



# Message from CEO

The greater Village Enterprise community is integral to our efforts to end extreme poverty in rural East Africa. Through your financial support, time, and advocacy, we are making great strides towards our mission of ending extreme poverty through entrepreneurship and innovation. Thanks to you, more than 64,000 people stepped out of extreme poverty last year alone! In addition, we launched 3,235 new businesses, a 17% increase over the previous year. As we continue to scale throughout Kenya, Uganda and beyond, we are eager keep you up to date on our accomplishments and learning.

This new Village Impact Report is the first in a series that we will publish three times a year in accordance with our Business Training Cycles. Through this medium, we aim to share progress towards our ambitious strategic goals, and highlight successes, challenges, new partnerships, cycle-specific metrics, and stories from the field. Again, thank you very much for your support of Village Enterprise!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dianne Calvi'.

*Dianne Calvi, President and CEO*



# Innovation Summit 2016

Since 2011, the Village Enterprise field staff has gathered annually for a week-long Innovation Summit. In an effort to revolutionize our work, and in turn transform the lives of East Africans living in extreme poverty, we review the results of pilots and research that we have conducted, and discuss how to improve our programs accordingly.

Thanks to a supplemental grant from the Imago Dei Fund, who also funded our “Soul Care” activities, our entire US office team was able to join the field staff for the 2016 event. In addition, board member, Jamie Austin accompanied the group for a week of presentations, breakout sessions and discussions on the following topics:



**Business Savings Group (BSG) Sustainability and Service Extension**  
Discussed how to ensure BSG's continue to flourish beyond 1 year and Village Enterprise's exit.



## **Integrating Conservation and Eco-Friendly Business Practices**

Presented and discussed conservation pilots on eco-agriculture, livestock management, tree planting, clean cook stoves, and solar power.



## **Top 10 Business Selection**

Reviewed and created recommendations for Village Enterprise's process of identifying best businesses by region based on profitability, demand, risk, longevity, and seasonality.



## **Business Mentor Capacity Building**

Determined which new sets of knowledge and skills are needed for improving business mentoring and mentors' capacity.



## **Skills Training Diversification**

Ranked new skills practiced or requested by our Business Owners according to business type and feasibility of incorporating them in trainings.



In addition to learning and streamlining processes, we had a lot of fun! Group meals, competitive games, Soul Care breakout sessions, and evening entertainment provided by our very own staff helped build great team camaraderie within and between our Kenya, Uganda and US offices.

# Partnership Highlights



## MARIE STOPES UGANDA PARTNERSHIP

Village Enterprise teamed up with Marie Stopes to institute a USAID-funded Long Term Family Planning project. The goal of this partnership is to significantly improve access to family planning at the community level. The project targets women and men of reproductive age, and equips community leaders to champion advocacy. While Village Enterprise does not directly offer health services, we recognize that physical and financial health are intertwined and that this partnership will not only improve the well-being of our individual Business Owners, but of their entire communities. For one week, the Marie Stopes team traveled long distances on challenging roads to reach the rural villages in which we operate. While Village Enterprise Business Mentors mobilized the community in locations like Oringoi, Uganda, Marie Stopes service providers set up a mobile health unit, complete with two sanitized private patient rooms. Over the course of the visit, attendees received group training on family planning and contraception methods as well as individual consultations tailored to personal health needs.

## GENEVA GLOBAL

Village Enterprise is expanding into the Nwoya region of Gulu, Uganda in partnership with Geneva Global's Speed School program. This program, which has shown great success in Ethiopia and West Africa, works with Gulu's large refugee population which has a low primary school enrollment rate. Through this new agreement, Village Enterprise is implementing an economic development intervention for parents and caretakers of students attending the Speed School with the goal to create a sustainable income and savings stream to support their children's education. Village Enterprise recently created 30 "Self Help Groups" (the equivalent of our BSGs), launched 240 Businesses and started training 750 entrepreneurs.

## LWALA COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

After winning the Lwala Community Alliance Design for Poverty Competition at the Sanklap Conference in Nairobi this past February, Village Enterprise has worked with Lwala to adapt our microenterprise development model for this partnership in Southwestern Kenya. Lwala is a non-profit health and development NGO that has been recognized by the Clinton Global Initiative for its commitment to maternal and child health. According to Executive Director Ash Rogers, "After an extremely competitive selection process, our judges from Segal Family Foundation, Ashoka, and Blood Water Mission chose Village Enterprise as the winner! Lwala couldn't be more excited about the selection. We are pumped to find ways to work together to fight poverty in Migori County, Kenya." Both organizations are excited about this new partnership as we share the belief in community led programs and are confident that joining forces will lead to a greater collective impact. We are in the process of raising funds to initiate the expansion and you can learn more about the partnership in the [Huffington Post](http://huffingtonpost.com/huff.to/215pcTs). [huff.to/215pcTs](http://huff.to/215pcTs)



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*Ash Rogers, Lwala Executive Director*

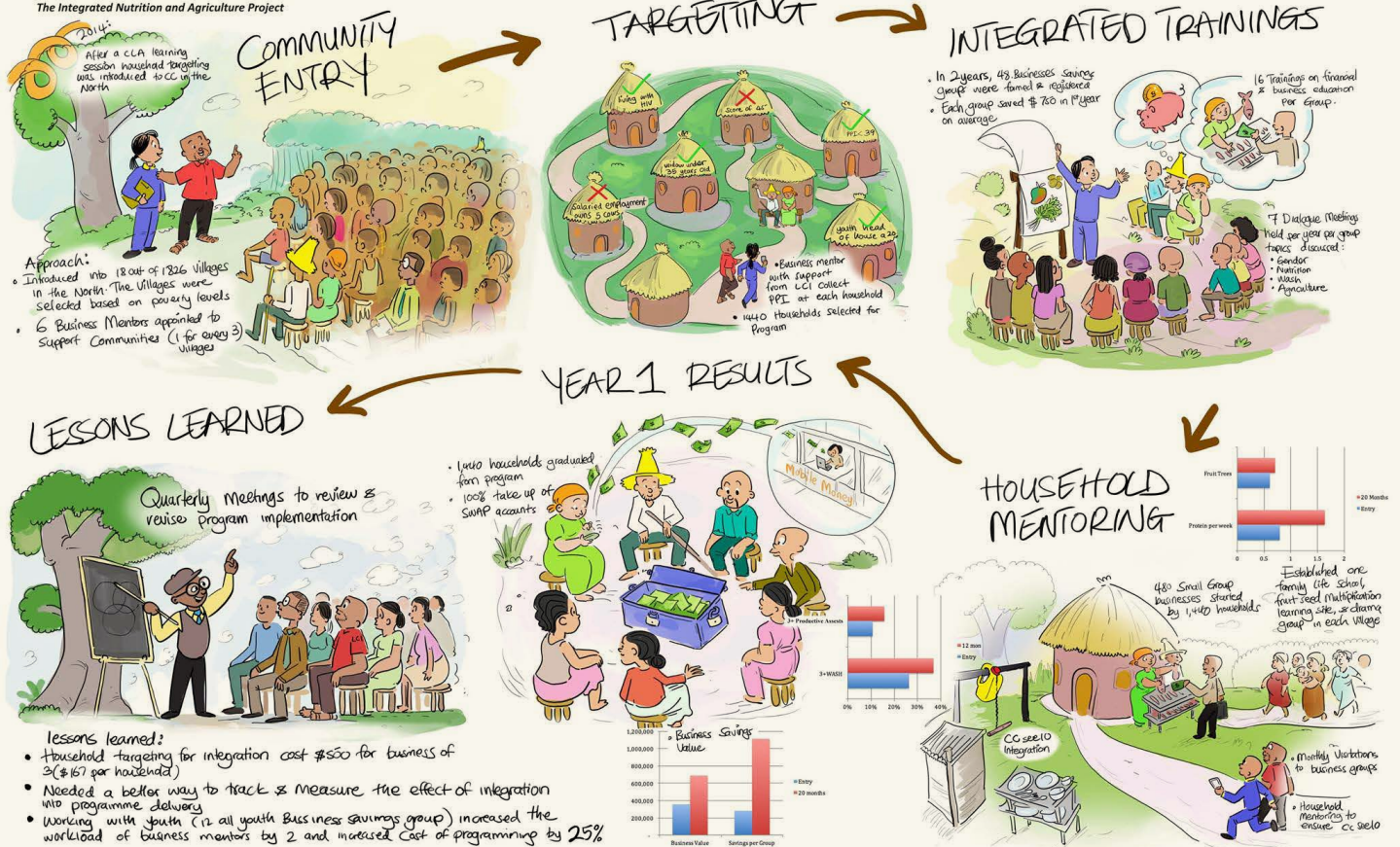
# Partnership Spotlight

## FHI 360 Development Conference



**Community Connector**  
The Integrated Nutrition and Agriculture Project

### HOUSEHOLD LEVEL INTEGRATION



Our partnership with FHI 360 on the USAID Uganda Community Connector Project inspired an important discussion regarding the trade-offs of household versus community points of intervention. At the Integrated Approaches for Development Learning Event hosted by USAID Community Connector on June 7th in Kampala, Village Enterprise and FHI 360 presented a compelling visual representation of the importance of VE's household level approach.

# Conferences



## ***Boston, MA: Classy Conference***

*June 14 - 16*

Selected as a Classy Awards finalist, Village Enterprise placed in the top 100 of the 1,300 applicant organizations. Lucy Wurtz, Director of Development and Communications, attended the Classy Conference, the country's largest award ceremony for excellence in social innovation.



## ***Washington, DC: RESULTS International Conference***

*June 25 - 27*

Caroline Bernadi, Sr. Director of Institutional Giving, attended the RESULTS International Conference, a movement of passionate, committed grassroots volunteers empowered and trained to use their voices to advocate for policies that address poverty. We participated in a one-day Graduation workshop, organized by Uplift, that brought together implementers of the Graduation approach from around the globe.



## ***Oxford, England: Skoll World Forum***

*April 12 - 15*

Dianne Calvi, Village Enterprise's CEO, participated in the invitation-only Skoll World Forum in Oxford, England. Skoll seeks to accelerate entrepreneurial solutions to the world's most pressing problems. Delegates represent nearly 65 countries and share, collaborate, innovate, and advance social entrepreneurship.



## ***Kampala, Uganda: Segal Family Foundation Annual Meeting***

*August 13 - 15*

Our COO and Ugandan Country Director participated in the Segal Family Foundation Annual Meeting and came away very inspired by the terrific speech by Keynote Speaker Graca Machel, and impressed by how SFF thrives to foster collaboration and sharing among grantees and funders.

# Spotlight New Employees



## ZACH HOINS COO

We are excited to announce that Zach Hoins joined Village Enterprise as our first Chief Operating Officer. Residing in East Africa, Zach will oversee the management and delivery of Village Enterprise's Graduation Program and drive our next phase of strategic growth. Zach has 12 years of professional experience leading and guiding teams, most recently as business development manager for the international development consulting firm Engility, where he expanded programming across Sub-Saharan Africa. Previously he co-founded The Recreation Project in Gulu, Uganda, where he lived from 2010-2013. We are confident that his unique background, personality, and heart for East Africa will be a great addition to the Village Enterprise family.



## VIOLAH KISHOIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Violah graduated from Egerton University in 2014 where she studied environmental science. She previously worked for Manna Development Agency in South Sudan as an Environmental Officer. As Village Enterprise's Conservation Programs Associate she will be working on environmental projects to educate Business Owners on the importance of conserving our natural resources and train them through hands-on projects. Violah believes that helping poor individuals to create sustainable and successful businesses will not only improve their living standards, but also help us in achieving our conservation goals.

## Visits

### 3RD CREEK - JUNE

With the mission of helping individuals achieve economic independence, 3rd Creek Foundation (3CF) has been a passionate of Village Enterprise over the past five years. Our Kenya Team was delighted to host Founders Dave and Pam Straley during their recent field visit.

### VISION TRIPS - JUNE

Village Enterprise Vision Trips are transformative travel immersions that go well beyond traditional opportunities to visit East Africa. Two small groups of donors and board members joined us in June.

### MULAGO FOUNDATION - AUGUST

Our Senior Management field team was honored to meet with three team members from the Mulago Foundation in Kampala.

### WEST AND SEGAL FAMILY FOUNDATIONS - AUGUST

Our Soroti, Uganda office was delighted to host program officers from the Segal Family Foundation and the West Foundation who have supported us for many years.



*Rebecca and her business partner proudly showing off the cow they purchased with proceeds from their business. Photo Credit: 3rd Creek Foundation*

# Feature Story

*The following is an excerpt by Christine Rose, who led our June Vision Trip in Uganda*

During our June Vision Trip a small group of Village Enterprise board members and supporters joined village leaders and local staff in attending a grant disbursement meeting. 30 businesses were receiving their first \$100 disbursement on this day in what felt far more like a ceremony than a meeting being such a momentous occasion in these villagers' lives! Upon arriving at the disbursement site, a series of bamboo mats and benches under a grove of trees, we were greeted with singing, clapping, drumming, "whooping," and the waves of palm branches. The joy in the air was palpable! As they "danced" us from our vehicle to our seats of honor, the grant recipients continued rejoicing until we joined in with them - this was their intent! We clapped and laughed and held hands as we all entered the disbursement area. All of the villagers were clad in their finest attire.

*What followed might sound contrived or uncomfortable - but it was quite the opposite! It was beautiful and inspiring.*

The disbursement began with local village leaders, Village Enterprise leaders, and community members each sharing words of greeting and encouragement to the Business Owners. In all my time, I cannot recall ever hearing a more sincere and moving series of motivational vignettes. The leaders also asked the foreign visitors to share a few words and through translation, each of us spoke with encouragement and affirmation. Despite living worlds apart, we easily bridged that gap realizing that all of us are living and working to provide better lives for our families and children. The positive response from the crowd was overwhelming. I had been forewarned that visitors in their midst would lend an air of significance to the occasion - similar to as if a dignitary attended one of our meetings. Rather than fighting any awkward emotions about that, I chose to embrace it and was thankful that being present added to the memorable nature of their day.

After the speeches, it was time to disperse the funds. Each group of three was called up one by one. They put their thumb print on an official document, and then received their funds and a hearty congratulations from the Village Enterprise team on this significant milestone. The business groups also brought the funds which they had been saving during the previous months, and carefully unwrapped them from the safety of the folds in their brightly colored garments. This money was combined in the envelope along with the \$100 disbursement as a signifying their partnership with Village Enterprise. The reactions were across the board - reserved quietness, shrieks of joy, kneeling in humble appreciation, "high fiving", whooping and hollering. Each was authentic and personal. The fact that the entire savings they contributed was \$2-3, and they were being granted \$100 (50 times what they could save) was amazing and life changing!

*As the disbursement ceremony ended, we all danced and clapped and laughed and "shrilled" together, each of us discovering our "inner-African". We held hands high, sharing a moment and unity that none of us would ever forget.*

Attending this disbursement was one of the most beautiful and moving experiences of my life! It was a unity of what previously felt worlds apart, high-tech America and rural Africa. I do not understand why I was gifted to witness such unique moments first-hand, but I feel both blessed and responsible to share the joy that these villagers have and the reminder they provided me with of what is important in life - our families, our children, our faith, our health, our communities. That is universal. We have much to learn from them. ❖