



AMANI INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER

QUARTER ONE (JANUARY-MARCH, 2025)



Group picture with in coming and outgoing Board Members



Welcome Remarks

Welcome to the Q1 Newsletter (Jan-Mar 2025) of Amani Initiative! As we enter the third year of our 2023-2027 strategic plan, we're more committed than ever to preventing child marriage and teenage pregnancy through community-driven interventions.

This year, we are excited about the progress ahead as we work towards a Uganda free from these challenges. In this issue, you'll discover the ongoing projects, key activities, and inspiring success stories that are helping us achieve our mission.

We invite you to join us on this journey and learn more about how you can make a difference.

Inzikuru Everline
Executive Director

Driving Change Across Communities: A Look at Amani Initiative's running Projects

In the first quarter of 2025, Amani Initiative continued to roll out seven impactful projects, each addressing key community needs across Uganda's West Nile region and beyond. This has been through partners such as Centre for Disease Control through Infectious Disease Institute, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Hunger Project Uganda, Femi Foundation, Girls First Fund, CARE International, and individual donors.

These projects address education, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, child protection, women's leadership, socioeconomic empowerment and infrastructure across Arua City, Maracha District, Arua District, and other Ugandan regions as highlighted below:-

School Systems Strengthening

Enhancing education through financial and compliance support



West Nile HIV Project

Combating HIV through comprehensive interventions



Empowered Voices

Combating child marriage through community resilience



Amani Elevator Facility

Building a community hub for transformation and sustainability



BRIDGET Project

Empowering vulnerable households through social and economic initiatives



Right2Grow

Addressing malnutrition and WASH access for children



Women's Voice and Leadership

Promoting gender equality and women's rights



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Nixon presentation during the N4G summit in France



Meeting at the Parliament of Uganda



Group picture after an interface meeting with Maracha District officials

From Global Stages to Local Solutions: Amani Leads Nutrition and Health Advocacy

Amani Initiative, represented by Nixon Ochatre, made a significant contribution at the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris, where they presented lessons learned from Uganda's Right2Grow project.

The organization shared innovative approaches such as the Trio Fantastico model, sub-national budgeting tools, and the Community Voice and Action (CVA) method, aimed at ensuring that government commitments lead to tangible improvements in nutrition and WASH.

Following the summit, Amani joined local CSO's to advocate in Uganda's Parliament, presenting a CSO Position Paper on Health, emphasizing the need for increased health financing, improved mental health services, and enhanced community health systems.

Amani together with the Hunger Project organized a Right2Grow interface meeting in Maracha District, using the Bridge2Voices approach to bring together citizens, water engineers, local officials, and the CAO's office to address WASH issues. This dialogue resulted in concrete commitments from district leaders to extend water sources, showcasing the effectiveness of locally driven advocacy.



Verification of facility records at Oleba Health facility

Building Bridges in HIV Care and Response

Under the West Nile HIV Project, Amani Initiative, with support from IDI and CDC, successfully tracked and re-engaged 196 clients lost to HIV and TB care, surpassing the quarterly target. We conducted Index Client Testing, testing 19 individuals, with one positive case linked to care.

Through facility supervision, financial reviews, and community-led approaches like Peer Support groups and support for discordant couples, we ensure a comprehensive, people-centered HIV response in Maracha District.



Group picture of participants at the West Nile SRHR symposium

SRHR in a Changing Climate

The West Nile SRHR Symposium 2025, hosted by Feminature Uganda and supported by Amani Initiative and other partners, gathered 60+ stakeholders to discuss integrating SRHR with climate resilience. Key discussions focused on gender-sensitive policies, tackling gender-based violence, and empowering communities.

Policymakers emphasized health equity, environmental protection, and boosting investments in adolescent SRHR services for sustainable impact.

BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING DREAMS THROUGH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



Amani staff following completion of a 3 days skills training of the Dream Achievers curriculum.

Launching the Dream Achievers Program

Between January and March 2025, the Amani Initiative made bold strides to improve educational outcomes for vulnerable children across Arua City, Arua District, and Maracha. The Dream Achievers Program, supported by the Girls First Fund, was officially launched in 20 low-cost schools, and will be onboarding 500 adolescents (300 girls and 200 boys).

Alongside 40 trained liaison teachers, the program is to deliver life skills, mentorship, and career guidance to 25 high-risk learners per school, addressing the alarming dropout crisis that affects nearly half of Uganda's primary school children before completion.

Key Takeaways



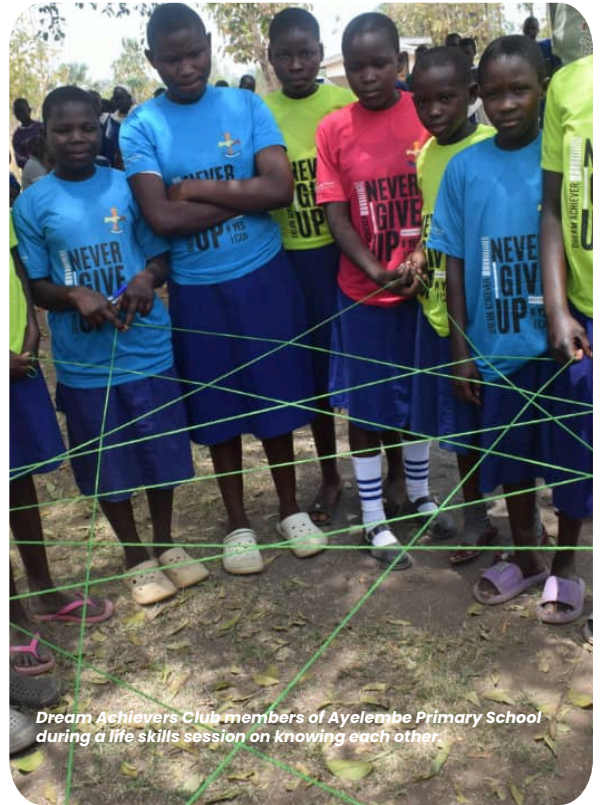
Strategic Early Intervention Works
– Targeting Primary 4–6 students through Dream Achievers has created a crucial buffer against Uganda's high dropout rates.



Holistic Education Yields Results
– Life skills, mentorship, and parental engagement are as essential as academic support in keeping children in school.



Stronger Schools, Better Learning – Supporting school systems directly improves learning conditions for vulnerable children and ensures sustainability.



Dream Achievers Club members of Ayelemba Primary School during a life skills session on knowing each other.

Learning Beyond the Classroom

To reinforce student engagement and parental involvement, Amani facilitated three life skills sessions in 19 schools and held a vibrant school outreach event at Ragem Primary School, engaging 80 learners in meaningful dialogue on empowerment through education.

These initiatives, run under the Empowered Voices Project, aim to nurture resilience, confidence, and goal-setting among children facing complex academic and social challenges.

Strengthening School Systems for Long-Term Impact

Through our School Systems Strengthening Program, we worked with proprietors of low-cost private schools to enhance financial management, improve statutory compliance, and access safe, low-cost credit through the Amani Elevator Facility with 6 low cost schools supported to access over 200m Ugx worth of safe financing.

By addressing root causes of institutional instability, we're helping schools create resilient, child-centered learning environments.





WOMEN ON THE RISE: FROM KNOWLEDGE TO INCOME AND LEADERSHIP

Across Arua and Maracha, women are turning knowledge into power. Over 139 vulnerable women from seven self-support groups participated in financial literacy sessions under the Women Voice and Leadership, BRIDGE, and Empowered Voices projects—learning to budget, save, and plan their way out of poverty.

Groups like Oluvu Women FAL, supported since 2020, revised their leadership structures and set goals to rent a produce store and purchase uniforms. Meanwhile, the Tara Ojataa Women's VSLA group under the BRIDGE Project set bold six-month goals—including group registration, business startups, and increased meeting savings—united by a shared commitment: “No one will be left behind.”

This momentum was fueled further by three financial and entrepreneurship trainings attended by 104 participants (98 women), resulting in a surge of new business ideas and personal goal setting. Collectively, these groups have saved over UGX 675,000 and built a UGX 250,000 social fund—laying the groundwork for sustained economic transformation.



Member of the Oluvu FAL group during the women's day event



Household follow up visit in Maracha as part of the BRIDGE Project

HOUSEHOLDS STEP FORWARD ON THEIR GOALS IN TARA SUB-COUNTY

Under the BRIDGE project funded by FEMI Foundation, a follow-up SWOT analysis was conducted in March 2025 for 35 households across five parishes in Tara Sub-county. The activity tracked progress on commitments made during the first analysis last quarter. Encouragingly, 33 households have begun implementing at least one of their three set goals, including starting or expanding businesses and housing improvements. Despite facing resource and climate-related challenges, participants showed increased confidence and visible improvements in their livelihoods.

FINANCIAL LITERACY AND INCLUSION



Group saving session

Amani Initiative empowered 139 women across 7 self-support groups through financial literacy sessions under three key projects. Staff also saved UGX 900,000 through VSLA. Additionally, six schools underwent business loan risk assessments, positioning them for over UGX 200 million in low-cost capital for sustainable growth.





School outreach at Ragem Primary School

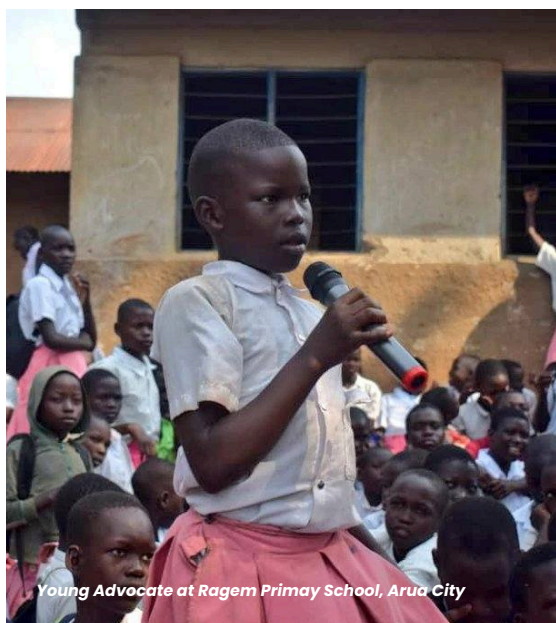


Group session



Group picture after clean-up of the maternity ward in Arua City

Classrooms for Change: School Outreach Inspires Young Advocates



Young Advocate at Ragem Primay School, Arua City

As part of International Women's Day celebrations we joined Arua City and Arua District.

We engaged 350 learners and 15 teachers at Ragem Primary School in Arua City. Through interactive sessions, students explored gender equality and child protection, with 90% pledging to stand against abuse. The day amplified youth voices and ignited a passion for safe, inclusive education.

We also teamed up with Arua City leaders, CSOs, and women's groups to clean the local hospital's maternity ward. Over 60 volunteers joined forces to improve hygiene for 120 mothers and babies. The hospital pledged quarterly clean-ups, reinforcing community ownership in safeguarding maternal health.



Stakeholder meeting hosted by Save the Children

Breaking the Silence: Tackling Arua's GBV Crisis Together

With Arua District recording Uganda's second-highest GBV rate (27%), we joined Save the Children Uganda and 12 stakeholders for a high-impact coordination meeting. Together, we reviewed the city's child protection strategy and committed to dismantling three core barriers: harmful cultural norms, political interference, and weak systems. The outcome? A united roadmap for stronger response and prevention.



Members of Oluvu FAL group displaying the advocacy messages during the women's day event in Maracha

Voices of Change: Rural Women Lead the Dialogue

In Maracha District, 40 women from the Oluvu FAL group led community conversations on early marriage. At a focused dialogue in Arua City, 23 participants (21 women, 2 men) shared real-life experiences and developed a community charter promoting school retention and youth protection. These grassroots conversations are turning silence into solutions.



Training with local leaders hosted by Feminist Uganda in Arua District



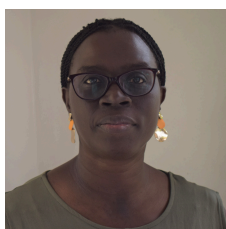
Certificate handover to the outgoing Chairperson



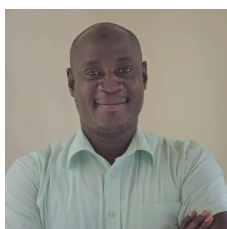
Staff training at the Amani Elevator Facility

New Leadership, Renewed Vision: Welcoming Our 2025–2027 Board of Directors

We are thrilled to welcome the Amani Initiative's 2025–2027 Board of Directors! This dynamic and inclusive team, with 60% female representation and members from diverse backgrounds—including persons with disabilities and young women—embodies our commitment to equity and transformative leadership. Check out the profiles for our Board of Directors



Eva Mudondo contributes sharp legal insight



Haruna Kanaabi champions reproductive health



Monicah Ocotoko ensures inclusive advocacy for persons with disabilities.



Denis Kisekka offers strategic financial oversight



Sarah Amazi brings fresh energy in youth empowerment.



Board governance training in Kampala

Building Stronger Foundations for Impact

In Quarter 1 of 2025, Amani Initiative strengthened institutional capacity through a successful Board handover and governance training, staff upskilling on community accountability tools, and a life skills training for facilitators under the Dream Achievers Program. These efforts promoted inclusive leadership, effective service delivery, and support for at-risk learners—reinforcing our commitment to sustainability and transformative community impact.



Phase one of the Amani Elevator Facility

Progress on the Amani Elevator Facility Construction

In Quarter 1 of 2025, construction of the Amani Elevator Facility progressed with the installation of windows and doors. The facility, which will house Amani Initiative's Head Offices, a Community Hall, and a Life Skills Transformation space, aims to support at-risk children and women. It will also generate local revenue to sustain our efforts against teenage pregnancy and child marriage across Uganda.

From Vision to Venture: How Julliet Found Purpose and Power in Community

Four months ago, Asinduru Julliet joined the Tara Women Ojata Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) Group, marking her first experience in such an initiative. Since becoming a member, she has participated in multiple training sessions on topics such as group dynamics, personal goal setting (personal flag), and developing business ideas.

These trainings have profoundly impacted her life, transforming how she interacts at an individual, group, and community level. Julliet has embraced the spirit of collaboration within the group, learning valuable skills like creating a business plan and developing sustainable business ideas.

Motivated by her training, Julliet proposed farming as her business venture. With her garden now prepared for cultivation and seedlings ready, she is set to begin planting. Her husband, Yakani Ratib, has been a supportive partner throughout the process, further strengthening their household's potential for success.



Asinduru Julliet

Seeing with the Heart: Melda's Inspiring Step into Business and Belonging

Despite her visual impairment, Badaru Melda from Kujaki Village started a mandazi business after joining Amani Initiative's training and savings group. With 8,000 UGX saved and a 10,000 UGX loan, she's building independence.

Melda calls for partner support to overcome mobility challenges and strengthen inclusive entrepreneurship opportunities.



Badaru Melda

LEADING WITH PURPOSE: ROSE'S JOURNEY FROM WIDOW TO COMMUNITY PILLAR

A widow and the chairperson of the Tara Women Ojata VSLA Group, Orodriyo Rose resides in Arana West Village, Wanguru Parish, Tara Sub-County. As a beneficiary of the BRIDGE Project, she has actively participated in training sessions on group dynamics, financial literacy, and developing business ideas. Rose has learned the importance of working collaboratively, saving regularly, and using profits rather than capital for business growth.

She borrowed 80,000 UGX to invest in her fish (Mukene) business and saves 5,000 UGX at each meeting. She acknowledges the group's progress in fostering equality and respect among members and highlights positive changes in how money is utilized.



Rose