Background (800 words)

To build positive within the slum communities, The Social Change Initiative (SCI) project titled “Enhancing Economic Empowerment and Access to Secure Housing in Slums of Fort Portal” was conceived to address challenges faced by the disadvantaged youth and women residing urban informal settlements. These settlements, often referred to as slums, are characterized by poor living conditions, including inadequate housing, limited access to essential services, and protracted poverty. The residents, predominantly unskilled, low-income rural-urban migrants, face significant barriers to leading dignified lives, contributing to a cycle of poverty and social instability.

This SCI is based on the broader context of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, where the promoter is focusing on peace building beginning within the family such that the improvement of living conditions and economic empowerment is seen as a foundation to for long-term peace and stability in vulnerable communities. This initiative, implemented by Patrick Rwekamba under the Rotary Peace Fellowship program, aims to empower marginalized populations, particularly youth, women, and children, by addressing the challenges of unemployment, underemployment, and insecure housing. The project’s focus on economic empowerment and secure housing is guided by the belief that these factors are crucial for fostering positive social change and promoting peaceful communities.

Urban informal settlements in Fort Portal, like many across Uganda and other developing countries, present a clear contrast to the more developed urban zones. The living conditions in these settlements are dire, with homes often constructed from temporary materials such as mud and wattle, lacking proper ventilation, sanitation, and security. Overcrowding is a common issue, increasing the risks for spread of diseases and contributing to social tensions and insecurity. Furthermore, the lack of access to basic services such as clean water, electricity, and transportation further marginalizes these communities, making it difficult for residents to improve their socio-economic status.

The youth in these settlements are particularly vulnerable. With limited access to quality education and employment opportunities, many young people find themselves trapped in a cycle of poverty. They are often forced into risky jobs where exploitation is rampant, and wages are insufficient to meet basic needs. For example, young men working in garages as “toolbox boys” are often underpaid and lack the tools and recognition needed to advance in their careers. Similarly, young women face significant barriers to employment, and those who do find work often do so in poorly paid and insecure jobs. For instance those working in restaurants earning as little as Uganda shillings five thousand per day.

The manipulative nature of employment opportunities available not only perpetuates poverty but also contributes to social unrest. The lack of stable income and secure housing creates a breeding ground for crime, substance abuse, and other social ills. Moreover, the adverse living conditions directly impact the educational attainment of children living in these areas. With inadequate lighting, cramped spaces, and a lack of electricity, many children struggle to complete their homework, leading to poor academic performance and high dropout rates. This, in turn, limits their future prospects, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

In response to these challenges, the SCI seeks to employ an approach that addresses both economic empowerment and housing security. The initiative is designed to provide targeted skills training to youth and women, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to start and sustain small businesses. By fostering entrepreneurship and financial literacy, the project aims to create pathways for economic independence and stability. This, in turn, is expected to reduce the incidence of crime and social unrest, as individuals gain access to legitimate income-generating opportunities.

In addition to economic empowerment, the SCI also focuses on improving housing conditions within the settlements. The project aims to construct affordable, climate-resilient housing units for vulnerable families, particularly single mothers and their children. By providing secure housing, the initiative seeks to create a stable environment that supports the well-being of residents and enhances their ability to pursue educational and economic opportunities. The integration of sustainable construction practices is also a key component, ensuring that the housing solutions are not only affordable but also resilient to the impacts of climate change.

The SCI’s approach is based on a theory of change that envisions a transformed community where vulnerable slum families are empowered with the skills and resources needed to break free from poverty. The initiative aligns with the broader goals of Rotary International’s peacebuilding efforts, particularly in its focus on equitable resource distribution and human capital development. By addressing the root causes of poverty and insecurity, the SCI aims to create a ripple effect of positive change, contributing to the overall peace and stability of the Fort Portal community.

In summary, the Social Change Initiative “Enhancing Economic Empowerment and Access to Secure Housing in Slums of Fort Portal” is a project that addresses the challenges of unemployment, underemployment, and insecure housing in urban informal settlements. Through targeted skills training and the provision of affordable housing, the initiative seeks to empower marginalized populations, reduce social unrest, and promote long-term peace and stability in the community.

## Problem Statement (250 words)

Within urban informal settlements, visible challenges emerges which define the reality faced by its inhabitants: widespread unemployment and substandard housing, both acting as formidable barriers to leading dignified lives and peace. The residents of these settlements are predominantly non income and low-income rural-urban migrants in pursuit of improved prospects. In these slums, the youth grapples with a deficiency in education and skills and resources required for self-employment, compelling them towards insecure activities such as theft, drug abuse, and idleness, seeking refuge in places like video halls or "bibanda." There is apparent exploitation of those employed in the informal in shops, garages, salons, and restaurants becomes their only recourse, with earnings insufficient to sustain their livelihoods. For example, those in garages, labeled as "tool box boys," remain in this stagnant role for years. Lack of toolkits, experience, and the slow process of gaining recognition and trust from customers perpetuates their exploitation by experienced mechanics, who compensate them with meager lunch allowances, offering no breakthrough from the grip of urban poverty.

The ripple effects of these harsh realities are negatively impacting on school children living in constrained spaces, inadequate lighting, and a lack of electricity pose significant hurdles, hindering their ability to complete school homework. These adverse conditions manifest as academic underperformance and alarming dropout rates. Living within informal settlements embody a collection of hazards, characterized by structures without proper windows, dilapidated and unsanitary floors, leaky walls and roofs, overcrowded living spaces, and a severe lack of fundamental services such as water connections, sanitation facilities, electricity, and reliable transportation. The fragility of these structures intensifies the risk of destruction during bad weather, highlighting the instability of living conditions.

## Goals and Objectives (400 words)

The general goal of the Social Change Initiative “Enhancing Economic Empowerment and Access to Secure Housing in Slums of Fort Portal” is to improve the quality of life for residents of urban informal settlements by addressing the visible challenges of unemployment and substandard housing. This goal is based on the theory that economic empowerment and secure housing are critical to fostering peace, stability, and social cohesion in vulnerable communities starting at household or family level.

**Specific Objectives:**

1. **Economic Empowerment through Skills Development:**
   * **Objective:** To equip 10 unemployed youth aged 19-35 years with market-relevant skills through hands-on training programs tailored to the demands of the local economy. The skills training will focus on practical trades such as street food vending, tailoring, shoe making, and other small business ventures that can provide immediate income opportunities.
   * **Outcome:** Empowered youth with the skills and tools necessary to start and sustain small businesses, leading to increased income stability and reduced reliance on insecure employment.
2. **Provision of Secure, Affordable Housing:**
   * **Objective:** To construct affordable, climate-resilient housing units for 2 vulnerable single mothers aged 19-35 years, providing them and their children with a stable and secure living environment. The housing units will be designed in collaboration with local builders and architects to ensure they are culturally appropriate and resilient to local climate conditions.
   * **Outcome:** Improved living conditions for vulnerable families, leading to enhanced safety, health, and overall well-being. Secure housing will also provide a conducive environment for children to pursue their education without the disruptions caused by poor living conditions.
3. **Promotion of Financial Literacy and Economic Self-Sufficiency:**
   * **Objective:** To provide financial literacy training to the project beneficiaries, enabling them to effectively manage their income, save for the future, and access credit through the formation of Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs).
   * **Outcome:** Increased financial literacy and economic self-sufficiency among project beneficiaries, fostering a culture of savings and investment that supports the growth and sustainability of small businesses in the community.

## Challenges and Mitigation Strategies (400 words)

The implementation of the Social Change Initiative faced several challenges that affected the results and achievement of its objectives. These challenges include:

1. **Limited Financial Resources:**
   * **Challenge:** The SCI started with a limited budget of $700 provided by the Rotary Foundation, which was not insufficient to cover much of the planned activities.
   * **Mitigation Strategy:** To address this, the project engaged local potential partners in extensive fundraising efforts within the Fort Portal region for available local resources which could be sustainable. This resulted into a youth skills training partnership with Toro Dairy Cooperative Society Limited and the Rotary Club of Kabarole.
2. **High Demand for Skills Training:**

**Challenge:** There were more potential beneficiaries for the project than initially anticipated. This unexpected increase in demand stretched the project’s resources and causing delays so that a large number could participate to benefit from the initiative within the set timeframe.

**Mitigation Strategy:** To address the high demand, the project achieved a partnership with Toro Dairy Cooperative Society Limited to skill youth artisans urban water and farm water installations and biogas technologies.

1. **Logistical and Administrative Challenges:**
   * **Challenge:** The logistics for transport and supervising training sessions was difficult by the lack enough fuel and field motor vehicle.
   * **Mitigation Strategy:** The trainees were grouped into two and each group allocated coordination team composed of the trainer and trainees volunteers whose responsibility was to overseeing day-to-day activities, ensuring efficient communication and resource allocation, and attendance. I contributed personally by offering a personal motor vehicle to carryout mobilization and monstering of activities.
2. **Inadequate Financing and Project Delays**

* **Challenge:** The project faced a lack of financing as initially planned, resulting in delays and extensions beyond the allocated time frame from the University. This has affected the completion of key activities and project conclusion.
* **Mitigation Strategy:** In response, the project lobbied the Rotary Club of Kabarole to take over the Social Change Initiative (SCI). While this solution holds potential for scaling up and long-term impact, bureaucratic processes have slowed down the materialization of funding, affecting alignment of the project with the University. The project will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders beyond the caprine week to explore other potential funding opportunities, while exploring alternative funding sources for project long term impact and sustainability.

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# CHAPTER TWO

## Literature Review (1000 words)

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) aimed at enhancing economic empowerment and access to secure housing in the slums of Fort Portal, this literature review explores the complexities of urban informality, peace, resilience, and urban planning. This review cover key insights from recent studies, focusing on urban informality, challenges in urban planning, and strategies for building resilience in informal settlements. The discussion draws from various sources, including Richmond, Myers, and Namuli (2018), Gay et al. (2009), Muggah (2012), Buhaug and Urdal (2013), Dobson, Nyamweru, and Dodman (2015), and Kiggundu (2014), to provide understanding of the dynamics at play in urban informal settlements.

#### Constraints to Urban Planning: Kiggundu's Analysis

Kiggundu (2014) examines the constraints to urban planning and management in secondary towns in Uganda, offering critical insights for the SCI. The study highlights the rapid urbanization in Uganda, with over 60% of urban residents living in informal settlements lacking basic infrastructure and services. The SCI must address this severe lack of infrastructure and services in Fort Portal’s informal settlements, focusing on improving access to essential services for vulnerable groups like youth and single mothers.

Kiggundu (2014) also critiques the modernist planning approach, which has not succeeded in promoting orderly urban development or improving service delivery in Uganda. The SCI should avoid the pitfalls of this approach by adopting a more flexible, context-sensitive planning strategy that responds directly to the needs of slum communities. This could involve community-driven planning processes and the integration of local knowledge into project design.

Finally, Kiggundu (2014) emphasizes the need for participatory and strategic urban planning, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including slum dwellers. The SCI should prioritize participatory planning processes that involve all relevant stakeholders, particularly the marginalized groups most affected by urban challenges. This inclusive approach will help ensure that the interventions are relevant, effective, and widely supported.

#### **Urban Informality and Vulnerability: Lessons from Kampala**

Richmond, Myers, and Namuli (2018) provide a detailed case study of urban informality in Kampala, Uganda, highlighting several key challenges that are directly relevant to the SCI. One of the critical challenges is the difficulty of implementing effective urban planning in informal settlements, which exacerbates vulnerabilities. The authors argue that top-down planning approaches often fail to address the specific needs of informal communities, leading to ineffective interventions. For the SCI, this underscores the importance of involving local communities in planning processes to ensure that solutions are tailored to their specific needs, as bottom-up approaches are likely to be more effective and sustainable.

Additionally, Richmond et al. (2018) emphasize the burden that growing cities place on environmental resources, such as water, which is often inadequate in informal settlements. The SCI can draw from this lesson by advocating for sustainable urban development practices that consider the long-term availability and management of essential resources. This is particularly relevant when introducing technologies such as water for urban farming and biogas fuel production, which require careful planning to be sustainable.

Furthermore, the article points out that informal settlements, despite their vulnerabilities, are integral to the urban landscape. This aligns with the SCI's focus on integrating vulnerable populations into the broader socio-economic fabric of Fort Portal. By recognizing the value of these communities and working to enhance their living conditions and economic opportunities, the SCI can contribute to more inclusive urban development.

#### **Megacities and Urban Exclusion: Insights for the SCI**

Gay et al. (2009) explore the politics of urban exclusion and violence in megacities of the Global South, offering valuable lessons for the SCI. The study highlights that urban informality is not merely a byproduct of urban growth but represents a complex transformation in urban dynamics. Informal settlements, often seen as areas to be formalized or eradicated, play a significant role in the urban fabric of rapidly growing cities. For the SCI, this means recognizing that informal settlements in Fort Portal may also be undergoing similar transformations. Strategies should consider these settlements as integral to urban development, rather than as areas to be marginalized. The people in these slums must be supported to adapt to the ever changing environment so that they are not left out of development.

The authors also address the severe socioeconomic and challenges faced by informal settlements, including inadequate infrastructure and services, which impact the quality of life and exacerbate vulnerabilities and insecurity. The SCI can incorporate targeted interventions to address these specific challenges in Fort Portal’s informal settlements, such as improving infrastructure, access to basic services, and addressing inequities.

#### **Urbanization, Poverty, and Violence: Muggah's Perspective**

Muggah (2012) presents a detailed analysis of the relationship between rapid urbanization, poverty, and violence, with a focus on how these dynamics play out in informal settlements. One of the key lessons from this study is that rapid urbanization often leads to an increasing concentration of poverty in urban areas, particularly in informal settlements. This pattern is evident in various regions globally, including Sub-Saharan Africa. The SCI must recognize that Fort Portal, like many other rapidly urbanizing cities, is likely experiencing similar patterns of urban poverty and informal settlement expansion. Addressing the specific needs of these impoverished areas, with a focus on both immediate relief and long-term development strategies, is crucial for the success of the initiative.

Another significant lesson from Muggah (2012) is the impact of urban violence, which is often associated with rapid urban growth and the proliferation of informal settlements. Urban violence can lead to victimization, eroded livelihoods, and increased segregation. The SCI should incorporate strategies to address violence and its impacts, potentially through community safety programs, conflict resolution initiatives, and efforts to reduce violence in vulnerable areas.

#### **Population Growth and Social Disorder: Reassessing Assumptions**

Buhaug and Urdal (2013) challenge the common assumption that high urban population growth is a primary driver of social disorder and violence. Their study reveals that other factors, such as weak political institutions, economic shocks, and ongoing civil conflict, play a more significant role in urban disorder. This insight is crucial for the SCI, as it suggests that addressing social disorder and violence requires a focus on governance, economic stability, and conflict resolution, rather than merely managing population growth.

The study also emphasizes the importance of using detailed, region-specific data to understand and address urban challenges. For the SCI, this means investing in data collection and analysis to better understand the urban dynamics in Fort Portal and the real needs of the slum people. Utilizing detailed, local data will enhance the initiative’s ability to tailor its interventions effectively, ensuring they address the specific needs and conditions of urban areas.

#### **Resilience Building in Informal Settlements: Lessons from Uganda**

Dobson, Nyamweru, and Dodman (2015) explore community-led approaches to building resilience in informal settlements in Uganda. They emphasize that urban resilience is most effectively built through the active involvement of local communities. The SCI should prioritize the involvement of slum residents, particularly youth and single mothers, in the planning and implementation of resilience-building activities and proving the skills that interest beneficiaries hence being dynamic. Empowering these groups to take the lead ensures that interventions are contextually appropriate and more sustainable.

The authors also highlight the importance of integrating both hard (infrastructure) and soft (behavioral and regulatory) investments in resilience-building efforts. This approach ensures that physical improvements are supported by the institutional systems necessary for their maintenance and expansion. The SCI should focus not only on physical improvements, such as housing and infrastructure but also on strengthening institutional systems and community organizations to enhance the long-term sustainability of the project’s outcomes.

#### In nutshell the literature reviewed provided a rich foundation for the Social Change Initiative focused on enhancing economic empowerment and access to secure housing in Fort Portal's slums. By integrating lessons from studies on urban informality, resilience building, and urban planning challenges, the SCI can develop a more robust and contextually appropriate and dynamic interventions for addressing the skills challenges faced by vulnerable populations in urban informal settlements. The insights gained from these studies guided the design and implementation of interventions, ensuring they are sustainable, inclusive, and impactful.

## Theoretical Underpinnings (1000words)

This section outlines the theoretical foundations of the Social Change Initiative (SCI) and how it’s Theory of Change (ToC) effectively connects to the identified challenges, ensuring the relevance of the intervention to produce the desired impact. The SCI targets vulnerable populations, including youth and single mothers in Fort Portal's urban informal settlements, with a focus on skills education, economic empowerment, and secure housing.

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the SCI establishes a clear connection between the problems identified and the intended long-term outcomes. The ToC framework outlines the logical sequence from the challenges observed in Fort Portal's informal settlements to the desired impact of economic empowerment and social inclusion. The following elements form the core of the ToC:

**Problem Identification:**

Fort Portal's informal settlements are characterized by systemic poverty, inadequate access to education and employment, and poor housing conditions. Rapid urbanization has compounded these issues, leading to overcrowding and limited economic opportunities. Vulnerable populations, particularly youth and single mothers, face significant barriers to improving their socioeconomic status.

**Intervention Strategy:**

The SCI addresses these challenges through a multi-pronged approach that includes:

1. **Skills Education:** Targeted training in high-demand sectors, such as water and biogas technologies, is provided to improve employability.
2. **Economic Empowerment:** The initiative facilitates access to startup kits and micro-enterprise opportunities to enable sustainable livelihoods.
3. **Secure Housing:** Collaboration with local stakeholders ensures the provision of secure, affordable housing to reduce homelessness and improve living conditions.

**Desired Impact:**

The SCI aims to achieve economic empowerment and social inclusion for vulnerable groups in Fort Portal's informal settlements. This will result in improved livelihoods, reduced poverty, and enhanced resilience against socio-economic challenges.

#### Connecting Theory of Change to Identified Challenges

The SCI's ToC is closely aligned with the specific challenges faced by the target communities. The initiative's components directly address the root causes of vulnerability in Fort Portal's informal settlements.

**Addressing Poverty and Unemployment:**

The cycle of poverty and limited access to employment opportunities are primary challenges. The SCI's skills education component is designed to build human capital, enabling participants to become competitive in the job market. By focusing on practical training in water and biogas technologies, the SCI ensures that beneficiaries acquire skills that are in demand within the local economy, particularly in urban dairy farming. This alignment with market needs is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and reducing unemployment.

**Improving Housing Conditions:**

Inadequate housing in informal settlements contributes to poor health, social instability, and limited economic productivity. The SCI’s housing intervention is based on the theory of social determinants of health, which emphasizes the impact of living conditions on overall well-being. By providing secure housing, the initiative addresses a fundamental barrier to social and economic development, improving the quality of life for participants and creating a stable foundation for economic empowerment.

**Promoting Social Inclusion:**

The SCI recognizes the marginalization of vulnerable populations, particularly youth and single mothers. The initiative's focus on these groups is critical for promoting social inclusion. By providing targeted skills training and secure housing, the SCI empowers marginalized individuals, enabling them to contribute to and benefit from economic growth. This approach aligns with the theory of social inclusion, which highlights the importance of integrating all members of society into the economic and social fabric.

#### Relevance of the Intervention

The SCI’s intervention strategy is relevant and responsive to the needs of the target population. The initiative’s focus on skills education, economic empowerment, and secure housing is directly aligned with the challenges identified in Fort Portal’s informal settlements.

**Responding to Local Needs:**

The relevance of the SCI is demonstrated by its alignment with local needs. The decision to focus on training in water and biogas technologies is based on a thorough needs assessment, ensuring that the intervention is contextually appropriate. Additionally, the provision of secure housing addresses a critical gap in the provision of essential services, directly improving the living conditions of vulnerable populations.

**Ensuring Sustainable Impact:**

The SCI’s potential for sustainable impact is rooted in its comprehensive approach to addressing both immediate needs (skills education and housing) and underlying causes of vulnerability (poverty and social exclusion). The ToC framework ensures that each component of the intervention is designed to contribute to the overall goal of economic empowerment and social inclusion. This approach creates the conditions for long-term change, enabling participants to improve their socioeconomic status and build resilience against future challenges.

**Scalability and Replicability:**

The SCI’s intervention model is both scalable and replicable. The ToC framework allows for adaptation to different contexts, making it a viable model for other urban informal settlements facing similar challenges. The core components of skills education, economic empowerment, and secure housing can be implemented in other settings, ensuring that the SCI’s impact extends beyond Fort Portal.

The theoretical underpinnings of the Social Change Initiative are firmly grounded in the Theory of Change. By directly addressing the identified challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate housing in Fort Portal's informal settlements, the SCI’s intervention strategy is highly relevant and effective. The initiative’s focus on skills education, economic empowerment, and secure housing is designed to produce the desired impact of economic empowerment and social inclusion. Through its comprehensive and context-responsive approach, the SCI is well-positioned to achieve sustainable change, improving the lives of vulnerable youth and single mothers in Fort Portal and serving as a model for similar interventions in other urban informal settlements

## Change theory and how it was applied: (700 words)

I have used the Change theory to provide a structured approach that will lead to the desired outcomes and the factors that will facilitate these processes. In the context of social change initiatives, change theory has helped in identifying the key drivers of change, understanding the mechanisms through which change will take place, and planning interventions that effectively address identified problems.

**Application in the Social Change Initiative**

**1. Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework**

The SCI proposal addresses critical issues faced by residents of urban informal settlements in Fort Portal, Uganda, including widespread unemployment, substandard housing, and lack of access to essential services. The change theory applied in this SCI involves a systematic approach to tackling these challenges through two primary pathways: Economic Empowerment and Secure Low-Cost Housing.

**2. Pathways for Change**

* **Economic Empowerment Pathway**:
  + **Theory of Change**: This pathway is based on the premise that enhancing skills and providing economic opportunities will lead to increased self-employment and financial stability. The theory suggests that by equipping youth with practical skills and providing small business start-up toolkits, individuals can generate income, reduce dependency on informal and exploitative jobs, and ultimately improve their socio-economic conditions.
  + **Application**: The SCI has implemented hands-on skilling programs in technical farm well drilling and biogas installations which scored highly is a marketable skills, other trades, such as salon business, shoe repair, and motorcycle maintenance are underway. This approach was designed to meet local market demands and provide beneficiaries with the tools and knowledge necessary for successful entrepreneurship. The formation of Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs) will further support economic resilience by fostering collaborative financial initiatives and access to credit-this also underway.
* **Secure Low-Cost Housing Pathway**:
  + **Theory of Change**: This pathway is grounded in the belief that secure and resilient housing is fundamental to improving living conditions and stability. The theory posits that by constructing affordable, climate-resilient housing units, the project will address the immediate housing crisis and provide a foundation for long-term security and well-being.
  + **Application**: The SCI focused on constructing low-cost housing for vulnerable single mothers and widows. Collaborative design with local builders and cost-effective construction methods to ensure that the housing units are both affordable and durable. This approach aimed to mitigate the risks associated with poor housing conditions, such as vulnerability to weather-related damage and lack of basic amenities.

**3. Integration and Monitoring**

The integration of these pathways within the SCI is aimed at creating a comprehensive intervention that addresses both economic and housing needs. The project will use continuous monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of its interventions, identify challenges, and adapt strategies as needed. The focus will be on ensuring that beneficiaries receive adequate support, that housing units meet quality standards, and that economic activities lead to sustainable outcomes.

**4. Outcomes and Impact**

The expected outcomes of the SCI include enhanced economic empowerment of youth, improved housing conditions for vulnerable families, and overall community upliftment. By applying change theory, the SCI aims to achieve these outcomes through a structured approach that combines skill development, economic support, and secure housing. The long-term impact will be measured by improvements in beneficiaries’ income levels, housing stability, and overall quality of life.

## Methods and Design: (800 words)

**1. Methodological Approach**

As defined under theory of change, the SCI employs a mixed methodological approach to address the challenges of unemployment and insecure housing in urban informal settlements. This approach is structured into two main components: Economic Empowerment and Secure Low-Cost Housing. Each component is designed with specific methods to achieve its objectives effectively.

* **Economic Empowerment Methods**:
  + **Hands-On Skills Training**: The project will offer practical training sessions in various trades and skills, tailored to market demands. Qualified instructors will lead these sessions, ensuring that beneficiaries acquire relevant and actionable skills.
  + **Small Business Start-Up Kits**: Beneficiaries will receive toolkits and equipment necessary for starting small businesses. These kits will be distributed based on the skills acquired and the type of business planned.
  + **Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs)**: The formation of SACAs will encourage financial collaboration and provide access to credit. Training on financial literacy will accompany this to ensure beneficiaries can manage their finances effectively.
* **Secure Low-Cost Housing Methods**:
  + **Housing Design and Construction**: The project will engage local builders and architects to design affordable and climate-resilient housing units. Construction will follow cost-effective methods to ensure affordability and durability.
  + **Community Involvement**: Local stakeholders and beneficiaries will be involved in the planning and implementation phases to ensure that the housing units meet community needs and preferences.

**2. Design and Implementation**

* **Project Inception and Stakeholder Engagement**: Initial activities include stakeholder identification, project launch meetings, and beneficiary profiling. These steps are crucial for establishing collaborative networks and ensuring community involvement.
* **Training and Capacity Building**: The design includes multiple training sessions for skill acquisition, financial literacy, and savings and credit. These sessions are structured to provide beneficiaries with the knowledge and tools needed for sustainable economic activities.
* **Monitoring and Evaluation**: The project will implement regular monitoring and evaluation assessments to track progress and measure outcomes. Focus group discussions, individual interviews, and quantitative data will be collected to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and make necessary adjustments.

**3. Risk Management and Adaptation**

The project design includes provisions for identifying and addressing risks. Continuous monitoring will help in recognizing challenges and adapting strategies accordingly. This approach ensures that the project remains responsive to evolving needs and conditions within the target communities.

**4. Sustainability and Long-Term Impact**

The sustainability of the SCI is built into its design through capacity building, skills transfer, and financial literacy training. The establishment of SACAs and the integration of entrepreneurship education are aimed at fostering long-term economic resilience. The housing component also emphasizes durable construction and community involvement to ensure lasting impact.

By employing a comprehensive and adaptive design, the SCI aims to create meaningful and sustainable change in the lives of residents in urban informal settlements, aligning with the broader goals of peacebuilding and social development.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Interventions and Activities: (1200 words)

The Social Change Initiative was meant to be implemented within a 9-month period, with activities organized into four key phases:

**Phase 1: Community Mobilization and Engagement**

* Conducted community meetings and information sessions to introduce the project and engage local stakeholders.
* Identified and recruit 20 unemployed youth to participate in the skills training components.
* Conduct a rapid needs assessment of the target beneficiaries and in line with available opportunities.

**Phase 2: Skills Training and Housing Construction**

* Implement hands-on skills training programs for youth in urban farm water well drilling and construction and biogas installation and maintenance, in collaboration with Toro Dairy Cooperative Society Limited.
* Work on construction of climate-resilient housing units for the identified single mothers, with input from local builders and architects is still pending and resource mobilization is going on.
* The provision of startup toolkits to youth who successfully complete the training programs, enabling them to launch their small businesses is also pending an agreement with Rotary Club of Kabarole to take up this project-negotiations are ongoing.

**Phase 3: Financial Literacy and Business Development (pending)**

* Conduct financial literacy workshops for all beneficiaries, covering topics such as budgeting, saving, and accessing credit.
* Facilitate the formation of Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs) among the beneficiaries to promote collective savings and investment.
* Provide ongoing mentorship and support to the newly established businesses, including regular follow-up visits and linkages to local business networks.

**Phase 4: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability Planning**

* There is ongoing monitoring the progress of the skills training and housing components, with a focus on the impact on beneficiaries’ income and living conditions.
* Conducting of an end-line survey to assess the overall impact of the project on the target communities is pending implementation of other activities.
* Developed a sustainability plan in collaboration with beneficiaries and local stakeholders to ensure the long-term viability of the small businesses and housing units-this is mainly embedded under approach and sustainability plan.

### **Sustainability (300 words)**

Ensuring the sustainability of the Social Change Initiative is a key priority, as the project aims to create lasting positive impacts for the beneficiaries and the broader community. The sustainability plan is built on several key pillars:

1. **Ongoing Support and Mentorship:**
   * The project provides continuous support to the beneficiaries through mentorship programs, regular follow-up visits, and linkages to local business networks. This ongoing support will help beneficiaries navigate the challenges of starting and sustaining small businesses in the informal economy, ensuring that they have the tools and knowledge needed to succeed.
2. **Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs):**
   * The formation of Savings and Credit Associations (SACAs) among the beneficiaries will provide a financial safety net and promote a culture of savings and investment. SACAs will enable beneficiaries to pool their resources, access credit, and invest in the growth and expansion of their businesses. This collective effort is still pending and will enhance the financial stability and sustainability of the small businesses established through the project.
3. **Community Ownership:**
   * The actively involves the community in the planning and implementation process, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility and the beneficiaries are only engaged in their areas of interest which are marketable as well. By engaging local stakeholders, including community leaders, builders, and business owners, the project aims to build local capacity and ensure that the skills and knowledge gained through the initiative are retained within the community. This approach will help create a supportive environment for the beneficiaries and ensure the sustainability of the project’s outcomes.
4. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**
   * The project will continue seeking to establish partnerships with local businesses, NGOs, and government agencies to provide additional support and resources. These partnerships will be crucial for scaling the project’s impact and ensuring that the benefits extend beyond the initial group of beneficiaries. Collaboration with organizations specializing in sustainable construction practices will also be pursued to enhance the resilience of the housing units and ensure their long-term durability.
5. **Climate Resilience:**
   * The housing units constructed through the project will be designed to be climate-resilient, using sustainable building materials and practices. This will ensure that the homes are durable and capable of withstanding the impacts of climate change, reducing the need for costly repairs and maintenance in the future.

## Key findings / impact: (800words)

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) focusing on economic empowerment and access to secure housing in the slums of Fort Portal has demonstrated considerable impact through its youth skills training component. This section outlines the key findings regarding the skills training in biogas installation and well water drilling, highlighting the progress, outputs, outcomes, and lessons learned during the implementation phase.

**Training of Youth Artisans in Biogas Installation, Safety Measures, and Maintenance**

One of the core activities of the SCI was the training of youth artisans in biogas installation and maintenance, with a strong emphasis on safety measures at farms. A total of 20 youth participated in this program, comprising 13 females and 7 males. The training took place over 12 days and involved both theoretical and practical components. As part of the hands-on training, four biogas digesters were installed in key clusters across Karambi, Kagote, Ruteete, and Buheesi.

The trainees received technical skills that empowered them to seek employment and self-sustenance. Upon completion of the training, each participant was awarded a Technical Certificate by Toro Dairy, which serves as formal recognition of their acquired skills and enhances their employability in the growing biogas sector.

The training has had an immediate and tangible impact, with four youths already securing employment at RESI Limited, the organization that provided technical support. These youths have since installed five biogas digesters for local farmers, demonstrating the practical application of their newly acquired skills. This has created employment opportunities while providing the artisans with valuable job experience in their field of expertise.

**Training of Youth Artisans in Well Water Drilling, Construction, and Maintenance**

Parallel to the biogas training, 20 youth, including 4 females and 16 males, were trained in well water drilling, construction, and maintenance. This training was more intensive, spanning 20 days and focusing on the technical and safety aspects required for constructing and maintaining wells. The training was held in clusters such as Harugongo, Kitumba, Ruteete, and Karambi, where five wells were constructed for practice purposes.

The practical aspect of this training allowed participants to directly apply the skills they learned, which will enable them to secure job opportunities in well water construction and maintenance. Similar to the biogas trainees, participants received Technical Certificates, which not only improve their employability but also instill a sense of accomplishment and capability in pursuing their career goals.

The training has already produced visible outcomes, with six youth artisans being contracted by a local farmer to construct a well in Nyakigumba Cluster. This success story underscores the relevance and immediate impact of the skills training on both the participants and the broader community.

**Lessons Learned**

Several important lessons have emerged from the implementation of the youth skills training component:

1. **Hands-On Training Is Crucial for Employment Creation**: The combination of practical and theoretical training in biogas installation and well water drilling has proven highly effective in equipping youth with marketable skills. The detailed, hands-on nature of the training, along with the certification process, has allowed participants to secure employment quickly. This demonstrates the critical role that practical, skills-based programs play in fostering economic empowerment among vulnerable populations, particularly in regions with limited formal employment opportunities.
2. **Inclusivity and Gender Balance Foster Broader Impact**: The inclusion of women in the training programs is a key success factor. In both the biogas and well water drilling trainings, significant numbers of female participants were equipped with technical skills traditionally reserved for men. This inclusive approach not only promotes gender equality but also empowers women to take on active, income-generating roles within their communities.
3. **Collaboration with Local Stakeholders Is Essential for Sustainability**: The project could not raises limited cash contributions. The success stories of youth artisans securing employment with local businesses and farmers highlight the importance of strong partnerships with local stakeholders. These partnerships facilitate the practical application of skills and provide youth with opportunities for employment and further skill development, ensuring the sustainability of the initiative.

**Feedback from Farmers and Stakeholders**

The feedback from beneficiaries involved in the SCI has been overwhelmingly positive. Farmers have expressed their appreciation for the skills training and its benefits, particularly in biogas installation and well water drilling. The installation of biogas digesters and the construction of wells have improved their farm operations, while the youth artisans have contributed to the local economy by offering their newly acquired services.

Farmers reported that these interventions have transformed their perspectives on dairy farming practices, integrating more sustainable and efficient technologies. The collaborative efforts between the Toro Dairy Cooperative Society (TDCS), aBi, and local stakeholders have significantly empowered farmers with practical knowledge and skills that enhance their productivity.

**Areas for Improvement**

One key area for improvement, highlighted by project and the implementing partners, is the need for a longer project timeline to ensure a broader impact. The short duration of the training programs limited the number of youth who could participate, and additional time would allow for a larger cohort to benefit from these life-changing skills. Furthermore, the farmers expressed interest in more advanced training sessions to further enhance their expertise.

The implementing partners also identified a need for ongoing capacity-building initiatives. Building on the initial success of the SCI, there is a call for continued support and training to further empower the youth artisans and the local community.

**Way Forward**

Moving forward, the SCI team is viewed as too early to end and the focus is on resource mobilization to implement other components of the project, follow-up activities with the trained youth to track their progress and register their employment successes. Additional efforts will be made to connect these artisans with job opportunities and to continue lobbying for local businesses to hire them. Continuous engagement with local stakeholders will be essential to maintain the momentum of the initiative and to ensure that the youth continue to apply their skills effectively.

In conclusion, the skills training component of the Social Change Initiative has successfully contributed to the economic empowerment of youth artisans in Fort Portal. Through hands-on training in biogas installation and well water drilling, participants have gained practical skills, secured employment, and contributed to the local economy. The lessons learned from this initiative will inform future capacity-building programs, ensuring even greater impact in the community.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## General Conclusion (300words)

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) focusing on economic empowerment and access to secure housing for youth and single mothers in Fort Portal's urban informal settlements has made significant strides in achieving its objectives. The skills training component in biogas installation and well water drilling has empowered 40 youth, equipping them with hands-on technical knowledge and certifications that have already translated into employment opportunities. These programs have not only provided individuals with sustainable income-generating skills but have also contributed to the broader community’s development through improved agricultural and water access systems.

The inclusion of both men and women in the trainings has fostered gender balance, creating a more inclusive economic environment. The immediate employment of several trainees, as seen in the success stories with RESI Limited and local farmers, further highlights the program's positive impact.

Overall, the SCI has demonstrated the importance of skills-based education in driving economic development in marginalized urban areas. While challenges related to the project’s timeline and scope were identified, the outcomes reflect a solid foundation for future capacity-building efforts. Moving forward, sustained support and follow-up activities will be critical to ensure the long-term success of the trained youth and the continued growth of the initiative.

## Recommendations / implications for Policy: (500 words)

The Social Change Initiative provides several insights and recommendations for policymakers, particularly in the areas of youth empowerment, skills development, and gender inclusion in the workforce:

1. **Expand Skills-Based Education Programs**: The success of the SCI highlights the need for policies that promote practical, hands-on training programs for youth, especially in technical fields such as biogas installation and well water drilling. Government and development agencies should prioritize funding and support for similar initiatives to create more employment opportunities and address unemployment, particularly among vulnerable populations in urban informal settlements.
2. **Promote Gender Equality in Technical Training**: The SCI’s training model, which included both male and female participants, should be encouraged at the policy level. Gender-sensitive policies that promote equal access to technical training for women can significantly enhance their economic participation, particularly in fields traditionally dominated by men. Policymakers should incentivize training institutions and employers to adopt inclusive practices that promote gender diversity.
3. **Longer Project Timelines and Support Structures**: One of the main challenges identified during the SCI was the short project timeline, which limited the reach and long-term impact of the training. Future policies should advocate for longer-term funding commitments for skills training programs, allowing for extended implementation periods and more comprehensive follow-up mechanisms. Continuous support structures, such as mentorship, job placement, and skills upgrading opportunities, should be integrated into these programs to ensure their sustainability.
4. **Public-Private Partnerships for Employment Creation**: Collaboration between government, private sector companies, and local communities was instrumental in the success of this project. Policies that promote public-private partnerships can enhance the capacity of programs like the SCI to scale up and provide more significant employment opportunities for trained youth. Government agencies should incentivize private sector engagement through tax breaks, subsidies, or direct partnerships in skills training programs, leading to better job placement for graduates.
5. **Localizing Training Programs for Context-Specific Solutions**: The SCI focused on skills relevant to the Fort Portal region, such as biogas installation and well water drilling, which align with the needs of the local agricultural and farming community. Policymakers should advocate for context-specific training programs that meet the particular needs of different regions, enabling trainees to directly apply their skills in local industries. National policies on vocational education and technical training should be flexible enough to accommodate regionally tailored programs that foster sustainable development.

## Sustainability plan: (800words)

For the long-term success of the Social Change Initiative, a comprehensive sustainability plan is critical. This plan addresses both the financial and operational strategies needed to maintain the benefits of the project for the youth and communities involved.

**1. Continuous Training and Skill Upgrading**

One of the cornerstones of sustaining the SCI’s impact is to ensure that the skills gained by the participants are continuously upgraded. As technologies in biogas installation and well water drilling evolve, there will be a need for the artisans to keep up with these changes.

* **Regular Workshops and Refresher Courses**: The SCI team should collaborate with local technical institutions and companies to offer regular workshops and refresher courses. This will not only ensure that the trained artisans remain competitive in the market but also provide an avenue for new entrants to join the workforce.
* **Certification Renewal Programs**: To maintain the relevance of the skills certification, participants should be encouraged to renew their certifications periodically. This can be tied to attendance at workshops or additional training modules, which will serve both as a quality control mechanism and a professional development incentive.

**2. Building a Cooperative for Youth Artisans**

To ensure the trained youth artisans continue to thrive post-training, the creation of a cooperative for biogas and water well artisans is recommended. This cooperative will serve multiple purposes:

* **Job Pooling and Resource Sharing**: The cooperative will act as a central hub for job matching, where requests for biogas installation or well construction can be pooled and assigned to the artisans. This will provide the artisans with a steady stream of work and ensure fair job distribution among members.
* **Collective Bargaining**: Through the cooperative, artisans will have greater leverage when negotiating contracts with clients, ensuring that they receive fair pay for their services. The cooperative could also negotiate bulk discounts for tools, materials, and transportation costs, reducing operational expenses for the artisans.
* **Mentorship for New Trainees**: The cooperative can also play a crucial role in mentoring new trainees, ensuring that the next generation of artisans receives guidance from experienced members. This creates a continuous cycle of skill transfer, fostering a long-term sustainable ecosystem of artisans in the community.

**3. Establishing Partnerships with Local Businesses and Farmers**

For the project’s sustainability, establishing ongoing relationships with local businesses, farms, and institutions is essential. These partnerships can offer continuous work opportunities for the artisans while addressing the agricultural needs of the community.

* **Service Contracts with Local Farms**: The SCI should formalize partnerships with farms that benefited from the initial biogas installations and water wells. Establishing service contracts with these farms for maintenance work will provide artisans with recurring work. Additionally, the farms will benefit from having a reliable source of local expertise to maintain their systems.
* **Engagement with Local Governments and Institutions**: Local government bodies and institutions can provide long-term sustainability through infrastructure projects or incentives. For instance, local municipalities may require water well construction in public areas or biogas installations for waste management. Engaging these institutions can provide artisans with public contracts, expanding their work opportunities.

**4. Access to Financial Services**

One of the critical challenges for youth artisans post-training is the financial capital needed to establish themselves independently. A sustainability plan must include provisions for financial support:

* **Microfinance and Loans**: Establish partnerships with microfinance institutions to provide small loans to the trained youth. These loans can help artisans purchase tools, transportation, or initial materials needed for jobs. Low-interest loans or grants should be prioritized to avoid creating debt traps.
* **Savings and Investment Groups**: Encourage the artisans to form savings groups within the cooperative. These groups can provide small loans or emergency funds to members, allowing them to overcome financial hurdles without relying on external loans.

**5. Community Engagement and Advocacy**

Long-term sustainability also relies on continued community engagement and advocacy for the value of skills-based training.

* **Awareness Campaigns**: SCI should work on raising awareness about the importance of biogas and water well systems in sustainable farming practices. Regular community outreach programs can inform local farmers and businesses about the availability of skilled artisans in their area, creating a demand for the services offered by the youth.
* **Policy Advocacy**: Engaging with local policymakers and government officials to create an enabling environment for the artisans is crucial. Advocacy efforts should focus on tax incentives for businesses that hire locally trained artisans, subsidies for biogas and water systems, and integrating skills-based training into national education policies.

**6. Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure that the SCI remains effective and relevant, a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system should be implemented:

* **Tracking Employment Outcomes**: Regular follow-ups with the trained artisans to monitor their employment status, income levels, and job satisfaction. This data will help refine the training programs and make necessary adjustments to improve outcomes.
* **Feedback Loops**: Establish mechanisms for the artisans and farmers to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the training programs and any challenges they face. This will allow for continuous improvements to the training model and ensure that the project remains aligned with community needs.

In conclusion, the sustainability plan for the SCI involves a diversified approach that includes ongoing training, financial support, job creation, and community engagement. By building strong local partnerships, offering continuous professional development, and advocating for supportive policies, the SCI can have a lasting, positive impact on the livelihoods of youth artisans and the wider community.

# APPENDICES

Pictorials Max **5pgs** with descriptions

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Clearances/ Permission letters



Participant Testimonies

To be attached

Any other relevant Document



# NOTE

Spacing: 1.5

Format: New Times Roman

Margins: Normal

Reference Style: APA Version 7.