



ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

2025

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List of Abbreviations

CDO	Childhood Development Organization
TYCCO	Tanzania Youth and Children Care Organization
ECD	Early Childhood Development
RCU	Regional ECD Coordination Unit
TECDEN	Tanzania Early Childhood Development Network
SMT	Senior Management Team
NM-ECDP	National Multisectoral Early Childhood Development Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
WWO	WAKE UP WOMEN ORGANIZATION
EDO	Enlighten Development Organization

Executive Summary

In 2025, Childhood Development Organization (CDO) experienced significant growth, enhancing its programs in Early Childhood Development (ECD) and education, health and nutrition, Safeguarding and child protection, and economic empowerment. Through both community and school-based initiatives, CDO supported over 10,400 adolescents and youth, fostering their academic progress and instilling hope for the future. Additionally, CDO conducted workshops for approximately 200 caregivers, equipping them with knowledge to promote better health and nutrition for children under 8 years who attend ECD centers and pre-primary schools across all Districts of Morogoro region.

Recognizing the needs of vulnerable households, CDO provided targeted support to 45 households, helping them break free from cycles of instability. Overall, CDO's efforts not only improved the well-being of youth and families but also laid a foundation for ongoing impact and collaboration in community development.

The year 2025 marked a crucial period of growth, consolidation, and strategic positioning for Childhood Development Organization (CDO). As the Regional Early Childhood Development Coordination Unit (RCU) for the Morogoro Region, CDO strengthened coordination among ECD stakeholders, expanded adolescent health programming, and deepened community-level interventions aimed at improving the well-being of vulnerable children and families.

Throughout the year, CDO implemented and coordinated various initiatives, including:

- ☞ Mtoto Kwanza Phase II (funded by TECDEN)
- ☞ Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu (funded by ViiV Healthcare Positive Action Grant)
- ☞ Changarawe projects (funded by the Changarawe project-England)
- ☞ Vijana Plus Project (Funded by Save the Children Tanzania)

These programs collectively reached over 10,600 direct beneficiaries, including adolescents, young mothers, caregivers, teachers, community leaders, government officials and Civil Society Organisation leaders and members of staff.

Childhood Development Organization (CDO) successfully fulfilled its constitutional role and responsibilities as TECDEN Regional Early Childhood Development Coordination Unit (RCU) for Morogoro by recruiting, overseeing, and coordinating the efforts of seven member organizations affiliated with TECDEN for 2025:

- ☞ Tanzania Youth and Children Care Organization (TYCCO)
- ☞ Kidssafe Fund
- ☞ Child Dignity and Equality Foundation (C-DEF)
- ☞ Malema Foundation Tanzania
- ☞ WAKE UP WOMEN ORGANIZATION (WWO)
- ☞ Enlighten Development Organization (EDO)
- ☞ SAWA Wanawake Tanzania

- Supported government supervision of daycare centers in Morogoro Municipality.
- Conducted two regional review meetings to evaluate the implementation of the National Multisectoral Early Childhood Development Program (NM-ECDP) for the periods of October to December 2024 and January to June 2025.

Key Highlights of CDO Initiatives in 2025:

- The successful implementation of the Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu project across 29 secondary schools and all 30 administrative wards within the Mvomero District Council.
- Ongoing support for 60 vulnerable students at different levels spanning from primary school to college and University levels, and 45 elderly beneficiaries through the Changarawe sponsorship program.
- The expansion of youth-friendly health services and HIV prevention outreach, which has cumulatively reached over 10,400 beneficiaries in Mvomero district.
- A strengthened collaboration with local government authorities and various sectoral departments.
- The successful acquisition of new funding commitments for the programming period of (2026–2028) in partnership with Save the Children Tanzania through the Vijana Plus Project and expansion of our partnership with ViiV Healthcare Positive Action grant through the Tunaweza project (2026-2028)

Message from the Executive Director

The year 2025 was both challenging and transformative for Childhood Development Organization (CDO). Across the communities we serve, we witnessed a significant increase in demand for our services, particularly in adolescent health, early childhood learning, child protection, and family economic resilience. These growing needs reflected not only persistent structural inequalities but also the trust that communities continue to place in CDO as a reliable partner in advancing the well-being of children and young people.

Throughout the year, our team remained steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive in a safe and supportive environment. We expanded our interventions in education, health and nutrition, safeguarding, and economic empowerment, reaching more vulnerable households and strengthening community systems that protect and nurture children. Our programs were implemented in close collaboration with local government authorities, schools, health facilities, community leaders, and development partners, ensuring that our work remained locally owned and sustainable.

One of the most notable achievements in 2025 was the scaling up of integrated adolescent health and life skills services. Through safe spaces, school-based initiatives, and community dialogues, thousands of adolescents, especially girls, gained access to accurate information, mentorship, and essential services that empower them to make informed decisions about their futures. At the same time, we strengthened our early childhood development initiatives by supporting caregivers, training them, and improving learning environments for young children in Morogoro region.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire CDO team, I extend my sincere gratitude to our donors, government partners, community leaders, and the children and families who inspire our work every day. Your trust and collaboration make it possible for us to pursue our shared vision of a society where every child is protected, educated, healthy, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Together, we will continue to serve the need for self-reliance.

Felistas Leonard Kalomo



Executive Director

Childhood Development Organization (CDO)

Organizational Profile

Vision

A vibrant organization that envisions a society in which communities and children enjoy their basic rights and needs.

Mission

To empower disadvantaged children through community engagement and sustainable interventions.

Geographic Coverage

Childhood Development Organization (CDO) operates within the Morogoro region, specifically Morogoro, Mvomero, Kilosa, Kilombero, Ulanga, Gairo and Malinyi districts. The organization is also positioned to extend its services in other regions should opportunities arise.

Core Values

Childhood Development Organization (CDO) has engaged in a systematic process to define its identity by evaluating fundamental principles that were crucial for establishing its credibility. For the year 2025, it was collectively determined that the organization would have upheld and adhered to specific principles, which would have constituted its core values. These core values have included Accountability, Commitment, Transparency, Integrity, Trust, Mobility, Stability, and Progressiveness.

Governance and Leadership

During 2025, the organization maintained strong governance oversight through:

- Board of Directors
- Senior Management Team (SMT) and
- Members

Program Performance by Strategic Objective

Strategic Objective 1: Early Childhood Development and Education

Key Achievements

Strengthening Regional Early Childhood Development (ECD) Coordination

The Community Development Organization (CDO) successfully organized a series of stakeholder meetings aimed at creating synergy among various organizations involved in early childhood development. These meetings brought together non-governmental organizations (NGOs), district councils, and local community actors to ensure that all parties are aligned with the objectives and strategies of the National Multisectoral Early Childhood Development Program (NM-ECDP). This collaborative effort was designed to enhance communication and foster partnerships, ultimately resulting in a more coordinated approach to early childhood development at the regional level.

Expansion of TECDEN Membership

In the year 2025, the TECDEN network saw significant growth, as five new affiliate members were successfully recruited. This expansion reflects a broader commitment to enhancing the network's capacity and reach in the ECD sector. Additionally, a comprehensive mapping and assessment of daycare centers was conducted, focusing on their quality of care and the support needed for registration. This initiative aimed to ensure that more childcare facilities meet the requisite standards, thereby improving the overall quality of early childhood services in the region.

Capacity Building

In an effort to strengthen the capabilities of those involved in early childhood development, more than 200 ECD practitioners, i.e., caregivers, owners of daycare centres, and Social Welfare Officers participated in targeted training sessions conducted from September 09-11, 2025. These sessions covered various crucial topics, including the Nurturing Care Framework, which emphasizes the importance of supportive environments for young children; the science of early childhood development, providing evidence-based insights into child growth and learning; and vital child safeguarding principles, ensuring that all children are protected and nurtured in safe environments. This capacity-building initiative not only enhanced individual skill sets but also contributed to a stronger, more knowledgeable workforce dedicated to the well-being of young children and their families.



Photo 1: An ECD Specialist Mr Davis Gisuka from Children in Crossfire (CiC) one of the leading Organization in CD programing during a Training co-organized by the Office of the Regional Commissioner, the Union of Owners of Daycare centers and Childhood Development Organisation (CDO).

Photo 2: A group photo of some selected participants with the Guest of honor Dr Musa Ally Musa, the Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary during ECD.

Education Financing and School feeding program

Childhood Development Organization (CDO) collaborates with government structures and development partners to enhance education financing and school feeding programs at Mongola Secondary School, ensuring that students from remote locations can pursue their studies in an equitable and efficient manner. As an organization, we are committed to covering the costs associated with providing meals for all 36 sponsored students, which include 6 Primary and 30 Secondary students. Additionally, we support an evening education program designed for students from primary to O-level. This program offers supplementary lessons in Mathematics and English. Following these instructional sessions, students participate in the Whizz Math program, which enhances their technical proficiency in Mathematics.

The library has consistently maintained its operations, conducting a total of 110 sessions 60 dedicated to Mathematics and 50 to English. To support the evening program for students, we have allocated approximately TZS 360,000 on a quarterly basis to compensate three educators, with each instructor receiving TZS 6,000 per session. Furthermore, to ensure online access to the Whizz Math platform, the organization has invested in internet services from Vodacom, incurring a quarterly expenditure of TZS 495,000, which translates to TZS 165,000 per month.

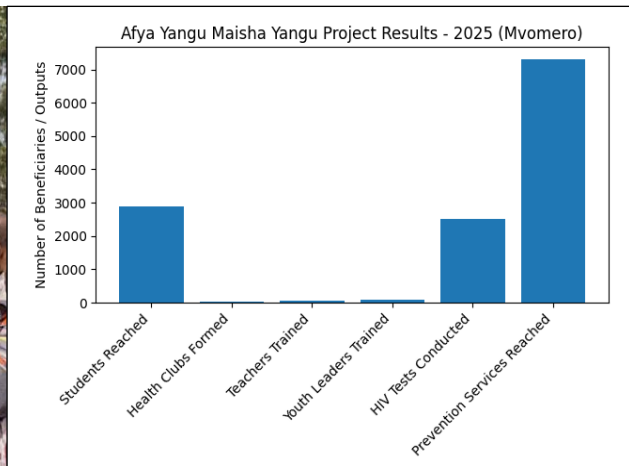
Strategic Objective 2: Health and Nutrition

Achievements of the Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu Project and Changarawe project

The Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu Project, funded by ViiV Healthcare, has made significant strides in promoting adolescent health across various dimensions, particularly in sexual and reproductive health (SRH). The project has successfully established 29 school health clubs, which serve as vital hubs for education, awareness, and support for adolescents in the community. Through these clubs, approximately 2,900 adolescents have participated in ongoing SRH education programs, empowering them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions regarding their health.



Photo 3: CDO Project Coordinator Mr Joseph Machira is engaging in community awareness-raising events and self-voluntary testing.



A Summary of Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu results in Mvomero

In 2025, the Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu Project achieved significant scale and depth in Mvomero District. The project established 29 school health clubs reaching over 2,900 adolescents students, trained 58 teachers to sustain school-based health education, and strengthened youth-friendly services in 21 health facilities. Over the project period, 7,305 young people accessed HIV prevention services, and 2,524 were tested for HIV, demonstrating improved service uptake and health-seeking behavior among adolescents. Additionally, we supported 45 BibiBabus (including 38 Bibis and 7 Babus) through our monthly food rations, which helped reduce living costs and enhanced family nutrition by increasing the number of meals available for elders.

Strategic Objective 3: Economic Empowerment

Under Strategic Objective 3, the Childhood Development Organization (CDO) embarked on a vital mission to bolster the economic resilience of vulnerable households, particularly those who care

for children and adolescents at heightened risk of school dropout, early marriage, and exposure to violence and exploitation. Understanding that poverty is a fundamental driver of child vulnerability, CDO designed a series of economic empowerment interventions tailored to enhance household income, promote financial literacy, and foster sustainable livelihoods.

In 2025, CDO took significant strides in supporting community-based savings and loan groups, focusing intently on adolescent girls and youth. Through comprehensive training sessions and dedicated mentorship, participants gained essential practical skills in areas such as savings strategies, small business management, and household financial planning. These groups not only acted as platforms for fostering financial inclusion but also provided safe spaces for members to openly discuss social challenges, share personal experiences, and collaboratively devise solutions to pressing issues affecting their families and communities.

To further expand economic opportunities, CDO implemented robust entrepreneurship training programs, offering start-up support to selected 6 beneficiary groups from 6 wards engaged in various small-scale enterprises like agriculture, petty trade, tailoring, and food vending. Each training module encompassed critical topics such as business planning, effective record keeping, market analysis, and customer relations, empowering participants to run their businesses more effectively and sustainably. Consequently, numerous beneficiaries reported a noticeable improvement in their household incomes, enabling them to meet essential needs such as food, medical expenses, and healthcare for their children.

In 2025, the initiatives undertaken by Childhood Development Organization (CDO) were significantly enhanced through effective collaboration with local government authorities and community leaders. This partnership ensured that inclusive economic opportunities were made accessible to all, with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups such as young mothers, and adolescents. As a result of these collaborative efforts, a group of young mothers from Doma Ward received a seed capital of 500,000 Tanzanian Shillings from Childhood Development Organization through the Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu Project. This financial support enabled them to successfully obtain additional funding of 4,000,000 Tanzanian Shillings from the local government to further develop their small business ventures.



Photo 4: A group of adolescent mothers has convened in Ndole Village to monitor their savings collectively, utilizing seed capital provided by CDO.



Photo 5: Adolescent young mothers receive their savings boxes from Mr Joseph Machira, the Project Coordinator of

Strategic Objective 4: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Childhood Development Organization (CDO) has executed several significant initiatives aimed at enhancing child safety and promoting positive parenting practices.

- These initiatives encompassed extensive community radio campaigns designed to raise awareness regarding various components of Early Childhood Development (ECD). Topics included the importance of good health, adequate nutrition, child safety, and opportunities for early learning for children under eight years of age. These campaigns were broadcasted through well-regarded local stations such as Abood FM Radio 88.3, Mviwata FM Radio 106.7, and Loyal Media. The programs featured informative discussions and engaging narratives to effectively captivate listeners and foster safe environments for children.
- Interactive parenting sessions held in Ndole Village, where parents and caregivers gathered to learn about the importance of nurturing parenting practices. These sessions provided practical advice and resources on how to foster healthy relationships with children and promote their overall well-being.
- Collaborative supervision activities of daycare centers, conducted alongside social welfare officers to ensure compliance with safety regulations and the well-being of children enrolled in these facilities. This joint effort also aimed to enhance the quality of care provided in these centers.

As a result of these comprehensive interventions, the community witnessed a significant increase in the reporting of violence cases, indicating a greater awareness and willingness among residents to address issues affecting children. Additionally, there was an evident improvement in the understanding of positive parenting practices, leading to a more supportive environment for children and families.

Photo 6: Media outreach has significantly contributed to raising awareness of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) issues. Project Coordinator Mr. Joseph Machira and Morogoro Social Welfare Officer Ms. Magareth Henjewele took part in a program at Abood FM 88.3 in Morogoro.



Impact Stories

Case Study: Transformation Through School Health Clubs

At Mziha Secondary School, the establishment of a School Health Club supported by Childhood Development Organization (CDO) has played a significant role in improving students' knowledge, confidence, and health-seeking behavior. The club provides a safe and supportive space where adolescents can openly discuss issues related to puberty, reproductive health, hygiene, mental well-being, and life skills topics that are often considered sensitive within the community.

One notable story of change comes from a Form II student who initially joined the club out of curiosity but soon found it to be a life-changing experience. Reflecting on her journey, she shared:

“Before joining the club, I was afraid to ask questions about my body and health. Now I educate my peers.”

Prior to her involvement in the club, the student described feeling confused and anxious about the physical and emotional changes she was experiencing during adolescence. Cultural norms and fear of judgment prevented her from seeking information from teachers or family members. This lack of knowledge affected her self-confidence and sometimes her concentration in class.

Through regular health club sessions facilitated by trained teachers and supported by CDO, she gained access to accurate, age-appropriate information about adolescent health and development. The participatory approach used in the sessions such as group discussions, role plays, and peer-to-peer learning enabled her to ask questions freely and learn without fear or stigma. Over time, her confidence grew, and she became one of the most active members of the club. She began assisting facilitators in organizing discussions and later took on the role of a peer educator, helping to disseminate correct health information to other students. Her transformation not only improved her own well-being and academic engagement but also positively influenced her peers, many of whom began to seek guidance and support from her.

Teachers at Mziha Secondary School reported that the presence of empowered peer educators like her has contributed to a more open and supportive school environment, where students feel safer discussing health concerns and seeking help when needed. The club has also contributed to improved school attendance among girls, particularly during menstruation, as members have learned about menstrual hygiene management and how to support one another.

This case highlights the critical role that school health clubs play in equipping adolescents with knowledge, life skills, and confidence. By creating safe spaces within schools, CDO is not only addressing immediate health information gaps but also nurturing a generation of informed and empowered young people who are capable of making responsible decisions and supporting their peers.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

During the 2025 implementation period, the Childhood Development Organization (CDO) continued to execute integrated programming across the Mtoto Kwanza Phase II, Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu, Changarawe, and Vijana Plus projects. These initiatives made substantial advancements in enhancing the well-being of children, adolescents, and families. However, they were accompanied by operational and coordination challenges that offered valuable insights for future programming endeavors.

Key Challenges

Coordination and Data Management Challenges

Implementing multiple projects simultaneously across different thematic areas placed a significant demand on staff capacity, monitoring systems, and coordination mechanisms. Ensuring timely and harmonized data collection, reporting, and feedback loops across projects required continuous strengthening of internal systems and staff training in monitoring and evaluation.

Scheduling Constraints with Government Officials

One of the key implementation challenges encountered during the reporting period was the overlapping schedules of government officials, which constrained the timely execution of several jointly planned project activities. Many project components, such as school health club launches, community dialogues, health facility mentorship sessions, and monitoring visits, required the presence or approval of officials. We noted that Government officials often faced competing priorities, including statutory meetings, national campaigns, emergency assignments, and routine administrative responsibilities. As a result, some planned activities had to be postponed or rescheduled multiple times. This led to delays in activity timelines.

Weather condition

This situation presented significant challenges, particularly during the rainy seasons when access to certain areas became extremely difficult due to their geographical locations. Many of these locations were situated in remote or elevated such as Kinda, Bunduki and Luale, which resulted in muddy and treacherous conditions during heavy rainfall. As a consequence, intervention efforts were often delayed, as teams had to postpone their visits until the weather improved and the roads became passable again. This reliance on favorable weather conditions not only hindered timely assistance but also highlighted the importance of considering geographical factors in planning future outreach initiatives.

Lessons Learned

1. Community Ownership is Critical for Sustainability

One of the most important lessons across all projects was that meaningful and continuous engagement with community leaders, parents, and local government structures is essential for program acceptance and sustainability. Early involvement of stakeholders in planning and regular feedback sessions significantly improved community buy-in and reduced resistance to sensitive interventions, particularly those focused on adolescent health and gender equality.

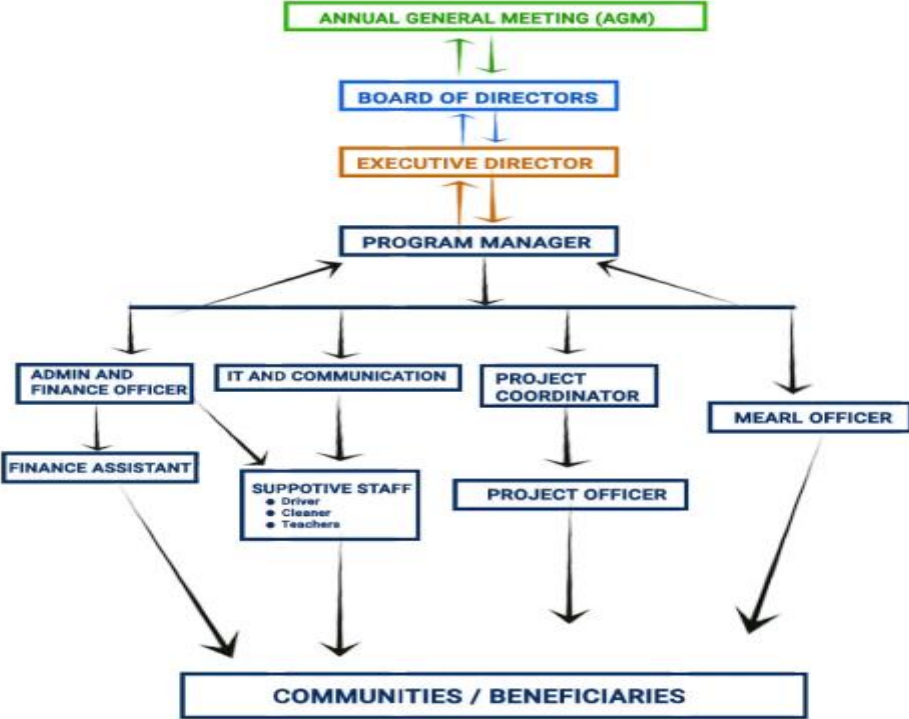
2. Peer-Led and School-Based Approaches are highly effective

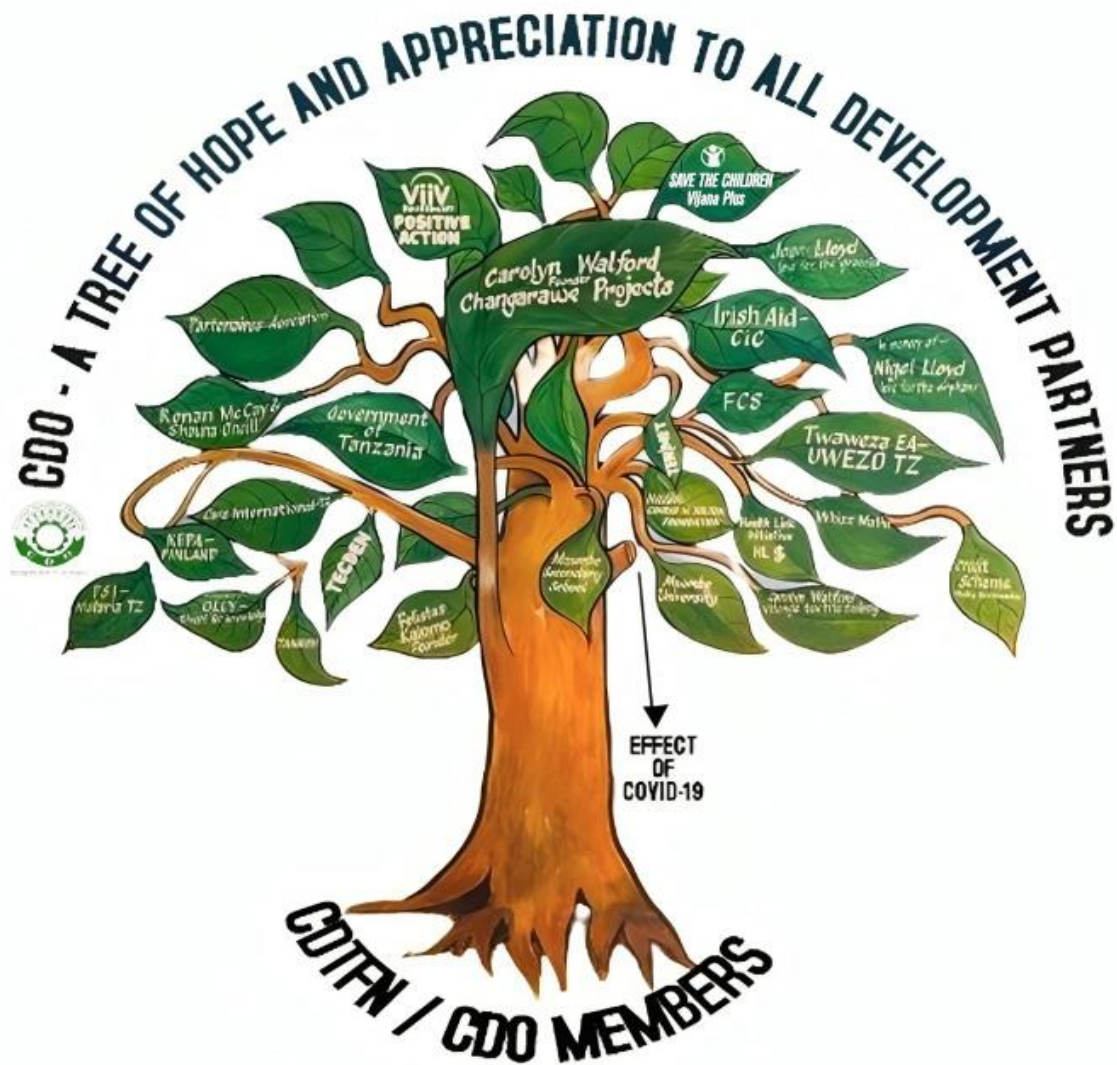
Experiences from Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu project demonstrated that peer educators, school health clubs, and youth champions play a powerful role in influencing behaviour change among adolescents. Students were often more receptive to messages delivered by their peers, highlighting the importance of investing in youth leadership and mentorship structures.

Future Outlook for 2026

- ☞ Childhood Development Organization (CDO) has successfully secured two new significant fundings: the Teachers Motivation Project to be implemented in Ulanga and Kilosa districts and the Tunaweza Project as part of the scale-up of the Afya Yangu Maisha Yangu project. The Teachers Motivation Project, scheduled to run over two years from 2026 to 2028, aims to enhance the teaching and learning environment, thereby improving educational outcomes in the targeted districts. Meanwhile, the Tunaweza Project, which is funded by a grant from ViiV Healthcare Positive Action program, is designed to empower adolescent boys and young men within the Mvomero District Council. Together, these initiatives represent a substantial commitment to fostering educational improvement and youth empowerment in the Morogoro region.
- ☞ In addition to these projects, Childhood Development Organization (CDO) is making strategic efforts to enhance its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems. As part of this endeavor, CDO plans to recruit dedicated M&E personnel who will lead the development and implementation of robust tracking and evaluation methods across its initiatives.
- ☞ Furthermore, the organization is committed to expanding its programming focused on adolescent boys, recognizing the critical need for tailored support in this demographic. They are also planning to scale up radio-based parenting education initiatives, which will serve as a valuable resource for parents seeking guidance and support. Additionally, CDO aims to strengthen its digital data systems, particularly to improve tracking and reporting mechanisms related to Early Childhood Development (ECD) initiatives. This comprehensive approach underscores the organization's commitment to effective programming and enhanced outcomes in the communities it serves.

CDO Organization Organogram – 2025





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