



Young Citizens of Rwanda

Registered Charity No. 1147302

Reporting Period: 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

by Jemrose L Walker CE

1. Introduction

I just love this quote by Wole Soyinka, Nigerian playwright and political activist, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986.



“Given the scale of trauma caused by the [1994] genocide, Rwanda has indicated that however thin the hope of a community can be, a hero always emerges. Although no one can dare claim that it is now a perfect state, and that no more work is needed, Rwanda has risen from the ashes as a model of truth and reconciliation.”

I have seen a lot of changes over my 25 years of serving in Rwanda. The nation has gone through many developmental modifications and I have seen many orphans and poor families rise from the dust of abject poverty. Education is paramount. Keeping the nation healthy is a number one priority. We are proud that YCR has played a small, but significant role in this National phenomenon.

2. Objectives of the Programme/Activities

YCR continues its mission to provide support in the following key areas:

- ❖ Access to formal and vocational education
- ❖ Safe accommodation and family shelter
- ❖ Improved health awareness and services for registered “poor & vulnerable” families
- ❖ Strengthening community capacity through training and gatherings
- ❖ Nutrition programmes to promote healthy growth and development

3. Activities Conducted

3.1 Gift of Education Programme

- ❖ We provided comprehensive support to more than 150 students of all levels of learning. This included paying all school fees and providing all school materials.
- ❖ We followed up on our initial support of Ingenzi Nursery School. This year we funded essential infrastructure improvements and helped to develop a safe and attractive play area.

3.2 Family Shelter

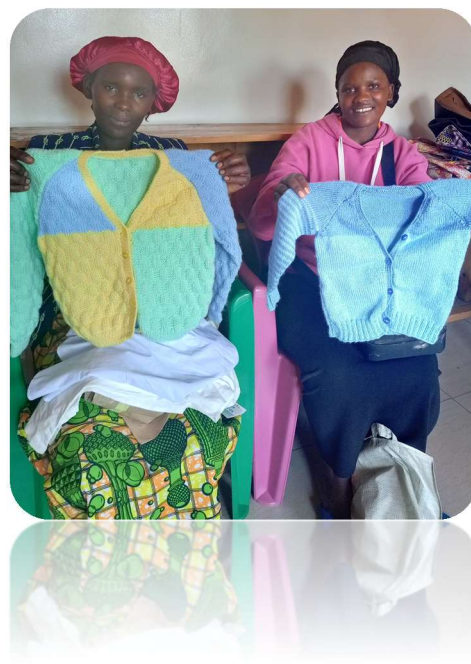
We assisted nine families by paying their monthly rent for up to one year; some support is ongoing. This initiative was put in place to provide long-term stability and help beneficiaries to eventually achieve self-sufficiency.

3.2 Health Support

Although Rwanda's National Health Insurance scheme known as *Mutuelle de Santé* is relatively affordable, many families struggle to meet this cost. YCR, in partnership with Gasabo District, tries to support as many families as possible, particularly those with young children, ensuring they have access to the health service they need. In some cases, it is also necessary for YCR to purchase prescribed medicines as these, too, can be beyond the means of vulnerable families.

4. Achievements and Outcomes

With the valuable support of our friends, donors and sponsors YCR has steadily contributed to the overall stability and quality of life for families, youth and children in Rwanda; encouraging hope and enabling practicable pathways toward personal independence. Our primary focus is always education. We deeply appreciate our donors and sponsors, who have made these achievements possible.



5. Challenges Faced

Despite our efforts and successes, YCR has encountered several challenges:

- ❖ **Limited Resources:** Insufficient funding and resources sometimes restrict the scope and scale of support we can provide, especially to new beneficiaries.
- ❖ **Infrastructure Constraints:** Although support has been provided to improve one local nursery school, we would also like to reach out to others trying to help the little ones, who would otherwise be left playing all day long in the dirt.
- ❖ **Access and Outreach:** Reaching the most vulnerable families in remote or hard-to-access areas remains difficult, affecting the timely delivery of assistance.

- ❖ **Sustainability:** Ensuring the long-term sustainability of programmes, especially in terms of consistent funding, resources and staff, continues to be a concern.
- ❖ **Economic unpredictability:** Fluctuation in the local economy and the ever-increasing cost of living is having a huge impact on family life, making the rise out of poverty existentially more difficult.

6. Lessons Learned

Throughout our work during 2024-2025, YCR has gained valuable insights that will guide future efforts:

- ❖ **Community Engagement is Crucial:** Involving community members in the planning and implementation of programmes enhances relevance and sustainability.
- ❖ **Holistic Support Yields Better Outcomes:** Addressing multiple needs simultaneously creates more lasting impact than isolated interventions.
- ❖ **Flexibility and Adaptability are Key:** Being responsive to changing circumstances and feedback from beneficiaries helps improve program effectiveness.
- ❖ **Partnerships Strengthen Impact:** Collaborating with local organisations, schools and stakeholders increases resource availability and outreach capabilities.
- ❖ **Sustainable Solutions Require Long-Term Planning:** Focusing on capacity-building and local ownership ensures that benefits continue beyond immediate support.
- ❖ **Share insights gained** during implementation to inform future activities.

7. Future Plans



Building on our achievements and lessons learned, YCR aims to expand and strengthen our initiatives in the coming year:

- ❖ **Gift of Education Programme:** Continue to support poor and vulnerable young people to promote quality education and skills development. Increase our support by 50%.
- ❖ **Increase Outreach:** Develop strategies to reach more vulnerable families in remote and underserved areas, ensuring no family suffers from lack of access to any help available.
- ❖ **Focus on vision sharing:** Implement capacity-building initiatives for our team and community volunteers.
- ❖ **Expand Health and Nutrition Programmes:** Address special health challenges through awareness campaigns conducted by Joint Aid Development Forum (JADF) – a division of Gasabo District – in our continuing fight against child malnutrition.
- ❖ **Monitor and Evaluate:** Establish strong monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress, measure impact, and adapt programmes as needed.
- ❖ **Psychosocial and Practical Support:** Despite government efforts, teenage pregnancy is on the rise. We are currently devising strategies, including fundraising, to help these young mothers get back to school and complete their education.

8. Conclusion

In 2024-2025, YCR made significant strides in supporting vulnerable families and promoting sustainable community development. Through dedicated effort, collaboration, and learning from our experiences, we have laid a strong foundation for ongoing and future initiatives. While challenges remain, our commitment to empowering individuals and improving the lives of children and youth remains unwavering. We look forward to building on our successes, embracing new opportunities, and continuing to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

