

# Eco-Fuel Africa: A Socially Impactful For-Profit Firm



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## Lugazi, Uganda

In Lugazi, as well as the rest of Uganda and most of Eastern Africa, over 80% of households use charcoal to cook food, boil water, and heat their homes.

Lugazi is considered the sugar capital of East Africa, there are a series of Indian-Ugandan subsidiaries owned by the Mehta Group; this has created a pronounced disparity in economic prosperity between native Ugandans and Indian-Ugandans in the community.

## Bio Char

Currently, 2,500 marginalized farmers in Uganda use our kilns to make biochar on their farms. These farmers no longer have to spend money on fertilizers and many have been able to increase their food harvests by over 50%.

This product is then sold by women micro-entrepreneurs, who are often able to double their household income.



## Project Information

### Work:

Measured the Social Impact felt at each level of the value chain from production to end user in the community by the firm Eco-Fuel Africa.

## Eco-Fuel Africa

### Process:

EFA works by training marginalised farmers to turn locally sourced biomass waste into a product called char using simple, locally made kilns. These farmers are trained for five days and after the training, they take home a kiln on a lease-to-own basis, and begin to make char out of waste sourced locally from their communities.

### Special Studies:

Worked with staff and executive team to identify how Eco-Fuel Africa was serving their communities

## Outcomes

### Social Impact Report (draft):

- +Drafted Social Impact Report
- +Completed Social Investor Prospectus

### Grant Award:

The Social Impact Report was finalized following my departure and used to secure continued funding from the United Kingdom's International Development arm, called DFID.

## Skills Utilized/Developed

+Practicing recognizing Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS) in a real world context

+Implementing evaluation methods through measuring the social impact of Eco-Fuel Africa

+Improving my cultural competency by having experiences truly outside my norms

## Classroom Connections

SW 654, Community Participation

This course gave me tangible skills that I used when interacting with members of the communities I worked within

SW 683, Evaluation

Taking this class prior to this experience enabled me to accurately and efficiently assess the social impact that Eco-Fuel Africa effects

## Lessons Learned

This was the first prolonged experience truly outside my comfort zone, this made me reconsider what I hold to be true about myself.

Living, and working in an entirely new community helped me practice humility and be ever cognizant of what I represented whether I wanted to or not. Having this opportunity is tremendously beneficial and odd; I am fortunate enough to enter a community for a short time then leave, is that a positive effect on those I met or am I acting selfishly in that I am taking more than I am giving?



## Career Connections

This experience has expanded my comfort boundaries, which will hopefully allow me to work more effectively in more places.

I have become more conscious of how I am perceived and what it means to give and receive respect

## Advice

+Assumptions are inevitable, and usually wrong

+When you realize you are incorrectly assuming, learn from it

+If you are not assuming, you may not be far enough outside your comfort zone

## Thanks to

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