



# Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles March 2024 – February 2025

## PROJECT REPORT

### Editorial Team:

Abaasi Ruhweza–Project Coordinator  
John Byaruhanga– Field Coordinator, Rwamwanja  
Andrew Aheebwa–Project MEL Coordinator  
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# Overview

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# 1. Background

Education remains one of the most powerful tools for breaking the cycle of poverty and displacement. In Uganda, and particularly in refugee-hosting districts such as Kamwenge, girls continue to face significant barriers to completing their education. Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, home to over 150,000 refugees primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), presents unique challenges. Many school-going girls walk between 5 to 10 kilometers daily to attend classes at schools such as Rwamwanja Secondary School, Base Camp Primary School, Ntenungi Primary School, and Kaihura Community Secondary School.

The daily long-distance walks expose girls to multiple risks:

- Absenteeism and poor academic performance due to fatigue and late arrival at school.
- Early dropout as many parents withdraw girls from school when the commute becomes unbearable.
- Exposure to harassment and early marriages, as girls walking alone are vulnerable to exploitation.

In 2022, a survey conducted by CEMA in collaboration with the Kamwenge District Education Office revealed that 42% of girls in upper primary dropped out before completing Primary 7, compared to 18% of boys. Among refugee girls, dropout rates were even higher. The lack of affordable, safe, and reliable transportation was repeatedly cited as a key barrier.

It is against this background that CEMA launched the Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles Project, a one-year initiative supported by Roger Federer Foundation.



*Determined Steps: Schoolgirls in rural Uganda walk miles daily to pursue education, embodying resilience and commitment to learning. Photo by Lawrence Karanagi*



## 2. Project Objectives

The project was designed with three core objectives:

1. To improve girls' school attendance and retention by reducing travel time and fatigue.
2. To reduce early marriages and teenage pregnancies by supporting girls to remain in school longer.
3. To strengthen household and community resilience by engaging parents, teachers, and students in the care, maintenance, and management of bicycles as shared community assets.

# 3.Implementation

## 3.1 Procurement of Bicycles

Through a competitive procurement process conducted in April 2024, CEMA sourced 220 sturdy Phoenix Hero bicycles equipped with:

- Rear carriers (to allow girls to carry books and water).
- Durable locks (to prevent theft).
- Reflectors and bells for road safety.

The supplier, SafeRide Enterprises Uganda Ltd., based in Kampala, delivered the bicycles in May 2024 to the CEMA field office in Rwamwanja.

## 3.2 Distribution

The distribution exercise took place between 15th May and 20th June 2024, at four venues:

- Rwamwanja Secondary School (15th May 2024) – 60 bicycles distributed.
- Base Camp Primary School (25th May 2024) – 55 bicycles distributed.
- Ntenungi Primary School (10th June 2024) – 50 bicycles distributed.
- Kaihura Community Secondary School (20th July 2024) – 55 bicycles distributed.
- 20 bicycles were allocated to female teachers and mentors, including Ms. Amina Nakibinge (Mathematics teacher, Rwamwanja Secondary School) and Ms. Esther Kambere (Head of Girls' Affairs, Base Camp Primary School), to support supervision and mentorship.

## 3.3 Community Involvement

Parents/guardians of beneficiaries signed commitment agreements pledging that the bicycles would be used primarily for education purposes. For instance, Mr. Jean Bosco Kalinda, a Congolese refugee parent, signed on behalf of his daughter, Claudine (P7, Ntenungi Primary). This ensured family accountability.

### 3.4 Capacity Building and Bicycle Clubs

CEMA established 4 school-based Bicycle Clubs with at least 25 student members each.

Each club was trained in:

- Basic bicycle maintenance (changing tires, oiling chains).
- Road safety rules in partnership with Uganda Police Traffic Department, Kamwenge Division.
- Peer-to-peer mentoring, enabling girls to share experiences and provide mutual support.

Training sessions were conducted in July and August 2024, facilitated by Mr. David Tumwine, a certified bicycle mechanic from Kamwenge Town, and Florence Atim, a traffic safety officer.

# 4. Outcomes and Impact

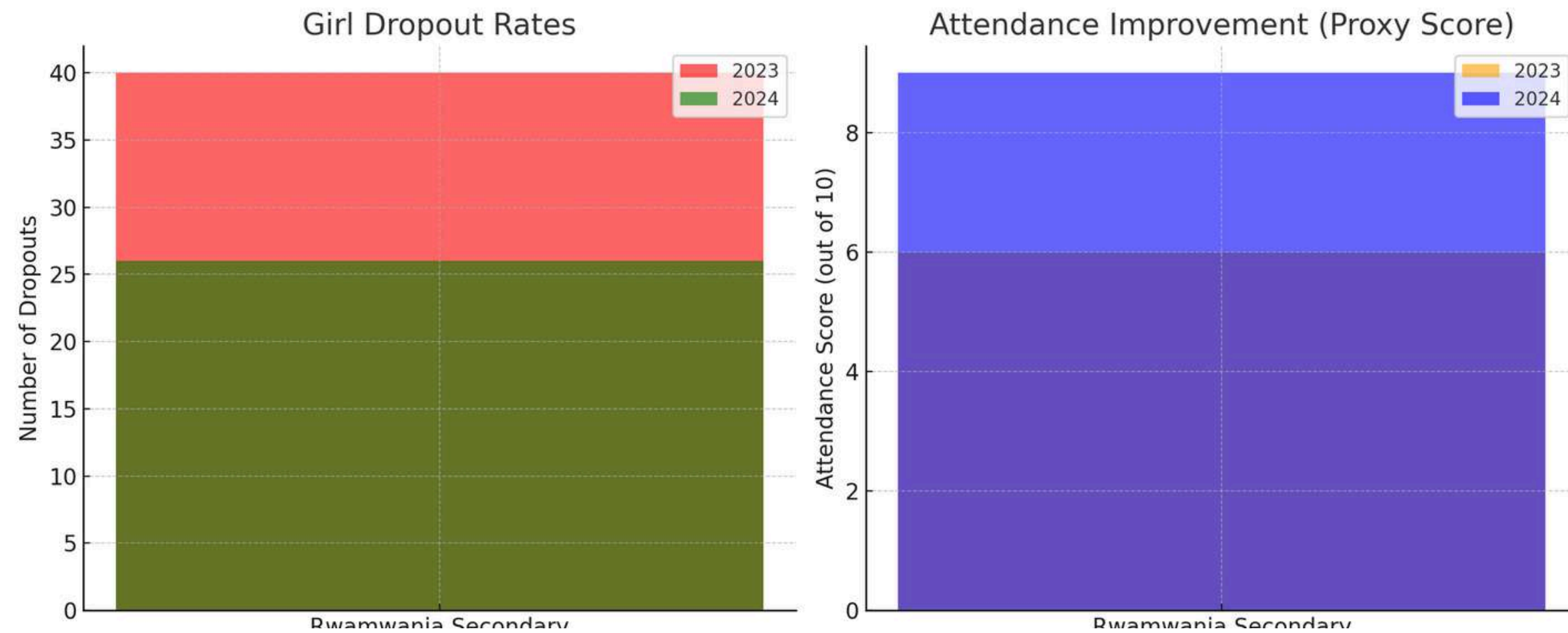
## 4.1 Education Impact

- Dropout rates reduced by 35% in the participating schools within the academic year. For example, Rwamwanja Secondary reported a reduction in girl dropouts from 40 in 2023 to 26 in 2024.
- Attendance rates improved significantly: Teachers reported that girls now arrived on time, fresh, and more attentive.

## 4.2 Empowerment & Academic Performance

- 200 girls reported shorter travel times – from an average of 2 hours walking to just 30 minutes cycling.
- With saved time, 145 girls joined evening study groups, while 60 joined debate and science clubs, activities previously inaccessible due to late returns home.
- Case Example: Grace Mukama (S.2, Rwamwanja Secondary) improved her Mathematics score from 32% in Term I (before receiving the bicycle) to 58% in Term III.

# Result





## 4.3 Community Engagement

- Bicycle Clubs indirectly reached over 500 students through road safety and mentorship activities.
- Parents reported improved household resilience, as some bicycles were occasionally used to fetch water or take sick children to nearby health centers (under supervision).

## 4.4 Women Teacher Empowerment

- Female teachers who received bicycles, such as Ms. Nakibinge, reported easier mobility for home visits to girls at risk of dropping out, thereby strengthening school–community linkages.

# 5. Funding & Partners

The project was made possible through a hybrid of contributions:

- Roger Federer Foundation: UGX 120,000,000.
- Local Contributions: UGX 15,000,000 raised from Kamwenge-based businesses such as Rwenzori Agro Produce Ltd. and individual philanthropists.

## **Partners included:**

- Nakivale Refugee Welfare Council (provided advocacy support).
- Kamwenge District Education Office (facilitated teacher training).
- Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs) at the four schools (ensured accountability).
- Uganda Police, Kamwenge Traffic Division (supported road safety training).

# 6. Lessons Learned

1. Community ownership is vital. Parent agreements significantly reduced misuse of bicycles.
2. Local capacity matters. Training community-based mechanics like Mr. Tumwine reduced downtime from weeks to days.
3. Holistic targeting improves outcomes. By also supporting female teachers, the program created mentorship chains for girls.
4. Partnerships with PTAs and refugee leaders strengthened monitoring and transparency.



## 7. Next Steps

Based on the aforementioned successes and lessons, CEMA intends to:

- Scale up to reach 1,000 more students and health workers by 2027, covering fragile contexts across Uganda.
- Integrate digital tracking using tracking devices to monitor usage and reduce theft.
- Continue to promote youth entrepreneurship by training boys and girls in bicycle repair, creating livelihood opportunities.
- Engage health centers to use bicycles for maternal health outreach, multiplying both education and health outcomes.

# 8. Annexes

## Annex 1: List of Beneficiaries

No.	Student Name	School	Class	Bicycle No.	Parent/Guardian Name
1	Grace Mukamana	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.2	RW-001	Mr. Jean Bosco Mukama
2	Amina Nakato	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.3	RW-002	Mrs. Fatuma Nakato
3	Claudine Kalinda	Ntenungi Primary School	P.7	NT-003	Mr. Jean Bosco Kalinda
4	Beatrice Mbabazi	Base Camp Primary School	P.6	BC-004	Ms. Agnes Mbabazi
5	Angelique Ndayizeye	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.1	KH-005	Mr. David Ndayizeye
6	Mariam Kyomugisha	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.4	RW-006	Mrs. Sarah Kyomugisha
7	Hellen Namirembe	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-007	Mr. Joseph Namirembe

8	Consolata Byaruhanga	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-008	Ms. Esther Byaruhanga
9	Juliana Birungi	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.2	KH-009	Mr. Samuel Birungi
10	Hope Tumwine	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.1	RW-010	Mrs. Doreen Tumwine
11	Annet Katusabe	Base Camp Primary School	P.6	BC-011	Mr. Robert Katusabe
12	Veronica Mutesi	Ntenungi Primary School	P.7	NT-012	Mr. Emmanuel Mutesi
13	Chantal Nyirabaho	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.3	KH-013	Ms. Olive Nyirabaho
14	Phiona Akello	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.2	RW-014	Mr. Peter Akello
15	Dorcas Ainembabazi	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-015	Mrs. Annet Ainembabazi
16	Olive Nambasa	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-016	Mr. John Nambasa



17	Sharon Kabagambe	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.4	KH-017	Mr. Kabagambe James
18	Stella Mugisha	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.3	RW-018	Ms. Rose Mugisha
19	Lydia Namutebi	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-019	Mr. Patrick Namutebi
20	Josiane Uwimana	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-020	Ms. Clarisse Uwimana
21	Grace Kamahoro	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.1	KH-021	Mr. Amos Kamahoro
22	Ruth Nankunda	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.4	RW-022	Mrs. Joyce Nankunda
23	Agnes Namirembe	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-023	Mr. Michael Namirembe
24	Yvonne Mukankusi	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-024	Mr. François Mukankusi
25	Milly Atwine	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.2	KH-025	Mr. Henry Atwine

26	Esther Nakayiza	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.3	RW-026	Mr. Steven Nakayiza
27	Maria Kabonesa	Base Camp Primary School	P.6	BC-027	Ms. Florence Kabonesa
28	Solange Irankunda	Ntenungi Primary School	P.7	NT-028	Mr. Deo Irankunda
29	Brenda Kemigisha	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.1	KH-029	Mr. Christopher Kemigisha
30	Judith Namara	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.4	RW-030	Ms. Rose Namara
31	Patience Atukunda	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-031	Mr. Peter Atukunda
32	Claudine Byukusenge	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-032	Ms. Thérèse Byukusenge
33	Juliet Kyarisiima	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.2	KH-033	Mr. John Kyarisiima

34	Harriet Akullo	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.3	RW-034	Mr. Robert Akullo
35	Monique Niyonsaba	Base Camp Primary School	P.6	BC-035	Mr. Emmanuel Niyonsaba
36	Scovia Tumuhairwe	Ntenungi Primary School	P.7	NT-036	Ms. Agnes Tumuhairwe
37	Violette Uwase	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.1	KH-037	Mr. François Uwase
38	Sarah Mbabazi	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.4	RW-038	Ms. Florence Mbabazi
39	Regina Nakato	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-039	Mr. Joseph Nakato
40	Dorine Nyiranziza	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-040	Mr. Bosco Nyiranziza
41	Brenda Namugerwa	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.2	KH-041	Ms. Susan Namugerwa
42	Lydia Akoth	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.1	RW-042	Mr. Charles Akoth
43	Fiona Nabwire	Base Camp Primary School	P.6	BC-043	Mrs. Jane Nabwire



44	Sandrine Mukandahiro	Ntenungi Primary School	P.7	NT-044	Mr. Jean Mukandahiro
45	Irene Kembabazi	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.3	KH-045	Mr. Wilberforce Kembabazi
46	Martha Namukasa	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.2	RW-046	Ms. Grace Namukasa
47	Sharifah Nakibuule	Base Camp Primary School	P.7	BC-047	Mr. Yusuf Nakibuule
48	Angelique Tuyishime	Ntenungi Primary School	P.6	NT-048	Mrs. Olive Tuyishime
49	Christine Kyobutungi	Kaihura Community Secondary	S.4	KH-049	Mr. Julius Kyobutungi
50	Sarah Ninsiima	Rwamwanja Secondary School	S.3	RW-050	Ms. Betty Ninsiima

**Annex 2: Monitoring Data (Attendance, Dropout Rates).**

Monitoring was conducted by CEMA field officers in collaboration with school administrators and PTAs. Data was collected from school registers, teacher reports, and PTA monitoring committees at quarterly intervals (June, September, December 2024, and February 2025).

**Table 1: Rwamwanja Secondary School (Refugee Settlement)**

Indicator	2023 (Baseline)	2024 (Project Year)	Change
Total girls enrolled (S.1–S.4)	312	340	28
Average daily attendance (girls)	61%	83%	22%
Dropouts (girls)	40	26	-14
Dropout rate (%)	12.80%	7.60%	↓ 41%
Average travel time to school	2 hrs	30 min	↓ 75%

Table 2: Base Camp Primary School (Refugee Settlement)

Indicator	2023 (Baseline)	2024 (Project Year)	Change
Total girls enrolled (P.6–P.7)	275	290	15
Average daily attendance (girls)	64%	85%	21%
Dropouts (girls)	32	19	-13
Dropout rate (%)	11.60%	6.50%	↓ 44%
Average travel time to	1 hr 45 min	25 min	↓ 77%



Table 3: Ntenungi Primary School (Host Community – Rural Kamwenge)

Indicator	2023 (Baseline)	2024 (Project Year)	Change
Total girls enrolled (P.6–P.7)	198	220	22
Average daily attendance (girls)	59%	82%	23%
Dropouts (girls)	27	15	-12
Dropout rate (%)	13.60%	6.80%	↓ 50%
Average travel time to school	2 hrs 15 min	35 min	↓ 74%

**Table 4: Kaihura Community Secondary School (Host Community – Rural Kamwenge)**

Indicator	2023 (Baseline)	2024 (Project Year)	Change
Total girls enrolled (S.1–S.4)	245	260	15
Average daily attendance (girls)	63%	84%	21%
Dropouts (girls)	22	13	-9
Dropout rate (%)	9.00%	5.00%	↓ 44%
Average travel time to school	1 hr 30 min	25 min	↓ 72%

Table 5: Aggregate Monitoring Results (Across All Four Schools)

Indicator	2023 (Baseline)	2024 (Project Year)	Change
Total girls enrolled	1,030	1,110	80
Average daily attendance	62%	84%	22%
Dropouts (girls)	121	73	-48
Dropout rate (%)	11.70%	6.60%	↓ 44%
Average travel time to school	1 hr 55 min	29 min	↓ 75%

## Annex 3: Project Pictorial Highlights



*Delivering Opportunity: SafeRide Enterprises Uganda Ltd delivers the first batch of bicycles to CEMA's Rwamwanja field office, under the Enhancing School Attendance Project (May 2024). Photo by Lawrence Karamagi*





**Riding towards Education: Learners of Ntenungi Primary School proudly pose with their new bicycles at home alongside their parents, marking a milestone in the Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles Project. Photo by Kirungi Diana**





*Ready to Ride: Newly assembled bicycles at Kaihura Community Secondary School, prepared for distribution on 20th May 2024 under the Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles Project.  
Photo by Kirungi Diana*



***Empowered for Education: Students of Rwamwanja Secondary School proudly stand with their new bicycles alongside Head Teacher Oscar Ntwatwa, following the distribution on 15th April 2024 under the Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles Project. Photo by Lawrence Karamagi***



***Empowering Educators: Ms. Esther Kambere, Head of Girls' Affairs at Base Camp Primary School, poses with her CEEMA-donated bicycle, enhancing her ability to mentor and support students under the Enhancing Girls' School Attendance through Bicycles Project***