

**CEMELIA  
INITIATIVES  
AFRICA**



Potential Meets  
Opportunity

# CEMELIA INITIATIVES AFRICA MID YEAR REPORT

2025

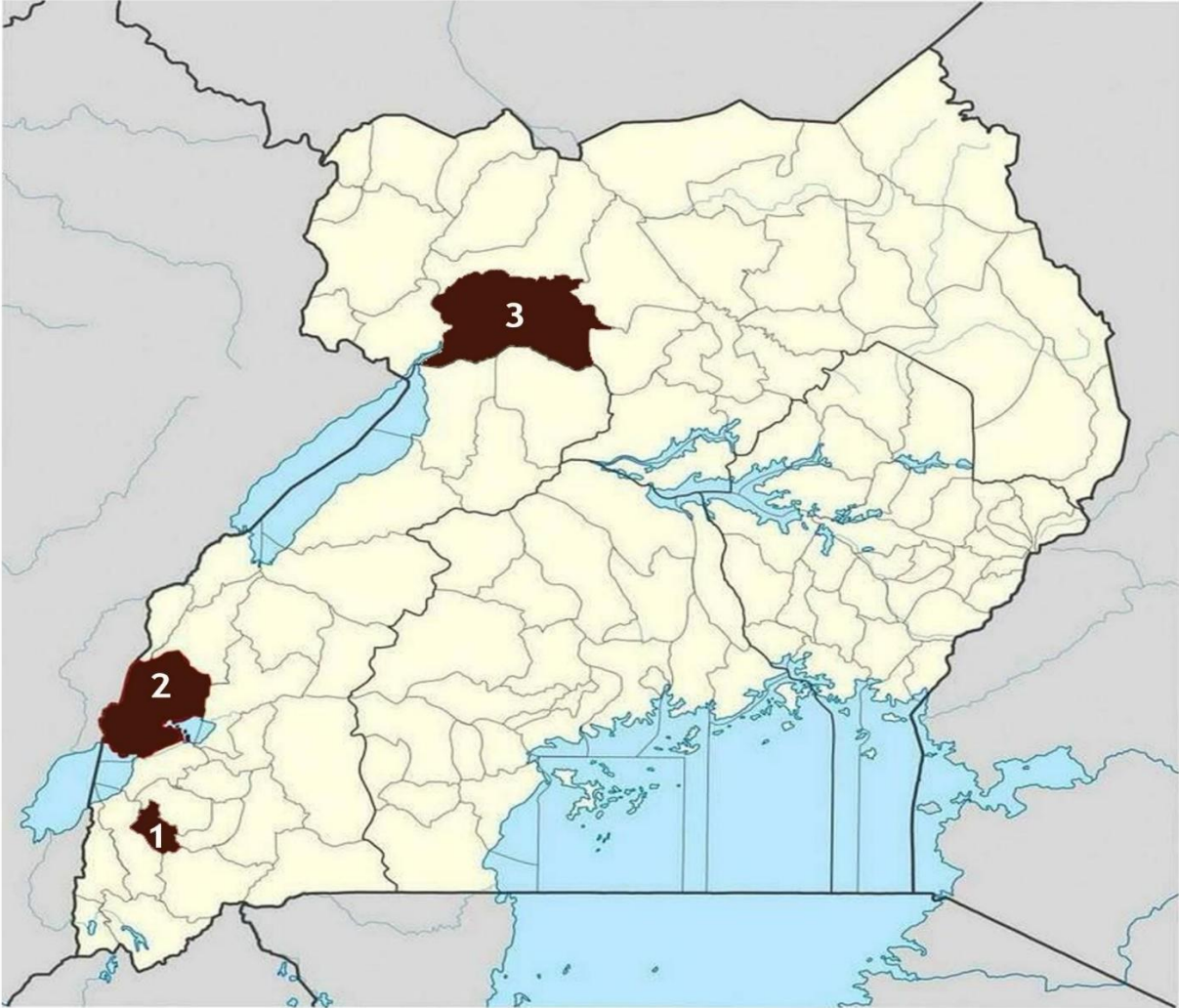
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## List of Acronyms

CBO	Community-Based Organization
GUSFAB	Gulu Sprinters Rugby Football Club
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
ToT	Trainer of Trainers
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education

**CEMELIA INITIATIVES AFRICA GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF OPERATION**



**KEY**



- 1. Mitooma District ( South Western Region)
- 2. Kasese District ( South Western Region)
- 3. Gulu District ( Northern Region)

# 1. Executive Summary

Cemelia Initiatives Africa is a registered, community-driven non-governmental organization based in Uganda, established in January 2024. With a mission to provide sustainable social services and build the capacity of vulnerable populations, the organization focuses on empowering women, youth, and children through targeted interventions in skills development, climate change mitigation, education, agriculture, health, and wellness. Operating in the districts of Mitooma, Kasese, and Gulu, Cemelia Initiatives Africa delivers grassroots programs that transform local challenges into opportunities reaching over 11,000 beneficiaries in its first year of operation.

Key achievements during the reporting period included innovation and skills enhancement for women and youth, particularly in improving the banana pseudo stem fibre with colour and using it to make biodegradable crafts; education support to improve literacy and numeracy; and the promotion of mental health awareness through sports-based activities.

In Mitooma District, a physical office has been maintained and improved with furniture and equipment to strengthen the organization's presence and enhance service delivery. More three (3) education scholarships were awarded to vulnerable primary school children, while seniors received essential health and wellness services. In addition, under the BanaCloth Project, women and youth were trained dyeing the pseudo stem fibre and using it to make colored crafts.

In Kasese District, the organization continued to partner with Mothercare Preparatory School to implement initiatives focused on climate change awareness, mitigation, and adaptation. In Gulu District, support was extended to target beneficiaries through mental health counselling sessions and addressing drug and substance abuse. These were conducted in partnership with the Gulu Sprinters Rugby Football Club, further advancing the organization's impact in youth wellness and behavioral change.

Despite notable accomplishments, several challenges were encountered. These included a limited market for eco-friendly products particularly those made from waste banana pseudo stems, insufficient funding to scale up economic empowerment and scholarship programs, and unreliable electricity supply, which disrupted fibre extraction and led to increased operational costs due to dependence on generators. In response, the organization-initiated efforts to identify local markets,

prepare funding proposals, and explore alternative energy solutions to sustain its activities.

Cemelia Initiatives Africa is guided by a participatory and inclusive approach that emphasizes local ownership, capacity building, and long-term sustainability. By equipping community groups with relevant skills and tools, and promoting the use of affordable, locally available materials, the organization ensures program continuity. All interventions are aligned with local government priorities and are integrated with public services to foster systemic change and enduring impact.

This report presents the progress made between 1st January and 30th June 2025, capturing key achievements, challenges, lessons learned, success stories, and the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that supported implementation and accountability.

## 2. Introduction

Founded in January 2024, Cemelia Initiatives Africa is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to transforming the lives of vulnerable populations: women, seniors, youth, and children through innovative, inclusive, and sustainable development initiatives. Cemelia Initiatives aims to achieve the following objectives: 1) Build the capacity of CBOs in project design, implementation, proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation and link them to funding opportunities. 2) Transform banana pseudo stems into quality, sustainable and biodegradable textiles and eco-friendly crafts; 3) Provide education assistance and improve literacy and numeracy in vulnerable communities; 4) Support climate change mitigation and adaptation in selected schools and communities; 5) Provide social, health and wellness services for seniors; 6) Support sports activities to aid healthy lifestyles and mental health for children and young people.

The year 2025 has been a year of innovation, growth, resilience and community engagement. Amidst social economic constraints, climate change challenges and increasing youth unemployment, our team remained steadfast in advancing our goal to provide sustainable social, education, agricultural and income generating initiatives through increasing the capacity of vulnerable people to meet their needs. We continue to deepened our reach across rural villages in Mitooma, Gulu and Kasese and established partnerships to create meaningful, sustainable and measurable change.

Key programs include “Project BanaCloth,” which empowers women and youth with skills to transform banana pseudo stems into eco-friendly products, and the “Golden Years Initiative,” aimed at enhancing the quality of life for vulnerable seniors. In addition, initiatives focused on climate change awareness, mitigation, and adaptation, alongside education support through scholarships, have made a tangible impact. These efforts have provided rural households with income-generating skills, promoted environmental sustainability, and enabled vulnerable children to access and remain in school.

This report outlines our key achievements, challenges and lessons learned as well as stories from the field. It also reflects our commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous learning as we work towards a more just and resilient future for our communities.

### 3. Implementation Progress

#### 3.1 Program Management



During the reporting period, the offices in Katenga Trading Centre were refurbished with more executive furniture; Chairs, Tables, Filing Cabinets and other office equipment like; a projector, Photocopier, Fridge and a Projector screen.



***Some furniture and equipment in the Katenga Office***

#### Partnerships and Collaboration

During the reporting period, strategic partnerships were strengthened with the Mitooma District Local Government, the Micro-Finance Support Centre and Centenary Rural Development Bank among other

organizations. As a result of the strong working relationship, the organization has maintained a visible and active presence at key district events. Senior management has represented the organization at major annual observances, including International Women’s Day, Youth Day, and Drop Everything and Read Day. Additionally, we have maintained and strengthened our partnerships with the following institutions, each contributing to one or more of the organization’s objectives:

Rwagashani Mixed Farm (Western Uganda): Partnering to increase household incomes among rural communities in Mitooma District through sustainable agricultural initiatives. Gulu Sprinters Rugby Football Club (Northern Uganda): A community-based club focusing on empowering young females by reducing school dropout rates, preventing teenage pregnancy, and improving mental health through sports engagement. IGNULAK Pour Femme (USA): A creative brand that uses natural materials to produce wearable art, interior décor, and functional design pieces contributing to the organization’s skills development and economic empowerment initiatives. Mothercare Preparatory School (Kasese District, Western Uganda): A strategic partnership designed to foster a lifelong love of reading among children while promoting environmental stewardship. This partnership aligns closely with the organization’s objectives related to climate change mitigation, foundational education, and literacy advancement.

## Communications, Visibility & Reporting

To enhance visibility and community engagement, branded materials such as pull-up banners, leaflets, and teardrop banners have been used on events such as National Women’s Day and are actively used during program implementation. An organizational website ([www.cemelia.org](http://www.cemelia.org)) was utilized serving as a key platform for visibility and engagement. Vibrant and informative updates are regularly posted, highlighting program activities, sharing experiences and providing stakeholders with timely information and resources.

### Excellence in Climate Action

Celebrating Excellence in Climate Action! Congratulations to Maate Adon from Mothercare Preparatory School for winning a gold medal in the Green Climate Kima Foods Debate on February 28, 2025!

[READ MORE ...](#)



*Cemelia website with an Article from Mothercare Preparatory School environment club pupils displaying climate smart messages*

Regarding reporting, technical and financial reports were timely submitted, in accordance with organizational requirements and donor guidelines. Broader program outcomes are communicated through various channels, including written publications, the organization's website, social media platforms (X and YouTube), ensuring visibility and accountability to all stakeholders.

### Program Design, Planning and Implementation

Detailed monthly activity work plans with clear timelines, responsibilities, and budgets were developed and reviewed and implemented.

Cemelia Initiatives Africa implemented its activities through a collaborative approach involving both organizational staff and community volunteers who are based within the target communities. To strengthen its reach and impact, the organization maintained its partners with CBOs, schools, health centers, and relevant government departments, leveraging local expertise, networks, and resources. Target groups including vulnerable youth, women, and girls are not only beneficiaries but also active participants in program activities, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring the relevance of interventions. During the period, the organization staff developed and submitted funding proposals to donor agencies and organizations; "Turning waste into wealth"; Nyamuhiizi Eco Rescue: Restoring nature, empowering communities; Rise together: Empowering women and girls for health, skills and equality and Transforming house holds for climate resilience and food security submitted to Centenary

Bank.

## Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

The developed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is actively implemented to track the progress of activities and achievement of program objectives, while enabling timely corrective actions when necessary.

Regular monitoring was conducted for each program component using structured interviews and observation checklists. These tools are aligned with key performance indicators and are used consistently to track progress, identify bottlenecks, and ensure accountability. Monthly review meetings and reflective learning sessions were held with program staff. These sessions provide a platform to discuss emerging challenges, share lessons learned, and revise strategies as needed to enhance overall program performance. Over the period, “Library in a Box” was monitored amongst our partner schools. Findings indicate that the “Library in a Box” package has helped in improving the reading culture as well as PLE performance in the partner schools. Observations, findings and lessons learnt will aid future planning and implementation.

## Progress Towards Objectives

### 1.1.1 Capacity Building for CBOs

Objective 1: Build the capacity of CBOs in project design, implementation, proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation and link them to funding opportunities.

During the reporting period, Cemelia Initiatives Africa provided both financial and technical support to Siime Foundation Africa – Mitooma Chapter, an affiliated community-based organization (CBO). This support facilitated the implementation of several initiatives, including the provision of education services to seven (7) Scholarship beneficiaries at Rwagashani Primary School, 1 beneficiary at Ruhinda Secondary School and 1 at St. Kaana International School respectively. “Library in a Box” was also rotated among our three partner Primary Schools; Rwagashani, Mboneko and Nyakahita. The CBO is still accessing and using the shared office space at Cemelia Initiatives’ headquarters in Mitooma District.

**Objective 2: Transform banana pseudo stems into quality, sustainable and biodegradable textiles and eco-friendly crafts.**

**Result 1: Sustainable and biodegradable crafts made from quality yarn from banana pseudo stems for income generation**

This objective was implemented under the BanaCloth Project whose goal is to skill women and youths to transform banana pseudo stem into quality, and biodegradable crafts for both the local and international markets.



*Weavers being trained on how to dye fibre*

During the reporting period, twenty-eight participants; women, and youths were mobilized and introduced to fibre dyeing, and trained on use of colors in carpet weaving and mat making. This training was facilitated by a UK- based Art and Design expert. After training, trainees learnt the skill of fibre dyeing and started making colored products.

### Key Activities and Outputs/Outcomes

Activity	Key Outputs	Key Outcomes
Train women and youths in color mixing and fibre dyeing.	-15 women and youths gained skills in in color mixing and fibre dyeing.	- Colored crafts made using dyed fibre
Women’s Day Celebrations	-5 members represented the organization at the District Women’s Day celebrations	-Publicity of the Organization increased



*Show casing Bana-craft products during the District Women’s Day Celebrations*

### 1.1.1 Education support

**Objective 3: Provide education assistance and improve literacy and numeracy in vulnerable communities.**

**Result 3.1: Increased access to primary/ secondary education to selected vulnerable children.**

Cemelia Initiatives Africa implements a merit-based scholarship for vulnerable academic gifted students. The scholarships cover tuition, PTA and/or scholastic materials. In collaboration with Siime Foundation Africa, the organization provided scholarships to 7 pupils in Rwagashani primary school. In addition, 2 other scholarships were provided to former scholarship awardees at Rwagashani Primary School; a boy and a girl who performed well and progressed to the next level of their education. They are now at Ruhinda Secondary School and St. Kaana International School respectively.



*Some of the scholarship awardees displaying their school bags.*

**Result 3.2. Increased literacy and lifelong learning among children and young people**

In collaboration with Siime Foundation Africa, the organization supported implementation of the “library in a box initiative.” A library in a box kit comprises a collection of 80-100 books and examination revision papers. The library in a box kit was rotated to give opportunity to children to read a variety of books as each box kit carries different titles. Over 842 children in three partner schools were reached with this initiative. New schools have expressed interest in joining the program; however, additional funding is required for the organization to expand coverage and meet the growing demand.



***Primary school children displaying books borrowed from the library in a box***



***Some of the children participating in the sit and read program***

Cemelia Initiatives Africa implemented the “Sit and Read” library initiative aiming at improving literacy skills through providing an environment for reading every Sunday afternoon. This program targeted children in Katenga township and the surrounding villages. During the reporting period, the numbers reached decreased to an average of 20 pupils per Sunday.

## Key Activities and Outputs/Outcomes

Activity	Key Outputs	Key Outcomes
Provide education scholarships to selected merit but vulnerable primary and secondary school students.	Scholarships were provided to 7 students in Rwagashani primary school and 2 in secondary schools.	Increased access to primary and secondary education.
Provide partner primary schools in Mitooma district with reading materials/story books and PLE revision papers using the “Library in a Box” approach.	3 Primary schools (Mboneko, Nyakahita and Rwagashani) accessed story books reaching 942 pupils.	Improved reading skills and school engagement to promote reading.
Provide “sit and read” library services to children in Katenga trading centre.	Library services provided to over 180 primary school pupils in Katenga township.	Improved reading skills.

## 1.1 Climate Action and Environment

**Objective 4: Support climate change mitigation and adaptation in selected schools and communities.**

**Result 4.1 Promoting environmental wellness and empowering schools and communities to advocate for sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.**

Cemelia Initiatives Africa supported children from Mothercare Preparatory School in Kasese district to sensitize the community using powerful environmental justice messages through participation in drama, speeches and debating competitions. Through such activities, the organization aims to inspire collective action for a healthier, greener future.



***Mothercare environmental club pupils delivering environmental justice messages through drama and debates***

**Key Activities and Outputs/Outcomes**

Activity	Key Outputs	Key Outcomes
Supported Mothercare Preparatory school to participate in climate awareness competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provided support to the Environment club to conduct awareness raising sessions on climate change through debates and entertainment.</li> <li>- Supported participation in district environment competitions including drama, debates and speeches.</li> </ul>	Increased climate literacy in communities and schools.

### 3.4. Health and Wellness

#### **Objective 5: Provide social, health and wellness services for seniors**

#### **Result 5.1: Improved cardiovascular health, reduced mental health issues, enhanced social skills, and increased self-esteem.**

To enhance hygiene and wellness of seniors, wellness kits were distributed to 30 program seniors each at the beginning of third quarter. The quarterly seniors' wellness kit consists of a bar of washing soap, a tablet of bathing soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, handkerchief, sugar/honey, salt, Vaseline, tea leaves, a pair of sandals, insecticide treated mosquito net and a 5-liter jerrycan where to keep drinking water. Seniors appreciated the wellness kit given to them and requested if provision of a comb and washing sponge could be considered in the future.



*Seniors receiving a quarterly health and wellness kit*

### Key Activities and Outputs/Outcomes

Activity	Key Outputs	Key Outcomes
Deliver home-based health, hygiene, and nutritional support to seniors.	-30 seniors supported with health and wellness kits.	- Improved nutrition and hygiene amongst targeted seniors.
Conduct home visits to reduce loneliness.	- One visit conducted by community volunteers under the program.	-Reduced loneliness and isolation among vulnerable seniors

## 3.5 Mental Health through Sports

**Objective 6: Support sports activities to aid healthy lifestyles and mental health for children and young people.**

**Result C: Reduced mental health issues, enhanced social skills, and increased self-esteem.**

In partnership with Gulu Sprinters Rugby Football Club, Cemelia Initiatives Africa continued supporting rugby sports activities as a tool for psychosocial support to address mental health issues encouraging girls to remain in school. The partnership enabled training secondary school girls in rugby while providing counselling sessions on mental health and the impact of drug and substance abuse to a team of 28 players.

### Key Activities and Outputs/Outcomes

Activity	Key Outputs	Key Outcomes
Promote mental health through rugby and football.	1 rugby events conducted. 2 counselling sessions held on mental health related issues. 1 mental health session was conducted, providing a platform for experience sharing and	Increased mental health awareness, reduced stigma, and enhanced emotional wellbeing among participants through peer support and shared experiences.

## Lessons Learned

Building trust and ensuring active participation of community members from the outset leads to higher acceptance and success rates. For example, involving local leaders in mobilizing support for community programs has proven effective.

Partnering with organizations, agencies and engagement of volunteers with specific competencies to support achieving objectives has expanded the organization's capacity and reach, demonstrating the power of strategic alliances.

The health and wellness package provided to seniors greatly improved their hygiene and sanitation status leading to healthier living condition. This suggests a strong community need and consideration for planning scaling up to benefit more seniors. Among others, this can be achieved through strategic partnerships with other organizations and securing additional funding.

## Implementation Challenges

- **Limited Market for Eco-Friendly Products:** The market for products made from banana pseudo stems, such as door mats, carpets and table mats, remains underdeveloped, limiting the potential for sustainable income generation.
- **Inadequate Funding:** There is a lack of sufficient funds to expand the coverage of economic empowerment initiatives, scaling up the scholarship program to support more vulnerable children, reading materials such as story books and extending more support to CBOs.
- **Unreliable Electricity Supply:** Frequent power outages have disrupted program activities. For instance, during banana pseudo stem fibre extraction, inconsistent electricity supply necessitated the costly use of a generator, hindering smooth operations.
- **Over the implementation period, the organization lost three beneficiary seniors; all females. These will be replaced in the first month of the next quarter.**