



# Building Farmer Prosperity and Youth Employment for the Uganda Coffee Sector

GCP Collective Action in Uganda:  
Mid-Program Progress Update (2025-2026)



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

GCP Collective Action in Uganda aims to improve smallholder coffee farmers' livelihoods and climate resilience while strengthening the sustainability of the coffee sector. The program expands access to quality extension services and supports sector preparedness for compliance with evolving market requirements such as the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD).

Coordinated by the Uganda Coffee Platform (UCP), the program builds on the lessons and best

practices from the GCP Collective Action Initiative "Youth for Coffee" (2022-2025). By capacitating entrepreneurial youths to establish Youth Business Units (YBUs) to provide coffee rehabilitation, renovation and agroforestry services to farmers, the program simultaneously addresses gaps in last-mile extension and the lack of employment opportunities for rural youth. The Youth Business Units are linked to existing supply chains to build a client base for their services, supporting their long-term sustainability and strengthening the resilience and sustainability of Uganda's coffee sector.

## GOAL

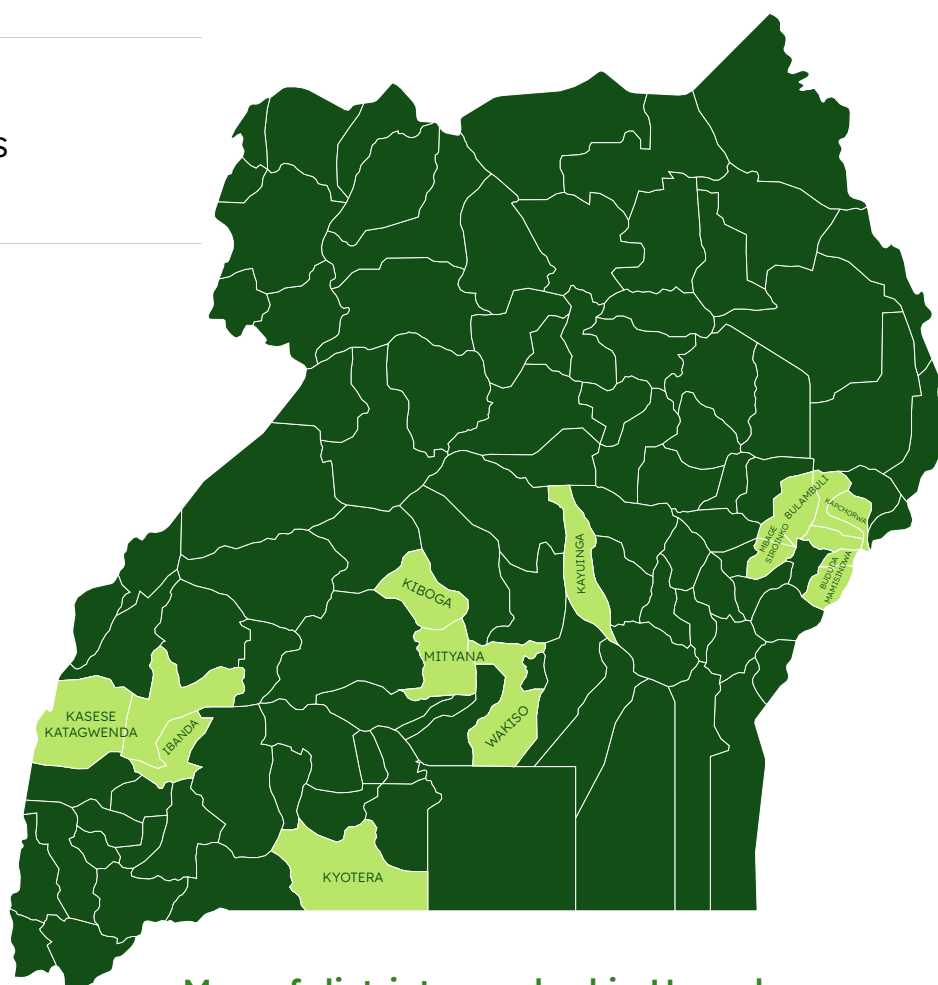
Increase farmers' coffee yields by **20%** and incomes by **10%** by the end of 2027

## TARGET GROUP

**75** Youth Business Units  
**~10,000** farmers

## DURATION

2025-2027



Map of districts reached in Uganda

# Challenges Being Addressed

- Low productivity: 1/3 or 1/4 of potential
- Old coffee trees are not maintained
- Climate change threatens yields
- Rural youth high unemployment levels
- Insufficient extension systems to provide training on Good Agricultural Practices
- Farmers are unprepared for new importing market regulations

## Expected Results

### **75 Youth Business Units**

established: employing 150 youths to provide agricultural training and services

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### **9,750+ farmers**

reached with rehabilitation and renovation training and services

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### **487,500 coffee trees**

rehabilitated and 7,500 agroforestry tree seedlings distributed

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### **EUDR & CSDDD improved preparedness**

through supporting the public-private EUDR taskforce and sector sensitization via UCP



# Mid-Term Program Progress Update

## YOUTH



**75**

Youth Business Unit  
established

**31**

female-led



**44**

male-led



**150**

Youth trained

**35**

females



**115**

males



## FARMERS



**4,053**

receiving  
rehabilitation and  
renovation services

**1,535**

trained on  
Agroforestry

**973**

receive income  
diversification  
support

## COFFEE TREES



**212,939**

coffee trees  
stumped

**64,429**

trees with sucker  
selected



# Stories from the Field

## Juliet Cherop, smallholder farmer

### Kapchorwa District

Juliet Cherop, sole provider for her eight children, has relied on coffee farming for more than 20 years. As her 212 Arabica coffee trees aged, productivity declined, with yields falling to just 1.0-1.5 kg of coffee cherry per tree and exacerbating the pressure on household income.

In January 2025, Juliet joined the GCP Collective Action through the Kapchorwa YBU, where she received training on coffee rehabilitation and other good agricultural practices. Encouraged by the guidance and support of the YBU, she agreed to have 50 trees stumped as a trial and later worked alongside her son to rehabilitate an additional 100 trees, while adopting pruning, de-suckering, sucker selection, and agroforestry.



**Accepting stumping was a difficult decision for me, as we depended on the existing trees for family income, and initially I was not comfortable with the idea.**

By the 2026 harvest, her yields had increased to 2.5-3.0 kg of cherry coffee per tree, nearly doubling previous years. Beyond the higher yields and improved long-term productivity, the intervention helped strengthen the role of coffee as a source of household income for Juliet and her family. Her son has also gained valuable farming skills, helping to improve the family's coffee enterprise for years to come.

## Khabusi Edith, smallholder coffee farmer

### Makali Community, Bududa District

For years, Edith Khabusi struggled with declining productivity as her coffee trees aged. Despite efforts to restore productivity through pruning and partial stumping, the results were limited and her coffee farm continued to deteriorate.

In February 2025, Edith joined the GCP Collective Action program, receiving training in coffee rehabilitation, farm management, and agroforestry. With hands-on support from the Bukibino YBU, Edith fully stumped 45 aging coffee trees and learned how to select healthy suckers from the regenerating plants. The YBU guided her through sucker selection of 25 arabica coffee trees, and she applied her new skills to the remaining 20. She also received fertilizer to improve soil fertility and agroforestry seedlings to diversify her farm and strengthen its resilience.

One year later, her regenerated coffee trees are showing significant health improvements, and she expects to begin harvesting them in the coming season. She anticipates that production will double compared to previous levels. Alongside a thriving avocado tree (received as part of income diversification support) these improvements have strengthened the productivity and resilience of Edith's farm.



**Today, the coffee looks much healthier, and I am confident that I will start harvesting next year. I expect my production to double. I am also happy to have planted an avocado tree that is growing well.**

## International Year of the Woman Farmer

Stories like these are especially relevant in 2026 – the United Nations's International Year of the Woman Farmer, which spotlights the essential roles women play across agrifood systems that often go unrecognized. These examples show what's possible when women farmers and young women leaders gain access to training and technical support, empowering them with the confidence to lead change. These stories are among many emerging from Uganda's coffee sector and show the value of investing in women across the coffee value chain.



# Lessons Learned

## Overcoming engrained traditions

Key barriers to improved coffee farming are often cultural rather than technical. Despite the proven benefits of stumping older coffee trees, some farmers are hesitant to adopt the practice. With coffee prices remaining high over the past two years, farmers were reluctant to absorb the temporary loss of income associated with cutting back tree branches that still have berries. In some communities, large, mature coffee trees are also valued symbols of status and tradition. Similarly, farmers often prefer familiar tree varieties over those recommended by Uganda's Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), even when these carry greater pest risks.

To address these challenges, YBUs and implementing partners have strengthened community awareness efforts and engaged local leaders to promote coffee rehabilitation and encourage farmers to view stumping as a long-term investment. UCP also expanded its training on agroforestry tree selection and pest management, helping farmers better understand the benefits of the recommended species. Both examples point to the same lesson: lasting changes

in agricultural practices depend not only on sound technical advice, but on sustained community engagement and trust-building.

## Adapting to climate change

Climate change-related weather disruptions have shortened the usual January-February stumping window for Robusta-growing regions. Unusual rainfall patterns triggered near-continuous flowering, leaving many trees bearing berries when scheduled for stumping. Farmers were therefore reluctant to prune or stump these trees, reducing registration and service delivery and delaying stumping, sucker selection, and fertilizer application.

UCP introduced staggered stumping as a mitigation measure, using two stumping windows per year (January-February and June-July). Since sucker selection and fertilizer application depend on prior stumping, accelerating stumping activities became a priority. Early results indicate that this approach has been effective for managing these climate-related disruptions, allowing the program to proceed with its intended activities as planned.

## About the partnership

Through a collective €2 million investment, the Global Coffee Platform (GCP), leading coffee companies, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) are working together pre-competitively to improve smallholder farmers' livelihoods, strengthen climate resilience, and promote more sustainable coffee supply chains in Kenya and Uganda.

The program is part of GCP's Collective Action for Farmer Prosperity and done in partnership with participating GCP members and the Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains Initiative (SASI). SASI, funded by BMZ and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, focuses on improving social, environmental, and economic conditions throughout agricultural supply chains.

GCP-affiliated Country Platforms in Kenya (Kenya Coffee Platform) and Uganda (Uganda Coffee Platform, hosted by Café Africa Uganda) coordinate the implementation and help ensure that lessons learned inform national coffee sector discussions and future action.



### Global Coffee Platform

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