

Strengthening Capacities for Resilience and Empowerment of Adolescent Mothers (S-CRAM)



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S-CRAM Project Progress Report

Strengthening Capacities for Resilience and Empowerment of Adolescent Mothers

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50 Target Mothers	4 Job Pathways	90 Days to Placement	6 Donors to Date
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Figure 1: Pad Distribution at S-CRAM Event

1. Introduction

This progress report provides an update on the Strengthening Capacities for Resilience and Empowerment of Adolescent Mothers (S-CRAM) project, which launched in late 2025 to support fifty adolescent mothers in Ikorodu, Lagos State, in their transition to safe, paid employment. The report summarises foundational activities completed, partnerships under development, and the operational framework now in place for full implementation in 2026.

S-CRAM addresses a critical gap: adolescent mothers in Ikorodu are systematically excluded from decent work. Childcare remains unaffordable, travel routes are often unsafe, and many young mothers lack the identification documents and bank accounts required for formal employment. Most available training programmes are disconnected from actual job vacancies, leaving participants with certificates that employers do not value. The result is a cycle of unpaid internships, precarious informal sales, and fragile income that cannot sustain a young family.

This project takes a different approach. Rather than offering generic skills training, S-CRAM partners directly with local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to co-design job pathways aligned with real vacancies. Barriers to employment are addressed holistically through childcare provision, transport support, identification clinics, and confidential sexual and reproductive health referrals. The goal is verified placement within ninety days.

2. Progress to Date

2.1 Community Engagement and Needs Assessment

The project team conducted introductory community meetings with adolescent mothers in the target area to understand their circumstances, aspirations, and barriers. These sessions revealed that most participants had discontinued their education due to early pregnancy. Many expressed strong interest in vocational pathways including tailoring, hairstyling, retail trade, and pharmacy assistance. A recurring theme was the gap between skills and capital: several young mothers had completed vocational training but lacked the resources to start businesses or secure formal employment.

Crucially, participants articulated clear goals. Some wish to return to formal education whilst learning trades part-time. Others, having already acquired marketable skills, need start-up kits, workspace, and working capital. This diversity of needs has informed the project's flexible pathway design, ensuring that interventions are tailored rather than one-size-fits-all.

2.2 Partnership Development

S-CRAM's employment-first model requires close collaboration with local businesses willing to host apprenticeships and reserve entry-level positions. The project team has initiated discussions with MSMEs in Ikorodu across the four target sectors: tailoring and fashion, hairstyling and beauty services, retail and pharmacy, and food services. These conversations focus on understanding employer needs, mapping specific competencies required for junior roles, and negotiating memoranda of understanding that guarantee placement opportunities for programme graduates.

Additionally, the team is developing referral relationships with government agencies for national identification registration and with financial institutions for basic account opening. These partnerships are essential to removing the documentation barriers that exclude adolescent mothers from formal employment.

2.3 Programme Design and Infrastructure

The project's operational framework has been designed around the specific barriers adolescent mothers face. Key infrastructure elements include:

Micro-crèche facility: An on-site childcare space enabling mothers to participate in training without the prohibitive cost of external childcare or the distraction of caring for infants during sessions.

Transport stipends and safe route mapping: Financial support for travel costs and identification of secure routes to training and workplace locations, addressing safety concerns that often prevent young women from accessing opportunities.

ID and account clinics: Structured sessions to support participants in obtaining national identification and opening bank accounts, prerequisites for formal employment and wage payment.

SRHR referral network: Confidential linkages to sexual and reproductive health services, ensuring participants can access care without stigma or disruption to their training.

3. 2026 Implementation Plan

With foundational work substantially complete, 2026 will focus on full programme delivery. The implementation timeline is structured around three phases:

Phase	Key Activities
Q1 2026 Enrolment & Setup	Finalise MSME MoUs; complete participant recruitment and enrolment; conduct baseline assessments; establish micro-crèche operations; launch ID and account clinics
Q2-Q3 2026 Training & Placement	Deliver blended training (centre-based practice + supervised workplace learning); conduct competency assessments using standardised rubrics; facilitate apprenticeship and job placements; provide ongoing mentorship and barrier removal
Q4 2026 Verification & Sustainability	Verify 90-day placement retention; establish alumni savings groups; document lessons learned; develop scale-up recommendations for Lagos State partners

4. Expected Outcomes

By the end of 2026, the S-CRAM project aims to achieve the following:

Fifty adolescent mothers enrolled, trained, and transitioned into verified paid employment or viable self-employment within ninety days of programme completion.

Four job pathways established with signed employer MoUs guaranteeing apprenticeship or entry-level positions for programme graduates.

All participants supported with national identification and bank account registration, enabling formal wage receipt and savings.

Alumni savings groups established to sustain peer support and financial resilience beyond programme completion.

A replicable model documented with competency rubrics, partnership frameworks, and operational guides suitable for adoption by other organisations across Lagos State.

5. Fundraising and Support

The project has a total funding goal of **£29,818**, of which **£168** has been raised to date from six donors. The team is actively pursuing additional funding through GlobalGiving campaigns, local corporate partnerships, and grant applications to foundations supporting youth economic empowerment in West Africa.

Funds will be allocated across core programme components: MSME partnership development and workplace coordination; micro-crèche establishment and staffing; transport stipends and safe route logistics; ID and account clinic operations; training materials and competency assessment tools; and programme monitoring and evaluation.

6. Conclusion

S-CRAM enters 2026 with its foundations in place. The project team has engaged directly with adolescent mothers in Ikorodu, understanding their circumstances and aspirations. Partnership discussions with local employers are progressing. The programme's distinctive infrastructure, from the micro-crèche to the ID clinics, has been designed to remove the specific barriers that exclude young mothers from decent work.

The young women who will participate in this programme are not seeking handouts. They have goals: to return to school, to use skills they have already acquired, to build businesses, to provide for their children. What they lack is opportunity and the practical support to access it. S-CRAM exists to bridge that gap.

We extend our gratitude to the six donors who have already contributed and to our partners who are investing time and expertise in making this model work. With continued support, 2026 will see fifty adolescent mothers in Ikorodu move from exclusion to employment, from vulnerability to stability, from surviving to thriving.