



**VOICE OF YOUTH
TANZANIA**

Q1 NEWSLETTER | JAN – MAR 2026

NEWSLETTER

January – March 2026 | Three-Month Organizational Overview

Empowering Youth. Transforming Tanzania.



Q1 2026 — IMPACT AT A GLANCE

25

Young Women
Enrolled (Her Voice
Cohort 8)

38,411

Youth farmers Reached
(YEFFA Q1)

16

Demo Plots
Created (8
Regions)

3

International
Volunteers Hosted

4,162

Jobs created
(YEFFA Program)

IN THIS ISSUE

01 About VOYOTA
02 Message from the Executive Director
03 REST Project Update
04 International Women's Day 2026

05 Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu Update
06 YEFFA Project Update
07 Volunteers, Interns & Field Students
08 Renovation & Facility Updates

CONTACT US

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT VOYOTA)



Voice of Youth Tanzania (VOYOTA) is a leading youth-led organization dedicated to empowering young people — especially adolescent girls and young women — across Tanzania. Founded in 2015 by passionate youth advocates and formally registered in 2017 under the Tanzanian Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups (Registration No. 00NGO/Rs/000297), VOYOTA has grown from a grassroots initiative into a nationally recognized force for change.

With over a decade of impact, VOYOTA has reached more than 10 million youth through innovative programs in economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), leadership and governance, climate justice, and community development. Our model is simple but powerful: equip young people with the skills, voice, and opportunities they need to lead dignified, self-reliant lives — and watch communities transform from within.

Our Mission



Our mission is to support youth efforts from the grassroots to a national level by promoting social welfare, conducting environment protection campaigns, running youth development training, and decision-making participation.

Our Current Programs

HER VOICE - UJUZI WANGU

Vocational skills, entrepreneurship & financial literacy for marginalized AGYW.

YEFFA PROJECT

Youth agripreneurship, climate-smart agriculture & livelihoods across 8 regions

HER VOICE - AFYA

AGYW health ambassadors advancing SRH, HIV prevention & gender equity in Monduli.

SAUTI YA KIJANA

School-based youth leadership, child rights & environmental conservation.

REST PROJECT

Reproductive health access for women in pastoralist communities.

ENDING PERIOD POVERTY

Menstrual hygiene, reusable pad production & school retention for girls.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Partners, Donors, Government Representatives, and Esteemed Stakeholders,

It is with great pride and genuine gratitude that I welcome you to this edition of VOYOTA's quarterly newsletter – a window into the work we have accomplished together over the past three months.

This quarter has been marked by remarkable momentum. From the launch of our eighth cohort of Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu – welcoming 25 young women into vocational and entrepreneurship training – to the YEFFA program reaching 38,411 Youth farmers across eight regions, the impact of our work continues to grow in both scale and depth.

The REST project brought our team to Lepurko for a powerful community dialogue on alternative rites of passage, tackling FGM and child marriage alongside community and religious leaders. Hearing young women like Margret speak with courage and clarity reminded us why this work matters – and why we cannot stop.

We also celebrated International Women's Day across Arusha with energy and purpose – our Her Voice and REST teams filled the streets with advocacy, handmade products, and powerful voices. The week closed with a youth debate that challenged every participant to reflect on equality, justice, and the change they can drive.

None of this is possible without you. To our donors, partners, government collaborators, and our extraordinary team – your belief in young people is what turns our mission into reality. Thank you for standing with us.

Together, we are building a Tanzania where every young person can thrive.

Vincent Uhega

Executive Director

VOICE OF YOUTH TANZANIA



REST PROJECT



The REST project is on a clear mission: ensure that girls and women across Tanzania can access comprehensive reproductive healthcare – not as a privilege, but as a right. In the first quarter of 2026, the REST team was anything but quiet. They traveled to remote communities, held trainings, attended national and international advocacy events, spoke on local radio, and received awards that recognized their growing impact.

Community Dialogue in Lepurko: Confronting FGM and Child Marriage

In January, the REST team traveled to Lepurko to facilitate a community dialogue on alternative rites of passage – gathering community leaders, religious figures, traditional practitioners, health providers, local government officers, and – most importantly – the girls and women directly affected by FGM and child marriage.

The dialogue was a turning point. A local church leader spoke openly about FGM still being practiced in secret within religious spaces – a rare and courageous admission that challenged those present to act, not just listen. He publicly committed to advocating against FGM within his congregation.

"Despite FGM being illegal since 1998, it still happens behind closed doors – in churches, in mosques, on newborn girls who cannot speak for themselves. We must stop it wherever it occurs."

– Community Church Leader, Lepurko Dialogue



Among the most powerful moments was when Margret, a young schoolgirl, stood before the room and spoke on behalf of her peers. Through tears, she described how FGM delays girls' education, forces them into early marriages with much older men, and leaves deep physical and psychological scars. Her voice moved the room — and moved people to act.



What the Dialogue Addressed

- FGM and its physical and psychological impacts
- Child and forced marriage in pastoralist communities
- Alternative, non-harmful rites of passage for girls
- Legal protections available under Tanzanian law
- Community-level accountability and reporting mechanisms

Who Was in the Room

- Community, religious & traditional leaders
- Local government officers
- Health service providers
- Girls and women affected by FGM/child marriage
- Traditional practitioners

The REST team also participated in a zero-tolerance event on FGM at the Mto Wa Mbu district, continuing to build momentum toward a community where no girl is subjected to these practices.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026

In early March, VOYOTA took to the streets of Arusha for International Women's Day — a week-long celebration and call to action. The Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu and REST teams joined events across the Usa-Leganga region and the entire Arusha city, filling the space with music, dance, vivid kitenges, and a collective pride in what it means to be a woman.

How VOYOTA Showed Up:

- REST team distributed advocacy flyers and raised awareness about SRHR services
- Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu participants showcased and sold handmade products: soap, batik cloth, laptop bags, wallets, and aprons
- Both teams participated in the Arusha-wide IWD celebrations with banners, messaging, and community engagement
- Her Voice was invited to a Women's Day debate at MSTCDC and Youth Hub
- Speakers challenged young women and men to examine gender inequality through documentaries, music, theatre, and panel discussions

THEME OF THE DAY

"Rights remind us that equality is not a favor"

"Justice reminds us that laws alone are not enough if women cannot access them."

HER VOICE UJUZI WANGU: COHORT 8 BEGINS

January 2026 marked the start of an exciting new chapter for the Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu program – the launch of its eighth cohort. This milestone reflects years of learning, refinement, and growing community trust in a program that turns potential into independence.

25

Young Women Enrolled in Cohort 8

15

Enrolled in Make up & Beauty

10

Enrolled in Tailoring

A Holistic Curriculum Built for Real Life

Beyond their core vocational training, the new cohort received classes designed to prepare them for every dimension of an independent life. The curriculum this quarter included: —>

- Makeup & Beauty techniques (Cohort A)
- Tailoring & Sewing (Cohort B)
- Soap and shampoo production
- Business and entrepreneurship
- Basic computer and digital skills

- English language communication
- Mental health and self-awareness
- Sexual and reproductive health (SRH)
- Financial literacy and market readiness
- Menstrual health education



Family Engagement: Building Trust from the Start

This cohort introduced a stronger focus on family engagement. The Her Voice project team conducted home visits with each participant's family – sitting down with parents and guardians to explain the program, discuss available opportunities after graduation, and build the kind of mutual trust that keeps girls in training.

Families were then invited to visit the VOYOTA offices, giving them a firsthand look at the learning environment and the people their daughters would be learning from. This approach helps reduce dropout rates, increases family support, and signals to communities that the program is built on respect and transparency.

Menstrual Health Education with Mwandamo

One of the highlights of Q1 was a dedicated menstrual health session with Mwandamo. The sessions were held in a circle, starting with mindfulness exercises to connect body and mind – an approach that was both practical and deeply affirming for young women who are rarely given this kind of space.

Through personal storytelling, product demonstrations, and open discussion, the young women learned about managing their menstrual health, family planning, and contraception. Each participant received a care pack with reusable pads, soap, and a period cup – practical tools for clean, sustainable menstrual management.

"When you treat young women with dignity and give them real knowledge about their bodies, you are giving them confidence. And confident women change communities."

— Mwandamo
Trainer, Her Voice
Ujuzi Wangu
Program

YEFFA PROJECT: GROWING JOBS, GROWING FUTURES



Since its launch, the Youth Entrepreneurship for the Future of Food and Agriculture (YEFFA) program has been one of the most ambitious initiatives in VOYOTA's portfolio — and its growth has been nothing short of extraordinary. In Q1 2026, YEFFA continued to translate large-scale mobilization into real economic opportunity.

38,411

Youth Farmers Reached

4,162

Jobs Created

16

Demo Plots Created (8 Regions)

56

Groups and Cooperatives incorporated

8

Regions Covered

From Mobilization to Employment

YEFFA's mandate goes beyond registering farmers. The team is deeply committed to creating sustainable employment, especially for young people who have been excluded from formal agribusiness opportunities. This quarter, the program focused on three key areas:

1. Training field officers on concrete pathways to job creation in agriculture
2. Facilitating agro-business, financial literacy, and market entry training for youth
3. Teaching crop quality management and good agricultural practices

YEFFA's philosophy starts on the ground: every new participant is encouraged to visit an active market before any classroom training begins. This approach — connecting young farmers to buyers before they even plant — shifts the mindset from subsistence farming to market-oriented agripreneurship.

Demo Plots: Learning by Doing

This quarter, YEFFA created 16 demonstration plots across all 8 project regions in partnership with field officers. These working farms serve as practical learning hubs where youth can observe, practice, and improve real agricultural outcomes. Quarterly field visits by the YEFFA team confirmed measurable improvements in produce quality and quantity among participating farmers.



Village-Based Advisors: Tanzania's Unsung Agri-Experts

Perhaps the most valuable investment YEFFA makes is in its Village-Based Advisors (VBAs). These are community-based agricultural specialists who carry YEFFA's interventions directly into local areas — bridging the gap between technical knowledge and grassroots reality.

What Makes VBAs Special

- Deep-rooted trust within local communities
- Hands-on agricultural experience that is contextually relevant
- Often more practically skilled than government extension officers
- Act as peer mentors, not just technical advisors
- Cascade training from YEFFA staff to village level

178
VBAs
Reached

Impact in Practice: A Sunflower Success Story

While the numbers tell one part of the story, individual lives reveal its full meaning. This quarter, a young woman who had been successfully growing sunflower seeds connected with the YEFFA program. The team helped her access processing machinery — enabling her to convert raw seeds into bottled sunflower oil.

The result? A higher-value product, a stronger income, and something even more remarkable: she began hiring her friends. One person's breakthrough became employment for several others — exactly the kind of ripple effect YEFFA is designed to create.



YEFFA — Putting Tanzania's Youth to Work, Right Now

YEFFA is already delivering. In Q1 2026 alone, 38,411 young farmers were reached and onboarded into agribusiness sessions - GAP, CSA, value chain development, and market and financial linkages — while 14,162 jobs were created and 16 demonstration plots established to build practical, hands-on farming skills. This is what it looks like when youth stop waiting for opportunity and start building it. Implemented by VOYOTA in partnership with AGRA across eight Tanzanian regions, YEFFA is on track to create 76,516 jobs by 2027. The results are real.

The momentum is now. Partner with VOYOTA through YEFFA and invest in what's already working.



COMINGS & GOINGS: VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS & FIELD STUDENTS

VOYOTA's strength has always come from the people who choose to show up — not just staff and program participants, but the volunteers, interns, and students who bring fresh energy and new perspectives to our work. Q1 2026 brought a rich mix of contributors from Tanzania and around the world.

Field Students from Tengeru Institute

In March, VOYOTA welcomed 16 university students from the Tengeru Institute of Community Development for a practical field placement. Over the course of their attachment, students were immersed in VOYOTA's day-to-day operations — from data entry and Excel-based analysis of YEFFA field data, to grant proposal writing and learning VOYOTA's recruitment and selection processes. →



But the learning went beyond desk skills. Students took turns supporting the Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu classes and facilitating one-on-one goal-setting sessions with the young women in the program. Together with an international intern, they also participated in professional English practice sessions and led small presentations and debates on public health, environmental, and social development issues.



International Volunteers & Interns

Mia — Switzerland

January – March 2026

Taught English and facilitated team-building sessions for young women in the Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu program.

Marie — Denmark

Mid-Feb – Mid-March 2026

Applied her business expertise to teach in the Ujuzi Wangu program and developed a full training curriculum for the cohort.

Kaya — USA & Germany

Mid-Feb – July 2026 (ongoing)

Leads SRH, mental health, and English sessions, bringing warmth and expertise that has quickly made her a valued member of the Her Voice team.

These international contributors bring skills, perspectives, and global connections that strengthen our programs and expose our participants to a world of possibility. We are deeply grateful for their time and commitment.

RENOVATION UPDATES: BUILDING BETTER LEARNING SPACES



Behind every effective program is a space where learning can actually happen. Over the past several months, VOYOTA has been investing in its physical infrastructure to ensure that the environment matches the quality of its programs.



New Classroom

A brand-new, purpose-built classroom for Her Voice Ujuzi Wangu students, complete with dedicated salon stations for beauty and hairdressing, and professional sewing stations for tailoring training.

New IT & Computer Lab

A renovated shipping container has been transformed into a modern IT and computer class space — equipping young women with digital skills critical for the modern economy.

These upgrades are more than physical improvements. They are an investment in dignity — a statement that the young women who walk through VOYOTA's doors deserve a world-class environment to learn and grow in. VOYOTA will continue to develop this space so it can serve the widest possible community.



PARTNER WITH US

Help Us Build the Next Chapter

VOYOTA is actively seeking partners, funders, and collaborators who share our commitment to youth-led development, gender equity, and climate-smart livelihoods in Tanzania.

FUND A PROGRAM

Support a cohort, a VBA network, Programs delivery, or a community health dialogue

COLLABORATE

Partner with us on research, delivery, or advocacy platforms

AMPLIFY

Share our work, advocate for youth-led change, volunteer your expertise

info@voyota.org | www.voyota.org | +255 755 427 000

Arusha, Tanzania | Follow us: @voyota_tanzania

Our Partners & Donors

