

## **Mbarara, Uganda – Mbra-City Urban Entrepreneurship Program**

**Location:** Mbarara, Uganda

**Venue:** Mbarara University of Science and Technology

### **Intro to the City, Distinctive Aspects and Demographics**

The population of Mbarara has more than doubled in the last decade, reaching about 300,000 people. The city mayor estimates that the population is between 400,000 and 500,000 during the day and 300,000 at night. With over 74% of the population below the age of 36 years.

**Regional Assets:** Mbarara is one of the fastest growing cities in Uganda as the main business hub in southwestern Uganda and a major transit route between Kigali and Kampala, well known for hosting Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Technology (MUST) and also serves a healthcare hub for the region all these present opportunities for entrepreneurs

**The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:** The current economy of Mbarara city is predominantly based on the social services sector, the informal sector activities, trade, and industry. Mbarara is the biggest town in the western part of Uganda and the second transit town between Rwanda and Uganda. The majority of people derive their livelihood from informal sector employment

**The Poverty and Disadvantage Challenge in the City:** Limited-service sector employment, high child-dependent rate, and low human capital skills

**Demographics:** Majorly small-scale single stalls market women and youths in early entrepreneurial journeys

**Program Management:** It is run with a team of volunteers made up of two business lecturers, 3 business owners and one former trainee from the first UPBI-cohort (Geoffrey Bwireh acts as the programs director-nonpaid volunteer position)

**Annual Cycle:** Runs from February - November (during the school calendar) year January and December are major holiday seasons in Uganda

**Approach:** Promotion of Peer-to-Peer mentorship, rotational voluntary participants hosting some training events and encouraging past participants to remain in touch with us

**Program Goals:** Start a fully functional apprenticeship program and expand the program to other parts of the country.

