

ICDP Arrives in Luuka District, Eastern Uganda

November 2025.

A new ICDP Facilitator training was launched in Luuka District, Eastern Uganda, in October 2025. This is coordinated by Stephen Malimba of the African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE) Uganda, in charge of Luuka Community Strengthening Project; implemented in partnership with Mission Alliance & Strømme Foundation in Oslo, Norway. Nicoletta Armstrong linked Julian Vander Noord and Trainer Patrick O'Loughlin. After first discussions this all happened very quickly as AEE were very keen to get started this year. Twenty (20) trainees, based in the project area of Luuka District and two (2) from a Strømme Foundation supported CBS Pewosa project from Butambala (Central Uganda) were enrolled. Trainers Chiku Ali (Tanzanian) and Patrick (Irish) travelled from Norway for the initial training. "We were very impressed by the excited, eager response we observed from the very start" says Patrick.

The training took eight days instead of the usual six, spread over two weeks with a weekend break in the middle. "We are very pleased we had the extra training days as everything was translated from English to the local language, *Lusoga*. We were better able to ensure a thorough understanding of the basic concepts and make sure ideas were shared mutually" adds Patrick. A particular strength is that one trainer, Chiku is from East Africa and could test whether participants were learning actively and challenging ICDP ideas. "You have heard all these ideas and concepts, seen our presentations, but what do you actually think?" Chiku often asked.



Chiku Ali facilitating trainees during a break-out session



Trainees having energizing moment of song and dance

The training involved a lot of roleplay, discussion, song and dance. “Fascinating to see how the Basoga people embody and practice learning through song and dance. One of the many ideas and experiences we take home from Uganda to Norway!” said Patrick. It is always uncertain how the ICDP approach and concepts will be received in a new cultural setting. There were certainly some disagreements in its early days but the group confirmed that it is on an ‘ICDP Journey’. Already in the first days of training there were many wonderful moments of sharing and learning and it was after the weekend break halfway through that those clear signs of change emerged. One trainee, Yazid, tried out some of the themes from the Emotional and Meaning Dialogues with his young child at home. His joy at his child’s positive response was obvious. His wife also commented saying he did not usually have time to play with his child but this had changed! Another trainee, Moreen also reported “My sister was so surprised that I was giving my son more time and listening to him instead of chasing him away as usual”. The trainers could build on these first experiences and encourage others to try positive things and observe the effects.

“In addition to the moving stories and great fun singing and dancing, I come away with some general observations. Religion is a very important, central part of people’s lives and we trainers must be able to incorporate respect and understanding of this. Secondly, perhaps surprisingly, it seemed that the younger parents/trainee facilitators were more resistant to ICDP’s messages of change. Thirdly, that it is more important to use plenty of time to share ideas about basic concepts than cover in full all aspects of the training programme. We look

forward to on-going discussions during our online supervision of running parent groups and at our final seminar” – Patrick.

The new facilitators are now set to begin their first caretaker meetings on 15th November 2025. This will mark the beginning of a transformative journey for Ugandan families—rooted in empathy, respect, and the belief that every child deserves to be valued as a person.



The whole group holding their copies of the ‘ICDP House’