

NEWS RELEASE

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OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL AND MILLIMAN LAUNCH FIRST OPPORTUNITY ZONE INNOVATION HUB IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

CHICAGO – February 3, 2020 – Opportunity International and Milliman are working together to launch the first extreme poverty Opportunity Zone innovation hub in Uganda. Building on Opportunity’s proven success in innovating solutions for agriculture value chains, children’s education, and digital finance tools, this powerful partnership will lift families out of extreme poverty.

The Opportunity Zone concept is the result of Opportunity's continuous work to dive deeper into the needs of those living at the bottom of the economic pyramid. This initiative combines programs proven to build sustainable futures for families by helping to grow and expand businesses and send children to quality schools. The goal is simple, and the impact is expected to be significant.

The pilot program, to be initiated in and around the Mityana district of Uganda over the next three years, will:

- Offer School Improvement Loans to build new classrooms, install safe water and sanitation systems, build low-cost computer labs, and hire and train quality teachers for 150 schools
- Help 25,500 students enroll in school and stay through graduation
- Provide training and support to school leaders at 105 schools so they can improve the quality of education for their students
- Offer 13,000 School Fee Loans to ensure children can stay in school when fees are due
- Provide 14,230 farmers in the Mityana district with best practices training and productivity loans to increase their incomes and create jobs
- Supply 3,500 small business owners with business management training and loans to grow their businesses and expand their staff

This two-pronged approach to support a family’s business or farm *and* improve their children’s education will create a powerful catalyst for families to create long-term sustainability for themselves, their communities, and the next generation.

“We are excited to launch the first Opportunity Zone innovation hub with Milliman to design and build solutions for people living in extreme poverty. Our concentrated efforts in the Mityana district will help more children go to school, more mothers care for their families, more farmers increase their yields, and more small business owners succeed in Uganda—and we're grateful to Milliman for joining us in this critical work,” said Atul Tandon, Chief Executive Officer of Opportunity International.

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“We are pleased to support the Opportunity Zone initiative through our Milliman Giving Fund,” said Milliman CEO Steve White. “The combination of supporting employment opportunities for families and education for children should lead to great outcomes in Mityana.”

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL

Opportunity International is a global non-profit committed to ending extreme poverty and promoting quality education for families in need. Since 1971, Opportunity has helped millions of families work their way out of poverty by providing financial resources, training, and delivering ongoing support to start small businesses, earn living wages, and feed their families. The organization provides loans to families seeking tuition and educators who want to improve local schools to get more children into better quality schools. In 2018, Opportunity International issued \$1.9 billion in loans, reaching nearly 10 million clients in 24 countries, and helped fund 6,343 schools serving 1.8 million children. Discover more at opportunity.org or join the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT MILLIMAN

Milliman is among the world’s largest providers of actuarial and related products and services. The firm has consulting practices in healthcare, property & casualty insurance, life insurance and financial services, and employee benefits. Founded in 1947, Milliman is an independent firm with offices in major cities around the globe. For further information, visit Milliman.com.

ABOUT THE MILLIMAN GIVING FUND

The Milliman Giving Fund facilitates broad charitable initiatives that support Milliman’s mission: To protect the health and financial wellbeing of people everywhere. The Milliman Giving Fund’s investments are focused on education, health, and job creation programs around the world.

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