



CIYOTA
EDUCATE. UNITE. GROW

**QUARTERLY
REPORT- 04**

2025



WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we conclude Quarter Four of 2025, I extend my sincere appreciation to our team, partners, donors, and the refugee and host communities we serve. Despite funding and operational challenges, CIYOTA continued to deliver inclusive, high-impact programmes across Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), directly impacting more than 10,252 individuals during the quarter.

A total of 1,016 learners benefited from Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Primary education (363 in ECD; 653 in Primary). Refugees comprised 85% (863) of enrolment and host community learners 15% (153), with 474 girls (47%) and 542 boys (53%). At the Child-Friendly Space in Maratatu village, 1,280 children received literacy, numeracy, and psychosocial support, thereby improving their readiness and well-being. 1,372 students accessed secondary education, including those in 5 CIYOTA Accelerated Education Programme centres. Across five primary schools, 2,069 learners improved literacy and numeracy through TaRL, with 88% attendance. The University Access Programme supported 43 students in Uganda and 23 in the DRC. The Family Business for Education Project strengthened incomes for 150 caregivers, benefiting 450 children. In addition, 1,828 young people gained entrepreneurship and leadership skills, and 925 students engaged in income-generating initiatives.

In the DRC, 663 learners received educational support, while young people participated in entrepreneurship and leadership programmes that led to the creation of new small businesses. Humanitarian and livelihood assistance reached more than 2,000 internally displaced households, and 2,950 beneficiaries strengthened food security and climate resilience through farmers' cooperatives. Trauma healing and leadership training involved 84 community leaders, alongside couples' seminars and women-led livelihood initiatives, strengthening families and community resilience.

Looking ahead, CIYOTA remains committed to sustainable impact through education, livelihoods, leadership and skills development. We will continue investing in programmes that help children learn, young people lead, families earn, and communities thrive. I invite you to explore the full report to see how, together with our partners, we are building resilient futures across Uganda and the DRC.



Ntakamazze Nziyonvira
Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

We are a refugee-led, community-driven non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and marginalised youth in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We believe that education, leadership, and entrepreneurship are the keys to transforming conflict-affected communities into thriving, self-reliant societies.

Everything we do is to support refugees and disadvantaged young people within the host community to access quality education



Our Vision

Build united, developed, and peaceful communities in Africa.



Our Mission

Educating conflict-affected children and youth to lead and rebuild communities.

WHERE WE WORK

UGANDA

Our programs are dedicated to delivering high-quality education to refugees and disadvantaged young children and youth within the host community. We strive to provide comprehensive support for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and primary school pupils, secondary education, university preparation, and skilling programs, ensuring all individuals have access to opportunities for academic advancement and personal growth.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Our programs center on offering scholarship support to young children and youth while concurrently training the community in socially responsible leadership, social entrepreneurship, and active non-violence. Through these initiatives, we aim to empower individuals, foster positive community development, and cultivate a sustainable environment for growth and prosperity.



1,016

ECD and Primary Education



735

Secondary Education



66

University Preparation



171

Sponsorship Program impact



1,828

Youth Empowerment/Skilling program



637

Accelerated Education Program(EAP)



2,069

Catch-up programs/TaRL



2,000+

Households reached with food & dignity kits



450

Children supported through the Family Business for Education Project



1,280

Child Friendly Space

IMPACT



UGANDA

Our programs are dedicated to delivering high-quality education to refugees and disadvantaged youth within the host community. We strive to provide comprehensive support for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and primary school pupils, secondary education, university preparation, and skilling programs, ensuring all individuals have access to opportunities for academic advancement and personal growth.



CIYOTA operates a model Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Primary School, an approach that has been extended to support several other primary schools within Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. The school serves both refugee and host community learners, delivering quality education in line with the Ministry of Education and Sports' curriculum, with a strong emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy. CIYOTA has sustained strong enrollment and retention, with 1,016 learners as of Quarter 4, reflecting active parental engagement and community ownership. The ECD program focuses on play-based learning facilitated by trained caregivers, while the primary section integrates academics with nutrition, psychosocial support, co-curricular activities and the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology to address learning gaps. Dedicated staff and strong school-community partnerships ensure an inclusive, safe and dignified learning environment where children, including those with special needs, can learn and thrive.

- **Enrollment:** In Quarter 4, CIYOTA ECD and Primary School maintained stable enrollment, with 1,016 learners; 363 in ECD and 653 in Primary. Refugee learners account for 85% (863) of enrollment, while 15% (153) are from the host community. Gender distribution remains balanced, with 474 girls (47%) and 542 boys (53%).



Education Support and Child Protection - Child-Friendly Space (CFS)

CIYOTA's Child-Friendly Space (CFS) in Maratatu Village provided a safe learning environment and protection for the 1,280 vulnerable children affected by displacement and limited access to school. Through basic literacy and numeracy sessions, structured play, and psychosocial support, the CFS improved school readiness, learning confidence, and emotional well-being, while reducing exposure to risks such as child labour, neglect, and early marriage. The intervention also strengthened caregiver trust in CIYOTA and contributed to a protective, child-centred learning environment.



- **Staffing:** CIYOTA ECD and Primary School is supported by 42 staff members, including 24 teaching and 18 non-teaching personnel. The team comprises 26 males and 16 females, with 19 staff members being refugees. Teaching staff deliver curriculum-aligned instruction, while non-teaching staff provide essential operational and welfare support, ensuring a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment.

Highlights of Key Activities

- During Quarter 4, CIYOTA ECD and Primary School sustained strong academic performance and efficient school operations. Teaching and learning progressed as planned, supported by timely syllabus coverage, structured revision, and mid-term and end-of-term examinations, resulting in an 87% internal examination pass rate. The Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) were conducted smoothly, marking the successful completion of the primary cycle. A total of 58 Primary 7 learners sat for their exams.
- Learner welfare and operational efficiency were further supported through improved hygiene facilities, including the acquisition of washing machines. The quarter also featured a successful Top Class Graduation Ceremony, celebrating ECD learners' transition to Primary One and strengthening parent-school engagement.
- Learner attendance and participation remained high throughout revision, examinations and end-of-year activities. Discipline among learners and staff was generally good, with minor cases addressed through guidance and counselling.



BREAKING EDUCATION BARRIERS PROJECT



In collaboration with Street Child Uganda, CIYOTA is in the third year of implementing the “**Breaking Education Barriers**” project across five primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement (Kasonga, Planning for Tomorrow, CIYOTA, IQRA and Community Development Association Primary Schools). The project adopts a holistic, inclusive and gender-responsive approach designed to enhance learning outcomes and ensure equitable access to quality education for all learners. It emphasizes foundational learning through the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology, girls’ empowerment through dedicated clubs and community engagement to foster ownership and sustainability of educational gains. During this reporting period, CIYOTA worked closely with community leaders, school management teams, parents and Kikuube District officials to strengthen collaboration and promote an enabling environment for children’s learning and development.



Highlights of Key Activities

- **TaRL Catch-Up Classes:** Implemented across 5 schools, reaching 2,069 learners, with 1,830 actively participating (88% attendance). Learners were grouped by ability, improving engagement, confidence in reading and numeracy, and overall classroom participation.
- **Girls' Empowerment Clubs (GEC):** Debate sessions in 4 schools engaged 199 learners, including girls with disabilities, strengthening their leadership, critical thinking, public speaking, and awareness of gender equality and girls' education.
- **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) sessions:** Comprehensive sessions reached 377 learners, improving knowledge of adolescent health, hygiene, and mental well-being, and boosting confidence and school participation, particularly among girls.
- **Back-to-School Mobilization:** Community meetings at CODA and P4T involved 242 participants, including parents, SMCs, and local leaders, to promote school attendance, safeguarding, and retention, with a special focus on girls and learners with disabilities.
- **Community Engagement:** Ongoing campaigns promoted shared responsibility for learner safety and protection, and ensured consistent follow-up on schooling, reinforcing child protection and the inclusion of vulnerable learners.
- **TaRL Midline Assessment:** One-on-one assessments for 2,069 learners showed that 16% met the minimum literacy standard, 18% in English, and 8% in numeracy, informing targeted remediation and teacher support.
- **Donor Visit:** In November 2025, Street Child visited CIYOTA, reviewing achievements in TaRL, girls' empowerment, and community engagement, discussing challenges, and reaffirming support for project sustainability and quality.



CIYOTA **operates a model Secondary School** in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement and supports 3 additional secondary schools, expanding access to quality education for refugee and host community learners. The initiative strengthens post-primary education and provides inclusive, transformative learning opportunities that equip young people with knowledge, practical skills, and positive values for higher education, employment, and community leadership.

The school reflects CIYOTA's commitment to academic excellence, life skills, and holistic development. Investments in classrooms, teacher housing, and learner-centred facilities have created safe, supportive, and dignified learning environments. Beyond academics, students benefit from psychosocial support, leadership development, and skilling programmes, enabling all learners, including those with special needs, to become confident, resilient, and self-reliant. Currently, the school enrolls 735 learners and maintains a 90% attendance rate, demonstrating the dedication of students, teachers, and staff to sustained academic and personal growth.



- **Enrolment:** The school currently has 735 mainstream learners enrolled, comprising 294 females (40%) and 441 males (60%). Of these, 203 learners (28%) are in the Advanced Level, while 532 learners (72%) are in the Ordinary Level. Regarding residency, 472 learners (64%) are refugees, and 263 (36%) are host community students. Overall, the school maintained an average attendance rate of 78%. Class-level enrollment statistics are detailed below;
- **Staffing:** CIYOTA Secondary School is supported by 52 staff members: 33 teaching and 19 non-teaching, including 13 refugees. The team comprises 39 males and 13 females and brings diverse perspectives, skills, and commitment to the school. Teaching staff deliver a learner-centred curriculum that fosters academic excellence and character development, while non-teaching staff provide essential support in administration, welfare, security, and maintenance, ensuring a safe, inclusive, and empowering learning environment for all students.



Highlights of Key Activities

- Academically, CIYOTA Secondary School concentrated on preparing students for national examinations and completing assessments. The school proudly hosted the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) and Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) examinations, with CIYOTA students sitting their exams at our own school centre for the first time, a significant milestone for the school. There were 94 UCE candidates and 96 UACE candidates, totalling 190 candidates. End-of-year assessments for Senior 1 to 3, and Senior 5 were conducted, marked, and reported on schedule, supported by end-of-term revision clinics to enhance learner readiness. Academic performance reviews informed promotion, retention, and learner support decisions.
- School administration was strengthened through a general end-of-year staff meeting (26th November 2025) and the successful Term 3 closure (28th November), during which learners received report cards, academic guidance, and counselling. A closing-day assembly communicated key academic and administrative information.
- Learner engagement extended beyond academics through work-and-study programs, including agricultural activities, inter-school debates, club participation, general cleanliness, assemblies, and thanksgiving prayers, fostering holistic development. The school also hosted external engagements, including inspections by the District Education Department, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention sensitisation, entrepreneurship training for Senior Three learners, and a malaria prevention campaign, all of which reinforced students' skills, health, and community awareness.



CIYOTA, in partnership with Street Child Uganda and Save the Children and coordinated by the Uganda Education Consortium Management Unit, successfully concluded the **three-year Multi-Year Resilience Programme II (2023–2025)**, funded by Education Cannot Wait. The programme officially ended in December 2025, delivering lasting outcomes for learners in both the refugee and host communities.

Through the project, **CIYOTA implemented the Entrepreneurial and Leadership Curriculum** at three secondary schools in the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement: Kyangwali Secondary School, Planning for Tomorrow Secondary School, and CIYOTA Secondary School. Each school was supported by a Centre Focal Person who worked closely with club patrons to ensure the curriculum was delivered effectively through mentorship and experiential learning. During the final quarter, CIYOTA conducted key activities to consolidate learning, showcase achievements, and document results and lessons learned from the three-year intervention. These activities highlighted the programme's impact and sustainability, demonstrating significant progress in strengthening learners' leadership, life, and livelihood skills by the close of the project in December 2025.



Highlights of Key Activities

- **Teacher and Staff Support:** 25 ECW teachers and club patrons received monthly stipends, recognition, and awards, boosting motivation, teaching quality, and school-based support systems.
- **Learner Empowerment:** 293 students, including People With Disabilities (PWDs), participated in leadership and decision-making sessions; 15 learner-led initiatives were showcased, strengthening leadership, life skills, confidence, and entrepreneurship.
- **Community and Governance Engagement:** The Parent Teacher Association, the school board of governors, district leaders, and consortium partners actively reviewed achievements, challenges, and sustainability strategies, enhancing school governance, accountability, and ownership.
- **Safeguarding and Safe Learning:** 38 participants were trained in safeguarding principles and reporting, helping ensure safer learning environments and stronger protection systems in schools.
- **Documentation and Evaluation:** Endline surveys (356 learners and stakeholders) and an ECW documentary captured project outcomes, lessons learned, and beneficiary voices, supporting accountability, visibility, and sustainability planning.



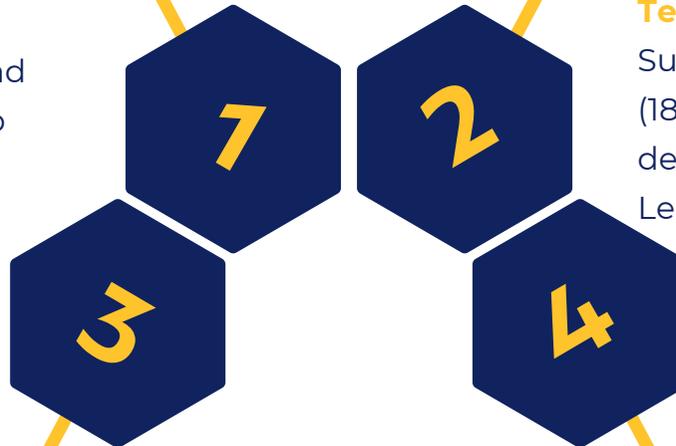
[Watch the Education Cannot Wait Project Documentary](#)



ECW project's Impact at Glance

Learner Skills & Employability

Reached 1,828 learners (refugees and hosts) through a 19-topic leadership and entrepreneurship curriculum, with 1,326 receiving practical, market-relevant training.



Teacher Capacity Strengthening

Supported and trained 25 teachers (18M, 7F) across three schools to deliver the Entrepreneurial Leadership Curriculum effectively.

Student Innovation & Financial Skills

Established 15 student-led enterprise clubs with 925 active members and trained 239 learners in financial management, budgeting, and record-keeping.

Equity, Resources & Retention

Distributed leadership manuals to school libraries and provided 1,050 reusable sanitary pads to 350 girls, improving learning continuity and school retention.



Key Outcomes

The endline evaluation (November 2025) confirmed improved learning outcomes and a 73% learner retention rate in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. All learners reported increased knowledge of leadership and entrepreneurship, and all 25 teachers gained sufficient capacity to deliver the curriculum using learner-centred approaches. The project also supported enterprise creation, strengthened school governance through active engagement of PTAs and BoGs, improved teacher well-being, and enhanced coordination with OPM, UNHCR, and consortium partners.



Lessons Learnt

Integrated programming and entrepreneurial clubs effectively translated learning into income-generating activities for learners and families. Continuous teacher training, strong accountability structures, timely stipend payments, and inclusive participation of both refugee and host community learners were critical to sustaining impact and programme continuity.



BRIDGED PROJECT - ACCELERATED EDUCATION PROGRAM (AEP)



CIYOTA, in collaboration with War Child Canada and the Mastercard Foundation, is implementing the Bridge: From Secondary Education and Skills Development to Job Opportunities for Refugee and Host Community Youth in Uganda programme, aligned with the Young Africa Works Strategy. The initiative addresses youth unemployment in refugee-hosting districts, with a primary focus on Kikuube District and Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Using a gender-sensitive and inclusive approach, CIYOTA empowers young people as agents of change while working closely with education agencies and government stakeholders to ensure effective and sustainable implementation. Across three learning centres, the programme engages 90 community members, including Youth Education Committees, Community Education Committees, and Mother-to-Mother groups who support girls' education through mentorship, peer support, and community mobilisation, encouraging out-of-school youth, including young mothers and fathers, to return to learning.



Enrolment

CIYOTA's Accelerated Education Program (AEP) continues to record steady enrolment growth each term, with cumulative enrolment rising to 637 learners from 583. This includes 298 refugees and 339 host community learners, reflecting strong inclusion across populations and balanced gender participation. CIYOTA AEP Centre leads with 276 learners, followed by Kyangwali with 274 and Nyamiganda with 87. Most learners (420) are enrolled at Level One, compared with 217 at Level Two, indicating strong entry-level intake and sustained access to accelerated education.



AEP Learners who sat for national exams

In 2025, a total of 120 AEP learners sat for the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations across three centres. CIYOTA Secondary School registered the highest number of candidates (64), followed by Kyangwali Secondary School (46) and Nyamiganda (10). The candidates included both refugee and host community learners, with notable female participation across centres, demonstrating equitable access to national examinations and successful progression within the AEP.

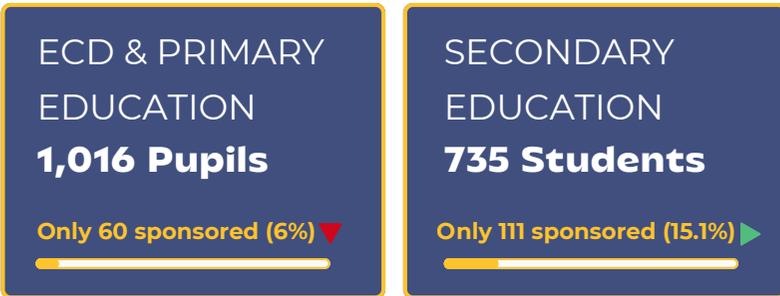


Highlights of Key Activities

- National AEP Guidelines Launch: CIYOTA participated in the official launch of the AEP Curriculum and Guidelines, showcasing learner innovations and strengthening standardised AEP implementation.
- Community Awareness on AEP and Safeguarding: Community sessions improved parental engagement, gender inclusion, and safeguarding awareness among refugee and host communities.
- Girls' Education Advocacy: Community dialogues and road drives increased awareness and support for girls' enrolment and retention in AEP.
- Youth Entrepreneurship Clubs Established: Entrepreneurship clubs were formed in two vocational institutes, strengthening youth business, leadership, and life skills.
- Strengthened Community Support and Coordination: Mother-to-Mother groups and AEP coordination meetings enhanced community support, financial literacy, and stakeholder collaboration.



SPONSORSHIP STATUS IN Q4, 2025



1,580 children and youth need your support!

Over 90% of CIYOTA learners remain enrolled; however, without immediate sponsorship support, they face a high risk of dropping out in Term One of the 2026 academic year.

The CIYOTA Sponsorship Program continues to make a meaningful impact by supporting children and youth from refugee and disadvantaged backgrounds in Uganda and the DRC to access quality education.

Many of these learners face financial hardship, displacement, or have lost parental support. Through the generosity of individual sponsors, more students are remaining in school and working toward brighter futures, with a continued focus on keeping girls in education.

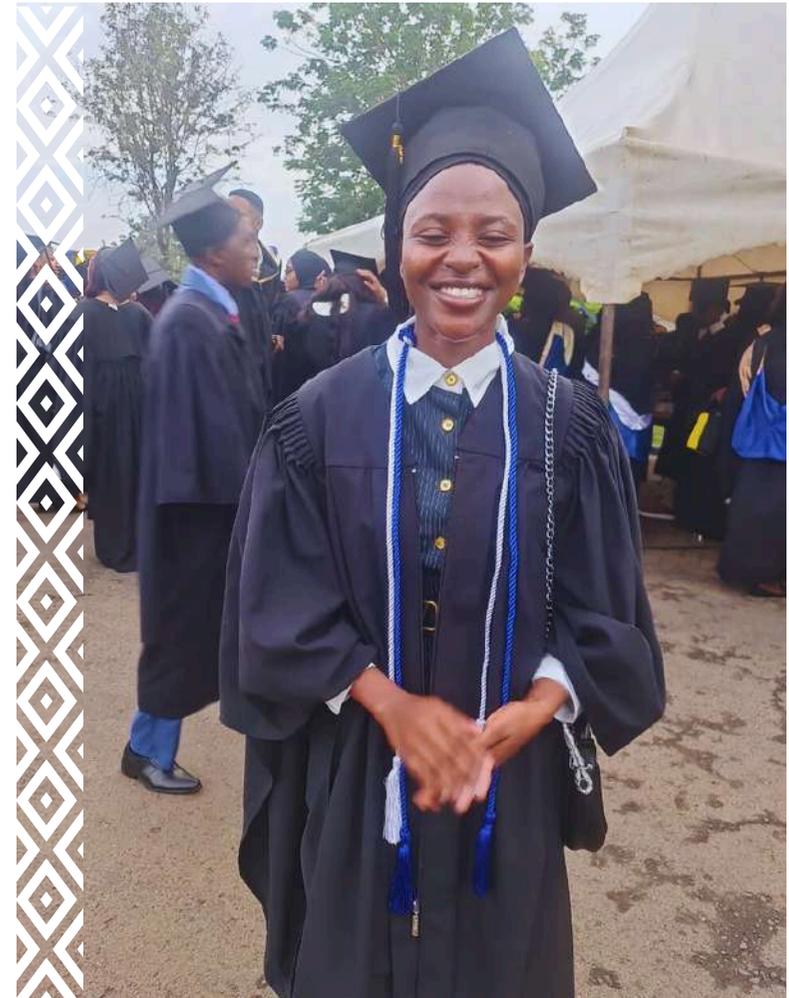
In Primary Education, 58 out of 1,016 students in Uganda and 2 in the DRC are currently supported by sponsors; 34 boys and 26 girls, all 100% forcibly displaced persons (FDPs).

In Secondary Education, 111 out of 735 students are under sponsorship; 51 boys and 60 girls, including 86 FDPs and 25 host community learners.



The CIYOTA University Access Program is a transformative initiative designed to bridge the gap between potential and opportunity for high-achieving young people from refugee and host communities. Grounded in the belief that education is a powerful equalizer, the program equips talented students with the skills, guidance, and resources needed to access quality higher education opportunities.

Between October and December 2025, CIYOTA provided sustained, holistic support to 43 students (16 females and 27 males), including 37 refugees and 6 host community members, through scholarships, mentorship, and transition assistance. Support extended beyond academics to include facilitation of essential travel and legal documentation, enabling smooth transitions to universities within the region and internationally. Through structured online and in-person coaching, personalized mentorship, and continuous follow-up, participants strengthened academic readiness, confidence, and decision-making, reinforcing CIYOTA's commitment to sustainable and inclusive access to higher education.





Family Business for Education Project - FBE

In September 2025, CIYOTA, in partnership with Street Child Uganda, launched the Family Business for Education Project in Maratatu and Nyamiganda village within Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. This initiative empowers refugee families by supporting sustainable livelihoods, ensuring that household income directly supports children's education and helps address poverty, a key barrier to schooling.

Over a 10-month period, the project will support 150 caregivers in developing small businesses and receive mentorship in parenting and financial management, thereby enabling 450 children to access and stay in school. Broader awareness and inclusive practices are expected to indirectly benefit over 4,000 children in the settlement. Three trained Family Business Officers have been deployed to implement the program and ensure meaningful impact.



Highlights of Key Activities

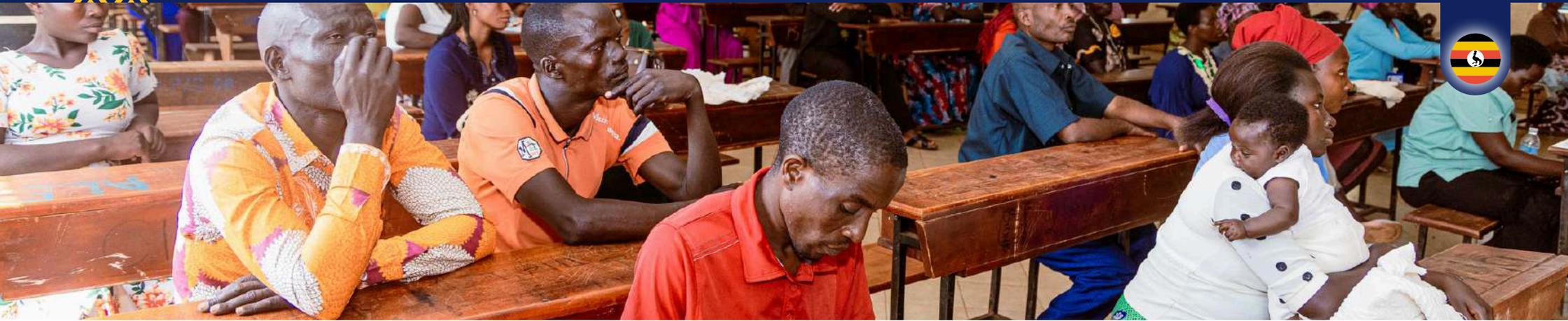
- **Baseline Survey:** A comprehensive survey was conducted with 150 refugee caregivers (147 females, 3 males, including 75 PWDs) to validate data, assess socio-economic conditions, education support capacity, and business readiness, establishing a strong benchmark for monitoring outcomes.
- **Caregiver Training:** A three-day training equipped all 150 caregivers with financial literacy, business skills, budgeting, marketing, savings strategies, group dynamics, and safeguarding knowledge in preparation for grant implementation.
- **Business Planning and Mentorship:** Caregivers drafted and refined 150 business plans with guidance from Family Business Officers, ensuring feasible, market-aligned, and profitable income-generating strategies.
- **Grant Disbursement:** Each caregiver received US\$139 (total US\$20,834) to start or expand businesses, supported by verified mobile money/bank accounts and consent agreements for joint accounts.
- **Project Monitoring Tools:** Monitoring and accountability tools were introduced, and Family Business Officers were trained to track progress, fund usage, and business performance effectively.
- **Follow-Up and Mentorship:** Daily mentorship sessions reinforced responsible use of funds, recordkeeping, stock management, pricing, customer care, savings, and market assessment, supporting early-stage business growth.
- **Education Support Messaging:** Mentorship and savings activities included education-focused messaging to promote school attendance, prepare for the 2026 academic year, and ensure equal access for girls and boys.
- **Savings Group Strengthening:** 7 savings groups were fully operational, with 98% caregiver participation, building financial resilience, increasing household income, reducing reliance on negative coping strategies, and enabling sustainable support for children's education.



Holistic Community Engagement in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement

The Community Engagement links education, child protection, psychosocial wellbeing, faith, and livelihoods to transform lives in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Guided by compassion, dignity, and community ownership, the department strengthens the resilience of children, youth, and families through integrated interventions. In Quarter 4 of 2025, children in Maratatu Village benefited from Child-Friendly Space activities that offered safe learning, literacy and numeracy support, structured play, and psychosocial care. At the household and community levels, couples' seminars, in partnership with Love Africa Mission, promoted family unity, respectful relationships, conflict resolution, and violence prevention.

These interventions were further enhanced through Teach to Transform leadership and trauma healing trainings delivered with international partners, fostering values-based leadership, personal growth, and psychosocial recovery. Participants emerged better equipped to support families, schools, and communities, contributing to reduced conflict and stronger social bonds. In parallel, women-led livelihood initiatives increased household income, food security, confidence, and social cohesion. Together, these activities demonstrate CIYOTA's holistic approach to community engagement, advancing safer, healthier, and more self-reliant communities, while reinforcing partnerships that sustain long-term transformation.



Couples' Seminars, Leadership Training, and Trauma Healing in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement

In partnership with Love Africa Mission, CIYOTA conducted 35 couples' seminars over four days, targeting refugee families and engaging church leaders as community influencers. The sessions promoted family unity, respectful relationships, conflict resolution, and the prevention of domestic violence, early marriage, and school dropout. Participants gained improved communication skills, a deeper understanding of how violence impacts child protection, and strengthened the role of church leaders as agents of positive change within families and communities.

Complementing these efforts, CIYOTA implemented a six-day Teach to Transform (TTT) leadership training and a six-day emotional trauma healing program delivered by the TTT Ministry Team (USA). 84 participants, including teachers, church leaders, youth, caregivers, and community volunteers, developed values-based leadership skills, servant leadership principles, and practical tools for personal and community transformation. Through these training sessions, participants enhanced their ability to recognise and address trauma, apply healthy coping strategies, support peaceful conflict resolution, and champion psychosocial well-being, ultimately strengthening families, schools, and broader community resilience.



Livelihoods - Women's Fish Farming Initiative

Since February 2025, CIYOTA, in collaboration with African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD), has been implementing the fish farming project “Enhancing Livelihood Opportunities among Refugee Families in Kyangwali Settlement”, targeting 75 former AEP learners (30 women and 45 youth). The project aims to develop practical aquaculture skills, diversify income sources, improve household nutrition, and increase resilience.

During Q4 2025, CIYOTA supported a women-led fish farming project that engaged 30 refugee women, including widows and single mothers with limited formal education, to strengthen their household income and resilience. The group stocked 1,500 fish fingerlings and jointly managed the pond through regular feeding, cleaning and water-quality monitoring. The project enhanced aquaculture skills, improved access to fish protein, strengthened social cohesion and confidence among women and reduced reliance on humanitarian assistance while promoting sustainable livelihoods.



DR CONGO

Our programs center on offering scholarship support to young children and youth while concurrently training the community in socially responsible leadership, social entrepreneurship, and active non-violence. Through these initiatives, we aim to empower individuals, foster positive community development, and cultivate a sustainable environment for growth and prosperity.



During the fourth quarter, CIYOTA delivered a comprehensive package of education and psychosocial support interventions to improve learning outcomes, enhance wellbeing, and strengthen resilience among children and youth affected by conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The interventions addressed the complex educational, emotional, and socio-economic challenges faced by learners in conflict-affected settings, with a strong focus on continuity of education, protection, and long-term empowerment. Key activities implemented during the quarter are outlined below.

1. **Scholarship Support Programme:** CIYOTA continued to deliver holistic scholarship support to primary, secondary, and university learners, with a strong focus on retention, academic performance, and wellbeing. The programme ensured timely payment of school fees and education-related costs, regular academic monitoring, and close engagement with schools to reduce dropout risks. In addition, learners received psychosocial support, mentorship, and guidance to address the effects of trauma, displacement, and insecurity, while consistent communication with sponsors strengthened accountability and sustainability of support.
2. **Psychosocial Support and Youth Resilience Building:** Recognising the impact of conflict on the emotional, social, and economic well-being of young people, CIYOTA strengthened psychosocial support and youth resilience-building interventions. The approach focused on improving coping skills, self-confidence, social cohesion, and economic agency, enabling learners to manage trauma, uncertainty, and displacement while actively contributing to their own recovery and community development. Key activities included:



a) Social Entrepreneurship Training

CIYOTA conducted social entrepreneurship training at Rubare High School in Rutshuru, reaching 43 learners and 2 teachers. The training strengthened entrepreneurship, leadership, and problem-solving skills, empowering learners to turn community challenges into viable income-generating ideas, while engaging teachers to sustain mentorship within the school.



b) Distribution of Scholastic Kits

To reduce material barriers to education, CIYOTA distributed scholastic kits to 199 learners at Zigama Primary School in Bunagana, including learners with disabilities. The support improved school readiness, participation, and confidence, eased the financial burden on vulnerable families, and promoted inclusive access to education.

Overall, CIYOTA's Q4 interventions improved access to quality education, strengthened psychosocial wellbeing, and built resilience among conflict-affected youth in eastern DRC. The integrated approach continues to support long-term recovery and sustainable development.



During this quarter, CIYOTA strengthened its University Access Programme in the DRC to support young people in transitioning to higher education and improving academic readiness. The program combined structured online and in-person coaching, mentorship, and practical guidance on university applications and admissions. Through personalised support and continuous follow-up, participants built confidence, navigated academic requirements, and made informed decisions about their higher education pathways.

A total of 23 students benefited, of whom 15 were supported to access undergraduate studies (11 females and 4 males), demonstrating strong female participation and commitment to gender inclusion, while 8 females and 8 males were supported at the master's level. Overall, the program expanded access to tertiary education, strengthened academic confidence, and created pathways for youth to pursue advanced learning despite the challenges of conflict and socio-economic conditions.

During this period, CIYOTA celebrated a major academic milestone with scholarship beneficiary **Mr Noel Kalinda**. At 27, from North Kivu, Noel successfully completed and publicly defended his work in Mathematics, Statistics, and Informatics at the University of Kinshasa, earning a "Satisfaction" distinction.





Leadership and Entrepreneurship Training

CIYOTA implemented leadership and entrepreneurship training through structured field visits to beneficiary projects in and around Goma, particularly in Ndosho and Chamahame. The training sessions targeted a diverse range of groups, including women's associations, farmers' cooperatives, AVEC groups, conflict-affected youth, church members, universities, schools, and youth associations. The sessions emphasised practical entrepreneurship skills, business start-up guidance and leadership development to promote self-reliance and job creation.

a) Chamahame SDA Church: CIYOTA conducted follow-up visits with 9 beneficiaries, of whom 8 had started small businesses, demonstrating strong uptake of entrepreneurship skills and growing confidence.

b) Birere SDA Church: Visits engaged 43 youth, with 17 already operating small businesses, reflecting early but promising outcomes and strong demand for entrepreneurship support among unemployed youth.

c) Ndosho SDA Church: Follow-up with 12 beneficiaries showed that 8 had initiated businesses, indicating steady progress toward economic self-reliance.

Overall, Q4 follow-up visits showed consistent growth in business uptake across sites, strengthening youth entrepreneurship, leadership, and sustainable livelihoods in conflict-affected communities.



SUPPORT TO FARMERS' COOPERATIVES

In 2025, the security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo deteriorated sharply as armed conflict intensified across the region. Escalating violence led to the closure of banks and Goma International Airport, severely disrupting humanitarian access, economic activity, and the delivery of essential services. The capture of key cities, including Goma and Bukavu, by M23 forces resulted in an estimated 3,000 deaths and over 2,900 serious injuries, triggering widespread displacement and significantly deepening the humanitarian crisis. Despite this volatile and challenging environment, CIYOTA remained operational and adaptive, maintaining a strong field presence and prioritising life-saving and resilience-building support. The organization focused on assisting internally displaced persons, returnees, and vulnerable host communities in Rutshuru, Masisi, and Nyiragongo, ensuring continued access to education, psychosocial support, and livelihoods interventions for conflict-affected populations.



To ensure people are served and continue to live their lives. CIYOTA's 2025 support in the DRC focused on key areas such as:

- Provision of farming tools
- Distribution of seeds
- Financial literacy
- Leadership training and peaceful conflict resolution.

Beyond the above mid- and long-term solutions, CIYOTA provided humanitarian assistance to more than 2,000 household IDPs, with dignity kits and foodstuffs such as rice, beans, maize flour, salt and cooking oil.



1. Masisi territory

CIYOTA has continued to support the UMOJA WETU Local Development Committee (CODEL/UMOJA WETU), an association that oversees farmers' cooperatives in the Masisi territory. The financial skills received from CIYOTA helped CODEL members to continue their entrepreneurial activities even in their displacement camps. Women farmed mushrooms on small farms and sold them to earn a living. When they returned home in March 2025, CODEL continued to sensitise community members on farming. The groups harvested 2,200 kg of potatoes, and members of the cooperatives sold them to buy school materials for their own children and for orphaned children. So far, CODEL has given scholastic materials to 850 school-going children, including 493 boys and 357 girls.

Currently, CODEL has launched a program to fight climate change, given the erosion affecting their lands. They have so far mobilised over 2,500 participants, including 1,600 women and 900 men and planted nearly 500,000 trees.





With CIYOTA's support, the Local Development Committee CODEL UMOJA WETU continues to implement its annual plan, with a strategic focus on food security and agricultural development in Masisi territory, North Kivu, DRC. In 2025, an agricultural campaign was launched targeting women's agricultural cooperatives and vulnerable households, aiming to improve household living conditions, strengthen resilience to food crises, and promote income-generating activities. The campaign included awareness-raising, provision of agricultural inputs and equipment, and training on best practices, intensive farming techniques, pest control, post-harvest preservation, and financial management.

The campaign reached four cooperatives across the M/KARUBA and M/SHANGA groups, including KAZI NI KAZI (COAK), Ruzinga (COPAR), Ruhegeri (COAR), and CASOM (Songambebe). Activities involved engaging local leaders, welcoming cooperative members, launching the planting season, conducting training sessions, disbursing support in cash or inputs, and evaluating progress with cooperative steering committees. These efforts collectively strengthened agricultural capacity, enhanced productivity, and supported sustainable livelihoods for cooperative members and their communities.

Results Achieved

During Season B, 877 people (359 men and 518 women) were sensitised and supported in the agricultural campaign, leading to improved food security and preparation for the next growing season. 4 training and 4 evaluation sessions were held with the cooperatives COAK, COPAR, CASOM, and COAR, while 262 members (including 8 persons with disabilities) received agricultural inputs and equipment. Despite the conflict, CODEL adapted to Masisi's dual farming seasons and generated potato sales totalling US\$1,200, supporting the association's activities.



2. Rutshuru territory

The Association for Socio-Economic Development (ADSE) focuses on agriculture and financial literacy, primarily through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA). ADSE operates 10 branches, each hosting at least 8 groups. Like many organisations in the region, ADSE was heavily affected by the conflict, resulting in the loss of members due to death or displacement to neighbouring countries. Membership, which previously exceeded 3,000, currently stands at 1,811, reflecting both the impact of the war and ongoing efforts to sustain community development activities.

Agriculture

ADSE adapts to the dual farming seasons of Rutshuru territory, and despite the conflict this year, achieved notable agricultural production. Cabbage sales generated 1,200,000 Congolese francs (US\$600), sweet potatoes brought in 600,000 Congolese francs (US\$300), and maize sales amounted to 1,800,000 Congolese francs (US\$900). All revenues were reinvested to support the association's operations and activities.

Savings (VSLA)

Building on CIYOTA's financial literacy training, ADSE established Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups where members contribute monthly and access affordable loans at 2% interest per month. Half of the profits support the association's growth, while the remainder assists members in meeting basic needs. To date, the VSLA groups have accumulated a total of USD 11,565 in contributions and interest, strengthening members' self-reliance and financial resilience.



3. Bunagana

In Bunagana, CIYOTA supports one women's group, DUKUNDANE, comprising 131 members, 104 of whom are female and 27 male. This group embarked on a mission to promote women's socio-economic development, inclusion, and socially responsible leadership.

Activity

These small-scale businesswomen and farmers have already purchased land to build a modern market and plan to acquire two additional plots to establish a school, ensuring their children have access to quality education.

Impact of war on associations and farmers' cooperatives

- Membership has decreased, and savings have become impossible due to members' vulnerability.
- Those involved in agriculture could not access their fields due to insecurity, and the same was true for those who ran small businesses, whose activities were paralysed.
- This situation has also affected children in school; many have dropped out due to a lack of resources.

Impact of Farmers' Cooperatives on Beneficiaries

In North Kivu and the broader eastern DRC, armed conflict limits access to education and disrupts the livelihoods of largely rural, agricultural communities. By supporting farmers' cooperatives, CIYOTA promotes an inclusive and empowering approach that helps beneficiaries meet basic needs, rebuild economic stability, and strengthen resilience.

Monitoring and interviews show that 80% (2,740 of 2,950) beneficiaries in Rutshuru and Masisi can now cover half of their children's school fees, meet basic needs, acquire land (30%), start income-generating agricultural activities (50%), reduce poverty (40%), and improve nutrition (50%).



Building Resilience Amidst Conflict

The year 2025 highlighted both the vulnerability and resilience of conflict-affected communities in eastern DRC. Despite insecurity, displacement, and economic disruption, CIYOTA remained committed to protecting dignity, sustaining livelihoods, and ensuring access to education.

Through an integrated humanitarian-development approach, CIYOTA supported farmers' cooperatives, women's groups, and local associations to restore livelihoods, advance children's education, and invest in climate resilience. While conflict continues to challenge stability and access to resources, the achievements of 2025 demonstrate that community-led solutions, strong local institutions, and sustained investment in people are key pathways to recovery, self-reliance, and lasting peace.



KEY SUCCESS AND LEARNINGS



Community Ownership: Group-based approaches strengthened accountability and long-term commitment. Engaging mothers, caregivers, and community leaders, plus peer support and involvement of men, effectively promoted girls' education, positive family behavior, and reduced domestic violence.

Mentorship and Monitoring: Regular guidance and on-site support improved outcomes in livelihoods, education, and leadership. Trainings were most effective when linked to real community challenges and included teachers and youth.

Education and Child Protection: Early learning and integrated psychosocial support prevented learning gaps and improved participation. Strong caregiver engagement and school–community collaboration boosted attendance, performance, and ownership of education outcomes.

Context-Specific Approaches: Tailored strategies, like linking financial literacy to real livelihoods, increased engagement and impact compared with generic models.



Challenges Affecting Programming in Uganda

During Quarter Four, implementation across education, community engagement, livelihoods and institutional operations faced a range of interconnected challenges.

- Household and socio-cultural constraints significantly affected participation, particularly for women and mothers whose caregiving, domestic duties and seasonal farming demands limited consistent attendance in trainings, seminars and livelihood activities. Cultural norms discouraged open discussion of marital conflict, while limited male involvement reduced the effectiveness of some family and GBV-prevention interventions. Fear of retaliation and weak referral systems (including distrust in law enforcement) also constrained reporting of sensitive cases involving powerful community members.
- The quarter highlighted broader infrastructure and utility constraints affecting the learning environment. National electricity outages sometimes disrupted ICT practical exams since schools operated with limited infrastructure capacity, including classroom space, computers, lighting and backup power maintenance. Gaps in desks, beds, uniforms and ICT tools emphasized the need for further investment. Learner welfare services also required strengthening, particularly medical supplies, play materials and sanitation facilities, to maintain a safe and supportive environment.



Challenges Affecting Programming in the DRC

The key challenges affecting program implementation in the Democratic Republic of Congo include limited funding, which restricts CIYOTA's ability to adequately respond to the growing needs of the communities served. In addition, insecurity in some operational areas has constrained access to vulnerable groups, thereby limiting the reach of entrepreneurship and youth leadership training activities. Furthermore, ongoing population movements in conflict-affected areas continue to disrupt humanitarian access, making it difficult to consistently engage target beneficiaries and deliver planned interventions.



Amisi N'Samba Jean Paul

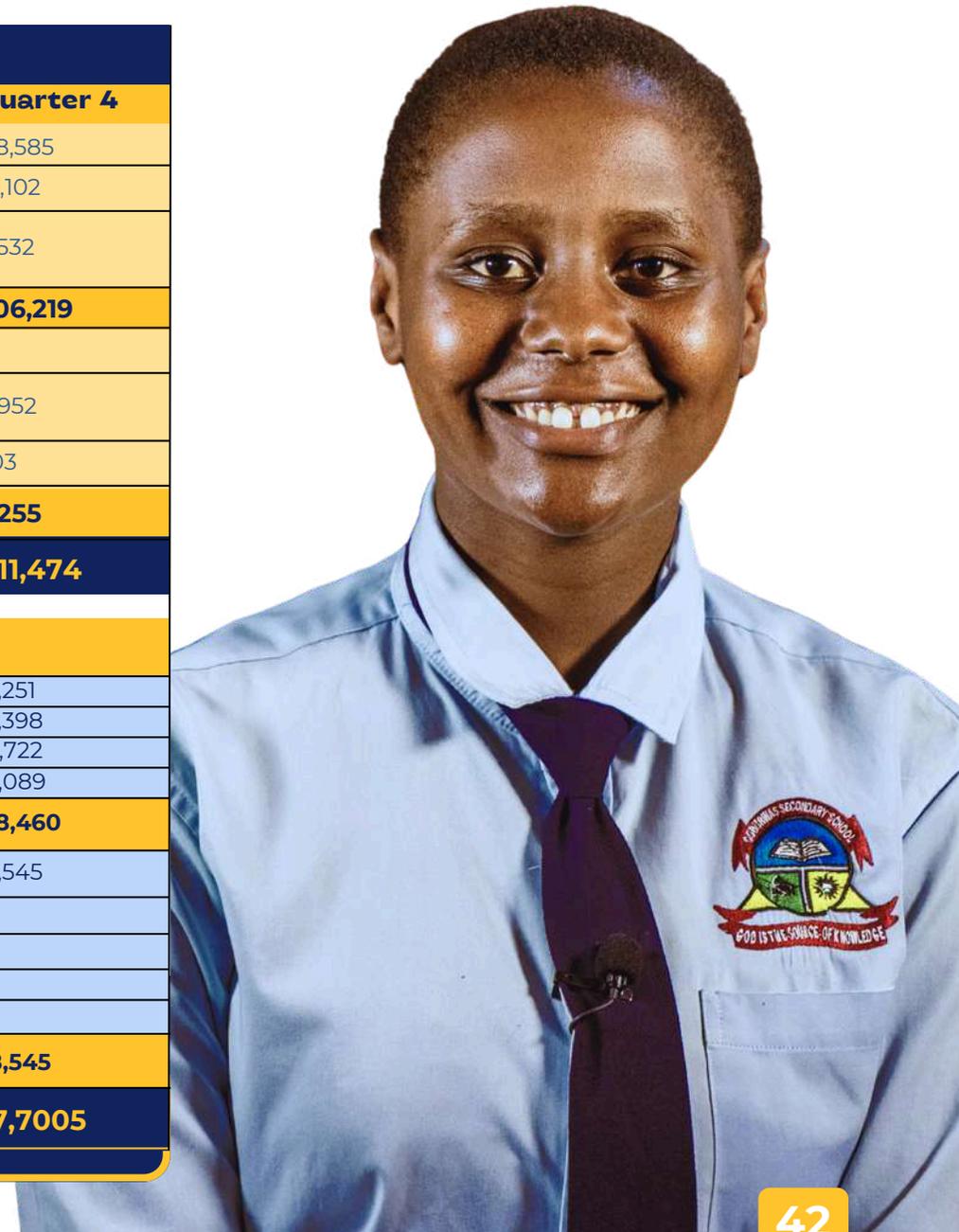
A 32-year-old entrepreneur from North Kivu whose life and livelihood were disrupted by armed conflict. In 2024, he joined CIYOTA's Pamoja kwa Maendeleo ya Congo (PMC) program in Goma, which helped him turn his informal skills in shoemaking, leatherwork, bookbinding, and welding into a structured and sustainable business.

With CIYOTA's support, Amisi founded **GODWINS**, producing shoes, leather pouches, bookbinding items, and welding products from cow and goat hides. Starting from scratch, he built a workshop that now employs four staff members, each earning a stable income. Through practical training in business management, financial literacy, and marketing, he learned to manage resources, maintain quality standards, and acquire new clients. His products are now recognised beyond Goma, and he actively uses radio advertising and networking to expand his customer base.

Despite challenges such as insecurity, limited workspace, and restricted access to materials, Amisi remains resilient and forward-looking. He continues to innovate, improve his craft, and create job opportunities for others in his community. Reflecting on his journey, he says, "**CIYOTA helped me see my potential and gave me the tools to turn my skills into a future.**"



INCOME					
Description	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Uganda	Tired grants and donations	\$49,592	\$188,135	\$70,790	\$128,585
	Untired grants	\$45,255	\$82,899	\$11,079	\$73,102
	Income from charitable activities (School income)	\$185,528	\$177,701	\$125,153	\$4,532
	Sub-Total	\$280,375	\$448,735	\$207,022	\$206,219
DR Congo	Income generating activities	\$520	-	-	-
	Untired grants	\$48,277	-	\$105	\$4,952
	Tired grants and donations	\$19,102	-	\$10,190	\$303
	Sub-Total	\$67,899	-	10,295	\$5,255
Total Income per Quarter		\$348,274	\$448,735	\$217,317	\$211,474
EXPENSES					
Uganda	ECD & Primary Education	\$41,461	\$41,076	\$30,301	\$29,251
	Secondary Education	\$45,805	\$84,748	\$61,997	\$62,398
	Other programs	\$72,457	\$73,582	\$53,268	\$98,722
	Administration	\$41,315	\$62,065	\$60,447	\$58,089
	Sub-Total	\$201,038	\$261,471	\$206,013	\$248,460
DR Congo	Administration	\$14,662	\$7,331	\$3,700	\$28,545
	Education	\$3,090	-	\$2,200	-
	Income generating activities	\$392	-	\$735	-
	PMC	\$587	-	-	-
	Other programs	\$10,870	\$5,435	\$4,290	-
	Sub-Total	\$29,601	\$12,766	\$10,925	\$28,545
Total Expenses per Quarter		\$230,639	\$274,237	\$216,938	\$27,7005





To ensure that CIYOTA continues transforming the lives of children and young refugees, and the host community, we aim to raise **USD 243,000** by year-end.



Q4 GALLERY - ECW PROJECT





GET IN TOUCH

Uganda, Africa

Kampala Office:

Nansana-Naluvule Along Hoima Road,
Moroto Lane; Plot 20 P.O. Box 37403
Kampala.

Field Office:

Kinakyeitaka village, Block 54, Kyangwali
refugee settlement

 executivedirector@ciyota.org

 www.ciyota.org

 +1 (276) 650-9001

DRC, Africa

Goma City, 100m from Signers
Roundabout, towards Virunga
Road, opposite Horizon building.

US, North America

5602 Tinkerbell In apt
2411 Fort Worth Tx 76119
+1 (276) 650-9001

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