



THE FAMILY BASIC JOURNAL

Communities. Partnerships. Impact.

Bi-annual Newsletter January - June 2026



HALF-YEAR IN REVIEW

The first half of 2026 carried LBE from community-rooted milestones to the global stage.

At home, Uganda's National ECCE Policy went from advocacy to law, and Kulea Watoto moved from partnership talks to a fully inaugurated project on the ground in Yumbe and Kampala.

Beyond our borders, LBE's Home-Based ECD model reached Kuala Lumpur and Kigali, putting Uganda's story in front of a global audience.

This edition brings together the stories, milestones, and collaborations that shaped January through June, as we remain committed to ensuring every child has the best possible start in life.

Top stories

- ✓ Uganda launches its National ECCE Policy
- ✓ Kulea Watoto 2.0
- ✓ LBE's model reaches Kuala Lumpur and Kigali
- ✓ Communities upgrade Home Learning Centres
- ✓ Parenting and livelihood skilling reaches Adjumani and Yumbe
- ✓ West Nile journalists trained on ECD reporting
- ✓ AiAL Network strengthens inclusive learning through peer exchange



Strengthening Foundations, Expanding Impact

The first half of 2026 has been a defining period for Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE), characterised by strategic planning, stronger partnerships, and meaningful progress in advancing quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) and community learning across Uganda.

The year began with a strong focus on accountability and organisational strengthening. LABE successfully concluded programme and financial reporting to its development partners and secured Board approval of its 2026 Work Plan and Budget, laying a firm foundation for effective programme delivery and institutional growth.

Across its operational districts, LABE continued implementing community-driven programmes that are transforming the lives of children and families. Through Home Learning Centres, parent education, literacy initiatives, and community engagement, the organisation strengthened access to quality early learning while promoting responsive parenting, child wellbeing, and inclusive education. These interventions continued to demonstrate the power of families and communities as the first and most important educators of young children.

Beyond programme implementation, LABE significantly expanded its visibility and influence by participating in national and international conferences, policy dialogues, technical working groups, and learning forums. By sharing evidence from the Family Basic Education (FABE) model, the organisation contributed to shaping discussions on ECD policy and practice while strengthening partnerships with government, academia, civil society, and development partners.



Institutionally, LABE invested in strengthening governance, financial management, operational systems, and resource mobilisation to ensure sustainability and greater impact. These efforts have enhanced the organisation's capacity to deliver quality programmes while positioning it for future growth.

As we look to the second half of the year, LABE remains committed to deepening partnerships, scaling innovative community-based solutions, generating evidence for policy influence, and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn, thrive, and reach their full potential. We are grateful to our Board, staff, partners, and the communities we serve for their continued trust and collaboration in making this vision a reality.

Stellah Keihangwe Tumwebaze
Executive Director,
Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE)



FLAGSHIP STORY

Strong Beginnings, Bright Futures: Uganda Launches its National ECCE Policy

On 30 April 2026, Uganda officially launched its National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy, a landmark moment for the country's youngest learners, and the culmination of years of advocacy, consultation, and community voices being heard.



NECDA Secretariat represented during the ECCE Policy launch

Working alongside children, parents, and communities at the grassroots level, LABE knows what is possible when families are supported and children get a strong start. A national policy that enshrines this commitment is one the country has long needed, and LABE looks forward to supporting its implementation across the communities it serves.

The launch followed the ECCE Walk on 29 April, a public march led by Hon. Dr. Joyce Kaducu, Minister of State for Primary Education, from Embassy House to Nakivubo Blue Primary School.

LABE joined the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Network of Early Childhood Development Actors Uganda (NECDA) for both events, under the theme "Strong Beginnings, Bright Futures."



Walking for the youngest learners: The ECCE Walk

"The early years shape everything that follows: cognitive development, social skills, health, and lifelong learning."

PROGRAMME UPDATE

Kulea Watoto Returns to Strengthen Families



One of LABE's major milestones this half-year was the return of Kulea Watoto, a flagship initiative for early childhood development in refugee and host communities.

Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the project is implemented through a consortium comprising LABE Uganda, The AfriChild Centre, Madrasa Early Childhood Programme, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC).

Phase 2.0 adopts a Two-Generation (2-Gen) Approach, recognising that children thrive when their caregivers are equally supported through parenting and livelihood interventions.

The journey towards the new phase began in February with advocacy efforts in Yumbe, where consortium partners engaged district and community stakeholders to promote the integration of five Kulea Watoto-supported Home Learning Centres into the district education system.

June saw the official National Inception of Phase 2.0 in Kampala, that bringing together government line ministries, development partners, refugee representatives, academia, and civil society to reaffirm a shared commitment to improving outcomes for young children. The national launch set the stage for coordinated implementation, policy engagement, and stronger collaboration among partners.

This was followed by the district inception meetings and community engagement activities conducted in Yumbe to strengthen local ownership and align implementation with community priorities.

Over the next three years, the project will reach 1,000 households across Yumbe District and Kampala, helping children and families build stronger foundations for lifelong learning and wellbeing.



AfriChild team visits LABE during preparation for Kulea Watoto 2.0



Kulea Watoto 2.0 inception in Yumbe

Roadmap to Kulea Watoto 2.0

February 2026

Advocacy: District and community stakeholders in Yumbe District engaged to support the integration of 5 HLCs into the district education system.

April - May 2026

Kulea Watoto 2.0: Intervention review, refinement, and co-designing.
MEL Workshop: Logframe production, MEL processes alignment and further workplan review.

June 2026

National Launch: Phase 2.0 officially launched through a national inception meeting.
District Rollout: Project officially rolled out in Yumbe and Kampala District.

BEYOND OUR BORDERS

LABE's Model on the Global Stage



April 2026: World Forum on Early Care and Education, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Executive Director, Stella Keihangwe Tumwebaze, represented LABE Uganda at the 2026 World Forum on Early Care and Education in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where she presented Uganda's Home-Based Early Childhood Development (HBECD) Model alongside practitioners from Nepal, Indonesia, and Canada.

LABE also showcased its Home Learning Centres and Family Basic Education (FABE) model to delegates from more than 40 countries, highlighting Uganda's community-led approach to early childhood development.



May 2026: Global Technical Financing Forum in Kigali, Rwanda

In May, Executive Director Stella Keihangwe Tumwebaze represented LABE at the Global Technical Financing Forum in Kigali, Rwanda, convened by the Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN) in partnership with the Government of Rwanda, UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO.

The forum brought together global leaders to strengthen financing commitments for early childhood development, providing LABE with an opportunity to contribute Uganda's perspectives to the regional dialogue.



February 2026: TAHEA Mwanza Visits LABE

LABE welcomed a delegation from the Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA Mwanza) for a learning exchange on community-led early childhood development and family empowerment.

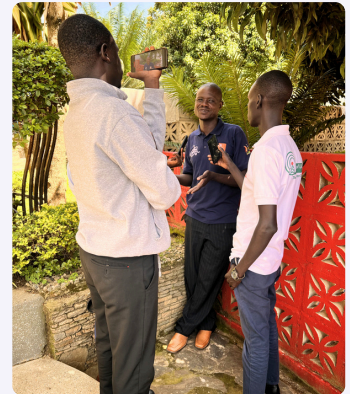
The delegation visited Agweng Home Learning Centre and the Nwoya District Community Development Office to explore LABE's Home-Based Early Childhood Development (HBECD) Model and learn how partnerships with communities and local government are expanding access to quality early learning.

ADVOCACY & INCLUSION

Making the Case for Every Child

Welcome Sesame: Inclusion & Belonging for Displaced Learners

In April 2026, LABE joined the Welcome Sesame Advocacy Workshop in Kampala, with our Parent Educators presenting alongside leading ECD partners. Rather than simply speaking about inclusive early childhood education, they demonstrated it, leading live, integrated classroom sessions for a room of key ECD stakeholders, modelling how social-emotional learning and belonging can be practically embedded in early childhood settings. Grounded in LABE's Family Based Education (FABE) model, the workshop made the case for two outcomes: that social-emotional learning be recognised as foundational to early learning in Uganda, and that these approaches be embedded in teacher training through Primary Teachers' Colleges nationwide.



Equipping Journalists to Report on ECD in Crisis Settings

In May, LABE partnered with the Moving Minds Alliance through the Reporters for Early Age Children in Humanitarian Crisis (REACH) Network to train 16 journalists from across West Nile on ethical reporting of early childhood development in crisis settings. The initiative strengthened journalists' understanding of the realities facing young children and caregivers while building a network of media champions committed to amplifying their stories.

Following the training, 15 journalists joined the REACH Uganda Chapter, extending the impact beyond the workshop itself. As participant Florence Aikoru of Spirit FM Koboko observed, "One story about an ECD centre can educate thousands of parents. If you do ten stories, you educate an entire community."

Her words reflect the vision behind the initiative: using ethical, evidence-based journalism to raise awareness, inspire action, and ensure the youngest children are no longer invisible in public discourse.



"One story about an ECD centre can educate thousands of parents. If you do ten stories, you educate an entire community."

- Florence Aikoru, Spirit FM, Koboko

COMMUNITIES AT THE CENTRE

Skills, Services, and Shared Learning



Supporting Families Through Skills Development

In February, through the UNICEF-supported *Strengthening Early Childhood and Childcare Services Delivery Project*, caregivers in Yumbe and Adjumani strengthened both their parenting and livelihood skills.

As part of the participating in parenting sessions, they received hands-on training in liquid soap and petroleum jelly production, equipping families with practical skills to improve household hygiene while creating new income opportunities.

For Charity Dusuman, Treasurer of God's Mercy Home Learning Centre Management Committee in Yumbe, the training is an investment in the next generation: *"I want my children and grandchild to grow up well and have a better future."*

UNICEF Visits Community-Led Early Learning in Action

June: LABE hosted a representative from UNICEF Uganda at New Star Home Learning Centre (HLC) in Adjumani, where the delegation observed a morning early childhood development session and met with parents, local leaders, and Centre Management Committee members. The visit highlighted the project's efforts to expand access to Home Learning Centres while equipping adolescent mothers and caregivers with parenting and child protection skills.



The team later visited Lori and God's Mercy HLCs in Yumbe, where they witnessed how caregivers in both host and refugee communities are using locally available, low-cost play materials to support children's holistic development, demonstrating the impact of community-led solutions.



Youths of Alibajiako Village, Terego District, laying bricks for the Home Learning Centre's upgrade

Community Ownership in Action

In Terego District, youths from Alibajiako Village rolled up their sleeves to lay bricks for the upgrade of their Home Learning Centre, part of a wider wave of community-led construction, renovation, and expansion across LABE-supported centres this half-year.

Similar efforts were underway at Adak HLC in Gulu and Mangulu Childcare Centre in Koboko, among others, demonstrating how local communities are taking the lead in strengthening spaces where young children learn and grow.

Rooted in Community Action: Coffee Project Sustains Early Learning in Kalungu



When Kalama Inclusive Home-Based Learning Centre in Kalungu District adopted LABE's Home-Based Early Childhood Development (HBECD) Model in 2022, it began with just four children. Today, it serves more than 40 learners, including children with disabilities.

Seeking to make the centre financially sustainable, proprietor Nyombi David joined hands with parents to launch a coffee enterprise after participating in a LABE-supported income generation training. With support from LABE, Kyambogo University and Sense International, the community planted 700 coffee seedlings on two acres of land donated by Nyombi himself, creating a long-term source of income to support caregiver remuneration, learning materials and future infrastructure improvements.



"The coffee project is our way of ensuring that this centre remains sustainable for generations to come."

- Nyombi David, Proprietor, Kalama IHBLC

During a June field visit to Kalungu, LABE joined district leaders and community members to witness the initiative's progress and celebrate a model where livelihoods directly strengthen children's learning opportunities.

LABE Executive Director Stellah Keihangwe Tumwebaze praised the initiative, saying:

This is exactly the kind of community ownership we hope to inspire. Beyond generating income, the coffee plantation can become part of children's everyday learning, using locally available materials such as coffee leaves and seeds to teach counting, sorting and other foundational skills."

READ MORE





Strengthening Inclusive Education Through Partnership

LABE continued to strengthen collaboration through the Comic Relief-funded All In, All Learning (AiAL) Network, working alongside APPCO, Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD), Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU), COHERE, Refugee Law Project (RLP), Sense International Uganda, and Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC) to advance inclusive education and literacy in Uganda. Through shared learning, evidence generation, and collective advocacy, the network is helping shape stronger, community-driven education systems that ensure every child has the opportunity to learn and thrive.

Learning Across Borders: AiAL Exchange

From 8th – 12th June, LABE hosted members of the AiAL Network for a peer exchange alongside Cheshire Services Uganda and CEFORD. Participants visited inclusive schools in Kira Municipality, community ECD centres in Moyo, and LABE's Asamvu and Lugbanga Home Learning Centres in Obongi, exploring practical approaches to disability inclusion, community ownership, teacher development, and sustainable financing for early childhood programmes.



VOICES AND MILESTONES

8th March: Celebrating the Women Who Drive Our Mission



Across the districts where LBE works, communities came together to celebrate International Women's Day, recognising the women who are driving change in early childhood development and community wellbeing.

In Terego, the Alibajiako Home Learning Centre Parent Support Group opened the district celebrations with a drama promoting inclusion for children with disabilities, while Hon. Rose Obiga, Woman MP for Terego District, called on women to embrace economic empowerment. In Gulu, young facilitators from Aleda Primary School led the commemorative march and shared a moving poem, demonstrating the leadership potential of young people. Meanwhile, in Obongi, the Lugbanga Home Learning Centre community joined district celebrations, ensuring women from refugee-hosting communities were equally represented.

The celebrations also honoured the many women behind LBE's work: staff, Board members, Parent Educators, caregivers, VSLA members, and community volunteers, whose dedication continues to give young children the best possible start in life.



Scan the QR code above to read our message to the women

There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish.

- Michelle Obama

Special Days We Marked This Half Year

1st June - Global Day of Parents: "Together for Parents"

28th May - Menstrual Health & Hygiene Day: "Together for a #PeriodFriendlyWorld"

11th June - International Day of Play: "Protect Play, Protect Childhood"

16th June - Day of the African Child: "Ensuring universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene for every child in Africa"





Our Half-Year in Numbers



2,976 (1,457M, 1,519F)

Pre-school children aged 3–6 from HLC communities supported to access early learning services

2,976 (707M, 2,269F)

Parents and community members trained in parenting and childcare, and supported to enhance children's education



214 (110M, 104F)

Toddlers aged 0–3 supported at programme childcare centres to access early learning services

1,482 (357M, 1,125F)

Community members involved in active Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs)



116 (40M, 76F)

Parent Educators (PEs) trained and supported with resources to deliver play-based early learning sessions for children aged 3–6 at HLCs.

297 (105M, 192F)

Young Facilitators (P4–P6 learners) supported to deliver play-based, child-to-child learning sessions for younger learners at home or in HLCs over weekends



569 (263M, 306F)

Home Learning Centre Management Committee (HLCMC) members engaged in HLC operations

M - Male

F - Female

56

Home Learning Centres (HLCs)

16

Childcare Centres

Supported to deliver quality and inclusive early childhood and childcare services



"LBE has provided an affordable learning opportunity for the children in the community, and has helped in skilling the adults."

— Mercy Nasra, Parent Educator, Lori HLC, Yumbe

OUR PEOPLE



Learning Through Mentorship Inside LABE's Internship Training Programme

LABE's Internship Training Programme gives students the opportunity to move beyond classroom learning and gain practical workplace experience through hands-on assignments, mentorship, and exposure to different areas of our work.

Rashidah Musa Kiisa joined LABE as an Accounting Intern, gaining practical financial experience.

In Her Words

What made you choose LABE for your internship?

I chose LABE because it is a reputable NGO committed to improving education and community development. I believed the internship would give me practical accounting experience while allowing me to contribute to an organisation making a positive impact in society.

Was there a moment when you felt genuinely included?

I felt genuinely included from my first day. During orientation, I was introduced to staff from different departments, who welcomed me warmly. My supervisor patiently guided me through each task, answered my questions, and gradually trusted me to perform accounting activities independently.

What was your biggest learning experience?

Learning QuickBooks and the online banking system was challenging because they were different from what I had studied in class. I learnt by asking questions, observing, practising the procedures and learning from feedback.

How did the internship connect your accounting work to LABE's wider mission?

I realised that proper budgeting, accountability and financial reporting help ensure resources are used effectively to support programmes that improve education and community development.

Complete the sentence: "My internship at LABE taught me..."

"...that learning goes beyond the classroom. It strengthened my technical accounting skills, built my confidence, and showed me the importance of teamwork, accountability, professionalism, and using my knowledge to support meaningful community work."

Welcome to the Team!



Annet Nanyonga - LABE HR

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Annet Nanyonga to the LABE team as Human Resource Officer. Annet joins us with over seven years of professional experience in Human Resource Management and Administration and will support LABE in strengthening our people, workplace systems, and organisational culture. We look forward to the contribution she will make to our team and our work.



Looking Ahead

As we move into the second half of 2026, LBE will continue strengthening partnerships, supporting community-led solutions, and expanding access to inclusive, equitable learning opportunities across Uganda.

Among our key priorities will be supporting the implementation of Uganda's new Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy, rolling out Kulea Watoto 2.0 in Yumbe, and strengthening community systems to deliver quality early childhood and childcare services. Alongside these efforts, we will continue working with government, development partners, and communities to advance literacy, early childhood development, and sustainable livelihoods that improve the lives of children and families.

THANK YOU

To our communities, caregivers, Parent Educators, District Local Governments, government ministries and agencies, civil society partners, donors, and everyone who contributed to this journey, thank you for making the first half of 2026 one of shared progress and lasting impact. Together, we are creating stronger foundations for children, families, and communities across Uganda.

Partner Spotlight

ConradNHiltonFoundation
ComicRelief
EchidnaGiving
LilianeFonds
SesameWorkshop
KuleaWatoto
UNICEFUganda
MOES **MGLSD** **RightToPlay**
TinyTotos **TAHEAMwanza** **AiALNetwork**
DistrictLocalGovernments **OPM**
UNHCR



STAY CONNECTED

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