

SASCU
STRATEGY
2025–2029

SAVE STREET CHILDREN UGANDA



SCAN



Bringing hope to vulnerable
children in Uganda.





FOREWORD

Our 2025–2029 strategy is a bold, evidence-informed response to the complex and evolving risks facing Uganda's most vulnerable populations. It is rooted in a rights-based approach and informed by deep consultations with stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries. We have grounded this plan in lessons that stress the importance of addressing the root causes of vulnerability that lead children and young people to end up on the streets, strengthening families as the first line of protection, and ensuring continuity of care for children and young people unable to return home.

The needs of children and young people in vulnerable situations remain vast, complex, and often overlooked or inadequately addressed. We also learn that access to sexual, reproductive, and mental health services is critical for street-connected young people and women, supporting dignity, independence, and recovery. Lastly, we have also learnt that climate change exacerbates poverty and displacement, requiring integrated climate adaptation within all program areas.

As global conversations around equity and justice evolves purred by the structural inequalities exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a rise of populist governments in the global north, international development must reckon with its colonial legacy. These realities compel us to reflect deeply on our purpose, methods, and the value we bring to the world.

SASCU's strategy is therefore both a practical roadmap and a values-based commitment to work in solidarity with communities toward a more just and inclusive Uganda.



INNOCENT BYARUHANGA OBUYYE
Founder & Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

Save Street Children Uganda (SASCU) is a faith-based non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the rights of street-connected, unaccompanied, or separated refugee children, other vulnerable children, young people, and women in Uganda. Founded in 2005, SASCU's primary goal is to rescue, rehabilitate, and reintegrate street-connected and refugee children, young people, and young women with their families and communities.

To achieve this mission, SASCU operates a government-approved Reception Centre in Kampala, where rescued children and young people are first received and stabilized, along with an approved registered children's home in Luwero District, where rescued children and young people receive counseling and psychosocial support, education, market-oriented skills training, and biblical discipleship training.

SASCU's vocational training centers in Luwero and Kampala are accredited as Livelihood Empowerment Centers by the Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT). Over the past twenty years, SASCU has effectively rescued, rehabilitated, and reintegrated more than 2,000 children and young people in Uganda.



OUR VISION

A society where no child lives on the street.



OUR MISSION

To promote the rights of children in street situations and other vulnerable children, young people, and women in Uganda through research, information, advocacy, service delivery, participation, and empowerment interventions in collaboration with others to enhance their socio-economic welfare.



OUR CORE VALUES

SASCU's core values form the foundation of our culture, guide every decision we make, and drive the success we celebrate. These values include;

- Respect For Human Dignity
- Learning,
- Collective Participation
- Volunteerism
- Integrity
- Transparency & Accountability



OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2025–2029



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthen protection systems that prevent and respond to abuse, violence, and exploitation of children and young people.

2. Expand access to equitable, inclusive, and quality early childhood and lifelong education.

3. Promote comprehensive, age- and gender-appropriate health services, including mental and sexual reproductive health.

4. Enhance the economic resilience of vulnerable families through social protection and inclusive livelihood opportunities.

5. Empower communities, especially children, young people, and women—to engage in climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

6. Build SASCU's internal capacity, sustainability, and accountability through robust governance and systems.

In Pursuing Realisation Of Our Objectives, We Will Operate Under The Following Cross-cutting Principles (Care)

- Child-Centered Programming:

Prioritizing the safety, voice, and development of every child.

- Advocacy and Evidence-Based Practice:

Using data and lived experiences to influence systems and policy change.

- Responsible Local Ownership:

Partnering with local actors and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability.

- Equity and Inclusion:

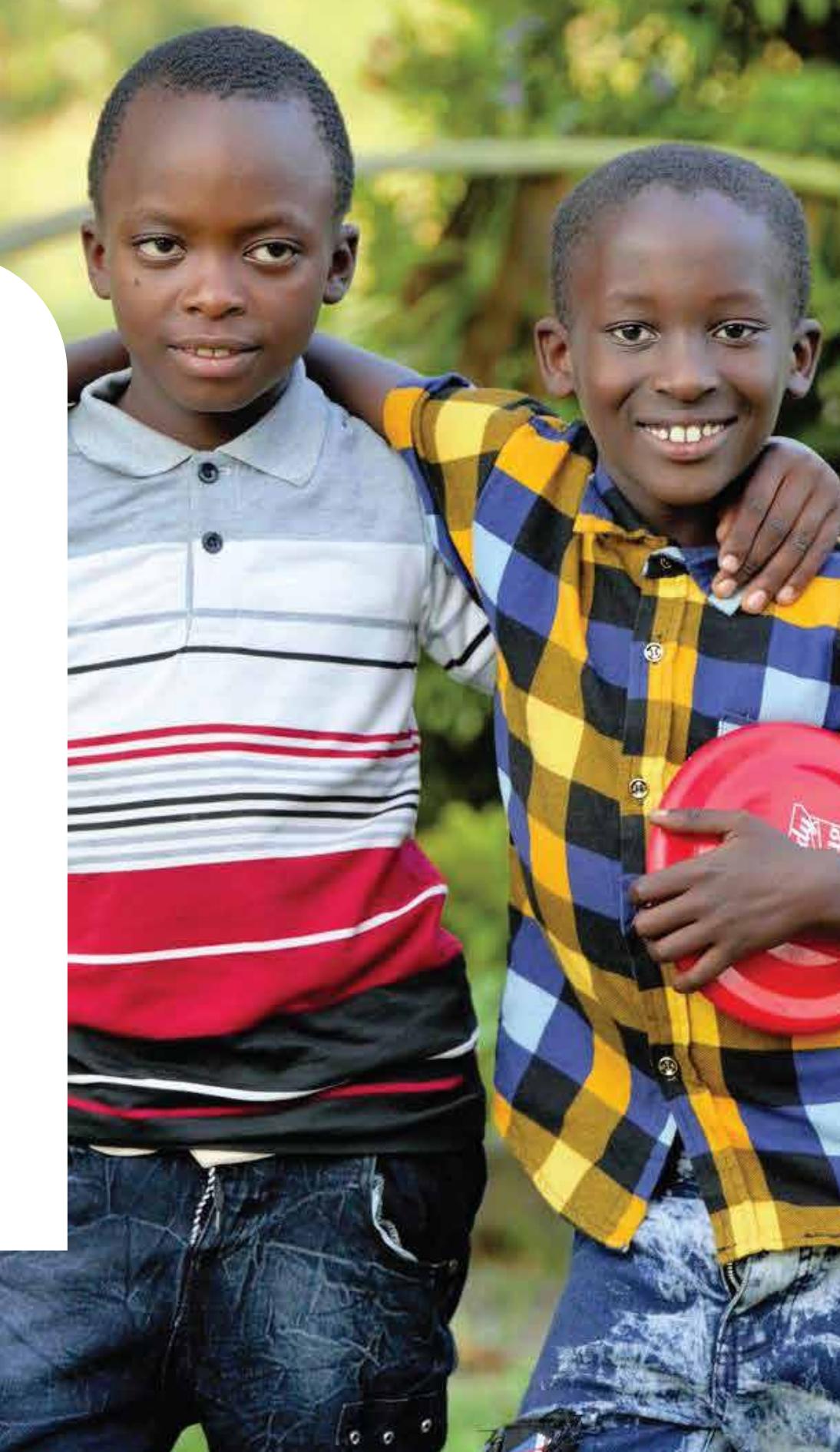
Reaching the most marginalized with dignity and fairness.



WHAT WE WILL CONTINUE DOING

Grounded in evidence from our longstanding impact, SASCU will continue its integrated approach to protection, education, psychosocial care, and family reunification, ensuring these services remain tailored to the needs of street-connected and other vulnerable children and young people. We will continue strengthening community and family-based protection systems to prevent abuse and exploitation, while vocational training and life skills development will remain central to building economic resilience among young people. Our commitment to advocacy and partnerships will persist, reinforcing national protection systems and influencing policies that protect children and young people's rights.

Additionally, we will maintain our provision of psychosocial support to address trauma and promote mental wellbeing. These proven approaches remain central to our mission, ensuring continuity and stability in our service to Uganda's most vulnerable children and young people.





WHAT WE ARE INTRODUCING



Informed by emerging challenges and opportunities drawn from lessons learned, SASCU will introduce strategic innovations to expand our impact. We will scale community-based, play-integrated early childhood development initiatives for children aged 0–3 to enhance early learning and strengthen caregiver capacity. Our work will expand inclusive and flexible education pathways for out-of-school children, prioritizing girls, children with disabilities, and displaced young people to ensure no one is left behind. We will integrate comprehensive sexual, reproductive, and mental health services for adolescents and young women, addressing critical health needs holistically. Across all programming, we will embed climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction to build resilience within communities facing climate-related vulnerabilities. Additionally, we will leverage digital technologies to strengthen education delivery, skills development and livelihoods. These innovations position SASCU to address root causes effectively while adapting to new realities and emerging vulnerabilities in the vulnerable groups we serve.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

SASCU's Theory of Change envisions a future where vulnerable children, street-connected children, young people, women, refugees, and other forcibly displaced persons, children with special needs, and those from marginalized communities live safe, healthy, empowered, and resilient lives. This long-term impact will be achieved through six mutually reinforcing outcomes

Vulnerable children, street-connected children, young people, women, refugees including other forcibly displaced persons, children with special needs, and those from marginalized communities live in safe, healthy, empowered, and resilient lives



Networking, collaboration, partnerships, advocacy, synergies
Cross cutting: Gender, equity, climate justice and action, environmental sustainability
Innovation, digitalization and Learning Agenda



WHAT WE RESPOND TO

At SASCU, we are motivated by the pressing and interconnected challenges affecting Uganda's most vulnerable children and young people.

WHAT WE RESPOND TO

Rising Violence, Abuse, and Exploitation

Widespread violence and abuse remain a grim reality, affecting 59% of boys and 68% of girls nationally. Sexual abuse, child labour, neglect, and exploitation are common, particularly among the urban poor, rural populations, and displaced communities. This highlights the increasing pressure on family and community protection structures and the need to strengthen these systems to cope with the changes.

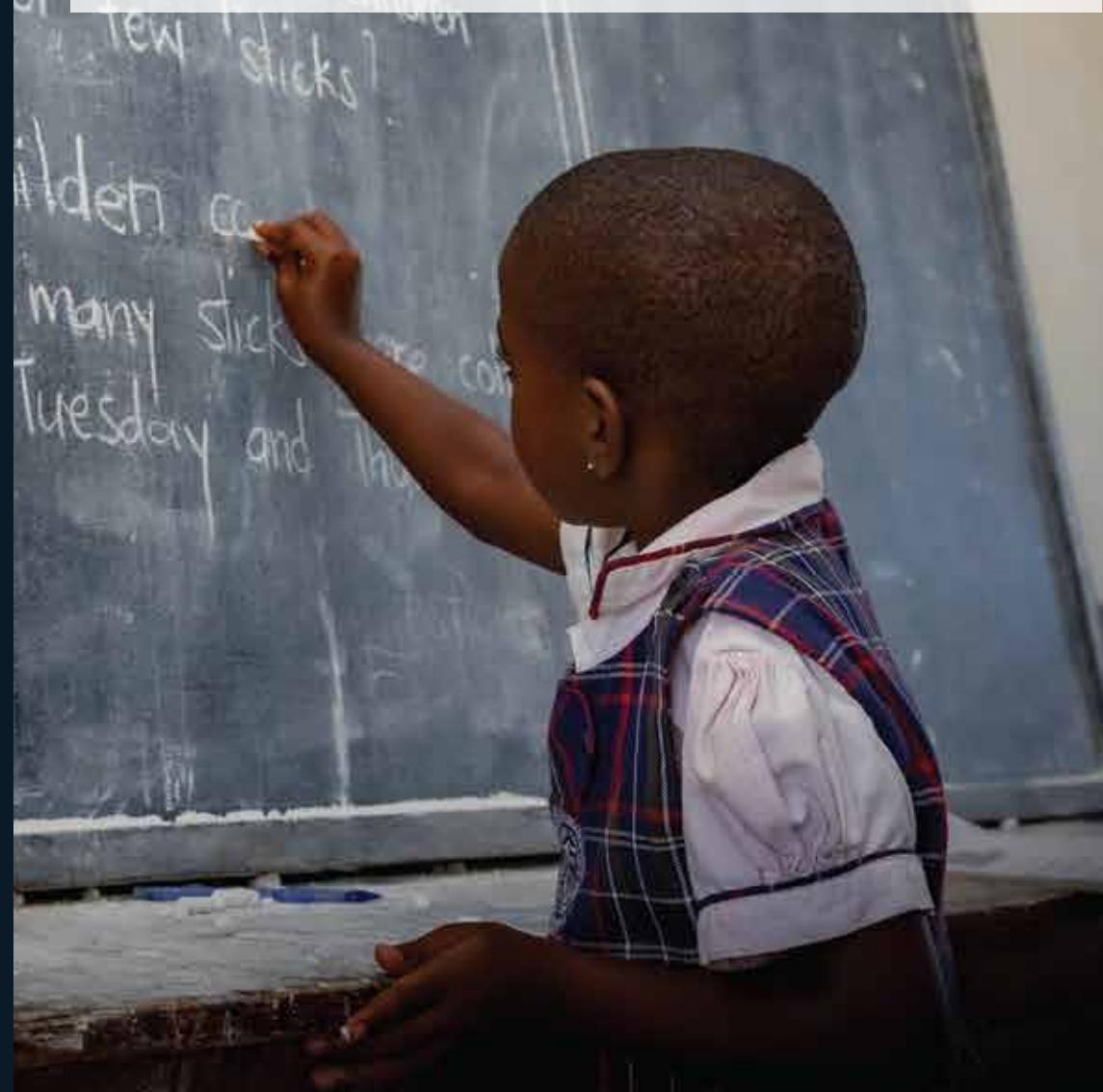
Street-connected children, young people and women

Street-connected children, young people and women: The number of street-connected children has increased by over 70% since the 1990s. As well, the number of street-connected young people and women has increased. We are responding by leading rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration efforts in urban slums and informal settlements. We provide safe shelter, trauma-informed psychosocial care, educational reintegration, and long-term protection to enable a complete return to normalcy. In partnership with families, communities, social groups, and institutions, we address the root causes of issues such as neglect, poverty, abuse, and conflict. Through life skills and vocational training, we equip children, young people, and women with the skills necessary for self-reliant and dignified lives.

GAPS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

Early childhood development (ECD) remains severely underfunded and under-prioritized, with only 10% of children aged 3–5 accessing formal pre-primary education.

Children aged 0–3 are especially underserved, missing out on critical early stimulation and play opportunities. Our goal is to expand community-based, play-integrated ECD and support responsive caregiving and home-based learning for the youngest children.



WHAT WE RESPOND TO

Barriers to education access

Education access is hampered by poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and discrimination. Girls, children with disabilities, orphans, and refugee children remain disproportionately excluded. We advocate for inclusive, quality primary and secondary education while supporting flexible learning pathways for children and youth who fall outside the formal system.

Poverty and economic vulnerability

Poverty forces families into harmful decisions such as sending children to the streets, early marriage, exploitative labour, or commercial sex. We address this by promoting entrepreneurship through small-scale enterprises, climate-smart agriculture, and locally relevant vocational skills in both development and humanitarian settings, including refugee-hosting communities. We provide financial services, entrepreneurship support, agro-entrepreneurship, micro-credit, farm inputs, and targeted mentorship to help vulnerable young people and women build and sustain businesses. Additionally, we equip caregivers with vocational training and financial literacy to build stable livelihoods and prevent unnecessary family separation, including among displaced and refugee populations.

Health challenges:

Health challenges: Children, young people, and women face profound health challenges driven by limited services, poverty, and stigma. In refugee settlements and on the streets, healthcare—including mental health and sexual and reproductive services—is often out of reach. We integrate holistic, inclusive health services into our work and promote psychosocial care, especially for survivors of trauma.

Climate change threats

Climate change is now one of the greatest threats to child wellbeing in Uganda. Ranked among the most vulnerable countries globally, Uganda is experiencing increasing floods, droughts, and displacement. We embed climate adaptation, environmental education, and resilience-building in all our programs.

Evolving funding landscape

The funding landscape for NGOs is shifting, with donors demanding impact, sustainability, and local ownership. SASCU will respond by strengthening our systems, diversifying financing, and aligning our work with national frameworks and global agendas such as the SDGs and the Sendai Framework.

WHERE WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In the next five years, SASCU's work will be focused on environments where children, young people, and women face the greatest risks and barriers to opportunity

Urban Slums And Informal Settlements

In Kampala, other cities, and other urban areas, we will respond to acute poverty, exploitation, violence, and lack of access to education, healthcare, and protection. Our integrated services address the immediate and long-term needs of individuals (including street-connected children and unaccompanied children and young people), families and communities living in slums and informal settlements.

Rural and Peri-Urban Communities

These are often the root of vulnerability, where poverty, abuse, violence, exploitation, harmful cultural practices, family breakdown, and climate disasters push children to the streets. We will prioritize early prevention, economic empowerment, and community-based protection to create sustainable change. This way, prevention will become possible, transformation will take root, and our impact will be most powerful and enduring.

Schools and Households

We will work with schools to ensure safety, inclusion, life skills, play, and menstrual hygiene management. In households, we will support positive parenting, address domestic violence, improve livelihoods, and build climate resilience focusing on young women and adolescent girls. These efforts will create safer, more supportive spaces where families can thrive and overcome cycles of vulnerability.

Refugee Settlements

In refugee contexts characterized by family separation, abuse, school dropout and unemployment, we will provide protection, education, psychosocial support, and vocational training. We will support reintegration, address trauma, create access to health and education, including digital and creative industry competences to reduce long-term dependency among both refugee and host populations.

Policy, Advocacy, Coordination and Learning Platforms

We will influence national and sub-national policy through active engagement in learning, coordination and advocacy platforms. Our goal is to secure increased investment in inclusive education, protection systems, health, climate resilience, and livelihoods for marginalized children and youth.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT AND FINANCING

SASCU will continue investing in organizational excellence to deliver on our commitments. To realise this, our priorities include a capable board, agile leadership, strong financial systems, and a skilled, motivated workforce. We will enhance communications and develop a robust resource mobilization strategy to support strategic growth.

Our Resource Mobilization Strategy will include competitive grants, partnerships, private sector engagement, and community contributions. Programme costs have been developed from the interventions that will be implemented to achieve the specific objectives under the five strategic plan objectives

MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

Our progress will be tracked through a results-based Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEAL) framework.

We will conduct a mid-term review in Year 3 and an end-term evaluation in Year 5 to assess outcomes, refine interventions, and inform future planning.

CONCLUSION

SASCU cannot do this work alone. We are committed to collaborating with communities, governments, civil society, and donors who share our values. Together, we can ensure that every child and young person, regardless of circumstance, has the chance to grow up safe, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.





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