

# **Child & Women International Development – CHWID.**

## **Fast-Track Project**

**Fund: \$98,000.**

## **Concept Note.**

### **Project Title:**

Integrated Women & Youth Livelihoods and Community Cohesion in Grand Bandundu, DRC

### **Applicant Organization:**

Child & Women International Development (CHWID).

### **WHO ARE WE.**

Child & Women International Development (CHWID) is an International Humanitarian and Development Organization under Canadian law registered under the Charitable Registration Number 1176816941 whose headquarter are based in Bourlamaque, Quebec in Canada and in the State of New York/USA under number 10090150, which campaigns to improve living conditions, alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people and promoting the development of the most disadvantaged areas in favor of women and children. [www.chwid.org](http://www.chwid.org)

**Vision:** Provide humanitarian assistance and carry out CHWID development and charity actions with vulnerable populations who are victims of multiple causes around the world.

### **MISSIONS.**

The general mission is to improve the quality of life and the future of children, women and other vulnerable people. It also has for mission, in Canada, in France, in Africa, in Europe and in the rest of the world.

### **Geographic Coverage:**

Provinces of Mai Ndombe, Kwilu, and Kwango (Grand Bandundu Region), Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Duration:** 12 Months (01<sup>st</sup> June 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> Mai 2027)

## **1. Background / Context (Expanded)**

Grand Bandundu, encompassing Mai Ndombe, Kwilu, and Kwango, has historically been home to the **Yaka-Teke ethnic group**, which gave rise to socio-political networks that included the

Mobondo movement. Over time, communities in this region have faced fragility due to recurring insecurity, low investment in agriculture and infrastructure, and social displacement. The **Mobondo menace** disrupted local economies, social cohesion, and access to markets, leaving many households vulnerable, particularly women and youth.

The region is predominantly rural, with an estimated population of **7–9 million people**, of which a large proportion are youth under 35 years. Household incomes are largely dependent on subsistence farming and informal trade, with limited access to formal credit or savings mechanisms. Market linkages are weak, and communities struggle to participate in profitable value chains, particularly for high-demand commodities such as vegetables, cassava, and organic honey.

**Proximity to Kinshasa** represents a significant economic opportunity. The capital's urban population faces **shortages in essential commodities**, including fresh vegetables, cassava derivatives, and organic honey. By targeting communities within accessible distances to Kinshasa, agricultural interventions can rapidly translate into income generation, marketable surplus, and strengthened livelihoods.

Additionally, the dismantling of USAID-supported programs has left a gap in technical support and income generation for women, youth, and vulnerable families. These circumstances underscore the need for **integrated approaches** that combine livelihoods, skills development, and social cohesion interventions to restore community stability and resilience.

## **2. Problem Statement (Expanded)**

Despite the economic potential of the Grand Bandundu region, communities face multiple challenges:

- 1. Economic vulnerability:**
  - Households, especially those headed by women, have limited income-generating opportunities.
  - Low engagement in profitable value chains constrains access to markets and capital.
- 2. Limited skills and resources:**
  - Youth and women have limited access to vocational, entrepreneurial, and literacy training.
  - Lack of formal financial tools restricts savings, investment, and business growth.
- 3. Social fragility:**
  - Historical insecurity, displacement, and the Mobondo influence weakened trust and social networks.
  - Reduced collaboration among community leaders and households undermines local development initiatives.
- 4. Market gaps:**
  - High-demand commodities such as vegetables, cassava, and organic honey are underproduced, particularly for urban markets like Kinshasa.
  - Communities lack the technical capacity to produce market-quality crops and maintain supply chains.

### 3. Objectives

#### Primary Objective:

- Strengthen **women and youth economic empowerment** through integrated interventions, including agricultural production (vegetable farming, cassava, beehive keeping for honey), VSLA-facilitated financial inclusion, handicraft activities, and vocational skills training.

#### Specific / Secondary Objectives:

1. **Enhance agricultural productivity and market access:**
  - Support production of high-demand crops (vegetables, cassava) and organic honey through modern farming and beekeeping techniques.
  - Facilitate market linkages with urban centers, particularly Kinshasa, to ensure income generation and value-chain integration.
2. **Increase financial inclusion and entrepreneurship:**
  - Establish and support VSLAs as part of women's economic empowerment activities.
  - Provide training in business management, handicrafts, and vocational skills to generate sustainable income.
3. **Strengthen community cohesion and resilience:**
  - Conduct participatory workshops, dialogues, and community engagement activities to rebuild trust and collaboration among households.
  - Foster local leadership in community-based development initiatives to maintain social stability.
4. **Promote literacy and vocational skills development:**
  - Integrate literacy programs with vocational training to ensure participants can fully engage in income-generating activities and VSLA operations.

### 4. Proposed Activities

#### Economic Empowerment / Livelihoods:

- Training in vegetable farming, cassava production, and organic honey production.
- Provision of inputs (seeds, tools, beehives) and technical support.
- Integration of VSLAs for savings, micro-loans, and community financial literacy.
- Vocational training and handicraft production (weaving, soap making, tailoring).
- Market linkage facilitation and support for small-scale trade.

#### Social Cohesion and Community Engagement:

- Community dialogues and conflict resolution workshops to rebuild trust.
- Collaboration platforms for youth and women to participate in local decision-making.
- Awareness campaigns to promote inclusiveness and collective problem-solving.

#### Capacity Building:

- Training in entrepreneurship, business management, and financial literacy.
- Continuous mentoring and technical support for agricultural and vocational activities.

## **5. Expected Outcomes / Impact**

### **Economic Outcomes:**

- Increased household incomes through agriculture, VSLA participation, and vocational skills.
- Improved productivity of high-demand commodities for local and urban markets.

### **Social Outcomes:**

- Strengthened community cohesion and trust.
- Increased participation of women and youth in local development initiatives.

### **Skills & Capacity Outcomes:**

- Number of women and youth trained in agriculture, vocational skills, and literacy.
- Enhanced capacity to manage small businesses, handicraft production, and VSLA operations.

### **Indicators:**

- % increase in household income from project activities.
- Number of participants actively engaged in income-generating activities.
- Number of community dialogues/workshops conducted.
- VSLA membership and loan uptake.

## **6. Sustainability**

- Community ownership through cooperatives, VSLAs, and local leadership structures.
- Income-generation models are market-oriented, replicable, and scalable.
- Partnerships with local stakeholders ensure continuation of technical support.
- Agricultural interventions target commodities with high urban demand, ensuring ongoing market relevance.