

End-term Evaluation

20 **25** **Uganda** **Country** **Report**



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List of Abbreviations

Acronym	Full Form
ACF	Action Against Hunger
ANC	Antenatal Care
BMET	Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBS	Community-Based Services
CBO(s)	Community-Based Organization(s)
CEGAA	Centre for Economic Governance and Accountability in Africa
CIDI	Community Integrated Development Initiatives
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSBAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organization(s)
CVA	Citizen Voice and Action
DCDO	District Community Development Officer
DDEG	District Development Equalization Grant
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DHO	District Health Officer
DNAP(s)	District Nutrition Action Plan(s)
DNCC(s)	District Nutrition Coordination Committee(s)
EED	Environmental Enteric Dysfunction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD(s)	Focus Group Discussion(s)
FRA	Food Rights Alliance
GISO	Gombolola Internal Security Officer
HC III / IV	Health Centre III / IV
HUMC	Health Unit Management Committee
IGG	Inclusive Green Growth (Dutch Embassy framework)
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (Netherlands MFA)
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
KII(s)	Key Informant Interview(s)
LC1 / LC3	Local Council One / Local Council Three
LDPG	Local Development Partners Group

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAMI	Management of At-risk Mothers and Infants
MCLD	Movement for Community-Led Development
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MDA(s)	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Netherlands)
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoTIC	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NDP IV	National Development Plan IV (2025/26–2029/30)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNF	National Nutrition Forum
NPHC	National Population and Housing Census
NSU	Nutrition Society of Uganda
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
PAS	Probation and Social Welfare Officer
PIAPs	Programme Implementation Action Plans
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSN(s)	Persons with Special needs
R2G	Right2Grow
SBN(s)	SUN Business Network(s)
SCS	Strengthening Civil Society
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SNCC(s)	Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committee(s)
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
THP	The Hunger Project
ToC	Theory of Change
TWG(s)	Technical Working Group(s)
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey

UGX	Uganda Shillings
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPA-FNS	Uganda Parliamentary Alliance on Food and Nutrition Security
URSB	Uganda Registration Services Bureau
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
VHT(s)	Village Health Team(s)
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network

Summary

The Right2Grow Programme is a five-year partnership (2021–2025) funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Power of Voices framework. It operates in six countries including Uganda to ensure that all children under five are well nourished and have equitable access to safe WASH services. In Uganda, Right2Grow addresses undernutrition as both a technical and governance challenge, working through communities, CSOs, and government institutions to promote accountability, equity, and civic participation. Globally, the consortium unites the organizations Action Against Hunger, Save the Children, World Vision, The Hunger Project, Max Foundation, and CEGAA, each bringing expertise in nutrition, WASH integration, advocacy, and governance.

Nationally, RIGHT2GROW Uganda collaborates with five key partners; **Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG)**, Food Rights Alliance (FRA), Community Integrated Development Initiative (CIDI), Nutrition Society of Uganda (NSU), and Movement for Community-Led Development (Uganda Chapter (MCLD) to strengthen advocacy, policy analysis, WASH service delivery, and citizen-led accountability. The programme's interventions follow four interconnected pathways: community empowerment, civil society strengthening, government adoption of integrated approaches, and international donor coordination. Using community approaches such as Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) and the Vision Commitment Action (VCA) model, RIGHT2GROW empowers citizens to demand services, adopt improved WASH and nutrition practices, and hold leaders accountable.

Its Theory of Change envisions a Uganda where all children under five are well nourished, achieved through multi-sectoral, gender-responsive action. It seeks to build empowered communities and CSOs, strengthen multisectoral government coordination, and promote donor alignment around the humanitarian–development nexus. The programme emphasizes inclusion, gender equity, evidence generation, mutual capacity development, use of linking and learning and joint advocacy, ensuring sustainable, community-driven progress toward ending undernutrition and improving WASH outcomes.

Evaluation Purpose

The evaluation aimed to assess the implementation and performance of the Right2Grow (R2G) Programme in Uganda (2021–2025). The evaluation focused on the effectiveness of the programme's Theory of Change, results framework, and M&E system, as well as its appropriation of key transversal components such as Mutual Capacity Development (MCD) and Linking and Learning (L&L), in strengthening civil society and improving access to nutrition and WASH services.

It examined how effectively the programme advanced its goals through multisectoral collaboration, gender integration, youth engagement, and sustainable service delivery.

The evaluation covered the programme period from July 2021 to June 2025, with data collection conducted between July and August 2025, and placed special emphasis on progress and changes observed after the Mid-Term Review (2022/2023). It assessed both achievements and challenges, analyzing how the programme transitioned from capacity building to institutionalization and sustainability.

Guided by OECD-DAC and IOB evaluation criteria particularly relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact, and sustainability the evaluation addressed key questions aligned with the programme's objectives. It applied a participatory and gender-responsive approach, ensuring that findings reflected diverse perspectives and informed evidence-based recommendations for future nutrition and WASH programming in Uganda.

Evaluation Methodology

The endline evaluation used a cross-sectional design with a predominantly qualitative approach, employing focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and observation to capture diverse perspectives at one point in time. Gender was integrated throughout, with sex-disaggregated data, gender-sensitive tools, and analysis frameworks that examined access, agency, and power dynamics among women, men, boys, and girls. Guided by OECD-DAC criteria, the study assessed the programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability, applying a feminist evaluation lens to analyze inclusivity and leadership among marginalized groups. Methodologically, the evaluation combined Contribution Analysis and Outcome Harvesting to assess how and to what extent the Right2Grow programme influenced observed changes.

Data collection involved an extensive desk review of programme and policy documents, focus group discussions with beneficiaries (12 FGDs conducted with caregivers, CVA groups, farmers, and community members), and a reflection workshop with partner organisations held in Mbarara to generate and validate contribution stories. Additionally, 36 key informant interviews were conducted with government officials, CSOs, consortium members, and development partners. These diverse data sources provided a rich basis for assessing programme achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.

Online complementary assessments were conducted to evaluate the progress and relevance of integrating the Mutual Capacity Development and Linking and Learning components as key programme achievements.

Evaluation Findings

Community Mobilisation

Right2Grow strengthened community voice and ownership by empowering citizens to identify nutrition and WASH gaps, present evidence, and hold leaders accountable through platforms such as dialogues, CVA scorecards, and photovoice. Out of 140 targeted community actions, 125 were achieved, and 81 of 100 identified barriers were addressed through joint initiatives with private sector actors, showing strong progress. These efforts translated into tangible improvements, including new and repaired boreholes, school latrines, nutrition demonstration gardens, and milk coolers. Districts also passed ordinances and allocated budgets for food and nutrition, while SUN Business Networks brought SMEs into nutrition-sensitive solutions. Communities gained confidence to influence local planning and budgeting, shifting from passive beneficiaries to active partners in governance. Importantly, the programme fostered inclusivity by engaging women, youth, and vulnerable groups, while also institutionalizing structures such as District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs), Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees (SNCCs), Parish Nutrition Committees, and water boards. Though challenges remain with sustaining budget commitments and ensuring full recognition of community monitors, Outcome 1 clearly demonstrated that empowered communities, when supported with the right tools and partnerships, can drive real and lasting improvements in nutrition and WASH services.

Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

The Right2Grow program significantly enhanced the capacity of CSOs to advocate for nutrition and WASH at national and sub-national levels. Through training in budget monitoring, evidence use, and policy engagement, CSOs created 160 spaces for influence nationally and 150 sub-nationally, while implementing 185 and 200 advocacy initiatives respectively, strong progress toward ambitious targets. Their advocacy contributed to tangible policy and financing wins, including Parliament's reinstatement of UGX 65 billion for agro-industrialisation, increased agriculture and water budgets, and the inclusion of CSO-backed nutrition indicators in Uganda's NDP IV. At district level, CSOs secured the first dedicated nutrition budget lines in sub-counties such as Busiriba and Kasambya, revitalized DNCCs and SNCCs, and influenced by-laws on sanitation and food security.

By strengthening multi-sector coordination, building inclusive coalitions, and linking advocacy to service delivery, Outcome 2 demonstrated how empowered CSOs can transform citizen voice into sustained policy influence, financing shifts, and tangible improvements in nutrition and WASH.

National Governments and Decentralized Entities

The Right2Grow programme strengthened Uganda's multi-sectoral response to undernutrition by ensuring that nutrition and WASH were integrated into national and local government priorities, financing, and policies. Working with Parliament, ministries, and district councils, civil society organisations successfully influenced budget allocations, secured the adoption of CSO proposals in agro-industrialisation, WASH, and nutrition programmes, and contributed to the integration of nutrition into the 4th National Development Plan (NDP IV). At decentralized levels, coordination structures such as DNCCs, SNCCs, and Water Boards were revitalized, leading to new by-laws, ordinances, and monitoring of dedicated nutrition budgets. By the evaluation period, 12 out of 15 targeted policies and laws were implemented, and public budgets for WASH (10%) and Food Security and Nutrition (>10%) were achieved, marking significant progress in institutionalizing nutrition and WASH within government systems. These gains demonstrate that Right2Grow has been effective in moving from advocacy to concrete budgetary, legislative, and service delivery outcomes that are both multi-sectoral and sustainable.

Donors and International Development Organisations

The Right2Grow programme mobilised international development actors and donors to strengthen coordination, advocacy, and resource alignment for nutrition and WASH through a humanitarian–development nexus. Engagements with WHO, UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, UNHCR, USAID, and the Local Development Partners Group elevated undernutrition as a cross-cutting priority, securing renewed commitments and pledges of increased support. High-level platforms such as the National Nutrition Forum and the National Colloquium on Stunting generated political momentum, with MPs pledging to mobilize funding and UNICEF promoting locally feasible solutions such as the “one egg a day” campaign. Although only 12 of the targeted 20 advocacy engagements were achieved, RIGHT2GROW laid critical groundwork by linking donor coordination to national policy processes, commissioning a financing study to guide future resource alignment, and ensuring that humanitarian interventions were better connected to long-term systems strengthening. These efforts positioned Uganda’s nutrition and WASH agenda more prominently on the international stage while establishing an evidence-driven pipeline for deeper commitments in 2025 and beyond.

Lesson Learnt

- *Sustained Change Requires Institutional Embedding, Not Project Dependency:* Right2Grow demonstrated that multi-sectoral coordination platforms (DNCCs, SNCCs) can deliver significant improvements in nutrition governance—but only when embedded within formal government planning and budgeting structures. Where local governments integrated nutrition and WASH actions into district plans, continuity was stronger. Future programmes must focus on institutionalization early rather than relying on project-driven facilitation.
- *Civic Participation Enhances Accountability and Service Delivery:* The Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) model and community scorecards effectively increased citizen engagement and responsiveness of duty-bearers. Evidence shows that citizen-led monitoring and interface meetings resulted in tangible improvements in WASH service delivery and health facility accountability. Governments and partners should prioritize scaling such models to all districts, linking them with formal performance monitoring frameworks.
- *Multi-Sectoral Approaches Deliver Stronger Outcomes: When Coordination is Incentivized.* The evaluation found that collaboration among health, water, education, and production sectors produced more sustainable impacts than single-sector interventions. However, coordination remained fragile without incentives and funding tied to joint planning and reporting. Government and donors should introduce performance-based financing for multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms to encourage interdepartmental collaboration.
- *Local Civil Society Strengthens Policy Accountability When Empowered with Evidence:* Empowering CSOs to use tools like Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) improved transparency and local advocacy outcomes. When equipped with data and coalitions (e.g., CSBAG, FRA, UWASNET), CSOs effectively influenced local and national policy. This demonstrates that data-driven advocacy is a critical complement to community mobilisation and must be maintained beyond donor cycles.
- *Gender Equality and Youth Engagement Are Transformative When Intentional:* The inclusion of gender-sensitive analysis, women’s leadership training, and youth-focused activities within RIGHT2GROW improved participation and ownership. However, lasting transformation requires formal inclusion mechanisms, such as leadership quotas, gender-responsive budgeting, and mentorship for young women and men. Programmes that treat gender and youth engagement as central—not peripheral—achieve more sustainable results.
- *Private Sector Engagement in Nutrition and WASH Is Still an Untapped Opportunity:* Collaboration with the SUN Business Network and local enterprises proved that the private sector can be a valuable ally in nutrition-sensitive supply chains and WASH innovation. However, engagement remained ad hoc. Future programmes should design structured incentives and partnerships that attract private investment in affordable hygiene products, fortified foods, and climate-resilient water systems.

Linking & Learning (L&L) was a game changer when it comes to achieving programme results: Integrating L&L as a core component of the programme across the six countries of Right2Grow was an innovative and effective strategy that significantly enhanced the programme’s overall implementation and impact. Through the

documentation and the sharing of programmatic learnings among partners, program activities and elements are continuously adapted and improved to better reach the programme objectives. In Uganda, the L&L strategy and vision led to enhancing collaboration, fostering cross-learning, and supporting adaptive management.

Recommendations

- The Government of Uganda should institutionalize dedicated budget lines for nutrition and WASH within the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and all District Development Plans (DDPs). This should include annual performance-based releases to DNCCs and SNCCs, clear tracking of expenditures, and public disclosure of nutrition financing data. Donors should support transition financing mechanisms for two years post-RIGHT2GROW to prevent regression.
- Institutionalize multisectoral coordination structures by embedding DNCCs and SNCCs into the core district planning and budgeting process. Each committee should receive an annual operational grant and report to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Line ministries should include coordination functionality indicators in the annual performance assessment.
- Establish a national civil-society resilience fund (led by CSBAG or NGO Forum) to sustain advocacy and policy monitoring on nutrition and WASH. Future programmes should invest in CSO institutional sustainability, strategic communication, and digital advocacy tools for budget tracking, particularly at sub-national levels.
- The Ministry of Local Government should mainstream CVA and community-scorecard models into district performance frameworks and integrate them within the Local Government Management Information System (LGMIS). This would allow community monitoring results to feed into sector performance reviews. Civil-society actors should continue to mentor CVA facilitators at community level to maintain gains.
- Apply a gender-transformative and youth-inclusive governance model by introducing leadership quotas in DNCCs, SNCCs, and community committees. Provide mentorship and leadership development opportunities for young women and integrate gender-responsive budgeting in all nutrition and WASH planning cycles.

1. Background and introduction

1.1. Country context

WASH Access and Service Inequalities

Uganda's WASH access has improved in the last half-decade but remains uneven by wealth, location, and settlement status. In 2022, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), using data from the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS), reported that only 43% of households had an observed handwashing facility with both soap and water available highlighting significant gaps that are widest in rural and poorer quintiles (UBOS, 2025¹). While JMP's 2023 global update highlights rising basic hygiene coverage worldwide, it emphasizes persistent deficits in Sub-Saharan Africa, where basic hygiene remains below universal coverage and rural–urban inequalities are pronounced (WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2023²). Beyond households, WASH in institutions is a continuing vulnerability in Africa, including Uganda—JMP's Africa snapshot points to slow progress in sanitation and hygiene, requiring multi-fold acceleration to meet 2030 targets (WHO/UNICEF, 2023). These service gaps translate into preventable disease and economic costs, especially where faecal contamination and inadequate handwashing align with crowding and seasonal shocks. In refugee-hosting districts and settlements, partners report periodic water trucking, rationing, and latrine overuse pressures that increase during funding shortfalls and new influxes (UNHCR, 2025; FEWS NET, 2024³). Taken together, WASH access remains a central determinant of child survival and human capital in Uganda, one that needs sustained investment in safe sources, climate-resilient systems, and hygiene behavior change, particularly in rural sub-regions and high-density settlements (WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2023; UNHCR, 2025⁴).

Child Nutrition and Health Status

In Uganda, child malnutrition remains a persistent challenge, with recent estimates indicating that the prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight among children under five has remained high despite gradual improvements over time. The 2022 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) reported that 24.4% of under-fives were stunted, 3.2% wasted, and 9.7% underweight (UBOS, 2023⁵). However, updated model-based estimates from UNICEF's 2025 malnutrition profile suggest slightly higher levels, with 25.4% stunted and 3.6% wasted, reflecting continued vulnerability (UNICEF/WHO/JME, 2025⁶). Although stunting has declined from nearly 38% in 2006 to about one in four children today, chronic malnutrition remains a major concern, highlighting the need for sustained, multisectoral interventions.

Uganda has made progress in maternal and child health, with under-five mortality declining to 52 deaths per 1,000 live births and 91% of deliveries now taking place in health facilities. These health system gains can contribute to improved child nutrition, especially when combined with better access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (UBOS, 2023⁷). However, serious challenges remain in terms of food security and nutrition. According to FEWS NET, between June 2024 and January 2025, several areas—including Karamoja and many refugee settlements—were classified as Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to reduced household purchasing power and declining

¹ UBOS. (2025, May 15). *Uganda National Household Survey 2023/24 — release note/summary page*. <https://www.ubos.org/uganda-national-household-survey-report-2023-2024-released/> (See also media coverage of the 16.1% poverty estimate: https://www.newvision.co.ug/articledetails/NV_211008)

² WHO/UNICEF JMP. (2023). *Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000–2022: Special focus on gender*. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jmp-report-2023/>

³ FEWS NET. (2024). *Uganda Food Security Outlook, June 2024–January 2025*. Famine Early Warning Systems Network. <https://fews.net/east-africa/uganda/food-security-outlook/june-2024>

⁴ UNHCR. (2025). *Uganda – refugee statistics and operational dashboards (July 2025)*. UNHCR Operational Data Portal. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/117903>

⁵ UBOS. (2023, September 8). *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) 2022: Key findings presentation*. https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2023UDHS_2022_Key_Findings_Presentation_B.pdf

⁶ UNICEF, World Health Organization, & World Bank Group. (2025). *Levels and trends in child malnutrition: UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Group Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates – Key findings of the 2025 edition*. Geneva: World Health Organization. Retrieved September 5, 2025, from <https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme/>

⁷ UBOS. (2023, September 8). *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) 2022: Key findings presentation*. https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/09_2023UDHS_2022_Key_Findings_Presentation_B.pdf

humanitarian assistance (USAID/FEWS NET, 2024). The IPC's July 2024 update further estimated that about 797,000 people in refugee-hosting districts were experiencing Crisis-level or worse food insecurity (IPC, 2024).

Uganda's position as one of Africa's largest refugee-hosting countries intensifies these vulnerabilities. The combination of displacement pressures, high dependency ratios, and funding shortfalls heightens malnutrition risks, particularly for children and pregnant or lactating women (UNHCR, 2025). These conditions highlight the close link between nutrition, WASH, and health outcomes. Poor sanitation and the lack of handwashing facilities increase the burden of diarrhoeal diseases and conditions such as environmental enteric dysfunction (EED), which contribute to growth faltering, micronutrient deficiencies, and persistent child malnutrition (UBOS, 2023; WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2023).

Economic and Poverty Trends

Uganda's economy has faced significant shocks over the past few years, similar to many countries in the region. The COVID-19 pandemic caused an initial slowdown, followed by a sharp rise in prices during 2022. Headline inflation peaked at 10.7% in October 2022, mainly due to rising food and essential goods, before gradually easing through 2023–2024 (UBOS, 2022)⁸. According to the World Bank's 2025 country overview, inflation eventually fell back below the Bank of Uganda's target, but the combined effects of the pandemic and price surges left many households with depleted savings and weakened coping capacities (World Bank, 2025).

Poverty trends reflect similar stress. The 2019/20 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) reported a 20.3% poverty rate using the national poverty line. At the international poverty line of \$2.15/day (2017 PPP), about 42% of Ugandans were classified as poor, highlighting the vulnerability of households living just above the national line (World Bank, 2025). Preliminary results from the 2023/24 UNHS suggest some improvement, with poverty falling to 16.1%, although large regional disparities remain, particularly in the poorest sub-regions (UBOS, 2025; New Vision, 2025). The World Bank has also revised its global poverty line to \$3.00/day (2021 PPP) in 2025, a methodological change that will raise Uganda's headline poverty rates in future reporting and must be carefully interpreted in policy discussions (World Bank, 2025). These dynamics call for stronger social protection systems, resilient rural livelihoods, and policies to stabilize prices, alongside investments in WASH and nutrition that protect vulnerable households and reduce the long-term impact of economic shocks (UBOS, 2022; World Bank, 2025).

Civic Space and Governance

Civic space shapes how effectively communities, civil society, and local governments can co-produce solutions whether on WASH accountability, nutrition services, or social protection targeting. In 2025, Freedom House rated Uganda "Not Free" with an overall score of 34/100, reflecting persistent restrictions on political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House, 2025)⁹. CIVICUS Monitor currently classifies Uganda's civic space as "Repressed," citing clampdowns on protests, environmental defenders, and opposition, and recurrent police disruptions of assemblies during 2024–25 (CIVICUS, 2025). The implications for service delivery are practical: constrained civic dialogue can weaken feedback loops for WASH system performance, undermine community-led total sanitation (CLTS) momentum, and narrow avenues for rights-based claims to safe water and hygiene in schools and healthcare facilities. Enabling, rather than narrowing, civic channels typically improves programme targeting and durability of gains—an important complement to financing pipelines in WASH and nutrition (CIVICUS, 2025; Freedom House, 2025).

Demographics and Population Dynamics

Demographically, Uganda's population continues to grow and urbanize. The National Population and Housing Census (NPHC) 2024 preliminary report counted 45,935,046 people (22.5 million male; 23.4 million female), an average household size of 4.4, and an annual growth rate of 2.9%—figures that translate into rapid demand growth for water, sanitation, housing, and social services (UBOS, 2024). This growth unfolds alongside significant displacement dynamics: official data recorded 1.74 million refugees and asylum seekers in October 2024, with UN and media reporting indicating the total approached ~1.9 million by mid-2025 amid funding gaps (OPM, 2024; UNHCR/Reuters, 2025). For WASH planners, these numbers underline the need for integrated service-delivery

⁸ UBOS. (2022, October 31). *CPI press release: October 2022 (headline inflation 10.7%)*. Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/10_2022CPI_Press_Release_for_October_2022.pdf

⁹ Freedom House. (2025). *Freedom in the World 2025: Uganda*. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/uganda/freedom-world/2025>

models that cover both host and refugee populations, strengthen utility performance, and extend safely managed sanitation for dense settlements—while ensuring hygiene promotion keeps pace (UNHCR, 2025; FEWS NET, 2024). Lastly, institutional data systems have improved. Uganda’s alignment with JMP definitions (e.g., measuring observed soap and water for “basic” hygiene) and periodic large-scale surveys (UDHS/UNHS) give a sound evidence base; UNICEF’s monitoring case study notes ongoing efforts to close indicator gaps and harmonize routine data, which should support more precise targeting (UNICEF, 2021; UBOS, 2023, 2025).

1.2. Programme overview

The Right2Grow programme is a five-year strategic partnership (2021–2025) funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Civil Society Strengthening – Power of Voices framework. It operates in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, South Sudan, and Uganda, with the aim of ensuring that all children under five years of age are well-nourished and that no one is left behind without access to basic WASH services. In Uganda, RIGHT2GROW collaborates with communities, community-based organizations (CBOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and government institutions to jointly tackle the underlying and structural causes of undernutrition. The programme recognizes that undernutrition is not merely a technical issue but also a governance, accountability, and equity challenge—requiring strong civic participation and integrated action across health, WASH, nutrition, gender, and livelihoods.

The global RIGHT2GROW partnership brings together six core international organizations, each contributing unique expertise to address undernutrition and WASH challenges. Save the Children International provides technical leadership on nutrition and leads global advocacy to end hunger and also contributes its strong child rights and nutrition expertise, coupled with policy engagement and community programming. The Centre for Economic Governance and Accountability in Africa (CEGAA) brings its specialization in economic governance, accountability, and public finance tracking. Max Foundation focuses on integrated WASH–nutrition programming, ensuring that interventions tackle the interconnected causes of malnutrition. The Hunger Project supports community mobilization and empowerment strategies to strengthen food security and resilience. World Vision leverages its long-standing community presence and the Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) social accountability model to enhance community-level advocacy and governance. ACF is partly responsible for the Mutual Capacity Development (MCD) component to reinforce national and local partners’ technical capacities and operational development and for the Linking and Learning (L&L) country strategy and technical support to continuously improve programme activities and key elements, based on good practices, challenges and recommendations.

In Uganda, the RIGHT2GROW consortium works closely with five key national partners that complement and strengthen implementation efforts. The Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) leads in budget monitoring and advocacy through its Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) role. The Food Rights Alliance (FRA) provides critical policy advice on national food security and nutrition. The Community Integrated Development Initiative (CIDI) serves as the WASH lead, offering technical expertise and programming on water, sanitation, and hygiene. The Nutrition Society of Uganda (NSU) generates evidence on nutrition gaps and tracks policy implementation through research. Finally, the Movement for Community-Led Development – Uganda Chapter (MCLD) focuses on community mobilization, awareness raising, and supporting citizen-led monitoring of nutrition, food, and WASH service delivery.

The ultimate goal of RIGHT2GROW is that every child reaches their full potential by eliminating undernutrition and improving WASH access. To achieve this, the programme pursues four interlinked pathways for change as set out in its Theory of Change (ToC):

- 1) **Community empowerment:** Communities demand and invest in basic social services and adopt good nutrition and WASH practices, working jointly with private sector actors to overcome barriers.
- 2) **Civil society strengthening:** Representative and empowered CSOs effectively navigate civic space to advocate for leadership, accountability, and good governance in preventing undernutrition.

- 3) **Government adoption of integrated approaches:** National and decentralized government entities mainstream multisectoral approaches to undernutrition in policies, action plans, and budget allocations.
- 4) **International and donor coordination:** Donors and development actors align and collaborate along the humanitarian–development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition.

Right2Grow Uganda’s interventions are anchored in advocacy, capacity strengthening, and community-led development, with activities designed to influence change at multiple levels. At the community level, the programme mobilizes and trains communities through Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups and community-based organizations (CBOs). Within the Hunger Project (THP) working areas, the Vision–Commitment–Action (VCA) method was also applied as a complementary community empowerment tool. The VCA process helps communities envision their desired future, commit to achievable actions, and mobilize collective effort toward improving WASH access, sanitation behaviors, and public health outcomes. CVA groups empower citizens to demand better services, adopt improved WASH and nutrition practices, and hold duty-bearers accountable. Community mobilization campaigns are also conducted to raise awareness about nutrition, WASH, and food security challenges. Importantly, the programme encourages women, men, and children to voice their needs and actively participate in co-creating solutions that respond to their local realities.

At the civil society level, Right2Grow strengthens the capacity of CSOs to navigate civic space and advocate for accountability in nutrition and WASH programming. This involves equipping organizations with tools for evidence-based advocacy, building their ability to monitor government performance, and enhancing their influence in decision-making processes. The programme also facilitates the formation of coalitions and alliances to strengthen collective action, particularly in pushing for greater budget allocation and resource mobilization for nutrition-sensitive and WASH services.

At the government and policy level, the programme works with both national and decentralized government entities to promote multisectoral approaches to undernutrition. This includes mainstreaming nutrition and WASH into policies, action plans, and budgets. Right2Grow also supports policy tracking, expenditure monitoring, and accountability mechanisms to ensure that government commitments are effectively translated into practice. In addition, the programme encourages collaboration among civil society, the private sector, and government actors to co-create integrated, bottom-up, and gender-sensitive solutions that address systemic barriers to nutrition and WASH service delivery.

Finally, at the donor and international level, Right2Grow engages with international development partners to align humanitarian and development interventions and promote coherence across sectors. The programme contributes to strengthening the global evidence base on the connections between WASH, nutrition, and governance, which is used to inform international advocacy and guide funding priorities. Through these multi-level interventions, Right2Grow ensures that communities, CSOs, government institutions, and development actors work in mutually reinforcing ways to eliminate undernutrition and expand access to basic WASH services in Uganda.

Apart from the proposed Theory of Change, one of the key cross-cutting pillars of the Right2Grow programme has been the Linking & Learning (L&L) component. Since the programme inception, L&L was structured as an approach more than a sum of activities and focused on an in-depth shift in ways of working to achieve long lasting impact by including critical reflection, learning and adaptive management in the project cycle. The L&L vision and 5 years strategy focused on behavior and mindset change: « *Within the next 5 years, capturing and sharing knowledge from communities and R2G partners will take place in a fluid, systematic and sustainable way. Learnings will be easily accessible and the continuous integration of learning to increase impact in programs and policies will be part of the ways of working of all Right2Grow partners* », with 3 outcomes: Outcome 1: Learning is captured, Outcome 2: Learning is shared, Outcome 3: Learning is used.

1.3. Programme theory of Change

The Right2Grow Uganda Theory of Change (ToC) is built on the conviction that every child has the right to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential. The ultimate goal of the programme is therefore that every child is able to reach their full potential, with a specific long-term impact of ensuring that all children under five in Uganda are well nourished. To achieve this ambition, the programme pursues a medium-term impact which include the following

- Government decision makers and other key stakeholders jointly and effectively address undernutrition in a multi-sectoral, gender-sensitive and inclusive way.

This recognizes that undernutrition is not only a matter of food supply or WASH access, but also of governance, equity, and coordinated action across sectors.

The ToC identifies **four main outcomes** as critical pathways to change.

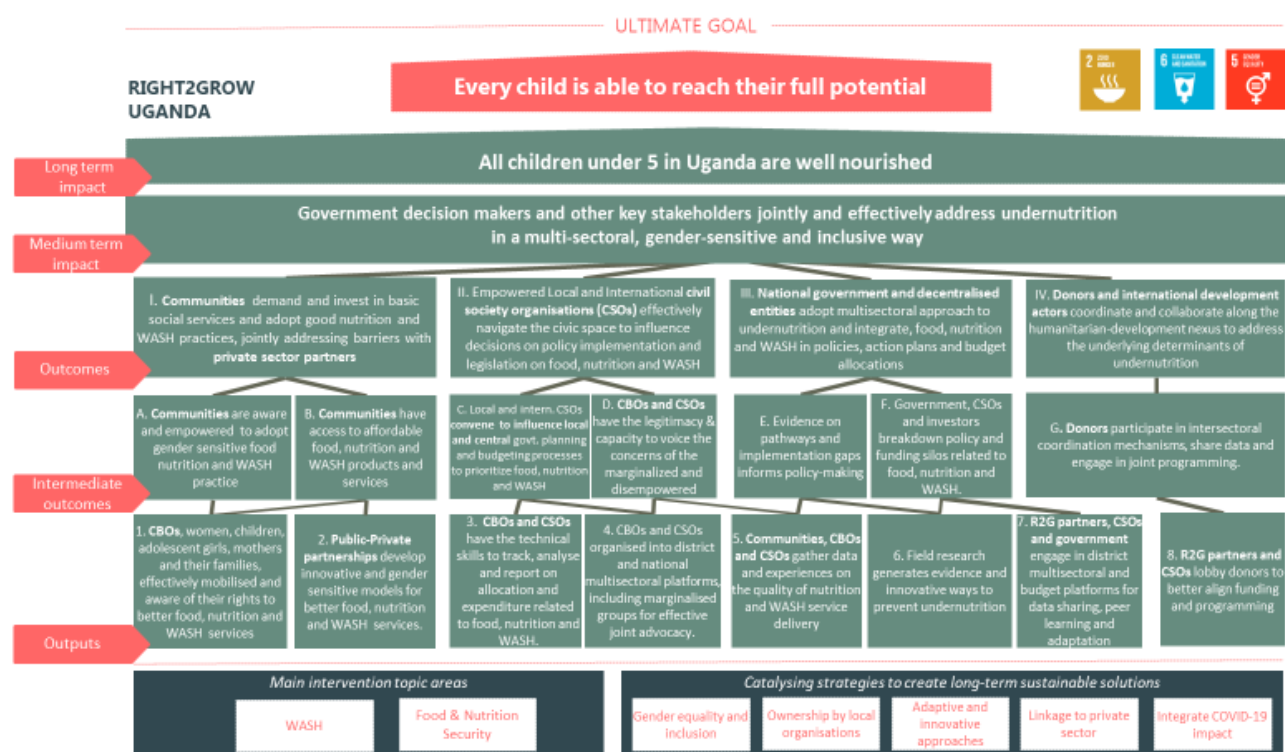
1. Communities demand and invest in basic social services and adopt good nutrition and WASH practices, jointly addressing barriers with private sector partners.
2. Empowered Local and International civil society organisations (CSOs) effectively navigate the civic space to influence decisions on policy implementation and legislation on food, nutrition and WASH.
3. National government and decentralised entities adopt multisectoral approach to undernutrition and integrate food, nutrition and WASH in policies, action plans and budget allocations.
4. Donors and international development actors coordinate and collaborate along the humanitarian-development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition.

To sustain these outcomes, the ToC highlights a set of **intermediate outcomes**. These include;

The programme's **outputs** outline the practical steps through which these outcomes will be achieved.

1. CBOs, women, children, adolescent girls, mothers and their families effectively mobilised and aware of their rights to better food, nutrition and WASH services.
2. Public-private partnerships develop innovative and gender sensitive models for better food, nutrition and WASH services.
3. CBOs and CSOs have the technical skills to track, analyse and report on allocation and expenditure related to food, nutrition and WASH.
4. CBOs and CSOs organised into district and national multisectoral platforms, including marginalised groups for effective joint advocacy.
5. Communities, CBOs and CSOs gather data and experiences on the quality of nutrition and WASH service delivery.
6. Field research generates evidence and innovative ways to prevent undernutrition.
7. R2G partners, CSOs and government engage in district multisectoral and budget platforms for data sharing, peer learning and adaptation.
8. R2G partners and CSOs lobby donors to better align funding and programming.

Figure 1: Right2Grow Uganda theory of change



1.4. Changes made after Mid-Term Review

This section highlights the main changes observed after the MTR, illustrating both institutional and community-level transformations.

Following the Mid-Term Review (MTR), the programme introduced deliberate reforms that marked a clear turning point in planning and delivery. Budgeting and resource allocation shifted from ad hoc arrangements to institutionalized budget lines for nutrition and WASH, guided by MTR recommendations to strengthen government ownership and sustainability. District technical teams were trained to integrate nutrition and WASH priorities into annual workplans and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), leading to deliberate allocations in Kamwenge District based on Right2Grow (R2G) evidence. This improved transparency and enabled more targeted investments in underserved sub-counties. Multi-sectoral coordination also improved as District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) were revitalized with clear terms of reference, regular joint planning, and evidence-based reviews using community scorecards. The use of these joint scorecards became the turning point, reducing duplication, promoting accountability, and linking sectoral actions such as kitchen gardens, nutrition education, and safe water initiatives into integrated, nutrition-sensitive WASH programming.

In terms of collaboration with other strategic partnerships and programmes, the MTR ushered in stronger joint engagements, most notably with CASCADE, UNICEF, and UPA-FNS, to amplify advocacy on nutrition and WASH. These collaborations resulted in joint organisation of the 3rd National Nutrition Dialogue, national CSO retreats to influence NDP IV, and collective lobbying for the Food and Nutrition Bill. This collective approach provided a wider voice for CSOs and demonstrated the value of unified advocacy platforms. Importantly, new spaces were created to elevate women and girls' leadership in agrifood systems, through the 1st National Gathering of Women and Girls Against Hunger and Malnutrition, which resulted in concrete commitments from government and private sector actors to support women's economic empowerment.

Collaboration with the private sector also became more deliberate after the review. Mapping and training of businesses in six districts under the SUN Business Network strengthened local networks to respond to food security gaps. By linking micro and small businesses to the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (2020/21–2024/25), the programme secured private investment in nutrition-sensitive practices such as milk coolers, community stores, and improved post-harvest handling technologies.

1.5. Description of endline evaluation process

1.5.1 Evaluation locations

Data for the evaluation was collected from a range of locations at national, district, and community levels to capture the programme's multi-layered implementation. At the national level, data was gathered from government ministries, agencies, and national-level CSOs engaged in nutrition, WASH, and governance. At the district level, the evaluation focused on six programme districts; Buliisa, Kamwenge, Adjumani, Kikuube, Bugweri, and Kabale, where interviews and consultations were conducted with district authorities, local CSOs, service providers, and programme partners. At the community level, data collection was carried out in selected sub-counties, parishes, and villages within these districts, engaging community-based organizations (CBOs), Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups, caregivers, and community members. This multi-site data collection approach ensured that evidence reflected both the policy and institutional perspectives at higher levels as well as the lived experiences and outcomes within communities directly targeted by the programme.

1.5.2 Evaluation Participants

The evaluation engaged a wide range of stakeholders at global, national, district, and community levels to ensure comprehensive learning and accountability. Key programme consortium partners, including The Hunger Project, Action Against Hunger, World Vision, CEGAA, Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), Food Rights Alliance (FRA), Nutrition Society of Uganda (NSU), Community Integrated Development Initiatives (CIDI), and the Movement for Community-Led Development (MCLD), were consulted to assess their roles, contributions, and coordination within the partnership. At the national level, data was collected from line ministries and national bodies such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Trade, Industries and Cooperatives, and the Office of the Prime Minister, alongside development partners including the Dutch Embassy in Uganda. At the district and sub-county levels, the study engaged District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs), health and water officers, community development officers, sub-county and parish chiefs, health workers, and agricultural officers to understand local service delivery and sustainability. At the community level, the evaluation worked with 19 community-based organizations (CBOs), 14 Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups, and target beneficiaries including caregivers of children under five, women, men, youth, and people living with a disability. This inclusive stakeholder participation ensured that perspectives from programme implementers, policymakers, service providers, and rights-holders were all captured to inform the findings and recommendations.

Out of a total of 87 respondents, 13 staffs from Uganda responded to the Linking & Learning (L&L) endline online survey: 4 respondents are from The Hunger Project, 2 from Action Against Hunger, 3 from FRA, 1 from CIDI, 1 from CEGAA, 1 from CSBAG and 1 from NSU.

1.5.3 Overview of the Scope & Key Evaluation Questions.

The evaluation primarily assessed the implementation of the Right2Grow programme, focusing on the technical aspects of programme activities, including the effectiveness of its Theory of Change, results framework, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. The L&L endline evaluation aimed to assess progress and achievements in L&L in Uganda and to monitor whether L&L practices acquired throughout the programme will continue, even beyond Right2Grow. The MCD questionnaires assessed the capacity strengthening efforts implemented since the programme's inception and their overall impact and the way that MCD interventions reinforced organizational capacities of local CSO partners in influencing policies and practices. All these combined evaluations evaluated how well the programme achieved its technical goals in strengthening civil society organizations and improving access to nutrition and WASH services. Key technical areas included assessing the multisectoral approach to undernutrition, gender sensitivity, youth engagement, and the sustainability of interventions.

Data collection for the evaluation was carried out between July and August 2025. The evaluation covered the full implementation period of the Right2Grow (RIGHT2GROW) programme in Uganda, from July 2021 to June 2025, and paid particular attention to activities and outcomes observed after the Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in 2022/2023. It assessed the programme's achievements, challenges, and changes over the first four years, while the end-line evaluation provided critical insights into outcomes and lessons learned. The analysis drew on both baseline data and MTR findings to measure progress toward the intended results and impact over time. This timeframe made it possible to capture the early foundations of the programme, such as capacity building and multi-sectoral coordination—while also examining the post-MTR shifts toward institutionalization, sustainability, and inclusive service delivery.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions specified in the Terms of Reference are based on the key objectives of the ETE and the OECD/DAC- and the IOB-evaluation quality criteria as well as a participatory approach with focus on gender and support for evaluation. Of the OECD/DAC criteria, particularly those on relevance, effectiveness, partnership coherence, impact and sustainability are taken into account. The evaluation questions are finalised during the inception phase.

Table 1: Evaluation Questions

Scope	Main evaluation questions
Relevance	To what extent did the overall programme ToC and country ToCs match with the key issues at country and global levels? To what extent are the overall programme ToC and the country ToC including assumptions valid and of high quality? To what extent have the programme strategies responded to the needs of local communities / targeted population? To what extent have the programme strategies responded to the needs to strengthen policies and budgets at country level ?
Effectiveness and impact	What have been the main (intermediate) outcome results achieved at end-line in relation to the programme ToC pathways and the progress towards the achievement of the donor indicators (output and outcome level)? To what extent were the programme's strategies and activities for the selected hotspots effective in producing the desired results? In what ways did the programme contribute to its planned development impact? What examples of positive or negative unintended effects did the programme encounter?
Sustainability	To what extent are the changes achieved by the programme long-lasting? What factors contribute to the sustainability after the programme's conclusion? What steps have been taken to build local capacity and ownership (including integration into local systems or practices) to sustain and/or scale the programme outcomes over time? How has the programme encouraged the change of WASH/nutrition policies to support the continuity of the achieved changes at the national and international level? How has the programme encouraged the change in access to nutrition and WASH services in a sustainable way at the national and international level? To what extent have local authorities pledged their continued support?

Coherence & Partnership and collaboration	To what extent has collaboration between the different Consortium Partners created added value in programme countries or at global level?
	To what extent is collaboration with other partners - outside the Right2Grow Consortium - taking place in programme countries, including with other SCS partnerships, and what has been the added value of those collaborations?
	To what extent have adaptive management principles influenced programming within Right2Grow at country and global level?
	What has been the added value of MFA, and separately, of its embassies, to the Partnership? And what is the value added of this Partnership to MFA?
	How successful was the programme in its localization and shift the power efforts at global and country level?

2. Methodology

2.1. Overall Research Design

The endline evaluation adopted a cross-sectional Design, employing mainly a qualitative approach, and it used Focus group discussions (FGDs), Key informant interviews, and Observation methods. The cross-sectional design was chosen because it provided an opportunity for studying a wide range of respondents from different categories while taking a snapshot of the study population at a certain time, thus allowing for conclusions about phenomena across a wide population to be drawn.

To ensure gender responsiveness, the evaluation integrated gender considerations throughout the study design. Evaluation questions explored gender-differentiated needs, experiences, and outcomes. Data collection tools were gender-sensitive, with sex-disaggregated data and separate sessions where appropriate. The Analysis applied gender frameworks to assess power dynamics, access, and agency. The evaluation also included relevant gender equality indicators and engaged women's groups and local stakeholders to validate findings and inform gender-sensitive recommendations.

The evaluation was designed based on the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria¹⁰, focusing on the impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability of the programme. It addressed key evaluation questions outlined in the terms of reference, as well as additional questions set out within the evaluation framework. This guided the assessment of the programme's achievements and challenges. A feminist evaluation lens was also applied to ensure that gender equality, power relations, and inclusivity were systematically analyzed across all components. This approach examined how women, men, girls, and boys experienced programme outcomes differently, whose voices were amplified or excluded in decision-making, and how the programme strengthened agency and leadership among women and marginalized groups. Particular emphasis was placed on understanding how the programme contributed to long-term outcomes, the replicability of its model, and the sustainability of its impact—while ensuring that these gains were equitable and transformative for all genders.

2.1.1 Methodological Approaches

Contribution Analysis

Contribution Analysis was applied as a theory-based evaluation method to assess how and to what extent the Right2Grow programme contributed to the observed changes in nutrition, WASH, and governance outcomes in Uganda. The approach started from the programme's Theory of Change and examined the links between interventions, mechanisms of change, and outcomes. To make this practical, the evaluation team selected several "hotspots"—key areas of change or contested interest identified during the inception phase. For each hotspot, the evaluation developed a contribution story, which provided a narrative of how the programme influenced the observed results. These stories followed the CIMO framework (Context, Interventions, Mechanisms, Outcomes), allowing evaluators to capture the specific conditions under which change occurred, the actions taken, the causal processes triggered, and the results achieved. Country teams drafted the initial contribution stories, which were then validated with external stakeholders through focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). This process ensured that the contribution claims were credible and considered other influencing factors beyond the programme itself.

Outcome Harvesting

Outcome Harvesting complemented the contribution analysis by drawing on the programme's extensive monitoring system, which had been documenting outcomes throughout its five-year implementation. This method identifies, formulates, verifies, and makes sense of outcomes without requiring them to have been predefined. For the endline evaluation, the team did not carry out additional harvesting; instead, it built upon the already harvested and substantiated outcomes that the programme had accumulated. These existing outcomes served as

evidence of the programme's achievements and were used to populate an Evidence Gap Map, providing an overview of changes across nutrition, WASH, and civic engagement. Furthermore, selected harvested outcomes were revisited during interviews and discussions with external stakeholders, not to fully re-substantiate all results, but to strengthen triangulation and validate the credibility of findings. This allowed the evaluation to connect documented programme outcomes with broader stakeholder perspectives, ensuring a balanced assessment of achievements and lessons learned.

2.1.2 Data Collection Methods and Tools

Desk Review

During the documentation review phase, the consultancy team reviewed all key documents provided by the consortium and partners, including programme reports, baseline reports, the Multi-Annual Program Plan, annual and semi-annual reports, and relevant policy documents. This desk review established key issues and helped inform data collection during the primary data collection phase. Relevant reports such as the Right2Grow Theory of Change, annual and semi-annual reports, the baseline study, the Mid-Term Review (MTR) report, outcome harvesting data, and monitoring data collected throughout the project were all reviewed to provide a comprehensive understanding of programme achievements and challenges. The team liaised with Action Against Hunger and consortium members to access all necessary documents relevant to the assignment, ensuring that secondary data supplemented the primary data collected in the field. Additionally, outcome harvesting data were collected and integrated, and the harvested outcomes were analysed for alignment with the Theory of Change, offering valuable insights into programme successes and challenges.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provided in-depth insights into the programme's outcomes at the community level. These discussions were recorded using audio recorders, with notes taken by the team for further reference. In consultation with Right2Grow partners, the team identified beneficiaries, ensuring gender and demographic diversity, including women, men, youth, and marginalized groups. The discussions focused on assessing programme impact and local-level changes in nutrition, food security, and WASH service delivery. Each session lasted no more than two hours to allow for comprehensive input while avoiding participant fatigue. Key participants included household members in target communities, parents and caregivers of children under five, community-based advocacy groups and CVA groups, youth and women's groups, Village Health Teams (VHTs), WASH Committees, farmer groups, and marginalized groups such as persons with special needs. The FGDs also served to evaluate the implementation of the Theory of Change and its alignment with local needs. Overall, the evaluation team conducted **12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** with a total of **54** participants, comprising **34 females and 20** males drawn from diverse community groups and project stakeholders.

Table 2: Sample Reach of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGD Group	Planned	Reached (Achieved Sample)
1. Caregivers of children under 5	4	4
2. Community Members	5	3
3. Citizen Voice & Action (CVA) Group	3	3
4. Farmers Group	4	2
Total	16	12

Reflection Sessions with Partner Organizations

In-country data collection was originally planned to begin with a reflection workshop involving staff from all partner organizations in the coalition. However, due to partners' busy schedules and ongoing programme activities, this was not immediately possible. The reflection workshop was eventually conducted on 7th August 2025 at Oxford Hotel, Mbarara, facilitated by the Maarifa Consult evaluation team consisting of **47** participants from all partner organisations. During the session, staff shared examples, experiences, and reflections on the programme's relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and coherence. The workshop also generated contribution stories that

were later validated through FGDs and KIs. Structured exercises encouraged participants to reflect on programme achievements and challenges. Participants included programme, MEAL, and management staff from each partner organization, with a maximum of nine representatives per session to ensure meaningful interaction and in-depth discussion. In coalitions with many organizations, each sent one representative, while smaller coalitions allowed for multiple representatives. Topics of discussion were shared beforehand to allow adequate preparation, and participants were selected based on their knowledge of programme implementation. Efforts were also made to ensure gender, age, and ethnic diversity. Overall, this reflection workshop served as a key component of the evaluation process, ensuring diverse perspectives were captured from the outset of data collection



Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews (KIs) were conducted with stakeholders such as Right2Grow Steering Committee members, CSOs supported by the programme, district and lower local government officials (including sub-county and parish leaders), policymakers, and representatives from line ministries. Respondents were purposively selected based on their level of engagement, institutional knowledge, and direct contribution to programme design, coordination, and implementation. Selection criteria included:

- (i) individuals with decision-making or oversight roles within implementing or partner organizations; technical officers or focal persons responsible for WASH, nutrition, or governance components;
- (ii) actors involved in coordination platforms such as DNCCs or partner learning forums; and
- (iii) representatives of organizations advocating for gender equality, youth engagement, and localization.

This purposive selection was justified to ensure the inclusion of voices with strategic and operational insight into the programme's functioning and outcomes. The interviews followed a semi-structured approach to capture rich, context-specific data aligned with the evaluation objectives. KIs were particularly useful for obtaining insights into programme governance, partnership collaboration, and cross-cutting themes such as gender, youth, and climate. They also helped assess power dynamics within the partnership, localization efforts, and the extent to which power was shifting to local CSOs—key dimensions of sustainability and equity in programme delivery.

Table 3: Sample Reach of the Key Informants

Category	Planned	Achieved Sample
District-level Officers (Health, Agriculture, Water, Planning, Statistics, PWD, Nutrition)	13	18
Sub-county Leaders & Chiefs	10	6
Civil Society & Community Groups	2	3
National-level Officials	2	2
Development Partners / External Stakeholders	2	1
DNCC / Cross-district Coordination	4	3
Other Administrative Officers	3	3
Total KIs	36	36

2.2. Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this endline evaluation was conducted with a strong emphasis on credibility, ethical integrity, and confidentiality. Given the largely qualitative nature of the study, careful data management practices were applied at every stage. Information was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIs), outcome harvesting sessions, participatory validation meetings, and desk reviews. All FGDs and KIs were audio-recorded with the consent of participants, complemented by handwritten notes from trained moderators and note-takers. The recordings were transcribed verbatim and translated into English where necessary, before being reviewed for completeness and clarity. To safeguard confidentiality, all personal identifiers were removed or anonymized prior to analysis. The transcripts and notes were stored in password-protected folders accessible only to the evaluation team, while physical notes and consent forms were secured in lockable storage.

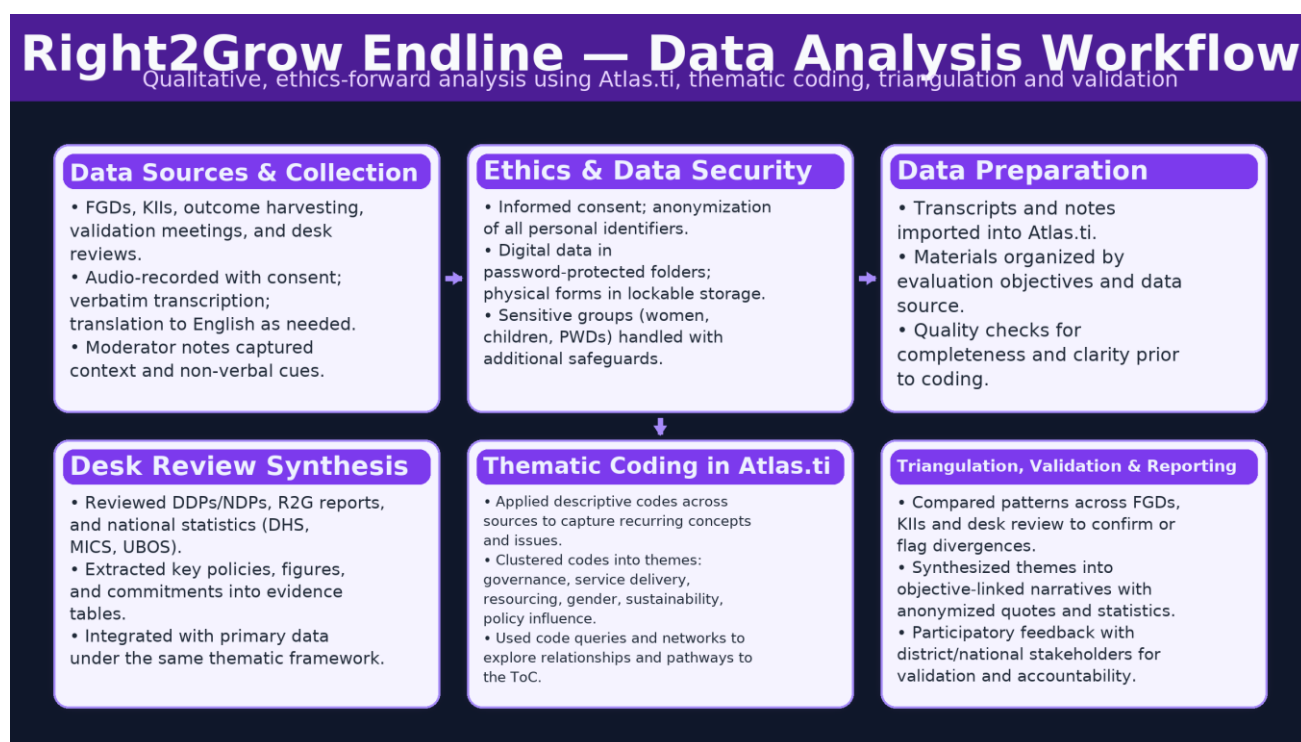
Thematic Analysis and Coding

The analysis itself was guided by a thematic approach supported by Atlas.ti software. Transcripts and desk review notes were imported into the software and systematically organized according to the project's evaluation objectives. The evaluation team began by applying descriptive codes to recurring concepts and issues identified across the data. These codes were then clustered into broader categories and themes, such as governance and coordination, service delivery, resource allocation, gender inclusion, sustainability, and policy influence. The use of Atlas.ti enabled efficient management of large volumes of qualitative data and allowed the team to visualize connections between themes, making it easier to trace relationships across interviews, group discussions, and policy documents.

Through thematic analysis, the evaluation team was able to identify patterns, commonalities, and differences in perspectives across districts and respondent groups. Governance-related themes revealed both stronger district-level coordination and persistent challenges in budget allocation. Themes on gender inclusion highlighted increasing participation of women in decision-making, but also revealed the continued imbalance of household responsibilities. By linking these themes to the programme's Theory of Change, the analysis showed how observed changes aligned with the expected pathways of influence and where gaps still existed.

Finally, the themes were synthesized into coherent narratives that directly addressed the evaluation objectives. These narratives were illustrated with anonymized participant quotes to capture lived experiences and supported with statistical and policy evidence drawn from the desk review. Triangulation across multiple data sources ensured that the findings were credible, while participatory feedback sessions with district and national stakeholders added a layer of validation and accountability. This combination of thematic coding, triangulation, and participatory validation ensured that the evaluation findings were both rigorous and grounded in the realities of the communities and systems studied.

Figure 2: Data analysis Work flow



2.3. Biases and Limitations

Several sources of bias may have affected data collection and analysis:

- **Selection bias:** Some respondents, particularly district officials, may have been more accessible or engaged with the Right2Grow programme, which could result in an overrepresentation of positive perspectives.
- **Response bias / Social desirability bias:** Officials often emphasized successes while downplaying challenges, as seen in interviews with the PAS, DCDO, DHO, and CAO. Statements about program achievements sometimes lacked supporting documentation, indicating a tendency to provide answers they perceived the evaluator wanted to hear.
- **Recall bias:** Given the multi-year scope of the programme, respondents' recollection of past activities and outcomes may have been incomplete or inaccurate.

The evaluation mitigated these biases by triangulating responses with community feedback, focus group discussions, and available programme documentation. Open-ended questions and a non-judgmental interview approach encouraged more candid reporting.

Limitations

Key limitations that affected the evaluation included:

- **Limited or incomplete documentation:** District-level records for RIGHT2GROW activities were often inconsistent or missing, making it difficult to track the exact implementation and impact of interventions.
- **Access constraints:** Difficulty scheduling interviews with busy senior officials caused some delays in data collection.
- **Political and institutional pressures:** Officials occasionally hesitated to discuss coordination gaps or programme shortcomings due to perceived sensitivity, which could limit transparency.

- Another constraint was the delay and difficulty in the transfer of funds from Impact House, which created operational limitations such as postponed fieldwork, reduced flexibility in mobilizing data collection teams, and delayed procurement of logistical inputs.

2.4. Ethical Considerations and Safeguards

The evaluation was implemented with a strong commitment to ethical research standards, safeguarding, inclusivity, and accountability to affected populations. Specific protocols were integrated throughout the evaluation process across the following thematic areas:

Safeguarding and Protection: To safeguard vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, all field researchers signed a safeguarding policy before deployment. The evaluation team received comprehensive training on safeguarding principles, including prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), child protection, and referral pathways. Fieldwork was closely supervised by the Lead consultant, with daily debriefings led by the team leader to flag risks or concerns.

Data Privacy and Confidentiality: The evaluation adhered to strict data protection and confidentiality standards. Personally identifiable information was excluded from the report unless participants provided explicit, written consent. For direct quotes or case studies that referenced individual names or personal experiences, written permissions were obtained. Where relevant, the participation of spouses or household heads was informed in line with local cultural norms. No photographs were taken or used without signed photo consent.

Gender Sensitivity and Voluntary Participation: Gender-sensitive approaches were applied throughout the data collection process. Female enumerators were prioritized to engage female participants to foster open dialogue in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner. Participation in all interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), or surveys was strictly voluntary and based on informed consent. Participants were informed about the nature, purpose, and expected duration of each session, helping to manage expectations and reduce fatigue.

Dissemination and Use of Findings: To protect the strategic value and ownership of the evaluation findings, the consultant committed not to publish or disseminate any part of the report externally without the written consent of the client. This ensures appropriate review, validation, and alignment with stakeholder communication protocols.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion: All data collection tools and methods were designed with sensitivity to cultural norms, gender roles, and age dynamics. Separate FGDs were organized for different demographic groups (e.g., women, men, youth, children) to ensure participants felt safe, respected, and comfortable. Data collectors were trained on culturally appropriate communication and respectful facilitation techniques.

Accessibility and Representation: The evaluation made deliberate efforts to include underrepresented and marginalized groups, especially persons with special needs. Data collection tools were adapted to accommodate mobility and communication needs, and venues were selected to ensure physical accessibility. This inclusive approach ensured diverse perspectives were captured and reflected in the analysis.

Transparency and Accountability: The evaluation was conducted in partnership with the Right2Grow consortium, with clear accountability for timelines, deliverables, and data integrity. A commitment to downward accountability guided the process: findings were shared with participating communities through feedback sessions and translated summaries in local languages. This validation process enabled communities to engage with and interpret findings, reinforcing transparency and mutual respect.

3. Findings

This section presents the findings of the Endline Evaluation of the Right2Grow Programme (2021–2025), organized according to the four programme outcomes and aligned with the overall objectives of the evaluation. The analysis is structured around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria; Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. The findings further highlight the extent to which donors and international development actors coordinated and collaborated along the humanitarian–development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition.

3.1. Relevance

This section assesses how well the Right2Grow (R2G) programme addressed the most pressing needs of communities and priority groups in Uganda, and how closely it aligns with national and district priorities.

3.1.1 Quality and evolution of the country ToC

The country Theory of Change (ToC) was found to be both comprehensive and contextually relevant. It clearly articulated the pathways through which governance, coordination, advocating for service delivery, gender inclusion, and policy influence contribute to improved nutrition and WASH outcomes. Its strength lay in linking grassroots advocacy mechanisms such as Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) with higher-level policy and financing processes, ensuring that community priorities were connected to district and national decision-making. By embedding accountability loops, where evidence from scorecards and outcome harvesting sessions could feed into District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) and further into national dialogues, the ToC provided a practical roadmap for scaling impact beyond individual project sites. National and Local government stakeholders consistently noted that the ToC captured the multi-sectoral and systemic nature of undernutrition, moving away from siloed approaches and aligning well with Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP IV) and the global Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) framework.

The country Theory of Change (ToC) has been consistently acknowledged as a strong guiding framework that has enabled alignment of strategies, partners, and outcomes across multiple levels. It clearly articulated how community mobilisation, district coordination, and national-level advocacy would combine to influence nutrition, WASH, and food security outcomes. However, the annual Right2Grow report (2024) indicates that implementation realities revealed areas where the ToC required ongoing adaptation. For example, in 2024, R2G shifted towards adaptive programming within the ToC framework. For instance, when external political events such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit disrupted scheduled engagements with Parliament, the consortium quickly adapted by using alternative advocacy channels, submitting civil society position papers to the Budget Committee and holding virtual meetings with policymakers. This demonstrated the flexibility of the ToC to accommodate unexpected disruptions while still pursuing its intended pathways of influence. Likewise, when the NDP IV and DDP IV processes overlapped with national budget consultations in 2024, partners divided roles to ensure representation in all key spaces. This adaptive behaviour was not foreseen in the original ToC, but it enriched its quality by showing that the theory could accommodate opportunistic engagement while maintaining coherence. In practice, this meant that advocacy messages on nutrition financing, WASH priorities, and agro-industrialisation proposals were included in the FY2024/25 budget framework, despite the political and logistical constraints.

3.1.2 Alignment of ToC with Key National & Global Issues

Alignment with Uganda's National Priorities: The Right2Grow Uganda ToC strongly aligns with Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP III 2020/21–2024/25), which emphasizes human capital development, nutrition, and access to WASH services as critical drivers of socioeconomic transformation (NPA, 2020¹¹). Uganda's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Policy (2015) and the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II (UNAP II 2020–2025¹²) also prioritize reducing undernutrition by integrating health, agriculture, social protection, and WASH interventions. The ToC's

¹¹ National Planning Authority (NPA). (2020). *Third National Development Plan (NDP III) 2020/21–2024/25*. Government of Uganda. PDF: <https://www.npa.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/NDP-III-English.pdf>

¹² Government of Uganda. (2020). *Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II (UNAP II) 2020–2025*. Kampala: Office of the Prime Minister. <https://scalingupnutrition.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/national-nutrition-plan-uganda.pdf>

focus on community demand for services, strengthened CSOs, and government adoption of multisectoral approaches mirrors these commitments, particularly the role of district nutrition coordination committees (DNCCs) in harmonizing interventions (UBOS & UNICEF, 2023). Moreover, its emphasis on equity, gender sensitivity, and inclusion resonates with Uganda's Vision 2040, which frames human capital, gender equality, and resilience as pathways to national development. Thus, the ToC pathways—community empowerment, civil society advocacy, integrated government response, and donor coordination—reflect Uganda's policy landscape, validating their relevance in addressing persistent nutrition and WASH challenges.

Alignment with Global Agendas: Globally, the ToC corresponds with key frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), while also reinforcing SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). The emphasis on community-led action, inclusive governance, and donor alignment reflects global calls for multi-stakeholder partnerships under SDG 17 (UN, 2015). In addition, the ToC's recognition of WASH as integral to nutrition outcomes aligns with evidence from WHO and UNICEF that underscores the WASH–nutrition nexus as central to preventing child stunting and mortality (WHO & UNICEF, 2023¹³). At the global level, the approach of combining advocacy, accountability, and evidence generation reflects broader frameworks such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, which stresses accountability mechanisms and multisectoral coordination to accelerate reductions in malnutrition. Hence, the ToC is well positioned to contribute both to Uganda's national goals and to global commitments to end undernutrition and ensure universal WASH access.

Furthermore, the four pathways of change in the Right2Grow (R2G) Theory of Change remain valid and have been demonstrated through tangible outcomes. Empowering communities to demand services and adopt better nutrition and WASH practices led to the repair of over 15 water sources, the emptying of 12 unsafe school latrines, the establishment of kitchen gardens, and enforcement of food and sanitation by-laws in districts such as Buliisa, Kamwenge, Maracha, and Kakumiro. Strengthening CSOs enhanced their influence in policy and budget processes, resulting in the inclusion of eight nutrition indicators in NDP IV and the reinstatement of funding for Agro-industrialisation and Water, Environment, and Climate Change programmes. Government integration of nutrition and WASH into national frameworks yielded key results such as the amended Public Health Act (2023), the Food and Nutrition Bill's progression in Parliament (2024), and increased district allocations for production and water. Coordination among donors and development actors such as UNICEF, UWA, and the Ministry of Water and Environment further enabled climate-resilient investments, including a 20,000-litre water reservoir in Adjumani and an electric fence in Nwoya to protect crops. Collectively, these achievements confirm that community empowerment, civic engagement, institutional integration, and multi-sector coordination are essential for sustaining improved nutrition and WASH outcomes in Uganda.

Table 4: Alignment of Right2Grow Uganda ToC with National and Global Priorities

Right2Grow ToC Pathways	Alignment with Uganda's National Priorities	Alignment with Global Agendas
Communities demand and invest in basic services and adopt nutrition & WASH practices	Aligns with UNAP II (2020–2025), which emphasizes behaviour change communication and community empowerment for improved nutrition and WASH. Also reflects NDP III Human Capital Development programme priorities on household behaviour change.	Linked to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), which emphasize access to nutritious food and WASH. Also consistent with the SUN Movement's community-led nutrition actions.
Empowered CSOs effectively navigate civic space to influence policy	Reflects Uganda's Nutrition Advocacy and Governance agenda, led by CSBAG and FRA, promoting citizen engagement in accountability and budget monitoring. Despite	Tied to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), which stress civic engagement,

¹³ UBOS, & UNICEF. (2023). *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2022: Key findings*. Uganda Bureau of Statistics. **Full report (PDF):** <https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/UDHS-2022-Report.pdf>

and legislation on food, nutrition, and WASH	constraints, civil society plays a vital role in policy dialogue.	accountability, and inclusive partnerships.
Government adopts multisectoral approaches and integrates food, nutrition, and WASH in policies and budgets	Strongly aligned with UNAP II and the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Policy (2015), which highlight integration across agriculture, health, education, gender, and WASH. Also resonates with the NDP III goal of breaking policy silos.	Matches global frameworks like the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) and WHO/UNICEF’s promotion of nutrition-sensitive WASH services. Contributes to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being).
Donors and international actors coordinate along the humanitarian-development nexus	Reflects Uganda’s Refugee Response Plan (RRP 2024) and commitments under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) to integrate humanitarian and development responses.	Directly linked to Grand Bargain commitments, SDG 17, and global emphasis on humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus. Reinforces SUN’s call for donor alignment and joint programming.

3.1.3 Responsiveness of programme strategies

Community-level relevance & responsiveness

Right2Grow directly responded to community-identified needs such as persistent child malnutrition, unsafe water sources, poor sanitation, and limited household food production by grounding its interventions in realities expressed during participatory planning sessions and community dialogues. Communities consistently highlighted challenges such as the lack of access to clean water, poor hygiene facilities in schools and homes, food insecurity caused by low agricultural productivity, and inadequate knowledge on child feeding practices. The programme combined practical nutrition training with everyday WASH improvements and livelihood supports that families could adopt immediately, addressing the interconnected challenges of poor diets, unsafe water, and inadequate sanitation. Community members described trainings and dialogues on exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, safe food preparation and storage, and boiling or treating drinking water, reinforced through household demonstrations that illustrated what a “model home” should look like with a latrine equipped with a handwashing station and soap, a rubbish pit, a clean cooking area, and a drying rack. To strengthen food security and reduce dependence on volatile markets one of the top priorities consistently raised by communities farmers received hands-on training in kitchen gardening, improved agronomic practices, and seedling and land-opening support. These activities directly responded to local concerns about unreliable harvests, limited access to nutritious foods, and the high cost of food in local markets. Peer learning through exposure visits to other districts allowed farmers to see practical, low-cost solutions they could replicate at home, reinforcing their confidence in sustaining change.

“...they taught us how to feed children well, keep our homes clean with hand-washing stations and latrines, and grow vegetables in our gardens. Now our families eat better, and our children are healthier.” We learned how to grow vegetables in vegetable gardens like dodo cabbage and egg plants. Those are very nutritious for our children. (FGD- Caregivers of children under 5, Kabale)

“...the project has changed the life of the community... at least the community have two meals in a day,” while another noted, “the rate of malnourished children has reduced... when you move around the community, you will not get it” (FGD, Community leaders, Zaipi Sub-County).

Demand-driven advocacy and local leadership capacity

The programme was highly **relevant** to community priorities and local governance contexts, as it directly addressed people’s expressed needs for equitable access to WASH and nutrition services, as well as their right to participate in local decision-making. By focusing on advocacy that emerged from within communities, the programme strengthened citizens’ awareness of their rights and their understanding of how public service systems operate. This alignment ensured that interventions were not externally imposed but grounded in community realities—particularly where access to safe water, sanitation, and nutrition services had historically been inadequate. Through safe dialogue spaces and participatory tools such as Citizen Voice and Action (CVA), communities were able to identify and prioritize their most pressing service gaps, transforming abstract concerns into clear, actionable demands. The inclusion of LC1 chairpersons and community structures as monitors further

reinforced relevance by embedding accountability and follow-up within existing local systems. This approach ensured that advocacy efforts complemented rather than duplicated government processes, making the programme contextually appropriate, community-owned, and responsive to local aspirations for improved WASH and nutrition outcomes.

“...Part of the project was looking at raising voices and advocating for needs... where the community is aware of their rights, and then they know what they’re looking for... it’s difficult to assess if people know what they’re looking for.” “For the community to know how to demand for what they need to get is really difficult.” DHO Kikuube

“Part of the project was... raising voices and advocating for needs awareness... where the community is aware of their rights, and then they know what they’re looking for.” “LC1 chairpersons... were in a new field... it took some time before they could really get it right. “...By the last meeting... the chairmen knew what was needed... they had done an assessment of the gaps... but they did not know how they could get this health assistant available.” DHO Kikuube

Gender responsiveness and convergence of male/female caretakers

The programme also worked to reduce gender barriers that limited women and men participation in decision-making. At the start, meetings showed gaps: men spoke mainly from a “male perspective” while women spoke from a “female perspective.” This created differences that made it difficult for the community to agree on shared solutions. Through regular dialogues and facilitation, the programme encouraged both men and women to take part equally, showing that leadership and service demands are not limited by gender. Over time, this helped shift attitudes and behaviors. Instead of men and women speaking separately, they began to come together with joint requests such as the need for safe water, WASH staff, and better child nutrition support. This shift showed that R2G’s approach was sensitive to local social norms and helped promote more inclusive participation. By supporting both men and women to act as leaders, the programme strengthened the credibility of community demands and ensured that the voices of vulnerable households, often left out, were also heard.

“...In the beginning there was a big difference... men were talking as men; women as women... and that would not bring us results in the same direction. We told them there is no big difference between a man and a woman in leading a family or demanding services. At the end, all were in leadership mode... everyone would say ‘we need this’—and you could see we really needed it...” DHO Kikuube

Local leadership capacity & service navigation

The programme also worked on building stronger local leadership by involving LC1 chairpersons as community monitors. This was a good strategy but also a challenging one. Unlike Village Health Teams (VHTs), who were already experienced in health-related work, LC1s were stepping into new territory, overseeing WASH and nutrition, following up on budgets, and understanding referral systems. At first, many were only partly informed and did not know how to put requests into action. However, through repeated meetings and training, their confidence grew. By the later stages, LC1s could clearly identify service gaps, such as the need for a health assistant to support WASH and rank these issues as priorities for action.

“...the focus was on the leadership of the community... LC1 chairpersons became monitors... they were in a new field... it took some time before they could really get it right.” “...by the last meeting... the chairmen now knew what was needed... they had done an assessment of the gaps... but they did not know how they could get this health assistant available. “they said, we need this. How do we get it?” DHO Kikuube

Improving service access and child health outcomes

The programme made health and WASH services easier for families by combining simple home practices with better access to facilities. Households learned, through hygiene demonstrations and mother groups, how to construct or improve latrines, set up affordable hand-washing stations with soap, boil and safely store drinking water, and cover or reheat food properly. Village Health Teams (VHTs) and health staff supported these changes by organizing immunization days, monitoring children’s growth, and making referrals for those who were sick or malnourished. Schools also played an important role by building hand-washing points and promoting hygiene among pupils. Communities went further by forming water-user committees that managed boreholes and collected small fees for repairs, reducing dependence on unsafe water sources. These combined efforts led to

visible changes in health and wellbeing. Families reported fewer cases of diarrhea, children showed better growth and energy, and households saved money by spending less on clinic visits and medicines. Improved health also meant children could attend school more regularly and concentrate better in class.

“Since we started using the latrine, washing hands, and boiling our drinking water—things we learned through partner organisations —our children are not falling sick the way they used to.” (FGD—community members, Kyangwali)

Strengthening Local Policies and Budgets for Nutrition and WASH

The Right2Grow programme was highly relevant to Uganda’s national and district priorities by aligning its focus on nutrition and WASH with existing government frameworks such as the District Nutrition Action Plan (DNAP) and NDP IV/DDP IV. The programme directly responded to district needs for technical and coordination support in integrating nutrition and WASH into planning and budgeting processes. By working through District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) and key departments like Health, Production, and Community-Based Services, Right2Grow strengthened local ownership and institutional alignment. Regular quarterly meetings and joint reviews ensured that identified community needs such as food security, hygiene promotion, and child health were reflected in district action plans. Although national-level funding for nutrition remained limited (around 2% through the Discretionary Development Equalisation Grant, (DDEG), the programme’s approach was contextually appropriate as it leveraged locally available resources, including community by-laws, school platforms, and human resources such as extension workers and head teachers, to extend advocacy and messaging. In districts like Obongi and Adjumani, the programme’s relevance was further demonstrated by its support for practical, locally adapted interventions such as promoting orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, training health workers in malnutrition detection, and guiding families on food storage and preparation. By strengthening systems already in place and building on local initiatives rather than creating parallel structures, Right2Grow ensured that its interventions were not only timely but also well-suited to the Ugandan context and district development priorities.

“...we brought community members and leaders together to talk about problems like malnutrition, lack of clean water and poor health services... Some funds have been set aside for repairing water sources and supporting nutrition activities...” Through coordination, they were able to support us to see how we can review... the district nutrition action plan... we have been planning together the little resources that is coming from the central government to support the local government. “Out of that, we are able to support what we call livelihood by improving production of food and storage of food... so that whatever we consume is what is really appropriate for the body.” KII with CAO, Adjumani

Strengthening the policy framework for multisectoral nutrition and WASH

The Right2Grow programme played a critical role in meeting a national-level gap by supporting the creation and finalization of a Nutrition Action Plan that brought together nutrition, WASH, and other relevant sectors under one framework. Before this plan, there was no clear, unified policy anchor that could guide both government institutions and development partners. This often-left ministries and districts working in silos, with overlapping priorities and limited accountability. Development partners also lacked a government-owned reference point to design and align their interventions, budgets, and monitoring frameworks. By guiding the drafting process and ensuring the plan was formally approved by district councils, Right2Grow delivered a tangible governance tool that the government could implement directly and that donors could confidently support. In practical terms, this meant that Uganda now had a policy instrument that clearly outlined roles, responsibilities, expected results, and monitoring mechanisms. From an evaluation perspective, this achievement significantly enhanced policy readiness by providing a clear vision and roadmap, while also increasing implementation feasibility. Because the plan was adopted and formally approved, it could now be embedded into budget processes, monitored through existing systems, and reviewed periodically. This transformed nutrition and WASH governance from being fragmented and ad-hoc to becoming structured and sustainable, giving both government and partners a concrete basis to scale up interventions and ensure accountability.

“...It supported the development and completion of the nutrition action plan... that was ultimate... it is multisectoral... it contains nutrition, WASH, it has all parts that we need...” they supported until it reached the point of getting approved by council, that’s the most critical thing.” DHO Kikuube. This plan gave us a clear direction. Before, each department was doing its own thing, but now we have one document that shows our roles and what needs to be done. It makes it easier for us to plan, budget, and even ask partners for support.” — DHO, Kikuube

Enabling budget alignment and financing leverage

The programme also addressed the critical national need for budget alignment and resource mobilization by ensuring that the Nutrition Action Plan functions not only as a policy but also as an advocacy and financing tool. While Right2Grow did not directly provide funding, it created the essential foundation for financing by supporting the development and formal approval of a government-owned plan. This gave donors such as UNICEF a credible reference for channeling resources and enabled ministries and districts to justify their allocations and systematically track expenditures.

This reflects the realistic sequencing of change in public finance: first comes the development of a credible, costed policy framework; second, the use of that framework for coordinated advocacy and budget negotiations; and third, the attraction of external financing and execution support. By securing an approved plan, R2G significantly increased the likelihood of nutrition and WASH priorities being integrated into district and sector budgets. The plan now provides a durable reference point for annual planning cycles, sector ceilings, and joint performance reviews.

“...the project itself did not bring finances... but the fact that this document was completed... that’s the advocacy document... even if it is to be done by donors, this is the document they will need... if you support the document which UNICEF is going to use for funding, then you have done it... I would say to a large extent.” DHO Kikuube

Contribution to strengthening national policies and budget frameworks

Right2Grow’s budget strategy emphasized institutional responsiveness rather than short-term increases to specific votes. The programme established and regularized formal forums, district and sector budget dialogues, evidence-sharing meetings, and consolidation workshops where nutrition and WASH priorities were raised, documented, costed, and channelled into the annual planning and budgeting cycle. In practice, this created a predictable pipeline that moves from community voice, through written, costed priorities and technical appraisal, to inclusion in plans and budgets, even under tight fiscal ceilings. Qualitative evidence shows that facility sanitation gaps (for example, latrines and hand-washing stations in schools and health centres) identified in these dialogues were reflected in planning documents and, in several instances, included in district budgets and implemented. This sequencing aligns with public financial management norms, where sustained agenda-setting and appraisal typically precede visible changes in aggregate allocations. While headline nutrition and WASH line-items did not spike within a single year, Right2Grow institutionalized the progression from voice to vote to spend, raising the likelihood that priorities affecting vulnerable households are systematically considered, competitively costed, and incrementally funded across successive budget rounds.

Advocacy and Local Policy Influence through the Right2Grow Programme

Under the Right to Grow programme, our organization worked with communities and local leaders to raise awareness about problems like child malnutrition, lack of clean water, and poor health services. The project used pictures (photovoice) to show real problems on the ground, which helped leaders see the issues clearly and act. We also held meetings with sub-county and district leaders to ask them to include nutrition and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) in their plans and budgets. By working with other organizations, our voice became stronger, and some changes happened—like fixing broken water sources and giving more attention to children’s nutrition. In some districts, funds have been set aside for these activities, and leaders have promised to keep supporting them even after the project ends. Although we had less influence at the national level, we shared community voices through civil society groups to push for bigger changes.

“...we brought community members and leaders together to talk about problems like malnutrition, lack of clean water and poor health services. We used photovoice to show leaders what was on the ground so they could act.” “We joined hands with other organizations; our voice was stronger.” “Local leaders have started to include nutrition and WASH in sub-county and district plans. Some funds were set aside for repairing water sources and supporting nutrition activities.” “At the national level our influence is smaller, but we worked with other civil society organizations to share community voices.” KII with local CSO, Kamwenge

Table 5: How R2G strengthened policies and budgets for nutrition & WASH

Need	How R2G Responded	What Changed	District
Policy anchor for multisector action	Supported drafting, review and approval of District Nutrition Action Plans (DNAPs) with DNCCs and departments (Health, Production, CBS).	Approved DNAPs used as a common reference for planning, costing and partner alignment.	Kikuube, Adjumani
Regular coordination & oversight	Convened/strengthened DNCCs; quarterly reviews to identify gaps, set action points, track progress.	More consistent meetings; action points drawn from DNAP and followed up across departments.	Adjumani
Pipeline from community priorities to budgets	Ran budget dialogues, evidence-sharing and consolidation meetings; helped articulate and cost priorities.	Sanitation gaps (school/health-facility latrines, handwashing) reflected in plans and, in cases, included in district budgets.	Kabale, Kamwenge
Using the 2% DGEG more strategically	Helped districts plan around the small DGEG nutrition allocation and add local revenue and staff time.	Better targeting of the ~2% to outreach, health-worker training and community sensitization.	Obongi, Adjumani
Accountability & tracking	Encouraged clearer budget lines, simple tracking, and joint reviews across Health, Production, CBS.	More transparent reports on nutrition outreach, trainings and community campaigns.	Obongi, Adjumani
Leveraging human resources, not only cash	Mobilized extension workers, head teachers, VHTs and facility staff for ongoing advocacy and service delivery.	Nutrition education integrated into clinics; school assemblies used for diet, hygiene and sanitation messaging.	Adjumani, Kamwenge
Community by-laws for food security	Backed local ordinances (e.g., each household to cultivate 1–2 acres for food).	Increased household food production and diversity aligned to nutrition goals.	Adjumani
Practical WASH investments & repairs	Catalyzed alignment of district and partner funds toward new water points and borehole repairs.	More functional sources; improved access to safe water in target areas.	Buliisa (Kigoya, Gotilyech, Kaabolo)
Nutrition-sensitive livelihoods & storage	Promoted OFSP and kitchen/demo gardens; supported post-harvest handling messaging.	Better diets and food availability; households keep some produce for consumption and income.	Adjumani, Buliisa
Advocacy tools to move decision-makers	Used photovoice and community dialogues to surface concrete gaps to sub-county/district leaders.	Faster fixes on visible issues (e.g., water source repairs) and more attention to child nutrition.	Kamwenge, Adjumani
Budget realism under tight ceilings	Focused on process quality (participation, documentation, costing) rather than promising big line-item jumps.	Incremental uptake of priorities; overall allocations still low in review period.	Bugweri, multiple
Partner alignment & financing leverage	Delivered the “funding-ready” policy product (DNAP) donors and ministries can use.	Higher likelihood of future support and smoother annual budgeting and joint reviews.	Kikuube, national interfaces

3.2 Effectiveness and contribution per ToC pathway

3.2.1. Community level

The Community Mobilisation outcome area focused on empowering communities to take the lead in shaping and demanding better nutrition and WASH services. Under this outcome, Right2Grow worked to build community confidence and capacity by creating spaces where citizens could engage directly with duty bearers, voice their concerns, and propose solutions. Platforms such as community gatherings, sub-county dialogues, and Photovoice gallery walks enabled people to reflect on service gaps, hold leaders accountable, and jointly plan improvements. At the same time, the programme strengthened partnerships with the private sector through the establishment of district-level Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Networks, encouraging businesses to invest in nutrition-sensitive products and services. Local governments were also engaged to adopt innovative product models, such as demonstration gardens, maize mills, and milk coolers, ensuring food security and sustainability. Additionally, media campaigns and radio talk shows in local languages extended awareness to wider audiences, promoting improved household practices in nutrition and WASH. Together, these interventions built a stronger sense of community ownership and advocacy, translating into tangible service improvements and more sustainable solutions for tackling undernutrition.

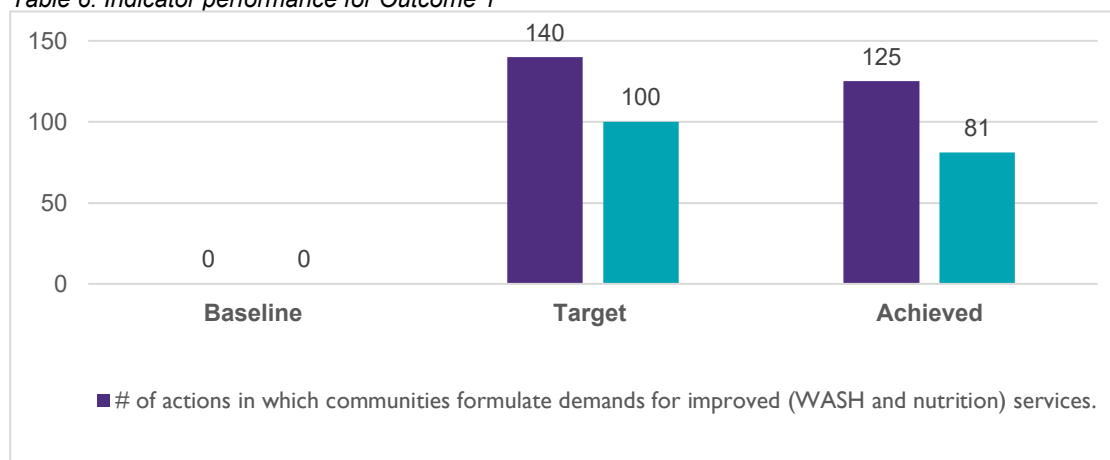
This outcome area has the following indicators;

- i. # of actions in which communities formulate demands for improved (WASH and nutrition) services.
- ii. # of barriers to good nutrition and/or WASH services successfully addressed by joint community and private sector initiatives.

Progress on Output and Outcome Indicators

Out of a target of 140 actions where communities were expected to formulate demands, 145 were achieved. This shows that communities are increasingly confident and organized in raising their priorities to duty bearers through structured dialogues, CVA scorecards, and advocacy forums. Similarly, in addressing barriers, 100 out of the 103 targeted obstacles to good nutrition and WASH were successfully resolved through joint initiatives between communities and private sector actors. For example, as a result joint initiatives, SUN Business Networks were established in Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha and Kabale to bridge the gap of limited private sector involvement in strategies to address the underlying causes of malnutrition in Uganda. These achievements highlight how community voices, when supported with the right platforms and partnerships, can drive tangible service improvements such as rehabilitated boreholes, better hygiene facilities, and nutrition-friendly initiatives.

Table 6: Indicator performance for Outcome 1



Source:

Programme Records

Effectiveness of Community Mobilisation

Community mobilization through dialogues and photovoice

At the community level, partners placed community voices at the center of change by holding gatherings, sub-county dialogues, and photovoice gallery walks. Before these activities, many people did not know what services they were entitled to or how to demand action from their leaders. With training and guidance, community structures such as CVA groups, CBOs, focal teachers, and water user committees gained the skills to present clear evidence and practical requests. This approach led to real improvements. For example, in Buliisa, eight new boreholes were drilled across Purongo, Biiso, and Buliisa sub-counties, and 15 drinking-water sources were repaired. In Maracha, four motorised wells were installed, and piped water was extended to 14 parishes. In Nwoya, 12 unsafe school latrines were emptied, and a community access road from Aparanga to Gotngur was upgraded to link people to a water point and the local market. In Lungulu sub-county, chemical contamination at a water source was successfully stopped. Together, these outcomes demonstrated a complete “voice-to-action” process, where communities identified problems, leaders confirmed them, and actual solutions were funded and implemented.

“...we raised our concerns, and now we have clean water from the new boreholes...” (FGD participant, Buliisa)

“Before, we had to use unsafe water, but now the repaired sources are working, and our children are healthier.”
(Community member, Adjumani)

Private sector engagement via SUN Business Networks

Under outcome 1, working with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, the programme mapped nutrition- and food-related businesses and helped districts establish SUN Business Networks to bring the private sector into local nutrition solutions. Newly formed SBNs; such as in Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha and Kabale created leadership structures and common workplans that align with the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (2020/21–2024/25). Their role is to improve the availability, safety, and affordability of nutritious foods and WASH-relevant products (like storage, fortification, or hygiene supplies). The networks have begun to close a long-standing gap by giving SMEs a seat in district coordination, so investments (for example, value addition and storage) match community needs raised in dialogues instead of running in parallel.

Community voice translated into public decisions.

Right2Grow consistently converted community priorities into formal planning and budgeting through Citizens Voice & Action (CVA), photovoice, and issue-brief pipelines. In Kahunge Sub-County, community-generated issue briefs on health-facility nutrition gaps were placed on the council order paper for discussion and approval on 30 Mar 2022 after dialogues Right2Grow convened in February and coaching in March. Similar processes in Buliisa led to a five-stance public-market latrine in Kabolwa (constructed June 2023 for ~ €7,317 from the District Water & Sanitation Conditional Grant) and a written directive from the Buliisa Chief Administrative Officer on 12 Sept 2023 instructing all heads of public institutions to plan and budget for demonstration gardens after the ordinance passed. This “voice-to-vote-to-spend” progression is evidenced in dialogue minutes, order papers, council minutes, CAO circulars—and in assets communities can point to.

Local government investment in practical product models

Advocacy went beyond making requests and led local governments to fund simple, low-cost actions that communities could maintain. Districts set up demonstration gardens and appointed focal teachers to coach boys and girls as nutrition champions; they also ran local radio programs on food and hygiene, got existing maize mills and milk coolers working, and created community food stores. These steps helped families grow, store, and process nutritious food, reduced post-harvest losses, and kept nutrition messages present at home, in schools, and in markets. A clear sign of this budget follow-through was in Buliisa Sub-County, where leaders allocated UGX 20 million to buy seeds for school and kitchen gardens, turning awareness into a funded activity that could be tracked each school term

Outcome 1 proved effective because community advocacy translated into durable changes in staffing, equipment, and infrastructure that kept nutrition and WASH services running reliably. In Kakumiro, the district recruited a Health Assistant for Kisiita Sub-County, creating a permanent focal point to coordinate WASH activities and drive related nutrition agendas. Kasambya HC III (Kakumiro) procured anthropometric equipment, which enabled routine screening and quicker management of malnutrition cases. In Buliisa, the Ministry of Water and

Environment approved the district water system design, a critical gateway to contracting and construction for safer, more reliable water access. In Nwoya, the Uganda Wildlife Authority installed an electric fence along the Patira and Kibale Park edges, protecting fields from elephant raids and safeguarding household food supplies. And in Adjumani, a 20,000-liter reservoir tank was installed at the hospital, stabilizing water for patients and staff and reducing service interruptions. Together, these changes showed that Right2Grow's community-driven approach did more than fix isolated problems—it embedded capacity (qualified staff, essential tools, approved designs, and protective infrastructure) that strengthened routine service delivery and sustained nutrition and WASH outcomes beyond project activities.

Local budget commitments towards nutrition and WASH: Another milestone outcome has been the increased prioritization of nutrition and WASH in local government budgets. In Kitumba Sub County, Kabale District, the Sub County Chairperson committed UGX 2 million in the 2022/23 financial year to establish nutrition demonstration gardens. This commitment went beyond rhetoric, as the funds were allocated and utilized to set up gardens at the sub-county headquarters, with plans to cascade them into local schools. This achievement is significant because it demonstrates how local leaders, influenced by advocacy and evidence generated under the Right2Grow programme, are making concrete budgetary allocations that respond to community needs. The decision to invest in demonstration gardens has both short-term and long-term benefits—improving immediate food security and embedding nutrition-sensitive agriculture into the local development agenda. This also strengthens accountability, as communities can now track actual resources allocated to nutrition, not just promises.

Greater inclusion of women, youth, and marginalised groups: The outcome mapping exercise also underscored improvements in inclusivity within community engagement processes. Women, adolescent girls, youth groups, and other marginalised voices—traditionally excluded from decision-making—are now increasingly participating in community dialogues, CVA forums, and scorecard exercises. Their participation has influenced priorities such as safe water access, maternal health, and school nutrition, which were previously overlooked. For example, women leaders highlighted the long distances to safe water points, which led to borehole repairs being prioritised in several sub-counties. Similarly, youth groups engaged in hygiene campaigns in schools and marketplaces, directly contributing to reductions in diarrheal cases. These examples show that inclusivity is not just about representation but about shifting priorities and outcomes to reflect the needs of those who have historically been marginalised. The change is significant because it embeds equity and gender sensitivity into local planning and budgeting, aligning with the programme's Theory of Change.

Establishment of new nutrition accountability structures: Outcome Mapping also revealed that advocacy at community level has catalysed the creation of new governance structures. A striking example is from Kasambya Sub County, where the Sub County Chief publicly committed, during a dialogue session in March 2022, to establish Parish Nutrition Committees for the first time. This development demonstrates how dialogue between citizens and local duty bearers can result in structural reforms that extend accountability mechanisms closer to communities. Parish Nutrition Committees are particularly important as they provide a permanent space for nutrition advocacy and service monitoring at grassroots level. By anchoring these structures within existing government frameworks, communities now have an institutionalized pathway to escalate concerns, follow up on commitments, and hold leaders accountable at parish level, which previously did not exist.

Tangible improvements in service delivery through advocacy: The mapping exercise documented several cases where community advocacy directly translated into improved service delivery. One example comes from Kisiita Health Centre III, where community members, CVA groups, and CBO representatives raised persistent concerns about lack of water at the facility. Their consistent follow-up pushed duty bearers to act, and in response, the health centre secured a water reservoir tank from MTN Uganda. This achievement illustrates how organized citizen voices can go beyond government duty bearers to engage private sector actors in addressing local challenges. The success highlights the power of communities not only in identifying service delivery gaps but also in mobilizing resources and partnerships to fill them. The direct outcome was a functioning water system at the health centre, which immediately improved service delivery for patients and health workers, while also demonstrating the value of citizen-led accountability mechanisms.

Box 1: Story of change from the Outcome 1

Story of Change — Biso Sub-County, Buliisa District

Before R2G: Households in Kijura relied on unsafe water sources and had limited knowledge of child feeding and hygiene. Kitchen gardens were rare, latrine coverage was low, and most community members did not know how to follow up on budgets or demand services.

What changed: Through Right2Grow's community dialogues and the CVA approach, men and women learned to identify and prioritise their needs, organise evidence, and present it to leaders. Community members mapped WASH and nutrition gaps, formed follow-up teams, and engaged sub-county and district offices.

Actions taken: Residents raised a formal demand for safe water, and a new borehole was constructed on community-donated land; local leaders and community monitors began routine follow-up on health-facility budgets and service availability; households adopted kitchen gardens and basic WASH standards (latrines, rubbish pits, handwashing stations). Churches and LC1s reinforced behaviour change through by-laws (e.g., every household to establish a kitchen garden).

Results noticed by the community: People reported fewer diarrhoeal illnesses, better child feeding, and quicker problem-solving with local authorities. Kitchen gardens became common, and communities now view public assets as "ours," organising contributions for borehole maintenance and appointing caretakers. Community members also feel confident engaging service providers and asking for accountability.

Sustainability: Local structures are in place—water user committees, LC by-laws, and routine follow-ups by leaders and volunteers. Communities collect small monthly contributions for maintenance and monitor facilities and household WASH practices.

Community voices (FGD transcripts):

"We kept demanding... and last year they constructed for us a borehole with very good water."

"A community member is now able to demand for service delivery... chairpersons go to the health centre and demand for accountability."

"Today, at least you will find kitchen gardens in most homes... mothers have been taught how to feed their children."

"Once a facility is brought, it is ours—we contribute for repairs and protect it."

Unintended / Unexpected Effects

Integration of community monitors into government systems

Since the project's implementation, a notable and unexpected but very positive change has been the transformation in how community monitors, many of them LC1 chairpersons within Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups, are perceived and engaged in local governance. Initially viewed as temporary project volunteers, these monitors are now recognized as part of formal government systems, reflecting a deeper institutional shift in accountability and citizen participation. After the project's capacity-building efforts and mentoring, community monitors began actively participating in District and Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC/SNCC) meetings and budget conferences, where they reviewed workplans, scrutinized funding for nutrition and WASH, and followed up with technical officers such as health assistants, water officers, and parish chiefs. This engagement produced tangible results, unsafe school latrines were emptied in Nwoya, a contaminated water source was cleaned in Lungulu, and in Buliisa, new and protected budget lines for boreholes and WASH projects were established. In several districts, CVA teams even registered as local CSOs, gaining legal standing to raise issues formally and maintain oversight between project cycles. The most significant change is that these practices have now become embedded within routine government planning and supervision cycles, rather than remaining project driven. This institutionalization of citizen monitoring demonstrates strong relevance and sustainability, ensuring that the accountability mechanisms initiated by Right2Grow are likely to persist beyond the programme's lifespan.

“...community monitors, many of them LC1 chairpersons, quickly shifted from project-linked volunteers to recognised actors within government routines. Previously they were not attending, they were attending district and sub-county planning meetings, “.”KII with DHO in Kikuube

Gender dynamics evolved during implementation

Another unexpected effect, for stance in the early stages of the programme, men and women sometimes engaged from “identity” positions (speaking as men or as women), which made joint problem-solving slower at household level. However, with the training and regular dialogues and facilitation shifted the tone toward shared leadership and joint requests (“we need this for our community”). This change, shifting the focus from simply delivering project outputs to improving the way people collaborate was not originally planned as a programme result. However, it emerged as a significant and unexpected gain, strengthening inclusive decision-making processes and laying a foundation for more sustainable governance in the future

“...at first, men and women engaged from their own identity positions—speaking as men or as women—which slowed down joint problem-solving. Over time, regular dialogue and facilitation shifted the tone toward shared leadership...” KII with DHO in Kikuube

Resistance from Health Facility Staff

In some locations, such as Kikuube District, the introduction of community monitoring structures led to unintended tensions at the health facility level. Community monitors occasionally faced resistance from health facility in-charges when they requested access to financial information on grants and expenditures. Health staff perceived the monitors’ oversight role as intrusive and questioned their legitimacy, arguing that they lacked official recognition as “budget monitors.” This misunderstanding created friction between community actors and service providers, limited transparency, and temporarily slowed accountability and joint monitoring efforts.

“At the health centres, some in-charges refused to share expenditure records, saying we lacked recognition as budget monitors. It was discouraging because we expected cooperation, yet our role was to promote accountability.” – Community Monitor, Kikuube

Additionally, despite continuous sensitization, some pregnant women remained reluctant to attend antenatal care early in pregnancy, which undermined maternal and child health goals and revealed persistent behavioural barriers that were harder to shift than anticipated. These experiences highlight the importance of strengthening formal recognition of community monitors within government systems and tailoring more targeted approaches to address entrenched socio-cultural behaviours, especially among vulnerable groups such as expectant mothers.

Programme Strategies Driving Change under Outcome 1

1. Sustainability and Institutionalization of Gains

Another key contribution is the integration of Right2Grow approaches into permanent district systems. The DNCC is now fully funded by the district, and grants such as the water and education grants are being used to support boreholes and construct gender-sensitive latrines. Schools and health centres also now have nutrition focal persons, ensuring sustained attention to nutrition beyond the project’s lifespan.

“At the moment, the district has some allocation in the budget to address nutrition issues... we now fund DNCC activities on our own, and boreholes and latrines will continue even when Right to Grow has gone.” (PAS, Bugweri District)

Increased Knowledge and Awareness

The Right2Grow programme directly contributed to improving community knowledge on nutrition and WASH by organizing trainings, demonstrations, and dialogues that translated complex information into simple, practical lessons. Caregivers learned how to prepare balanced meals using locally available foods, the dangers of open defecation, and safe water practices. This knowledge shift is directly linked to programme interventions, as community members repeatedly attributed their new awareness to the training sessions, posters, and health talks facilitated by partners, health workers, and CVA groups.

“...the nutrition training from partner organisations helped a lot, they trained us at the church and taught us how to combine food groups and take care of our children’s meals” (R1, Kikuube).

"I learned how to start and maintain a kitchen garden to support year-round vegetable supply in my home and even sell some for income..." (R6, Kikuube).

Role of Community Support

The programme's strategies of combining community outreach with household-level follow-up played a major role in turning knowledge into practice. Health workers and VHTs were equipped to carry out home visits, while CVA groups reinforced behaviour change through community meetings and peer-to-peer support. This multi-level approach made the information more accessible, personalized, and continuous, ensuring that participants not only heard the messages but also acted on them. Seeds provided by the programme, posters used in community sensitization, and sanitation campaigns further strengthened uptake of the new practices.

"...It was the VHT who came to my home and explained the benefits of hand washing after latrine use, before eating and after" (R7, Kikuube). "The project team from partner organisations and the VHTs came together during sanitation campaign; that is when I learned about latrines and why they should be covered..." (R6, Kikuube).

Community Participation and Ownership

A major contributing factor to the observed changes was the deliberate involvement of community members in programme activities such as budget monitoring, WASH follow-ups, and farmer trainings. The programme enabled groups to participate directly in monitoring services in schools and health centres and also introduced modern farming practices like kitchen gardening. This participatory approach created a strong sense of ownership and accountability, ensuring that households actively applied the knowledge and practices learned.

"We were involved in the program of budget monitoring... in the hospital, in the health center 3s, then in the school that was in the WASH department." (FGD Participant, Miniki Village, Adjumani District)

Collaboration with CSOs and CBOs

The programme fostered strong partnerships between the district and local CSOs such as Wilmat Development Foundation and Multi-purpose Training & Community Empowerment Association (MTCEA). These organizations, supported under Right2Grow, co-implemented activities like backyard gardens, monitoring of WASH facilities, and sensitisation campaigns. This collaborative approach improved feedback loops, strengthened local capacity, and ensured that community concerns reached district platforms.

"We've had joint planning, monitoring, and advocacy efforts with Wellmark Development and Malt Purpose on the R2G project... through this partnership, we achieved significant milestones including backyard gardens and monitoring of WASH projects." (PAS, Bugweri District)

Strengthened Local Governance and By-Laws

The engagement of local leaders, especially LC1 chairpersons, was another contributing factor to the success of programme strategies. Leaders introduced by-laws to protect crops and reduce domestic conflicts, while school management committees introduced feeding programmes and vegetable gardens. These governance structures provided an enabling environment for sustaining programme contributions and extending their benefits across the community.

"Even the LC1 chairpersons put by-laws concerning the destruction of crops and any domestic issues... the issue of food shortage in the communities has been reduced due to the by-laws set by the government." (LC1 Chairperson, Odule West, Adjumani District)

Strengthened Service Delivery and Community Voice

Service delivery improvements have been achieved through the establishment of CVA groups, who act as "the second eye" of the district by monitoring WASH and nutrition services and reporting gaps. Right2Grow also ensured inclusivity in service delivery by promoting access to safe water, pit latrines, and gender-sensitive facilities in schools and trading centres. These strategies enhanced accountability and gave communities confidence that their voices could shape services.

"We have had a community voice, called CVAs... they were trained to speak for their communities. At one time, they were in the budget conference and informed us of what is happening on the ground." (PAS, Bugweri District)

Gender and Social Inclusion

The programme promoted inclusivity by involving men, women, youth, and persons with disabilities in nutrition and WASH discussions. Women acknowledged greater participation and decision-making power, though they

also expressed frustration that men often leave much of the workload to them. This gender dialogue is a step toward more balanced household responsibilities.

“At the start of the project women were not involved... but now everyone is participating, men and women.” (FGD participant, Kabale District)

Table 7: Reflections on Contribution of Programme Strategies to Achieved Changes (Outcome 1)

Contributing Factor	Contribution of Programme Strategies	Quotes
Sustainability & Institutionalization	Integration of Right2Grow into district systems; DNCC fully funded by the district; boreholes and gender-sensitive latrines supported under district grants.	<i>“We now fund DNCC activities on our own, and boreholes and latrines will continue even when Right to Grow has gone.” (PAS, Bugweri District)</i>
Increased Knowledge & Awareness	Trainings, demonstrations, and dialogues improved knowledge on balanced meals, safe water, breastfeeding, and kitchen gardening.	<i>“The nutrition training from partner organisations helped a lot... taught us how to combine food groups and take care of our children’s meals.” (R1, Kikuube)</i> <i>“I learned how to start and maintain a kitchen garden to support year-round vegetable supply in my home and even sell some for income.” (R6, Kikuube)</i>
Training & Community Support	Health workers, VHTs, and CVA groups provided home visits, sanitation campaigns, and peer support to translate knowledge into practice.	<i>“It was the VHT who came to my home and explained the benefits of hand washing after latrine use, before eating and after.” (R7, Kikuube)</i>
Household & Community Changes	Households built latrines, started kitchen gardens, and diversified meals due to programme mobilization and input provision.	<i>“We built a latrine in early 2023 when the CVA group encouraged us.” (R1, Kikuube)</i> <i>“I started boiling drinking water in mid-2022 after my child got sick and the nurse advised me.” (R3, Kikuube)</i>
Community Participation & Voice	Enabled direct participation in budget monitoring, school WASH follow-ups, and farmer trainings, creating ownership and accountability.	<i>“We were involved in the program of budget monitoring... in the hospital, in the health center 3s, then in the school.” (FGD Participant, Miniki Village, Adjumani District)</i>
Collaboration with CSOs/CBOs	Partnered with CSOs like Wellmark Development and Malt Purpose for backyard gardens, WASH monitoring, and joint advocacy.	<i>“We’ve had joint planning, monitoring, and advocacy efforts with Wellmark Development and Malt Purpose... we achieved significant milestones.” (PAS, Bugweri District)</i>
Agricultural Support & Food Security	Provided seeds, training, and land preparation support, improving household food production and reducing hunger.	<i>“At least the community have two meals in a day.” (FGD Participant, Zaipi Sub-county, Adjumani District)</i>
Gender & Social Inclusion	Promoted participation of women, youth, and PWDs in nutrition and WASH decisions, though workload imbalances persist.	<i>“At the start of the project women were not involved... but now everyone is participating, men and women.” (FGD Participant, Kabale District)</i>

Evidence gaps and sustainability challenges

Despite these achievements, the reflections also pointed to several gaps and risks. While community advocacy has led to commitments in budgets and visible improvements in service delivery, there is limited evidence on whether these changes are consistently sustained over time. For instance, while some boreholes were repaired and nutrition activities budgeted for, it remains unclear whether future financial cycles will continue to prioritise these areas without external facilitation. Similarly, in some health facilities, community monitors faced resistance

from staff who questioned their legitimacy to demand financial records or expenditure reports. This shows that while accountability has improved, the formal recognition of community monitors within government systems is not yet complete. Without institutionalization, there is a risk that the gains achieved could be reversed if leadership changes or external funding declines. These gaps highlight the need for stronger integration of accountability mechanisms within official government frameworks and for continuous tracking of whether budget commitments translate into improved outcomes for households.

3.2.2. Civil society organisations

Under the Strengthening Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) outcome area 2, the Right2Grow (R2G) programme focused on empowering CSOs and community structures to effectively advocate for nutrition and WASH. Capacity was built through trainings in Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET), equipping CSOs with skills to analyse budgets, develop and present position papers, and track fund utilisation. At national level, CSOs participated in high-level dialogues on stunting, a national colloquium, and the first Presidential Dialogue on WASH, using these spaces to lobby for stronger political commitment and increased resources. They influenced policy processes such as the review of the 2003 Nutrition Policy, the development of NDP IV, and advocacy for the Food and Nutrition Bill, with some proposals successfully integrated into official frameworks. At sub-national level, CSOs and community groups influenced district development plans and contributed to tangible results such as the drilling and rehabilitation of boreholes, establishment of nutrition demonstration gardens, and revitalisation of District and Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees. Through advocacy campaigns, coalitions, and public events, CSOs created visibility, strengthened partnerships, and elevated community priorities, ensuring that nutrition and WASH remained central to governance, financing, and service delivery.

This outcome area consists of 4 indicators including;

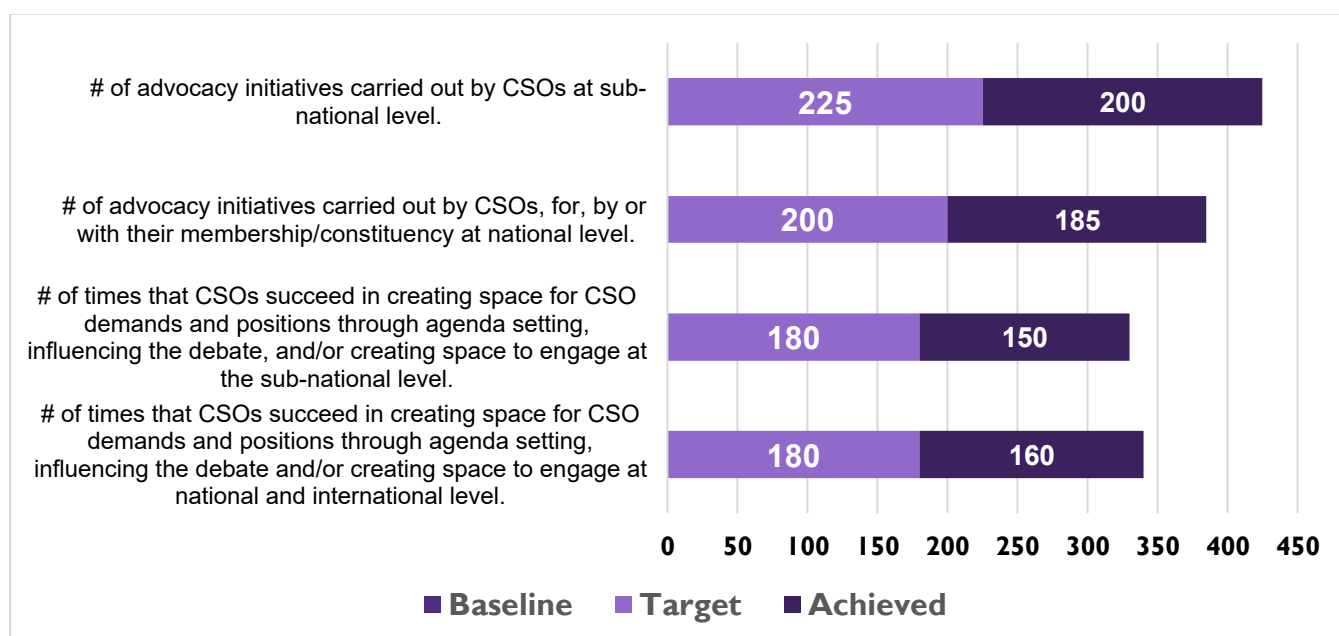
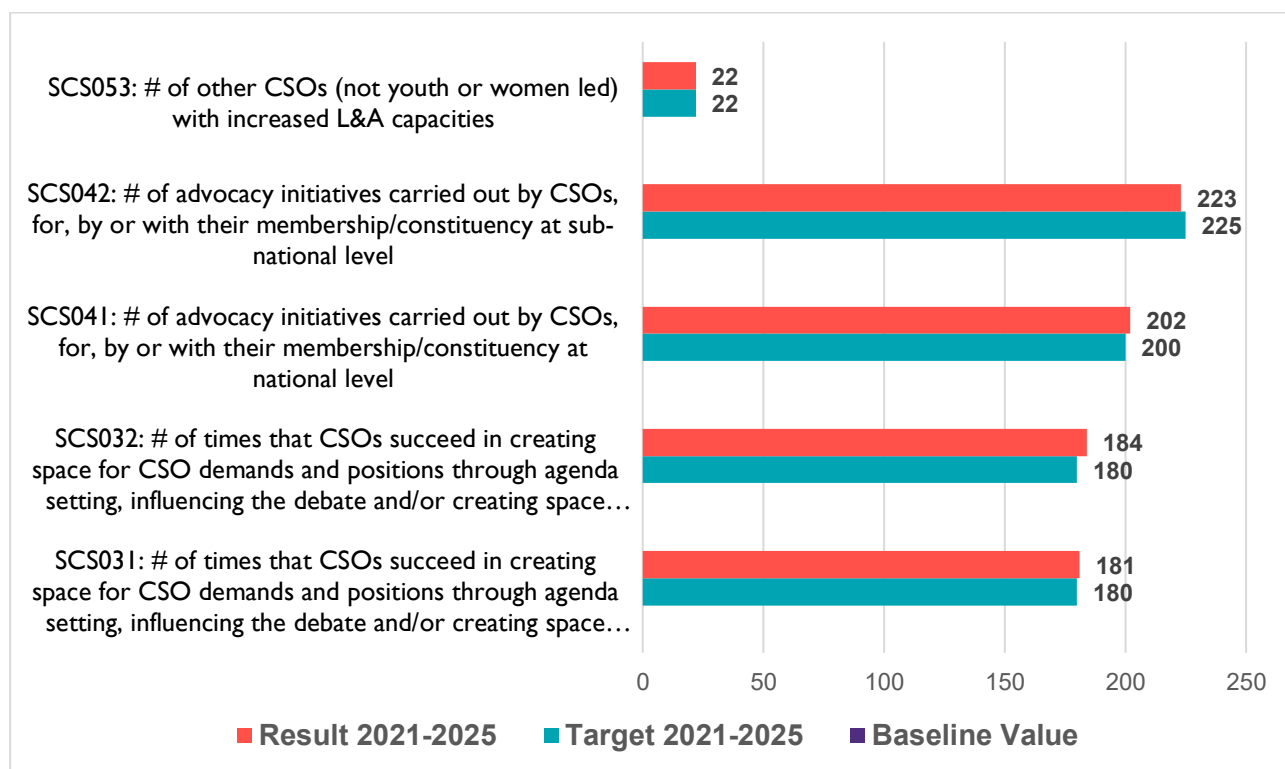
- i. # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at national and international level.
- ii. # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate, and/or creating space to engage at the sub-national level.
- iii. # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency at national level.
- iv. # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs at sub-national level.

Progress on Output and Outcome Indicators

The performance of Outcome 2 indicators on Strengthening Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) shows strong progress, even though targets were not fully met in all areas. At the national and international level, CSOs successfully created space for their demands and positions 160 times against a target of 180. This reflects significant achievement in agenda setting, influencing debates, and participating in high-level dialogues such as nutrition policy reviews, food systems platforms, and WASH advocacy events. Similarly, at the sub-national level, CSOs created 150 opportunities for engagement against a target of 180, showing meaningful progress in influencing district and community-level decision-making processes, including local government budget discussions and nutrition coordination forums.

In terms of advocacy initiatives, CSOs carried out 185 activities at the national level, nearly meeting the target of 200. These included presenting position papers, engaging Parliament on the Food and Nutrition Bill, and participating in dialogues with government ministries and development partners to secure commitments for nutrition and WASH. At the sub-national level, CSOs achieved 200 advocacy initiatives against a target of 225, reflecting their active role in lobbying for improved service delivery, resource allocation, and community mobilisation.

Figure 3: Indicator performance for Outcome 2



Effectiveness of Strengthening Civil Society Organisations

Budget alignment and resource mobilisation.

Budget alignment and resourcing under Outcome 2 showed strong progress, largely driven by civil society advocacy. At the national level, CSOs led by CSBAG and CEGAA influenced parliamentary debates by presenting position papers on the National Budget Framework Paper and Ministerial Policy Statements. Out of their 26 recommendations, 18 were adopted by parliamentary committees. This momentum continued in 2025,

when Parliament accepted 7 out of 14 CSO proposals in Agro-industrialisation, 2 out of 4 in Nutrition, and 4 out of 16 in Water. Importantly, in March 2024, Parliament reinstated UGX 65 billion, raised the Agro-industrialisation budget to UGX 1.878 trillion for FY2024/25, and increased the agriculture development budget from UGX 157.39 billion to UGX 243.38 billion. At the local level, six target sub-counties (Busiriba, Kahunge, Buliisa, Biiso, Kasambya, and Kisiita) successfully allocated the required 2% of the District Development Equalisation Grant (DDEG) to nutrition governance for FY2023/24. Notably, Busiriba created its first-ever nutrition budget line of UGX 400,000, while Kasambya allocated UGX 500,000 for weighing scales and UGX 800,000 for transporting nutrition supplements. Though these figures may seem small, they represent significant milestones, marking the first time local governments created dedicated budget votes for nutrition services.

Stronger civil-society platforms and tools.

Civil society capacity and coordination expanded markedly, giving communities staying power in policy arenas. In 2021 R2G mapped actors and convened first-ever multi-stakeholder forums in Kakumiro, Buliisa and Kamwenge, leading to formal CSO Nutrition Platforms (13 members in Kamwenge, 20 in Kakumiro, 14 in Buliisa). CVA structures were trained in the new curriculum (18 resource persons per sub-county) and reached 5,055 residents (2,259 men; 2,796 women) with standards sensitisation across six sub-counties by end-2021. In 2024, NSU led a Mutual Capacity Development course (24–27 June) on resource mobilisation, donor engagement, organisational management and gender, providing third-tier CBOs their first training of this kind; Partners standardised Budget Monitoring & Expenditure Tracking (BMET) tools and supported multi-district reflection meetings. This steady diet of skills plus platforms made it normal not exceptional for communities and CBOs to draft issue papers, attend budget conferences and secure responses.

Tangible service-delivery improvements.

Outcome 2 proved effective because advocacy and budget work translated into real improvements in service delivery. New boreholes were drilled in Biiso and Buliisa sub-counties, and another was commissioned in Kamwenge, giving communities access to safe drinking water for the first time. In addition, eleven broken boreholes across Biiso, Buliisa, and Kisiita were rehabilitated after community concerns were raised during CVA forums and photovoice gallery walks. Progress was also seen on piped water. In Buliisa, the district worked with consultants to design the Kigoya water scheme and allocated over UGX 81.7 million for the first phase of construction. Even before the full scheme was approved, the District Water Department managed to install a pump at Kigoya by reallocating funds from another project, showing that local leaders were willing to act on community demands while pushing bigger plans forward.

Governance, by-laws and accountability for WASH.

As a result of civil society engagement, communities are now seeing real change because local leaders and committees are stepping up to make hygiene, sanitation, and WASH practices part of everyday life. In Igombe Sub-County, a new by-law was enacted in 2024 requiring every household to have a pit latrine. Families responded positively, and this has already improved sanitation and hygiene at community level. Similarly, in Nwoya, Hoima, and Kakumiro districts, a comprehensive by-law to limit unnecessary selling of food as a measure to prevent food insecurity and malnutrition was passed in September 2024 after Right2Grow-supported community meetings earlier in May. This by-law covered nutrition, food security, water, sanitation, and hygiene, showing how community voices can directly shape local Policy. In addition, water-user committees were re-established in various programme areas including Kamuganguzi and Kitumba in Hoima district. These committees now develop action plans, assign caretakers, and prepare budgets for WASH, providing practical answers to the long-standing challenge of “no one maintains it” that often-left infrastructure broken and unused. With these by-laws and structures in place, communities now have stronger governance mechanisms to sustain improvements in water access, sanitation, and nutrition. This approach is ensuring that services are not only fixed but maintained over time, marking a big step forward in community health and accountability.

Private-sector engagement through SUN and product models.

RIGHT2GROW turned private sector engagement from one-off activities into structured partnerships through the SUN Business Network (SBN) and district product models. With support from the Ministry of Trade, SBN committees were formed in Bugweri, Maracha, Nwoya, and Kabale district. In Kakumiro, RIGHT2GROW helped

the district and local cooperatives sign 70:30 co-financing agreements that led to six community stores, five maize mills, and two milk coolers. These investments were the result of RIGHT2GROW's product-model¹⁴ scoping and lobbying efforts. The district also installed two demonstration "smart silos" to reduce post-harvest losses. These actions show how nutrition objectives are now directly linked with market actors, giving real benefits to households through better storage, processing, and food access.

Agenda setting and access to decision-making spaces

Right2Grow program helped Civil society organizations (CSOs) to move beyond attendance to active agenda-setting. The CSOs secured formal advocacy spaces including national nutrition dialogues, technical working groups, budget conferences, guideline-development meetings, food-systems forums, Breastfeeding Week TWGs, Women's Day platforms, and district review meetings where Nutrition and WASH were placed as standing items rather than ad-hoc topics. In these rooms, CSOs tabled evidence-based position papers, tracked prior commitments, and proposed concrete language for policies and budgets. This access translated into outcomes: the Parliamentary Committee on Food and Nutrition Security received and discussed CSO positions; the Speaker of Parliament was lobbied and the Food and Nutrition Bill was presented on the floor, with the Mover granted leave; and the review of Nutrition Planning Guidelines adopted three CSO proposals on accountability, multisector planning, and routine needs assessments. By anchoring Nutrition and WASH in these venues, CSOs ensured that decisions were not only heard but codified in guidance and legislative steps.

Policy wins and lawmaking momentum

National-level engagement of CSOs produced tangible policy movement. After a targeted lobby meeting with the Speaker of Parliament, the Food and Nutrition Bill was tabled on the floor and the "Mover" was granted leave to advance it an essential procedural hurdle cleared. CSOs' joint press briefing at Parliament spurred government-led consultations to update the long-standing 2003 National Nutrition Policy. In parallel, the review of Nutrition Planning Guidelines adopted three CSO-backed proposals: (1) stronger accountability and transparency, (2) an explicit multi-sectoral planning approach, and (3) routine nutrition needs assessments. Each change embedded better governance practices into the policy cycle, demonstrating that civil society pressure could shape the rules, not just react to them.

Integration into national development planning

Right2Grow partners helped steer Uganda's NDP IV process, ensuring Nutrition and WASH were not sidelined as "social" add-ons but recognized as economic and human-capital priorities. CSOs championed consultations that led government to integrate eight civil-society-proposed nutrition indicators into NDP IV (2026–2030). Partners also participated in the National CSO Retreat to populate NDP IV Programme Implementation Action Plans, while a Right2Grow-convened national colloquium on stunting kept under-five malnutrition at the center of the NDP IV policy discourse. These steps locked nutrition outcomes into the country's top planning instrument proof that advocacy reached the highest level of agenda setting.

Box 2: Stories of change on CSO level

Story of Change – Civil Society Organization (CSO) Strengthening

Name: Emily Kyomugisha

Organization: Kamwenge Centre for Empowerment and Social Accountability (KACESA)

Position: Chairperson

District: Kamwenge

Duration of involvement: 2 Years

¹⁴ In this context, the term "**product model**" refers to a district-level framework or approach used to identify, promote, and scale up specific local products or value chains that can simultaneously generate income and improve nutrition outcomes.

"Through the Right2Grow programme, our organization mobilized communities, trained village health teams, and created platforms for dialogue between citizens and leaders. Using tools like community scorecards and photo-voice, communities confidently raised concerns on nutrition, WASH, and health services, leading to practical changes such as repairing boreholes and including nutrition in district work plans and budgets. The district Nutrition Coordination Committee became active again, and leaders began prioritizing child wellbeing in planning processes. Women, youth, and marginalized groups are now more empowered to speak up, and their priorities, such as maternal health and safe water, are being addressed. For us at KACESA, the biggest change is that accountability practices are no longer external interventions but are becoming part of local government systems. This ensures that children grow healthier, communities remain engaged, and service delivery improves even beyond the life of the project."

Programme Strategies Driving Change under Outcome 2

Improving Multisectoral Coordination

One of the most important contributions of Right2Grow was strengthening multisectoral coordination and joint planning. Before the programme, departments worked in isolation, but the DNCC platform established and strengthened under Right2Grow brought together agriculture, health, water, and planning to design and monitor nutrition-sensitive interventions collaboratively. This collective planning reduced duplication, improved efficiency, and ensured that agriculture and WASH contributed directly to nutrition outcomes rather than operating in silos.

"before each department would run its own programmes, but with Right2Grow we started sitting together... now when we talk about nutrition and WASH, everyone contributed from their department, and that has made our work more effective." (District Agriculture Officer, Kamwenge District)

Building Local Capacity for Nutrition and WASH

Right2Grow significantly strengthened the capacity of community structures, health workers, and CSOs to deliver nutrition and WASH interventions. CVAs, VHTs, teachers, and sub-county leaders were trained on advocacy, hygiene promotion, and malnutrition screening. This decentralized capacity meant that messages reached households consistently and were acted upon.

"...we have trained the CVAs on WASH, nutrition, and advocacy issues, and the support came from Right2Grow. Those CVAs have started fighting malnutrition because malnutrition begins from home." (District Nutrition Focal Person, Bugweri District)

"...health workers were trained to identify malnutrition cases early... they now educate families about balanced diets, what foods to grow and how to prepare them." (Principal Assistant CAO, District)

Institutionalizing Budgeting and Resource Allocation

Right2Grow played a vital role in influencing district budgeting by ensuring that nutrition and WASH were given dedicated budget lines. While national funding remained limited, the programme supported districts to integrate nutrition-sensitive activities into their Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks. This improved expenditure tracking, accountability, and transparency in resource use.

"...before Right2Grow, nutrition and WASH services were often underfunded or fragmented across departments. With the project's guidance, the district has started including specific budget allocations for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, kitchen gardens, and WASH initiatives." (DAO, Kamwenge District)

Strengthening Collaboration Between CSOs and Local Governments

The programme enhanced synergy and trust between CSOs and district authorities. CSOs participated in quarterly review meetings, enabling shared planning and feedback. This collaboration improved responsiveness and mutual accountability in addressing nutrition and WASH challenges.

"...in the last two years, the new leaders became realistic... we even had their contacts. They were advocating and demanding for services. We started planning together on what can be achieved both by the district and the programme..." (DHO Gerald Asaba, Kikuube District)

Promoting School and Community-Led Nutrition Models

The introduction of school gardens, demonstration plots, and household kitchen gardens provided visible and practical examples of good nutrition and hygiene practices. These initiatives helped link WASH and food production, improved children's knowledge of nutrition, and encouraged replication at home.

"...Bulyansme Primary School is now a model... they keep their gardens, and one teacher has even been appointed to train others. They also maintain handwashing facilities." (District Nutrition Focal Person, Bugweri District)

"...I engaged in encouraging local communities to participate in growing nutritious foods, promoting school gardens which equipped children with knowledge... and these students would extend the best practices home..." (DWO, Buliisa District)

Mutual Capacity Development

Mutual Capacity Development (MCD) contributed to strengthening CSOs' advocacy effectiveness by combining technical training with peer learning and practical application. Uganda-based partners applied tools such as storytelling, Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) and Outcome Harvesting to improve evidence use, coalition-building and engagement with government actors. The evaluation found that these capacities supported CSOs to move beyond activity delivery towards more strategic, evidence-informed advocacy at national and sub-national levels.

Table 8: Reflections on Contribution of Programme Strategies to Achieved Changes (Outcome 2)

Contributing Factor	Contribution to Change	Illustrative Quote
Improving Multisectoral Coordination	DNCC platforms brought agriculture, health, water, and planning departments together to co-design and monitor interventions, reducing duplication and ensuring agriculture directly contributed to nutrition outcomes.	"Before each department would run its own programmes but with Right2Grow we started sitting together... now when we talk about nutrition and WASH everyone contributed from their department and that has made our work more effective." (District Agriculture Officer, Kamwenge)
Improving Civic Engagement and Community Voice	LC1 chairpersons acted as monitors, linking community voices with CSOs and district systems. Over time, grassroots leaders became effective advocates for service delivery gaps.	"These LC1 chairmen were fairly informed but in a new field... at the last meeting, I could see they now knew what was needed and had assessed the gaps in their areas." (DHO Gerald Asaba, Kikuube)
Strengthening Local Capacity through Training	CVAs and school focal persons were trained in WASH, nutrition, and advocacy, creating a strong grassroots network to fight malnutrition at home and in schools.	"We have also trained the CVAs on WASH, nutrition and advocacy issues... those CVAs have started fighting malnutrition, because malnutrition begins from home." (District Nutrition Focal Person, Bugweri)
Enhanced Community Feedback Loops	Platforms such as barazas and radio talk shows improved accountability by allowing communities to raise concerns and demand responses from duty bearers.	"Dialogue meetings and radio talk shows allowed the community to hold us accountable... If they felt they were not seeing improvements, they raised issues, and we had to respond." (Principal Assistant CAO, Adjumani)
Budgeting and Resource Allocation	Nutrition and WASH were given dedicated budget lines, with improved tracking and accountability mechanisms at district level.	"Before Right2Grow, nutrition and WASH services were often underfunded... with the project's guidance, the district has started including specific budget allocations for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, kitchen gardens, and WASH

		initiatives.” (District Agriculture Officer, Kamwenge)
Building Demand-Driven Advocacy	CSOs and communities jointly advocated for service improvements, holding health assistants accountable for WASH inspections and other duties.	“One monitor told me, ‘your health assistants are not doing what they should... we expect them to do WASH inspections but we don’t see them.’ That feedback helped me act on it immediately.” (DHO Gerald Asaba, Kikuube)
Capacity Building of Health and Extension Workers	Training frontline staff on malnutrition screening and diet education improved early detection, referrals, and preventive services.	“Health workers were trained to identify malnutrition cases early... They now educate families about balanced diets, what foods to grow and how to prepare them.” (Principal Assistant CAO, Adjumani)
Strengthening Collaboration Between CSOs and District Systems	Improved communication and participation of CSOs in review meetings-built trust, joint accountability, and stronger advocacy.	“In the last two years, the new leaders became realistic... we even had their contacts. They were advocating and demanding for services. We started planning together.” (DHO Gerald Asaba, Kikuube)
Promoting School-Led Nutrition Models	School gardens and handwashing facilities served as sustainable demonstrations of nutrition and hygiene practices, with teachers trained to maintain them.	“Bulyansme Primary School is now a model... they keep their gardens, and one teacher has even been appointed to train others. They also maintain handwashing facilities.” (District Nutrition Focal Person, Bugweri)
Increased Community Ownership and Gender Roles	Women maintained WASH facilities while men played advocacy roles, ensuring sustainability through shared responsibilities.	“The females responded positively... usually females keep the facilities clean, while the males mainly do the advocacy part.” (District Water Officer, Buliisa)
Shifts in Mindset and Self-Reliance	Communities shifted from dependency to self-reliance, using small land plots for food/income, while civil servants gained confidence and visibility through media/donor forums.	“People now use even small plots for food and income. I myself gained visibility—appearing on TV and representing our work to donors gave us credibility.” (CDO, Dzaipi Sub-County, Adjumani)
Community Engagement and Demonstration Gardens	Demonstration farms and school gardens enhanced knowledge and encouraged households to adopt better nutrition practices.	“I engaged in encouraging local communities to participate in growing nutritious foods, promoting school gardens... and these students would extend the best practices home.” (District Water Officer, Buliisa)

3.2.3 National governments and decentralised entities

Through Right2Grow, civil society organisations worked with Parliament, ministries, and local governments to influence financing, strengthen coordination structures, and shape supportive policy frameworks. This included developing and presenting position papers to Parliament on the National Budget Framework Paper and Ministerial Policy Statements, which secured the adoption of several CSO proposals in agro-industrialisation, WASH, and nutrition programmes. At the same time, Right2Grow convened national dialogues and technical workshops that informed the integration of CSO recommendations into the 4th National Development Plan (NDP IV), ensuring nutrition was anchored within human capital and agricultural priorities. At district and sub-county levels, the programme supported the functionalisation of coordination structures such as DNCCs, SNCCs, and Water Boards, which in turn advanced by-laws, ordinances, and monitoring of budget allocations for nutrition and WASH.

Under this pathway of change, the program pursued three indicators which include;

- i. % of public budgets allocated and implemented for nutrition and WASH services (increased funding).
- ii. # of laws, and policies implemented for sustainable and inclusive development.
- iii. # of laws and policies improved.

Progress on Output and Outcome Indicators

The table on Progress on Output and Outcome Indicators highlights notable achievements in strengthening policy implementation and financing for nutrition and WASH services. By the evaluation period, the programme achieved its target of 15, up from a baseline of 0. This indicates substantial policy-level progress driven by Right2Grow advocacy and technical engagement at both national and district levels. Key examples include the review of the National Nutrition Policy (2003), tabling of the Food and Nutrition Bill in Parliament, and integration of eight CSO-proposed nutrition indicators into NDP IV (2026–2030). At district level, local by-laws on sanitation, food safety, and open defecation were passed in Yumbe, Kakumiro, and Maracha, showing the ripple effect of advocacy at subnational levels.

For the budget allocation indicator, the programme far exceeded its targets, with WASH funding reaching 67% and Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) funding at 54%, both surpassing the target of 10%. This impressive increase reflects stronger district ownership, improved budget tracking and advocacy by DNCCs, SNCCs, and CSO coalitions, and the mainstreaming of nutrition and WASH into district development plans and annual work plans.

Table 9: Indicator performance for outcome 3

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Result
	Value	2021-2025	2021-2025
SCS022: # of laws, policies, and norms/attitudes, blocked, adopted, and improved for sustainable and inclusive development.	0	15	15
% of public budgets allocated and implemented for nutrition and WASH services (increased funding).	0	WASH: >10%	WASH: 67%
		FSN: >10%	FSN: 54%
Indicator	Baseline	Target	Achieved
# of laws, and policies implemented for sustainable and inclusive development.	0	15	12
% of public budgets allocated and implemented for nutrition and WASH services (increased funding).	0	WASH: 10%	WASH: 10%
		10%	10%

Effectiveness of National Governments and Decentralised Entities

The Strategic Role of Right2Grow at National Level

At the national level, the Right2Grow programme played a pivotal role in shaping Uganda's policy and financing landscape for nutrition and WASH. RIGHT2GROW operated through a multi-partner consortium comprising Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), Food Rights Alliance (FRA), Action Against Hunger (AAH), World Vision Uganda (WVU), Save the Children International (SCI), and The Hunger Project (THP). Each organization

contributed distinct expertise, CSBAG led budget and policy advocacy, FRA provided technical leadership on food and nutrition policy, AAH brought humanitarian and resilience perspectives, while WVU, SCI, and THP bridged community evidence with national policy engagement. Collectively, these partners advanced a unified agenda aimed at integrating nutrition and WASH priorities into government systems, increasing domestic financing, and strengthening the enabling policy environment for sustainable food and nutrition security.

Coordinated Policy Engagement and Legislative Adoption

Right2Grow's consortium members engaged systematically with Parliament, the Ministry of Finance, and the National Planning Authority (NPA) to influence policy and legislative priorities for nutrition, food security, and WASH. Between 2021 and 2025, these coordinated efforts resulted in the adoption of 44 policy proposals, including improvements in the National Budget Framework Papers (NBFPs), Ministerial Policy Statements (MPS), and new provisions for nutrition-sensitive programming under the Parish Development Model (PDM). In 2021 and 2022, CSBAG and FRA presented multiple position papers to Parliament's Budget Committee, leading to the adoption of 23 combined proposals that strengthened budget allocations for agriculture, water, and health sectors. RIGHT2GROW also supported CSO participation in the review of ministerial policy statements, ensuring that nutrition and WASH priorities were included in the FY2021/22 and FY2022/23 national budgets.

Budgetary Effectiveness and Increased Domestic Financing

One of RIGHT2GROW's strongest achievements at the national level was its success in influencing budget allocations for nutrition and WASH services. CSBAG, supported by AAH, FRA, and WVU, led high-level advocacy with the Parliamentary Budget Committee and sector working groups to push for increased domestic financing for agriculture, water, and environment. Their collective advocacy led to notable budget increases across key financial years. In FY2022/23, the budget for agro-industrialization, natural resources, and water supply rose by 110%, representing a UGX 304 billion increase. By FY2023/24, sustained engagement through RIGHT2GROW resulted in the reversal of budget cuts, increasing allocations for the Agro-Industrialization Programme from UGX 1.2 trillion to UGX 1.81 trillion, and raising the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) budget from UGX 564 billion to UGX 1.03 trillion. Similarly, the Water and Environment sector budget increased from UGX 83.83 billion to UGX 88.19 billion. These results reflect RIGHT2GROW's effectiveness in mobilizing cross-sectoral evidence to make a fiscal case for investing in nutrition and WASH.

Nutrition Financing

Funding for nutrition in Uganda has been a joint effort between the Government, development partners, private sector, civil society organizations, and communities. Together, they have supported the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAP) II (2020/21–2024/25), which serves as the country's main strategy for improving nutrition financing, coordination, and accountability. At the national level, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) have provided leadership in resource mobilization, policy guidance, and coordination across key sectors.

Table 10: **Allocation to Key Sectors supporting Nutrition Financing 2019/20-2023/24**

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Totals	%age
UGX (Billions)							
Health	311.4	334.7	402.7	450.1	583.2	2,082.1	57%
Agriculture	116.0	146.7	144.5	132.5	199.6	739.3	20%
Education	102.0	111.0	98.4	56.6	125.7	493.7	14%
MGLSD	4.4	3.7	0.3	1.6	6.5	16.6	0%
MoWE	55.3	86.5	70.1	28.2	57.3	297.5	8%
MoTIC	4.3	3.3	3.5	2.8	2.4	16.2	0%
Totals	593	686	720	672	975	3,645	100%

Source: Status of Financing for Nutrition, Food Security and WASH Report in Uganda 2024

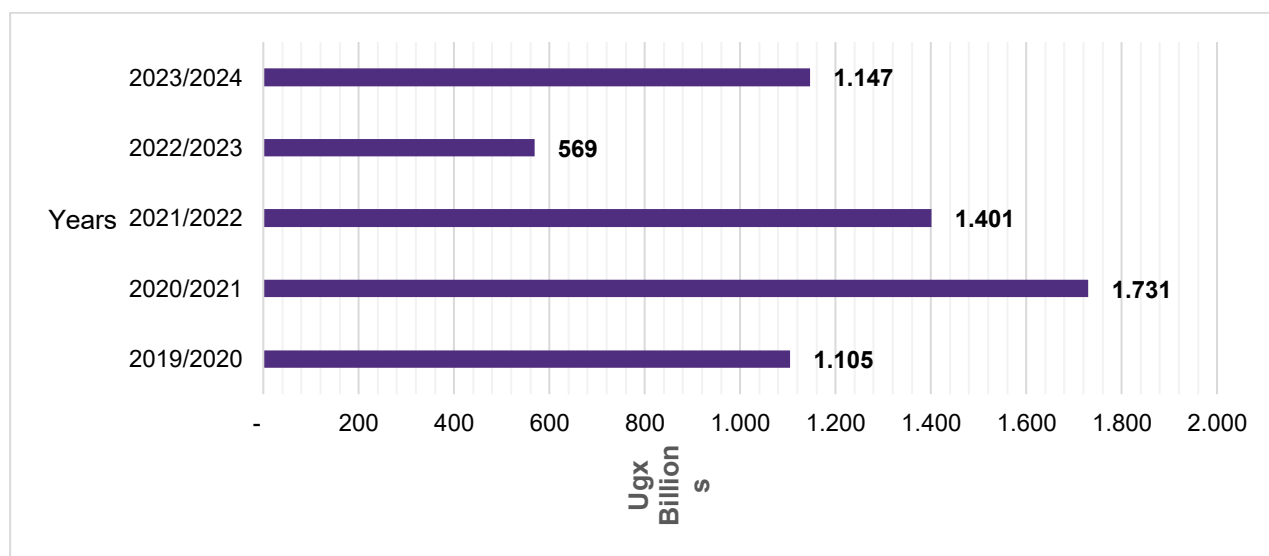
The table shows the allocation of funds to key sectors supporting nutrition financing in Uganda from FY 2019/20 to 2023/24. Overall, nutrition-related investments increased from UGX 593 billion in 2019/20 to UGX 975 billion in 2023/24, representing a steady rise in government and partner commitment to nutrition. The health sector received the largest share, accounting for 57% (UGX 2,082.1 billion) of total allocations, followed by agriculture (20%), education (14%), and water and environment (8%). Smaller contributions were observed from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MoTIC), each contributing less than 1%. This trend demonstrates increasing cross-sectoral investment in nutrition, with health and agriculture remaining the main drivers of nutrition-sensitive programming in Uganda.

Within this landscape, the Right2Grow (R2G) programme has played a key role in enhancing nutrition governance and financing at both national and subnational levels. Right2Grow has worked with government entities, District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs), and Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees (SNCCs) to strengthen budget tracking, promote citizen engagement, and advocate for increased funding to nutrition-sensitive interventions.

WASH Financing

Between FY 2019/20 and 2023/24, the sector spent a total of UGX 5,949.41 billion. Funding levels fluctuated over the years—rising sharply from UGX 1,105.73 billion in 2019/20 to UGX 1,730.52 billion in 2020/21, largely due to the increased resource needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, allocations later dropped, declining from UGX 1,073.22 billion in 2021/22 to UGX 564.88 billion in 2022/23, representing an average reduction of about 45% over the five-year period.

Figure 4: **Funding by GoU for WASH in UGX Billions**



Source: GoU Approved Budget Estimates 2019/20 – 2023/24

Converging sectors around budget influence and financing

Right2Grow and partner CSOs used the FY2024/25 budget window to bring health, WASH, agro-industrialisation, and education actors to the same table and push a coordinated financing agenda. Following the National Budget Framework Paper and subsequent Ministerial Policy Statements, CSOs submitted multi-sector position papers to Parliament. This joint posture led to five concrete adoptions in the national budget: two proposals under the Agro-industrialisation programme, two in the WASH sub-sector, and one within the nutrition sub-programme. To sustain alignment, the consortium convened a National Dialogue on Nutrition Financing (FY24/25) and a technical workshop that fed into NDP IV Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs), culminating in a memorandum of CSO-proposed nutrition interventions, several of which were taken up as indicators in the final NDP IV draft.

These steps showed that multi-sector advocacy did not remain rhetorical; it converted analysis into adopted lines in national plans and budgets.

Institutionalizing Nutrition within National Planning Frameworks

In 2024, Right2Grow partners, led by FRA and CSBAG, worked closely with the National Planning Authority (NPA) to integrate nutrition-sensitive targets into Uganda's Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV). This marked a significant milestone in institutionalizing nutrition within the national policy framework. Following a National Dialogue on Nutrition Financing co-organized by FRA, AAH, and WVU in July 2024, CSOs developed and submitted a joint memorandum that proposed specific nutrition indicators for the Agro-Industrialization and Health programme areas. As a result, 24 CSO-proposed indicators were adopted into NDP IV's Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs). This outcome not only secured long-term policy recognition for nutrition but also established a framework for tracking national progress on stunting reduction and WASH outcomes.

Strengthened Governance and Cross-Sector Coordination

At the national level, Right2Grow strengthened coordination among ministries and agencies responsible for nutrition and WASH. Through the Nutrition Development Partners' Group and national policy dialogues, the consortium brought together the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Agriculture (MAAIF), Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), and National Planning Authority (NPA) under one shared agenda. Partners like WVU and AAH provided technical input to align sectoral priorities, while CSBAG and FRA advocated for institutional mechanisms such as inter-ministerial committees and accountability scorecards to monitor budget execution. This approach improved coherence across line ministries, ensuring that food security, nutrition, and WASH were addressed as interconnected priorities within government programmes. The engagement also deepened CSO-government partnerships and reduced fragmentation in the national response to malnutrition.

Institutionalization of Nutrition Staffing at District Level

A major achievement was Kamwenge District's recruitment of a nutrition officer in 2022, following gaps identified during a District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC) functionality assessment in 2021. Prior to this, nutrition activities lacked technical guidance, undermining the effectiveness of the DNCC. With Right2Grow advocacy and targeted recommendations, the district filled this critical vacancy, ensuring the DNCC now benefits from a technical advisor. This demonstrates how structured assessments, evidence dissemination, and follow-up can influence human resource decisions within local government. The result is a stronger institutional framework for nutrition governance, positioning the district to better design, implement, and monitor nutrition interventions.

Increased Domestic Financing and Budget Allocations

The programme was effective in influencing budget increases for nutrition and WASH across several financial years. Between 2022 and 2024, Right2Grow-supported advocacy contributed to at least four major budget increments in priority sectors, including agriculture, water, and environment. In 2022, national allocations under agro-industrialization, natural resources, and water supply increased by 110%, representing a UGX 304 billion rise from the previous financial year. In 2023, further engagement through CSBAG and partner organizations led to a reversal of budget cuts under the Agro-Industrialization Programme, with allocations increasing from UGX 1.2 trillion to UGX 1.81 trillion. The Ministry of Agriculture's budget also rose from UGX 564 billion to UGX 1.03 trillion. Similarly, the Water and Environment sector budget increased from UGX 83.83 billion to UGX 88.19 billion.

National and District budgets reflecting multi-sector priorities

Sustained CSO engagement translated into measurable shifts in district allocations that touched production, water, and social services. Kamwenge increased its Production & Marketing budget by UGX 814,000 (47%) and its water budget by UGX 39,822,000 (3%). Kakumiro raised Production & Marketing by UGX 1,484,958,000 (55%) and water by UGX 163,364,000 (13.9%). Buliisa increased Production & Marketing by UGX 373,761,000 (33%) and water by UGX 140,791,000 (28%). These were not abstract reallocations: UGX 93,786,654 was set aside to drill two boreholes in Biiso and Buliisa Sub-Counties; UGX 20,000,000 funded a two-stance pit latrine at Kijumbia Community School; UGX 9,516,000 financed surveying a Busiriba water scheme; UGX 98,204,730 was approved to drill three additional boreholes (Kigoya-Kijangi in Buliisa SC and Kijura-Busingiro in Biiso SC); and UGX 43,000,000 covered the Uribo Water System design.

District-Level Policy and Budget Commitments

At district level, several breakthroughs were recorded. In Nwoya District, the District Executive Committee acknowledged nutrition as a cross-cutting issue and committed 1% of its local revenue towards a nutrition audit. Similarly, in Kakumiro District, leaders initiated the drafting and eventual passing of a district food and nutrition policy, while in Buliisa District, councilors approved an ordinance to strengthen food and nutrition security. These milestones highlight a growing trend of decentralized governments recognizing nutrition not as a health-only issue but as a multi-sectoral priority deserving of financial and policy attention. Such commitments move beyond rhetoric to tangible allocations, reflecting the integration of nutrition into broader governance systems.

MCD also supported government engagement by strengthening partners' technical and facilitation skills. In Uganda, CSOs used capacities developed through MCD to support district-level processes, including evidence-based dialogue, coordination platforms and the integration of advocacy tools into planning cycles. This contributed to more structured interaction between civil society and local authorities and reinforced the programme's multi-sectoral approach to nutrition and WASH governance.

Story of Change on National government and Decentralised level

Story of Change: Strengthening Nutrition and WASH Governance in Bugweri District

When the Right2Grow programme began in Bugweri District in 2021, there was no functional District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC). Nutrition and WASH issues were fragmented, with little collaboration across departments. With the support of RIGHT2GROW, the DNCC was established and institutionalized, holding quarterly meetings that brought together key sectors including health, education, production, and community development. This structure has since become the backbone of nutrition governance in the district, ensuring that planning and monitoring of interventions are coordinated and sustained.

RIGHT2GROW also supported local government policy and budgeting processes. For the first time, a specific allocation of UGX 500,000 per quarter was earmarked for nutrition activities within the district's budget framework. Though modest, this marked a significant shift in recognizing nutrition as a priority area. Additionally, RIGHT2GROW worked with health facility in-charges to allocate small but consistent amounts of funding to WASH and school health promotion activities, aligning local actions with national policy guidelines that require 30% of health budgets to go towards health promotion and sanitation.

At the service delivery level, the programme's collaboration with Community Voice and Action (CVA) groups transformed how WASH and nutrition were integrated. Communities were mobilized to improve water source hygiene, fence boreholes, and adopt safe water handling practices. Annual events like Sanitation Week and World Water Day, supported with resources and logistics from RIGHT2GROW, reinforced these messages and strengthened community ownership.

One of the most visible results has been in schools. With RIGHT2GROW's technical and financial support, many schools established nutrition gardens, growing vegetables such as eggplants and Sukuma wiki, and in some cases planting up to 50 banana trees. Children not only consumed these foods at school but also carried nutrition messages home, encouraging parents to diversify diets. This school-based approach sparked contributions from some parents, such as providing maize for porridge, although mindset barriers remain among others.

Sustainability has been enhanced by embedding these initiatives within government and community systems. The DNCC now oversees all district nutrition activities, while CVA groups act as a bridge between communities and government officials. Political leaders have also been engaged from the start, giving legitimacy and continuity to the initiatives. Importantly, the presence of a designated nutrition focal person an outcome of RIGHT2GROW's advocacy has provided a permanent anchor for nutrition within the district system..

Unintended / Unexpected Effects

One of the main challenges arose from the establishment of new governance structures such as District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) and sub-county water boards. These structures raised expectations for increased and sustained funding from local governments. In practice, however, the amounts allocated were very small—for instance, UGX 500,000 per quarter in some districts. While symbolically significant, these allocations were insufficient to meet the scope of nutrition and WASH interventions initiated under Right2Grow. This gap between expectations and actual funding created frustration among local stakeholders, and in some cases strained relationships between CSOs and government duty bearers.

While there has been progress in increasing budget allocations, the amounts remain very small compared to the actual needs of the District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC). It's just a drop in the sea. Without continued partner support, we are limping." (KII with Assistant District Health Officer,)

In addition to the above, the gender dynamics around Outcome 3 revealed unintended consequences. Women were generally more engaged than men in dialogues, community gatherings, and advocacy spaces. While this increased women's visibility and leadership, it also meant that the burden of participation and community mobilization often fell disproportionately on women. Men's limited involvement reinforced existing inequalities in decision-making and risked leaving nutrition and WASH responsibilities framed as "women's issues," rather than shared community concerns.

"When you want something to move, you involve the female. Females have responded more than males... Men tend to make themselves busy, sometimes over nothing. In most meetings, the women are more proactive than men." (KII with District Agriculture officer,)

Community participation sometimes created resistance and tensions. While CVA groups and CBOs were empowered to demand accountability, some health facility staff perceived this as a challenge to their authority, particularly when communities requested access to financial records or raised complaints about service delivery. This resistance slowed down responsiveness in certain facilities and highlighted the lack of formal recognition of community monitors within government systems.

"Some staff questioned the legitimacy of community monitors demanding records. This sometimes-created tension instead of cooperation." (KII with District Health Official,)

Programme Strategies Driving Change under Outcome 3

Capacity building, household policy, and WASH–nutrition integration

R2G strengthened DNCC members and local leaders to pass and enforce practical resolutions (e.g., household and institutional kitchen gardens), while deliberately pairing nutrition actions with reliable WASH services to avoid fragmented delivery. This combination improved dietary diversity and ensured facilities had functional water where nutrition activities were implemented.

"We came up with a resolution that each household should have a kitchen garden... this has influenced nutritious food growing and improved community diets." (District Agricultural Officer, Kamwenge)

"As the nutrition committee planned activities like kitchen gardens, we as the WASH team had to ensure water sources were operational in those areas." (District Water Officer, Buliisa)

Institutionalizing planning and financing (DDEG, DNAP, and partner support)

The programme helped districts formalise financing by introducing the 2% DDEG allocation for nutrition and supporting the drafting, validation, and publication of DNAPs that integrate sector budgets (health, water, education, production). This institutionalisation—reinforced by partner support from CARE and Raising the Village—anchored nutrition/WASH in routine plans and resources rather than projects.

"Before R2GRIGHT2GROW, DDEG had no nutrition component. Now guidelines ensure 2% is allocated to nutrition, including demo gardens and training activities." (District Agricultural Officer, Kamwenge)

"R2GRIGHT2GROW supported the publication of the DNAP which contains annual budgets from every sector as guided by the Ministry of Finance." (District Water Officer, Kikuube)

Joint planning, budget engagement, and policy responsiveness

By convening multi-department planning with the Budget Desk and backing district budget conferences, R2G improved how priorities are framed and absorbed into formal budget cycles. Even where immediate increments

were modest, issues like school sanitation gained visibility and were taken up in plans—strengthening the pathway from evidence to budget decisions.

“Bringing together affected departments with the Budget Desk has improved understanding... this helps push the agenda forward.” (DHO, Kabale)

“The programme... supported dialogue and budget meetings; issues like lack of sanitation facilities in schools or health centres have been taken into account during budget planning.” (District Planner, Kabale)

Data use for evidence-based prioritization

The programme enhanced collection and use of nutrition/WASH data for targeting, directing scarce resources to underserved areas and vulnerable households and sharpening advocacy asks with evidence.

“Data showed only 76% had safe water, so resources were directed to underserved areas... similarly, malnutrition data shaped focus on food security and sensitization.” (Principal Assistant CAO, Adjumani)

“One of the most significant evidence-based decisions was in water access—data showed only 76% had safe water, so resources were directed to underserved areas... similarly, malnutrition data shaped focus on food security and sensitization.” (Principal Assistant CAO – Adjumani District)

Table 11: Reflections on Contribution of Programme Strategies to Achieved Changes (Outcome 3)

Contributing Factor	Contribution / Observed Change	Evidence (Quote & District)
Capacity Building and Policy Resolutions	Targeted trainings empowered DNCC members and local leaders to pass and implement household nutrition resolutions. A key achievement was the policy requiring every household and institution to have a kitchen garden, improving dietary diversity and food security structures.	“We came up with a resolution that each household should have a kitchen garden... this has influenced nutritious food growing and improved community diets.” (District Agricultural Officer, Kamwenge District)
Improved Budgeting and Resource Allocation	R2G influenced district budgeting, ensuring 2% of the DDEG is allocated to nutrition. It also lobbied nationally with the Ministry of Finance for a formalized nutrition budget line, supported by development partners like CARE and Raising the Village.	“Before R2G, DDEG had no nutrition component. Now guidelines ensure 2% is allocated to nutrition, including demo gardens and training activities.” (District Agricultural Officer, Kamwenge District)
Development of the District Nutrition Action Plan (DNAP)	Facilitated the drafting, validation, and publication of DNAPs, integrating sectoral budgets from all departments. This mainstreamed nutrition and WASH in district planning and improved accountability.	“R2G supported the publication of the DNAP which contains annual budgets from every sector as guided by the Ministry of Finance.” (District Water Officer, Kikuube District)
Linking WASH to Nutrition Programming	Ensured WASH services complemented nutrition interventions such as kitchen gardens and school feeding, reducing fragmentation and fostering holistic outcomes.	“As the nutrition committee planned activities like kitchen gardens, we as the WASH team had to ensure water sources were operational in those areas.” (District Water Officer, Buliisa District)
Joint Planning and Budget Engagement	Facilitated joint planning processes that brought in multiple departments and the Budget Desk, improving understanding and	“Bringing together affected departments with the Budget Desk has improved

	visibility of nutrition and WASH priorities in district budgets.	understanding... this helps push the agenda forward.” (DHO, Kabale District)
Improving Budget Dialogue and Policy Responsiveness	Supported district budget conferences, enabling inclusive participation and ensuring community concerns like school sanitation were integrated into district planning.	“The programme has contributed, particularly by supporting dialogue and budget meetings... issues raised such as the lack of sanitation facilities in schools or health centres have been taken into account during budget planning.” (District Planner, Kabale District)
Promoting Nutrition in Schools	Established school nutrition gardens and sensitized children, leading to spillover effects at household level. Parents also began contributing food items, though mindset challenges remain.	“Right now, when you move around, most schools can show you a nutrition garden... some parents provide food so that children can at least have a cup of porridge.” (Assistant DHO, Bugweri District)
Data Use for Evidence-Based Planning	Enhanced districts’ ability to collect, analyze, and use nutrition and WASH data, guiding prioritization of safe water infrastructure and nutrition interventions.	“One of the most significant evidence-based decisions was in water access—data showed only 76% had safe water, so resources were directed to underserved areas.” (Principal Assistant CAO, Adjumani District)

3.2.4 Donors and international development organisations

The mobilisation of international development actors under Outcome 4 focused on strengthening coordination and collaboration among donors, UN agencies, and development partners to address the root causes of undernutrition through a humanitarian–development nexus. Right2Grow actively engaged key partners such as WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, FAO, and USAID in national-level advocacy spaces, including the Food and Nutrition Bill consultations, the National Nutrition Forum, and a retreat with the Speaker of Parliament. These engagements helped secure donor commitments to sustained support for nutrition and WASH interventions, with the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) pledging increased funding. A major milestone was the organisation of the National Colloquium on Stunting, which reviewed Uganda’s progress and challenges, spotlighted gaps in stunting reduction, and identified innovative approaches such as the “one egg a day” campaign for children under five. Members of Parliament also pledged to seek new funding opportunities for nutrition, demonstrating growing political momentum alongside donor support.

To achieve this outcome are, the programme pursued two indicators including the following

- i. Level of success of lobby and advocacy roles by Right2Grow and its partner towards donors and international actors.
- ii. Degree of integration of the WASH-Nutrition nexus by donors along the humanitarian-development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition.

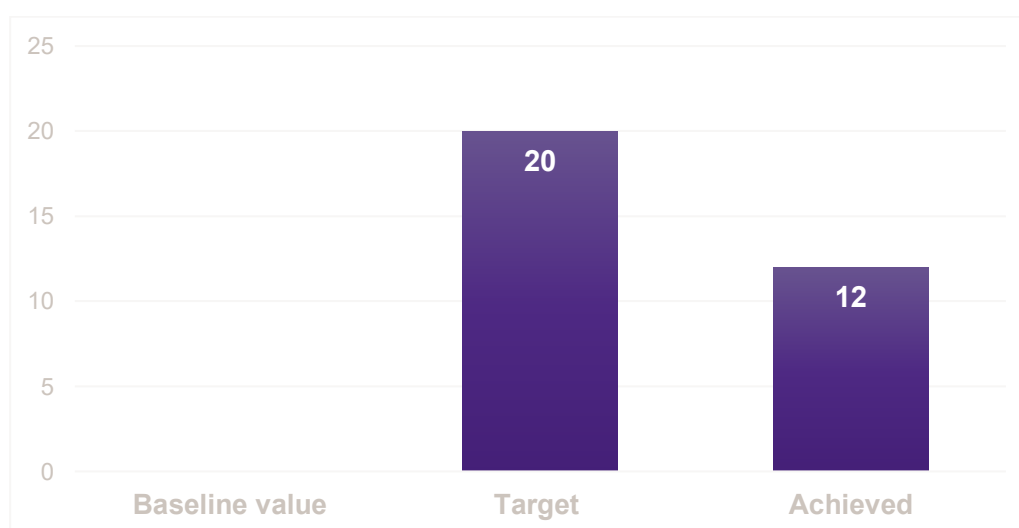
Progress on Output and Outcome Indicators

At endline, Outcome 4 of the Right2Grow programme met its targets: both measured indicators shifted from Low at baseline to High in 2021–2025, matching the planned performance levels. Specifically, the level of success of R2G and partners’ lobby and advocacy with donors and international actors is rated High, reflecting effective influence and traction in policy and funding dialogues. Likewise, the degree of donor integration of the WASH–Nutrition nexus across the humanitarian–development nexus is High, indicating that partners are now coordinating WASH, nutrition, food security, and health efforts rather than implementing stand-alone projects. In

sum, despite variability in the number of discrete engagements elsewhere, the quality and policy impact of R2G's engagement were sufficient to deliver the intended outcome-level change.

Figure 5: Indicator Performance

Indicator (disaggregate by sub-indicators where applicable)	Baseline Value	Target 2021-2025	Result 2021-2025
Level of success of lobby and advocacy roles by R2G and its partner towards donors and international actors	Low	High	High
Degree of integration of the WASH-Nutrition nexus by donors along the humanitarian-development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition	Low	High	High



Effectiveness of Mobilizing international development actors

Increased Awareness on Donor and Development Partner Investments in Nutrition

One of the key achievements under the Right2Grow programme has been the increased visibility and awareness of development partner investments towards nutrition. Since the inception of the project in 2021, ACF, World Vision, THP, FRA, MoH, USAID, UNICEF, and other partners have been convening development partners and donor meetings. In 2022 symposium meeting at the Golf Course Hotel in Kampala. During this forum, strategic notes were presented by agencies such as WFP, UNICEF, WHO, and USAID, outlining their commitments and contributions to nutrition. This platform enhanced transparency created alignment among stakeholders and strengthened the shared vision of addressing undernutrition across the humanitarian-development nexus. Following this engagement, the Ministry of Health convened a post-nutrition symposium workshop to follow up on the commitments and discussions.

Convening high-level actors around a shared agenda.

Throughout the year, Right2Grow proactively brought major development and humanitarian actors to the same table—including WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, FAO, and USAID—and positioned undernutrition as a cross-cutting priority rather than a single-sector problem. These partners were engaged during a retreat with the

Speaker of Parliament, consultations on the Food and Nutrition Bill, and the National Nutrition Forum (NNF). This coordination generated visible political and technical commitments: development partners under the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) publicly affirmed increased support to nutrition, and the UN Resident Coordinator underscored a multi-sector approach as the most effective pathway. In practical terms, these engagements aligned messaging, reduced fragmentation of initiatives, and created a common platform where humanitarian actors (e.g., UNHCR in refugee-hosting districts) and development partners (e.g., UNDP, FAO) could plan complementary actions.

Using evidence to align donor financing and priorities.

To steer partner resources toward the biggest gaps, Right2Grow commissioned the study *Status of Financing for Nutrition, Food Security, and WASH in Uganda (2019–2023)*. While finalization was scheduled for 2025, the work already served as an anchor for dialogue with donors, helping to map who funded what, where overlaps existed, and which determinants of undernutrition remained under-resourced. By signaling the intent to publish a consolidated view of financing flows, the consortium created incentives for partners to coordinate pipelines, avoid duplication, and target underserved populations and geographies—core principles of the humanitarian–development nexus.

Strengthening CSO Engagement and Representation in the SUN Movement

Outcome 4 has played a pivotal role in strengthening the participation and legitimacy of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in national and global nutrition platforms. The programme mobilized CSO networks to actively participate in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) CSO meetings at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). This mobilization led to the revamping of the CSO SUN network, ensuring that non-state actors were formally recognized by OPM as equal partners in the SUN movement. Since the project inception in 2021, Right2Grow partners participated in a national CSO meetings at OPM headquarters. A case in point the chairperson of the SUN Civil Society Network (SUNCSN) in Uganda is the Food Rights Alliance (FRA). This achievement highlights how donor-supported programmes can strategically elevate CSO voices, ensuring that grassroots concerns are represented at the highest levels of decision-making.

Rebalancing attention toward chronic undernutrition.

Right2Grow supported a National Colloquium on stunting among children under five that examined Uganda's off-track trajectory against SDG targets (24.4% stunting against a 2024 target of 19%). Donors and government leaders agreed that while emergency funding for wasting was essential, stunting demanded more sustained, preventive investment across food systems, WASH, health, and social protection. UNICEF encouraged civil society to champion a simple "one egg a day" action for children under five as a locally feasible, nutrition-dense measure. Members of Parliament pledged to identify funding opportunities for stunting reduction, demonstrating that the event did not end with discussion but catalyzed concrete follow-ups in advocacy and resource mobilization.

Linking policy reform with partner coordination.

Engagements with donors were deliberately tied to policy processes so that external support reinforced national systems rather than parallel ones. During consultations on the Food and Nutrition Bill and the review of the 2003 National Food and Nutrition Policy, Right2Grow ensured that multilateral and bilateral actors contributed to a coherent accountability framework. This approach strengthened government ownership, positioned donors as enablers of national priorities, and improved the likelihood that future partner investments would flow through district and national plans (e.g., DNCC/SNCC platforms, NDP IV results frameworks) rather than stand-alone projects.

Humanitarian development complementarity in practice.

By convening UN agencies and development partners in the same spaces as Parliament, sector ministries, and CSOs, Right2Grow helped align short-term humanitarian actions with longer-term systems strengthening. Partners discussed practical bridges—such as pairing emergency water access and hygiene promotion in high-need communities with medium-term financing for service reliability and coupling child feeding campaigns with school- and community-based behavior change. This planning logic reduced the typical stop-start cycle of

emergency vs. development programming and focused attention on the underlying determinants of malnutrition: safe water and sanitation, adequate diets, primary health care, and household food security.

Results commitments, pipelines, and a clearer coordination compact.

The programme secured explicit partner commitments to keep nutrition high on the agenda and to increase funding, as expressed at the NNF and subsequent dialogues. Second, it shifted the narrative toward prevention of stunting, with UNICEF and MPs endorsing actionable, locally affordable measures and pledging to pursue funding. Third, it put in motion a shared evidence base—the financing study—to guide 2025 engagements with donors and international agencies, with the aim of aligning resources to nutrition, food security, and WASH priorities where the needs and impact potential were greatest. Together, these outcomes showed that Right2Grow did more than host meetings; it converted convening power into coordinated commitments and an evidence-driven pipeline that donors, government, and implementers could act on in 2025.

Unintended / Unexpected Effects

The mobilisation of international development actors under Outcome 4 contributed significantly to raising the profile of nutrition and WASH. However, it also generated some unintended negative effects. One key issue was that the commitments made by donors during high-level engagements, such as the National Colloquium on Stunting and consultations on the Food and Nutrition Bill, raised expectations among government officials, CSOs, and local communities that new and substantial funding would immediately follow. When such pledges did not quickly translate into tangible resources, this created frustration and mistrust among some stakeholders who had anticipated quick responses.

In addition to the above, while donor mobilisation created momentum around stunting, it also contributed to a skewed focus in resource allocation. International actors demonstrated stronger interest in stunting interventions, while wasting and other nutrition-related challenges remained underfunded. This imbalance risks undermining Uganda's ability to tackle malnutrition holistically, particularly in fragile and food-insecure regions where wasting remains acute. By concentrating resources too heavily on one aspect of malnutrition, the approach could inadvertently leave behind some of the most vulnerable groups.

Programme Strategies Driving Change under Outcome 4

Convening Power and High-Level Platforms

The Right2Grow programme played a catalytic role in mobilizing international development actors and donors around the nutrition and WASH agenda. By creating spaces such as the National Nutrition Forum and the National Colloquium on Stunting, Right2Grow successfully elevated nutrition as a policy priority and facilitated dialogue between government, CSOs, and global actors. These high-level platforms created visibility and opened pathways for aligning donor resources towards national nutrition goals.

Strengthening Partnerships Across the Humanitarian–Development Nexus

One of the most notable contributions was the ability of Right2Grow to leverage its convening power to bring together a wide range of stakeholders—including WHO, UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, UNHCR, and USAID—into joint conversations on addressing undernutrition. This not only strengthened partnerships but also led to renewed commitments, such as the pledge from the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) to increase support for nutrition interventions. By fostering these engagements, Right2Grow contributed to building a stronger multi-sectoral approach across the humanitarian–development nexus.

Evidence-Driven Advocacy for Resource Alignment

Right2Grow's evidence-driven advocacy also proved influential. The commissioning of the “Status of Financing for Nutrition, Food Security and WASH in Uganda (2019–2023)” study gave the programme and its partners a credible foundation to engage donors on financing gaps. This positioned Right2Grow not only as a mobiliser but also as a knowledge broker, providing data that could shape future funding decisions. The study, once finalised, is expected to further enhance donor coordination and resource alignment in 2025 and beyond.

Shaping Policy and Integrated Approaches

Another important contribution was in shaping policy discourse. Through its advocacy, Right2Grow ensured that international actors engaged with Uganda's policy commitments, such as the Food and Nutrition Bill and the Zero Stunting Campaign. The programme also influenced narratives by promoting integrated WASH–nutrition approaches, encouraging donors to consider both sectors in tandem. While challenges remain in sustaining momentum and ensuring balanced funding across nutrition priorities, Right2Grow's strategies laid the groundwork for a more coordinated and responsive donor environment.

3.3. Cross-cutting themes (gender, youth, climate)

Gender

Gender

Right2Grow learning strategy focused on continuous documentation and integration of learnings to improve effectiveness and impact. Documentation efforts focused on a targeted and limited number of themes, selected by partners at country level, to avoid scattering efforts, strengthen team engagement, and ensure that all teams actively implemented each step of the learning cycle. The Uganda consortia teams chose the following country Learning Theme they wanted to learn from: ***"What is the role of women empowerment in improving WASH and Nutrition outcomes for their community?"***

12 out of 13 respondents of the L&L survey consider the country learning theme's documentation process improved programming. Thanks to the theme documentation, gender mainstreaming has become more intentional in R2G activities in Uganda.

"The learning question helped focus efforts on understanding the impact of empowering women who are primary caregivers on nutrition and WASH outcomes. It deepened partners' appreciation of the link between gender empowerment and program success, leading to more intentional integration of gender in WASH and nutrition programming." (L&L survey respondent)

"The documentation of the learning question on gender mainstreaming helped the Right2Grow members to gain understanding on how to engage both males and females within the project interventions with special emphasis on the vulnerable children, girls." (L&L survey respondent)

Gender-responsive policies and planning

The RIGHT2GROW programme ensured that gender equality was embedded in local and district planning processes. District Development Plans (DDPs) and District Nutrition Action Plans (DNAPs) were revised by District Local Governments in collaboration with CSOs and DNCCs, to explicitly include gender-sensitive objectives, particularly focusing on women, adolescent girls, and persons with disabilities. In Adjumani and Kamwenge districts, CSOs successfully lobbied for nutrition and WASH ordinances that incorporated gender targets, while in Kakumiro, budget reviews led to dedicated funds for maternal health and child nutrition. At the national level, CSOs supported the review of the 2003 National Nutrition Policy, pushing for clauses on gender equity and maternal nutrition. These examples show that policy commitments translated into tangible frameworks that guide both budget allocations and service delivery.

Infrastructure and service access for women and PWDs

Investments in inclusive infrastructure directly improved women's and PWDs' access to services. In schools across Buliisa and Nwoya, separate latrines for girls were constructed, reducing absenteeism linked to menstruation. Ramps were installed at water points to ensure that PWDs and the elderly could access safe water with dignity. In Yumbe district, a 20,000-litre reservoir tank was installed at Adjumani Hospital, guaranteeing water access for maternity wards that disproportionately serve women. These changes emerged as results of community-led advocacy supported through R2G platforms such as CVA groups and district dialogues: Similarly, CVAs influenced local councils in Busiriba Sub-County to allocate funds for pit latrine construction at Kijumbia Community School, improving sanitation for girls. These examples demonstrate that gender-sensitive infrastructure investment was not symbolic but addressed very real service gaps.

Shifting gender norms and male engagement

The project also deliberately worked to shift cultural norms by involving men in caregiving and household nutrition. Community dialogues and sensitisation campaigns in Maracha and Kakumiro encouraged men to attend antenatal visits and participate in child feeding practices. This resulted in antenatal care (ANC) attendance by men increasing from 12% before the project to 41% by the third year. In Nwoya, men began supporting household kitchen gardens and livestock rearing after exposure visits organised by R2G. Women in FGDs testified that men were increasingly helping with food preparation and hygiene practices, which reduced the burden on women and improved household health outcomes.

Participation and leadership

Outcome harvesting revealed that women and PWDs had taken on more leadership roles in community structures. In Buliisa, women chaired several water user committees, while in Obongi, PWD representatives were elected into sub-county WASH boards. Women, adolescent girls, and refugee mothers actively participated in community scorecard sessions, raising concerns around stigma in maternal health services. Their feedback prompted health centres in Kamwenge and Maracha to adjust their services to be more responsive to adolescent mothers. This inclusion in planning and monitoring not only gave vulnerable groups a stronger voice but also ensured that interventions responded directly to their lived realities.

Youth

Youth as agents of change in nutrition and WASH

Young people were increasingly engaged as actors in Right2Grow programming, though their participation and influence varied across districts. In Kamwenge, youth nutrition clubs collaborated with teachers to lead handwashing campaigns in schools, while in Buliisa, young people used photovoice exhibitions to draw attention to poor sanitation facilities. In Kakumiro, youth groups participated in community scorecard processes, helping to track borehole repairs and share feedback with local authorities. These initiatives show that youth engagement created some openings for accountability in WASH and nutrition, particularly at the community level. However, while youth representation in Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees (SNCCs) marked a positive step, their contributions were often limited to awareness and mobilization roles rather than decision-making. Continued mentoring and clearer institutional pathways are needed to strengthen the consistency and influence of youth participation in local governance and service delivery processes.

Skills development and livelihood opportunities

Across several districts, youth participation in agriculture and nutrition initiatives expanded through local programmes and partnerships that emphasized practical, climate-smart approaches. In Nwoya, young people received training in cultivating orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, while in Maracha, they engaged in demonstration gardens promoting drought-resistant crops suited to changing climatic conditions. Youth groups also became active in value-addition enterprises such as maize milling and food storage, helping to reduce post-harvest losses and create income opportunities. In Buliisa subcounty in Buliisa district, a UGX 20 million district budget allocation supported seeds for school and kitchen gardens, many of which were managed by youth associations. These collective efforts reflect a growing recognition of youth as contributors to local food and nutrition security, with their involvement linking livelihood improvement to community resilience and nutrition outcomes.

Behavioral change through youth-led initiatives

Youth-led cultural approaches (drama, music, debates) effectively shifted community practices. In Kamwenge, school debates on “boiling water before drinking” led to households reporting higher uptake of safe water practices. In Maracha, youth dramas about sanitation were broadcast on local radio, reinforcing hygiene behaviours across communities. FGDs revealed that youth-led sensitisation campaigns carried more influence because messages were relatable and used simple, culturally familiar methods. Families reported adopting consistent handwashing, covering food, and diversifying diets because of youth-led advocacy.

Leadership and civic participation

Youth were not only participants but also decision-makers. In Kabale, youth representatives presented position papers during district budget conferences, advocating for WASH infrastructure in schools. Their lobbying

contributed to the inclusion of funds for drilling 4 motorised water wells and extending piped water to 14 parishes. In Kakumiro, youth also advocated for the recruitment of health assistants, which was achieved in Kisiita Sub-County. These outcomes demonstrated that youth had matured into civic leaders capable of influencing government decisions, an important step toward sustainability of accountability mechanisms.

Climate

Right2Grow promoted climate-smart agriculture as a direct response to food insecurity linked to erratic rainfall. In Nwoya, demonstration gardens showcased drought-tolerant crops like orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and cassava. Farmers were trained in mulching, intercropping, and soil conservation techniques to adapt to changing climate conditions by district agricultural extension workers and partner organizations, who had been supported or influenced through Right2Grow's multisectoral coordination structures. In Kamwenge, local by-laws required every household to cultivate at least one acre for food security, reinforcing food storage and resilience during periods of scarcity. These actions enabled households to diversify diets and withstand shocks while also generating income from surplus produce.

In addition to the above, the programme also ensured WASH infrastructure was climate resilient. In Adjumani, a 20,000-litre reservoir water tank was installed at the hospital to stabilise supply during dry seasons. In Buliisa, the Ministry of Water and Environment approved a climate-sensitive water system design, which became the foundation for long-term water investments. In Nwoya, an electric fence was constructed by Uganda Wildlife Authority along Patira Game Park to protect crops from elephants, securing both food production and community safety. These investments not only safeguarded nutrition outcomes but also reduced losses from climate-induced risks.

Community sensitisation played a big role in embedding climate awareness. Radio programmes and dialogues in Maracha and Kakumiro promoted efficient water use, safe waste disposal, and sustainable farming practices. Communities were encouraged to terrace land, plant elephant grass to reduce erosion, and adopt waste management practices like rubbish pits. Farmers reported adopting tree planting and soil fertility management, practices that reduced vulnerability to floods and droughts. This strengthened household resilience while ensuring that WASH and nutrition outcomes could be sustained in the face of climate change.

At the governance level, Right2Grow supported districts to mainstream climate into policies and budgets. For example, DNCC meetings in Buliisa and Nwoya tracked the use of the 2% DDEG allocation, while also aligning it with climate-sensitive interventions like kitchen gardens and food storage systems. Districts passed by-laws limiting unnecessary food sales to guard against seasonal hunger, directly linking food security with climate adaptation. Partnerships with the Ministry of Water and Environment further ensured that climate considerations were included in national policy processes, anchoring resilience in both service delivery and governance systems.

3.4. Impact

Attributable Results – Direct Changes Caused by Right2Grow

Attribution refers to results that can be clearly and directly linked to the programme's actions or investments without significant influence from external actors. Across its four outcomes, Right2Grow recorded several direct achievements that can be attributed to the consortium's structured interventions, community engagement, and targeted capacity-building initiatives.

At the community level, the programme's investments in Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) structures, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), and Subcounty Nutrition Coordination Committees (SNCCs) led to concrete service improvements. Evidence from the 2024 Annual Report shows that communities in programme districts successfully lobbied for and obtained tangible WASH and nutrition-related improvements, such as the drilling of eight boreholes in Buliisa, Biiso, and Purongo subcounties, the rehabilitation of fifteen water sources, and the emptying of twelve unsafe school latrines. These outcomes were directly achieved through Right2Grow's training, technical backstopping, and financial support for community monitors and local advocacy forums, underscoring clear causality between programme activities and service delivery outcomes. In addition, several households adopted improved hygiene practices such as construction of handwashing stations and backyard kitchen gardens following community sensitization and radio campaigns facilitated by Right2Grow partners.

At the institutional level, Right2Grow's capacity-building efforts for local government and civil society actors directly led to the formation and revitalisation of District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) and the institutionalization of Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) skills among CSO partners and district officials. These structures and capacities did not exist or were dormant prior to the programme, and their current operationalization can therefore be attributed to Right2Grow's deliberate investments. The training of district staff, sub-county extension workers, and CSOs on BMET and participatory planning empowered these actors to monitor local budget allocations, advocate for increased WASH and nutrition financing, and engage meaningfully in district development planning.

Moreover, Right2Grow directly supported the creation of district-level SUN Business Networks (SBNs) in Nwoya, Maracha, Kabale, and Bugweri districts, thereby bridging the gap between private-sector actors and local nutrition initiatives. These networks were established through targeted facilitation and resource mobilization by the consortium, further highlighting attribution. Through these actions, Right2Grow directly caused a measurable increase in local-level planning, service improvement, and institutional accountability mechanisms in the nutrition and WASH sectors.

Strengthened political and policy engagement.

The programme shifted the way decision makers engage with nutrition and WASH by creating spaces where leaders work jointly and learn from evidence. Through CSO-led position papers and continuous dialogue, parliamentary committees and ministries began to adopt nutrition-sensitive proposals. For example, two of eleven agro-industrialisation proposals, two WASH-related priorities, and one nutrition-specific intervention were incorporated into the national budget framework. Mutual-capacity development surveys revealed that district officials increasingly valued working with CSOs and community monitors, citing improved collaboration and accountability compared to previous years. One district planner noted that "we now meet more often with other sectors and development partners to jointly plan for nutrition and WASH—something that rarely happened before." This marks a cultural shift in governance towards joint responsibility.

Improved multi-sectoral budget allocations and accountability.

At sub-national level, districts not only increased allocations but also demonstrated better cross-sectoral cooperation. Kamwenge, Kakumiro, and Buliisa saw significant increments in their production and water budgets, which were explicitly tied to nutrition and WASH outcomes. Communities confirmed that their advocacy now translated into funded action for instance, Buliisa Sub-County allocated UGX 20 million to establish school and kitchen gardens after CVA groups presented evidence of child malnutrition. This illustrates that decision makers were not just promising but acting in coordination to address undernutrition.

Positive outcomes for children's nutrition, health, and growth.

The most important sign of impact is how these governance and financing changes translated into better outcomes for children. The programme's integration of school gardens, breastfeeding campaigns, and nutrition education contributed to shifts in household practices: more families reported feeding children a diversified diet, boiling drinking water, and maintaining handwashing stations. In areas where boreholes were repaired or new water points constructed, parents reported reduced cases of diarrhoea and waterborne diseases among under-fives. According to the outcome mapping exercise, caregivers also observed improvements in growth patterns and reduced stunting signs, with some districts reporting declines in malnutrition cases documented through health centre screenings. One mother in Buliisa highlighted that "children no longer fall sick as often because we now have clean water and grow vegetables in our backyard." These testimonies underscore how Right2Grow's multi-sectoral approach yielded visible child health improvements.

Joint working and learning among decision makers.

The mutual-capacity development survey confirmed that decision makers—from LC1 leaders to district technical officers—were now "working together more, sharing ideas and doing new things differently." For example, in Nwoya, the district works office collaborated with community groups to construct an access road leading to a local water source and market, while in Kakumiro, the health department and production officers jointly promoted

nutrition-sensitive farming alongside WASH campaigns. This represents a tangible shift from siloed planning to coordinated, multi-sectoral action

Impact Summary Box: Right2Grow's Contribution to Development Impact

On Children (Nutrition, Health, and Growth)

Improved child feeding practices through school and kitchen gardens, radio campaigns, and nutrition education.

Families reported better diets, regular handwashing, and use of safe water—reducing diarrhoea and waterborne diseases among under-fives.

Health facilities such as Kasambya HC III procured anthropometric equipment, enabling better screening and treatment of malnutrition.

Testimonies from caregivers showed visible improvements: “children no longer fall sick as often because we now have clean water and grow vegetables in our backyard” (FGD, Nwoya).

On Decision-Makers (Coordination and Action):

Districts like Kamwenge, Kakumiro, and Buliisa increased production and water budgets, with explicit nutrition/WASH allocations.

Sub-counties (e.g., Buliisa) allocated UGX 20 million for school and kitchen gardens, showing that advocacy translated into funded action.

Decision makers worked more collaboratively across sectors: e.g., health and production officers jointly promoted nutrition-sensitive farming with WASH campaigns.

National-level adoption of CSO proposals: 2 agro-industrialisation, 2 WASH, and 1 nutrition priority integrated into the FY24/25 budget.

Mutual-capacity and linking-and-learning surveys confirmed that leaders now meet more often, share ideas, and “do things differently” in addressing undernutrition.

Contributive Results – Right2Grow's Influence on Broader Change

While the above results can be directly attributed to Right2Grow's actions, much of the programme's long-term impact is observed at a systemic or policy level where attribution is shared. These outcomes reflect contribution, where Right2Grow's advocacy, coalition-building, and evidence generation supported broader national or institutional change led by multiple actors

A major area of contribution lies in national policy and budget influence. Through coordinated advocacy with partners such as the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), Food Rights Alliance (FRA), and Nutrition Society of Uganda (NSU), Right2Grow played a pivotal role in shaping Uganda's National Development Plan IV (NDP IV) and the Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs). R2G consortium partners developed and submitted policy position papers that advocated for the inclusion of nutrition and WASH priorities, resulting in eight new nutrition indicators being integrated into the draft NDP IV (2026–2030). In addition, through parliamentary engagement and budget dialogues, the programme contributed to a 23.31% increase (approximately UGX 337.89 billion) in the national budget for agro-industrialisation an area directly linked to food and nutrition security. Although these policy shifts were ultimately decisions of government, Right2Grow's evidence-based advocacy, coalition coordination, and sustained engagement provided the momentum and technical rationale for such changes

Right2Grow also made substantial contributions to national dialogue and legislative processes. The consortium's engagement in the National Colloquium on Stunting, the first Presidential Dialogue on WASH, and the Food and Nutrition Bill consultations elevated national commitment to nutrition governance and financing. The consortium's leadership in convening diverse actors including the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Health, and

Parliament helped to advance policy discussions that led to the presentation of the Food and Nutrition Bill on the floor of Parliament and government consultations to update the 2003 National Nutrition Policy. These milestones demonstrate that Right2Grow did not act in isolation but rather amplified national reform processes through evidence, coordination, and persistent advocacy.

Another area of notable contribution was the strengthening of civil society voice and coordination. Right2Grow's consortium structure modelled collaboration among multiple actors—World Vision Uganda, Action Against Hunger, The Hunger Project Uganda, FRA, CSBAG, and others—and extended this partnership approach to grassroots CSOs, CBOs, and citizen groups. The programme's emphasis on linking community-generated evidence with national advocacy platforms allowed citizen demands, collected through CVA scorecards and local dialogues, to inform policy discussions at higher levels. This created a virtuous cycle of accountability, where local evidence influenced national priorities, and national policies were cascaded back to empower community structures. These outcomes, though not solely attributable to R2G, demonstrate the programme's contribution to building a more coordinated, multi-level advocacy ecosystem for nutrition and WASH governance in Uganda.

Contribution of Other Actors to Observed Outcomes

The results achieved under the Right2Grow Programme cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader ecosystem of actors that shape Uganda's nutrition and WASH agenda. The programme operated within a multi-stakeholder landscape involving government ministries, civil society coalitions, international development partners, community-based structures, and the private sector. Many of the positive shifts observed between 2021 and 2025 therefore stem from collective action in which Right2Grow's role was catalytic rather than solitary. Understanding these relationships helps clarify the boundary of attribution and situate Right2Grow's achievements within the wider movement for nutrition and WASH governance in Uganda.

Government and National Policy Actors

The most significant contribution outside Right2Grow has come from the Government of Uganda, whose national and sub-national initiatives provided both direction and momentum for addressing malnutrition and WASH challenges. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), through its coordination of the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II (UNAP II, 2020–2025), ensured that nutrition and WASH remained central to the country's development agenda. The National Planning Authority (NPA) led the integration of nutrition, food security, and sanitation outcomes into the draft National Development Plan IV (NDP IV), with technical input from sector ministries. Similarly, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) implemented the Sanitation and Hygiene Improvement Programme (SHIP), the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) strategy, and WASH in Health Facilities guidelines all of which expanded access to sanitation, hygiene, and safe water in the same districts where R2G worked.

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), through the Programme-Based Budgeting (PBB) reforms, contributed to improved alignment and visibility of nutrition-related expenditures across sectors. These reforms made it possible for CSOs, including R2G partners, to track and advocate for nutrition allocations more effectively. Furthermore, district local governments, supported by line ministries and UNICEF, continued implementing the Nutrition Coordination Committee guidelines, ensuring that nutrition remained institutionalised within local planning processes. Hence, much of the enabling environment that Right2Grow leveraged policies, frameworks, and institutional mechanisms—was created and financed by the state.

Development Partners and Donor Initiatives

Parallel investments by international development partners significantly complemented the achievements reported under Right2Grow. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), for instance, has been a lead actor in financing WASH infrastructure in schools and health facilities, promoting open-defecation-free (ODF) communities, and supporting national data systems such as the District Health Information System (DHIS2). The World Food Programme (WFP) contributed through school-feeding and nutrition-sensitive social protection initiatives, while USAID implemented the Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services (RHITES) programmes and Feed the Future activities that targeted similar outcomes in maternal and child nutrition.

Other major donors, such as the European Union (EU), World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), and KOICA, have funded complementary projects in rural water supply, climate-resilient WASH infrastructure, and food security systems. For example, the AfDB-funded Sustainable Rural Water and Sanitation Project (SRWSP)

expanded safe-water coverage in the Albertine and West Nile sub-regions, areas overlapping with Right2Grow districts like Buliisa and Adjumani. Similarly, the World Bank-supported Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UgIFT) programme increased conditional grants for sanitation and public-health improvements at local-government level. These large-scale investments amplified the physical infrastructure and fiscal space into which Right2Grow's advocacy messages fitted, thus accelerating results that might otherwise have taken longer to materialize.

Civil-Society Organisations and Advocacy Networks

Beyond the Right2Grow consortium partners, several national and grassroots CSOs and advocacy platforms have been active in promoting accountability and policy change in the nutrition and WASH sectors. Networks such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Civil Society Alliance, the Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET), the Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development (HEPS-Uganda), and the Civil Society Advocacy Group for Nutrition (CSAN) have continuously championed policy dialogues, citizen mobilisation, and budget transparency.

UWASNET, in particular, has coordinated over 200 member NGOs to extend water and sanitation services to underserved communities, while also leading national WASH advocacy and monitoring. The SUN Business Network (SBN) a joint initiative of the Ministry of Trade and the private sector—mobilised private companies to invest in nutrition-sensitive value chains, especially food fortification and supply-chain safety. Many of these initiatives pre-date Right2Grow and continue independently, yet their outcomes—such as improved coordination, stronger CSO participation in budget processes, and heightened public awareness contributed significantly to the ecosystem within which R2G's work thrived.

Additionally, faith-based and community organisations such as Caritas Uganda, World Vision Area Programmes, and Water Mission implemented WASH and health-promotion activities that directly improved community access to services. These interventions, while not under Right2Grow, helped normalise hygiene practices and reduce open defecation, thereby reinforcing the same behaviour-change outcomes that Right2Grow targeted.

3.5. Sustainability

3.5.1 Perceived sustainability of achieved changes

Districts Now Budget for Nutrition and WASH

One of the strongest markers of sustainability under the Right2Grow programme has been the institutionalization of nutrition and WASH priorities into district plans and budgets. For example, in Buliisa District, the District Council allocated UGX 20 million for school and kitchen gardens, while in Kakumiro and Kamwenge, district budgets for production and water were increased by 55% and 47% respectively in FY24/25. These allocations, though modest, demonstrate that nutrition and WASH have become part of regular government planning processes rather than short-term donor projects. Local government ownership is further reinforced through ordinances and by-laws such as those in Yumbe District limiting unnecessary food sales to prevent household food insecurity, and in Busiriba and Buliisa Sub-counties where sanitation by-laws were passed to curb open defecation and poor household hygiene. Similarly, in Bugweri District, quarterly allocations of UGX 500,000 were introduced to support nutrition and WASH activities under the District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC).

"Because of this DNCC, with support from Right to Grow, we advocated, and the planning unit started allocating that 500,000 for nutrition activities. This money is specifically for nutrition—supporting the nutrition focal person."

KII with DWO

Communities Maintaining Low-Cost Solutions

At the community level, sustainability is evident in the adoption of low-cost, practical interventions that are maintained by households and schools. In Maracha District, communities successfully lobbied for motorised water wells and piped water expansion to 14 parishes, while in Nwoya District, CVA groups influenced the construction of a community access road that improved access to food markets and a water source. Schools across districts, with support from focal point teachers, established and maintained demonstration gardens that serve both as learning centres for children and as a source of household nutrition messaging. The establishment of community

food stores and maize milling facilities, supported by local governments in partnership with CSOs, has also shown promise in reducing post-harvest losses and ensuring year-round food availability.

Partners Supporting Lasting District Systems

Partners also played a critical role in reinforcing sustainability. Partners supported districts like Adjumani and Nwoya in strengthening their District Nutrition Action Plans (DNAPs) and enhancing DNCC coordination, ensuring regular quarterly meetings to track nutrition indicators. In Adjumani, the installation of a 20,000-litre reservoir tank at the district hospital not only addressed an immediate water gap but also built institutional resilience to ensure continued water supply for health services. Similarly, in Nwoya, the Uganda Wildlife Authority constructed an electric fence around Patira and Kibale Park boundaries to protect community crops from elephants an intervention directly linked to household food security and sustainable livelihoods. Such investments illustrate how partnerships between government, CSOs, and agencies like UWA embedded structural changes that will endure beyond Right2Grow's direct support.

National Policies Supporting Long-Term Change

At the national level, sustainability is being advanced through strengthened policy and financing frameworks. The successful advocacy by Right2Grow consortium partners for the integration of nutrition priorities into the 4th National Development Plan (NDP IV) ensures that nutrition and WASH remain high on Uganda's development agenda. The completion of the Food and Nutrition Bill, supported by CSOs and presented in Parliament, further signals a long-term legal framework to guide future investments in nutrition. Donor engagement through the National Colloquium on Stunting and the Nutrition Financing Dialogue also demonstrated alignment of international support with Uganda's priorities, with UNICEF and the Local Development Partners Group (LDPG) committing to increased investments. These linkages between community voices, district commitments, and national frameworks enhance the sustainability of programme outcomes by ensuring multi-level accountability and continued resourcing.

Health Services Now Include Nutrition and WASH

One of the clearest signs of sustainability is how nutrition and WASH interventions were mainstreamed into existing government service systems. For example, in Kakumiro District, a health assistant was recruited specifically to oversee WASH interventions, while in Kasambya Health Centre III, anthropometric equipment was procured for screening and managing malnutrition. These are not parallel project structures—they are permanent additions to Uganda's health system, funded and managed through district structures. Similarly, outreach services in Busingiro Parish (Buliisa District) were expanded to decongest Biiso Health Centre IV, showing that service delivery gaps were systematically addressed. These measures embed nutrition and WASH in routine health services, increasing the likelihood that results will last beyond the life of Right2Grow.

"what I see as a big achievement is that the changes brought by Right to Grow have now become part of the normal government system. Health assistants, nutrition focal persons, and even schools are continuing the work as part of their routine duties, not as a project." KII with CAO Buliisa

Public-Private Partnerships Creating Market Solutions

Right2Grow also reinforced sustainability by promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships that bridged government, CSOs, and the private sector. Through the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Networks in Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha, and Kabale districts, small and medium enterprises were mobilised to improve food value chains, promote fortified products, and expand access to nutritious foods. These networks provide a market-driven sustainability pathway because businesses have incentives to continue investing in nutrition-sensitive production and distribution. At the same time, partnerships with agencies like the Uganda Wildlife Authority (electric fence in Nwoya) and the Ministry of Water and Environment (approval of Buliisa's water system design) demonstrate how leveraging diverse actors institutionalised long-term solutions to food and WASH challenges.

"Right2 Grow showed us that sustainability goes beyond community training, it's about connecting everyone, from small businesses to government departments. When private companies see value in nutrition, they keep the work going even when donor funding ends" KII with DAO, Bugweri

Government Systems Taking Over Programme Roles

The integration of Right2Grow outcomes into government systems has been a cornerstone of sustainability. For example, the Zero Stunting agenda under the Ministry of Health was informed by Right2Grow advocacy and data-sharing, making stunting a national health priority. At district level, nutritionists, health assistants, and planners have been formally recruited onto government payrolls, embedding nutrition and WASH within existing public service delivery systems. These cadres will continue driving awareness, screening, and treatment of malnutrition long after external project funding ends. By ensuring that staff, policies, and tools are institutionalised, Right2Grow reduced dependency on parallel systems and strengthened local ownership.

Citizens and CSOs Now Part of District Planning

Right2Grow deliberately built the capacity of communities and local CSOs to engage in budget conferences and planning dialogues. For instance, civil society organisations trained under BMET actively participated in district annual review meetings, national budget conferences, and parish consultations, presenting evidence-backed position papers on nutrition and WASH. In Kamwenge and Buliisa, community voices influenced allocations for borehole drilling and school feeding interventions. This kind of institutionalised citizen participation is critical because it embeds accountability in budgetary cycles and ensures continued advocacy for local priorities even without direct programme facilitation.

Mutual Capacity Development

Findings from the MCD endline capacity assessments indicate a high level of confidence among Ugandan partners in sustaining acquired knowledge and skills beyond the programme period. Tools and approaches introduced through MCD are reported to be embedded in routine advocacy and coordination practices, particularly at district level. This perceived sustainability aligns with broader programme findings on institutionalisation and ownership.

Local CSOs Strengthened to Continue Advocacy

Local CSOs and CVA groups were deliberately strengthened to become independent and registered entities. For example, CVA teams in districts such as Kakumiro and Obongi registered with Community Development Offices (CDOs) and URSB, enabling them to operate legally, access grants, and scale up advocacy work. Many CSOs also established internal governance systems, including safeguarding and financial management policies, to enhance accountability and credibility. Their inclusion in DNCCs and SNCCs further institutionalised their role in planning and coordination, giving them a legitimate voice in ongoing district dialogues. This investment in CSO strengthening ensures that accountability and advocacy will continue beyond Right2Grow's lifespan.

Laws and Policies Anchoring Long-Term Commitments

Another sustainability driver has been the adoption of recommendations from Right2Grow into key planning frameworks. The inclusion of nutrition, food security, and WASH priorities in NDP IV and DDPs created binding commitments for ministries and districts to fund and deliver on these outcomes. Additionally, by-laws and ordinances passed in Yumbe, Buliisa, and Kamwenge provide a legal framework to protect food security (e.g., restrictions on unnecessary food sales) and sanitation (by-laws against open defecation). At national level, Right2Grow contributed to momentum on the Food and Nutrition Bill, ensuring nutrition continues to be a legislative priority. These policy anchors provide a durable foundation for long-term sustainability.

"the difference with Right to Grow is that its recommendations didn't end in reports—they were adopted into district and national plans. Once a commitment is in a plan or by-law, it becomes everyone's responsibility to sustain it." KII with DWO

3.5.2 Factors contributing to sustainability (incl adaptation to changing contexts)

Several interrelated factors contribute to the likelihood that the outcomes achieved under the Right2Grow (R2G) programme will endure beyond its implementation period. Evidence from Outcome Harvesting and stakeholder consultations confirms that sustainability has been reinforced through systemic integration, financial commitments, capacity strengthening, community ownership, and adaptation to evolving contexts. The L&L survey welcomed the documentation and sharing of lessons learned as a major contribution to strengthening collaboration, cross-learning and adaptive management.

Integrating into government systems has been a key driver of sustainability. Nutrition and WASH priorities were incorporated into statutory frameworks like the National Development Plan (NDP IV), District Development Plans (DDPs), and District Nutrition Action Plans. At the national level, including “zero stunting” in the Ministry of Health agenda and advancing the Food and Nutrition Bill provide long-term policy foundations. At the district level, local governments formalized interventions through ordinances and bylaws, ensuring accountability beyond donor cycles.

Budgetary commitments at the district level provide a tangible anchor for continuity. Outcome Harvesting confirmed that multiple districts created or expanded budget lines for nutrition outreach, hygiene campaigns, and WASH infrastructure. These achievements were often a direct result of advocacy by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups, and budget monitoring partners such as CSBAG, MCLD, and NSU, who provided budget information and nutrition updates aligned with district priorities. By embedding programme outcomes into formal budgets, financial responsibility shifted from donors to government systems.

Capacity building and institutional memory have also contributed significantly to sustainability. Village Health Teams (VHTs), sub-county nutrition focal points, community-based peer educators, and community-based organizations (CBOs) received targeted training. Outcome Harvesting demonstrated that these actors continue to deliver nutrition and WASH services autonomously, supported by strengthened governance structures and organizational policies. This localised capacity ensures continuity even after project closure. A training on L&L concept, processes and tools have also been cascaded at national, local and 3rd level CSOs. 100% of respondents recognized the importance of strengthening the documentation skills of local partners to capture local knowledge, as they are considered being in the best position to learn from their interventions and to continuously adapt and improve them. Investing in continuous and practical L&L training at all levels is a key factor of sustainability, fostering this institutional memory.

*« The local partners share feedback from the grassroot level which helps to feed into the interventions made. »
(L&L survey respondent)*

- The Right2Grow Learning Catalogue is also a key resource to consider when talking about sustainability. The Catalogue is a unique compilation of the most significant insights of the programme based on best practices, challenges and recommendations documented from the programme implementation of activities, initiatives and methodologies. It gathers more than 40 learning briefs developed by all the six countries of the Right2Grow consortium to get inspiration of and help on the replication and upscale of activities/initiatives/methodologies serving advocacy.
- Here below are the learning briefs developed by Uganda teams and that can be found in the Learning Catalogue:
 - Children parliament for improved WASH and nutrition
 - Communication campaigns for community mobilization
 - Using VCA (Vision Commitment Action) and CVA (Citizen Voice Action) to enhance community engagement
 - Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) in Uganda
 - Using the Photovoice methodology to strengthen community advocacy

Community ownership and grassroots accountability further reinforce sustainability. R2G deliberately fostered citizen agency, with CVA groups mobilizing communities to engage in budget conferences, lobby leaders for sanitation facilities, and demand the repair of boreholes. In several districts, CVA teams formalized their roles by registering as CSOs, further embedding citizen-led accountability within local systems. Communities increasingly view themselves as co-producers of services rather than passive recipients, creating a self-sustaining accountability mechanism.

Adaptation to changing contexts has strengthened the programme's resilience. In refugee-hosting districts such as Adjumani, interventions were tailored to meet the needs of both host and refugee populations, with outcomes reflecting joint planning between humanitarian and government actors. The programme also demonstrated flexibility in responding to political transitions by embedding interventions in cross-sectoral

structures like DNCCs and SNCCs, ensuring continuity regardless of changes in personnel. Partnerships with trade officers and the private sector in food-related enterprises further adapted programme strategies to promote safe and nutritious foods through market systems.

3.5.3 Reflections on three identified aspects of sustainability

Government

At the national level, sustainability of nutrition and WASH policies has been strongly institutionalized.

The Ministry of Finance directive requiring all ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) to integrate nutrition into their budgets is a clear systemic outcome. In addition, the draft Food and Nutrition Bill progressed in Parliament with strong support from the Uganda Parliamentary Alliance on Food and Nutrition Security (UPA-FNS). The integration of nutrition-sensitive planning into the NDP IV (2025/26–2029/30), with eight CSO-proposed indicators adopted, also shows that government commitment has moved from rhetoric to formal policy frameworks. At the district level, DNCCs and SNCCs were revitalized in places like Kamwenge, Buliisa, and Kakumiro. Local councils passed by-laws on sanitation and nutrition, while some districts—like Buliisa—allocated funds for pit latrine construction in schools and borehole repairs. These efforts show that Right2Grow investments have influenced local governance priorities. However, limited fiscal space remains a key barrier. District technical teams, already stretched across multiple mandates, often lacked sufficient funds to fully implement these policies. For example, in Busiriba Sub-County, a water scheme was surveyed with community participation, but implementation stalled due to limited government funding. Thus, while policy anchoring is strong at the national level, the district-level sustainability remains constrained by inadequate resource allocation and overstretched technical capacity. Score: 2–3/5 (Moderate sustainability, stronger at national level than at district level).

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

CSOs emerged as one of the strongest sustainability anchors of Right2Grow. They were not only actively engaged in DNCCs and SNCCs but also conducted budget monitoring, expenditure tracking, and policy advocacy at both district and national levels. Registered CVA teams, now recognized as CSOs in districts like Nwoya and Kakumiro, established governance systems, constitutions, and financial procedures that enable them to operate independently and apply for grants. For instance, in Kakumiro, a registered CVA-CSO successfully applied for funding from a local foundation to expand kitchen gardens, ensuring continuity of nutrition-sensitive interventions without Right2Grow's direct support. CSOs also proved effective in influencing decision-making. In Buliisa, they lobbied successfully for UGX 93.7 million to be allocated to drilling boreholes, while in Yumbe, CSO coalitions pushed for the passage of by-laws on food security. Their advocacy extended to national spaces as well, such as lobbying Parliament to prioritize the Food and Nutrition Bill and supporting revisions to the National Nutrition Policy (2003). This highlights how CSOs bridged community voices with policy platforms, creating sustainable advocacy pathways. Nevertheless, sustainability risks remain tied to funding diversification. While CSOs have strong grant-writing capacity, many still depend on donor support for operations. The absence of reliable domestic funding sources could limit their ability to scale up interventions in the future. Score: 3/5 (Good sustainability, but contingent on funding diversification).

Local Authorities

Local authorities displayed commitment by institutionalizing nutrition and WASH priorities in their District Development Plans (DDPs) and by financing hygiene campaigns using local revenue. Outcome Harvesting confirmed tangible outcomes such as the creation of budget lines for nutrition, the drilling of boreholes in Biiso and Buliisa Sub-Counties, and the passage of sanitation by-laws in Busiriba. In Kamwenge, funds were allocated to survey and plan a water scheme, while in Kakumiro, nutrition coordination activities were directly budgeted within district structures. These examples illustrate that local governments are not passive recipients but active contributors to sustainability, embedding Right2Grow priorities into existing plans and financing structures. Political leaders were also oriented on by-laws and ordinances, reinforcing accountability. However, limited fiscal space remains a critical challenge. Districts often rely on donor-supported interventions to supplement inadequate local revenue streams. For example, while Adjumani hospital installed a 20,000-litre reservoir tank, sustaining its maintenance may prove difficult without additional financial support from development partners. Therefore, while

policy intentions are strong at the local level, financial and technical resource constraints hinder full sustainability of gains. Score: 2/5 (Moderate sustainability, limited by fiscal and technical constraints).

3.6. Coherence and partnership

3.6.1 Internal coherence & partnership functioning

The programme demonstrated strong internal alignment through its integrated, multi-sectoral approach, which combined efforts in nutrition, WASH, food security, and governance. Each implementing partner contributed unique expertise that complemented the others, creating a balanced and collaborative structure. Through this design, the programme promoted coordinated action across different thematic areas and administrative levels, ensuring that interventions in one sector reinforced progress in others. All partners operated under a unified framework with shared objectives, harmonized tools, and joint accountability systems, which fostered synergy, reduced duplication, and enhanced the overall effectiveness of implementation at both national and subnational levels.

The programme's theory of change provides a clear structure linking activities to desired outcomes. It connects community empowerment and citizen voice to government responsiveness, improved service delivery, and better nutrition outcomes. This structure enables smooth collaboration between partners—each contributing to a specific result area while sharing evidence and learning to inform others. For instance, data from CVA (Citizen Voice and Action) processes feed into national-level advocacy, ensuring coherence between local evidence and policy influence.

Complementarity Between Health, WASH, and Production Interventions. A key strength of Right2Grow's internal coherence lay in how interventions complemented rather than duplicated each other. Health activities on infant and young-child feeding were reinforced by Production department efforts to promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture through kitchen and demonstration gardens. Meanwhile, WASH interventions ensured the availability of safe water for food preparation and hygiene, thereby closing the loop between water, sanitation, and nutrition. In Kabale, health assistants incorporated food security messages into community hygiene sessions, while agriculture officers integrated hand-washing and sanitation messaging into farmer trainings. This deliberate cross-sector complementarity reflected a shared understanding that nutrition outcomes depend on coordinated action across multiple determinants.

Synergy Between Community Structures and Technical Departments. The programme maintained strong vertical linkages between community structures such as Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) groups, community monitors, and LC1 leaders and technical departments. These actors collected community feedback, tracked service delivery, and relayed emerging issues to the DNCC for response. This two-way communication improved coherence between grassroots action and district planning. For example, CVA groups reported on functionality of boreholes and hygiene facilities, which informed district supervision and budget prioritization. The synergy created by this flow of information fostered mutual accountability and ensured that technical responses addressed community-identified needs.

Partnership functioning

Right2Grow improved coordination and joint planning. The Right2Grow programme helped create a regular system of meetings at district and sub-county levels, including quarterly reviews and joint monitoring visits. This brought together government departments, CSOs/CBOs, and CVA groups to plan and act on the same platforms. District leaders explained that during the development of district workplans, NGOs and CBOs were invited to align their activities with government priorities, which reduced duplication in WASH, nutrition, and behaviour change campaigns. As a result, community evidence from scorecards, facility supervision, and water registers was quickly shared with district committees and used to guide budget decisions. For example, Buliisa Sub-County allocated UGX 20 million to expand school and household gardens, and several districts created budget lines for sanitation campaigns and borehole maintenance.

Partners co-produced dialogues, photovoice exhibitions and participatory drama so communities could meet government officers and CSOs in one forum. Theatre troupes (e.g., Tunaca) translated technical messages into relatable stories (Had I Known; My Health, My Right), after which CVA facilitators captured citizen asks and

responsible officers issued time-bound commitments. Follow-up through CVA scorecards and joint inspections shortened the loop between demand and response: 8 boreholes were drilled in Purongo, Biiso and Buliisa; 15 drinking water sources were repaired in Buliisa and Biiso; 12 risky school latrines were emptied in Nwoya (with costs met by LC3 and GISO); and a contaminated source in Lebngec Upper (Nwoya) was made safe after community sensitization. Coherence here was not just about attendance at meetings it meant a single, consistent pathway from evidence to commitment and solving the issues

By co-facilitating SUN Business Networks in Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha and Kabale, partners brought traders, processors and district commercial officers into the nutrition agenda—addressing barriers like food safety, product availability and last-mile distribution. The SBNs created leadership structures, aligned with the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan and district DDPs, and opened channels to promote fortified/safe products and value addition (e.g., functionalizing maize mills, milk coolers, and establishing community food stores). Linking MoTIC, commercial officers and food businesses made “nutrition markets” part of routine district coordination—not a stand-alone NGO track.

Right2Grow and coalition partners influenced the NDP IV PIAPs, securing eight CSO-proposed nutrition indicators and adoption of proposals across Agro-industrialisation, WASH and Nutrition sub-programmes. Ordinances and by-laws were passed in Kakumiro, Buliisa, Kikuube, Busiriba and Buliisa Sub-Counties (sanitation, food security, anti-open defecation, limiting unnecessary food sales). At national level, post-budget dialogues and committee submissions ensured two WASH, two agro-industrialisation, and one nutrition proposals made it into the final FY24/25 budget.

Across districts, Right2Grow moved the partnership from parallel projects to one coordinated system. Evidence travelled coherently from community scorecards to DNCCs; proposals translated into budget reallocations and infrastructure; private sector and donors were woven into the same conversation; and local organisations were strengthened to lead. The result: more water on tap (drilling, repairs, solar systems), safer schools (latrine emptying), improved health capacity (recruitments, equipment, outreach), crop protection (electric fence), and nutrition-friendly planning and markets (SBNs, garden inputs, policy wins). The challenge that remains and that partners jointly recognize is to lock in resourcing, so the coherent ways of working continue at full strength after external funding cycles shift.

The MCD approach reinforced internal partnership coherence by promoting horizontal learning and shared ownership across consortium and national partners. Rather than a top-down training model, MCD facilitated peer exchange and co-creation, strengthening trust, role clarity and collaboration. This mutuality contributed to more coherent implementation and adaptive management across programme components.

3.6.2 External coherence

The Right2Grow programme demonstrated strong external coherence through deliberate collaboration with a wide range of actors at national, district, and community levels. Partners engaged in joint planning, implementation, evaluation, and monitoring, which fostered consistency across interventions. Mechanisms such as partner exchange learning visits, financing dialogues, media appearances, and partnership-building events strengthened synergies between government entities, civil society, and development partners. Sub-granting to community-based organisations (CBOs) and structured community mobilisation further reinforced alignment between local priorities and programme objectives.

Several initiatives illustrate this coherence in practice. The national stunting campaign provided a unifying platform for nutrition advocacy, while innovative approaches such as Trio-Fantastico for the Gender Dynamics Study, photo-voicing, and children’s parliament amplified diverse voices in national debates. Policy engagement was evident through contributions to the Food and Nutrition Bill, the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Strategy II, and the development of education guidelines, ensuring programme linkages to broader sectoral reforms. Furthermore, partners contributed to global and national accountability processes, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) submission on the right to adequate food, as well as producing position papers on financing WASH, nutrition services, and agricultural industrialization.

Advocacy and social behaviour change were reinforced through Good Food campaigns and documentation of community voices, which connected grassroots perspectives to higher-level policy platforms. These actions reflect

how programme partners leveraged existing government and donor coordination spaces, as well as civil society networks, to harmonise efforts and reduce duplication.

To deepen external coherence, the programme should institutionalize documentation of joint advocacy and coordination efforts, formalize cross-sector protocols, and systematically map these contributions to national and donor frameworks to sustain influence beyond programme cycles.

Coherence with Dutch Embassy in Uganda

Right2Grow's systems approach aligned closely with the Embassy's Inclusive Green Growth (IGG) priorities by combining inclusive service delivery, stronger local governance, and climate-aware WASH and nutrition actions. Using the IGG results framework, the programme reported 23,768 people directly reached by 2025 through targeted activities (e.g., community dialogues, health outreaches, facility-based counselling) and 98,212 people indirectly reached via mass and community media (radio talk shows, local-language campaigns, community theatre). Service improvements translated the demand into access to new boreholes and rehabilitated water sources, motorized wells with piped water, and a 20,000-litre reservoir at Adjumani Hospital ensured safe water where demand had been articulated.

The programme is coherent with the Embassy's Inclusive Green Growth (IGG) priorities because it advances the same pillars the Embassy tracks and funds. First, it strengthens governance and accountability through CVA by turning community evidence (scorecards, public dialogues, budget forums) into district workplans and budget lines that are reviewed in DNCC/SNCC meetings. Second, it builds sustainability and country ownership by shifting financing and stewardship to government systems (district budgets and ministerial discussions), reducing dependence on projects and aligning with the Embassy's emphasis on domestic resource mobilization and system integration. Third, it mobilizes markets for nutrition through SUN Business Networks, linking millers and traders with public health and commercial officers to improve food safety and nutrition which matches with IGG's market-based approach to durable change. Fourth, it embeds inclusion (women, youth, and persons with special needs in planning and monitoring so that service access and behaviour change are equitable, which is central to IGG's "inclusive" lens.

Coherence with Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Right2Grow's evidence-based advocacy contributed to domestic resource mobilization and to policy anchoring and institutionalization which are two explicit MFA/IGG priorities. For example, district councils in Kakumiro, Buliisa, and Kamwenge increased funding for Production & Marketing and water services and earmarked resources for practical works such as new boreholes, school sanitation, and the Uribo Water System design. At the national level, sustained civil-society engagement supported the reinstatement and increase of the Agro-industrialisation and Water–Environment programme budgets, keeping rural water and nutrition financing visible in cabinet and parliamentary discussions. In parallel, policy anchoring advanced through integration of nutrition and WASH in NDP IV, DDPs and DINAPs, routine use of DNCC/SNCC structures, recruitment of relevant cadres, and momentum on the Food and Nutrition Bill. Taken together, these shifts show that locally generated evidence can move both district budgets and national programme envelopes securing public financing and embedding reforms in government systems thereby improving the likelihood that gains in nutrition and WASH will endure beyond project cycles.

Coherence with Other Partnerships (Bilateral/UN)

Right2Grow worked within UNICEF and during the project life, they convened WASH coordination structure meetings, which gave a clear channel to lift district evidence into national discussions and accelerate decisions. By aligning with UNICEF's child-focused WASH nutrition priorities, district requests moved faster from problem identification to action for example, approval of Buliisa's water system design, drilling and repair of multiple boreholes in Buliisa/Biiso, installation of motorized wells with piped distribution in Maracha, and a reservoir tank at Adjumani Hospital to stabilize supply for patients and staff. These results show how UNICEF's convening role and standards, combined with Right2Grow's community evidence, translated into concrete service improvements.

National advocacy moments were used jointly to keep consistent messages in front of decision-makers. The National Colloquium on Stunting, Office of the Prime Minister dialogues, and the first Presidential Dialogue on WASH offered shared platforms where UNICEF's guidance such as the "one egg per day" message for children under five was amplified through Right2Grow's social and behaviour change channels (local-language radio,

community theatre, school clubs). At the same time, access barriers were tackled with practical solutions, such as the wildlife-protection fence along the Patira/Kibale Park edges in Nwoya, which helped safeguard crops and household food security. The combination of aligned messaging and visible improvements strengthened public confidence and policy follow-through.

Roles were complementary rather than duplicative. UNICEF and line ministries set standards and coordinated the sector; Right2Grow supplied bottom-up evidence through community scorecards, Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET), and Citizen Voice and Action (CVA); and district officers converted findings into workplans and budgets. This model supported government commitments to expand solar-powered water systems in low-coverage districts and enabled routine follow-through on local issues such as emptying unsafe school latrines in Nwoya and addressing chemical contamination in Lungulu. Working alongside UNICEF therefore improved coherence across partners, reduced overlap, and helped move district priorities into financed actions that are more likely to last.

Coherence with Other Actors

Each actor did what it does best. Government set policy, chairs DNCC/SNCC, and controls budgets. UNICEF and other UN agencies supported standards and convened coordination in their sectors (especially WASH). Civil society mobilised communities, gathered evidence, and followed up on commitments (e.g., cleaning a chemically contaminated source in Lungulu, Nwoya). The private sector, through SBNs, improved access to safer, more nutritious foods. This division of labour reduced duplication and made it easier to track who was doing what, and where.

Right2Grow worked inside existing government structures rather than creating parallel ones. The programme aligned its plans and messages with the National Development Plan (NDP IV), District Development Plans (DDPs), and District/Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs/SNCCs). This meant health, water, agriculture, education, and planning officers could sit with civil society and agree on one set of priorities and timelines. Because UNICEF typically convenes government–donor WASH coordination in Uganda, Right2Grow fed its WASH evidence and priorities into those government-led spaces, reinforcing one agenda instead of many separate ones. The result was fewer overlaps, clearer roles, and faster movement from evidence to action—such as approval of Buliisa’s water system design and budgeted follow-up by the Ministry of Water and Environment.

In districts, Right2Grow partners planned together with sector officers under DNCC/SNCC leadership. This is the same coordination logic used by UN and government partners in WASH and health. Practical results followed because everyone pulled in the same direction: 8 new boreholes in Purongo, Biiso and Buliisa; 15 repaired water sources in Buliisa/Biiso; 4 motorised wells and piped water to 14 parishes in Maracha; 12 school latrines emptied in Nwoya; and a 20,000-litre reservoir installed at Adjumani Hospital. The UWA electric fence along Patira/Kibale Park edges in Nwoya also showed how multi-actor coordination can protect crops and food security linking environment and nutrition goals.

Coherence was not only public-sector. With the Ministry of Trade and district commercial officers, Right2Grow helped establish SUN Business Networks (SBNs)—six in total, with four set up in 2024 (Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha, Kabale). These platforms brought millers, traders and processors into district nutrition discussions, connected value-addition facilities (maize mills, milk coolers) to public health goals, and kept private-sector behaviour aligned with food safety and nutrition standards often promoted by UN and government partners. This made the overall response more complete: policy + services + markets.

Humanitarian–development nexus in refugee-hosting areas. In districts like Adjumani, Right2Grow’s work complemented the roles of UNHCR and health partners by focusing on durable fixes that serve both refugees and host communities. Installing the 20,000-litre hospital reservoir is a clear example: it stabilised water for patients and staff and reduced service interruptions that harm maternal and child nutrition. Working through district systems ensured that humanitarian and development actions reinforced each other, rather than running on separate tracks.

Efficiency of the Programme

Efficient Financial Management

The Right2Grow (R2G) programme demonstrated a high level of efficiency in financial management and implementation over its five-year period (2021–August 2025). Out of a total budget of €4,750,045 (UGX 19

billion), the programme had utilized €4,587,439 (UGX 18.35 billion) by the end of August 2025, representing a 97% absorption rate. This strong financial performance reflects effective planning, prudent resource allocation, and timely execution of activities across multiple implementing partners and districts. The small balance of €162,606 (UGX 650 million) by the final year demonstrates that the programme maintained sound budget discipline, ensuring that resources were fully directed toward planned interventions while keeping adequate funds for final closeout and sustainability activities.

Strong Partnerships and Localized Implementation

The programme achieved high efficiency through collaborative delivery among implementing partners each focusing on their comparative strengths while sharing costs for joint activities like learning events and advocacy. Partnerships with private sector actors under the SUN Business Network (SBN) in districts such as Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha, and Kabale further enhanced sustainability by linking nutrition outcomes to market-driven initiatives, thereby reducing dependency on donor funding

Streamlined Monitoring, Learning, and Accountability

Efficiency was strengthened by the programme's emphasis on evidence-based monitoring and learning. Routine tracking through Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) tools, outcome harvesting, and joint quarterly reviews ensured that lessons learned were quickly integrated into implementation. This adaptive learning reduced delays and wastage, improving responsiveness to community needs and ensuring every euro spent contributed to measurable outcomes.

Leveraging Existing Government Structures

Efficiency was also achieved through integration into existing government systems rather than creating parallel structures. The programme worked through District Nutrition Coordination Committees (DNCCs) and Sub-County Nutrition Coordination Committees (SNCCs), enabling multi-sectoral collaboration among departments of Health, Production, Water, and Community Development. This structure minimized administrative duplication and optimized district budgets by aligning Right2Grow interventions with District Development Plans (DDPs) and the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV).

4. Lessons learnt and best practices

4.1 Programmatic

Adopting Multisector approach was effective in delivering results: Where health, water, agriculture and planning departments worked as one team through DNCCs/SNCCs and joint quarterly reviews communities saw quicker service improvements. In Buliisa and Maracha, coordinated plans translated into eight new boreholes and four motorized wells with piped extensions to 14 parishes; in Nwoya, collaboration with the district works office produced a community access road from Aparanga to Gotngur to reach a water point and local market; and in Kakumiro, health and planning teams recruited a Health Assistant for Kisiita to lead WASH and nutrition work.

Using simple and people centred tools were effective: Photo-voice gallery walks, CVA scorecards, BMET, and community dialogues turned citizen feedback into clear asks and concrete follow-up. CVA scorecards and radio call-ins led to the repair of 15 drinking water sources in Buliisa and Biiso, the emptying of 12 risky school latrines in Nwoya (with costs covered by local leaders), and the clean-up of a chemically contaminated source in Lungulu. BMET skills helped partners present position papers during budget conferences, contributing to Parliament's UGX 14.5 billion reallocation for rural water and district increases for example, Production & Marketing budgets rose by 55% in Kakumiro and 33% in Buliisa, while water budgets rose by 13.9% and 28% respectively.

Engage markets for nutrition: Right2Grow worked with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC) and district commercial officers to bring the private sector into the nutrition agenda in a structured way. Together the project mapped local food businesses, trained owners and managers, and helped them form leadership structures under the SUN Business Network (SBN). In total, six district-level SBNs were operationalized, including four new networks in 2024 (Bugweri, Maracha, and Kabale). These platforms gathered millers, traders, dairy processors, and market vendors around a shared goal: improve business practices that make food safer and

more nutritious and align those practices with district nutrition priorities. At district level, SBNs became practical coordination hubs. Members agreed on simple, low-cost standards clean water use in processing, safer storage to reduce contamination, basic hygiene at points of sale, and clear, gender-sensitive messages on infant and young child feeding.

Donor Coordination Is Vital to Reduce Fragmentation and Promote Coherence: The Dutch-funded Right2Grow consortium successfully fostered collaboration among multiple actors, but fragmentation across donor-funded nutrition projects persisted. Future donor engagement—led by the Dutch Embassy and the Nutrition Development Partner Group (NDPG)—should strengthen joint programming, pooled funding, and a unified results framework aligned with government priorities.

Climate Resilience Must Be Central to Future Nutrition and WASH Programming: Environmental shocks increasingly affected nutrition security and access to safe water. Yet climate adaptation was not systematically integrated. Future initiatives should embed climate-smart agriculture, sustainable water management, and disaster-risk reduction as standard components of nutrition and WASH programming to safeguard long-term community resilience.

Leverage local capacity first: Putting local organisations in the lead made delivery faster and results more durable. Community-based organisations (CBOs), youth and women's groups, theatre troupes, and trained community monitors already knew the people, languages, and decision-makers in their areas. We therefore contracted and coached these groups to co-design school and village campaigns, run dialogues, and follow up on agreed actions. Theatre troupes turned technical WASH and nutrition messages into short plays and radio spots that people related to, drawing large audiences and generating immediate feedback we could act on. The approach translated directly into service improvements.

Integrated Behaviour Change and Service Delivery for Better Nutrition and WASH: Right2Grow combined behavior-change communication with practical service. Partners ran local-language radio spots and talk shows, community drama, and breastfeeding campaigns that explained “what to do” (exclusive breastfeeding, safe water handling, handwashing, kitchen gardens) and “where to get help” (clinic days, repair hotlines, water board contacts). These channels reached large audiences and prompted households to act. In parallel, districts removed access barriers so that new demand met ready services. Key actions included; Ministry of Water and Environment approval of Buliisa's water-system design (clearing the way for contracting and construction), installation of a 20,000-litre reservoir at Adjumani Hospital to stabilize water for patients and staff, and Uganda Wildlife Authority's electric fence along the Patira/Kibale Park edges in Nwoya to protect crops and household food security.

Outcome Harvesting and Contribution Analysis Improve Learning and Accountability: Combining outcome harvesting with contribution analysis provided a clearer understanding of how and why change occurred. This approach enhanced ownership of results among partners and improved the credibility of evidence used for advocacy. Future government and donor evaluations should adopt theory-based evaluation methods to capture complexity, learning, and systemic change beyond quantitative metrics.

The Linking and Learning component as a key transversal pillar of the Right2Grow programme: Since the programme inception, L&L was structured as an approach more than a sum of activities and focused on an in depth shift in ways of working to achieve long lasting impact by including critical reflection, learning and adaptive management in the project cycle. The L&L vision and 5 years strategy focused on behavior and mindset change: « *Within the next 5 years, capturing and sharing knowledge from communities and R2G partners will take place in a fluid, systematic and sustainable way. Learnings will be easily accessible and the continuous integration of learning to increase impact in programs and policies will be part of the ways of working of all Right2Grow partners* », with 3 outcomes: Outcome 1: Learning is captured, Outcome 2: Learning is shared, Outcome 3: Learning is used. Respondents from Uganda strongly recognized the added value of the L&L strategy at country level to improve programming. Documenting lessons learnt (best practices/challenges and recommendations) of their activities, initiatives and methodologies simplified and improved their implementation and quality afterwards. The sharing of lessons learned was especially valued in Uganda for its significant role in enhancing collaboration, fostering cross-learning, and supporting adaptive management.

“These engagements towards L&L have strengthened collaboration, cross-learning, and adaptation among partners, ensuring that insights from the ground inform strategy and implementation across the consortium.” (L&L survey respondent).

« It has simplified the process of implementing the programme activities. When faced with challenging tasks, partners are able to share, interact, and learn from each other on the best practices. » (L&L survey respondent).

“Since the start of the programme, sharing of learnings has become more intentional within our organization and the R2G consortium. Platforms such as quarterly learning and reflection meetings, joint partner reviews, and thematic learning sessions have been established to facilitate open exchange of experiences, challenges, and best practices.” (L&L survey respondent)

4.2 Partnership collaboration

What worked Well

Partnerships under Right2Grow revitalized district-level coordination by reactivating and institutionalizing DNCC and SNCC structures. Before Right2Grow, meetings were irregular and often dominated by a single department, typically Health—leaving gaps in joint planning. Through technical and logistical support from partners these committees began convening regular quarterly sessions where sector heads jointly planned, reviewed progress, and addressed emerging WASH and nutrition issues. This multisector collaboration fostered shared accountability each department reported progress against clear indicators and action points were jointly tracked. Importantly, the DNCC forums promoted cross-learning among technical staff; for instance, agriculture officers began integrating WASH messages in farmer trainings, while health assistants incorporated food security discussions into their outreach. Coordination was further enhanced by multi-sector supervision missions and shared activity calendars, reducing duplication of effort.

“before each department would run its own programmes, but with Right2Grow we started sitting together... now when we talk about nutrition and WASH, everyone contributes from their department, and that has made our work more effective.” — District Agriculture Officer, Kamwenge District

District CSO nutrition platforms and CVA coalitions helped partners share data, divide tasks, and speak with one voice. This coordination turned advocacy into real investments. In Buliisa, the platform helped secure UGX 93.8 million to drill two boreholes and UGX 43 million to design the Uribo Water System. In Kamwenge and Kakumiro, joint advocacy contributed to notable increases in Production & Marketing and water budgets, allowing districts to fund more outreach, repairs, and supervision. These platforms also supported government coordination: partners helped revive or establish four DNCCs and one SNCC and reactivated three previously dormant committees so routine review and follow-up could continue.

MOUs between national partners, local CBOs, and district authorities clarified roles and opened doors to planning and budget spaces. With signed agreements, CBOs were invited to present scorecards and evidence at district meetings and budget conferences. Formal ties with think tanks CSBAG (budget analysis) and FRA (research) and with parliamentary forums strengthened the quality of advocacy. This contributed to wins such as eight CSO-proposed nutrition indicators integrated into NDP IV and the reinstatement and increase of the Agro-industrialisation and Water–Environment programme budgets in FY2024/25.

Embedding Nutrition into District Plans and Budgets Strengthens Accountability

Districts learned that integrating nutrition priorities into their formal plans and budget frameworks—rather than treating them as project activities creates long-term accountability. When DNCCs included the Budget Desk in discussions, they were able to link nutrition actions to existing budget codes, such as disease prevention, community mobilization, and school feeding. This approach encouraged departments to own their nutrition responsibilities even after external funding reduced. The key lesson is that sustainability starts when nutrition and WASH are mainstreamed within government systems and costed in annual workplans.

“Now we have a nutrition vote in every sub-county. That makes it easy to follow up, because it’s part of our budget cycle.” — Principal Assistant Secretary, Kabale

Different partners brought different strengths: International NGOs and Local CSOs ensured technical standards; CBOs mobilized communities; media and theatre troupes turned technical guidance into relatable stories; DNCC/SNCC provided government anchoring; and SUN Business Networks (SBNs) linked the private sector to district nutrition goals. Multi-stakeholder coalitions extended impact UWA installed an electric fence along Patira/Kibale Park edges in Nwoya to protect crops; LDPG donors made commitments at the National Colloquium on Stunting; and the Speaker of Parliament supported tabling the Food and Nutrition Bill. This diversity made responses more adaptable and influential.

CVA structures, water user committees, school nutrition champions, and DNCC/SNCC meetings created steady “check-in points” where commitments were tracked and escalated. Results followed: 15 drinking water sources were repaired in Buliisa/Biiso; four motorised wells were drilled and piped water extended to 14 parishes in Maracha; and by-laws to curb drivers of food insecurity were passed in Yumbe and Kakumiro. Because these platforms are embedded locally and meet regularly, they continue to function even when external funding fluctuates.

Right2Grow deliberately empowered local actors. CVA teams registered as CSOs so they could attend budget meetings and legally follow up on commitments. Youth- and women-led CBOs co-designed school and community campaigns. The Empower Women in Agriculture – Uganda Chapter gave women a national voice on food systems. District-level SBNs (including four new SBNs in 2024 Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha, Kabale) brought millers, traders, and processors into nutrition discussions. These shifts increased trust, sped up decisions, and grounded results in local ownership key for long-term sustainability.

Using local-language radio, theatre, and community dialogues raised demand for services, while districts tackled access barriers. Examples include approval of Buliisa’s water system design, a 20,000-litre reservoir tank at Adjumani Hospital, and the electric fence in Nwoya to protect household food security. This two-track approach, change practices and improve access proved to be a best practice that communities could see and feel.

Working with the Ministry of Trade and district commercial officers, partners helped establish six district-level SBNs overall (four in 2024). These platforms mobilized millers, traders, and processors around safer, more nutritious foods, linked maize mills and milk coolers to district goals, and supported value-addition efforts. Tying local businesses to public nutrition targets is a practical way to sustain change beyond project cycles.

What Didn’t Work Well

Depth and Consistency of Collaboration

While the DNCC brought departments together, the depth of collaboration with CSOs and community structures was uneven. The Production department reported limited direct engagement with implementing partners on agricultural interventions, even though they jointly participated in DNCC meetings. CSOs under Right2Grow were perceived as more focused on health, WASH, and advocacy, with fewer structured linkages to agricultural extension services or farmer networks. Consequently, some demo plots and nutrition-sensitive farming initiatives lacked consistent technical backstopping after initial establishment.

“I think there may not have been limited collaboration between CSOs and the production department... they have been working majorly in WASH; when you see production, the interventions like demo gardens were done by facility in-charges and our role was mainly advisory.” KII with DAO

Resources & Frequency of Engagement

Despite improved planning, limited operational resources and competing workloads often constrained engagement frequency and field follow-up. District staff highlighted that budget ceilings for outreach, fuel, and supervision made it difficult to conduct the planned number of joint visits to schools and communities. As a result, supervision and review meetings were sometimes postponed or combined, reducing the continuity of field-level learning.

Data, Tools, and Evidence Use

Although awareness of nutrition and WASH data has improved, systematic data collection and use remain weak in several departments, especially Production. Officers reported lacking standardized tools to collect, analyze, and report data specific to nutrition-sensitive agriculture or household WASH practices. In some cases, different departments used parallel templates or databases, while others were unaware of the partner-developed dashboards or digital tools used for advocacy and planning. This limited evidence-based decision-making and made it difficult to consolidate district performance data.

“I think there is still a gap when it comes to nutrition... collecting data is not a simple thing to do, especially for WASH and nutrition. We cannot give exact data because we lack the tools for collecting it even in the production department.” District Agriculture Officer

Sustainability Requires Early Planning and Local Financing Models

Districts realized that sustainability should be built from the outset, not at project closure. When CSO funding declined, many community activities and infrastructure maintenance slowed down. This exposed gaps in operation and maintenance (O&M) planning and local cost recovery systems. The lesson is that projects should identify low-cost technologies, build community ownership early, and establish maintenance plans, including user fees or spare-parts funds, before handover.

“Some pumps stopped working after the project because no one planned for repairs or collected money for maintenance.” – **Water Officer, Adjumani**

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Key conclusions

Multi-sector action drove better, faster results: The evaluation confirmed that undernutrition is best addressed when health, water, agriculture and planning actors work together and are convened through active coordination platforms such as DNCCs and SNCCs. Where these structures were functional, outcomes were stronger and budgets more responsive. Joint district teams planned and sequenced works, health outreaches, borehole drilling/repair, and climate-smart production support so communities saw practical benefits quickly. Examples included eight new boreholes in Purongo, Biiso and Buliisa; four motorized wells with piped extensions to 14 parishes in Maracha; the Ministry of Water and Environment’s approval of Buliisa’s water system design; and the installation of a 20,000-litre reservoir tank at Adjumani Hospital. These are concrete results of multi-sector planning rather than isolated projects.

Community structures were catalysts of change and empowerment: Local mechanisms CVA groups, water user committees, community monitors and nutrition champions gave residents a direct line to decision-makers and a practical way to follow up. CVA-led scorecards and dialogues translated community priorities into action: 15 drinking water sources were repaired in Buliisa and Biiso; 12 unsafe school latrines were emptied in Nwoya (with costs covered by local leaders); a contaminated water source in Lungulu, Nwoya, was cleaned up; and a

community access road from Aparanga to Gotngur was completed to reach a water point and market. As one participant put it, “We are now able to see advocacy being done from lower levels as well.” In districts where CVA teams registered as CSOs, community voice became even more visible and durable.

Inclusion strengthened participation, trust and service quality: Active involvement of women, youth and persons with disabilities improved how services were planned and delivered. Schools constructed girl-friendly latrines; water points added ramps for PWDs; and committees intentionally brought women and PWDs into leadership roles. Male engagement in maternal and child health grew, while youth groups led school and community campaigns on hygiene and nutrition. The Empower Women in Agriculture (EWA)—Uganda Chapter, launched with Right2Grow support, created a national platform for women to shape food and nutrition policies. These changes built confidence and trust between communities and local government and made services more responsive to real household needs.

Evidence-based advocacy improved accountability and unlocked financing: When advocacy drew on community-generated data scorecards, joint supervision notes and outcome harvesting, leaders responded. Districts created or expanded budget lines: Buliisa allocated funds to drill new boreholes (UGX 93.8m), design the Uribo Water System (UGX 43m) and construct school latrines (UGX 20m); Kamwenge increased its Production & Marketing budget by 47% and its water budget by 3%; Kakumiro increased Production & Marketing by 55% and water by 13.9%; Buliisa increased Production & Marketing by 33% and water by 28%. Nationally, Parliament reallocated UGX 14.5 billion to rural water, and eight CSO-proposed nutrition indicators were integrated into NDP IV. These shifts demonstrate how community evidence, escalated through CSOs, can influence real budget decisions.

Policy and legal wins anchored changes in the system: Multiple districts passed or revived by-laws and ordinances on food security and sanitation (e.g., Yumbe, Kakumiro, Busiriba and Buliisa), while nutrition ordinances advanced in Kakumiro, Buliisa and Kikuube. The Food and Nutrition Bill progressed in Parliament after a CSO-led lobby meeting with the Speaker, and three proposals (accountability, multi-sector planning, and needs assessments) were adopted into national planning guidelines. At service level, government recruited a Health Assistant in Kakumiro, procured anthropometric equipment for Kasambya HC III, and approved Buliisa’s water system design—signals that institutions are taking ownership of Right2Grow priorities.

Partnerships with private sector, media and development partners expanded reach and influence: SUN Business Networks were established in Nwoya, Bugweri, Maracha and Kabale, connecting traders and processors to nutrition goals and safer food standards. District and national radio shows, theatre groups and gallery walk kept WASH and nutrition messages in public view; one listener described starting a kitchen garden after a radio program. At national level, the Right2Grow -convened Colloquium on Stunting drew WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, FAO and USAID; partners pledged to prioritise funding and called for practical campaigns such as “an egg a day” for children under five. These alliances widened the coalition for change and improved consistency of technical messages.

Multi-sector approaches plus strong local structures delivered the greatest empowerment: Districts that combined coordinated government platforms (DNCC/SNCC) with empowered community structures (CVA, water boards, VHTs, youth groups) saw the clearest improvements: faster problem-solving, fewer duplications, and steady follow-through. In Buliisa, joint planning linked water, health and education actions (boreholes, school gardens, latrine construction). In Nwoya, cooperation between wildlife authorities and district leaders secured an electric fence along Patira/Kibale Park edges, protecting crops and household food security—an example of multi-sector problem-solving beyond the usual WASH/health boundaries.

Sustainability advanced but remains uneven and at risk without stable financing. Many gains were embedded in government systems functioning DNCCs/SNCCs, recruitment of staff, community committees, and CSOs able to monitor budgets. However, continuity weakened when CSO funding dipped, and high-cost interventions (e.g., demonstration farms, large water schemes) still rely on external financing. Staff turnover and competing district priorities also slowed follow-through. The lesson is clear: integration into district plans and budgets must happen early, and local capacity for ongoing operations and maintenance needs continued support so that results last beyond the project cycle.

Integrating Linking and Learning as a core component of the programme: across the six countries of Right2Grow was an innovative and effective strategy that significantly enhanced the programme’s overall implementation and

impact. Uganda has demonstrated substantial progress in building a learning culture that is more intentional, reflective, and operationally useful. Learning is no longer seen as a parallel process but as a central pillar that informs and improves programme implementation, strategy, and collaboration. This evolution fostered deeper critical reflection and allowed for timely adaptations, leading to more impactful interventions. To maximize the potential of Linking and Learning in future programming, emphasis should be placed on training teams and providing in person support to regularly use the tools and better integrate learning in programme adaptation. Moreover, establishing clear performance indicators for learning documentation, dissemination, and application from the outset could provide a more detailed understanding of progress made and areas needing adjustment.

5.2 Key recommendations for the future (including the opinion of the consultant)

No.	Key Finding	Detailed Recommendation (Post-RIGHT2GROW)	Primary Responsible
1	District and national budget allocations for nutrition and WASH remain low and largely dependent on donor financing.	The Government of Uganda should institutionalize dedicated budget lines for nutrition and WASH within the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and all District Development Plans (DDPs). This should include annual performance-based releases to DNCCs and SNCCs, clear tracking of expenditures, and public disclosure of nutrition financing data. Donors should support transition financing mechanisms for two years post-RIGHT2GROW to prevent regression.	MoFPED, NPA, OPM, District Local Governments, Development Partners
2	Coordination mechanisms (DNCCs/SNCCs) improved under RIGHT2GROW but remain weak and unsustainable after project exit.	Institutionalize multisectoral coordination structures by embedding DNCCs and SNCCs into the core district planning and budgeting process. Each committee should receive an annual operational grant and report to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Line ministries should include coordination functionality indicators in the annual performance assessment.	OPM, MoH, MoWE, MoLG, District Councils
3	CSOs strengthened their advocacy under RIGHT2GROW but face limited funding and shrinking civic space.	Establish a national civil-society resilience fund (led by CSBAG or NGO Forum) to sustain advocacy and policy monitoring on nutrition and WASH. Future programmes should invest in CSO institutional sustainability, strategic communication, and digital advocacy tools for budget tracking, particularly at sub-national levels.	CSBAG, FRA, NGO Forum, Development Partners, MoGLSD
4	Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) and scorecards improved accountability but were not scaled up nationally.	The Ministry of Local Government should mainstream CVA and community-scorecard models into district performance frameworks and integrate them within the Local Government Management Information System (LGMIS). This would allow community monitoring results to feed into sector performance reviews. Civil-society actors should continue to mentor CVA facilitators at community level to maintain gains. Refer to the Right2Grow Learning Catalogue and especially to the learning briefs focusing on the implementation of the CVA and VCA approaches and its key insights for scaling it up.	MoLG, World Vision Uganda, District Local Governments, OPM
5	Gender and youth considerations improved, but women and youth remain underrepresented in decision-making structures.	Apply a gender-transformative and youth-inclusive governance model by introducing leadership quotas in DNCCs, SNCCs, and community committees. Provide mentorship and leadership development opportunities for young women, and integrate gender-responsive budgeting in all nutrition and WASH planning cycles. Reinforce Children Parliament functioning –	MoGLSD, CSOs, Youth Councils, Women's Networks, District LGs

Refer to the corresponding learning brief on 'Children parliament for improved

wash and nutrition' in the Right2Grow Learning Catalogue

6	Private-sector participation through the SUN Business Network (SBN) is still limited and largely donor-driven.	Strengthen public–private partnerships (PPPs) to incentivize local agribusinesses, SMEs, and WASH entrepreneurs to invest in nutrition-sensitive and climate-resilient innovations. Introduce tax breaks or grant matching for fortified foods, milk coolers, solar-powered boreholes, and hygiene product manufacturing. Districts should convene annual investment forums to attract private-sector collaboration.	MoTIC, PSFU, SBN-Uganda, District Investment Offices, Development Partners
7	The M&E framework successfully applied outcome harvesting but lacked harmonization and consistent data quality across partners.	Develop a national integrated Nutrition and WASH Data and Learning Platform, hosted under OPM and UBOS, to harmonize indicators, store disaggregated data, and link outcome harvesting with government management information systems. Future sector programmes should ensure routine data verification, feedback loops, and real-time dashboards for policy tracking.	OPM, UBOS, NPA, MoH, MoWE, Development Partners
8	There has been substantial progress in building a more intentional and reflective learning culture, but its long-term sustainability is uncertain.	Continue efforts to document and share lessons learned at all levels of implementation. Learning and sharing lessons is everyone's business, so maintain in person training sessions on L&L concepts and tools and experience sharing and exchanging spaces between actors (Ex: Learning week, quarterly meetings...)	All partners at all levels
8	Communities demonstrated ownership and active participation, but sustainability is uncertain after programme closure.	Consolidate community ownership by embedding CVA/VCA models into district community-development structures and training parish development committees to manage them. Districts should integrate these models into their Community Development Departments and provide minimal facilitation to community monitors for continuity.	District Local Governments, MoLG, OPM, CSOs
9	Donor coordination along the humanitarian–development nexus improved but was not fully achieved.	Strengthen Nutrition Development Partner Coordination Platforms (NDPG) to ensure alignment of humanitarian and development actors around government-led plans such as UNAP III. Donors should commit to joint annual reviews, pooled funding, and a unified results framework to avoid fragmentation.	Dutch Embassy, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, WHO, World Bank, OPM
10	Climate variability and environmental degradation increasingly threaten nutrition and WASH outcomes.	Mainstream climate-resilient programming into all future nutrition and WASH interventions by promoting rainwater harvesting, water-source protection, safe storage, drought-tolerant crops, and green energy for WASH facilities. Districts should integrate these in their Environment and Natural Resources Plans to safeguard long-term gains.	MoWE, MAAIF, NEMA, NPA, District Local Governments
11	Unequal coverage and access	Expand coverage with a focus on equity: Target underserved sub-counties, especially in refugee-hosting areas. Ensure resources are fairly distributed between host and refugee populations to promote social cohesion.	
12	In some districts there were some evidence of Limited coordination and fragmented planning	Strengthen and institutionalize multi-sectoral coordination for nutrition and WASH by maintaining the District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC) as a formal structure for joint planning, budgeting, and monitoring. Ensure all key	

departments—health, water, agriculture, and planning—continue to collaborate under one framework.

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Detailed Data Collection Overview

	KEY INFORMANT	INSTITUTION	POSITION	TYPE OF INTERVIEW
1.	Asaba Gerlad	District	DHO	Key informant interview
2.	Muhumuza Insingoma	Sub-county	Monitor/LC3 Chairperson	Key informant interview
3.	Byenka Joas	District	Statistician	Key informant interview
4.	Mawadri Solomon Stalin	District	PWD focal Personal	Key informant interview
5.	Ambayo Micheal	Sub-county	DHO	Key informant interview
6.	Akapurira Victor	Kabale District	Principal Assistant Secretary	Key informant interview
7.	Akanyduka Baram	Kabale District	Water officer	Key informant interview

8.	Bjeloganda Wilson	Kabale District	Sub-county chief (DCD)	Key informant interview
9.	E, aricha Dechiri	Adjumani District	Principal Assistant Chief Administrative Officer	Key informant interview
10	Luhu Henery Leko	Adjumani District	Assistant District Health Officer	Key informant interview
11.	Dr. Ntume barnabus	Kikube district local government	DNCC chairperson	Key informant interview
12	Mr. Agondeze Hillary Winyi	Kikube district local government	District water officer	Key informant interview
13	Kyangwali youth group	Kyangwali sub-county Kikube district	Youth group	Key informant interview
14	Mr. Wakame Maurice	Buliisa district local government	District water officer	Key informant interview
15	Mr. Byamukama Micheal	Kamwenge district local government	Assistant district water officer	Key informant interview
16.	Ms. Masitula Nateebwa	Kamwenge district local government	Senior agriculture officer	Key informant interview
17.	Dr. Ntume barnabus	Kikuube district local government	DNCC chairperson	Key informant interview
18.	Jenifer	Kabale District	DNCC	Key informant interview
19.	Gilbert Mateeka	Kabale District	DHO	Key informant interview
20.	Jesica	Bugweri District	CDO	Key informant interview
21.	Nguna Harriet	Bugweri District	Agricultural officer	Key informant interview
22.	Hanan Kagere	Bugweri District	SAS	Key informant interview
23.	Edgar Nabasa	Kamwenge district	District Agricultural officer	Key informant interview
24.	Emily Kyomugisha	Kamwenge District	Civil society organisation	Key informant interview
25.	Patrick Bakessima	Kamwenge District	District Planner	Key informant interview
26.	Cliff Kussima	Bullisa District	Sub county chief Biiso	Key informant interview
27.	Tadeo Isingoma	Kikuube District	Director Tunaca Troupe	Key informant interview
28.	Gilbert Katusiime	Bullisa District	Chief Administrative officer	Key informant interview

29.	William Bwabasajja	Kikuube District - Kyangwali	Sub county chief	Key informant interview
30.	Mr. Kakulu Boaz	Bugweri District	District Planner	Key informant interview
31.	Mr. Berrete Mary	Bugweri District	Principal Assistant Secretary	Key informant interview
32.		Bugweri District	District Nutrition focal person	Key informant interview
33		Kabale District	DHO- environmental officer.	Key informant interview
34.	Ketra Nakayenga	Ministry of trade	Principal consultant.	Key informant interview
35	Laura Ahumuza Turinawe	Ministry of Health	Nutritionist at Ministry of Health.	Key informant interview
36.	Mr. Byaruhanga Josephat	Dutch embassy	Senior policy officer for Agriculture and Agribusiness.	Key informant interview

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED

	FGD Group	Number of Participants	Location
1.	Caregivers of children under 5.	9	Kabale
2.	Caregivers of children under 5.	9	Sub county – Kiziranfumbi, Kikuube district
3.	Community Members	11	Kyangwali Sub-County FGD (Kikuube District):
4.	Kahunge Citizen Voice & Action (CVA) Group	9	Kahunge sub-county Kamwenge district
5.	Farmers Group	9	Miniki village, zaipi sub -county, Adjumani district
6.	Community Members	10	Biiso subcounty- Bullisa District.

Annex 2 – Indicator progress

Thematic Area	Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Achieved
Community Mobilisation	# of actions in which communities formulate demands for improved (WASH and nutrition) services	0	140	125
	# of barriers to good nutrition and/or WASH services successfully addressed by joint community and private sector initiatives	0	100	81
Strengthening Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at national and international level	0	180	160
	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate, and/or creating space to engage at the sub-national level	0	180	150
	# of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency at national level	0	200	185
	# of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs at sub-national level	0	225	200
Multi-sectoral Approach	# of laws and policies implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	0	15	12
	% of public budgets allocated and implemented for nutrition and WASH services (increased funding)	0	10%	10%
Mobilizing International Development Actors	Level of success of lobby and advocacy roles by R2G and its partners towards donors and international actors	0	20	12

Annex 3 – Limitations encountered and mitigation strategies used

Key limitations that affected the evaluation included:

Documentation at the district level was often incomplete or inconsistent, which made it difficult to track the full scope of R2G activities. To overcome this, the team triangulated data from multiple sources including DNCC minutes, community scorecards, and CSO reports to fill information gaps and verify progress on the ground.

Scheduling interviews with senior officials at both national and district levels proved difficult, particularly being the election period when many leaders and ministry officials were engaged in early campaign activities. These circumstances caused delays in securing appointments and conducting some field missions. The team mitigated this challenge by making fresh appointments and, in cases where key officials were unavailable, interviewing their assistants or junior officers who were directly involved in programme implementation and could provide relevant information.

There were delays in the transfer of funds from Impact House, which temporarily affected field activities. The team managed this by focusing data collection efforts in Kampala and national offices while waiting for disbursements, later expanding to districts once funds were received.

Some national and district stakeholders postponed or delayed appointments, affecting scheduling. This challenge was addressed through consistent communication via email and phone, and by engaging local R2G focal persons to help reschedule meetings quickly.

Finally, a major limitation was the lack of updated government data on nutrition, WASH, and food security budgets and expenditures. The evaluation overcame this by triangulating information from Ministry of Finance reports, CSBAG budget analyses, and district-level statistics, ensuring a reliable picture of financial trends.