



2024



Annual Impact Report

WAR CHILD USA

A NOTE FROM OUR FOUNDER

In 2024, War Child celebrated a major milestone: our 25th anniversary. Looking back, I am proud of how far we have come. What started as an idea – an aspiration to build a more effective, responsive, sustainable, and local community-led humanitarian organization – has turned into a global movement committed to helping children recover from the legacy and trauma of war. A quarter century ago, we were a volunteer staff of one, and now there are more than a thousand War Child staff throughout the world, more than 99% of whom come from war zones and who are running and leading our operations.

We have worked in dozens of war-torn countries, persisted in the face of the most challenging crises, and have helped transform the lives of millions of children and their families. It has been an extraordinary privilege to bear witness to that progress. Today, Congolese girls can access education without fear because of the innovations in distance learning that we have pioneered. South Sudanese mothers can ensure their children do not go hungry because of their new farming skills, ensuring women also have the means to become economically self-sustaining. We are the leading provider of catch-up learning for refugees in Uganda who have fled violence in neighbouring countries, among other successes. We are proud of this work – work that all of you, as our supporters, have made possible. Our legacy is your legacy.

Despite this progress, we know we are far from realizing a world in which War Child would no longer be needed or relevant – a world without war. When we started, I hoped that our work would gradually become redundant. The fact that our expertise is more in demand than ever is a profoundly disturbing reflection of the current state of the world. The last few years have brought devastating conflicts threatening the lives of tens of millions of people. In Sudan, where we have worked for 20 years, 13 million are at risk of acute starvation, and yet the global humanitarian appeal for Sudan in 2024 was less than one quarter funded. In Afghanistan, women and girls continue to face extreme persecution and a denial of their basic human rights. There are more than 120 million people displaced right now – the worst displacement crisis since World War II. There are more places locked in conflict and many more people in need than when we first started – that is a tragic indictment of our current geopolitical climate.

One of the hardest things to confront in the course of doing this work is why some crises receive so much attention and support, while millions of others are abandoned and left to struggle in the face of unfathomable atrocities, without garnering significant international condemnation or response. And yet, this is where we have focused our efforts since inception: we pay attention to crises others have the luxury of forgetting, to the people who need us when most others have already gone home. We will never chase the next crisis hoping to ride donor tailwinds. Which is why I am so grateful for your enduring support. We know we do what we do well, and we know it works. And we will always remain when asked and where we can, not because it is easy, but because we are a lifeline for the most vulnerable women and children. You make that possible. Thank you for believing in us, our programs, and the children who benefit from our work. That you care enough, in this way, to be a part of our organization is the best and only antidote to war millions might ever know in their lifetime. Thank you for being a part of this journey with us.

Samantha Nutt, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC, C.M.
Founder and President
War Child USA



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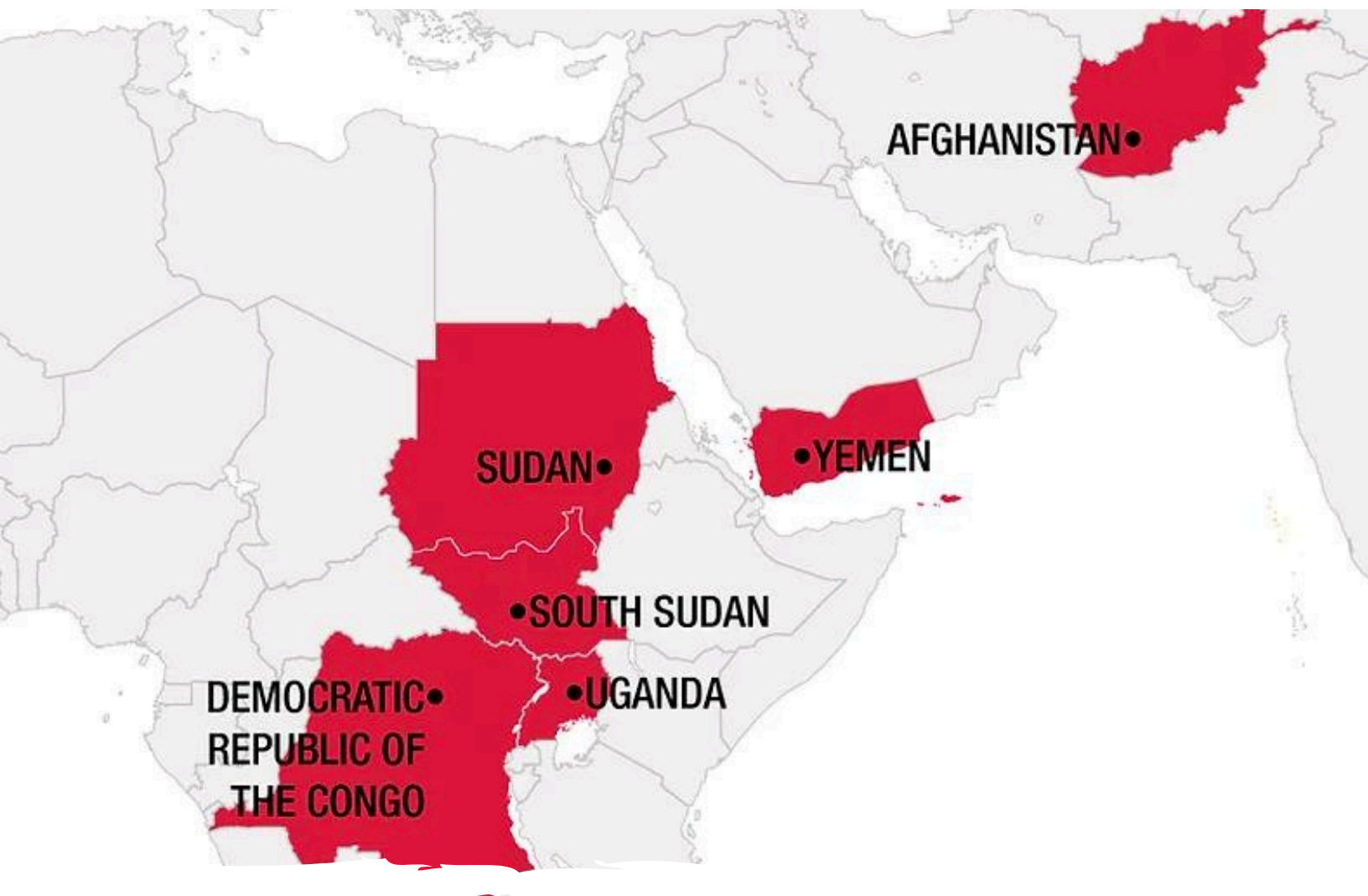
VISION

Accelerating peace by
disrupting the cycle of
violence

MISSION

Driving generational change
for the hardest hit by investing
in the power of local
communities

Where We Work



War Child's model of humanitarian action is rooted in collaboration and is locally driven and locally led. We work to foster the capacity of children, their families, and their communities to develop resilience, self-reliance, and self-determination in overcoming the impacts of violence and displacement.



AFGHANISTAN

Since the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021, life has been difficult, particularly for women and children.

Twenty-three million people need humanitarian assistance to survive, half of them children. Fourteen million face acute food insecurity.

Restrictions on women's ability to earn a living is exacerbating the crisis. To address this, War Child is providing women with vocational and business skills training and start-up support to launch small businesses and build sustainable livelihoods.

Women and children also face unrealistic barriers to access healthcare, including pre- and post-natal care. Children, particularly girls, face restrictions to accessing education and are suffering from years of exposure to violence in all its forms.

War Child has responded by offering health and protection programs for women and children, including mental health support, reproductive healthcare, and general treatments through our mother and children health centers. War Child has also opened child-friendly spaces for vulnerable children which offer psychosocial support and recreational learning, as well as a series of multi-purpose youth centers aimed at providing trainings and a pathway to employment for young men and women.



THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

War Child has worked in the DRC since the early 2000s, primarily in education. A decade ago, our team developed an innovative, radio-based solution for children who were unable to attend school. The program has evolved over the years and in 2024 made impressive progress in the South Kivu region which has suffered considerably from the effects of conflict. Working in remedial education centers, the team saw pass rates rise to over 90%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the radio-learning approach.

War Child also made significant progress towards launching a comprehensive youth empowerment program called INUKA – a Swahili word meaning “to get back on your feet”. A detailed market study was carried out to identify economic trends, obstacles to youth entrepreneurship, and areas with strong potential for growth. The findings pointed to promising opportunities in digital services, environmental management, and small-scale agriculture work including food processing, packaging, and storage. However, it also exposed key challenges, such as limited access to funding and mentorship—especially among young women. During this initial phase, local capacity was strengthened, partnerships were formed, and interest from youth was clearly demonstrated. With this foundation in place, the program is now ready for full-scale rollout when security conditions allow.



SOUTH SUDAN

The world's youngest nation remains fragile, five years after a ceasefire ended a brutal civil war

Sporadic violence continues to flare up, disrupting essential services reaching the population, while food insecurity remains a critical issue across the country. This is being exacerbated by the impact of climate change, as well as a large influx of refugees from the civil war in neighbouring Sudan.

War Child's commitment to agricultural improvement has been essential in addressing these challenges. Poor farming techniques can degrade soil quality and threaten crop yields. War Child provides training in sustainable agricultural practices and literacy to stabilize food security and allow farming communities to achieve long-term economic sustainability.

Additionally, War Child delivers training and awareness programs focused on gender-based violence and women's rights. By creating safe spaces, women and girls can pursue education and economic opportunities without fear of discrimination or harm. By integrating these efforts, War Child plays a crucial role in strengthening community stability and resilience in a country that remains deeply affected by conflict.



Photo Credit: El Tayeb Siddig/Reuters

SUDAN

The violent civil war that began in Sudan in 2023 has developed into the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Over 13 million people have been forced from their homes, with 4 million fleeing to neighbouring countries. The Darfur region, where War Child worked for 20 years, has been subjected to some of the most intense violence, including genocidal attacks on civilians.

War Child was forced to suspend its operations in 2023 as it became far too dangerous for our staff to continue, many of whom were from communities targeted by rebel fighters. In the second half of 2024, War Child began investigating restarting programming once security improves. We remain fully committed to the Sudanese people and to their recovery from this latest round of violence.



UGANDA

Uganda currently hosts more than 1.75 million refugees who have fled conflict in neighbouring countries, most notably South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan.

This is the largest such population in Africa, due in part to Uganda's policy of allowing them access to land and employment. Despite this, youth unemployment among refugees in Uganda is disproportionately high, with some estimating it to be as high as 80%.

With a long history in Uganda, War Child has been a leading agency working with the refugee and resettlement communities, aiming to provide out-of-school children and youth with access to education and a viable route to employment. War Child is the leading provider of catch-up learning programs that allow children and youth who have missed out on schooling the opportunity to reintegrate into the local systems. Thousands of young people have successfully graduated from the programs and have gone on to complete their studies.

War Child also acts as a bridge from education to employment through targeted vocational training, apprenticeships, and support for start-up businesses. To address the problems of irregular incomes, young people are given access to financial literacy classes and encouraged to join savings groups that can provide short term loans during leaner times.



YEMEN

The conflict in Yemen, the poorest country in the Middle East, has persisted for almost a decade, with hundreds of thousands killed.

It is a complex and volatile situation, with two separate and warring factions, one in the northern Houthi region (backed by Iran) and the other in the south of the country (backed by Saudi Arabia). Despite a UN-negotiated ceasefire, tensions remain high, with the Houthis' recent targeting of international shipping in the Red Sea delaying hopes of a sustainable peace deal.

Three quarters of the Yemeni population require humanitarian assistance, with more than half the country living in extreme poverty. Despite this, donors have gravely underfunded the humanitarian response, forcing two-thirds of UN programs to scale back or close.

In addition to these urgent needs, Yemen is experiencing a crisis in education. Twenty-five percent of Yemen's schools were either destroyed, partially damaged, or are being used for non-educational purposes because of the war. In 2021, War Child began to rehabilitate war-damaged schools and provide training on children's rights and protection. War Child's improvements to school infrastructure, including water, sanitation, and power facilities, along with the provision of school supplies and teacher training, are helping to create safe-learning spaces for 500 primary students in both the north and south of the country. We are also responding to child protection concerns by organizing youth-led awareness campaigns on issues such as child labour, early marriage, child rights, and access to education.

WAR CHILD IMPACT IN 2024

EDUCATION

Globally, a staggering 250 million children are out of school, with many denied their right to learn because of armed conflict.

For a quarter of a century, War Child has pioneered creative and innovative solutions to bring children back to the classroom. Recognizing that the complexity of war creates a wide array of barriers to education, War Child tailors its approach to meet the unique challenges that children face. From giving young refugees a chance to catch up on missed years, to providing distance learning when it is impossible to get to school safely, War Child believes that whatever it takes, every child should have the opportunity to learn.



WAR CHILD IMPACT IN 2024

OPPORTUNITIES

War and armed conflict directly affect families' ability to earn money and support themselves. Farmland becomes inaccessible, markets are destroyed, livestock is looted, manufacturing materials are unavailable, and banks are closed or inoperable.

These, and a host of other challenges, contribute to a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break.

In coping with intractable poverty, people turn to strategies of last resort, such as early and forced marriage, overuse of natural resources, reduced investments in children's education, and even criminality and corruption. War Child provides vocational and skills training to parents and young people and offers guidance and financial support to help them establish sustainable businesses. By helping people lift themselves out of poverty, War Child empowers them to make positive decisions for themselves and their families and regain a sense of security and independence.



WAR CHILD IMPACT IN 2024

PROTECTION

The rights of women and children can only be protected if everybody knows what they are. This is why War Child spends a lot of time and energy promoting them within communities.

This can take many forms, from youth-led initiatives on peace and conflict management, to radio broadcasts on the rights of children, to programming that gives women a lead role in both the design and implementation of the work.

War Child seeks to empower women and young people with the skills and tools to advocate for themselves and to build the capacity of the whole community to be their champions. A population-wide understanding of women and children's rights is the most powerful way to ensure they become the bedrock on which a more secure and peaceful future can be built.



WAR CHILD PROJECTS



Health and Social Protection for Vulnerable Groups in Afghanistan

Afghan youth are facing serious challenges due to economic hardship, political instability, and limited access to education and jobs. Government restrictions and weakening social support systems have made it increasingly difficult for them to build a stable future. With fewer opportunities and growing social pressures, young people in Afghanistan are left in an increasingly vulnerable situation.

In response, War Child set up multipurpose youth centers (MYCs) in Kabul, Balkh, and Samangan to support young people with a wide range of essential services. These centers provide psychosocial support, life skills training, literacy classes, vocational programs, youth-friendly healthcare, and freelancing opportunities. In total, the centers reached over 15,000 young people.

Vocational programs trained 100 youth, evenly split between male and female participants, in trades such as tailoring, mobile repair, and computer programming. Programs for entrepreneurial young people focused on digital skills like web development and graphic design, equipping graduates with toolkits to help them start their own small businesses. MYCs became key hubs for youth empowerment, education, and mental well-being.

Healthcare for women and children in Afghanistan is in crisis, worsened by strict government restrictions on women's movement. Access to prenatal and postnatal care, reproductive health services, and cancer screenings has been dramatically reduced. This decline has been further accelerated by the loss of international aid following the withdrawal of American forces.

War Child has taken action to support vulnerable communities, especially women and children, by launching health and protection programs. We established women-friendly health spaces and mother and child healthcare centers, which offer a wide range of services, including mental health support, reproductive healthcare, and general medical treatment. These centers also provide life skills education and emergency referrals, providing over 10,000 people with life-saving medical and social care.

WAR CHILD PROJECTS



Protection for Vulnerable Children in Afghanistan

The consequences of decades of violence and instability have left children in a precarious place in many areas of Afghanistan. For many children, particularly girls, government restrictions create barriers to accessing healthcare and education. War Child has been working to overcome these. In 2024, War Child identified a vital need to provide safe spaces for children suffering from exposure to violence, including sexual violence, disabled and orphaned children, and those experiencing mental health issues. A quarter of Afghan children suffer from anxiety, ten times the global average.

In November 2024, War Child began implementing a new program providing child-friendly spaces (CFSs) delivering structured psychosocial support for children, as well as offering recreational learning and life-skills training.

By the end of the year, 30 CFSs had been established with qualified staff recruited and trained in safeguarding, case management, and how to prevent and respond to sexual abuse. These included psychosocial counselors, child protection case workers, and community mobilizers. Six hundred children were registered and receiving care at the CFSs, while over 200 caregivers had been reached with messages on positive parenting, winter safety, and how to prevent family separation. With the frigid Afghan winter approaching, 2500 winter safety kits had been procured, with distribution set for January 2025.

WAR CHILD PROJECTS



Social Enterprises led by Congolese Youth

The INUKA project, named after the Swahili word meaning “to get back on one’s feet,” is a youth empowerment initiative in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Young people in the region face severe challenges because of ongoing conflict, displacement, and economic instability. Sexual violence is rife, recruitment into armed groups is a constant threat, and the resulting trauma has left many with mental health issues.

The program was launched in September 2024 with a detailed market study conducted in South Kivu province to understand economic trends, obstacles for young entrepreneurs, and industries with strong growth potential. The study, which included 535 participants, found great opportunities in agro-processing, digital services, and environmental management. However, it also uncovered major challenges, such as difficulties in getting financial support and guidance—problems that especially affect young women.

In 2025, War Child will use the lessons learned in the first phase of the INUKA project to begin implementation of a youth entrepreneurship program in the DRC.

WAR CHILD PROJECTS



Back to Learning for Children in Eastern DRC

Education in Eastern DRC faces serious problems because of war and displacement. Violence has forced over 1.6 million children out of school, and more than 2,500 schools have been shut down or destroyed. Others are being used as shelters for displaced families, meaning many children no longer have classrooms to learn in. The schools that are still open do not have enough teachers, books, or funding. Girls encounter additional barriers, including the risk of early marriage and gender-based violence, further limiting their opportunities for education and personal development.

Over a decade ago, War Child developed an innovative radio-based solution for children unable to attend school. The program has been developed and adapted in the years that followed with impressive results.

In 2024, the project was supporting three remedial education centers in South Kivu. It made important progress in improving access to education, providing instruction on teaching methods, and upgrading school facilities. A total of 1,073 students, including 546 girls, enrolled across the three locations. Academic performance was impressive, with pass rates of 91% and 92% during the 2023–2024 school year, demonstrating how successful this radio-based approach can be. Additionally, national primary exam results were notably high, at well over 90%, reflecting how well students were learning.

WAR CHILD PROJECTS



Sustainable Farming in South Sudan

2024 marked the final year of War Child’s FEED II program in South Sudan – a groundbreaking initiative that sought to improve farming techniques and business practices, increase food preservation, and provide alternative vocational opportunities for young people. It had a core objective of reducing inequalities between men and women in terms of access to and control over resources to enhance food security.

The year was marked by several significant challenges. Disputes over cattle that involved armed groups disrupted agricultural production, forcing many farmers to seek safer locations to continue their work. Climate-related problems, including delayed rainfall, destructive crop pests, and severe flooding, further reduced food supply and displaced families from their homes. Additionally, the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Sudan led to an influx of refugees coming across the border, increasing demand for already strained local resources. Meanwhile, the continued depreciation of the South Sudanese pound worsened food insecurity and heightened economic pressures for households across the country.

Despite these challenges, the program continued to have a significant, positive impact on farming communities. To help them adapt to climate challenges, over 5,700 people received vital weather information services. In addition, more than 1,400 farmers learned about traditional ecological knowledge and how to collect meteorological data. Training on food storage and preservation after harvest also helped families improve their food security.

An adult literacy program continued to support over 9,000 participants, helping them improve their reading, leadership, and financial skills. The project also helped families earn money and become more financially stable. Over 60 savings groups were created, bringing together about 1,500 members who collectively saved more than 800 million South Sudanese pounds.

WAR CHILD PROJECTS

**Education, skills training, and employment opportunities for refugees in Uganda**

Uganda hosts a total of 1.75 million refugees, the largest population in Africa. War Child has a long history in the country and is a lead agency working with these communities.

In 2024, our programs saw considerable progress in helping young people in refugee and host communities get better access to education, job training, and work opportunities. Our team successfully supported almost 9,000 individuals, 65% of whom identified as refugees. A key achievement was the transition of almost 1,500 youth into employment, accounting for 17% of all participants. These young people developed practical skills through market-driven training programs, hands-on apprenticeships, and business incubation initiatives. Additionally, 850 youth received scholarships for vocational training, while 138 were awarded university scholarships, further strengthening their pathway from education to meaningful employment.

War Child continued to enhance digital learning through the Digital Science and Virtual Laboratories initiative, recording over 19,300 logins across 34 learning centers. Both accelerated learning students and mainstream learners benefited from these resources. Meanwhile, there was progress in constructing learning spaces, with several newly completed centers now in use. These developments contributed to creating safer environments in which to learn.

When data from the program was analyzed, it revealed that only 49% of participating youth earned daily wages, with others receiving income on a weekly, monthly, or seasonal basis. To mitigate this income instability, War Child is expanding access to financial literacy training, strengthening savings groups, and improving connections to market opportunities.

Overall, the program is making significant progress in helping more young people access education and develop job skills, while promoting resilience in vulnerable communities. These efforts are laying the foundations for a sustainable future.



THE INSPIRATION OF RADIO

Angelique struggled at her community primary school in the DRC. She suffered from learning difficulties and could barely write her name by Grade 4. She began to lose all motivation and finally dropped out altogether. Fortunately, her mother Sarah heard about War Child's radio-based learning through an awareness campaign in her community. With nothing to lose, she decided to enroll Angelique.

"I'm amazed at what she's experienced since she joined" Sarah told War Child. "She's very motivated, she doesn't miss a day."

Angelique has started to read and occasionally speak French.

"I think it's the radio that's bringing about this change. May God bless this organization and this teaching method. I hope it will continue to help more children."



FINDING STRENGTH THROUGH SUPPORT

After the death of her husband, Shararah was left as the sole provider for her four young children. She was struggling financially and completely overwhelmed. The weight of her burden took a heavy toll on her mental and physical health, leading to severe anxiety.

When she discovered one of War Child's mother and child health centers, her life began to turn around. She received psychotherapy, counseling, and medical support, helping her regain confidence and learn coping strategies to manage stress. With renewed hope, she now envisions a better future for her children.

"I thought my problems would never change," she says. "But I learned that every problem has a solution if we seek help."



A SECOND CHANCE AT EDUCATION

The death of Dorothy's father caused severe financial problems for her family, and Dorothy was forced to drop out of school. It seemed unlikely that she would complete her education, which would have thwarted her ambition of becoming an accountant.

Fortunately, War Child's Accelerated Education Program gave her the second chance she craved. With support for school fees, materials, and uniforms, Dorothy passed her national exams and is now studying for her Advanced Level, the equivalent of final exams taken before applying to university. Her dreams are alive again.

"I have received support to return to school," she told our staff. "I want to help others who dropped out like me."



ANYA'S TEA TRIUMPH

Anya a 31-year-old mother of five living in a refugee settlement in Uganda. She knows what it means to build something from nothing. What began as a humble tea stall with a single kettle and a handful of cups has blossomed into a shop offering not just tea, but a nourishing breakfast.

War Child intervention was a turning point in Anya's life. We organized her and her peers into a Village Savings and Loan Association, providing training in business management, and savings and loan procedures.

"We learned how to invest wisely," Anya explains. "I took out a loan, invested it in my business, and repaid it within a month. My business is now thriving, and we can send our children to school!"



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