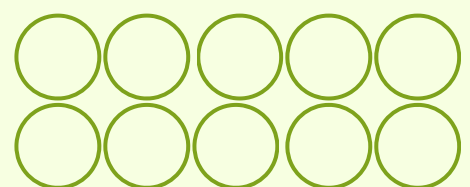




**Youth Initiative for Community
Empowerment-YICE**



ANNUAL REPORT



***"Rooted in Resilience: Empowering
Women, Regenerating
Communities"***



Executive summary

In 2025, Youth Initiative for Community Empowerment (YICE) deepened its commitment to building resilient, inclusive, and climate-smart communities by placing women at the center of agricultural transformation. Working alongside smallholder farmers, community leaders, and partners, YICE reached over 12,000 community members, delivering practical solutions that strengthened livelihoods, improved household nutrition, and enhanced resilience to climate shocks.

Through regenerative agriculture training, food forest establishment, and climate adaptation support, women farmers increased their capacity to sustainably manage their land, improve productivity, and secure diverse sources of food and income. Over 3,450 farmers were trained in regenerative farming practices, while thousands more were mobilized and sensitized on climate-smart agriculture, organic soil management, and sustainable land use. These interventions translated into healthier soils, improved harvests, and greater confidence among women farmers as stewards of their land.

Food security and nutrition remained a core priority. By promoting regenerative gardens and distributing vegetable seedlings, YICE enabled households to access fresh, nutritious foods throughout the year. These efforts reduced dependence on market purchases, improved dietary diversity, and generated surplus produce for sale within local communities.

Economic empowerment was further strengthened through financial literacy training, equipping women with skills in savings, budgeting, and income planning. As a result, participating households reported improved financial decision-making, increased ability to meet essential needs, and greater resilience to economic stress.

Beyond community-level impact, 2025 was a year of organizational growth for YICE. Investments in community-based field teams, learning systems, and regenerative infrastructure strengthened programme delivery and laid the foundation for long-term sustainability. As YICE looks ahead, the organization remains committed to scaling impact, deepening partnerships, and advancing women-led, climate-resilient development.



A Glance At 2025



3,450

Farmers trained in regenerative farming practices to restore soils, improve yields and build climate resilience



1,685

Refugee farmers received vegetable seedlings to enhance food security and self reliance



1,200

Women farmers supported to engage in sustainable livestock farming, strengthening household incomes and nutrition



4,425

Fruit Trees planted in the refugee settlement to strengthen climate resilience and restore ecosystems.

Strengthening Financial & Farming Capacity



1,513

Farmers trained in financial literacy and basic agribusiness skills



420

Students supported through hands-on capacity building and practical training



40%

Increase in refugee household incomes from sell of harvested vegetables

Investing In Sustainable Coffee Systems



10,500

Improved coffee seedlings distributed to 100 women coffee farmer



20,000

Capacity coffee tree nursery established to ensure long-term seedling availability and sustainability

Refugee-Led Regenerative Solutions



20

Refugee households engaged to design and establish a regenerative village settlement model



30

Small-scale irrigation kits distributed to refugee farming households to improve year-round production



80%

Refugee households reached having at least 2 meals per day

Community Engagement



12,208

Community engagements conducted through trainings, workshops, demonstrations and outreach activities



18

Community Volunteers trained to strengthen local capacity, ensure timely service delivery, and promote sustainable community-led impact.

Client Satisfaction **85%**

Women engagement **78%**

WHO WE ARE



YICE Started operations in 2014 as a Community based organization – and is duly registered with the government of Uganda.

We are a social organization providing bundled regenerative agricultural services to last mile smallholder farmers including refugees, women and youth.

Our goal is to promote food security and nutrition, to regenerate the biodiversity and achieve climate change adaptation, and improve incomes for smallholder farmers.

Together with our supporters, we walk to last mile to build the capacity of vulnerable smallholder farmers to practice regenerative farming. Eat healthy and earn incomes for their households. Our beneficiary targets include; the refugees, host communities and persons with disabilities. We operate in Kassanda, Mubende districts; and Nakivale Refugee Settlement.

Our Vision

A world where all last mile smallholder farmers and their families thrive in a sustainable way is what we believe in and work for at YICE. We are leaders of innovative and bundled regenerative agricultural solutions for smallholder farmers. We support and accompany them on their path to ecological and sustainable farming.

Our Mission

To provide sustainable and actionable regenerative farming services to rural smallholder farmers that help promote food security and nutrition, conserve the environment, and promote incomes; targeting women, youth and displaced people in Uganda.

Core Values

Empowering people: We empower last mile communities to Champion their own resilience to shocks and live healthy lives.

Conserving the biodiversity: We care about animals, plants and micro nutrients in the soil. We practice organic farming to ensure all live-in harmony.

Working with others: We believe we can't accomplish anything alone. We always share and seek for partnerships and guidance from others.

Scale and sustainable solutions: We seek to build solutions that create everlasting impact on the globe.

Our Approach

YICE seeks to impact through a community led food systems approach to sustainable food production and climate resilience



Regenerative diaries, on garden Support, fruit tree planting, nutrition and good feeding awareness and training, water harvesting, organic fertilizer training and group savings training



THEMATIC IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Food and Nutrition Security

Improving household food and nutrition security was a core outcome of YICE's work in 2026. Through regenerative agriculture training and the promotion of diversified food systems, women farmers strengthened their ability to produce nutritious food consistently throughout the year. A total of 2,716 farmers were trained on food forests, tree planting, and manure use, equipping them with skills to integrate vegetables, fruits, and soil-enriching practices into their farms. In addition, 695 farmers received vegetable seedlings, enabling households to establish or expand regenerative kitchen gardens. As a result, participating households reported increased access to fresh vegetables, reduced dependence on market purchases, and improved dietary diversity particularly for women and children. Surplus produce from these gardens also generated small but reliable incomes, reinforcing the link between nutrition and livelihoods.



Livestock-Based Livelihoods: Poultry and Piggery

Livestock farming formed an important complementary livelihood strategy within YICE's integrated approach. Through targeted training and asset support, women farmers were supported to diversify income sources while improving household nutrition. Women farmers received practical training in poultry, goat and piggery management, including animal housing, feeding, hygiene, disease prevention, and biosecurity. These skills strengthened farmers' capacity to manage livestock sustainably and reduce losses. Livestock assets contributed to improved household nutrition through access to animal-source foods, while also providing manure for regenerative gardens and coffee plots. Over time, the sale of livestock and related products created additional income streams, enhancing household resilience and reducing vulnerability to economic shocks.



Regenerative Settlements and Localization in Refugee Response

In 2025, YICE advanced its commitment to localization, sustainability, and refugee-led development through the implementation of the Regenerative Settlement Project in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, Rubondo Zone. Implemented in partnership with Bassattu Innovations, with financial and technical support from Re-Alliance and technical oversight from Arup, the project demonstrates how refugee settlements can be co-designed with communities to regenerate people, place, and biodiversity. The project successfully secured formal allocation of three acres of land from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), completed land surveying and demarcation, and established strong institutional collaboration with OPM and UNHCR. Using an inclusive and transparent selection process, 20 refugee households were identified, prioritizing women-led households, persons with disabilities, child-headed households, and newly arrived refugees. Through two participatory community workshops held in 2025, refugees actively shaped the vision of the settlement using accessible tools such as storytelling and household drawings. These engagements strengthened trust, ownership, and accountability, while surfacing critical challenges including overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, energy poverty, and housing insecurity. The project also invested in learning, coordination, and knowledge sharing, holding regular multi-partner meetings, engaging settlement coordination platforms, and launching a dedicated project webpage to share progress and lessons globally.



Despite challenges such as high community expectations and changes in government leadership, the project made strong early progress, positioning the Regenerative Settlement as a proof of concept for scalable, community-led, and environmentally sustainable refugee settlements. By centering refugee voices and shifting decision-making power to local actors, YICE's 2025 work contributed to more dignified, resilient, and future-ready settlement models, aligned with national refugee response priorities and donor commitments to localization and sustainability.



Capacity Building for School Agriculture Clubs

YICE strengthened youth capacity and climate-smart agriculture skills through support to a 6-month School Agri-Club Project implemented by AVDA Uganda in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, targeting Kikurura and St. Paul Primary Schools. The initiative focused on building practical agricultural skills, leadership, and environmental awareness among refugee and host-community learners, with a total project investment of USD 1,000.

Through school-based Agri-Clubs meeting twice weekly, 120 students were directly trained in hands-on crop production, soil management, composting, water conservation, and organic pest control. Students established and managed school demonstration gardens growing vegetables such as sukuma wiki, carrots, onions, eggplant, and fruit trees including mango, pawpaw, and avocado. Learning was intentionally practical, linking classroom concepts to real-life application and food systems.

YICE's support enabled the provision of essential agricultural tools, inputs, and planting materials, strengthening the schools' capacity to deliver sustained experiential learning. Educational workshops, including sessions led by a local farmer, exposed learners to traditional and modern farming challenges, while a seed-to-table activity reinforced connections between agriculture, nutrition, and household food security. Beyond direct participants, the project indirectly reached over 300 additional students through peer learning, open demonstrations, and awareness activities.

Early outcomes included improved teamwork, leadership, and responsibility among learners, increased understanding of climate-smart agriculture, and enhanced environmental stewardship through waste recycling, tree planting, and soil conservation practices.



Produce from the gardens contributed to school meals and take-home support for vulnerable learners, improving dietary diversity. The project also demonstrated YICE's commitment to inclusive education, supporting the re-enrolment and participation of children with disabilities through home visits and provision of inclusive learning materials. Key lessons highlighted the importance of hands-on learning, community partnerships, and planning for garden maintenance during school holidays. Overall, the Agri-Club initiative illustrates YICE's contribution in 2025 to youth empowerment, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods, while providing a scalable model for integrating practical agriculture and life skills into refugee-hosting school communities.



Women Coffee Plus (WOC+) Project – Climate-Smart Coffee and Livelihoods

In 2025, YICE implemented the Women Coffee Plus (WOC+) Project in Kassanda District with support from the FREE GROW Fund, strengthening climate resilience, food security, and livelihoods for women smallholder coffee farmers. The project directly engaged 123 women coffee farmers, organized into seven groups, and indirectly reached over 600 community members.

The initiative combined regenerative and climate-smart agriculture with food forest development and financial inclusion. Women farmers received hands-on training in soil health management, permaculture design, organic pest control, agroforestry, water conservation, and climate-resilient coffee production. To support adoption, YICE distributed 5,000 improved coffee seedlings, established a central coffee nursery capable of hosting 16,000 seedlings, and supplied 500 fruit trees alongside diverse vegetable seeds for cover cropping and household nutrition. The project strengthened household food security and income diversification through the establishment of regenerative gardens and introduction of alternative livelihood assets, including goats and piglets, which also improved access to manure for organic soil fertility. Financial literacy and savings training were delivered to all groups, improving women's financial management skills and access to formal financial services.

Early results show improved agricultural productivity, increased household nutrition, emerging income from surplus produce, and enhanced climate adaptation capacity among participating households. The project also contributed to YICE's organizational sustainability by establishing a coffee nursery that will continue supplying high-quality, climate-resilient seedlings while generating income for future programming.

Overall, the WOC+ Project demonstrates YICE's integrated approach to women's economic empowerment, climate resilience, and regenerative coffee systems, providing a scalable model for inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.



Strengthening Climate Resilience Through Irrigation Support

YICE Uganda prioritized access to small-scale irrigation solutions as a critical component of its regenerative farming and refugee livelihoods programming. In contexts where prolonged dry spells and erratic rainfall increasingly undermine food production, the distribution of 30 low-cost irrigation kits enabled 30 refugee and host households to sustain year-round food production and reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture.

The irrigation kits were distributed to targeted farming households and demonstration sites to support vegetable gardens, coffee nurseries, and food forests. Each kit was designed to deliver water efficiently at the root zone, minimizing water loss through evaporation and runoff. This approach allowed farmers to make optimal use of limited water resources harvested from rainfall, household storage containers, or nearby communal sources.

The primary purpose of the irrigation kits was to stabilize food production during dry seasons, when households are most vulnerable to hunger and income loss. By enabling consistent watering, farmers were able to establish seedlings successfully, protect crops during periods of heat stress, and maintain vegetable production even when rainfall was delayed. This directly contributed to improved household nutrition by ensuring a steady supply of fresh vegetables throughout the year. Beyond food security, the irrigation kits supported income generation and livelihood diversification. Farmers using the kits reported higher survival rates of crops and the ability to produce surplus vegetables for local markets during dry periods, when supply is typically low and prices are higher.



This strengthened household cash flow and reduced negative coping strategies such as selling productive assets or engaging in environmentally harmful activities.

The irrigation support also reinforced YICE's broader climate adaptation strategy. Combined with training in mulching, water harvesting, shade management, and soil health restoration, the kits enhanced farmers' capacity to adapt to climate variability while reducing pressure on natural resources. Demonstration plots equipped with irrigation kits served as learning hubs, accelerating peer-to-peer adoption and promoting scalable, climate-smart solutions within the community.

Overall, the distribution of irrigation kits in 2025 played a vital role in advancing YICE's mission to build resilient, self-reliant, and climate-adaptive farming households, ensuring that gains in regenerative agriculture training translated into sustained production and lasting impact.



Fruit Tree Planting and Long-Term Nutrition

Fruit tree planting was promoted as a long-term investment in nutrition, income, and environmental restoration. Through training and hands-on support, farmers were encouraged to integrate fruit trees into their farms as part of food forests and agroforestry systems. Fruit trees such as avocado and mango were introduced to improve household access to micronutrient-rich foods while contributing to soil conservation, shade, and improved microclimates. These trees provide a sustainable source of food and future income, particularly during periods when annual crops are affected by climate stress. By combining fruit tree planting with regenerative farming practices, YICE supported communities to build food systems that are productive, climate-resilient, and capable of delivering long-term nutrition and livelihood benefits.



350

Women refugee farmers engaged in fruit vending business



40%

Increase in refugee household income with women earning extra \$15-\$30 each month from fruit selling



2000+

Children able to enjoy balanced diet nutritious meals from fruits and vegetables

25%

Improvement in nutrition for refugee children



STORIES OF CHANGE

Maria – Building Food Security from the Ground Up



"Today, my land feeds my family and gives me confidence for the future."
— Woman coffee farmer, Kassanda District

Maria is a smallholder coffee farmer in Kassanda District and a mother of four. Before joining YICE's programme, her household relied heavily on a single harvest season, often struggling to access enough nutritious food during dry months. Through hands-on training in regenerative farming, Maria learned how to restore soil health, integrate cover crops, and establish a food forest within her coffee plot. With vegetable seedlings provided by YICE, Maria established a regenerative garden that now supplies her family with leafy greens and vegetables throughout the year. Any surplus is sold within her village, providing income for school needs and household essentials.

Utamuriza Jane – Growing Confidence Through Climate-Smart Farming



"I now make decisions about my farm with confidence, even during difficult seasons."

— Refugee farmer, Nakivale Refugee Settlement District

Jane joined the programme with limited experience in independently managing her farm in a dry, arid area where water scarcity often constrained production. Through training in climate-smart and regenerative agriculture, she learned new approaches to farming with limited water, including mulching, soil restoration, organic fertilizer production, and water conservation techniques. These practices have enabled her to protect crops during prolonged dry spells, reduce losses from pests, and maintain production despite challenging conditions. More importantly, Jane has gained the confidence to actively participate in decision-making on her farm and to support other women in her group.



Uwimana Glorious – Turning Knowledge into Income



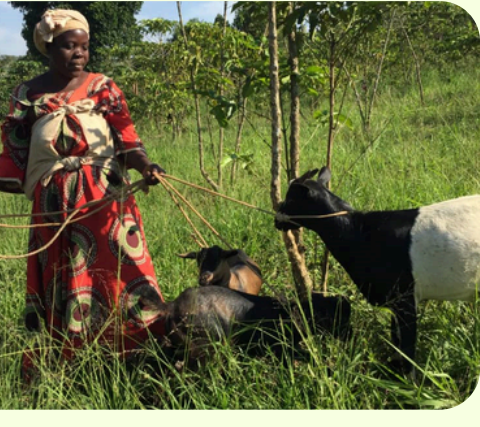
"For the first time, I feel in control of my money and my plans."

— Woman farmer and VSLA participant

Glorious participated in YICE's financial literacy training, where she learned budgeting, savings, and income planning skills. By combining these skills with income from surplus vegetable sales, she began saving regularly and investing back into her farm. This financial stability has enabled Grace to meet household needs and respond to emergencies without falling into debt.

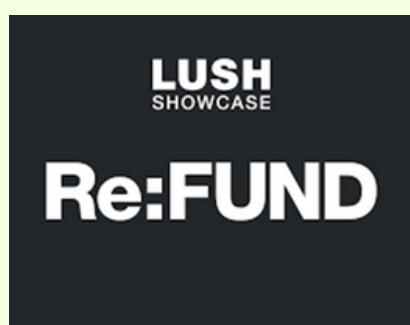
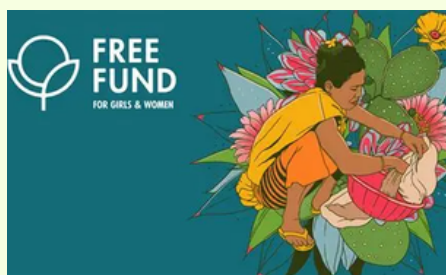


PICTORIAL



PARTNERSHIPS

YICE's impact in 2025 was made possible through strong partnerships with community groups, local governments, and development partners. Collaboration with district production offices and extension workers ensured technical quality and local ownership of interventions. Community-based farm agents played a critical role in mobilization, training, and follow-up support.





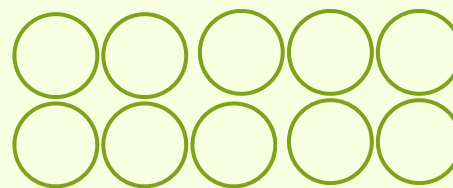
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

In 2026, YICE will build on the momentum of 2025 by scaling proven interventions and deepening impact. Key priorities include:

- Expanding regenerative agriculture and climate resilience training to reach more smallholder farmers
- Strengthening food and nutrition security through diversified food systems and food forests
- Enhancing women's economic empowerment through integrated livelihood and financial inclusion initiatives
- Operationalizing regenerative learning and demonstration hubs to support knowledge sharing and sustainability
- Deepening partnerships with government, communities, and development actors

As climate pressures and economic uncertainty continue to affect rural communities, YICE remains committed to supporting women and youth with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to build resilient futures.

WORK WITH US



Contact Us



info@yiceug.org
ugandayice@gmail.com



Our Website

<https://www.yiceug.org/>



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Co-founders:

Noah Ssempijja

(snoah2008@gmail.com)

Winnie Tushabe

(tushabe16@gmail.com)

WhatsApp: +256774582242

