

Cariboo Gate

The field edition

Cariboo Gate Foundation × Bweyale Vocational Education

May 2026

INSIDE

A full day in the settlement

Schools, homes and the women rebuilding after war.

THE GAP

165,000 refugees

And very few mental health professionals.

2.5
weeks on
the ground

ON SITE

The school walls rise

From foundation to roofline.

FIELD VISIT REPORT

Building hope, *one wall at a time.*

Two and a half weeks in Kiryandongo District, monitoring construction and listening to the families the school is for.



INTRODUCTION

Two and a half weeks *on the ground.*

In May 2026, representatives of Cariboo Gate Foundation spent two and a half weeks in Uganda to monitor our projects, strengthen partnerships and engage with refugee communities in Kiryandongo District.

The visit focused on overseeing the construction of a new training centre building and gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing refugee families living in Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement.

Working closely with Bweyale Vocational Education (BVE), local engineers and community organizations, the visit provided valuable insight into both the progress achieved and the continuing needs within the settlement.

2.5

weeks in Uganda

3

refugee households visited

165,000

refugees living in Kiryandongo

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WEEK ONE • BWEYALE, KIRYANDONGO DISTRICT • REVIEWING THE WALL ON SITE

Arrival and construction meetings.

Following arrival in Kampala, the team travelled to Bweyale, where the project is based. On arrival the team attended a local church service and shared a meal with the community, a chance to reconnect with local partners.

In the first days Cariboo Gate met representatives of Bweyale Vocational Education and the project engineer to assess the school training centre. The foundation had been completed. Discussions covered structural quality, site conditions and ground levels, material quantities, room allocation, budget and accountability, and cooperation between the three teams.

The meetings emphasized transparency and construction standards that will let the building serve the community for many years.

ON THE TABLE

Structural quality and long-term sustainability

Site conditions and ground levels

Material quantities and measurements

Building functionality and room allocation

Budget considerations and accountability

Cooperation between Cariboo Gate, BVE and the engineers

KIRYANDONGO REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

A full day in the settlement.

The team visited schools, households and community organizations.

The team visited a primary school and observed computer lessons. Students openly shared their aspirations and experiences. Teachers explained that many families struggle to provide both school fees and daily meals, so the school has begun developing gardens and agricultural activities to improve food availability and help students concentrate on their courses.

Three refugee families welcomed the team into their homes and shared stories of conflict, displacement and rebuilding their lives.

Discussions highlighted food insecurity, shelter and livelihoods, raising children in difficult circumstances, and recovery after conflict.

These conversations demonstrated the resilience and determination present within the refugee community.

Teachers explained that many families struggle to provide both school fees and daily meals.



MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

The need *no one can see.*

The team met the South Sudanese Women Building Association, which provides mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and empowerment programs for women and girls. Several concerns were highlighted.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Food shortages and poverty | 2 | Trauma caused by war and forced displacement |
| 3 | Family stress and domestic violence | 4 | Depression and anxiety |
| 5 | Increasing substance abuse among youth | 6 | Anger and behavioral challenges in children and adolescents |
| 7 | Tribal tensions and competition over limited resources | 8 | Lack of access to specialized mental health care |

With approximately 165,000 refugees living in Kiryandongo and only limited mental health professionals available, psychosocial support remains critically underfunded despite increasing needs.

WEEK TWO

Monitoring construction progress.

Regular site visits made sure work followed the plan and quality standards held.

The second week focused primarily on monitoring the progress of the school building. During this period, Cariboo Gate monitored wall construction, reviewed the quality of ongoing work, consulted with the engineer and construction team, documented progress through photographs and video, gathered material for reporting and donor communication, and continued coordination with Bweyale Vocational Education on the next stages.

1

stage to the next: from foundation to rising walls.

By the end of the visit, the wall construction had progressed significantly compared with the foundation stage seen on arrival.



KEY OBSERVATIONS

Five things we saw.

1 Education remains a priority.

Access to quality education continues to provide hope and opportunities for refugee children and young people.

2 Mental health requires greater attention.

Counseling and psychosocial support services remain severely underfunded despite growing needs within the refugee population.

3 Food insecurity impacts every aspect of life.

Food availability affects education, family wellbeing and community stability.

4 Local partnerships are essential.

Strong cooperation with local organizations enables sustainable, community-led development.

5 Infrastructure and human wellbeing are interconnected.

School construction alone is not sufficient. Education, psychosocial support and community resilience must develop together.

School construction alone is not sufficient.



THE SCHOOL BUILDING UNDER CONSTRUCTION · MAY 2026

School construction *progress.*

COMPLETED

- Foundation completed
- Technical review with the engineer
- Material requirements confirmed
- Wall construction commenced
- Significant progress on the structure
- Ongoing collaboration with BVE

NEXT STEPS

- Complete the walls
- Windows and doors
- Roofing and structural finishing
- Internal plastering and flooring
- Electrical installation
- Painting and final finishing
- Prepare classrooms and learning spaces
- Continued monitoring and documentation

The visit reinforced the importance of combining infrastructure development with community engagement and psychosocial support.

APPRECIATION

With sincere thanks.

Cariboo Gate Foundation extends its sincere gratitude to:

Bweyale Vocational Education (BVE)

The project engineer and construction workers

South Sudanese Women Building Association

School staff and community leaders

Refugee families who generously shared their stories

All donors, sponsors and supporters whose contributions make this work possible

Together, we continue building hope and resilient futures.

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