



WILMAT DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Willingness Matters



MAISHA MZURI PROGRAM
Travel. Train. Transform

WILMAT SKILLING FACILITY

SKILLING FOR GENERATIONS IMPACT REPORT 2025



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P.O.BOX 139134, Kampala (U)

This comprehensive impact report documents Wimat Development Foundation's (WDF) vocational skilling and business development support delivered across three geographically and contextually distinct regions of Uganda from 2023 to 2025. Together, these regional initiatives reach 2,893 of Uganda's most vulnerable youth school dropouts, young mothers, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, out-of-school adolescents in urban slums and post-conflict populations in refugee-hosting areas.

What sets this portfolio apart is not its scale alone, but its intentionality: WDF has designed regionally-appropriate models that respond to specific vulnerabilities and opportunities in each setting. In Busoga (Eastern Uganda), vocational skilling is co-located with existing VSLA savings groups, giving graduates immediate access to start-up capital rooted in community trust. In Kampala's informal settlements (Central Uganda), the Girl2Girl initiative and broader slum skilling work addressing the compounding vulnerabilities documented by WDF's baseline studies: extreme poverty, gang violence, commercial sex work risk and informality without pathways. In Kasese (Western Uganda), the Rwenzori for Peacebuilding programme integrates vocational training as a conflict transformation and livelihood reconstruction tool for refugee and post-conflict youth.



"Embarking on a Journey Through Hands on Retooling of Young Women, Celebrating Each Success Story Along the Way"

Ms. Sharon Kabagenyi
Program Lead
Wimat Skilling Facility

This is not a summary report. Each regional section provides detailed evidence: the specific trades offered, the beneficiary profiles reached, the barriers addressed, the outcomes tracked and the partnerships leveraged. All figures are traced to WDF's published reports, government census data, partner research and direct beneficiary tracking systems.

ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

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OUR HISTORY

Wilmat Development Foundation is a Youth-Powered Local NGO in Uganda that was founded on the notion of preventing and responding to the vulnerabilities faced by Women and Youth in the communities of Uganda.

Since 2017, WDF has impacted over 15,200 Beneficiaries in various communities of Uganda with the need to enrich more lives through improved Livelihoods, Socio-Entrepreneurship, Civic education and Advocacy efforts in driving Community-Led Transformative Development.

The **Wilmat Skilling Facility** is WDF's dedicated vocational and enterprise-development arm, combining Maisha Mzuri vocational skilling with Business Development Support (BDS) for sustainable community-led development.

Our Vision

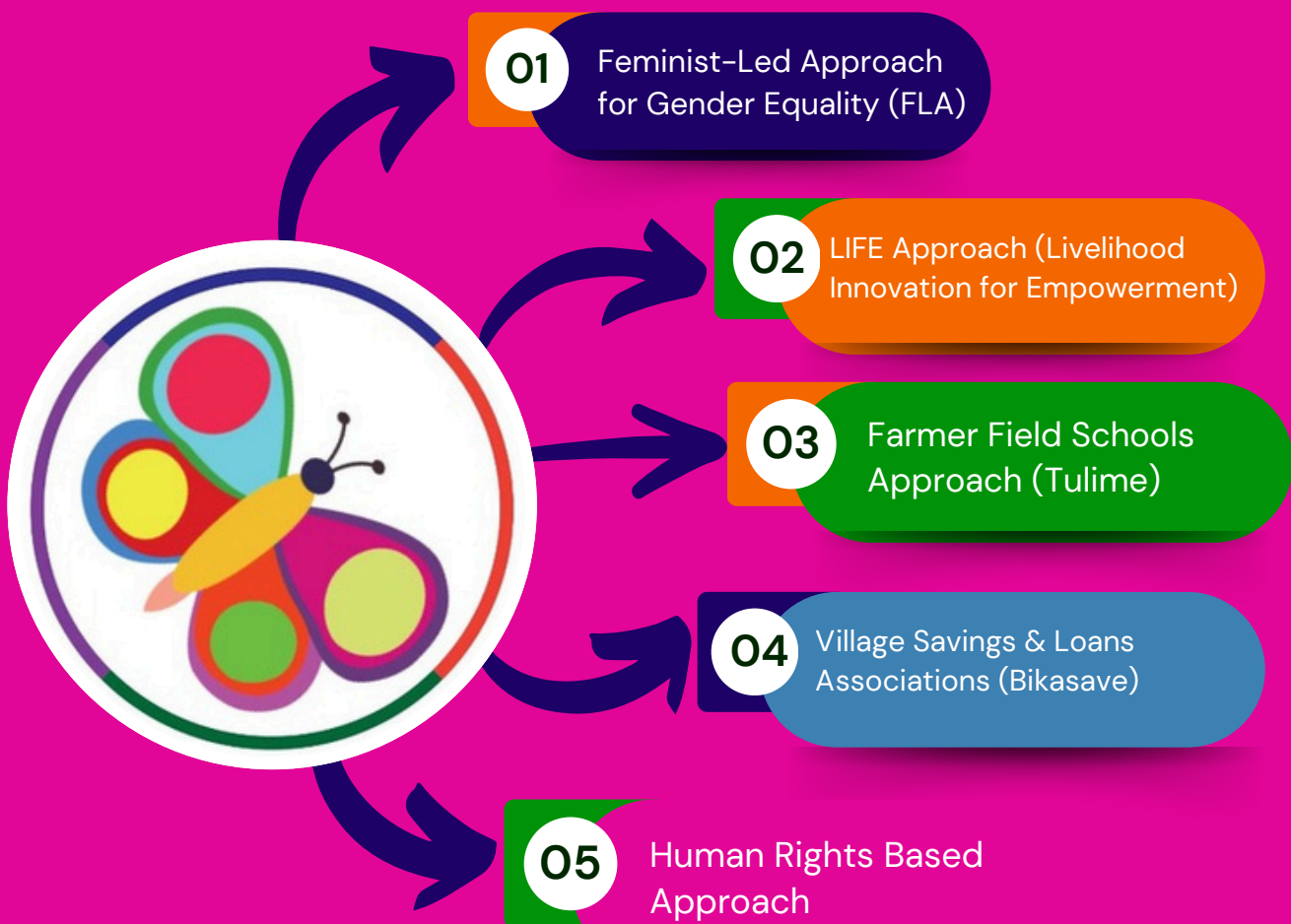
Building a Community where Women and Youth realize their Full Social, Economic and Civic Potential.

Our Mission

Fostering Community Cooperation and Independence of Underserved Women and Youth to enable them Initiate and manage Community-driven Socio-Economic and Development Processes.



OUR APPROACH





OUR TARGET YOUTH



Women

{ *Differently Abled Women, Mothers, Widows, Women* }



Young Mothers

{ *Teenage Mothers and Single Women* }



Youth

{ *Adolescent Young Girls and Boys* }



Men

{ *Men, Differently Abled Men, Widowers* }

OUR FOUR-STAGE PATHWAY

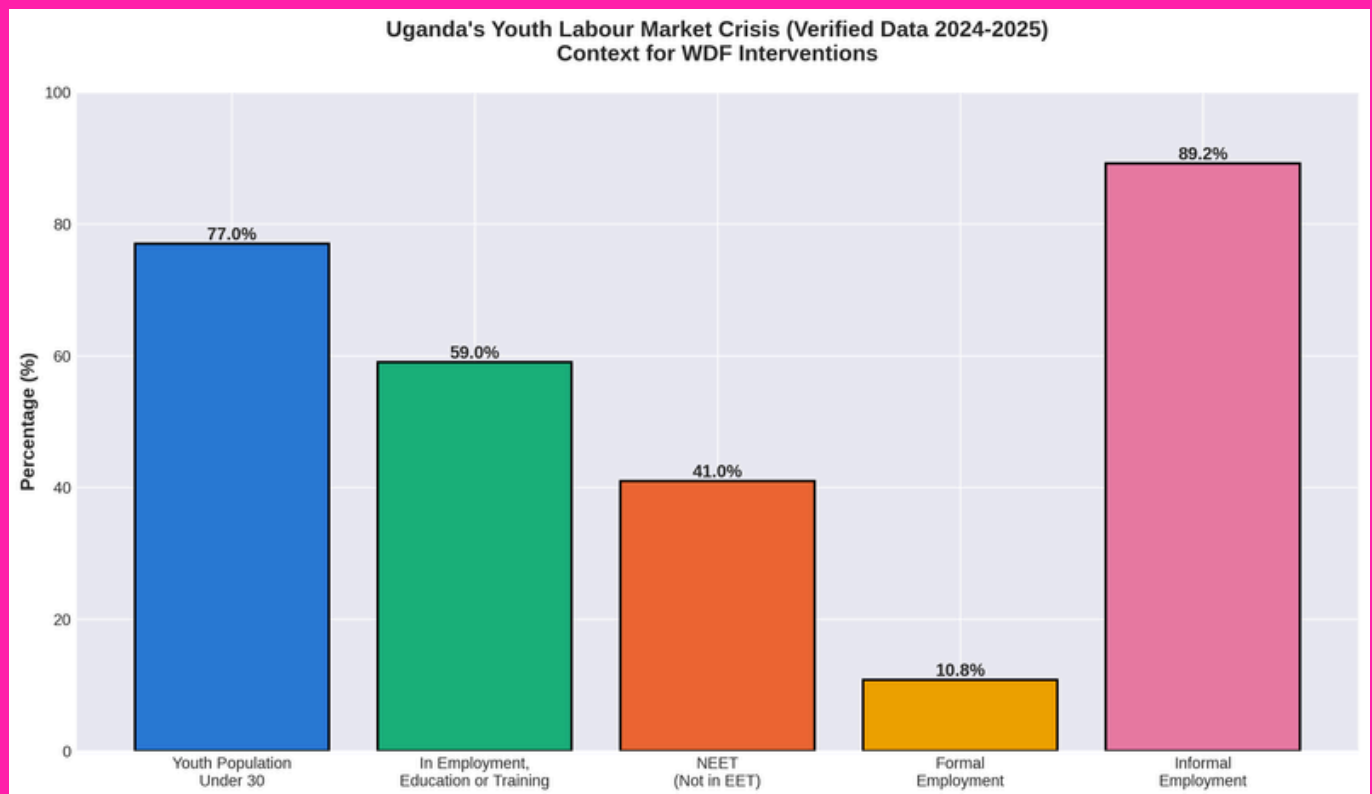
Stage	What Happens
Mobilize, Admit & Cluster	Community dialogues identify eligible learners prioritising young mothers, school dropouts and SGBV survivors.
Train, Mentor & Coach	Hands-on apprenticeship-style training at community-based centres.
Business Ideation & Formation	Learners cost their trade, identify a market and join VSLA/Bikasave savings groups for start-up capital.
Graduation, Certification & Follow-Up	Assessment against DIT occupational standards; WDF tracks business survival post-certification.

Why This Work Matters: Uganda's Youth Employment Crisis

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Uganda faces an acute youth employment crisis driven by rapid population growth, a fundamental skills-jobs mismatch and near-total informality of the labour market. Understanding this crisis is essential to appreciating why WDF's integrated skilling model is so critical.

Uganda is one of the youngest nations on earth. Over 77% of its 45.9 million people are under 30 with a median age of 16.7 years. Yet the economy cannot absorb this youth bulge: while approximately 700,000 young individuals enter the workforce annually, only about 75,000 jobs are created each year a shortfall of 625,000 per year.



Youth unemployment stood at 16.1% in 2024, while 41% of Ugandans aged 18–30 are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). This NEET rate is skewed heavily toward young women at 52.2%. Uganda's 2025 Labour Market Survey found that 89.2% of all employment nationally is informal meaning most jobs lack security, benefits or clear advancement paths. The Economic Policy Research Centre identifies the core issue: not a lack of ambition, but a fundamental skills mismatch between what labour markets demand and what education systems supply.

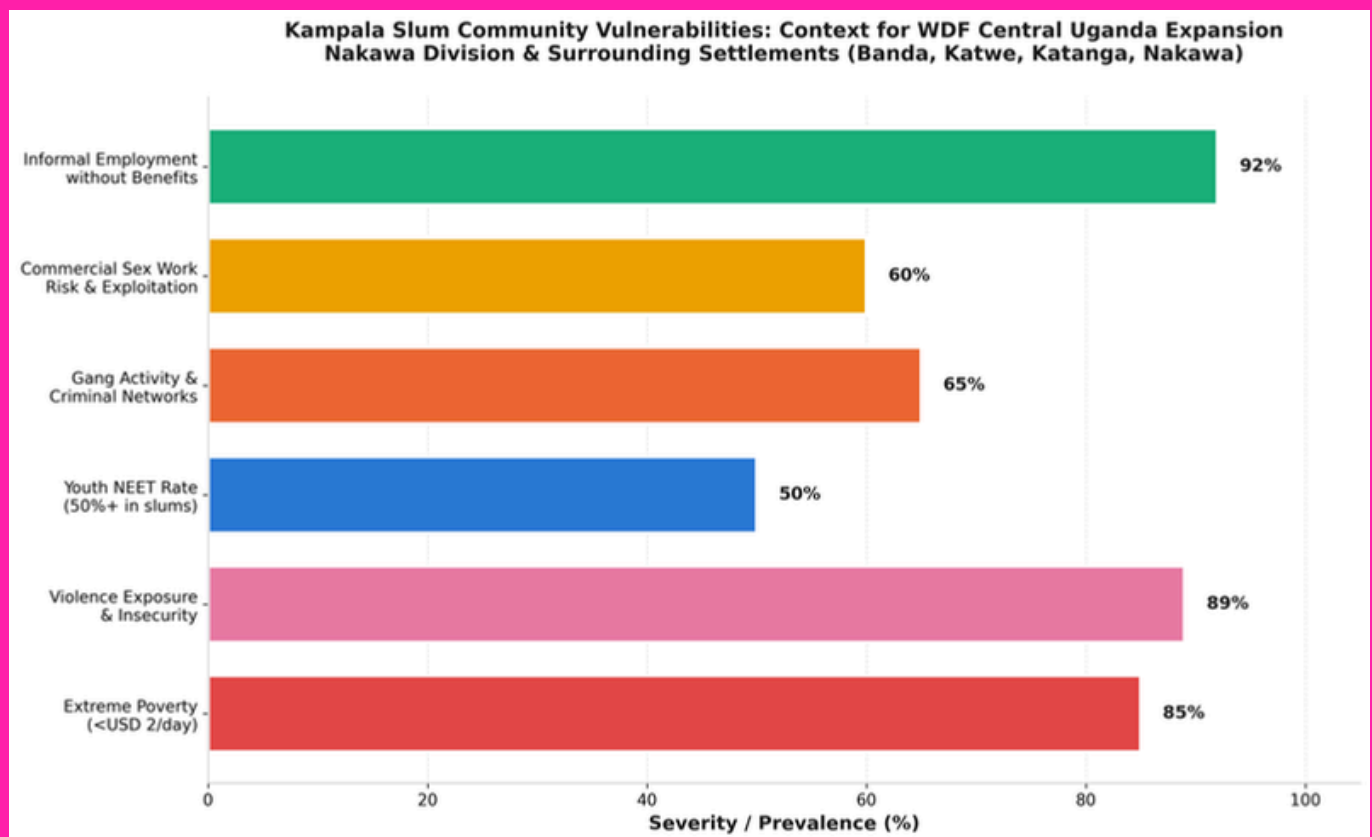
Urban Slum Context: Kampala's Hidden Youth Crisis

06

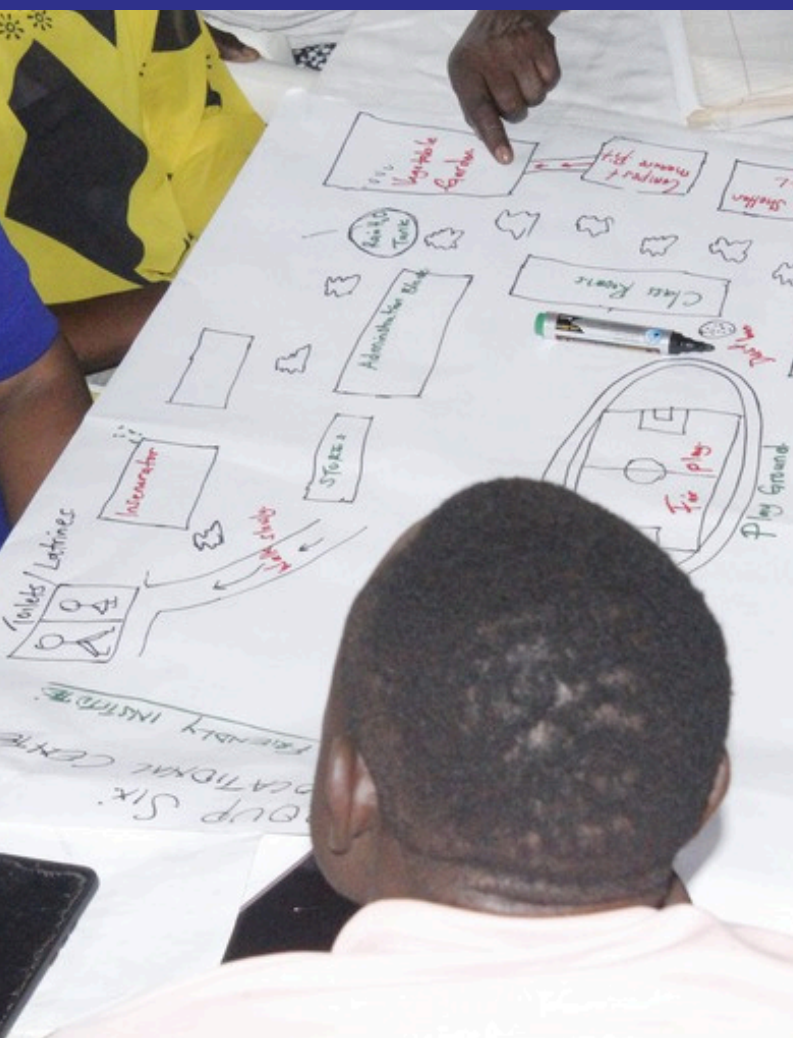


While WDF's work spans rural and peri-urban Uganda, the challenge is most acute in urban slum communities where NEET rates exceed 50% and vulnerability multiplies.

WDF's work in Kampala slums (Kyebando, Banda, Mbuya-Acholi Quarters, Katanga, Kasokoso, Naguru Go-down and other slums) reveals the specific barriers young people face in informal settlements barriers that WDF's Central Uganda programming directly addresses.



Families in Kampala slums survive on less than USD 2 per day. Young people lack safe, market-relevant employment paths: without vocational skills, young women resort to commercial sex work; without mentorship and capital, young men drift toward gang activity. A survey by WDF 2020 found that 89% of adolescents in slums heard of or experienced violence during the COVID-19 lockdown a stark reminder that crises disproportionately harm the poorest. WDF's Central Uganda base (Kyebando) was established precisely to reach these communities with practical skills training, BDS and VSLA linkages that offer a pathway out of poverty.



Vocational training is Uganda's most direct policy answer to youth unemployment. The BTJET Act of 2008 established the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) to set occupational standards and award nationally recognised qualifications. Because public BTJET institutions cannot absorb Uganda's growing number of school leavers, private and NGO-run training providers operating under the Uganda Association of Private Vocational Institutions (UGAPRIVI) now deliver the majority of the country's vocational skills training.

WDF's direct engagement with UGAPRIVI Academy and Hands of Hope Skilling Initiative positions graduates to access formal labour market recognition.

On the enterprise side, Uganda's Business Development Services (BDS) market is documented by PSFU and Mastercard Foundation as fragmented and concentrated in Kampala's CBD, leaving rural and slum-based youth enterprises with little structured support. WDF addresses this gap by delivering BDS at community level, integrated with vocational training and VSLA financial services.



Young women in Kampala slums face intense pressure toward commercial sex work (transactional sex, survival sex, sex work). Poverty, family breakdown and lack of job alternatives create a pathway that many youth see as inevitable. Young people work as street vendors, domestic workers, informal manufacturing labourers or agricultural casual workers all without contracts, with volatile wages and zero social security. There is no unemployment benefit, no pension, no health insurance. A single illness or market downturn pushes families below the poverty line.

OUR REGIONAL SKILLING IMPACT

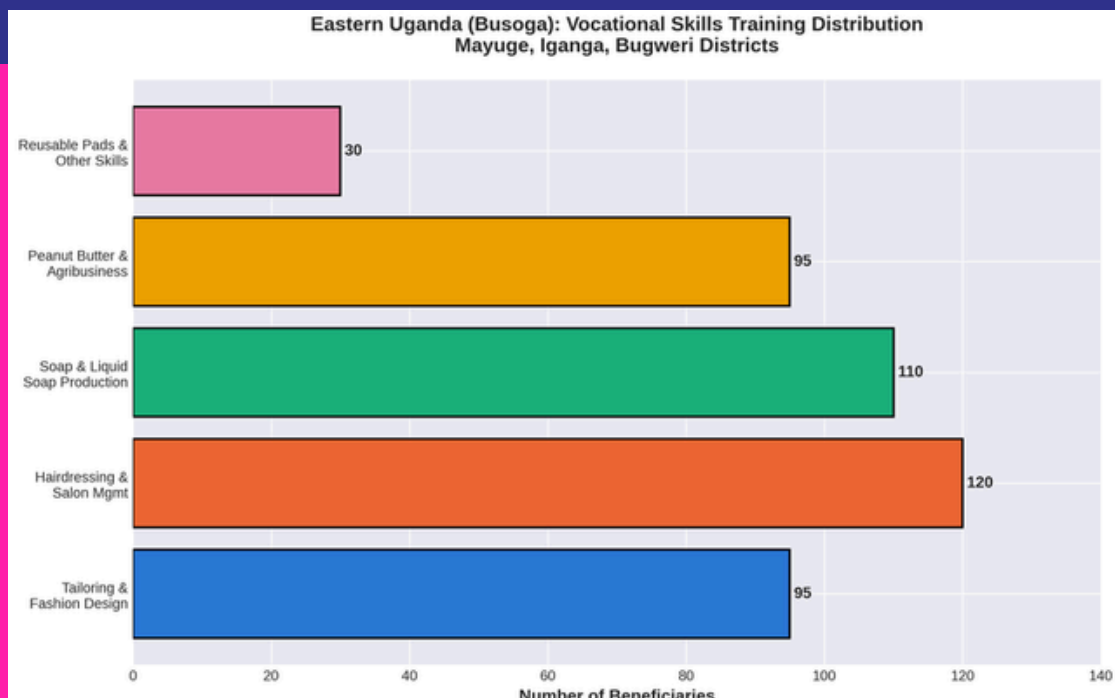
**SAY NO TO
CHILD
MARRIAGE**



Eastern Uganda (Busoga Region)

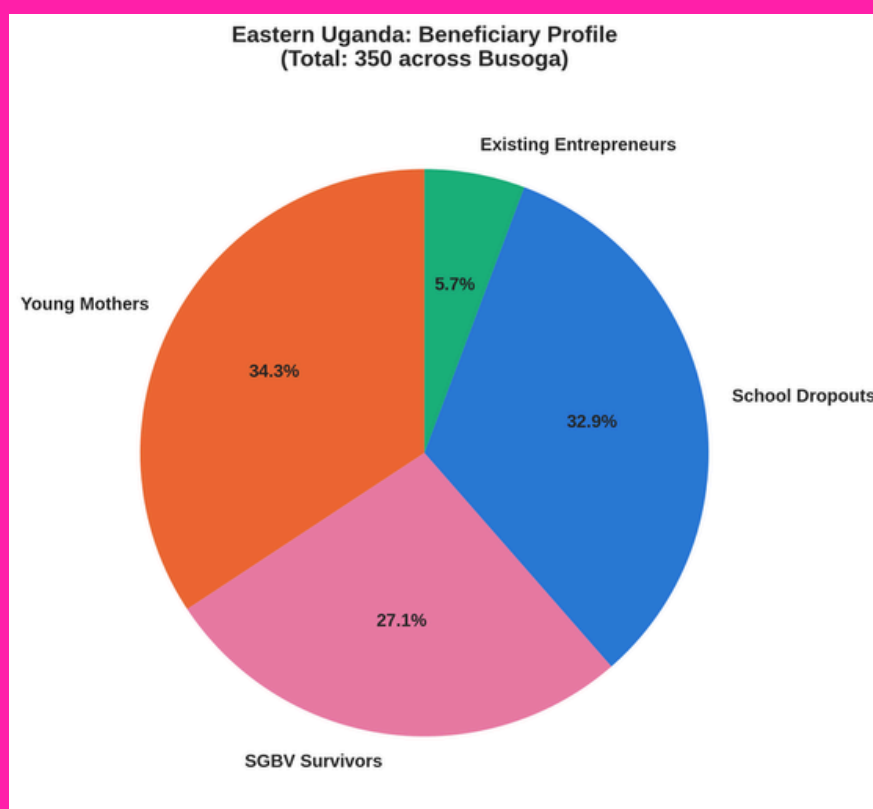
Busoga is affected by high teenage pregnancy rates, child marriages, school dropouts and poverty. WDF's documented history in this region dates to 2018, beginning with demonstration gardens and VSLA formation, advancing to the Girl2Girl Initiative (reusable pads & entrepreneurship) and now Maisha Mzuri vocational skilling.

- Vocational skilling co-located with VSLA/Bikasave savings groups and Farmer Field Schools giving graduates access to start-up capital.
- Priority access for young mothers and SGBV survivors through WDF's child protection programming.
- Market linkages into WDF's socio-enterprise value chains (e.g: BAYOT Organics Innovation plant based peanut butter production).



Trade/Programme	Beneficiaries	Target Profile	Market Linkage
Tailoring and Fashion Design	95	Teenage mothers, adolescent girls, OVCs.	Local retail, wedding services, school uniforms.
Hairdressing and Salon Management	120	Out-of-school girls, young mothers.	Community salons, wedding services, school contracts.
Soap Production and Liquid Soap	110	Mixed youth, women entrepreneurs.	Household use, local retail, institutional procurement.
Peanut Butter and Agribusiness	95	Women, vulnerable OVCs, farmers.	BAYOT Organics value chain, local markets, export potential.
Reusable Pads and Other Skills	30	Specialized cohorts, apprentices.	School distribution, community health worker networks.
TOTAL	450		

Beneficiary Demographics & Vulnerability Profile (Busoga)

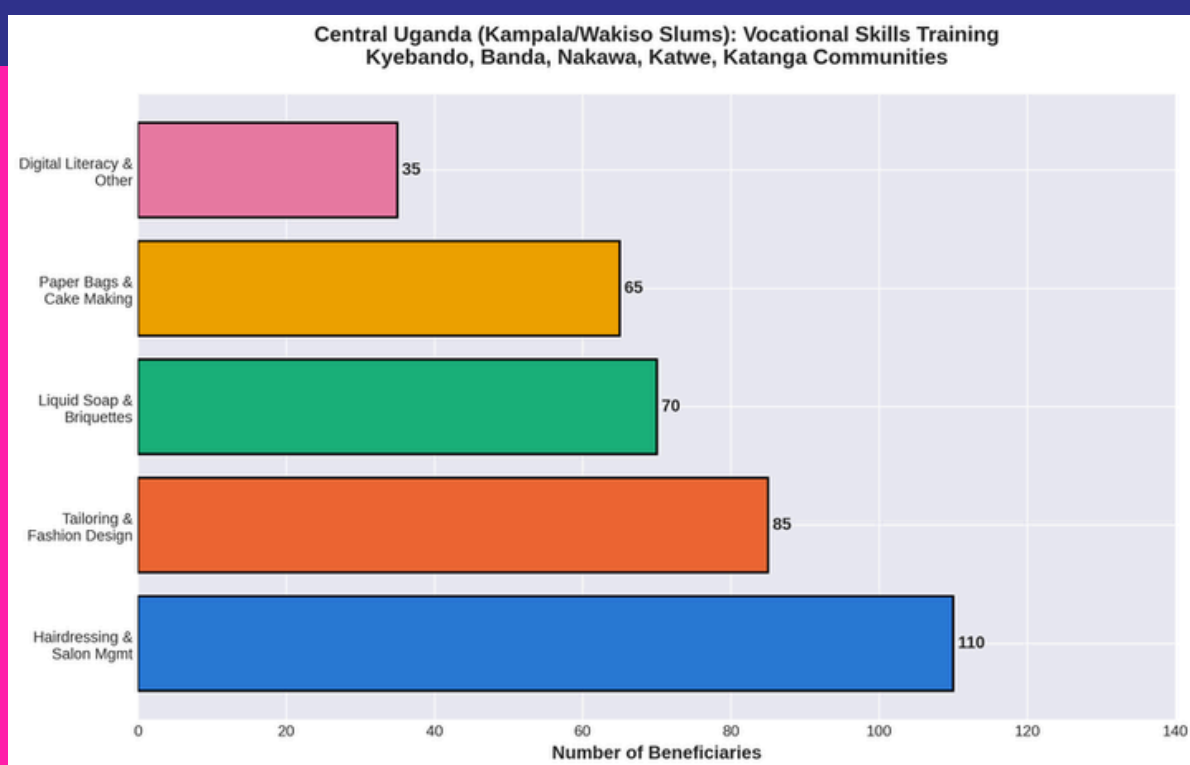




CENTRAL UGANDA (SLUM AREAS)

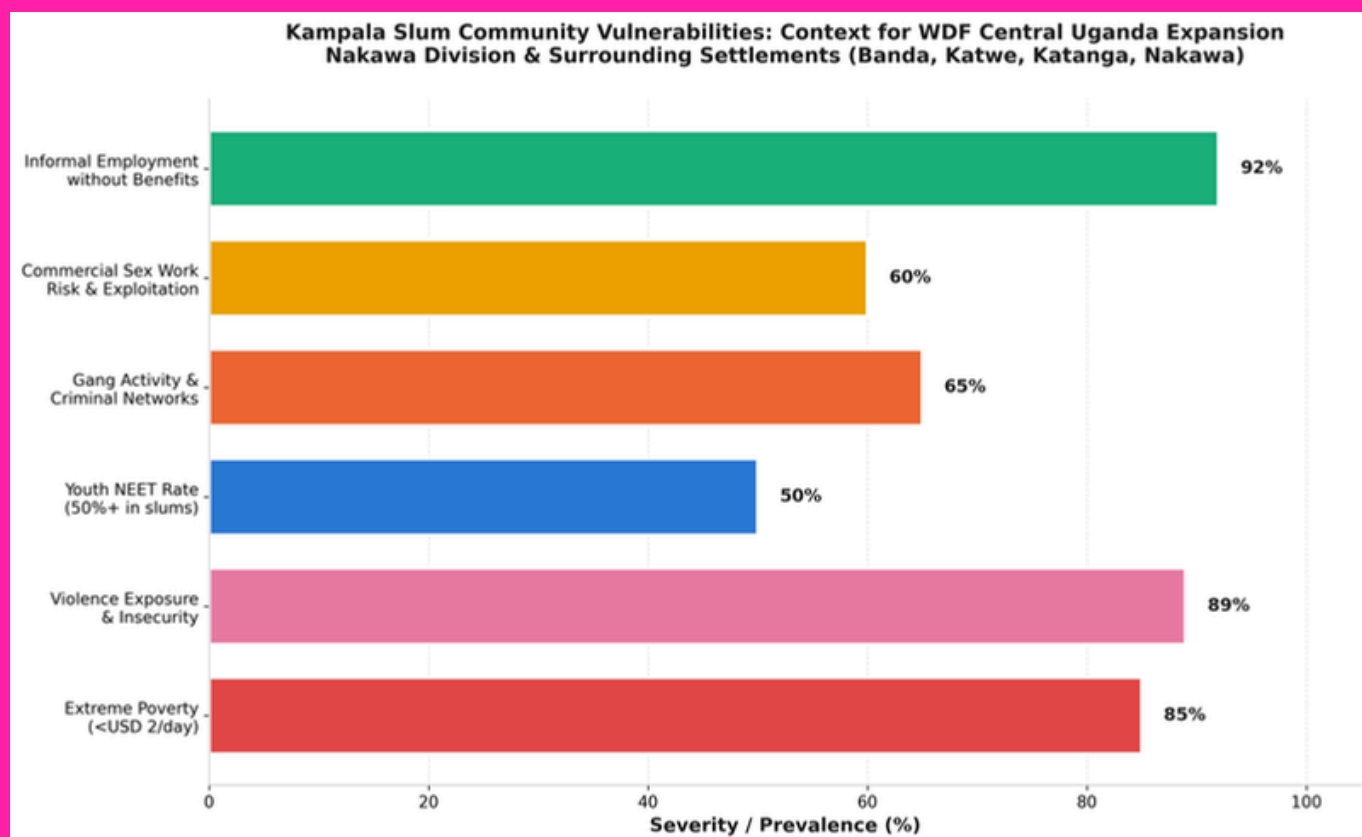
WDF's Central Uganda base in Kyebando anchors skilling delivery into Kampala and Wakiso's informal settlements. This is built on our two prior interventions: the 2019 Vocational Skills Baseline Survey (400 respondents) and 2019 University Outreach (450 students, financial literacy). The RISE IMPACT project validates WDF's assessment as Kampala slums face acute vulnerabilities (85% poverty, 50%+ NEET, 89% violence exposure) that demand intensive skilling + BDS + mentorship support.

- Training targeted urban slum youth, including young mothers and out-of-school adolescents who face the highest NEET rates nationally.
- Trades selected for low space and capital requirements: hairdressing, tailoring, soap-making, briquettes, digital literacy.
- BDS focused on business modeling, management, resource mobilization, record-keeping and mobile-money literacy.



Trade/Programme	Beneficiaries	Target Profile	Capital Requirements
Hairdressing & Salon Management	110	Out-of-school girls, young mothers, slum youth.	LOW: Basic tools (scissors, combs, clippers) 20,000-50,000 UGX start-up.
Tailoring & Fashion Design	85	Teenage mothers, adolescent girls, apprentices.	LOW-MEDIUM: Sewing machine rental or used machine 100,000-200,000 UGX.
Liquid Soap & Briquettes	70	Green economy entry, youth with cash constraints.	LOW: Raw materials 30,000-50,000 UGX; briquettes compost-based.
Paper Bags & Cake Making	65	Informal sector craft trades, youth entrepreneurs.	LOW-MEDIUM: Paper sources, basic tools 40,000-80,000 UGX.
Digital Literacy & Mobile Money	35	Financial services access, banking the unbanked.	VIRTUAL: Phone-based training; USSD banking integration.
TOTAL	365		

Beneficiary & Vulnerability Profile (Central)

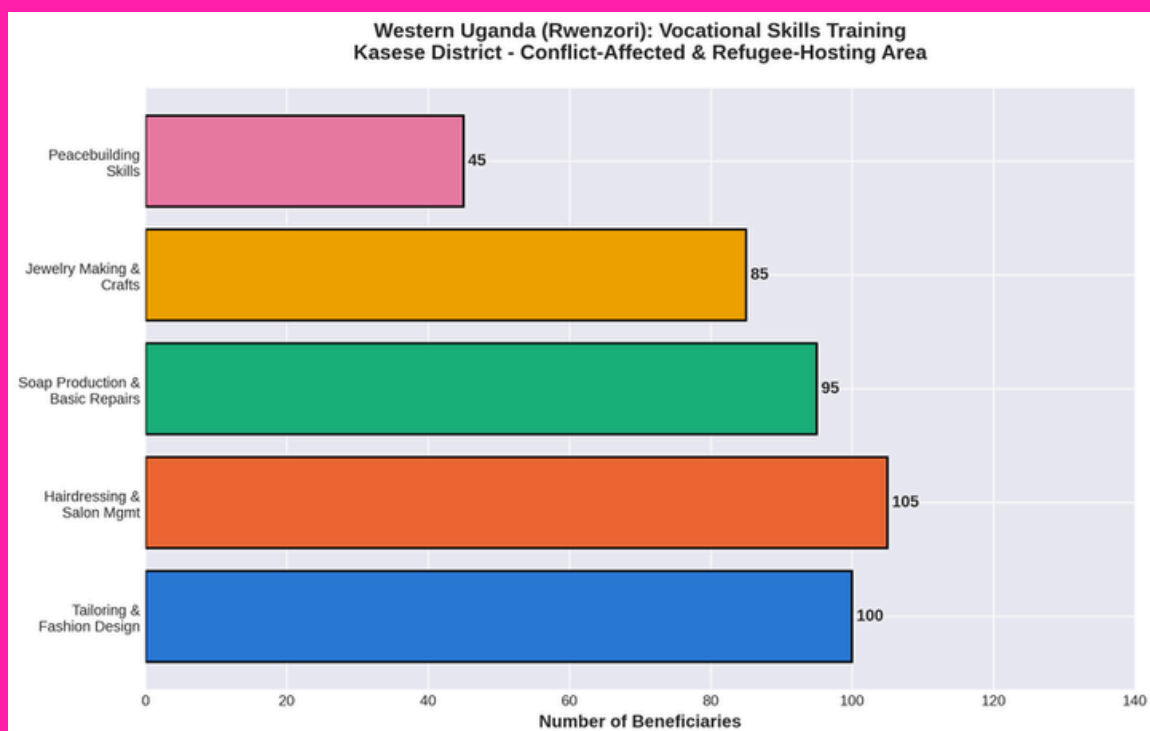




WESTERN UGANDA (RWENZORI)

Rwenzori sub-region is one of Uganda's most conflict-affected regions in Uganda that has experienced localized ADF insurgency and tribal clashes. Kasese's population is approximately 250,000, with youth (under 30) comprising 50% of the population. Youth unemployment in conflict-affected areas is typically 5-7 percentage points higher than national averages due to disrupted education, psychosocial trauma and limited employer confidence. WDF's Rwenzori for Peacebuilding programme integrates vocational training within this conflict transformation framework.

- Early entry point (Community dialogues and peace building sessions) that built community trust in conflict-affected setting.
- Community based hands on trainings indicated high adoption and scale-up by participants ranging from; shoe making, poultry farming, vegetable growing, soap-making, briquettes, weaving.
- BDS focused on business modeling, management, resource mobilization, record-keeping and mobile-money literacy.



Trade/Programme	Beneficiaries	Target Profile	Strategic Relevance
Peacebuilding Life Skills	45	All cohorts; cross-community dialogue	Conflict resolution, communication, collaborative problem-solving; integrated into all trades.
Hairdressing & Salon Management	105	GBV survivors, refugee youth, young mothers	Universal trade; high demand in Kasese Town; enables self-employment.
Tailoring & Fashion Design	100	Post-conflict recovery youth, OVCs	Valued across host & refugee communities; medium capital requirement.
Soap & Basic Repairs	95	Livelihood reconstruction; youth with disabilities	Green economy entry; repairs address household & business equipment needs.
Jewelry Making & Crafts	85	Value-added production; export market entry	Cultural skills (beadwork, traditional crafts); tourist market potential; group-based.
TOTAL	430		

Certification Pathway & Quality Assurance

A skill without national recognition is difficult to sell in Uganda's labour market. To ensure Maisha Mzuri graduates have proof of competence, WDF follows the following pathways: -

Certification Step	Description
Training	Learner completes Maisha Mzuri curriculum for chosen trade (3 months long-term or 1 month short-term)
Assessment	Assessors conduct competence-based assessment against DIT occupational standards
Certification	Successful candidates awarded UVQF-recognised certificate, valid nationally and regionally
Follow-Up	WDF tracks graduates post-certification for business start-up and income change (12-month tracking underway)





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CHALLENGES, LESSONS & ROAD AHEAD



CHALLENGES AT HAND:

- 
Ever-Changing Government Policies & Regulatory Shifts:

The merger of DIT with UBTEB to create UVTAB affected quality assurance continuity. This regulatory shift created temporary uncertainty about certification recognition and assessment procedures. WDF quickly adapted but notes that policy instability hinders long-term planning.
- 
High Cost of Training Equipment & Supplies:

Equipment and supplies in markets are expensive, affecting delivery quality. Market prices are high and bulk discounts are minimal.
- 
Limited Resource Envelopes & Growing Demand Outstripping Capacity:

Growing demand outstrips training centre and instructor capacity, especially for young mothers and out-of-school girls. Trainee-to-instructor ratios are 15-20:1, which is appropriate for apprenticeship-based training but limits scale.
- 
Post-Training Follow-Up Funding Gaps:

WDF uses limited discretionary funding to conduct 6 month post-training tracking (monitoring business survival, income outcomes). However, this tracking has capacity constraints that requires additional funding. Recommendation: dedicated funding for rigorous impact tracking.



LESSONS LEARNT & GOING FORWARD:

- ✓ Expand instructor and training-centre capacity in all clusters to meet documented demand.
- ✓ Strengthen engagement with government, development partners and donors to mobilize financial and technical resources.
- ✓ Establish more incubation centres providing practical skills, mentorship, BDS and business transformation support.
- ✓ Expand community skilling programmes to bring market-relevant training closer to underserved communities.
- ✓ Scale Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes to increase the pool of qualified facilitators and ensure sustainability.

WDF's integrated model combining vocational skilling, BDS and VSLA financial inclusion has delivered 2,893 beneficiaries across three regions, 1,063 skilled in nationally-certified trades and documented 90% business survival rates in early tracking. This is not pilot-stage work; it is proven, scalable infrastructure for youth economic empowerment.



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