

**Working title:** Jewelry, Stability, and Gender Equality: Uganda

**Project Purpose:**

The purpose of this project is to help Musana International, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) focused on empowering women and alleviating poverty in Uganda, improve its impact as it develops its own, in-house evaluation program. The in-house evaluation program will provide Musana a sustainable way to continuously and accurately measure the impact of its developmental projects without creating reliance on outside consultants. The project will culminate in 3 months of program-tailored evaluation data, and an academic grade, comprehensive research report with statistical analysis of Musana's program data.

**Project Importance:**

While program evaluation has long been an aspect of international development, it is quickly becoming a crucial aspect of developmental work as well as an integral requirement for program funding. Program evaluation is the process of aligning program theory with implementation, whereas impact analysis refers to the actual measuring of program deliverables. Musana International, originally a BYU social venture project, has come to recognize the many benefits that come from statistical analysis of developmental impact. As a result, they have approached BYU's Program Evaluation and Assessment Team (PEAT) and asked for their help creating its own, self-run evaluation program that will allow them to integrate program evaluation and impact analysis into their standard operations.

This project holds personal significance for me as an Eco-business major with an International Development minor as economic marginalization has strong links with environmental degradation (Bacon, 2005; IADB, 2011) and sophisticated evaluation techniques can substantially improve the implementation of development programs.

**Project Overview:**

Musana is an established NGO operating in Lugazi, Uganda that promote female empowerment in four, interrelated areas of focus including: employment, education, health, and community development. These areas already have proven, synergistic benefits to empowering women (Grown et al., 2005), and Musana's success in the past has only been shadowed by their inability to thoroughly quantify their impact - an issue that plagues scores of NGO's. Improvements in these four areas are achieved through a multifaceted approach to "artisan support." This support includes the training of local, Ugandan women as artisans, the provision of steady income, the mandatory enrollment of children in school for all artisans (as well as a tuition cost-matching program and other educational subsidies), business and English literacy programs, and daily trainings on specific topics within their four, target areas of focus. Our project aims our twofold: provide an analysis of Musana's services (with an ultimate, statistical deliverable on Musana's functional impact in the form of a publishable research report), and work with Musana staff to train them on the evaluation process. Our project will run for 3 months during which we will work with Musana staff on site in Lugazi. Preparation for the project has entailed acceptance into the program and a year of preparatory coursework spanning the 2016-2017 academic school year. Training for the project consists of several classes designed to help students become proficient in program evaluation and current practices in international development, as well as collaboration with Musana, and further mentoring from PEA T's faculty facilitators, Scott Sanders, and Carol Ward. While multiple metrics are used to measure treatment effects in various fields, Randomized Control Tests (RCT's) are generally regarded as the multi-disciplinary "golden metric" of analysis. While they may have drawbacks on macro-level evaluation, RCT's are particularly effective, and potentially ideal for relatively small projects such as those of Musana's scope (Cartright, 2007). Within the framework of international development, impact analysis ideally consists of RCT's (or, when impossible, tests designed to

replicate a "true" RCT as closely as possible) which covers both a randomly selected "control" group (of comparable socio-economic status, race, language, etc.) as well as a randomly selected "treatment" group for comparison. Experimental design in these tests is particularly important as it ensures that only program-specific impacts are measured. This is a large part of why so much preparatory work is necessary in successful program evaluation. Further provisions are also made to ensure the representative integrity of both groups. When the data are gathered, we will run further analysis to ensure relevant social, political, environmental, economic, and cultural circumstances are isolated and accounted for. For example, an evaluation finding that a given program increased cell phone access by 45% in a community might combine this with regional data showing an overall increase in cell phone access by 45% and conclude that the program had negligible "true impact." Our evaluation will follow similar parameters and will provide Musana an accurate, useful understanding of the true impact of their services, along with an understanding of how to replicate such evaluation in the future.

We will work with Musana staff members throughout this process and use it as a "hands on" learning experience for them in the development of their evaluation program.

#### **Qualifications of Thesis Committee:**

**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Scott Sanders, Sociology Department.

Dr. Sanders currently serves as the PEAT program coordinator and has a strong background in developmental work and statistics. His graduate school work included primary social research in the Philippines and Thailand and he currently teaches classes on international development, statistics, and the PEAT preparatory course. I have known Scott for 9 months now, and we were first introduced when I interviewed with him as a potential PEAT applicant in September.

**Faculty Reader:** Dr. Joseph Parry, Philosophy Department.

Apart from previously serving as the Dean for the Honors department, Dr. Parry is a professor of Interdisciplinary Humanities and is currently housed in the Philosophy department. His previous experience mentoring dozens of students in various stages of the honors program and his aforementioned experience in Interdisciplinary Humanities makes him particularly qualified as a Faculty reader for an interdisciplinary thesis of this nature. Dr. Parry and I met my Freshman year at BYU while attending his Honors 120 class. We've maintained a strong relationship ever since and he has served as a valuable mentor for me throughout my time in the Honors program.

**Faculty Coordinator:**

**Project Timeline:** Sketch the timetable you've set for producing the thesis/project, including when you aim to finish.

#### **Timeline:**

April 2017: Complete preliminary project preparations Spring/Summer Semesters 2017: Carry out project in Lugazi, Uganda; Begin data analysis

August 2017: Return to United States for completion of data analysis (with help from Dr. Scott Sanders); Begin assembling of final report September 2017: Complete data analysis; Integrate completed data into project report October 2017: Finalize data report and complete any additional Honors-specific report requirements.

**IRB or IACUC Approvals (Optional):**

Due to the specific nature of our project, we will not need IRB clearance as we will not be collecting primary data from any of Musana's staff or constituents. Musana will be providing all the data and we will simply serve as an analytical "consulting" role.

**Funding:**

In our 3 months on-site, we will live and work entirely in the town of Lugazi, Uganda where Musana is headquartered. This will be a great benefit to us as it will allow us to observe the day to day life of a developmental organization in the field, as well as grant us extended time to provide our services to Musana. I have been involved in academic research for two years now, and have participated in projects on experimental design and the impact of global economic trends on subsistence level producers in the Global South. I feel strongly that this experience will significantly augment my academic trajectory at BYU, as well as better prepare me for a career in international development.

My current, anticipated costs and funding sources are listed below:

**Costs:**

Airfare: \$1750  
Tuition: \$1300  
Total Food (3 months): \$450  
Hygiene/Prescription/Medical Costs: \$200  
Total Transportation (In-country): \$300  
Pre-Trip Medical preparation (vaccines, etc): \$150  
Necessary trip supplies etc.: \$500

--Note: Due to the remote location, I will be purchasing a portable, backup solar charging kit for my phone and tablet and will also need to acquire an international phone plan, an AC/DC power converter, and some basic clothing (sandals, khaki "work" pants, etc). for my stay.

Total Accommodation: \$400-\$1000

--Note: I realize this is a dramatic price range. Lugazi, Uganda is a relatively small town with very limited long-term accommodation options. Since our NGO is well established in the area, they have some access to "long term" rates and have been able to secure these housing options for our other two (female) interns. As of now, however, they have not received word on whether they will have a similar option for me, so the price range reflects the minimum (if a long-term rate option is available), or the current expected price (which is approximately the rate I currently pay for 3 months of rent in Provo.) I am currently expecting this higher rate to be the case upon my arrival.

Total Cost Estimate: \$5650

**Funding:**

PEAT Internship Grant: \$3000  
International Development Grant (minor): \$1000  
Life Science Internship Grant (college): \$1100  
Total Current Funding: \$5400

As mentioned previously, my personal and familial financial situation is quite limited. I have been entirely independent and though I feel these numbers are likely accurate, they are not inflated, and if any unforeseen costs should arise, my response options are particularly limited as the internship is unpaid, the current difference in trip costs and funding will already be exhausting my personal funds.

**Culminating Experience:**

The intended outcomes of this project are also twofold: while in country, we will help Musana create its own self-run evaluation and impact analysis program. This will allow Musana staff to conduct their own program evaluation without the aid of an external party, and will be a practical tool for them to improve their practices. Upon completion of our study, we will produce a summary report of

our findings for Musana. This will grant them a better understanding of their program efficacy, and will contain suggestions for program improvement. This may also function as a program evaluation "training guide" which will they can use both as a reference work for staff

Personally, I have been heading a now year long research project on the impacts of Fair Trade as a tool for poverty alleviation. In a personal correspondence, Melissa Sevy, Musana's CEO told me that they were seeking to understand whether Fair Trade Certification would be valuable to them as an organization. While I do not yet know what our project results will be, I strongly believe that this experience will also correlate highly with my personal research which I intend to publish in the following academic school year and share with Musana. In terms of this project, however, our findings will be presented on campus to other students, and potentially at the Mary Fulton Mentored Research Conference and the Kennedy Center's International Inquiry Conference.

### **Conclusion (optional):**

This thesis project is particularly relevant to my future academic trajectory because it has strong ties with my post graduate and career goals. I would ultimately like to launch a developmental eco-firm which will focus on streamlining the communication process between academic researchers and development practitioners addressing human needs on the front lines. Princeton's Dr. Stephen Pacala is renowned for a thought experiment involving a puzzle with more correct puzzle piece combinations than there are places to use them. He uses this "game" as a hands-on example demonstrating that we already have more than enough solutions to address an issue. In Pacala's case, his puzzle actually refers to his research on climate change and his finding that, even with current technologies, we have more than enough solutions to completely solve the problem several times over. Our issue in this, and many other circumstances, is not a lack of knowledge, it is simply choosing which of hundreds of "correct" combinations of solutions we will use. T.S. Elliot once said, "where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" I believe strongly that a system that both tracks our current societal needs and provides data on viable solutions or combinations of solutions would drastically improve the efforts in improving "the human condition." Google drastically increased access to information on a personal level. Now, "big data" is changing the way businesses identify new market niches. By modifying the way we access data in the development sector, I think we will significantly change the way we solve problems not just on an individual or business level, but as a society

### **Sources:**

Bacon, Christopher. "Confronting the coffee crisis: can fair trade, organic, and specialty coffees reduce small-scale farmer vulnerability in northern Nicaragua?." *World development* 33.3 (2005): 497-511.

Cartwright, Nancy. "Are RCTs the gold standard?." *BioSocieties* 2.1 (2007): 11 -20.

Grown, Caren, Geeta Rao Gupta, and Rohini Pande. "Taking action to improve women's health through gender equality and women's empowerment." *The Lancet* 365.9458 (2005): 541-543 .

IADB, USAID, and World Bank. "The Nature and Magnitude of the Coffee Crisis and Its Impact on Central America." Proc. of *Managing the Competitive Transition of the Coffee Sector in Central America*, Guatemala, Antigua. 4. Inter-American Development Bank, United States Agency for International Development, World Bank, 3-5 Apr. 2002. Web. 14 Sept. 2016.