



ANNUAL REPORT 2025 and **PROGRAMME FINAL REPORT 2022-2025**

Annual Report for 2025 and Final Report for the 2022-2025
Programme Period, submitted to the Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland under its Programme-Based Support

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Acronyms

AP	Area Programme
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CPA	Child Protection Advocacy
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CVA	Citizen Voice and Action
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EU INTPA	European Union International Partnerships
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting
FMNR	Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
HEAT	Hostile Environment Awareness Training
LDC	Least Developed Country
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PBAS	Partnership Budget and Accounting System
PMEAL	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SST	Strategy Support Team
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WV	World Vision
WVI	World Vision International
WV Nordic	World Vision Nordic

1. SUMMARY

The year 2025 marked the final implementation year of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) funded Safer Tomorrow for the Children of East Africa Programme, implemented through ten projects in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda. The Programme aimed to ensure that the most vulnerable children and youth are safe and act as agents of change in their families and communities through three interconnected result areas: child protection and participation, youth employment and empowerment, and resilience and social accountability.

Implementation was completed successfully despite an increasingly difficult operating environment. Climate shocks, conflict, displacement, food insecurity, inflation and reductions in humanitarian assistance continued to affect vulnerable children, families and communities, particularly in Somalia and refugee-hosting areas of Uganda. Drought, floods, wildfires, food ration cuts and limited capacity among local authorities affected household resilience and, in some cases, participation in project activities. Nevertheless, flexible implementation, close cooperation with communities and authorities, and conflict-sensitive approaches enabled the projects to remain broadly on track.

A particular highlight of 2025 was the Programme Impact Seminar, organised in Rwanda in October. Representatives from all Programme projects came together for one week of joint learning, outcome harvesting, thematic reflection and field visits. The seminar enabled projects to compare experiences and identify lessons and good practices for future programming, while also responding directly to the 2024 external Programme evaluation's recommendation to strengthen shared learning.

Communications and advocacy continued to make the Programme's results and wider child-rights issues visible in Finland. School meals remained WV Nordic's key advocacy focus in 2025 as part of World Vision's global ENOUGH campaign, alongside communications on girls' rights and disability inclusion. Advocacy and media engagement helped bring these issues into public discussion and supported dialogue with relevant stakeholders.

OUR WORK IN NUMBERS 2025

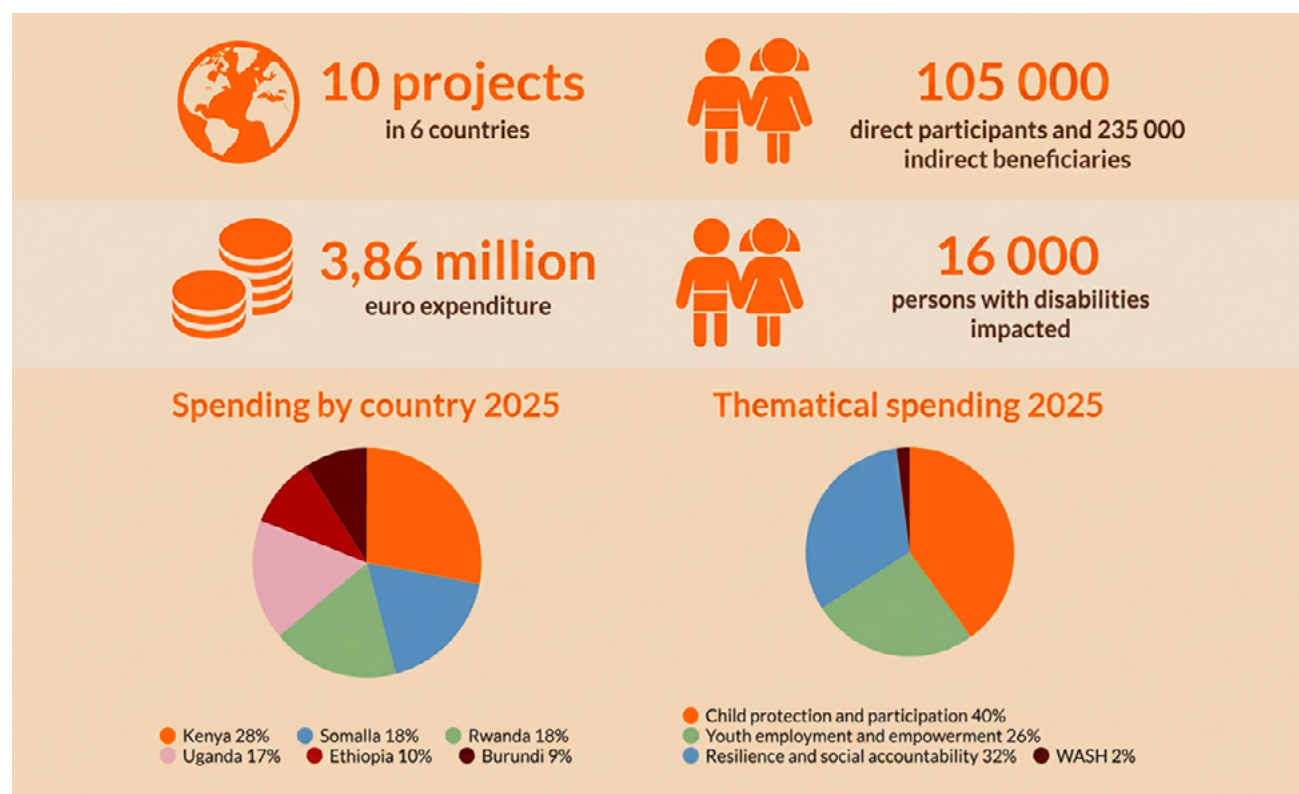


Figure 1. Our work in numbers 2025

As presented in Figure 1, in 2025 the ten projects reached 105,146 direct participants, of whom 54.6% were women and girls and 39.8% were children. A total of 5,166 persons with disabilities were reached, representing 4.9% of direct participants. In addition, approximately 16,000 persons with disabilities were impacted by the Programme in 2025.

Total Programme expenditure in 2025 was €3,864,934, of which €3,283,677 was financed by the MFA and €581,257 through private self-financing. A total of 78% of expenditure was transferred to partners for Programme implementation.

Across the full 2022–2025 Programme period, substantial progress was made towards the Programme's overall impact objective. The proportion of children and youth who considered their community a safe place increased from 66% at baseline to 82% at endline, exceeding the end-of-Programme target of 81%. The proportion who felt able to influence their family and community increased from 56% to 72%, representing significant progress although remaining slightly below the 75% target. Particularly encouraging progress was observed among children and young people with disabilities, although important differences remained between population groups and implementation contexts.

The combined results broadly support the Programme's Theory of Change. Child protection contributed most directly to safer environments for children, while youth empowerment and stronger household and community resilience contributed through longer and sometimes less direct pathways. Across the Programme, the strongest results were generally achieved where interventions were integrated: where knowledge and skills were accompanied by functioning community structures, responsive duty-bearers, psychosocial support, access to finance and markets, and opportunities for children and young people to participate and exercise influence. At the same time, the results demonstrate that severe external shocks and deeply rooted social norms can slow or reverse progress.

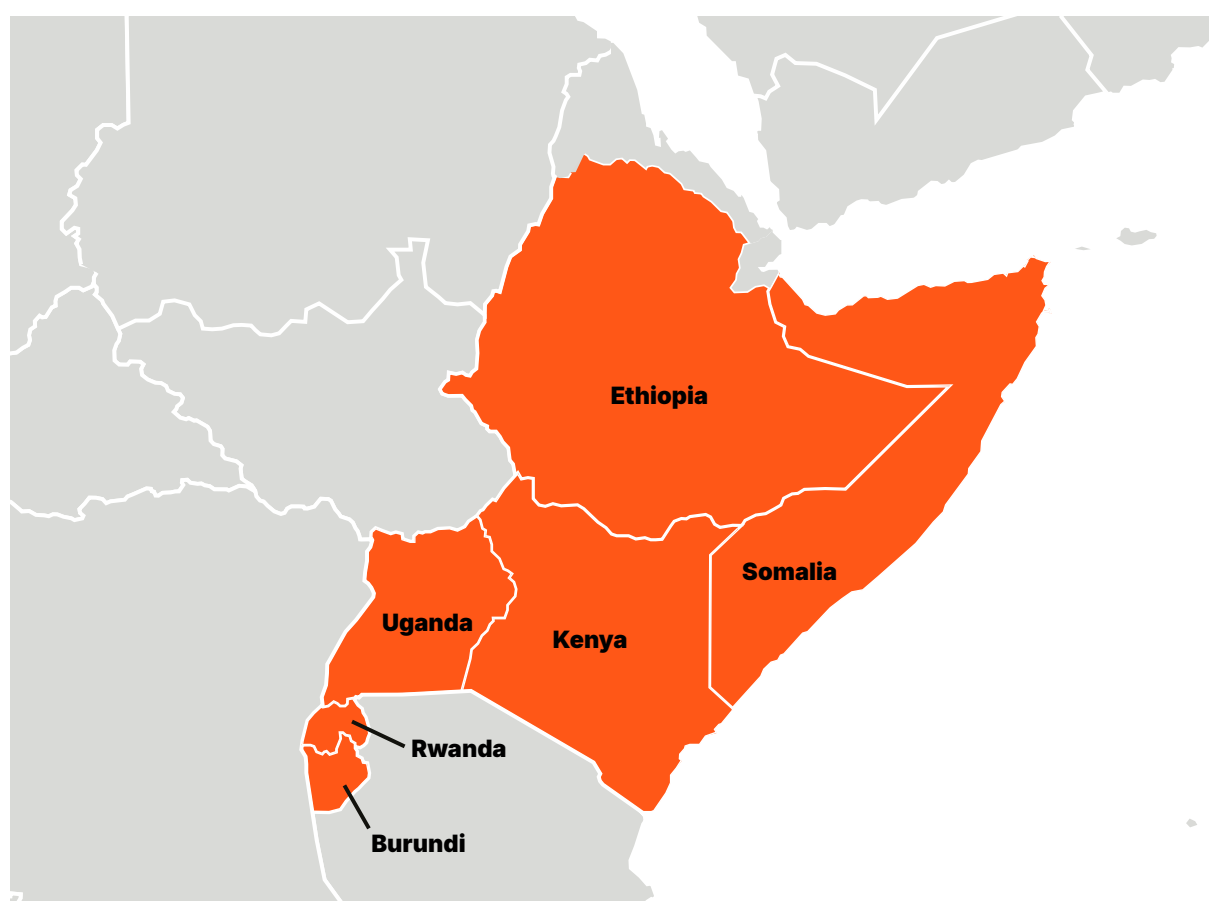
Across the four-year period, the projects recorded 410,197 direct participants cumulatively, including 14,607 persons with disabilities. These figures reflect the scale of the Programme, but the most important results are the changes experienced by children, young people, caregivers and communities.

Behind every figure and finding in this report is a story of transformation: a child who feels safer, a young person who has gained the confidence to influence decisions, a caregiver better able to support and protect children, or a community taking greater responsibility for children's wellbeing. Over four years, children, young people, caregivers, community members, local organisations and duty-bearers experienced meaningful changes through the Programme's sustained presence and partnerships. These individual and collective stories are ultimately the most important expression of the Programme's impact and the clearest reminder of why this work matters.

2. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The main objective of the Safer Tomorrow for the Children of East Africa Programme was to contribute to the realisation of child rights and the protection of the most vulnerable children and youth in East Africa. The Programme had three thematic result areas: 1) child protection and participation, 2) youth employment and empowerment, and 3) resilience and social accountability. The Programme was carried out in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda through 10 projects.

The Programme placed a strong emphasis on strengthening civil society, promoting gender equality and advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Close cooperation with formal and informal duty-bearers, including government authorities, traditional and religious leaders, was considered essential for achieving sustainable results. The Programme promoted the psychosocial wellbeing of participants and provided psychosocial support where needed. It also applied the triple nexus approach linking humanitarian assistance, development and peace, as well as conflict-sensitivity and Do No Harm principles, particularly in fragile contexts and in work with refugees and host communities. Cooperation with private-sector actors supported youth employment, innovation and sustainable livelihood opportunities.



The Programme's Theory of Change outlines how the three result areas are suggested to contribute to the overall impact objective. Through implemented activities, the Programme seeks to strengthen safe environments where children can grow, and youth can thrive. It assumes that children who are empowered with awareness of their rights can protect themselves, educate and protect their peers, and, with the support of duty-bearers, contribute to safer communities.

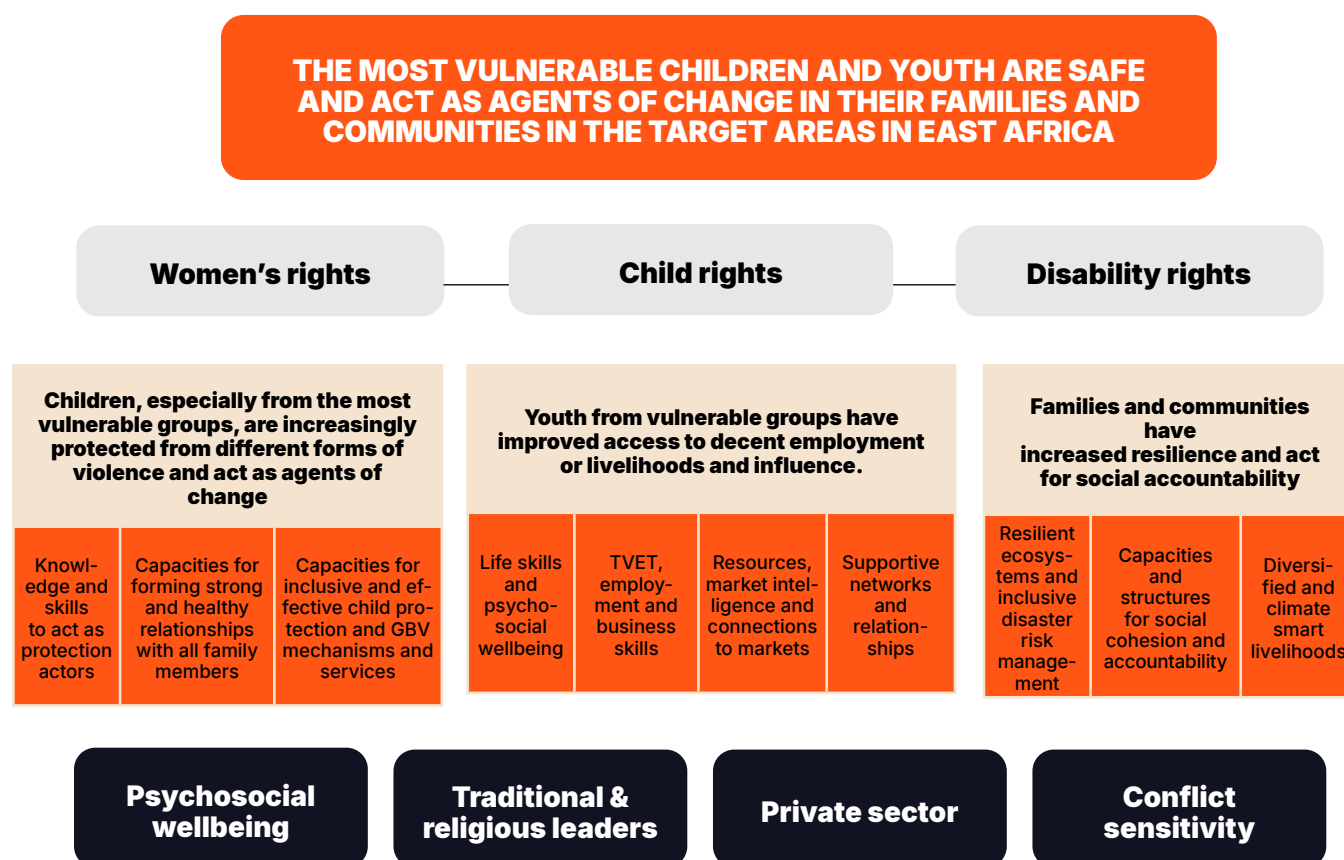


Figure 2. The Programme's simplified Theory of Change

The Programme's Theory of Change outlines how the three result areas contributed to the overall impact objective. Through its activities, the Programme sought to strengthen safe and supportive environments in which children can grow, and young people can thrive. It assumed that children who understand their rights and are empowered to participate can better protect themselves and their peers and, with the support of duty-bearers, contribute to safer families and communities.

According to the Theory of Change, child protection and youth employment are connected because violence experienced in childhood can have long-term effects on behaviour, learning, and social interaction. In this sense, child protection provides an important foundation for youth employment and empowerment efforts. At the same time, youth who are economically and socially empowered are more likely to build caring, positive, and protective relationships with their own children and with others. Resilience and child protection are interlinked because families and communities that are more resilient to economic, environmental, and social shocks—and that have stronger capacities for social accountability—are better able to protect children from violence. In turn, stronger social protection structures contribute to family and community cohesion and resilience. Resilience and youth employment are also interconnected, as resilient families and communities provide a more enabling environment for young people to access skills training and livelihood opportunities and to realise their rights. At the same time, youth with sustainable livelihood options and opportunities to participate in decision-making contribute to resilience, cohesion, and peace.

WV Nordic applies a human rights-based approach that strengthens the capacities of both rights-holders and duty-bearers. The Programme was grounded in international human rights frameworks, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and was guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, accountability and transparency. Strengthening civil society, community participation and institutional capacity is central to promoting local ownership, sustaining results and contributing to longer-term legal, policy and social change.

Contribution to Finland's Broader Policy Objectives and Country Programmes

During the Programme period, WV Nordic's Development Programme contributed to Finland's broader policy objectives by promoting human rights, gender equality, inclusive governance, peace and active civil society. Through community-based advocacy, civil society capacity strengthening and dialogue with local authorities, the Programme strengthened the ability of rights-holders to claim their rights and hold duty-bearers accountable. It also supported local authorities and service providers in fulfilling their responsibilities. While the Programme did not include separate components for formal peace mediation or direct support to human rights defenders, for example, it contributed to an enabling environment for peaceful and rights-based change by strengthening civic participation, social accountability, conflict prevention and community dialogue.

The Programme also contributed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. Activities addressing female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), women's participation in decision-making and women's economic empowerment supported the objectives of Resolution 1325. The Programme supported the objectives of Resolution 2250 by strengthening young people's livelihoods, life skills, participation in community decision-making and role as active citizens and peace actors. Youth groups and peace clubs also promoted social cohesion, local dialogue and young people's constructive participation in conflict-affected and fragile contexts.

The Programme complemented Finland's country-level development cooperation in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Ethiopia, work on Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), agricultural value chains and sustainable livelihoods supported rural economic development, while activities addressing GBV promoted women's participation in decision-making. In Kenya, the Programme supported Finland's objectives concerning women's meaningful participation, freedom from violence and young people's access to technical and vocational skills and decent employment. In Somalia, the Programme contributed to the protection and sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls by preventing violence, addressing FGM and other harmful practices, and promoting women's economic empowerment.

The Programme also contributed to Finland's efforts to promote school meals in the framework of the School Meals Coalition (see Chapter 7, Communications and Advocacy).

3. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The Programme countries in East Africa face a range of human rights and governance challenges, including limited civic and democratic space, restrictions on participation and freedom of speech, corruption, and weak governmental structures that exacerbate inequality and exclusion. According to CIVICUS, civic spaces in Ethiopia and Burundi are closed, while in the other four Programme countries they are repressed.¹ Burundi's rating was downgraded because the 2025 elections "took place in a deeply repressive political environment, marked by widespread restrictions on expression, media independence and political participation." The protests in Kenya in 2025 were violently cracked down, and there was increasing repression of media and journalists in Somalia in 2025. In contrast to limited civic space, governmental structures are often particularly weak in the areas where the Programme is implemented, with local duty-bearers lacking the resources they need. While some countries have recorded strong economic growth, this growth has rarely benefitted the vulnerable and marginalised people and communities with whom World Vision works.

The area of operation is challenged by the interaction of climate change, conflict and displacement. According to a report by the World Meteorological Organization, East Africa (an area which also covers some countries this Programme does not) has experienced strong precipitation variability,

¹ CIVICUS Monitor, Global Findings 2025 https://monitor.civicus.org/globalfindings_2025/

with intense wet spells and floods in many countries, but also a significant decrease in rainfall in the Horn of Africa, especially during the long rainy season from March to May.² In 2025, drought affected more than 8.5 million people in Kenya and Somalia. This led to poor crop and pasture conditions in areas where WV works specifically with pastoral communities. Climate change is one of the drivers of hunger, and in East Africa 58.6M people were severely food-insecure and 8.7M children under five acutely malnourished.³ At the end of 2025, WV estimated that 54M people in the East Africa region needed humanitarian assistance. There were more than 17M internally displaced people who faced food ration cuts because of decreasing international support. For example, Burundi, a very poor country in itself, hosts over 110,000 refugees, with rations at 50% of requirements. Uganda is Africa's largest refugee-hosting country, hosting around 1.9M refugees at the end of 2025, with arrivals in 2025 coming especially from South Sudan but also from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Simultaneously, 2025 was also marked by the spread of infectious diseases, including cholera and Mpox and Marburg virus disease.

Challenges such as climate change, displacement, and violent conflict affect vulnerable populations and exacerbate existing inequalities. Limited resources, including farmland, cause tensions between refugees and host communities. Children are often the first to suffer from poverty and climate change, as parents resort to negative coping mechanisms that undermine the realisation of children's rights. When there is scarcity of food, children are seven times more likely to attend school irregularly, families are eight times more likely to have a child engaged in child labour, and more than nine times more likely to have a child begging. Women and girls frequently bear the burden of tasks that become increasingly difficult in these contexts, such as farming, gathering food, fetching water, and collecting fuel. They also face heightened exposure to GBV and are more likely to be affected by harmful coping strategies, such as dropping out of school and early marriage, perpetuating cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

Gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities remain challenges across the Programme area. These include persistent gender gaps in women's participation in decision-making both at household and community levels, lower access to productive resources and financial instruments, and lower rates of digital literacy, driven by social norms that limit the roles considered suitable for women. In all Programme countries, most women work in agriculture while also carrying the primary responsibility for home and childcare. Girls are less likely to remain in school for many years and are more likely to marry young, while boys face risks such as child labour and, in some cases, recruitment into criminal or armed groups. Stigma and misconceptions about disability contribute to the marginalisation of persons with disabilities, and their rights are frequently not realised in practice. A practical challenge for this Programme is the identification of persons with disabilities; they can be hidden by their families, and on the other hand, there are challenges in understanding what disabilities are and how differently they manifest.

4. PROGRAMME RESULTS

The Programme's results are analysed and presented by result areas, supported by relevant output-level evidence. It draws on quantitative and qualitative data collected and analysed annually across the Programme's ten projects.

Progress is assessed by comparing aggregated Programme-level indicator data with baseline values, annual targets and end-of-Programme targets. Data are disaggregated by age, sex and disability where the indicator design and data collection methods allow. Particular attention is given to the participation and results of persons with disabilities throughout monitoring, reporting and analysis.

² World Meteorological organisation: State of the Climate in Africa 2025 <https://library.wmo.int/idurl/4/69867>

³ World Vision East Africa Region. 2025 East Africa Impact Report <https://www.wvi.org/publications/annual-report/east-africa/world-vision-east-africa-impact-report-2025>

The Programme consists of ten projects that each contribute to one or more of the Programme's three result areas:

Short name	Country	Full title	Dates	Result areas
Ejo Heza	Burundi	Ejo Heza Child Protection and Youth Empowerment Project	2022–2025	CP YE
FMNR Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Assisted Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) for Sustainable Land Management and Livelihood Project	2022–2025	RS
Ngoswet AP	Kenya	Ngoswet Area Programme	2022–2025 (2014–2030)	CP RS
Roysambu	Kenya	Roysambu Youth Livelihood Project	2022–2025	YE
Alale	Kenya	Alale Anti-FGM and Reproductive Health Project	2022–2025	CP
Buliza	Rwanda	Buliza Youth Empowerment Partnership Project (BYEPP)	2022–2025	YE
Umurava AP	Rwanda	Umurava Area Programme	2022–2025 (2019–2030)	CP YE RS
Somalia FGM	Somalia	Acceleration of FGM/C Abandonment Project	2022–2025	CP
Somalia CP&ENV	Somalia	Child Protection and Environmental Safety Project	2022–2025	CP RS
Adjumani	Uganda	Adjumani Child Protection, Livelihoods and Environment Project (ACLEP)	2022–2025	CP YE RS

Result areas: CP = Child Protection & Participation YE = Youth Employment & Empowerment RS = Resilience & Social Accountability

Table 1. Programme project register.

Two Programme-level impact indicators were measured at baseline and endline to assess changes in children's and young people's perceptions of safety and their ability to influence their families and communities. Progress at outcome level was monitored through seven indicators: four for child protection, one for youth employment and empowerment, and two for resilience and social accountability. Outcome-level monitoring was done annually. The progress is assessed using traffic lights for clearer interpretation in the progress tables: Green light indicates clear progress towards the intended results, where both progress from the baseline data is evident and the annual target is met; yellow light signifies progress from the baseline figures, but the annual target is not met; and red light indicates neither progress from the baseline nor meeting the annual target.

Overall, the Programme made strong progress towards its impact objective. Both impact indicators improved considerably between baseline and endline. Child protection and participation showed broadly consistent progress, particularly in children's awareness of protection services and the strengthening of community-based protection mechanisms. Youth employment and empowerment achieved strong results where life skills, psychosocial support, vocational training, finance, mentoring and market linkages were provided together. Resilience results were positive overall but more uneven and highly sensitive to drought, conflict, displacement, food insecurity and other external shocks.

4.1 IMPACT

The most vulnerable children and youth are safe and act as agents of change in their families and communities in the target areas in East Africa

The Programme's impact is reflected in the experiences of children and young people in the communities where it worked. In 2025, for example, Charity, a 16-year-old member of the Ngoswet Children's Parliament in Kenya, represented children from her community at a conference in Nairobi, bringing their perspectives on climate change and child protection to a national audience. Her experience illustrates one dimension of the Programme's impact objective: children and young people not only feeling safer, but also increasingly seeing themselves as able to participate and influence decisions affecting their lives.

IMPACT

The most vulnerable children and youth are safe and act as agents of change in their families and communities in the target areas in East Africa

Impact Indicator		Baseline	Final Target	2025 Result	Project Contribution
II 1	% of children and youth in the target communities who feel that they are safe from physical, psychological, and emotional violence or danger of manmade or natural shocks in the community.	66%	81%	82%	All, except Ethiopia FMNR
II 2	% of children and youth in the target communities who feel that they can share their opinions and participate in events/discussions in their families or communities that concern them.	56%	75%	72%	All

Table 2. Progress of impact indicators

As Table 2 indicates, two Programme-level indicators were used to assess progress towards this objective: the proportion of children and youth who feel that their community is a safe place, and the proportion who feel that they can influence their family and community. Both indicators improved over the Programme period. Perceived safety increased from 66% at baseline to 82% at endline, exceeding the end-of-Programme target of 81%. Perceived influence increased from 56% to 72%, falling three percentage points short of the 75% target. It is important to note that the Programme defined 'safety' broadly not only as freedom from physical, psychological and emotional violence, but also from manmade or natural shocks in the community. This wider definition reflects the Programme's resilience work, including efforts to strengthen community cohesion and disaster preparedness.

The overall direction of change was positive, but the aggregated results conceal important differences between projects, contexts and population groups. In particular, progress in perceived safety was generally stronger and more consistent than progress in influence.

Safety and influence developed differently

The Programme results suggest that strengthening child protection structures and community mechanisms contributed relatively directly to children's perceptions of safety. Changes in influence were less consistent, as they depended more strongly on household and community power relations, social norms and opportunities for participation.

The Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia illustrates this difference. At endline, all children and youth surveyed reported that they considered their community safe, including children with disabilities. Qualitative evidence also indicated earlier use of reporting and referral pathways and fewer reported cases of physical punishment, early marriage and child labour. However, perceived influence remained uneven: the project average reached 78%, but the result for girls was 52% (below their 58% baseline) against 91% for boys, while girls with disabilities reached 69% and boys with disabilities 81%. The results suggest that improvements in protection and safety did not translate equally into girls' voice and participation, reflecting persistent social norms around household and community decision-making.

Roysambu in Nairobi's informal settlements showed a different pattern. Perceived safety increased from 56% to 81%, while perceived influence increased from 76% to 97%. Particularly strong gains were recorded among youth with disabilities, whose sense of safety rose from 28% to 78% among young men and from 24% to 82% among young women. The project combined life skills and psychosocial support with economic opportunities, mentoring and community participation. The results suggest that as young people gained skills, confidence and opportunities to contribute economically and socially, they were increasingly recognised as active contributors within their families and communities.

The project in Adjumani, Uganda showed a similar pattern, with children's perceived safety increasing from 77% to 88% and youth participation in decision-making from 71% to 90%. Together, these findings suggest that projects combining protection, economic empowerment, peer support and community engagement tended to show stronger progress across both dimensions of the Programme's impact objective.

The impact findings also show important differences by age, gender and disability. Among youth with disabilities, both indicators improved considerably from low baselines and exceeded their targets: perceived safety rose from 47% to 81% for young women and from 50% to 79% for young men, while perceived influence rose from 45% to 78% and from 45% to 79% respectively. Girls with disabilities also showed strong progress in perceived influence, from 52% to 77% against a 70% target. Among children with disabilities, improvements in perceived safety were more modest, rising from 71% to 75% for girls and remaining unchanged at 75% for boys, around five percentage points below target. These groups remained the lowest scoring at endline. This indicates that while the Programme's focus on disability inclusion contributed to important gains, barriers affecting children with disabilities remained.

Gender differences were particularly evident in the influence indicator. Girls without disabilities showed very little change in perceived influence, increasing from 63% to 64% against a target of 83%. This was the weakest result among the Programme-level impact subgroups and indicates that increased participation opportunities alone were not sufficient to overcome deeply rooted gender norms affecting girls' voice and decision-making.

The Alale Anti-FGM project in Kenya illustrates the complexity of these results. Perceived safety among boys and male youth declined slightly, while the result for girls remained unchanged. At the same time, perceived influence among girls with disabilities more than doubled (see section 4.6). The project therefore demonstrates that progress can differ considerably between groups even within the same community.

Two broader findings emerged from the Programme's impact analysis. First, economic empowerment appears to have contributed to children's and young people's influence in ways that were not fully anticipated in the original Programme design. Livelihood and savings activities were primarily expected to improve economic wellbeing, but project evidence suggests that they also influenced how young people were perceived within their households and communities. This was particularly evident in projects such as Roysambu, Adjumani and Umurava, where economic interventions were combined with life skills, psychosocial support and opportunities for participation.

Second, several projects reported that children, youth, community groups, religious leaders and other local actors increasingly continued protection, advocacy and environmental activities without direct project facilitation. This suggests growing local ownership that is only partly captured by the Programme's impact indicators. In Ngoswet, for example, children's parliaments developed into recognised platforms for children's participation, while in Somalia youth and community groups increasingly initiated awareness and dialogue activities themselves.

Interpretation of the impact findings

The impact findings should be interpreted with some caution. Projects operated in very different environments, from relatively stable rural communities to informal urban settlements, refugee-hosting areas and fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Some projects were already in a second phase, while others began during the Programme period. In addition, not all projects were designed to contribute equally or directly to children's safety and influence.

Measurement itself also requires careful interpretation. As child protection systems become stronger and children become more aware of their rights and reporting mechanisms, willingness to disclose violence may increase. Higher reporting can therefore sometimes reflect greater awareness and trust rather than a deterioration in safety. This highlights the importance of interpreting quantitative indicators alongside qualitative evidence and contextual information.

Overall, both Programme-level impact indicators improved considerably during 2022–2025. Perceived safety exceeded its end-of-Programme target, while perceived influence improved substantially but remained below target. The findings broadly support the Programme's Theory of Change and indicate that the strongest progress was achieved where child protection, economic empowerment, psychosocial wellbeing, community engagement and local structures reinforced one another.

4.2 CHILD PROTECTION AND PARTICIPATION

The Programme's approach to child protection was based on World Vision's systems approach, which combines children's empowerment and knowledge, transformation of harmful attitudes and social norms, strengthening of formal and informal protection services, and improved laws and accountability through advocacy and citizen voice. As child protection was at the core of the Programme, eight projects contributed to this result area. Progress was measured through four indicators covering children's knowledge, parents' knowledge and behaviour, community-based child protection, and caregivers' attitudes towards FGM. The Programme's outcome indicators do not, however, capture all dimensions of the child protection work. For example, important work with duty-bearers was measured mainly at output level.

Overall, the child protection result area showed a mixed but very positive picture. Community-based child protection initiatives exceeded their target, while children's awareness of protection services improved from baseline but ended slightly below the end-of-Programme target. Caregiver approval of FGM also declined and positive parenting results remained relatively high. At the same time, the aggregate figures do not capture the full complexity of change. Child protection outcomes depend on changes in knowledge, behaviour, social norms, service responsiveness and duty-bearer action, and these dimensions are not captured equally well by the Programme's outcome indicators. The results should therefore be read together with output-level evidence and qualitative analysis from the projects.

Progress in 2025

OUTCOME 1

Children especially from the most vulnerable groups are increasingly protected from different forms of violence and act as agents of change in their families and communities

Outcome Indicator		Baseline	Final Target	2022 Result	2023 Result	2024 Result	2025 Result	Project Contribution
OCI1.1.	% of children who know of the presence of child protection services and mechanisms.	44%	66%	64%	56%	74%	64%	Burundi: Ejo Heza; Kenya: Alale & Ngoswet; Rwanda: Umurava Somalia: CP-Environment & Anti-FGM/C; Uganda:Adjumani"
OCI 1.2.	% of parents and other caregivers who demonstrate knowledge on positive parenting practices	59%	71%	61%	50%	65%	68%	Burundi: Ejo Heza; Kenya: Alale & Ngoswet; Rwanda: Umurava Somalia: CP-Environment & Anti-FGM/C; Uganda: Adjumani
OCI 1.3.	% of parents and caregivers who approve FGM	11%	5%	4%	9%	7%	9%	Kenya: Alale; Somalia: Anti-FGM/C
OCI 1.4.	# initiatives by community groups	0	35	16	15	24	57	Burundi: Ejo Heza; Kenya: Ngoswet & Roysambu; Uganda: Adjumani

Table 3. Progress of outcome 1 indicators

In the final implementation year, work continued to ensure that children in project communities know what to do, or know an adult they can turn to, in cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other forms of violence, and that they are aware of available child protection services. The indicator stood at 64%, close to but below the annual target of 66% and lower than the 74% recorded in 2024. A closer analysis shows, however, that girls and boys with disabilities performed better than children without disabilities and exceeded their respective targets. Results for girls and boys without disabilities fell short of target. This suggests that the Programme's deliberate focus on disability inclusion contributed positively to access to child protection information, while awareness among children without disabilities did not quite progress as planned in the final year.

Project-level results were not always straightforward to interpret. In Alale, Kenya, the indicator declined from 82% in 2024 to 50% in 2025 despite intensified child protection awareness activities. At the same time, 83% of children expressed confidence in local child protection actors, indicating that awareness of specific services and trust in the broader protection system may not develop at the same rate. Gender patterns also differed considerably between projects. In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, girls' awareness fell to 50%, below the project baseline of 66%, while boys reached 88%. The project linked this partly to population movements and cultural barriers affecting girls' access to information. In Adjumani, the pattern was reversed: girls reached 94% compared with 44% for boys, while children with disabilities recorded the lowest result at 46%. The project attributed this partly to the delivery model, as girls participated more actively in school-based clubs while boys were harder to reach through these channels.

Delivered largely through schools and child clubs, training and advocacy platforms strengthened children's knowledge, peer support and participation, promoted respectful treatment of peers, including children with disabilities, and in some cases created a multiplier effect through peer education.

The positive parenting indicator remained relatively high in 2025, at 68%, although it fell slightly short of the annual target of 71%. Notably, 2025 was the first year in which more male than female caregivers participated in training. This is an encouraging development, given the importance of engaging men in changing parenting practices and gender roles. Male Action Groups in Adjumani, Uganda, provided one example of an approach that engaged men and boys in strengthening family relationships, communication with children and reducing tolerance of violence in the home.

In Alale, sustained community dialogue and social norm change activities through the C-Change model engaged community members, traditional leaders, former circumcisers and other influential actors in challenging harmful beliefs and promoting alternatives to FGM. Public abandonment of the practice by former circumcisers, combined with advocacy by community champions and local

A Refugee Girl Who Chose to Fight

Nancy, a 17-year-old refugee in Maaji settlement, Uganda, fled conflict in South Sudan after losing her mother and brother, arriving with her father in 2016. Life in the settlement quickly became unbearable. Her stepmother withheld food, reminded her of her mother's death, and prevented her from attending Child Friendly Space (CFS) activities, pushing Nancy to the brink of suicide. A turning point came when she opened up to a World Vision caregiver. With psychosocial support, she began to heal and find her voice and channel her experiences into advocacy. She joined the Male Action Group as its only female member, helping bridge conversations between boys and girls on gender rights. Through Peace Club and Mobile Journalists activities, she uses storytelling to expose issues like forced marriages and child abuse.

Today, she leads awareness campaigns in local markets, megaphone in hand, speaking out boldly against harmful cultural practice, and urging parents to keep their children in school and respect their rights. As she puts it: "Who will fight for our rights if I don't?". Her motivation is deeply personal: "I have first-hand experience in being abused and there are several other children silently suffering in the community." Now in secondary school, Nancy is a testament to how timely support can transform a child's life and inspire an entire community.

leaders, contributed to stronger public rejection of FGM. These efforts were associated with a substantial decline in reported caregiver approval of FGM, which stood at 2.9% at endline.

In the Somalia FGM/C project, caregiver approval of FGM declined from 20% at baseline to 17.7% at endline, indicating gradual but uneven progress. Approval declined among women to 12.5%, compared with a baseline of 14%, while approval among men increased to 22.8% from a baseline of 10%. This could partly be linked with deeply rooted cultural traditions, ongoing population displacement and differences in the households included in the endline survey.

The Programme also supported community-based protection structures and their cooperation with formal duty-bearers. Progress in this area was measured through an indicator tracking initiatives undertaken by community groups supported by World Vision, such as Citizen Voice and Action groups, Child Protection and Advocacy groups and Child Protection Committees. As in previous years, the target was exceeded. A total of 22 initiatives were reported in 2025, including identification and referral of protection cases, community awareness activities, dialogue with duty-bearers, advocacy on gender-based violence and peer-led action by children and youth.

This work was reinforced by support to community and duty-bearer structures. In 2025, the Programme supported 89 child protection units and 79 community-based groups, while 293 local authorities and community leaders, including teachers, police, health and social workers, and faith and traditional leaders, received child protection training. This output-level evidence is important because duty-bearer engagement is central to the Programme's child protection approach, although it is not fully captured by the outcome indicators.

Progress during the Programme period 2022–2025

During the Programme period, children's awareness of child protection services and mechanisms increased from 44% at baseline to 64% at endline, slightly below the end-of-Programme target of 66%. The indicator peaked at 74% in 2024. Among children without disabilities, awareness increased from approximately 48% to 58%, while among children with disabilities it rose from approximately 41% to 69%, with the strongest gain among girls with disabilities, from 36% to 64%. However, important differences remained between projects and groups, particularly in the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, where girls lagged behind boys. The findings also show that knowledge of protection services is only one factor contributing to whether children feel safe.

The positive parenting indicator ended the period at 68%, slightly below the 71% end-of-Programme target but increased from the 59% baseline. Results for women and men were similar, at 67% and 66%, both around nine percentage points below their targets, while caregivers with disabilities exceeded theirs, women rising from 49% to 68% and men from 59% to 72%. Project-level results were more varied. In Adjumani, almost 10,000 parents and caregivers participated in training during 2022–2025, and the indicator remained consistently high at 92–95%. In Ngoswet, approximately 3,500 caregivers were trained, yet the result declined from 95% at baseline to 75%. In Umuwava, Ejo Heza and the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, smaller training numbers were accompanied by stable or improving results. These findings indicate that the number of caregivers trained alone does not explain changes in parenting knowledge or practice.

Where knowledge translated into practice, projects reported reduced use of corporal punishment, improved parent-child communication, greater use of non-violent discipline and stronger respect for children's views. However, practice change was slower for behaviours requiring sustained time, resources and changes in deeply rooted beliefs. Some caregivers continued to regard physical punishment as an acceptable disciplinary method, demonstrating the need for continued engagement rather than one-off training.

At Programme level, reported caregiver approval of FGM declined from 11% at baseline to 9% at endline, remaining above the end-of-Programme target of 5%. In Kenya, the project combined sustained C-Change community dialogue with engagement of traditional and religious leaders,

former circumcisers and community champions. Six former circumcisers publicly abandoned the practice, and community awareness activities reached more than 8,000 adults during the Programme period. In the Somalia FGM/C project, girls, particularly girls with disabilities, remained harder to reach and had less access to information, participation opportunities and decision-making processes, and the findings illustrate that declining public approval of FGM does not necessarily mean that the practice has been abandoned in private life.

During 2022–2025, the Programme recorded 57 community-led initiatives to protect children. Beyond what the indicator captures, project-level evidence points to concrete changes in target communities, including children returning to school, increased birth registration and the establishment of mobile court services.

Conclusions and Lessons Learnt

Children's awareness of child protection services improved over the Programme period, with particularly strong progress among children with disabilities. This suggests that the Programme's emphasis on inclusive approaches helped reach children who are often left behind. At the same time, the indicator ended slightly below target and declined in the final year. The key lesson is that awareness-raising needs to be reinforced over time and linked to accessible, trusted and functioning reporting and referral mechanisms.

Positive parenting results show that training alone does not automatically lead to lasting behavioural change. Knowledge is more likely to translate into safer family relationships when reinforced through mentoring, peer support, faith and community leadership and repeated engagement with caregivers. Positive parenting should therefore be understood as a longer-term social and behavioural change process rather than a one-off training intervention.

The anti-FGM work demonstrates that social norm change is possible when community dialogue is sustained and led by trusted local actors. A key learning is that changes in publicly expressed attitudes cannot automatically be assumed to represent full abandonment of FGM in private practice. Sustainable change requires continued engagement with religious and traditional leaders, former circumcisers, men and boys, women and girls, and broader child protection structures.

Community-led child protection initiatives also demonstrate increasing local engagement in identifying protection concerns, referral, awareness-raising and advocacy. The indicator measures the number of initiatives rather than their quality or effectiveness and therefore provides only partial evidence of systems change. However, in several locations' community structures, youth groups and local leaders increasingly continued activities with limited project facilitation. One example identified through outcome harvesting at the Programme's Impact Seminar came from Alale, where increased participation in Alternative Rites of Passage was supported by a shift in the position of the Pokot Council of Elders from passive acceptance towards active community sensitisation. The project's role was increasingly facilitative, helping create the conditions for community leaders themselves to become agents of change.

Overall, the results broadly support the Programme's child protection Theory of Change. Children's safety and protection depend not only on their own knowledge, but also on family relationships, community norms, accessible protection mechanisms and responsive formal and informal duty-bearers. The strongest results were achieved where these elements reinforced one another. At the same time, the findings demonstrate that behavioural and social norm change is gradual and cannot be fully captured through a small number of outcome indicators. The results should therefore be considered together with output-level evidence and qualitative findings from the projects.

4.3 YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

The Programme's approach to youth employment and empowerment was based on the assumption that vulnerable youth improve their access to decent employment and sustainable

livelihoods when they strengthen their life skills and psychosocial wellbeing, gain relevant technical and vocational education and training (TVET), employment and business skills, improve their access to resources, finance, market intelligence and market connections, and develop supportive networks and relationships that strengthen their agency and influence. The Theory of Change assumed that psychosocial wellbeing, private sector engagement, conflict sensitivity, disability inclusion and gender equality would strengthen progress towards sustainable employment outcomes.

Four projects contributed directly to this outcome area: Ejo Heza in Burundi, Roysambu in Kenya, Buliza in Rwanda and Adjumani in Uganda. Youth employment was also a smaller component of Umurava. Overall, the Programme results broadly support the Theory of Change. Improvements in psychosocial wellbeing, life skills, vocational competencies, financial inclusion and access to supportive peer networks contributed to higher levels of employment, self-employment and youth influence. However, the results also demonstrate that skills training alone is insufficient without access to finance, markets and continued mentoring support.

Progress in 2025

OUTCOME 2

Youth from vulnerable groups have improved access to decent employment or livelihood and influence development in their communities

Outcome Indicator		Baseline	Final Target	2022 Result	2023 Result	2024 Result	2025 Result	Project Contribution
OCI 2.1.	% of youth who are employed or self-employed	7%	72%	43%	64%	63%	68%	Burundi: Ejo Heza; Kenya: Roysambu; Rwanda: Buliza & Umurava AP; Uganda: Adjumani

Table 4. Progress of outcome 2 indicators

In the final year of implementation, Outcome 2 continued to show positive progress, with 68% of targeted youth employed or self-employed, recovering from the decline recorded in 2024. Although the end-of-Programme target of 72% was not fully achieved, the result remained close to target and demonstrates substantial progress in supporting vulnerable youth to access livelihood opportunities despite challenging economic environments. At the same time, the indicator captures employment or self-employment status more clearly than the quality, profitability or durability of that employment, which should be considered when assessing sustainability.

At project level, the strongest results were recorded in Rwanda and Uganda, where 87.9% of the targeted youth in Buliza and 90.2% in Adjumani were employed or self-employed by the end of the project period. In Burundi, 74% of supported youth were engaged in economic activities by 2025, against an original project target of 25%, which can be considered as achievement given the challenging refugee and host community context. In Umurava, where youth employment was a smaller component, the project reported an increase from 78% at baseline to 83.3% at evaluation. In Roysambu, Kenya, the proportion of youth with technical skills who were employed or self-employed increased from 7.2% at baseline to 26.6% at endline. Although lower than in the other projects, this represents substantial progress in a low-income urban context characterised by high youth unemployment and informality. The project's final evaluation found employment among the comparison group at 10.7%, providing additional evidence that the project contributed to the observed improvement.

From Sewing Machine to Steady Income: Viviane's Story

For 28-year-old **Viviane**, escaping poverty and single motherhood required determination and a new opportunity. After leaving school because of financial difficulties and a difficult marriage, she returned to her parents' home unsure how to support herself and her child.

In 2025, she runs her own tailoring business in Rulindo District, Rwanda, earning a stable income and supporting her family.

"Now, I dream of building a better future for my child by growing my business, gaining more skills and becoming financially independent."

With vocational training and start-up support from the Buliza Youth Empowerment Partnership Project, Viviane gained tailoring skills and received a sewing machine to start her business. She now combines tailoring with selling clothing and other products and saves part of her income regularly. The programme supports vulnerable youth with practical skills and self-employment opportunities, creating pathways to financial independence and long-term wellbeing.

The results indicate that employment outcomes were strongest where life-skills development, psychosocial support, vocational training, entrepreneurship support and access to finance were implemented as an integrated package. This finding was also reflected in outcome harvesting during the Programme's Impact Seminar. In Umurava, 60 teenage mothers moved into income-generating activities following a combination of life skills training, TVET and savings-group participation. Participants identified changes in confidence and self-reliance as important foundations for the subsequent economic gains. Similar findings across projects suggest that employment outcomes were strongest where psychosocial wellbeing and life skills were followed by practical skills, access to finance and market opportunities.

Several projects also demonstrated the importance of linking youth to savings groups, cooperatives, financial services and market actors. In Adjumani and Buliza, self-employment emerged as the dominant pathway to livelihoods, reflecting the limited availability of formal wage employment opportunities in rural and refugee-hosting contexts.

At the output level, two indicators moved against the overall trend but provide useful insight into how implementation developed in the final year. TVET graduations fell short of the annual target partly because some Roysambu

participants chose digital-skills pathways instead of vocational training. This represented a shift between routes into employment rather than necessarily a loss of employment opportunities and was consistent with digital livelihoods emerging as a viable pathway in urban settings. New membership of youth livelihood groups also fell short of target because Adjumani had already met its life-of-project target and shifted from establishing new groups towards mentoring and consolidating existing ones. The continued strong employment result in Adjumani suggests that this shift was appropriate in the final year.

Disaggregated outcome data show that the employment indicator ended the period at 74.7% for young men, above their 73.2% target, but at 68.2% for young women against a 75.2% target. In Buliza, women represented approximately 68% of participants and showed strong progress in accessing employment and leadership opportunities. In Roysambu, employment among young women increased from 5.3% to 23.5%, compared with an increase from 8.9% to 31.1% among young men.

Youth with disabilities also benefitted, although results were uneven. Young women with disabilities ended the period at 70.4% against a target of 75.0%, while young men with disabilities reached 60.0% against a target of 63.8%, the weakest result among the disaggregated groups. Accessibility barriers, limited access to suitable training institutions, stigma and wider labour-market constraints continued to restrict their opportunities.

Progress during the Programme period 2022–2025

Across the Programme period, the proportion of the targeted youth who were employed or self-employed increased from 7% at baseline to 68%, representing substantial progress towards the

final target of 72%. The strongest progress occurred during the first half of the Programme period, with employment and self-employment increasing from 7% at baseline to 64% by 2023. Progress thereafter was more gradual.

Part of this gradual development reflects changes in measurement rather than performance alone. Until 2024, Roysambu measured the previous year's cohort, whereas the endline included youth from across the full Programme period, providing a larger sample over a longer time horizon. Nevertheless, the results also suggest that reaching the remaining youth became challenging, particularly for those facing multiple and overlapping barriers.

Across the projects, participating youth moved from unemployment, underemployment and dependency towards greater economic participation and self-reliance. The strongest evidence comes from Buliza, where the proportion of youth participating in income-generating activities increased from 31.7% to 87.9%, and from Adjumani, where 87.6% of trained youth became economically active. Roysambu demonstrated that meaningful employment gains are possible even in a highly challenging urban environment when skills development is combined with mentoring and entrepreneurship support.

The Programme period demonstrates the importance of access to finance in translating skills into livelihoods. The Programme exceeded its end-of-period target for youth entrepreneurs accessing finance, and projects where finance was combined with business skills and market linkages generally achieved strong employment results. In Buliza, for example, financial inclusion among participants increased from 4.97% to 57.22%, alongside an employment result of 87.9%. At the same time, lack of access to credit remained the most frequently reported constraint in Adjumani at endline, followed by limited market access. These findings support the Theory of Change assumption that skills alone are insufficient and need to be complemented by access to finance and markets.

The Programme generated broader outcomes beyond employment. As young people gained livelihoods, many reported higher levels of confidence, decision-making power and influence within their families and communities. At Programme level, the proportion of youth who considered that they had sufficient means to influence their own lives and communities increased from 5% at baseline to 52% at endline. This was substantially higher than in earlier years but remained below the 67% end-of-Programme target.

The gap against target may partly reflect uneven opportunities for young people to participate and exercise voice alongside improvements in their economic situation. This suggests that livelihood gains do not automatically translate into broader agency without deliberate opportunities for participation. Adjumani reported that 89.5% of youth felt able to influence decisions affecting their lives and communities, with similar positive trends observed in Buliza, Ejo Heza and Roysambu. These findings support the Theory of Change assumption that economic empowerment can contribute to stronger youth agency and citizenship.

Some unexpected results emerged during the Programme period. Roysambu demonstrated the potential of digital livelihoods, with some youth earning income through freelancing and online work while still participating in training. In Buliza and Ejo Heza, youth increasingly became peer mentors and agents of change, sharing business and life-skills knowledge with siblings, neighbours and community members. In Umurava, vocational opportunities involving refugee and host-community youth contributed to social cohesion in addition to economic outcomes. These outcomes were not fully anticipated in the original Programme design.

Participation and employment outcomes among youth with disabilities were mixed. Inclusion strategies enabled youth with disabilities to access Programme support and contributed to positive outcomes, although the ambitious 10% inclusion target was not reached in Roysambu and Umurava. The experience also highlighted continuing barriers related to accessibility of training institutions, stigma, availability of suitable opportunities and wider labour-market conditions. Future programming should therefore continue to strengthen targeted and adaptive inclusion measures and set targets that reflect the operating context.

Conclusions and Lessons Learnt

The Programme generated several important lessons. Psychosocial wellbeing and life skills should not be viewed merely as complementary interventions but as important foundations for employability. Vocational training alone rarely translates into sustainable employment; access to finance, market linkages and continued mentoring are also important. Also, group-based approaches, such as savings groups, cooperatives and peer networks, create social capital that can strengthen both economic resilience and youth agency. Finally, reaching particularly vulnerable groups, including youth with disabilities, requires targeted and adaptive measures throughout the employment pathway.

One of the most significant changes observed during the Programme period was the increased agency of young people. In addition to gaining employment and livelihoods, many young people reported greater confidence, stronger influence over decisions affecting their lives and a more active role within their families and communities. In several projects, young people also became peer mentors and role models, sharing skills and encouraging others to pursue livelihood opportunities. This suggests that economic empowerment contributed to broader social participation and leadership beyond the employment outcomes captured by the Programme indicator.

Differences between contexts were evident. The highest employment rates were recorded in the rural and refugee-hosting projects, where self-employment and group enterprises provided viable livelihood pathways despite weak formal labour markets. Urban Roysambu operated in a highly competitive and informal labour market and recorded lower employment rates, although digital skills and freelancing emerged as promising alternatives. Adjumani demonstrates that strong employment results are possible even in a fragile and displacement-affected context when psychosocial wellbeing, livelihoods support and financial inclusion are addressed together.

Overall, the results broadly support the integrated youth employment model outlined in the Theory of Change. The findings suggest that vulnerable youth are better positioned to achieve sustainable livelihoods when psychosocial wellbeing and life skills are combined with market-relevant skills, access to finance, mentoring and supportive networks. However, sustainable employment depends not only on individual skills and motivation, but also on market demand, access to capital, household responsibilities and wider economic conditions. The findings also show that economic empowerment can strengthen youth agency, but this is more likely when young people are given deliberate opportunities to participate, exercise leadership and influence decisions within their families and communities.

4.4 RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Resilience and social accountability form the Programme's third result area, focusing on the capacity of vulnerable families and communities to withstand shocks, recover from them and sustain development gains over time. The approach brought together four mutually reinforcing elements: diversified and more secure livelihoods; sustainable management of natural resources; inclusive and child-centred disaster risk management; and stronger community cohesion and social accountability. Conflict sensitivity, disability inclusion and gender equality were expected to strengthen progress across these areas, while improved household resilience was expected to contribute to safer and more protective environments for children.

Six projects contributed directly to this result area: Adjumani in Uganda, the FMNR project in Ethiopia, the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, Ejo Heza in Burundi, Ngoswet in Kenya and Umurava in Rwanda. Progress was measured through two outcome indicators: the proportion of households that had not needed to resort to unsustainable coping mechanisms, and the proportion applying improved and sustainable agricultural or forestry techniques. Ejo Heza reported against the first indicator only and Umurava against the second. Inclusive disaster risk management and social accountability were measured mainly at output level and are therefore less fully reflected in the quantitative outcome analysis.

Progress in 2025

OUTCOME 3

Families and communities have increased resilience and act for social accountability in an enabling environment

Outcome Indicator		Baseline	Final Target	2022 Result	2023 Result	2024 Result	2025 Result	Project Contribution
OCI 3.1.	% of households that have not needed to use unsustainable coping mechanisms.	48%	67%	60%	54%	52%	63%	Burundi: Ejo Heza; Ethiopia: FMNR; Kenya: Ngoswet AP; Somalia: CP-Environment; Uganda: Adjumani
OCI 3.2.	% of households who apply improved and sustainable agriculture or forestry techniques	54%	80%	50%	61%	62%	90%	Ethiopia: FMNR; Kenya: Ngoswet AP; Rwanda: Umurava AP; Somalia: CP-Environment; Uganda: Adjumani

Table 5. Progress of outcome 3 indicators

The two outcome indicators showed different levels of progress in the final year. Adoption of improved and sustainable agricultural or forestry techniques reached 90%, exceeding the 80% target, while the proportion of households that had not needed to resort to unsustainable coping mechanisms reached 63%, 11 percentage points above the previous year but below the 67% target. These results need to be understood considering considerable differences between projects and changes in the wider humanitarian, climate and economic context.

The first element of the Programme's resilience approach was diversified and more secure livelihoods. Economic insecurity is closely connected to children's vulnerability: when households face severe economic pressure, families may withdraw children from school, send them to work or resort to environmentally harmful livelihood strategies such as charcoal production. In Ethiopia, 80% of households in the FMNR project reported avoiding harmful coping strategies. Although below the project's ambitious target of 93%, this represented substantial progress. The strongest project-level result was recorded in Adjumani, where 81% of households reported avoiding unsustainable coping mechanisms, exceeding the 80% target and improving considerably from 42% in 2024. At the same time, households continued to face pressures including food ration reductions, limited access to agricultural land for refugees and climate-related impacts on production.

The Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia illustrates how strongly resilience outcomes can be shaped by the wider humanitarian context. The proportion of households avoiding negative coping strategies declined from 63% in 2024 to 23% in 2025, against an annual target of 51%. Prolonged drought, livestock losses, rising prices and reduced humanitarian assistance pressured household assets and livelihoods, and some families returned to charcoal production and withdrawing children from school. The result does not reflect project implementation alone but shows how severe external shocks can reverse earlier resilience gains.

Ngoswet in Kenya presents another important finding. Adoption of sustainable practices remained above target, while only 13% of households reported avoiding unsustainable coping mechanisms, against a 22% target and a 14% baseline. This illustrates that adopting improved practices does not automatically translate into household resilience: families also need sufficient income, productive assets and capacity to absorb repeated shocks. The weak coping result may also partly reflect how the indicator was interpreted during data collection.

The second element focused on restoring the natural resources on which vulnerable communities depend and strengthening climate-smart agriculture, including agroforestry, conservation agriculture, water harvesting and erosion control. In 2025, the outcome indicator increased from 62% to 90%, well above the annual target of 80%, driven particularly by strong results in Adjumani and the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, alongside continued progress in Ngoswet.

In Adjumani, adoption reached 85%, above the 80% target and up from 52% in the previous year. Participants adopted practices including organic farming, agroforestry, waste management and tree planting, with many households applying several simultaneously, and some were able to increase production sufficiently to sell surplus while retaining food for household consumption.

In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, the proportion of households applying improved techniques increased from 18 % in 2024 to 100 % in the final year. This reflects project design: household-level energy and climate technologies were intentionally introduced in the final year, and once implementation began, demand substantially exceeded the planned number of households. The simultaneous rise in adoption and fall in the coping indicator illustrates an important distinction: households can adopt improved technologies while remaining highly vulnerable to severe shocks.

In Ngoswet, adoption remained relatively stable, increasing from 71% in 2024 to 72% in 2025 and remaining above the 70% target. Activities included environmental restoration, climate-smart agriculture and productive inputs, including coffee seedlings for vulnerable households and improved livestock for a group of persons with disabilities.

The third and fourth elements, inclusive and child-centred disaster risk management and community cohesion and social accountability, were monitored mainly at output level, and participation in both exceeded annual targets. Activities included conflict-sensitive community engagement, Citizen Voice and Action (CVA), dialogue with duty-bearers and measures to increase the participation of women, young people and persons with disabilities. Because these were measured through participation indicators, the framework evidence participation and capacity strengthening more strongly than longer-term changes in preparedness, service delivery or duty-bearer responsiveness. Qualitative evidence nevertheless gives some indication of these broader changes: projects reported stronger engagement of duty-bearers in disability inclusion, youth-led initiatives influencing adult attitudes, and CVA practitioners being elected to local leadership positions, showing how participation in a Programme-supported structure could develop into wider civic engagement.

Progress during the Programme period 2022–2025

Across the Programme period, the proportion of households that had not needed to resort to unsustainable coping mechanisms increased from 48% at baseline to 63% at endline, a gain of 15 percentage points, although below the 67% target. Progress was not linear: results were affected at

Charity brings children's voices to climate action

For 16-year-old **Charity**, climate change is part of everyday life in Kenya's Ngoswet AP, where drought and heavy rainfall affect livelihoods and natural resources. In 2025, she represented the Ngoswet Children's Parliament at a conference in Nairobi, bringing children's perspectives into discussions on climate change and child protection. Charity believes schools and decision-makers should invest more in increasing tree cover, as trees along the Kerio River help prevent soil erosion, protect farmland and improve water quality.

"Children want to know how climate change affects them and how it can be prevented."

Through environmental education, tree planting and children's participation, the Ngoswet AP helps communities strengthen resilience to climate-related risks. Children's parliaments give young people a platform to raise concerns, share solutions and engage with decision-makers on issues affecting their future. This strengthens both community resilience and accountability by ensuring that children's voices are included in decision-making.

different points by climate shocks, conflict, insecurity, food insecurity and inflation before improving again in the final year.

Project-level trends illustrate how strongly context influenced results. The FMNR project in Ethiopia increased from 64% to 80%, Ejo Heza from 48% to 68%, and Adjumani from 60% to 81%. By contrast, the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia ended the Programme period at its baseline of 23% following severe external shocks. Ngoswet ended at 13%, close to its baseline of 14%, having reached the target level in 2024 before falling back in the final year.

These differences show that meaningful progress was possible even in fragile contexts, but that resilience gains remained vulnerable to severe shocks. In Ethiopia, households gaining economically viable alternatives to environmentally harmful practices substantially reduced their reliance on extractive coping. In Adjumani, positive results were achieved despite displacement and humanitarian pressures, although refugee households remained more vulnerable than host-community households. In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, the deterioration in 2025 demonstrates the limits of project-level resilience interventions when drought, conflict and economic pressures exceed households' capacity to absorb shocks.

Savings and access to finance appear to have been particularly important in helping households manage economic pressures. Savings-group membership expanded considerably, and communities generated their own lending capital without donor funds, providing a financial buffer that in some cases enabled households to retain productive assets through periods of stress. Where shocks exceeded that capacity, as in the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, households were again forced to draw down assets and return to negative coping strategies.

The sustainable agriculture and forestry indicator followed a different trajectory. Adoption developed gradually from a Programme baseline of 54%, increasing to 90% in the final year and exceeding the 80% target. The increase reflects accumulated adoption, particularly in Ethiopia and Uganda, but also the planned sequencing of household-level interventions in the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia and should therefore be interpreted considering differences in implementation timing between projects.

Pathways differed by project: Ethiopia progressed steadily in sustainable land and forest management, Adjumani fluctuated with humanitarian pressures, erratic seasons, limited land access and wildfires before recovering, and Ngoswet adopted more gradually, ending above its target. Participation also varied between groups and types of activity. Men were proportionally better represented in environmental conservation training, while young women were the largest single group in disaster risk management training. This suggests that gender patterns within resilience work differed according to the type of intervention and should be considered when designing future activities.

Social accountability activities reached substantial numbers of civil society actors and community members, and cumulative participation exceeded targets, although the figures were influenced by the inclusion of Ethiopian forest cooperative members within the indicator measuring the number of civil society actors. Conflict sensitivity analyses and Do No Harm approaches also supported implementation. Several outcomes described above were not anticipated in the original design, and these qualitative findings matter because social accountability was measured mainly at the output level.

Conclusions and Lessons Learnt

Overall, the results broadly support the resilience model set out in the Programme's Theory of Change. Households with more diversified and climate-smart livelihoods, access to savings and finance, productive assets and sustainably managed natural resources were generally better positioned to cope with shocks and reduce reliance on harmful coping strategies. At the same time, the coping indicator remained below its end-of-Programme target, and the Programme demonstrates how rapidly household resilience can weaken when climate, economic or conflict-related shocks exceed households' capacity to respond.

Several lessons emerged. First, reducing unsustainable coping requires economically viable livelihood alternatives together with sufficient household assets and access to finance. The Ethiopia FMNR experience demonstrates that where households have realistic alternatives to environmentally harmful practices, substantial and sustained change is possible. The Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia demonstrates the other side of the equation: when external shocks exceed households' capacity to cope, earlier gains can be difficult to sustain.

Second, training alone was rarely sufficient to change practices. Results were stronger where practical learning was accompanied by productive inputs, assets, credit or other resources that enabled households to apply what they had learned. Strong demand for productive inputs and household technologies in several projects reinforces the importance of combining knowledge with practical means to act.

Third, resilience needs to be assessed over time. Sustainable agricultural and environmental practices can accumulate gradually, remain in use once embedded in livelihood systems and spread informally beyond direct participants. Household coping, by contrast, can deteriorate rapidly in response to drought, conflict, inflation or reductions in humanitarian assistance. Future monitoring should therefore interpret resilience indicators alongside information on food security, household assets and the severity of external shocks, and annual targets should take planned implementation sequencing into account.

Finally, this result area needs to be understood as a combination of household resilience, environmental sustainability and collective capacity rather than through either outcome indicator alone. Community organisation, social accountability and local ownership are themselves part of resilience: savings groups increasingly managed their own capital, sustainable practices spread beyond direct participants, and community actors took greater responsibility for collective action. Progress was strong in sustainable practices and more mixed in household coping, while qualitative evidence points to changes the quantitative framework did not fully capture.

4.5 PROGRAMME-LEVEL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the Programme performed well across all three result areas, although the consistency, strength and measurability of results varied. Child protection and participation contributed most directly to children's safety and agency, although progress was uneven across its indicators: community-based protection initiatives exceeded their target, while children's awareness of protection services fell back in the final year and positive parenting improved from baseline but ended short of its target. Youth employment and empowerment showed the most consistent year-on-year progress and achieved strong results where life skills, economic support, vocational training and mentoring were combined into an integrated offer. Resilience and social accountability met one of its two outcome targets, adoption of sustainable practices, and results were more variable and sensitive to external shocks. Some elements were measured mainly at output level, which limits the conclusions that can be drawn about longer-term change.

Several common factors shaped performance across all three areas. Integrated approaches generally produced stronger results than isolated training or awareness-raising. Results were stronger where participants had access to functioning community structures, services, finance, markets and responsive duty-bearers. Where structural barriers remained, or where climate, economic or conflict-related shocks exceeded what households and communities could absorb, progress was weaker or harder to sustain.

Differences between operating contexts were considerable, but fragility alone did not determine results. Strong outcome-level changes were achieved in some fragile settings where interventions responded to local realities and offered practical, economically viable alternatives. In Somalia, however, the combined pressure of conflict, drought, inflation, livestock losses and reduced humanitarian assistance weakened household resilience despite successful delivery of many planned activities. In refugee-hosting areas of Uganda, food ration cuts, limited land access and population movement constrained what was achievable. More stable contexts with stronger government structures generally supported more consistent implementation and closer cooperation with local authorities.

Civic space also shaped what kind of change was possible. In more restricted environments, community groups were generally more effective at addressing concrete local service issues through evidence-based, non-confrontational engagement than at influencing higher-level policy or resource allocation. The Programme adapted by working through different combinations of civil society organisations, community groups, schools, cooperatives, faith and traditional leaders, and local authorities.

The six final evaluations add several Programme-level observations. Community-level finance scaled successfully while access to formal financial systems remained more constrained: savings group membership and access to group credit expanded, while collateral and guarantee requirements continued to limit formal financial inclusion. The evaluations also suggest that food security outcomes were generally stronger where projects addressed production and household assets directly, while improvements were less evident where food security was expected to follow indirectly from other livelihood gains. They also point to lessons in measurement and target-setting. Some targets proved very ambitious in the specific operating contexts, while differences in baseline and endline sampling affected the comparability of some results.

The findings broadly support the Programme's Theory of Change and show that meaningful progress was possible in both stable and fragile contexts. In fragile environments, however, results were more vulnerable to reversal and need to be understood alongside changes in climate, conflict, food security, markets and household assets. Future programming should retain the integrated approach while strengthening outcome-level measurement of social accountability, duty-bearer responsiveness and the connections between result areas.

Across the Programme, some of the most encouraging changes extended beyond individual indicators. Children and young people increasingly took active roles in their communities, youth became peer mentors and role models, women and persons with disabilities gained greater visibility and influence, and community structures increasingly continued activities with less direct project facilitation. These changes point to growing agency and local ownership and provide an important complement to the quantitative results presented in the individual result areas.

4.6 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The Programme's cross-cutting themes were gender equality, non-discrimination, disability inclusion, environment and climate, and conflict sensitivity. Mainstreaming these themes was a requirement for all projects: each conducted compulsory gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) and conflict sensitivity analyses at design stage and reported against the themes throughout implementation. These themes serve WV's global mission of eradicating discrimination and building resilient, peaceful communities, and align with Finland's development policy. The depth of integration varied by theme and context, as set out below.

Gender equality

Gender equality was addressed through both participation targets and longer-term norm-change work. The projects often had quotas and targets for women and girls' participation in project activities. Projects tackled the barriers identified in their GEDSI analyses through gender-specific activities: in Ejo Heza, Burundi, life-skills training, leadership mentoring and safeguarding mechanisms for girls and young women, alongside sessions on positive masculinity, conflict management and shared household responsibilities for boys and young men. In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, gender-responsive approaches resulted in men becoming more engaged in parenting roles and community protection discussions, which helped shift gendered expectations around caregiving. Families also reported reduced acceptance of early marriage and physical punishment, indicating positive shifts in gender norms. In Alale, Kenya, for example, endline findings recorded a 68% reduction in girls' intention to undergo FGM in intervention communities.

The contribution of these approaches was also reflected in shifts in women's roles and participation, although persistent gender inequalities remained. Work with local leaders, combined with women's

life-skills training and confidence to speak up, resulted in more inclusive decision-making. The project contexts are very challenging in terms of gender equality. In Ethiopia, for example, women's share of formal leadership roles did not increase, but women participated more actively in decision-making in community development and cooperatives, where they now make up 45.2% of membership and attendance at cooperative meetings reached 81.5%. Across the Programme, progress in women's participation generally ran ahead of progress in transforming the unequal power relations behind it.

Change at household and community level was clearest where women gained an economic footing. In Alale, Kenya, women's participation in household decision-making rose sharply over the Programme period, from 23% to 68%, and a similar trend was recorded in several other project areas. In Roysambu, young women's access to income strengthened their voice in household decisions. The furthest-reaching shift was in Ngoswet, where women began competing for and winning leadership positions in local governance: three women now serve as local administrators, the first time this has happened in a setting where men were traditionally regarded as the sole authority in family and community life.

Disability inclusion and non-discrimination

Significant progress in disability inclusion and non-discrimination was reported at household and community levels, although progress varied across contexts and areas of work. All projects used inclusive targeting, and most collaborated with organisations of persons with disabilities. In Alale, Kenya, the share of children with disabilities who feel able to influence their family and community rose from 30% to 78% for girls and from 42% to 69% for boys, against targets of 48% and 55% - gains substantially ahead of those recorded for children without disabilities. These changes were also visible in practice. In Alale, Chepangachar, a woman with a disability, became a strong voice for women in her community. Her experience shows how disability inclusion went beyond participation, with persons with disabilities increasingly taking on roles as leaders, mentors and agents of change.

The Programme's experience also showed that changing attitudes towards persons with disabilities depended less on information-sharing and awareness-raising alone than on normalising their participation in community structures and decision-making. Economic empowerment through TVET or village savings and loans associations (VSLAs) also improved their status and reduced stigma. In some projects, groups of people with disabilities were supported to establish VSLAs, while in most cases it was ensured that VSLAs were inclusive. For example, in the project in Adjumani, a local OPD provided VSLA training to new groups.

Beyond women, girls and persons with disabilities, marginalised groups in these contexts included the ultra-poor, school dropouts, teen mothers, refugees, people in remote areas, linguistic minorities and members of minority clans. The Ejo Heza project gave the theme of non-discrimination particular focus and recorded the clearest change. CPCs and youth groups became more inclusive and better equipped to identify, report and address discrimination, contributing to safer, more protective environments. Participation of girls, persons with disabilities and vulnerable youth increased markedly in community decision-making structures, youth platforms and child protection clubs, and their involvement made these bodies more responsive to diverse community needs. Roysambu, Kenya, showed the importance of working with the whole family to support youth with disabilities, while in Umurava, targeted awareness-raising increased school attendance among children with disabilities.

Duty-bearers also became more inclusive in practice. In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, religious leaders, cultural elders, police, children's committees and government structures handled child protection cases more consistently and with greater attention to confidentiality; in Adjumani, Uganda, stronger referral pathways and individual case management improved the safety of children and youth needing support. In many contexts, training also resulted in duty-bearers intensifying registration of persons with disabilities, thereby enabling them to receive the government's financial support.

Environment and climate

The Programme area contends with recurrent natural disasters and with the effects of climate change and environmental degradation on agriculture and other common livelihoods, which ties climate and environmental action closely to food security. Environmental degradation, especially erosion and thinning of vegetation, is typical of the project areas. Projects combined awareness raising on environmental protection with information on climate-smart practices and, in some cases, tools and seedlings. Projects reported visible recovery of vegetation cover in areas where tree planting was undertaken.

The contribution of these approaches was reflected in the share of households applying improved and sustainable agriculture or forestry techniques, which rose in every project reporting against the baseline – from 25% to 85% in Ethiopia, 59% to 72% in Ngoswet and 60% to 85% in Adjumani. Progress on households avoiding unsustainable coping mechanisms was more uneven: Ejo Heza rose from 48% baseline to 68% and Adjumani from 60% to 81%, both above target, while Ethiopia reached 80% against 64% baseline and 93% target, and Ngoswet slipped from 14% to 13%.

Competition over access to natural resources, especially water, has historically been a source of conflict in Ngoswet. New and rehabilitated water systems significantly reduced competition during dry periods: bringing water points closer to households and increasing supply for farming removed the long journeys and shared sources that had triggered disputes. Water scarcity no longer acts as a trigger for conflict, which is the clearest instance of environmental peacebuilding in the Programme. Environmental action served as a de-escalation tool elsewhere too, though the source of tension differed: natural resources in the Somalia FGM/C project, and waste management in Nairobi's informal settlements. In the Child Protection and Environmental Safety project in Somalia, existing environment committees mobilised local action against erosion and protected rangelands; in Nairobi, work with waste collection groups improved their safety, although organising proper waste management remains unfinished.

Many projects worked through existing or newly established community structures that will outlive the project. Savings groups enabled members to invest in improved seeds, irrigation and climate-adaptive technologies. In Ethiopia, forest restoration diversified livelihood options for communities organised in cooperatives, increased access to forest-based resources and reduced vulnerability to climate-related shocks. Cooperatives also took on active forest management, which reduced wildfire risk, improved forest structure and protected restored areas from further degradation. This suggests that durable environmental gains depend less on the initial intervention than on whether local structures have the capacity to maintain it.

Conflict sensitivity

Conflict sensitivity was mainstreamed throughout planning and implementation across all projects. Conflict sensitivity analysis, following World Vision's global model, identified vulnerabilities and potential triggers in each context. Three practices proved consistently important: transparent and inclusive participant selection covering both marginalised groups and other distinct groups such as refugees and host community members; countering misinformation about what projects could and could not provide; and adapting activity schedules to participants' realistic availability. In Roysambu, flexible scheduling, catch-up sessions and phone follow-up allowed young people to rejoin their cohorts without penalty when economic pressure or household instability pulled them into casual work.

Conflict resolution training affected family relations as well as relations between groups such as refugees and host communities, and more peaceful family relations contributed directly to child wellbeing and safeguarding. Community-level forums for resolving emerging conflicts through dialogue also strengthened trust and social cohesion.

Projects in Alale, Kenya and in Ethiopia reported that duty-bearers and local leaders increasingly identified early signs of tension and responded to them. In many projects, community advocacy and CVA work helped hold duty-bearers accountable for addressing grievances but also helped them to identify potential sources of conflict.

5. LOCALISATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Localisation, local ownership and the strengthening of partnerships became particularly visible in the final year of the Programme period. In 2025, several projects placed increasing emphasis on embedding achieved results in local structures, strengthening communities' own implementation capacity, and reinforcing the responsibilities of authorities and other local actors. As projects entered their transition and exit phases, responsibilities were increasingly and systematically transferred to local authorities, community structures and partners.

For World Vision, localisation is rooted in the organisation's own identity and operating model. WV's development programme approach is built on a community-led process, and its Transformational Development principles commit the organisation to partnership, community empowerment, inclusion, local adaptation, listening to communities and challenging unequal power dynamics. Structurally, WV has operated since the 1970s as a global partnership of separate, equal and interdependent national entities, which today are primarily led and managed by national staff. In this Programme, that model meant that implementation was led throughout by World Vision's national offices in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda, working through locally registered organisations, community-based organisations (CBOs) and government structures rather than through separately established delivery units.

The Programme generally did not create parallel service delivery or administrative systems but strengthened existing community and government mechanisms, in different but mutually reinforcing ways across countries. In Kenya, community representatives, schools, village leaders, local government structures and community-based actors were strengthened in child protection, social accountability and local planning; the Roysambu project worked with local actors such as Pawatech Solutions on youth skills and market readiness, and the Ngoswet with community-based structures such as Kormei CBO. In Rwanda, the Umurava worked through locally registered actors including Rwanda Extractive Workers Union, CLADHO and Association Mwana Ukundwa, reinforcing child protection, rights-based work and community participation structures. In Uganda, community volunteers, para-social workers and other community-based protection actors were increasingly integrated into local systems, and in Somalia, community committees, youth, religious leaders and local authorities assumed a more visible role in child protection, the prevention of harmful practices and community-level environmental responsibility.

During the year, the localisation principle was advanced above all by bringing decision-making and responsibility closer to communities and partners, and the role of partners in decision-making became correspondingly more visible. The 2024 Programme evaluation identified WV Nordic's flexibility towards its implementing partners as a strength of the Programme, and this approach continued in 2025. Partner-identified needs also drove Programme-level decisions: all three budget revisions approved by the MFA during the year originated in circumstances identified by implementing partners, including exchange-rate volatility affecting the forest management project in Ethiopia and the reallocation of EUR 30,000 within the Somalia FGM/C project to humanitarian cash assistance for drought-affected families. Partners also shaped joint learning: the Impact Seminar convened in Rwanda in October 2025 brought representatives of all Programme projects together for a week of outcome harvesting and thematic work, while project-level annual reflection and planning meetings brought community partners, government departments, faith leaders, youth groups and CBOs into review and planning. Capacity support was in most cases directed at partners' existing structures rather than new ones. In Adjumani, for example, disability inclusion was implemented through the existing structures of the Adjumani District Disabled Persons Union instead of establishing parallel mechanisms, and in Somalia the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs and district administrations came to rely on project-supported community committees for community engagement and the dissemination of policy. In financial terms, 78 per cent of total Programme expenditure in 2025 was transferred to local WV offices for project implementation.

Local ownership strengthened during the Programme period, although its depth varied. It was strongest where interventions built on existing community groups, cooperatives, village structures or local government practices, and where local actors managed resources or took collective decisions on the direction of activities. In Ethiopia's forest management and land-use related projects, user rights granted to cooperatives, jointly agreed rules and the accumulation of cooperatives' own assets strengthened communities' responsibility for sustaining results, and in savings groups,

youth cooperatives and livelihoods groups members managed their own savings, investments and productive activities. Because these structures were linked to members' own resources, incentives and collective decision-making rather than to project activities alone, they also contributed to sustainability. Participation of beneficiaries and local stakeholders was correspondingly broad-based and, in many projects, structural, extending from children and young people in protection clubs, peer groups, savings and entrepreneurship groups and community dialogues, to parents and caregivers, local leaders, faith actors, teachers, registered organisations and technical authorities involved in both implementation and oversight. Participation improved not only reach but also behaviour, relationships and norms: in several projects children's and young people's ability to express their views and influence decisions in their families and communities increased, while parents' willingness to listen to children and adopt non-violent parenting practices strengthened.

The effectiveness of local advocacy was one of the strongest localisation dimensions of the Programme. In several projects, community-generated evidence, collective organisation and dialogue with authorities contributed to tangible changes in services, protection practices and local resourcing. In Kenya, community-led advocacy strengthened the responsiveness of authorities in child protection cases as well as contributed to broader development results, such as improvements in roads and water infrastructure. In Somalia, the independent initiative shown by youth, religious leaders and community committees in promoting child protection and environmental responsibility demonstrated that advocacy was increasingly moving from project activity into local practice.

Localisation also met real constraints. In Ethiopia, the carbon component illustrated this: benefit-sharing arrangements were not sufficiently clear during implementation, and the cooperatives now carrying the results forward still require further professionalisation and stronger market linkages (see section 8.1). In Kenya, the Alale evaluation recommended strengthening county-level ownership and financing, indicating that responsibility had not yet been fully absorbed into county systems. In Rwanda, the Umurava evaluation found that youth livelihood initiatives required sustained support to remain viable after closure, that behavioural gains remained vulnerable to regression without continued reinforcement, and that geographic distance limited coverage of remote populations. In Somalia, coordination with authorities was slowed by competing institutional priorities and the limited availability of government staff, and gaps in financial and technical resources, particularly for livelihoods and wider outreach, remain a risk to continuity. More structurally, capacity support in the Programme was directed primarily at partners' ability to deliver and manage project activities rather than at their own organisational development priorities. WV has identified this same pattern in its own analysis of local partnering, alongside a tendency to approach partnering through the lens of risk and compliance and an inherent asymmetry in size and access to resources between WV and local partners.

A key lesson from the Programme period is that localisation requires continued investment not only in transferring responsibility to local actors, but also in strengthening their organisational capacity, access to resources after project closure, and meaningful participation in decision-making. The Programme also showed that local ownership is strongest when local actors are not treated merely as implementers, but as rights-holders, duty-bearers and partners with the capacity, legitimacy and channels to influence services, resources and decisions affecting children and communities.

6. PRIVATE AND MULTI-SECTOR COOPERATION

In 2025, WV Nordic started a partnership with the Finland-based solar technology company LyteFire in Kenya. LyteFire develops solar-powered solutions for areas with limited access to reliable energy. In addition to the pilot of a bakery using solar oven, groundwork was done in Kenya and Uganda for building solar ovens and cookers in collaboration with local TVET institutions. In Burundi, WV collaborated with Finnish GloCal Nutrition, a project aimed at improving the nutrition and health of mothers, children, and families through educational videos covering various topics such as pregnancy, breastfeeding, and nutrition. The videos are available in multiple languages to cater to different communities. In Rwanda, the local World Vision office participated in the Nordic Business Forum in Kigali in February 2025 and engaged with Finnish companies and institutions.

During 2022–2025, WV Nordic engaged with the private sector and business partnership platforms, for example, the Shared Actions workshop organised by Finnpartnership and Fingo in 2024

and 2025, to identify sustainable and innovative approaches for achieving development impact. Collaboration focused particularly on Finnish companies and was developed through direct partnerships and country-level opportunities in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda and South Sudan (non-MFA-funding).

The Finnish Baby Aid Kit partnership with Finnish Logonet Ltd. was the main operational collaboration during the Programme period. In Somalia, implementation started in November 2022 and was completed in December 2023. A total of 1,000 kits were distributed to encourage pregnant women to complete at least four antenatal care visits and deliver at health facilities. The project contributed to increased use of maternal health services with approx. 7,000 women receiving antenatal and postnatal care from qualified midwives. In 2024, the Logonet partnership continued in Rwanda through the distribution of 4,000 Finnish Baby Aid Kits in the Umurava project area and surrounding districts. The project strengthened the health system and community capacity by training 185 health providers and 1,609 Community Health Workers on antenatal care services, while community campaigns reached 29,661 people with information on antenatal care and facility-based delivery. In the project districts, deliveries at health facilities increased from 27,497 in 2023 to 35,948 in 2024.

During 2022–2024, the Programme collaborated with a Finnish company Tespack on Smart Solar Media System, a solar-powered audio-visual solution for off-grid settings in Uganda and Rwanda. The technology enabled World Vision staff and partners to use videos and other visual materials in trainings, awareness-raising and community engagement in locations with limited access to electricity, thereby improving the efficiency and quality of outreach to communities, beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Overall, private sector collaboration in 2022–2025 remained targeted and opportunity-driven, with the most concrete results achieved in maternal and newborn health, renewable energy-based solutions, and partnership pipeline development. Kenya and Rwanda emerged as priority countries for collaboration, reflecting both Programme needs and private sector interest. At the same time, most partnerships were initiated already during the previous (2018–2021) Programme, reflecting the challenges in finding companies and other actors for collaboration despite the emergence of new platforms.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

7.1. IN THE AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In 2025 and across the Programme period, project communication and advocacy focused on mobilising communities, raising awareness, sharing results, and keeping stakeholders informed. These efforts aimed to strengthen visibility, coordination, and accountability while advancing project-specific priorities and World Vision's national agendas and global themes. Across countries, projects used a wide range of channels and platforms, including community meetings, public dialogues, barazas, gadaa system assemblies, faith gatherings, mosque announcements, school forums, WhatsApp groups, phone calls, radio, posters, social media, and printed materials to reach community members, children and youth, caregivers, civil society groups, duty-bearers, and partner institutions.

Communication did more than increase visibility and share information; it also supported participation and feedback, both central to World Vision's accountability approach. Although methods varied by context, from traditional forums to digital platforms, community gatherings were generally the most effective channel. Children were mainly reached through schools and engaged through a mix of celebration and advocacy, especially on the International Day of the African Child, which often served as a key platform for amplifying children's voices and influencing decision-making, including through children's parliaments. Communities were also engaged through events such as World Environment Day, World Refugee Day, International Women's Day, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, and the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign. In most projects, World Vision's CVA approach was used to strengthen accountability, improve service delivery, and increase the responsiveness of duty-

Promoting School Meals in East Africa

Since 2024, World Vision Nordic has championed school meals across Burundi, Kenya, and Rwanda as part of WV's global ENOUGH campaign, an initiative to end child hunger worldwide by 2028. Advocacy has been central to this work. In Kenya, World Vision conducted a government education budget analysis in 2024 that directly contributed to an increased budget allocation for school meals. In Burundi, a 2025 conference brought together regional and national government representatives to strengthen political commitment to school feeding. Both country offices have actively engaged governments on commitments made under the international School Meals Coalition to provide meals for all schoolchildren by 2030. Beyond policy, the Programme has worked to turn commitments into reality — equipping school kitchens, establishing school gardens, and in Rwanda, partnering with 26 schools to plant 33,000 fruit trees, ensuring children have access to fresh, nutritious food. The result is a model that connects political will to community action, keeping children in school, well-fed, and learning.

bearers through constructive dialogue across sectors, including in refugee settings.

In Kenya, advocacy contributed to improved access to justice, infrastructure improvements, and greater youth participation in public processes. In Somalia, it supported stronger protection systems, more open public dialogue on FGM, and greater attention to environmental risks. In Ethiopia, advocacy reinforced inclusive participation in restoration and land management. In Rwanda and Uganda, advocacy helped address concrete service delivery barriers and strengthened collaboration between communities and local authorities. In Burundi, advocacy increased the responsiveness of local authorities to community feedback, improved the representation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in community committees, and brought inclusion into local development planning.

From 2022 to 2025, advocacy became a central strategy for promoting child protection, youth participation, gender equality, disability inclusion, environmental stewardship, and social accountability. The projects strengthened the capacity of community structures, youth groups, cooperatives, faith leaders, and civil society organisations to identify issues, analyse service gaps, engage duty-bearers, and influence local planning and resource allocation. The CVA approach

was especially important in enabling evidence-based, non-confrontational dialogue between communities and authorities, leading to greater participation in planning and budgeting. By supporting CVA, the Programme also helped increase the visibility and leadership of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in contexts where these groups are often excluded from decision-making.

As 2025 was the final year, many projects commissioned final evaluations, which were validated and shared with stakeholders. Projects that ended also implemented exit strategies, including dissemination of results and other measures to strengthen the sustainability of outcomes.

7.2. IN FINLAND

The objective of WV Nordic's Communications and Advocacy 2022–2025 was to increase the general public's understanding of current issues in global development with a focus on child rights and to make the results of WV Nordic's Programme visible to wider audiences. To achieve this, WV Nordic set the outcome "understanding of current issues in global development and positive attitude towards development cooperation has increased", supporting the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 4.7 and other SDGs. Progress towards the outcome was monitored through two outcome indicators and four output indicators.

Progress in 2025

COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

Outcome Indicator		Baseline	Final Target	2022 Result	2023 Result	2024 Result	2025 Result	
OCI 4.1.	% of Finns who think that development cooperation and development policy is important.	68%	68%	66%	63%	62%	71%	WV Nordic
OCI 4.2.	% of WV Nordic supporters who report that their understanding of challenges children face in the global south has increased	90%	98%	91%	93%	91%	90%	WV Nordic

Table 6. Progress of communication and advocacy indicators

Measured against the goals it set, WV Nordic has succeeded in producing engaging content for its audiences and has managed to communicate Programme results in an understandable way. The progress was measured through two outcome indicators. First, most Finns (71% in 2025) consider development cooperation important, a significant rise from previous years (2024: 62%). Second, a supporter survey revealed that 90% reported increased understanding of challenges faced by children in developing countries. The result falls just short of the target but remains strong given that the baseline was already high.

The progress was achieved through 1) content production for WV Nordic's social media, digital channels and print magazine, and 2) strategic media work focusing on target media outlets. During the reporting year, a total of 18 press releases and opinion pieces were published. Two field visits to Uganda and Burundi were organised to gather content and media materials.

Throughout the year, topics related to global development and WV Nordic's Programme, together with the expertise of WV staff, gained visibility in key Finnish media outlets. Opinion pieces, media coverage and other content consistently supported the organisation's communication and advocacy priorities for the year, including school meals, girls' rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities.

In 2025, promotion of school meals continued as the key advocacy topic, as WV Nordic has selected it as its specific focus within World Vision's global ENOUGH campaign, which aims to end child hunger worldwide by 2028. In addition to highlighting the issue in communications, a meeting with World Vision's child representatives and MFA's representatives was organised on the margins of the 2nd Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition in September 2025, in Brazil. An Op-Ed on school meals by WV Nordic CEO and Director General of MFA's Department of Development Policy was published by Lapin Kansa daily in September. School meals were also WV Nordic's focus in an open seminar related to education in developing countries, organised in Oodi Library together with two other NGOs (FELM and FIDA) in September 2025.

Trends, challenges and learnings in the Programme period 2022–2025

The Programme period began with the pandemic still affecting some activities, and public attention then shifted to the war in Ukraine. To reach audiences and get its message heard, WV Nordic focused on selected key themes in global development and in emergencies that were clear and relevant to its audiences. WV Nordic positioned the organisation in discussions around girls' rights, global hunger (school meals) and child rights in emergencies.

Engaging content was strategically repurposed across many different channels in social media, print, web, public service videos and photography exhibitions. In media relations, this was done

through press releases, op-eds and journalist briefs and pitches. WV Nordic served journalists by providing information and facilitating interviews both on global development as well as on fast-developing emergencies.

To ensure quality content, WV Nordic strengthened cooperation with World Vision International (WVI) and partner countries' WV comms teams, freelance journalists and photographers, as well as with innovative new partners with larger audiences, e.g. in social media.

Recognising the importance of producing content that is both authentic and compelling for Finnish audiences, WV Nordic organised 11 media and content-gathering trips during the Programme period. These resulted in dozens of communication materials for WV Nordic's channels as well as notable, in-depth stories in mainstream media.

Media hits focused on WV Nordic's chosen key priorities such as child protection (FGM), disability rights, youth employment and climate change mitigation. WV Nordic's staff or partners were featured in target media outlets such as Yle, MTV3, STT and many regional and local newspapers. In total, media hits during the Programme period had a potential reach of 302 million.

WV Nordic also created visibility outside the digital space, organising three photography exhibitions. The WV print magazine survey (2025) also revealed that readers are highly satisfied with its content, with 94% saying they are well or very well informed about the results of WV Nordic's work.

Going forward, building understanding and support for global development in an increasingly polarised environment will require WV Nordic to keep on focusing on its core themes that are relevant to its audiences. Co-creation with local freelancers and national office communications teams has been successful, and it needs to be further developed to challenge stereotypes and avoid harmful narratives. Children's voices need to stay in focus, and they need to be heard ethically and authentically. In addition, well-planned media visits from Finnish media have been very successful and are needed to create in-depth feature stories that captivate the audiences.

WV Nordic's content needs to meet ethical guidelines and communicate clearly not only about the impact but also about the challenges WV Nordic's work might face e.g. in fragile contexts. In a future full of AI, authenticity will be central to communication that builds understanding and support.

8. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

8.1 MEAL

WV Nordic's Programme followed the planning, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (PMEAL) plan created at the start of the Programme period. The Programme evaluation was conducted in 2024, and a learning event was organised for the projects following its completion. The evaluation informed the implementation in 2025, although not every recommendation was possible or relevant to implement in the final year. For example, the evaluation recognised that the Programme's results framework does not capture all the good work that is done. It was not appropriate to change it for the final year, but in the writing of this report, results not fully captured by the set indicators are also analysed.

Another recommendation by the evaluation was to collect and share lessons learnt and good practices between different projects. To encourage this, WV Nordic organised another Impact Seminar in October 2025 in Rwanda. The theme of the Impact Seminar was outcome harvesting, and it brought together representatives from all the Programme's projects for one week. There were sessions on outcome harvesting but also on more specific themes including gender, disability inclusion, child protection and participation, and youth employment and empowerment. The seminar included field visits, which prompted discussion of how activities are organised in different projects, and all sessions were documented.

All projects in the Programme consulted their participants and target communities regularly to stay accountable and get feedback to improve their operations. This took the form of meetings,

suggestion boxes, toll-free telephone lines, field visits, discussions during trainings, planning and review meetings and community-level discussions, which created opportunities for beneficiaries to provide feedback on the relevance, quality, and accessibility of activities. WV Nordic places emphasis on ensuring accessibility and inclusivity of available feedback channels, and the projects found creative ways to achieve this. The project in Adjumani, Uganda collects feedback in various ways and keeps a systematic record of it, categorised by type. Beneficiary selection criteria, roles, and responsibilities were clearly communicated by projects to reduce misunderstandings and promote trust. The Ejo Heza project in Burundi reported that the feedback from children, youth, community members, and partners was considered during coordination and reflection meetings and resulted in project improvements. The projects also met with their partners and duty-bearers to receive feedback. Ngoswet in Kenya reports that they met community partners, government departments, faith leaders, youth groups, and CBOs in annual reflection and planning meetings.

The projects had their regular learning cycles that contributed to improvements in project implementation, as well as realistic target setting. Most projects held reflection meetings at regular intervals as well as quarterly and/or annual review workshops. The projects adopted adaptive management to respond flexibly to feedback, lessons learnt as well as emerging risks. For example, the project in Ethiopia reports that learning from fire incidents led to strengthened community-led fire prevention systems and increased investment in awareness and firebreak construction. The Somalia child protection and environment project convened multi-stakeholder Learning and Reflection workshops, co-facilitated by the monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) and project teams, to review implementation progress, discuss challenges, and explore key learning questions, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, members of community-led committees, and representatives from relevant government line ministries, and by the inclusive approach they ensured that learning was grounded in real field experiences and diverse perspectives. In the project in Adjumani, the Results Matrix was updated in early 2025 to account for the changes and lessons learnt from the challenging operational context.

Evaluations

The End of Project Evaluation of **Adjumani Child Protection, Livelihoods and Environment Project** (2022–2025) found that the project was highly relevant, addressing key vulnerabilities in Adjumani in Northwestern Uganda, including poverty, child protection risks, and environmental degradation. The integrated approach combining child protection, livelihoods, and environmental interventions proved effective in improving household resilience and wellbeing. Significant progress was observed in household capacity to provide for children (70% to 87.6%), children's perceived safety (77% to 87.6%, still below the 93% project target), and youth influence in decision-making (70.6% to 90.4%, close to the 91% target). Livelihood outcomes were particularly strong, with income diversification increasing from 23.8% to 69.8% and over half of households reporting increased income. Food security showed only modest improvement (60% to 65.1%), a change the evaluation found not to be statistically significant ($p=0.195$) and remains a key area requiring further attention. The project achieved high adoption of sustainable environmental practices, rising from 0% at baseline to 75.9%, which contributed to improved production, food availability, and resilience. Child protection outcomes improved through increased awareness, stronger reporting mechanisms, and positive parenting practices, although harmful practices such as child labour and early marriage persist. The project demonstrated strong efficiency and coherence, leveraging partnerships with government and other actors while maintaining solid financial management. Sustainability prospects are positive, driven by strong community ownership, functioning local structures, and integration into government systems. Cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, disability inclusion, and conflict sensitivity were effectively mainstreamed but require continued targeted efforts for the most vulnerable groups. The evaluation concludes that the project made a substantial contribution to improving child wellbeing, livelihoods, and resilience, while highlighting the need for sustained support, particularly in food security and inclusion.

The **Assisted FMNR Project** (2019/20–2025), implemented by World Vision Ethiopia in Kindo Koysa, Offa and Shashemene districts, combined FMNR, enrichment planting, cooperative development and livelihood and carbon linkages to test whether integrated support would drive

community-led restoration and resilience. The terminal evaluation, based on a survey of 384 households, focus groups and an OECD-DAC criteria assessment, confirms that the Theory of Change is valid and operational. Environmental perceptions reversed completely: all respondents reported declining forest cover at baseline while none did so in 2025, and FMNR adoption - a narrower measure than the Programme indicator on sustainable techniques - reached 84% from a 35% baseline, with 96% of adopters practising on communal land. Livelihood substitution was the critical enabler, with charcoal selling falling from 53% to 3% and fuel wood selling from 56% to 22%. Asset diversification followed, modern beehive ownership reaching 89% and livestock owned by over 90% of cooperative-engaged households, and food security improved, with 98% of respondents reporting a better status and 67% of households reporting children eating three meals a day. Cooperatives evolved into robust institutions with elected leadership and bylaws, and disability inclusion moved from non-existent to operational, reaching 13% active participation by persons with disabilities. Women's participation rose to 82% in meetings and 84% in training, but evidence of transformative change, meaning women's control over forest product income and intra-household decision-making authority, remains limited. The evaluation assesses the project as relevant and efficient, noting that the low-cost, farmer-led model leveraged community labour to restore extensive landscapes. Sustainability prospects are promising, with 90% of households willing to continue forest management and FMNR embedded in routine land use, although carbon finance infrastructure is in place while revenue remains pending, leaving sustainability dependent on forest product income and cooperative viability rather than anticipated carbon payments. Long-term success will require further professionalisation of cooperatives and stronger market linkages, and unclear carbon benefit-sharing arrangements created friction during implementation, pointing to the need for transparent governance in any future carbon phase.

The **Umurava Area Programme** served Gisagara District from 2022, reaching 81,267 host community members and 9,316 refugees from Mugombwa camp. The final evaluation documented substantial progress in livelihoods, mindset change, education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), alongside deterioration in food security and in several child wellbeing indicators. Economic resilience strengthened considerably, with caregiver savings capacity increasing from 36% to 69.6% and youth employment rising from 78% to 83%. The programme catalysed meaningful mindset transformation, with positive attitude indicators rising from 4% to 35.5%. Perceptions of conflict management improved markedly, rising from 53% to 88.2%, although households reporting good social cohesion fell from 98% to 81.2%. Child labour declined from 13% to 5.9%, and adolescents reporting sexual violence in the past 12 months from 10% to 5.7%. Educational and WASH outcomes similarly progressed, with grade 3 reading proficiency rising from 0% at baseline to 35.3% and improved sanitation expanding from 66% to 86%. However, youth livelihood initiatives required sustained support to ensure post-programme viability, behavioural gains remained vulnerable to regression without ongoing reinforcement, and geographic challenges limited coverage of remote populations. To consolidate achievements and ensure lasting impact, the evaluation recommended prioritising sustaining livelihood and employment gains, reinforcing behavioural transformation through community leadership, strengthening WASH maintenance, and supporting marginalised groups.

The **Buliza Youth Empowerment Partnership Project** (2022-2025) was implemented in Rulindo District, Rwanda to address youth unemployment and advance inclusive development. The project targeted vulnerable youth including school dropouts, teen mothers, and youth with disabilities through a comprehensive approach combining life skills training, vocational education, entrepreneurship development, and financial literacy. The evaluation revealed significant achievements: 87.93% of participants secured employment or self-employment, up from 29.58% at baseline, a gain of 58.35 percentage points. The project trained 1,050 youth in trades such as welding, tailoring, and auto-mechanics, providing start-up kits and cash transfers for purchasing productive assets. Life skills training reached 89.50% of participants, up from 51.05% at baseline, with 83.46% demonstrating entrepreneurial skills, an area not measured at baseline. Financial inclusion expanded through savings groups engaging 94.10% of youth, up from 66.99%, while access to formal financial services rose from 4.97% to 57.22% and remained the weakest area. Beyond economic empowerment, Buliza advanced gender and disability inclusion, established 119 CBOs, and fostered community resilience. The evaluation recommended scaling vocational training, strengthening formal financial inclusion, and consolidating gains through youth cooperatives. Buliza

demonstrated how integrated, multidimensional youth empowerment initiatives can effectively transform vulnerable youth circumstances and contribute to sustainable development.

The external evaluation of the **Alale Anti-FGM project** (2022–2025) in Kenya concluded that the project's integrated, community-based approach was highly relevant and contributed to strengthening the protection of children from FGM, child marriage and other forms of violence. Functional community-based child protection mechanisms increased from 35.5% at baseline to 84.6% at endline, exceeding the project target of 70%. The proportion of children able to identify at least three methods of protecting themselves also increased from 32.6% to 57.9%. Savings for Transformation groups, Community Change dialogues, Alternative Rites of Passage and community advocacy were identified as particularly effective approaches for addressing the social, cultural and economic drivers of FGM and child marriage. However, the evaluation also identified continuing challenges related to cross-border FGM, insecurity, pastoralist mobility and prolonged drought, which affected participation and weakened household resilience. For the next phase, it recommended strengthening county-level ownership and financing, further developing cross-border cooperation, improving accessibility and meaningful participation for persons with disabilities, and linking economic empowerment activities more closely with community child-protection structures to sustain the results.

The **Roysambu Youth Livelihood Project** (2022–2025) aimed to improve the livelihoods, safety and agency of vulnerable youth in Roysambu and Mathare informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya, ultimately reaching 1,184 youth. The final evaluation of the project showed improved employment outcomes among trained youth, with 26.6% of them employed or self-employed (compared to 10.7% in control sites), and 20.3% engaged in quality work (up from 16.8% at baseline). While the results appear modest, they are strong for a challenging urban context marked by limited economic and employment opportunities and high population mobility, including among participants. At the same time, the evaluation showed significant improvements in feeling of safety and inclusion of youth: 80.7% of youth felt their community was safe (up from 55.6%), and 96.9% felt able to participate in community discussions (up from 75.9%). These results are important because the project, in line with World Vision's Youth Ready model, aimed not only to provide pathways to employment or entrepreneurship through TVET, business training and start-up support, but also to support the holistic empowerment of participants. Youth were therefore provided with foundational life skills and psychosocial support, for example, to build their confidence and self-reliance. The project promoted gender equality and inclusion, with 52.1% of direct beneficiaries being female and 3.8% being persons with disabilities. The 10% disability inclusion target proved ambitious in this context, and the evaluation recommended setting realistic, context-sensitive targets while continuing to strengthen inclusion measures.

8.2 RISK MANAGEMENT

A few of the risks identified in the Programme risk matrix materialised during 2025 (see below), while others did not. For the risks that the Programme was able to prepare for, prevention and mitigation strategies proved effective in the final year of the Programme; where occurrence could not be prevented, mitigation limited the consequences. There are several risks that need to be considered continuously, one of the most important of which is ensuring support from the local communities as well as authorities and political decision-makers. With local communities, the implementing staff engage in awareness-raising and provide accessible information to ensure transparency and to manage expectations. Collaboration with duty-bearers is necessary to bring about structural change, and the projects have fine-tuned their approaches to be mutually beneficial and fruitful. Active risk management and timely mitigating action ensured that projects could progress as planned; this proved necessary on several occasions in 2025 in response to weather events. Often the visibility of the WV brand and its staff is an effective means of avoiding risks like corruption and abuse, which is the result of decades of work to ensure the organisation's integrity. Safeguarding members of local communities and the security of staff require constant effort, training and decisiveness.

The Programme risk matrix was updated during 2025 as part of active risk management. The amendments reflected changes in the operating context as well as experience gained during implementation and covered both the assessed probability and impact of individual risks and their mitigation strategies. The updated matrix is attached to this report as an annex.

During 2025, a case of non-compliance with World Vision's procurement standards was identified in Somalia in relation to the procurement of audit services, resulting in a financial loss to the Programme. The case was detected through WV's internal monitoring and reporting systems, reported to WV Nordic and the MFA in accordance with agreed procedures, and investigated promptly. The financial loss was reimbursed to the MFA, and the staff member responsible was held accountable. Corrective measures were implemented to strengthen procurement controls in the affected project. No other cases were reported through these channels during 2025.

WV Nordic's risk management practices are grounded in ethical standards, child protection policies and adherence to anti-corruption guidelines. Key policies for risk management include the Code of Conduct Policy, the Adult and Child Safeguarding Policy and the Anti-corruption Policy. WVI has strong structures to prevent economic risks, such as corruption, money laundering and funding terrorism. Audit arrangements are described in section 8.3. WV staff globally undergo annual training and refresher courses on ethical rules and safeguarding practices. Additionally, WV maintains a robust whistle-blower policy, encouraging reporting of either suspected or evidenced misconduct, such as corruption and harmful behaviours like sexual abuse or harassment. WV Nordic's Programme guidelines instruct the projects to report all suspicions of misconduct immediately and habitually remind them of this obligation. Safeguarding concerns raised by community members enter through the feedback channels described in section 8.1 and are passed on to the national or regional office; depending on the type and severity of the complaint, the project team or national office informs WV Nordic. In severe cases, the WVI takes over the handling of the case. Risks are also assessed and monitored at the country level, facilitated by the Strategy Support Teams (SSTs). As part of WV's global practices, WV Nordic conducts organisational risk assessments and reports updates to the WV Nordic Executive Board and WVI twice a year.

Each project of the Programme conducts risk assessments annually and develops mitigation strategies, contributing to the overall Programme-level risk assessment. While the Programme's overall risk level is moderate, critical risks have been identified. The operating environment in 2025 added pressure across several dimensions. Reductions in US government humanitarian funding affected the availability of complementary support in Somalia and Uganda, where WV's projects operate alongside humanitarian actors. Prolonged drought, flooding and climate-related shocks affected livelihoods and household resilience in multiple project areas, increasing the vulnerability of participants and in some cases directly affecting implementation. Rising food prices and economic instability compounded these pressures, particularly for the most marginalised households.

Some risks are at the country level, such as political and environmental risks, rather than specific to projects, which occasionally complicates assessing their impact on beneficiaries or implementation outcomes. Often there are also indirect effects, such as insufficient rainfall endangering the safety, wellbeing and rights of women and girls due to tensions resulting from increased strain on households. Therefore, WV Nordic remains committed to supporting monitoring practices and facilitating communication across all partners to identify, prevent or mitigate risks promptly. This approach aims to ensure operational resilience and efficacy in tackling potential challenges.

There were several common themes among the key risks identified and addressed by the projects.

Risk 1. Climate-related risks and economic vulnerability of local communities

The populations that the projects of this Programme work with are economically very vulnerable for a multitude of reasons. Economic vulnerability is connected to climate change and environmental degradation but not solely caused by it; it is also because the target populations are very poor, live in areas where governmental structures are weak, if they exist at all, and have had to endure a range of stressors in their personal lives. Economic instability at project locations leads to fluctuations in market prices, which can undermine livelihoods. These factors compound the harmful impacts of a changing climate and environmental degradation that make known livelihoods more difficult or impossible, and people must find other means to survive.

The key risk to the projects was that participants would have to drop out of project activities to attend to their immediate needs. The projects placed emphasis on offering participants tools for long-term

benefit, such as climate-smart agriculture and forestry and TVET for professions and skills relevant in the coming years and offered training on financial literacy and strengthening market linkages. The projects also made practical arrangements to mitigate the risk of dropping out, for example by adjusting meeting times and locations, active follow-up and strengthening mentorship. In case of natural disasters, such as flooding or landslides, activities were rescheduled. For example, to mitigate the risk of dropping out of training or delaying participation in group activities, the Roysambu project in Nairobi intensified follow-up with households, adjusted training schedules to accommodate youth availability and strengthened mentorship support to keep participants engaged.

Risk 2. Weak government structures and political influences on implementation

Limited institutional capacity among local government duty-bearers remained a key risk in 2025. High workloads, resource constraints and staff turnover within local authorities affected the consistency and timeliness of service delivery. Political interference was a risk, especially at times of elections and economic crises. Projects mitigated these risks through conflict-sensitive approaches, strong safeguarding systems, local capacity building, flexible financial and operational planning and close coordination with authorities, communities and humanitarian partners. For example, in the case of the project in Adjumani, this risk particularly affected child protection and extension services where the project focused on mentoring, joint planning and gradual handover of responsibilities to duty-bearers. In Burundi, there was an election in June 2025 that caused a temporary cessation of all NGOs' field operations and therefore affected the implementation timeline of the Ejo Heza project. For the project in Ethiopia, inadequate support and cooperation from relevant government offices was a key risk to effective project implementation, and to mitigate it, the project prioritised empowering the community-based cooperatives while maintaining strong collaboration with the respective government offices.

Risk 3. Sustainability and local ownership at Programme end

Weakness of government structures posed a challenge to sustainability and system-level change at Programme closure. To ensure sustainability at systems-level, the projects gradually strengthened their institutional capacity, starting this work at the beginning of the project, to ensure a smooth transition. For example, the project in Ethiopia worked with cooperatives, government partners, and community leaders to enhance governance, accountability and long-term management capacity.

Community-based monitoring and social accountability mechanisms were used to support transparency and follow-up on commitments. The projects worked actively to increase citizen action and to enable citizens to hold duty-bearers accountable. By reinforcing collaboration rather than parallel systems, the projects managed to reduce dependency and enhance local ownership, even within constrained institutional environments. For example, the project in Alale, Kenya supported the mobilisation of local communities, which resulted in the introduction of a monthly mobile court, which improved access to justice for communities located far from judicial services. Ngoswet in Kenya supported the creation of platforms for active citizen groups and authorities to meet in a structured manner.

8.3 HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

Human resources and organisational capacity

The International Programmes team experienced staffing changes during the reporting period. The Programme Adviser responsible for the MEAL component went on parental leave during the year, creating temporary capacity gaps within the team. To ensure continuity, WV Nordic engaged an external consultant with specialised expertise in monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning. The consultant supported Programme-level MEAL work and strengthened the wider team's capacity through practical guidance, training and mentoring. A new team member joined in November 2025 and provided further support to the Programme team. Project responsibilities were also redistributed among team members to balance workloads, broaden country and thematic expertise, and promote continuous learning and professional development.

The organisational change negotiations, which concluded in December 2024, created an opportunity to reorganise responsibilities in line with the evolving needs of WV Nordic's international work. As part of the revised structure, the previously combined grants and humanitarian leadership function was divided into two positions. A Head of Grants and a Head of Humanitarian Aid took up their respective responsibilities in March 2025. This strengthened the management capacity available for institutional fundraising and humanitarian programming.

In addition to these two positions, the International Programmes team comprised five Programme Advisers with responsibility for project and Programme management. Team members also held specific cross-cutting responsibilities, including Programme finance, corporate innovations and sponsorship programming. The work of the team was led by the International Programmes Director, who also retained responsibility for selected projects and strategic Programme processes.

WV Nordic employed approximately 30 full-time equivalent staff members in 2025.

Competence development and staff wellbeing

The Programme team strengthened its technical and operational capacity through several training sessions and workshops during the year. These included training and practical support in MEAL, Results-Based Management and Programme quality. Relevant staff also maintained preparedness for work and travel in high-risk environments through Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT). HEAT is mandatory for WV staff whose roles require travel to or work in high-risk locations.

WVI also provided mandatory global compliance training. WV Nordic staff completed the required courses, including training on the World Vision Code of Conduct, dignity and respect at work, and the prevention of harassment. Child and adult safeguarding training remained compulsory for all employees. Programme team members completed the required safeguarding training and continued to promote safeguarding standards among implementing partners.

Managers received training in early intervention, coaching-based leadership and change management. The internal Environment and Climate Change Working Group, comprising staff members from different functions, also continued its activities during the year.

Staff wellbeing was monitored through regular staff surveys and management follow-up. Wellbeing was further supported through staff events and discussions during weekly staff meetings, including discussions on workload, resilience and coping with organisational and external change.

Programme management and governance

Programme management and oversight remained systematic throughout the reporting period. WV Nordic's Senior Leadership Team met weekly. Progress in the Programme, emerging risks, operational challenges and required management actions were reviewed on a monthly basis within the team.

The International Programmes Director maintained regular contact with the relevant Programme Directors and senior Programme staff in World Vision field offices. Scheduled meetings and ongoing communication supported transparent cooperation, joint assessment of Programme performance and the escalation of issues when necessary.

WV Nordic's Board of Directors convenes four to five times per year. Its committees, the Ministry and Fundraising Committee, the Governance Committee and the Audit and Risk Management Committee, generally met before each Board meeting and more frequently when required. These governance arrangements supported oversight of organisational performance, Programme implementation, financial management, strategic decisions and key risks.

Financial administration, monitoring and internal controls

WV Nordic's administrative and financial operations are subject to regular internal oversight within the World Vision Partnership and to independent external auditing. The MFA-funded Programme

is audited annually by an external auditor in Finland. Individual projects are also subject to annual audits conducted by independent audit firms in the respective Programme countries.

World Vision uses the Partnership Budget and Accounting System (PBAS) for Programme financial management and reporting. Project expenditure and budget implementation are monitored monthly by the responsible World Vision field offices and reviewed regularly by WV Nordic. Consolidated financial performance is formally assessed at least twice a year, with additional follow-up undertaken when significant variances, delays or risks are identified.

Regular virtual meetings are held with project teams to review financial performance, implementation progress and the quality and timeliness of reporting. Financial processes and internal controls are also assessed during monitoring visits using WV Nordic's updated financial monitoring tools. Identified issues are documented, followed up and escalated when required.

Members of WV Nordic's finance and administration functions participate actively in the wider World Vision Partnership Finance Network. The network supports the exchange of good practices, professional collaboration and alignment with Partnership-level financial policies and priorities. The staff member responsible for Programme finance also participates regularly in Global Field Finance Team meetings organised by WVI.

8.4 PROGRAMME FINANCES AND EXPENDITURE

Overview

The implementation period for the 2025 reporting year ran from 1 January 2025 to 31 January 2026, the one-month extension having been approved by the MFA in December 2025. Total Programme expenditure was €3,864,934, reflecting sound budget management across all categories. The Programme was financed through the grant from MFA of Finland (85.0%) and WV Nordic self-financing (15.0%), in line with the agreed co-financing ratio.

The MFA grant drawn in 2025 was €3,150,000. Together with €135,081 carried over from 2024 and net of €1,405 returned during the year, a total of €3,283,677 was available and fully utilised. No grant was carried forward beyond January 2026, and the returned amount is reflected in the financial statements. Some 78% of total expenditure was transferred directly to implementing partners for project activities.

The three budget revisions approved during the year demonstrate both the Programme's ability to respond adaptively to changing circumstances - exchange rate volatility, confirmed audit outcomes and an acute humanitarian situation in Somalia - and the transparency of WV Nordic's financial management. All revisions were submitted proactively, supported by clear justifications, and approved by the MFA within the Programme period.

Budget revisions

Three change requests were submitted and approved by the MFA during 2025. The first change request (approved 26 February 2025) transferred unused 2024 grant funds to 2025, estimated at approximately €138,000 at the time of the request. The largest single item was the Ethiopia FMNR project (approximately €55,000), where exceptional ETB exchange rate volatility had caused the available project budget to fluctuate sharply, leaving funds unspent despite active implementation under an acceleration plan.

The second change request (approved 12 September 2025) confirmed the final audited carry-over amount as €135,081 (slightly below the February estimate), with Ethiopia FMNR confirmed at €53,063. The project budget under category A was adjusted accordingly, and the total revised budget was set at €3,934,479.

The third change request (approved 9 December 2025) sought and received MFA confirmation that €30,000 within the Somalia FGM/C project budget could be used for humanitarian cash assistance rather than development cooperation activities. The funds were directed to drought-affected families in the FGM project area in Puntland, with a focus on GBV survivors, in response to a severe and deteriorating drought crisis. This did not affect the total budget or the project's budget line - it was a change of use within an already approved amount, requiring donor confirmation given the distinction between development and humanitarian funding. The same request also secured the one-month extension of the grant period to 31 January 2026.

Budget category	Original budget (€)	Revised budget (€)	Actual (€)	Variance vs revised
A. Projects	€2,967,131	€3,102,212	€3,032,159	-2.3%
B. Planning, Monitoring & Evaluations	€327,000	€327,000	€328,936	+0.6%
C. Communication & Advocacy	€230,000	€230,000	€233,310	+1.4%
D. Administration (Flat Rate 7%)	€265,267	€275,267	€270,530	-1.7%
Total Programme expenditure	€3,789,398	€3,934,479	€3,864,934	-1.8%

Table 7. Budget overview by category - original, revised and actual, 2025

Funding Source	Amount (€)	Share (%)
MFA of Finland Grant	€3,283,677	85%
WV Nordic self-financing	€581,257	15%
Total Programme expenditure	€3,864,934	100%

Table 8. Actual expenditure by funding source, 2025

The total expenditure of the Programme in 2025 was €3,864,934, of which €3,283,677 (85%) was financed by the MFA and €581,257 (15%) comprised self-financing from private donors. Overall, the financing structure remained cost-effective and in line with the approved budget. In total, 78% of Programme expenditure was transferred to partners for Programme implementation. The remaining funds were allocated to communication expenses (6%), project planning, monitoring, evaluation and capacity building (9%), and general administrative costs (7% flat rate). Personnel costs in Finland accounted for 6% of total Programme expenditure.

At the summary category level, no variance against the revised budget exceeded ±15%.

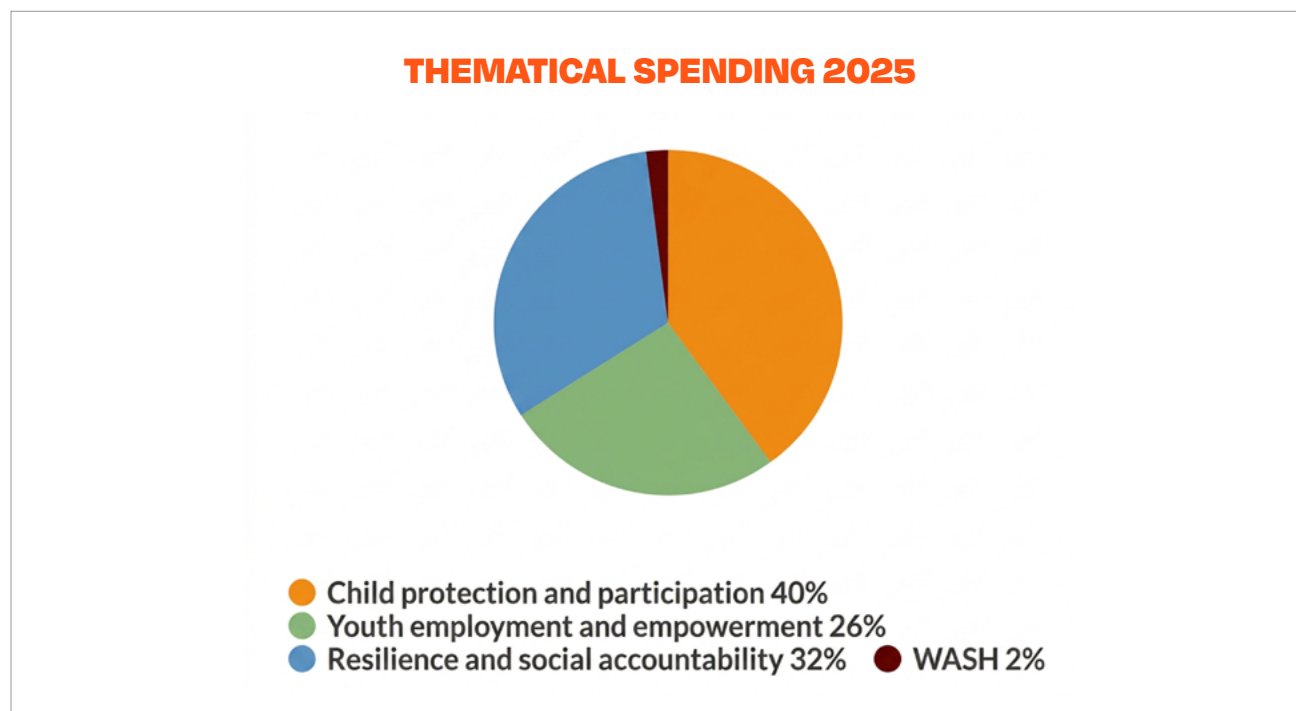


Figure 3. Programme's thematic spending

As Figure 3 shows, in 2025 the distribution of Programme costs across Outcomes 1–3 and WASH was as follows: Outcome 1: Child Protection and Participation 40%, Outcome 2: Youth Employment and Empowerment 26%, Outcome 3: Resilience and Social Accountability 32%, and WASH 2%. Funding supported the promotion of school meal programmes in Kenya, contributing to Outcome 1, and the deployment of solar-powered ovens in Uganda and Kenya, contributing to Outcomes 2 and 3. Costs for promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities are mainstreamed across all sectors.

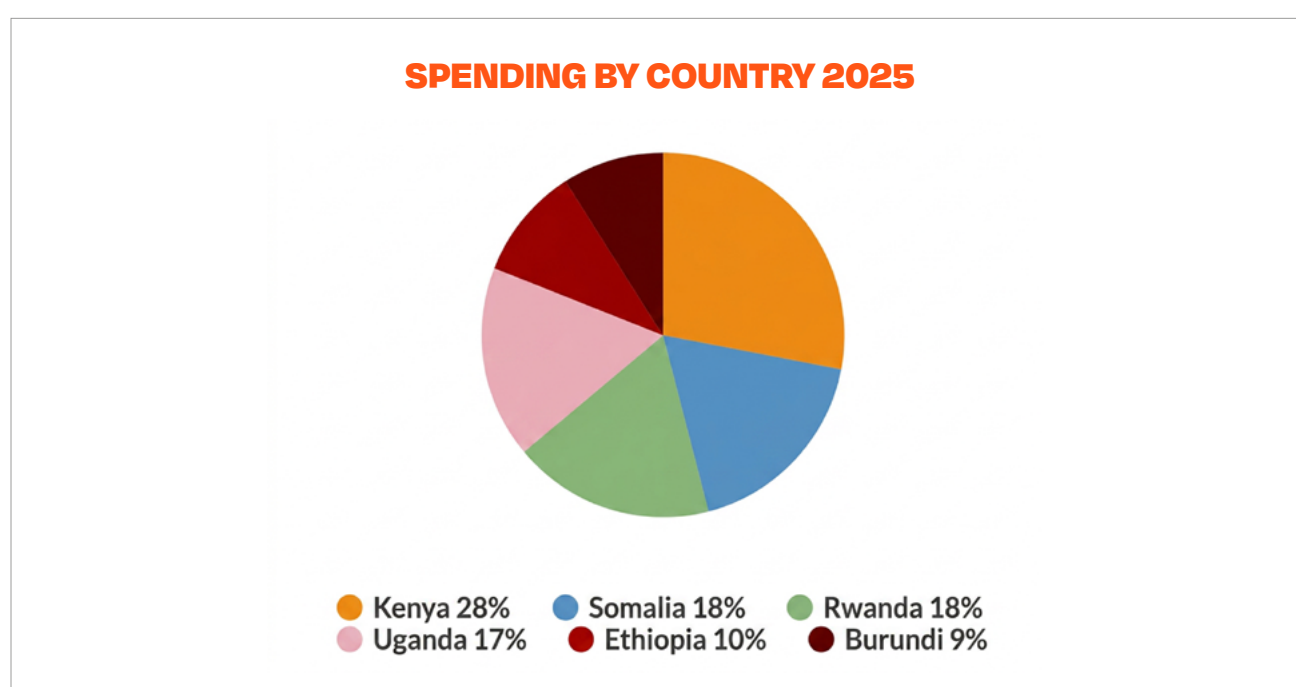


Figure 4. Spending by country 2025.

Programme expenditure was allocated across six countries through ten projects. As shown in Figure 4, the largest share of Programme expenditure occurred in Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda. Five of the six implementation countries, Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda, are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs). In 2025, 72% of the total Programme budget was spent in these countries. In Kenya, which is classified as a lower-middle-income country, WV Nordic's projects were implemented in some of the country's poorest areas.

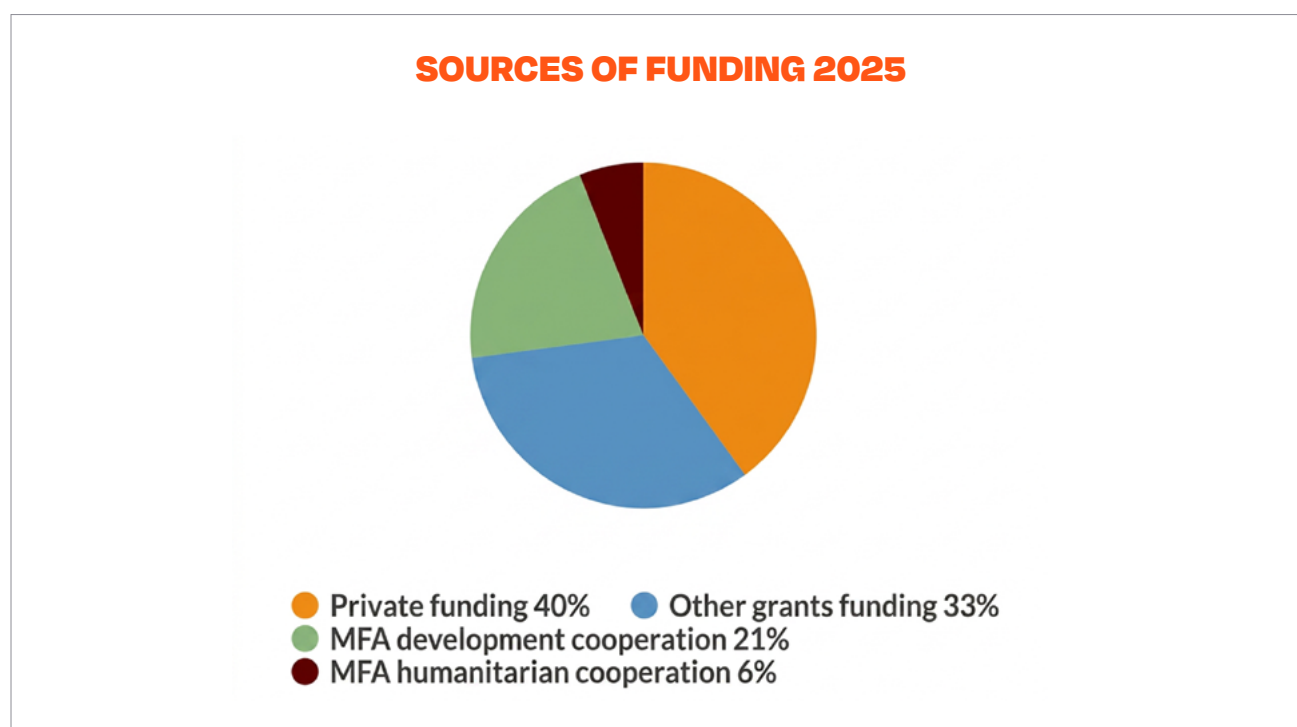


Figure 5. Sources of WV Nordic total funding 2025.

In addition to MFA development cooperation funding, WV Nordic's funding portfolio in 2025 included projects financed by the MFA Humanitarian Unit (KEO-70), Danida, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), European Union International Partnerships (EU INTPA), United Nations agencies (the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR), as well as private funding sources. This diversified funding base, as presented in the figure below, supports organisational sustainability and enables the leveraging of synergies across programmes and funding streams.

Financial performance 2022–2025

Across the full Programme period, financial management was sound, and implementation proceeded in line with the approved budget. No major financial challenges occurred, and the Programme remained within its approved funding envelope throughout. Carry-overs between years were modest and arose from legitimate implementation factors, most notably exchange rate fluctuations and end-of-year timing differences in partner reporting, rather than from underperformance or absorption problems. The co-financing ratio was maintained consistently across all four years.

