



**SHARED ACTION AFRICA**  
Together We Achieve



## **Empowerment of Refugee Women and Girls:**

A year of Resilience and Progress

Annual  
Report

**2023**

# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Message From The Chief Executive Officer                  | 3  |
| Vision and Mission  | 4  |
| Where We Work: Nakivale and Oruchinga Refugee Settlements | 4  |
| Our Solution  | 5  |
| Programs  | 6  |
| Program Impact  | 6  |
| Economic Empowerment                                      | 7  |
| Sexual and Reproductive Health                            | 8  |
| Empowering Women Through Family Planning                  | 9  |
| Climate Resilience Agriculture                            | 9  |
| Impact Story: Meet Sifa Corodina: An Inspired Woman       | 10 |
| Income  | 12 |
| Expenditure   | 12 |
| Expenditure in FY 2023                                    | 12 |
| Partners and Supporters                                   | 13 |
| Staff and Volunteer Recognition                           | 14 |
| Future for 2024   | 15 |
| Call to Action  | 15 |

# Message From The Chief Executive Officer

**Evelyn Nassuna**



**D**ear Supporters and Friends,  
It is with immense gratitude and pride that we present the Annual Report for Shared Action Africa for the year 2023. Last year marked a significant milestone in our journey, with our impact expanding to serve over 30,000 women and girls in Nakivale and Oruchinga refugee settlements. Our programs, encompassing modern family planning, cervical cancer screening, youth-friendly SRHR services, financial inclusion, enterprise development, climate-smart agriculture, and sustainable energy access reflect a substantial leap from previous years, where our reach was limited to just 2,000 people annually. This success is a testament to the steadfast support of our partners, board of directors, supporters, and our dedicated staff and volunteers.

The resilience of women and girls fleeing conflicts, coupled with our shared commitment, has fortified both our program participants and Shared Action Africa. Our women's Savings Groups remain the cornerstone of our comprehensive programs, fostering social networks and empowerment within refugee and host communities.

In 2023, our initiatives included training health workers, providing essential equipment for quality family planning and cervical cancer screening services, and collaborating with women-led Savings Groups for training in sustainable agriculture, financial management, business development, climate change, and sustainable energy. We also remained devoted to facilitating access to youth-friendly services for adolescents, particularly girls and young women, in collaboration with other stakeholders in

Nakivale and Oruchinga refugee settlements in southwestern Uganda.

We celebrate our passionate team of staff and 44 volunteers, with special recognition for the outstanding impact of our sexual and reproductive health unit, led by Priscilla and Adellah, whose contributions have tripled during the past two years.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our generous donors for their unwavering support throughout 2023. Your contributions have been instrumental in advancing our mission and empowering us to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your commitment and belief in our cause. We eagerly anticipate continuing our collaboration in the years ahead.

Looking forward, we aspire to elevate our organization to new heights, refining our program strategy for greater and sustainable community impact. We are excited to welcome new funding partners and supporters on this transformative journey. Integral to our strategy is the integration of technology into our operations, providing real-time insights and optimizing our interventions for maximum positive outcomes among the people we serve.

As you peruse this year's annual report, featuring inspiring stories of resilience and empowerment, I invite you to join us in our mission to build resilient and sustainable livelihoods and optimize the health and wellbeing of women and girls in the refugee settlements.

Thank you for inspiring us and for your unwavering support in helping refugee women and girls rebuild their lives and restore their dignity.

# Vision and Mission

## Mission



Shared Action Africa is a nonprofit that supports women and girls to attain sustainable livelihoods, lead healthy lives, and become agents of climate justice in rural and refugee areas in Uganda.

## Vision



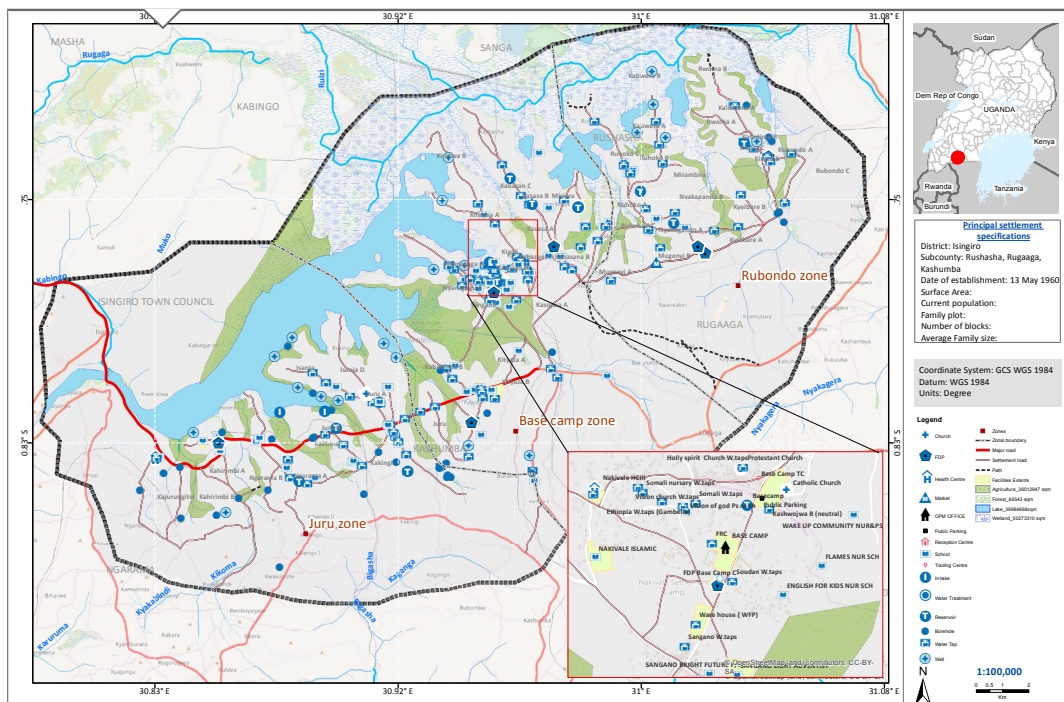
We envision a world where women and girls can drive positive social change and lead their communities/ countries in becoming active stewards of a more sustainable earth.

## The Problem and Target Population

Over 110 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, with women and girls making up 50%. In Uganda, home to 1.54 million refugees, Shared Action Africa supports 15,000 refugee women and girls annually in Nakivale and Oruchinga settlements, where most live on less than \$2.15 a day. They face economic hardship, gender discrimination, and limited access to essential services, leading to exploitation, food insecurity, climate risks, and poor health. Migration and gender inequality further worsen their vulnerability, restricting resources and opportunities.

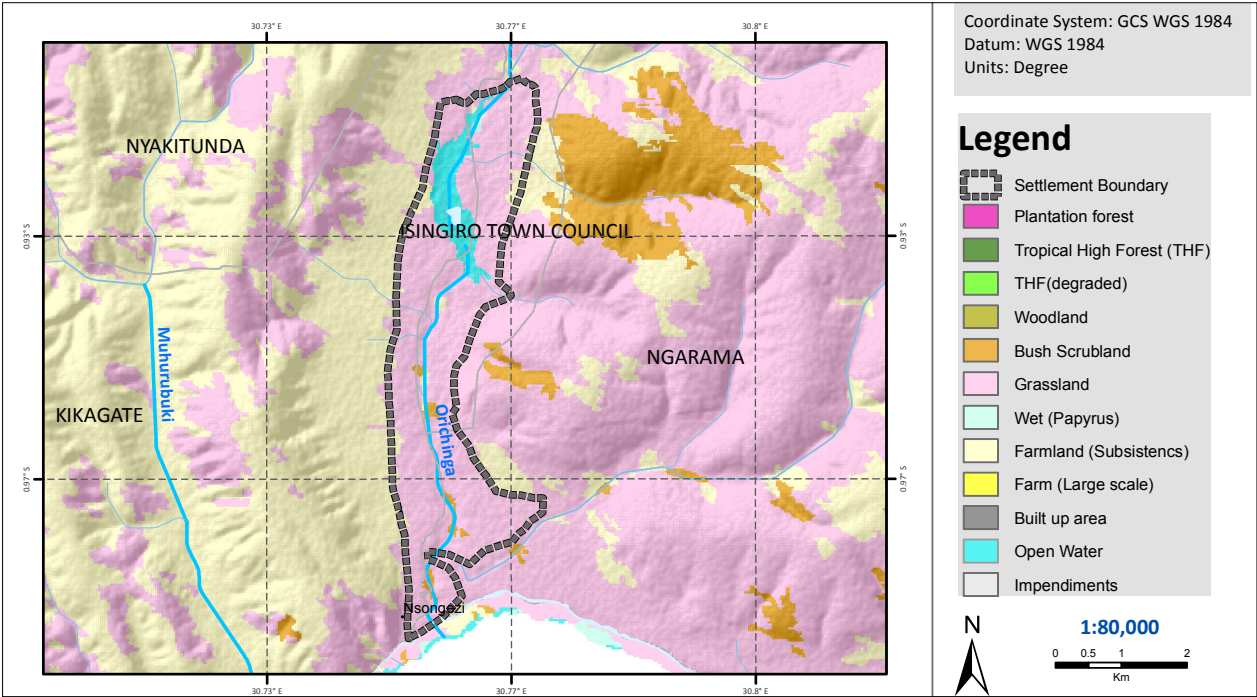
# Where We Work: Nakivale and Oruchinga Refugee Settlements

**Nakivale map**



## Oruchinga

This map of Oruchinga Refugee Settlement shows how the settlement has developed over different years and how it has been occupied by people from various countries. In these settlements, we are deeply embedded in the communities, working closely with the host communities to address their unique challenges and build sustainable solutions for a better future.



## Our Solution

### Our Approach: Harnessing Savings Groups for Sustainable Livelihoods

Shared Action Africa’s theory of change leverages **women-led Savings and Business Groups (VSLAs)** as a foundation for advancing **economic security, SRHR, advocacy, and climate resilience**. By integrating financial inclusion with essential services, we create sustainable pathways for refugee women and girls to strengthen their livelihoods and agency.

Through this approach, women access financial resources, improve their health outcomes, and build leadership skills. This holistic model not only enhances individual and household well-being but also fosters **social cohesion and systemic change**, ensuring long-term empowerment for entire communities.

Savings Groups are very powerful tool for transforming the lives of the marginalized women in the rural and refugee settlements as they offer a platform for accessing many services in a single meeting, while empowering the women to act through movement building to address the systemic injustices that perpetuate poverty among their communities

**Priscilla Nambajjwe, Director of Operations and Finance, Shared Action Africa.**



## Programs



**Economic Empowerment:** Our livelihood programs provide refugee women with training in sustainable agriculture, enterprise development, and vocational skills, offering a pathway to economic resilience.



**Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights:** Through comprehensive services, including family planning, cervical cancer screenings, and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, we ensure that women and girls have access to essential healthcare, while empowering them to make informed decisions about their well-being.



**Climate Resilience:** Collaborating with the women and other stakeholders, we implement initiatives in sustainable agriculture and energy security, building resilience to the changing climate and securing livelihoods.

## Program Impact

### Our Impact

**12,737** people were provided with family planning and cervical cancer screening services

**8,951** Women received family planning methods.

**205** Women screened cervical cancer screening.

**1,717** adolescents & young women used youth-friendly SRH services.

**584** women improved food security for **2,927** family members.

**20** Health workers trained

**26 VHTs & 18 health workers** received mentorship.

**6 health facilities** equipped with essential SRH tools.




**25 women-led savings groups** united to form the Refugee Women's Movement (**750 women**).

**37% of women** increased incomes by **at least 40%**

# Economic Empowerment

## Impact

Our livelihood programs reached 731 refugee women, providing inputs and training to support sustainable agriculture, business development, and vocational skills. This resulted in women creating a capital base of \$22,623 enabling them to establish 1058 women businesses.

-  **731**  
Refugee women
-  **\$22,623**  
Capital base created
-  **1,058**  
women businesses



*Women's empowerment through establishment of savings groups*

## Impact Story

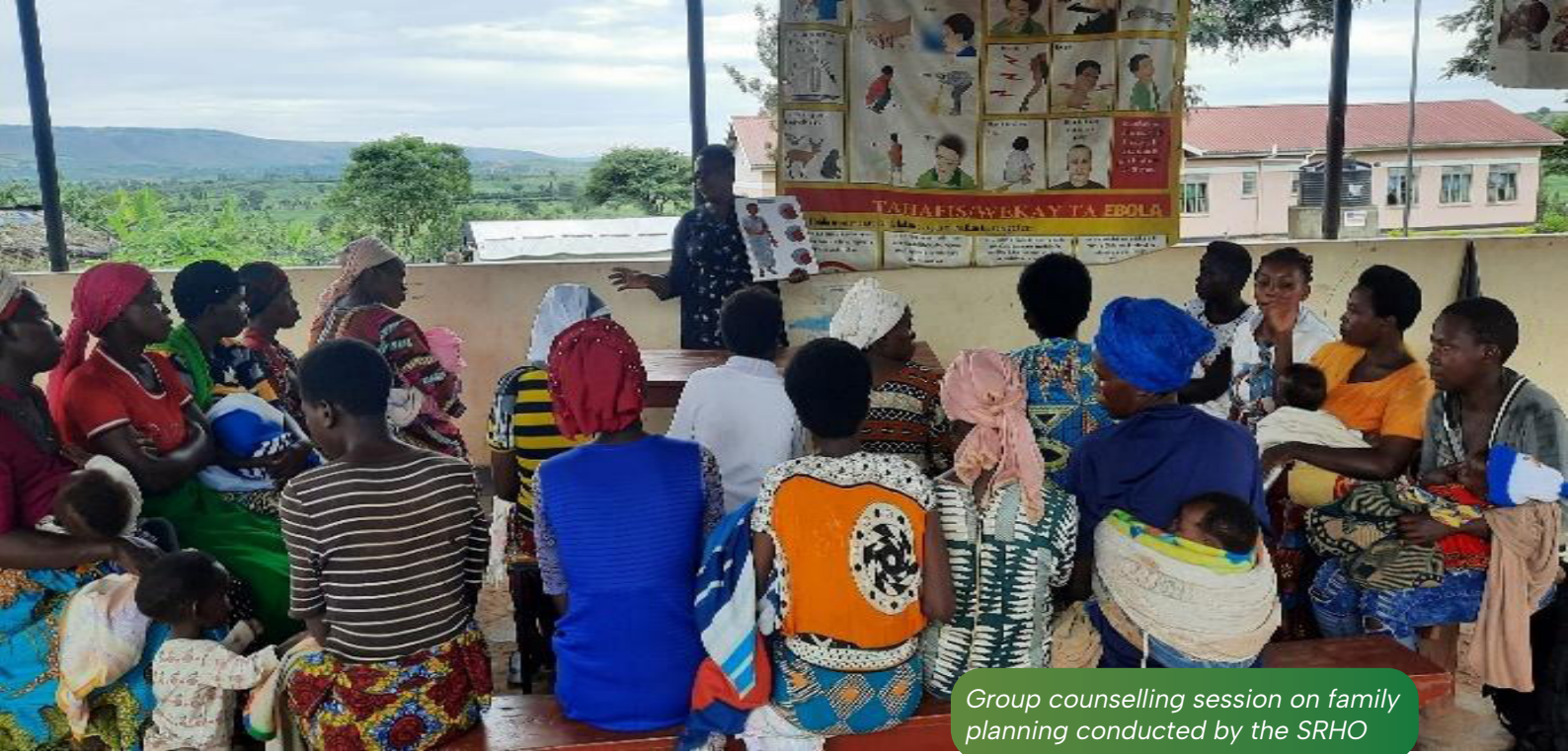
Meet Jane, a member of Abishizehamwe savings group Jane began farming tomatoes, eggplants, and watermelons with UGX 500,000, partly borrowed from a savings group. In the first season of 2023, she earned UGX 3,000,000 from selling tomatoes, allowing her to repay her loan, pay school fees for her three children, and reinvest in her farm. In the second season, she expanded to include watermelons, earning UGX 3,300,000. Jane proudly shares, "With the income from agriculture, I can pay school fees for my children and provide them with good shelter. Thank you, Shared Action Africa."



*Jane with her daughter in her garden of tomatoes*



With the income from agriculture, I can pay school fees for my children and provide them with good shelter



Group counselling session on family planning conducted by the SRHO

# Sexual and Reproductive Health

## Overview

16,126 women and girls accessed essential sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, cervical cancer screenings, and youth-friendly services including menstrual health education, hygiene, STI prevention, and modern contraceptives.



**16,126**

women and girls accessed essential services

## Impact

Our dedicated health team, led by Priscilla, Adellah, and Joan, has tripled its reach over the past two years. This success is attributed to excellent collaboration with health facilities, Isingiro District Health Office, Medical Teams International, and the Youth SRHR Access



A health worker providing a family planning method to a



# Empowering Women Through Family Planning

A 33-year-old refugee mother of nine shared how access to family planning transformed her life. Having conceived frequently while breastfeeding, she struggled with exhaustion, illness, and financial hardship. Her children suffered from malnutrition, and she felt overwhelmed by the burden of care.

Seeking help, she visited a health facility, where she received counseling on contraceptive options. After experiencing side effects with Sayana Press, she switched

to Jadelle, which worked well for her until the birth of her ninth child. She later opted for an IUD, which she continues to use comfortably.

*"Family planning allowed me to space my children and plan financially," she shared. "Without it, I would likely have 15 children and no means to support them. I urge women to consider family planning and men to support their spouses—because a planned family leads to a happy community."*



*A satisfied user giving her testimony about using family planning during the International Women's Day Celebration in Juru sub-basecamp, Nakivale Refugee Settlement.*

## Climate Resilience **Agriculture**

### Impact

Our dedicated livelihoods and Climate Resilience team supported 731 women and their families to decrease their expenditure on food through adoption of sustainable agriculture on kitchen gardens and communal gardens. Similarly, through advocacy and partnerships, we supported the Refugee Women's Movement to successfully lobby for land for agricultural production.



**731**

**Women and their families supported to decrease their expenditure on food**

# Impact Story: Meet Sifa Corodina: An Inspired Woman



*Sifa Corodina addressing fellow women during the visit by Janae of World Centric*

In Nakivale Sub-Base Camp, located in Nakivale refugee settlement in Southwestern Uganda, we find Sifa a refugee from Congo, who is married to a Uganda national, and together they have 5 children.

Sifa found herself at the center of change when Shared Action Africa brought its program to her area. With the dream of rebuilding, her life in Uganda, she embraced the opportunity presented by the organization. Assured of the support promised to her and other women in her community, she mobilized others from both the host and refugee communities, and together they formed Umoja Nangulu Group Savings Group that brings together 27 women and 4 men.

Sifa's life is steadily unfolding against the backdrop of the transformative program implemented by Shared Action Africa, with the support of two funding partners, JAC Trust and World Centric. The program aims to enhance the resilience of 750 women-

headed households in refugee and host communities to climate change. This is achieved through working with the program participants to improve food security, address climate change and sustainably manage the environment.

Armed with the knowledge and the support provided by the program and her Savings Group, Sifa dived into the world of entrepreneurship. Through access to capital through her savings group, and skills development training, entrepreneurial spirit soared, and she is a business owner of a thriving produce marketing business.

The changing climate patterns, particularly the flooding during the rainy season and prolonged droughts during the dry season continue to pose a threat to traditional farming practices. Similarly, lack of access to land for production is among the challenges that perpetuate hunger among refugee households and malnutrition among the refugee children.



*Sifa with her fellow savings groups members in their communal garden of tomatoes*

To address the worsening food insecurity, Shared Action Africa supported the Refugee Women’s Movement, under the leadership of Sifa to successfully access 6 acres of land for production from the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda. Using resilient crops provided by Shared Action Africa, and practices taught to them that conserve water and the soil, the 6 savings groups transformed the 6 acres into 6 communal gardens, providing access to nutritious foods to over 194 households, an in turn enhancing their resilience to climate change.

Sifa also spearheaded the campaign of encouraging the members in her savings group to seize the opportunity and acquire energy efficient cookstoves, subsidized by 50% by Shared Acton Africa. As chairperson of her savings group, she oversaw the creation of an interest free energy efficient cookstove loan aimed at providing financing options to the group members. Accordingly, SAA appointed her to become the ambassador for the energy efficient cookstove program because she is a source of inspiration to her peers, fostering a collective commitment to sustainable production, and management of natural resources.

However, Sifa’s journey and those of her fellow women, particularly the refugees, has not been without hurdles. Access to resources, particularly insufficient capital to support meaningful investments, and overcoming societal norms and prejudices posed challenges, but her determination prevails. Through the support of Shared Action Africa’s program, Sifa and her fellow women navigated the obstacles, turning

them into steppingstones towards a brighter future. As Sifa continues her journey, her story becomes an inspiration to others, and proves that when you invest in a woman, you invest in the transformation of the family and the community at large.



*Sifa with her newly purchased dual energy efficient cookstove*

# Income



**88.25%**

Grants and Donations



**11.74%**

Individual Donors: (Mycorrhizal DAF Fund, Rotary Club of Marin Sunrise, etc.)

# Expenditure



**77%**

Program Expenses



**4%**

Fundraising & Capacity Building Expenses



**17%**

Management and Administrative Costs

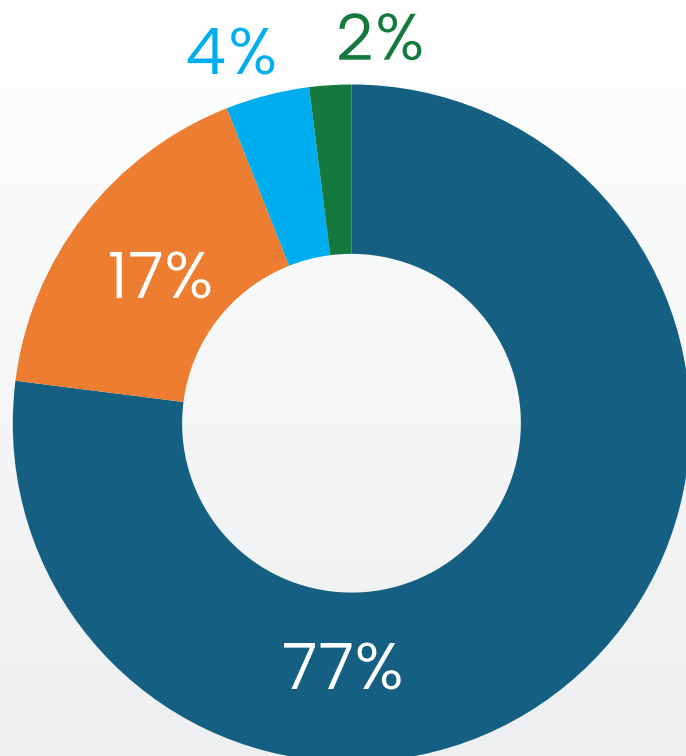


**2%**

Capital Equipment

## Expenditure in FY 2023

- Program Expenses
- Management and Administrative Costs
- Fundraising & Capacity Building Expenses
- Capital Equipment



# Partners and Supporters

**W**e extend our heartfelt gratitude to our funders for their invaluable support throughout 2023. Our partners—World Centric, JAC Trust, Bergstrom Foundation, African Women’s Development Fund, and Rotary Club of Marin Sunrise—have been instrumental in advancing our work in SRHR, livelihoods, climate resilience, and advocacy for women and girls. Through your generosity, we have expanded access to critical health services, strengthened economic opportunities, and empowered communities to drive sustainable change. Thank you for believing in our mission and standing with us to create lasting impact.

We sincerely thank our partners, including the Isingiro District Health Officer, Medical Teams International, UNHCR, and the dedicated members and individuals who came together to form the Youth SRHR Access Coalition for Nakivale and Oruchinga Refugee Settlements. Your collaboration and commitment have been vital in advancing sexual and reproductive health rights, expanding access to critical services, and fostering youth-led advocacy. Together, we are breaking barriers, shifting social norms, and ensuring that young people in refugee communities have the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health. We deeply appreciate your partnership in transforming the communities that we serve.



*Shared Action Africa team with partners and supporters*



Shared Action Africa Staff with Members of the Youth SRHR Access Coalition for Nakivale and Oruchinga Refugee Settlements

## Staff and Volunteer Recognition

We celebrate our team of dedicated staff and over 45 volunteers who worked tirelessly to achieve our notable results during the year. Special appreciation to [Names], whose commitment to our mission is inspiring.

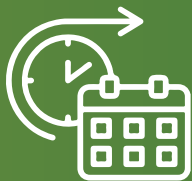


Youth Advocacy champions/peer educators led by the Advocacy Officer receive certificates of appreciation.



Youth Advocacy champions/peer educators led by the Advocacy Officer receive certificates of appreciation.

## Future for 2024



In 2024, we aim to elevate our impact by refining our organizational strategy and bringing on new supporters. We plan on building new partnerships with funding partners to join us on this exciting journey. Key to our strategy is the integration of technology to enhance our community impact and program monitoring and evaluation, ensuring real-time insights and optimization of interventions.

## Call to Action



As we reflect on the achievements of 2023, we invite you to join us in our mission. Your support ensures that women and girls in the refugee settlements refugee women continue to rebuild their lives, access economic opportunities, improve their health, and build resilience to climate change.



## Contact Information

For more information or to get involved, please contact us at

-  +256 782 250 660
-  [info@sharedact.org](mailto:info@sharedact.org)
-  [www.sharedact.org](http://www.sharedact.org)



**SHARED ACTION AFRICA**  
Together We Achieve

*Thank you for inspiring us and for joining us in helping refugee women and girls rebuild their lives and restore their dignity.*