

End of Year NEWSLETTER

2025



BEYOND NUMBERS

This year, we walked alongside older persons across Teso, ensuring each felt seen, valued, & cared for. We strengthened our team, reached deeper into communities, and created impact that touches hearts as much as lives.



A YEAR OF CONNECTION, COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIPS

From everyday care to extraordinary moments, 2025 was a year of growth, resilience, and togetherness. Through our core programs, partnerships, and community engagement, we reached more older persons, strengthened our team, and built networks that will sustain our work for years to come. Each story, each connection, and each act of support reminds us why we do this work.

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ECHOES OF WISDOM

Stories of Hope

85-year-old Mzee Atiku who lost his wife at a young age, raised children as a single parent, and endured war, displacement, and floods, is featured in our Echoes of Wisdom Project.

End of Year Note from the Executive Director



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Dear Reader,

If you are reading this, it means you are part of the Emerald Foundation Uganda story—and I thank you. As we close the year, please accept my heartfelt gratitude. Together with the Board of EFU, our staff and volunteers, partners, donors, beneficiaries, and well-wishers, you have been central to everything we have achieved in 2025.

This year reminded us that progress is not only measured by numbers, but by qualitative improvements in people's wellbeing. Your belief in dignity for older persons continues to inspire our work every day.

This year has been particularly meaningful in strengthening our impact among older persons and in advancing age-friendly communities across Eastern Uganda. With the generous support of the Friends and Partners of the Greg Gelburd Foundation—our principal program supporters—we expanded food and nutrition assistance to the most vulnerable older persons, increased home visits, and strengthened assisted daily living and psychosocial support for elders living alone or with limited family care. Because of this partnership, more older persons accessed basic healthcare through community outreaches and health camps, including screening, referrals, and follow-up support for those managing chronic conditions.

At the same time, our ability to deliver these programs sustainably has been strengthened through the ongoing organizational capacity-building support from GIZ under the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP II). This project is enhancing our governance, management, and financial systems, enabling our team to work more effectively and with greater accountability. We were equally encouraged by the growth of other partnerships and goodwill around our work, ranging from community leaders and legal professionals to media partners and additional donors.

As we look ahead to 2026, Uganda's ageing population continues to grow amid persistent challenges. People aged 60 and above make up 5% of the country's population, and increasing life expectancy means this number is certain to rise. Still, I have never felt this more hopeful and confident of our organizational potential. Our internal systems are stronger, our partnerships are deepening, and our staff and volunteers are more aligned than ever with our shared vision. The year 2026 will be an even greater year of impact!

This newsletter celebrates the milestones, stories, and collective efforts that shaped a very meaningful 2025. I thank you again for being part of this journey.

Warm regards,

Executive Director
Emerald Foundation Uganda

Throughout the year, Emerald Foundation Uganda continued to walk alongside vulnerable older persons,

Through home visits and daily care, we supported older persons living alone or with limited family support, helping ease loneliness and neglect. Community health outreaches provided basic check-ups, health talks, and follow-up care. For many older persons, food support made daily meals possible, while essentials like mattresses and other beddings brought comfort, rest, and dignity to elders who had been sleeping on bare mud floors & worn-out mats.



EFU team delivering a mattress ©EFU



Amuria, Dokolo Beneficiaries receiving food packages ©EFU



Sorting drugs for community distribution ©EFU

Listening to the Evidence: An Emerging Health Need

During our health camps, we carried out rapid syphilis tests with older persons, and found a high positivity rate, revealing a serious but often overlooked health issue among older people.

In response, we have designed a larger project to expand screening, referrals, and follow-up care,

We also now plan to expand health camps throughout Teso so more elders can be tested, treated, and supported. This is an important shift toward listening to what data and people are telling us and acting early on health concerns that too often go unnoticed.



Rapid diagnostic testing during a health camp. ©EFU

Celebrating International Day of Older Persons 2025

On 3rd October 2025, EFU commemorated the International Day of Older Persons, bringing together 207 older persons from across Teso, alongside community members, partners, & local leaders.

Elders shared life stories and testimonies, sang familiar songs, danced, and performed drama in an atmosphere of laughter, reflection, and connection.

Media Highlights (Watch Videos)

- ▶ [Dance & Drama show](#)
- ▶ [Community moments](#)
- ▶ [Chief Guest \(Prof. Ogwang's Address\)](#)
- ▶ [EFU Executive Director's Speech:](#)



Elders performing a cultural song/dance. ©EFU



Elders having a snack during celebrations. ©EFU

Donation & Distribution of Herbal Medicines

In support of EFU's health camps & community health outreaches for older persons, Prof. Ogwang donated a consignment of herbal medicines, warmly received by our team. This contribution enhanced our effort to provide essential care to vulnerable elders across Teso



Older persons all smiles ©EFU



Prof. Ogwang Patrick presents a donation of herbal medicines to Emerald Foundation Uganda ©EFU

Highlights from EFU's International Day of Older Persons



EFU Executive Director serving elders during the event. ©EFU



Staff and Board of EFU with Prof. Ogwang. ©EFU



Photo of older persons with all stakeholders. ©EFU

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WITH OLDER PERSONS

As the year drew to a close, EFU hosted a Christmas celebration with older persons, creating a joyful space for interaction, storytelling, singing, and shared meals. For elders, celebration meant more than festivity, it offered companionship, laughter, and a renewed sense of belonging.

These moments of connection reminded us that healthy ageing goes beyond physical care. It also includes emotional wellbeing, social inclusion, and the simple power of being seen, heard, and valued within the community.



Older persons with their food packages ©EFU



Celebrants reacting to a performance ©EFU

VOICE, ADVOCACY & VISIBILITY



A session of the media training in progress. ©EFU

In November 2025, Emerald Foundation Uganda strengthened its communication and advocacy capacity through a media training facilitated by the Vision Group Media Training Team.

The training equipped EFU staff with practical skills in solution journalism and mobile journalism (MoJo). This has since enabled EFU to document stories ethically, produce quality photos and videos, and amplify the voices of older persons with dignity and accuracy.

Staff participated in hands-on exercises, field simulations, and mobile editing sessions, gaining confidence in storytelling that highlights both challenges & solutions. This has positioned EFU to engage media, partners, and the public more effectively, while strengthening advocacy for the rights and well-being of older persons.



Participants during break off activity ©EFU

The training strengthened EFU ability to tell stories clearly, ethically, and with credibility in service of older persons and vulnerable communities. These skills were quickly applied through the **Echoes of Wisdom project**.

This training aligns with EFU's commitment to effectively communicate the experiences, rights, and needs of older persons while amplifying advocacy and community impact through strong media engagement.

Catherine Amulen- Programs Manager



Session on short video editing using VN app ©EFU

MEDIA FEATURES & COVERAGE

In 2025, EFU's work and advocacy for older persons reached wider audiences through local & national media, helping amplify elder voices and elevate issues affecting them.

- **New Vision: Teso's solution to old age**
https://www.newvision.co.ug/category/report/tesos-solution-to-old-age-neglect-NV_224483
- **Vision Group Journalists Volunteer Media Literacy Training for Teso Elderly Focused Organization:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXTEgppNFB8>

ECHOES OF WISDOM

In November 2025, Emerald Foundation started a 6-month Project: **“Echoes of Wisdom”**, a **Intangible cultural heritage** initiative to capture the knowledge, lived experiences, and lessons of older persons. Through this project, we celebrate their wisdom, preserve cultural knowledge, and share stories that inspire, teach, and connect generations—thanks to the support of our partner, **Prof. Ogwang Patrick Engeu**.

FEATURED

Mzee Clement Atiku — Resilience and Wisdom

At 85, Mzee Atiku embodies the power of a life lived fully. Born in 1941 in Soroti District, he grew up in a humble farming family, learning under a mango tree and writing on the ground when books were scarce. These early lessons in determination and resourcefulness shaped a lifetime of service.

Yet life tested him in ways few can imagine. He lost his wife at a young age, raised his children as a single parent, endured war, displacement, floods, and the loss of loved ones. Retirement brought new challenges: limited mobility, joint pain, and no stable income.

Through it all, Mzee Atiku carries decades’ worth of knowledge and experiences on adapting to environmental changes, surviving hardship, and the cultural values & traditions that have guided his life — intangible cultural heritage now preserved through Echoes of Wisdom for generations to come.



Mzee Clement Atiku at his home ©EFU

“Life teaches you to endure, to adapt, and to care for others. These are lessons we must pass on.”

— Mzee Clement Atiku

Strengthening institutional Capacity of Emerald Foundation Uganda for Impactful Programming and Sustainability

In 2025, Emerald Foundation Uganda made deliberate investments in strengthening the systems, skills, and structures that enable our work to thrive sustainably. A major milestone was the GIZ-funded capacity-building project titled **"Strengthening Emerald Foundation Uganda's Internal Capacity to Implement Impactful and Sustainable Programs."** Through this project, we began enhancing our governance, management, financial, M&E, and human resource systems to ensure that EFU is better equipped to sustainably deliver accountable, high-impact programs for older persons.



Participants in one capacity building workshop ©EFU

Communication Capacity Development & Training

Emerald Foundation Uganda also participated in a five-day Communication Capacity Development and Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop aimed at strengthening how organizations communicate, engage communities, and document impact.

The workshop equipped participants with practical skills in training others, ensuring knowledge transfer and long-term sustainability beyond the sessions. Key focus was on writing effective content for social media, aligning communication with organizational values, developing clear messaging, and strengthening newsletter writing & documentation practices.

This training strengthened our internal communication systems, improved storytelling capacity, and built the capacity of our Programs Manager to multiply these skills within Emerald Foundation.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training

In October 2025, our Programs Manager (PM) participated in a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training supported by GIZ in Kampala, strengthening our ability to measure outcomes, learn from our work, and communicate impact more effectively to partners and donors.

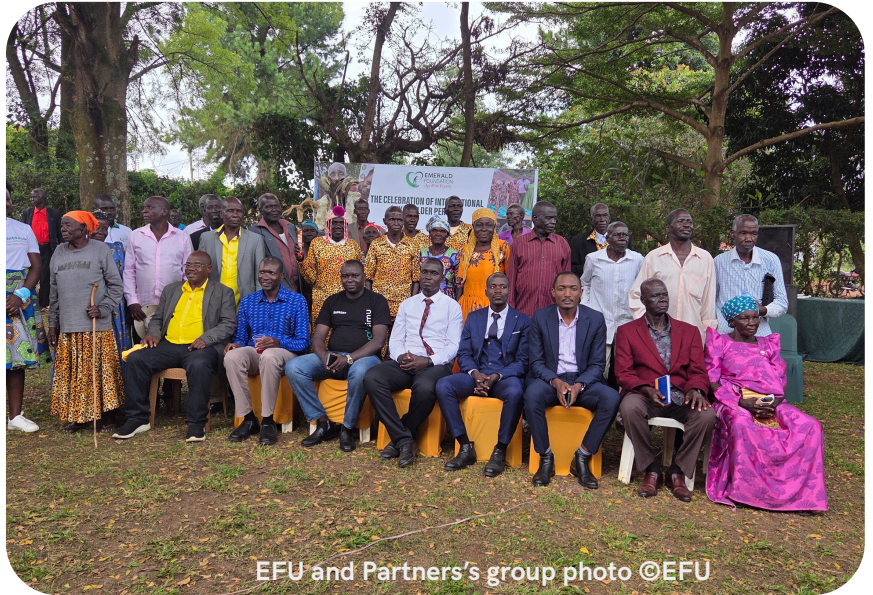


PM (kneeling) in an activity demonstration ©EFU/Amulen

Together, these efforts are an important step toward institutional maturity, transparency, and long-term sustainability for Emerald Foundation Uganda

Walking Together to Advance Dignity in Ageing

Throughout 2025, several partners, friends, & Individual supporters provided EFU with financial support & in-kind contributions that sustained our activities. Whether visible or behind the scenes, every contribution strengthened our ability to care, respond, & remain present for older persons who might otherwise be forgotten.



EFU and Partners's group photo ©EFU



Salume Okure Solita (ED) attending MWF event ©EFU/Okure

Leadership, Learning & Global Connection

EMERALD FOUNDATION UGANDA TO THE WORLD!

In July 2025, Emerald Foundation Uganda's Executive Director, [Salume Okure](#), participated in the Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF), at the Virginia- Presidential Precinct in United States, engaging in leadership training, peer exchange, and learning with emerging leaders from across Africa. The experience strengthened our organisational leadership, broadened global perspectives on ageing and social inclusion, and brought home new ideas that are now informing our programs, partnerships, & long-term vision.

From Bicycles to Motorcycle thanks to The Greg Gelburd Foundation

We are grateful to the [Greg Gelburd Foundation](#) whose financial support strengthened our Care, Wellbeing & Dignity programs since July 2025. The foundation's support directly contributed to improved welfare for older persons, enabling us to reach further and respond more consistently to community needs.

Of note this year, was the purchase of a motorbike, funded by the friends & partners of the Greg Gelburd Foundation. Until then, our team relied on bicycles to reach distant communities, limiting reach and straining staff. Today, our team is able to reach older persons more efficiently and consistently.



Our team riding to the community to deliver food in 2024 ©EFU



Program Team receiving the Motorbike in 2025 ©EFU



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• <https://www.linkedin.com/company/emerald-foundation-uganda/>



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HAPPY 2026