

Annual Report 2025

Civil Connections
Community Foundation



Building robust communities

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Forward from the Civil Connections Team

Dear friends, partners, members and colleagues,

Welcome to our eighth annual report, and to a reflection on the milestones and key impacts we've had over 2025. The past year, much like the year before it, has been marked by profound global change for the field of grassroots work. Civil Connections itself has matured into an established and ambitious little community organisation, achieving much with small means. Yet even as we enter a world with new technologies and geopolitical realities, we measure the ebb and flow of global events against the farther-reaching impact which we have seen grassroots leadership continue to achieve.

For example, down in Uganda our partners at Network for Active Citizens have been working with thirty youth-led grassroots CSOs across Kampala, Yumbe, and Mayuge. Their ambitions and capacity were trained, organisational resilience reinforced, and the civil hubs out of which they operate –the Green Democratic Spaces blossoming across the country– maintained and expanded. Young people found their voices and democratic confidence, and in leading up to the 2026 federal elections in Uganda, at least 9 of youth counsellors who were part of the SLOGBAA training decided to run in their local level elections.

We might also look at some initiatives closer to home. In an encore collaboration with our Italian partners Polygonal, we saw 20 young people from Denmark and Italy turn environmental and social concerns into concrete local action. From climate-conscious tours and peer inclusion activities in Copenhagen to youth-led mental health and environmental initiatives in Cori, young people delivered micro-projects that reached hundreds in their communities, strengthened local networks, and visibly transformed concern into community impact.

Together, we are *building robust communities*; these are just snippets stories from projects over the course of the year. We now enter 2026 with a strong portfolio of new projects, and have honed the depth and calibre of the relationships at the heart of Civil Connections. Now more than ever, it is clear that the work of those at the grassroots level are among the most important – often at the forefront for building resilience in the midst of shrinking civic space. World-changing events will continue to come, but we maintain a stronger resolve and even greater determination to support our communities to withstand these pressures, and capable of shaping what comes next.

And so we move forward with purpose: amplifying local voices, ensuring that local communities are the drivers of change, and working together to ensure that no one is left behind. We are excited for the year ahead and welcome you, reader, warmly into our mission.

Enjoy the rest of the report.



Civil Connections
Building robust communities

About Civil Connections

Civil Connections Foundation (CCCF) is an international nonprofit organization founded in 2018 and based in Copenhagen, Denmark. We work to support local grassroots organizations, especially those in rural and underserved communities, so they can play a stronger role in shaping and driving development in their own contexts. Our vision is a world where grassroots organizations and community actors have the strength, tools, and support they need to create lasting change in their communities.

Local Communities
in the Driver's Seat

Context-Based
Solutions

Action for
marginalized &
local rural

Building Genuine
Critical Mass

No-one Left Behind
Do No Harm

The Guiding Principles

We believe that lasting change starts from within communities. The people closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions. In many parts of the world, the majority of people live in rural areas, often facing the greatest inequalities and the least access to resources.

At CCCF, we focus on finding these local actors, supporting their work, and helping bring their voices and contributions into the wider development conversation.

We focus on four key areas: sharing and amplifying the work of grassroots actors; supporting them to grow their skills and capacity; helping them access funding and resources; and providing ongoing encouragement, mentorship, and partnership.

We support small-scale and targeted initiatives that can make a real difference locally and grow over time. In 2025, we have seen the fruits of this approach, and have scaled our work with our partners into greater projects with more complexity and higher impact.

Our Approach

Everything we do is guided by a few key principles, informing our **Community Impact Model**:

- Local communities are in the drivers' seat when it comes to their own development.
- Focus on locally-grown solutions that are rooted in local knowledge and realities, where needs are often greatest.
- A commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind, by paying attention to inequalities and differences within communities themselves.

Working side-by-side with local organizations, community leaders, and civil society groups to co-create and implement projects that build confidence, strengthen local systems, and support long-term sustainability. Our mission is to support these actors, especially at the local and rural level, to achieve their goals and contribute to a fairer, more sustainable world.

People & Culture

As always, Civil Connections is powered by its “tiny but mighty” team – one that is dedicated and works ambitiously for our values and commitment to our goals. In 2025, we welcomed new team members, interns, and volunteers, all of whom have grown and pursued their goals within and beyond Civil Connections with support from the organization.

At Civil Connections we are especially grateful for the rotating team of interns that we receive. Every year, they share their fresh perspectives and experiences and are part of the center of our activity taking them far and wide in Europe, representing Civil Connections at each step.

Across the board Civil Connections has the privilege of a hardworking, dynamic team that thinks outside the box, and dedicated to fostering growth of all staff.

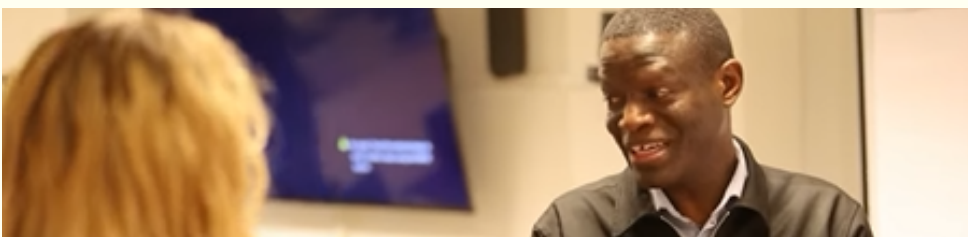


**Joana and Saad
Spring Interns 2025**



**Olivia and Ana, Fall Interns 2025
Helene Koch (center), New Staff 2025**

Our partners are also at the heart of our work – from Denmark, to Uganda, Morocco, Syria, and across Europe. We are proud to report that across 2025 we have been able to maintain many of our key partnerships, which we jump into 2026 with new projects, bigger ideas, and more determination than ever. Both at home and abroad, we are keen to acknowledge the hard work and collaboration of all those who have touched Civil Connections, without whom our work would not be possible.



2025 Projects Overview

A view from the urban Green Democratic Space and home base for Holistic Action for Development and Empowerment (HADE) in Kampala, Uganda.

Civil Connections Around the World

Over 2025, Civil Connections continued its work independently in our local community in Denmark, as well as with our cooperations with partners from across Europe and Africa. Along with our partners at Network for Active Citizens, we wrapped up our SLOGBAAll project based out of Uganda. The SLOGBAAll Project was the result of many positive impact projects implemented jointly between NAC and CCCF, aimed at equipping young Ugandans in Yumbe, Kampala and Mayuge with the knowledge, skills, and platforms to influence local governance and public spending.

Successful lobby meetings and position papers discussed at the offices of local government leaders enabled grassroots youth CSOs and youth received a pledge from local leaders to uphold the allocated 30% Parish Development Model funding for youth. The youth in these districts talked to leaders about their challenges in accessing the funds, particularly for women attempting to access the funds.

In the Green Democratic Spaces established by NAC, local partner CSOs, and community youth, more than 30 CSOs are utilising these Green Spaces for their operations, with more than 15 noted formations of youth-led CSOs across the three regions. This has been invaluable for peer-to-peer relationships among youth-led CSOs, and has led to a cornerstone of inspiration for inter-CSO networking in the next iteration of the SLOGBAA community impact projects (see: "Funding Milestones"). The direct feedback of youth throughout the project, as well as during a joint visit by Civil Connections and NAC, feeds our next steps, bridging local context, perspective and decision-making with community change across each district.





Closer to home, our EU-funded projects EUPulse and CISOMO II took action and energized the Civil Connections team who participated in, planned, and hosted workshops, international meetings, and capacity building exercises for European youth and NGO workers. In EUPulse, Civil Connections concluded the project with a series of podcast productions on the topic of European democratic processes and policy reforms – an initiative led by the Civil Connections team of interns in late 2024 and early 2025.

In CISOMO II, Civil Connections welcomed a delegation of European representatives across NGOs, CSOs and practical sectors for a workshop on integration policies, and how grassroots shape civil society and facilitate integration work in Denmark. This forms a part of Civil Connections greater work in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at home and abroad. Together with our partners in CISOMO, we put on a series of workshops brainstorming policy recommendations to be implemented in our communities to support cross-cultural dialogue and integration in EU countries.



Finally, 2025 also kicked off our Road to Resilience project with partners INDEPCIE in Spain and Palast der Löwin in Germany. Through participatory workshops and community-based activities, the project empowers people with refugee experience to build resilience, confidence, and a sense of belonging. At the same time, it equips practitioners with practical tools and shared approaches to support inclusive communities and foster meaningful connections across diverse backgrounds.

Youth Empowerment

Youth empowerment and developing young people's sense of agency – the understanding that their voices matter and their actions can make a difference – is another part of Civil Connections' mission as a community organisation. We believe that young people are drivers of their communities, and the key to lasting change. How do we try to achieve this? By encouraging youth and working together to recognize their ability to create change, both on their own and in collaboration with others, and nurturing confidence, participation, and collective engagement in their communities.

In 2025, the project "Youth for Earth" brought together young people from *Denmark and Italy* to work on small, local initiatives connected to environmental, social, and wellbeing-related issues.

Over the course of the project, participants explored existing initiatives, shared experiences, and developed their own micro-projects. These projects were shaped by the young people themselves and adapted to their local contexts, interests, and capacities.

Youth described the project as both challenging and empowering. Participants highlighted that it was meaningful to see that "there is something that can be done". Others reflected on how working with youth from another country helped them find common ground despite different backgrounds and communication styles. Participants also valued that the project allowed room for experimentation, with one reflection noting that "it's okay not to finish" because the process itself can still start something for others.

A toolbox was developed in the project for other youth and youth workers to be inspired on how to facilitate microchange. Download the toolbox and read more about the project [here](#).

Initiatives developed by youth in the project:



PLASTIC FREE! LET'S CLEAN UP THE BEACH OF LATINA!

Location of activities: Latina Beach, Italy

Mission: To promote respect for the environment and the protection of marine areas

Activities:

- Collection of plastic waste along the Latina coastline
- Delivery to the municipal waste management service
- Shared lunch, and discussion on how to better raise awareness about protecting the beach

Competences needed to run the initiative:

- Creativity and problem solving
- Attention to inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Support or input needed

It is an activity that you can do without any inputs. Take a walk alone or with friends and collect the garbage you find on the way. Protect the nature, get some exercise, and keep the place nice.

You can talk to local organisations or authorities if you want to borrow gear for the cleaning.

Opportunities:

A Plastic Free event gives participants the chance to protect the environment, connect with others, and promote awareness about marine conservation.



Funded by
the European Union



Youth For Earth

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

At its core, Civil Connections is guided by the principles of democracy and human rights. It encourages active citizenship, protects freedoms, and promotes awareness of rights and responsibilities within society.



In *Denmark* we work for healthy communities where everyone have a sense of belonging no matter who they are. Throughout 2025, we have continued our workshops for professionals supporting them in their work for diversity and inclusion, and with parents on how they tackle racism and discrimination together with their kids. This resulted in the finished **Diversity Toolbox**, begun in 2024 and officially published in 2025. This toolbox has been developed with youth and professional collaboration, as tool for all how you can start the conversation with kids, youth, colleagues or management about diversity, equity and inclusion in your community.

This project went hand-in hand with our ongoing initiative funded by Velliv Forening, United Against Racism (Fælles mod Racisme). In this project, parents and caretakers to racialized children were, across 2025, once again gathered at an inspiring, touching and useful evening, where role play, discussions and new knowledge equipped the parents and caretakers to better understand, support and embrace the racialized children in daily life and especially if exposed to racism.

As part of this, Civil Connections participated in Skvulp Festival 2025, along with Mette Toft Neilsen from Dekonstruer. Skvulp was a unique opportunity to take part in a festival where culture, sports, education, volunteering, social work, local business and citizens meet. Under the motto **Love for the community**, Skvulp invites to conversations, experiences and activities that bring people and perspectives together.

With Mette, Civil Connections piloted parts of the Diversity toolbox and has the opportunity to receive with community members who gave feedback, commentary and insights into how the toolbox might be useful for them.

Scan the QR-code to check out the diversity toolbox
www.civilconnections.org



Moving Forward: Fundraising Milestones

Civil Connections secured a strong set of fundraising milestones this year, scaling upwards, outwards, and deeper with our goals and strategy in mind. With contracts signed and tasks at hand, Civil Connections is moving forward with an exciting portfolio of projects set to roll out in 2026.

With support from CISU, we continue our work in Uganda, and are excited to work with some old friends and new partners. Together, we are implementing a series of small climate and education centric projects with the Najeza Valley Foundation and the Busoga Avocado Farmers Cooperative Union. In addition to this, Civil Connections is maintaining its presence with the Mayuge Community House. A member and donor-supported initiative, the community house will expand its library, ITC resources, supporting the thriving RISE Mayuge Soccer League and its function as a hub for sustainable community growth.

Farmer-centric & Supportive Food Systems Pilot

With Who?

In a new partnership rolling out, this project aims to pilot a farmer-centric, scalable model for sustainable avocado and other crops farming among **smallholder farmers in Busoga, Uganda**. Through a cascade training approach, the we seek to reach 286 farmers and over 900 households, fostering community-level knowledge sharing.

How?

The pilot will strengthen the Busoga Avocado Farmers Cooperative Union's capacity to deliver proactive extension services, focusing on **climate-smart practices, quality standards, market readiness, and healthy agri-food system practices**. Ultimately, this pilot aims to boost rural incomes, resilience, & food systems while positioning BAFCU as a key driver of sustainable Agri-transformation.



The Busoga Avocado
Farmers Cooperative Union



Environment Awareness and Out-schooling Demonstration Program Pilot

With Who?

Working with 5 schools and community workers, this programme will engage with **180 children** through interactive, child-friendly climate change education, and play-based learning in **Najeza, in the Wakiso District** of Uganda.

How?

Inspired by the Danish Out-schooling Program, this project **combines outdoor learning, experiential activities, and nature-based education with classroom teaching to promote holistic development**. Using 10 acres of land, and experience from 20 outdoor learning visits with 5 schools since 2020, we pilot a scalable Environmental Awareness and Outschoooling Demonstration Program targeting primary school children (6–12 years) often excluded from similar initiatives.



The Najeza Valley
Foundation



Strengthening Outdoor Learning in the Primary School System in Uganda

With Who?

This project works with **teachers, school leaders, Parent-Teacher Associations**, and district education stakeholders in five underserved primary schools in **Wakiso District of Uganda**.

How?

Drawing inspiration from the Scandinavian udeskole model, this project focusses on **strengthening the integration of outdoor learning within Uganda's primary school system by focusing on institutional uptake rather than short-term demonstration**. Building on lessons from the Environment Awareness & Out-schooling Demonstration Program (EODP), it addresses gaps in teacher ownership, administrative support, and structured guidance needed to sustain outdoor learning in regular school practice.



The Najeza Valley
Foundation



The Mayuge Community House

With Who?

This project continues Civil Connections' long support of the Community House in **Mayuge, Uganda**. Established by our founders and now organised by the Hope Alive Initiative, new funding to the will continue to empower youth in Mayuge, and support its function as a hub for **youth-led organisations and community groups**.

How?

This project focuses on establishing **sustainable coordination mechanisms and local ownership** while establishing frames for the use of the community house and library for continuous education. By empowering youth and community groups, we to foster democratic values, build leadership skills, and support grassroots development for inclusive and sustainable civil society growth



The Hope
Alive Initiative



2025 also closed out with two large projects securing funding, representing major milestones for a long-term strategy of impact. The first of these projects is Youth Inspiring Youth For Partnership and Advocacy, funded by CISU's small programme modality and implemented with our regular collaborators down at Network for Active Citizens in Uganda. Based on our projects SLOGBAA, SLOGBAII, and Youth Inspiring Youth for Accountability and Advocacy, this project won 2.4 million DKK to activating youth-led advocacy, governance accountability and civic engagement, with Accountability and CivicPreneurship fellowships, building of platforms by strengthening dedicated Green Democratic Spaces, and a programme of inter-district exchange opportunities.

Secondly, together with our partners at Project Soar in Morocco, Civil Connections succeeded in securing CISU's large project modality for Soar Your Way. A long-time dream come to life, CC and PS will work with three grassroots NGOs in Syria, rolling out Project Soar's innovative online Soar Your Way Platform to reach girls across Syria with tailored, girls-rights programming empowering women community leaders and teen girls to advocate their rights. This project was based on the success and impact made during the Bigger Movement (2021-2022) and STAND (2022-2023) projects.



Each of these new initiatives represent a step forward in Civil Connections' path of strategic growth: one that maintains our vision for community impact. The journey of these projects – and the strength of the partnerships they have produced – show our impact model as both tried and true, able to be scaled while uplifting and maintaining local grassroots actors who are the heart and drivers of each project.



Financial Report 2025

2025 saw a positive turnaround and complete reduction in our annual deficit of -17.132DKK in 2024 to a positive net of 157,081 DKK. This is the result of a previously unreported bank account from 2022 was identified and corrected in 2025, resulting in a direct adjustment to equity of 249,562 DKK. This correction increased the equity from -19,021 DKK to 230,541 DKK and the liquid assets from 27,534 DKK to 277,096 DKK, ensuring more accurate financial reporting going forward.

Civil Connections saw a reduction in administrative expenditures in 2025, set to decreased in 2026 with CC having relinquished its office space in favour of a co-working space at Mellemfolkelige Samvirke. A working group established by the general assembly in 2025 continues to work towards getting dedicated grants and independent funding for the Mayuge Soccer League in Uganda, a continuing commitment from last year's report to reduce the League's slice of the administrative financial "pie".

Resultatopgørelse

	Note	2025 kr.	2024 kr.
Nettoomsætning	1	707.328	751.859
Dækningsbidrag I		<u>707.328</u>	<u>751.859</u>
Personaleomkostninger	2	-431.660	-621.206
Dækningsbidrag II		<u>275.668</u>	<u>130.653</u>
Andre driftsindtægter	3	909.439	2.518.904
Administrationsomkostninger	4	-108.864	-137.566
Andre personaleomkostninger		-9.723	-10.218
Andre eksterne omkostninger		<u>-118.587</u>	<u>-147.784</u>
Andre driftsomkostninger	5	-909.439	-2.518.905
Årets resultat		<u>157.081</u>	<u>-17.132</u>
Forslag til resultatdisponering			
Overført resultat		157.081	-17.132
		<u>157.081</u>	<u>-17.132</u>

In 2025, Civil Connections also wrapped up three EU projects (EUPulse, CISOMO and Youth4Earth), leading to reduced expenditure in transfer fees and bank guarantees, as well as receipt of the final 20% of funding of each project having completed reporting to the EU schemes.

As of the end of 2025, all expected expenditures have been covered, and we now launch into 2026 with renewed funding avenues, mainly from CISU. Overall, the above represents a strong financial backbone for Civil Connections, having succeeded in implementing our projects even with latent financing. Civil Connections continues to have a robust financial system that ensures that the organisation delivers on its contracts and maintains high levels of trust within our partnerships.

Continuing into 2026

2025 has been a year of consolidation and growth – with many projects ending, and new ones emerging from the old. 8 years on, we have closed in on our strategic goals, are creating synergies with our long-term partnerships, and carefully cultivating the direction of the new. At the same time, our goals are the same as they have always been: making sure that we help pave the way for local communities and people at the grassroots to shape the direction of their futures.

Indeed, this report has at length impressed the point to which our partners, the local agents, and community members are the heart and drivers of each initiative. Civil Connections strives to work as more than an NGO, but a model of community impact – centralising the power of local actors, especially those in rural and marginalised contexts, their creative ideas and reality of their agency, to create an impact greater than the sum of all of our parts. We need only look at the direction of the many new initiatives that Civil Connections has underway in 2026 – nearly all of which have come directly from the minds of partners, or local actors, across Africa and in Denmark.

So what is a “robust” community? For Civil Connections, a robust community will always be one able to take action for itself, in charge of its own aspirations and development at all times. Working together in this way has been the foundation of creating not just developing communities but equal communities both locally, but also across boundaries, especially in closing the power gaps between funders and local marginalized communities.

Such co-creation drives change, and in our organisation has been the model for sustainable development as well as the key honest, trust-based, (and yes) robust working partnerships with communities and grassroots organisations across many years. For this we are thankful, also for all of the members, staff and volunteers over 2025 – as well as friends, family and many others who have touched Civil Connections’ work over the years.

Moving into 2026, Civil Connections is launching into exciting work and a strong portfolio. Thank you for your support in 2025, and we look forward to continued collaboration, cooperation, and co-creation in 2026.



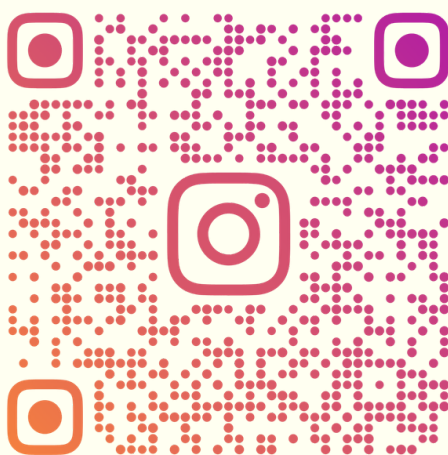
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