



Right2Grow Ethiopia Annual Report 2023

Summary



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Programme Overview 2023

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Lead Partner	World Vision
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1. Programme context

1.1 Changes in the country context

In 2023, Ethiopia experienced continued security concerns. Less than a year after the war ended in Tigray and northern Ethiopia, armed clashes between the Ethiopian National Defence Force and members of the Fano militia escalated across Amhara region during the week of July 31. This followed months of increased tensions and prompted the Government of Ethiopia to declare a six-month state of emergency in the region. In August 2023, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' (SNNP) Region is also dissolved and two new regions formed. Right2Grow is actively working with the newly established Central Ethiopia region and zonal key government actors including project intervention areas. This is an opportunity to advance key advocacy initiatives like establishment of a Regional Nutrition Council which was pending due to expected disintegration of the former SNNP Region. Nationally, growing humanitarian needs strengthened a recognition of the urgent need to adopt and accelerate implementation of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (HDPN) approach. Ethiopia's 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan emphasizes the need for increased engagement and coordination with development and peace actors to work to address the root causes and drivers of humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities. The mid-term review (MTR) also identifies this as a window of opportunity for Right2Grow to influence.

1.2 Risks and implementation challenges

Political instability, active hostilities and a volatile situation in Amhara region, as well as sporadic conflict at local level in some other areas, hampered effective implementation of Right2Grow and affected achievement of results. Right2Grow followed the security situation by jointly doing scenario planning. Some adaptive strategies used was to shift trainings to regional level when security situation and internet connectivity allowed as well as use phone for follow-up and coaching. Right2Grow also take advantage of the established strong relationship with local partners and communities to identify opportunities to implement. Unavailability and loss of institutional memory in some government sector offices, as attention shifted towards security issues, as well as continued high turnover of government officials and experts capacitated by Right2Grow contributed to the challenges. Right2Grow continue to assess the capacity gaps of decision makers and provide a tailored capacity buildings as per needs. However, this made it difficult to promote multi-sectoral coordination for nutrition and WASH policies and strategies. Another challenge is limitation of local government budget to address nutrition and WASH service gaps identified by the community through Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) task force. Therefore, focus is on small doable action that can be done by the community, service provider and available government budget. Further, the delay by government in establishing national Food System and Nutrition Council hampered the successful implementation of multi-sectoral efforts at all levels. Right2Grow is actively advocating at all levels to influence decision makers to establish the council, for example through the organizing of high-level national policy dialogue to address barriers in December 2023.

1.3 Cross cutting issues

Right2Grow puts focus on inclusiveness and ensures women, youth and people with disabilities are well represented and engaged in our advocacy work. In our interventions on community-level, we make deliberate efforts to ensure that these vulnerable groups are well represented in structures such as CVA task forces to address gaps in nutrition and WASH services. In the CVA task forces, more than 30% of members are women and more than 5% are people with disability. Right2Grow also conducts effective advocacy to ensure that the interest of women, youth, and people with disabilities are considered. For instance, while supporting promotion of SATO toilet pans in Gurage zone, Right2Grow influenced producers and local level private enterprises to avail pans that are suitable for people with disability.

2. Programme results

2.1. Demand and investment in basic social services for nutrition and WASH (Pathway 1)

- Raising Awareness on nutrition and WASH:** Awareness creation workshops engaging over 1,260 community members focused on their role to improve WASH and nutrition services in their community, use of existing WASH and nutrition services and indigenous knowledge.
- Facilitating Social Accountability and Dialogue Between Stakeholders:** Implementing social accountability approach Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) to empower community and demand for improved nutrition and WASH services in Woredas. Following monitoring standard and score card sessions, CVA task forces facilitated 74 interface meetings in which the community share identified gaps and priorities and community, government and service providers jointly create an action plan to improve the services monitored. Out of 345 commitments made by the government, service providers, and community in 2023, 189 are already implemented. For example, Enimay Woreda Water Office maintained 7 out of 11 (64%) non-functional water points, enhanced services at Fendika Health Centre through procurement of ultrasound and laboratory equipment as well as at Guangua Health Centre through hiring of an additional nurse and pharmacist, and community built a communal latrine using locally available materials in Geta Woreda.
- Capacitating Private Sector:** Support to private sector aims to improve availability of affordable WASH and nutrition services and expand the role of private enterprises in addressing nutrition and WASH challenges. Capacity building included skills gaps training to small-scale entrepreneurs, training and business linkage on SATO toilet pan, awareness raising on Seqota declaration programme and innovative interventions, and efforts to engage private sector in multi-sectoral coordination meetings. As a result, 42 targeted business enterprises are producing and selling different WASH and nutrition products.

Results

Code	Indicator	Baseline value	Target (year 3/overall)	Year 3 achievement	Notes/ comments
R2G.O C.1.1	# of actions in which communities formulate demands for improved (WASH and nutrition) services	0	75	172	Community through the established CVA task forces made actions like score cards, monitoring standards, and interface meetings to demand service providers and local government for improved nutrition and WASH services at health facilities, water facilities and schools.
R2G.O C.1.3	# of targeted barriers to good nutrition and/or WASH services successfully addressed by joint community and private sector initiatives	0	84	189	189 targeted barriers to good nutrition health, and WASH services were addressed by the joint action of the community, service providers, and government. Barriers included shortage of medical personnel at health facilities, non-functioning water facilities, and irregularity of nutrition screening service at health facilities.

R2G.O P.1.1	# of CSOs involved in R2G	0	8	8	Right2Grow Ethiopia consortium consists of 8 organisations. Consortium work with 156 tier-3 CSOs, 124 being CVA taskforces and Accountability Action Teams and 32 national CSOs.
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2.2. Civil Society Empowerment (Pathway 2)

- CSO Capacity-building on Advocacy:** Various capacity-building focused on enhancing CSOs advocacy roles and strategic positioning in influencing policies, budgeting and decision-making, on implementing advocacy strategies to address local WASH and nutrition challenges, and on communication and networking skills. Though this the partnership with CSO platforms Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA) and Ethiopia Civil Society Coalition for Scaling-up Nutrition (ECSC-SUN) were strengthened at national and regional levels. Equipped with improved advocacy knowledge and skills, CSOs are engaging more effectively with decision-makers at all levels.
- Strengthening Collaboration with CCRDA:** National CSOs panel discussion organised in collaboration with CCRDA bringing together 67 national CSOs and CBOs representatives. As a result, three advocacy agendas including nutrition multi-sectoral mainstreaming, WASH governance, and HDPN programming were selected to be carried out by CCRDA and its membership organizations.
- Revitalizing ECSC-SUN network:** Revitalizing workshops of 2 regional ECSC-SUN chapters to provide a platform for networking and membership expansion, progress updates and steps forward to become an active network. In Central Ethiopia and Sidama regions final TOR for the regional ECSC-SUN was endorsed and five steering committee members elected, out of which 3 of them are Right2Grow partners.
- Establishment of Accountability Action Teams (AAT):** Woreda-level structure which consist of multi-sectoral government sector officials, council members, and CSOs/CBOs representatives. Objective of structure to support the local advocacy efforts through generating evidence and amplifying community voices in agenda setting, policy influencing, budgeting practices, and decision making.

Results

Code	Indicator	Baseline value	Target (year 3/overall)	Year 3 achievement	Notes/ comments
R2G.O C.2.1	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions.	0	59	67	Right2Grow engaged in decision-making processes and influenced nutrition policy implementation, budget allocation, and put nutrition and WASH issues on the agenda at all levels. This includes Nutrition Coordination and Technical Committee meetings at Woreda, Zonal and regional level, budget influencing on Woreda level, and ECSC-SUN regional meetings. On national levels, this includes National Nutrition Coordination Body, Seqota Declaration stakeholder platform, MoH Annual Review Meetings and CSO-led platforms through CCRDA and ECSC-SUN.

R2G.O C.2.2	# of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency	0	5	5	Successfully carried out five overall advocacy initiatives. On local level, CVA task forces carry out social accountability initiative and as result nutrition, health, and WASH services are showing improvement. Inclusive service initiative is promoted through inclusive representation of vulnerable groups in advocacy. Efforts are also done to promote private sector to play their irreplaceable role in addressing problem of undernutrition. Although establishment of Food System and Nutrition Council is not yet realized at any level, Right2Grow influenced functioning of nutrition coordination committee and technical committee in operation areas as well as made significant progress advancing the issue on national level through the agreed next steps to solve legal barriers in policy dialogue. Promising progress made in engaging key actors to carry out HDPN initiatives.
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2.3. Adoption and mainstream of multi-sectoral approach to undernutrition (Pathway 3)

- Policy dialogue on Food System and Nutrition Council:** Organized high-level national policy dialogue to influence key decision-makers and generate policy recommendations for the draft proclamation of Food System and Nutrition Council establishment at all levels. As a result, it was agreed to establish, or revisit existing, a task force with defined TOR and timeframe to undertake a legal gap analysis and draft the proclamation to speed up the council establishment. It was also agreed to create inclusive space for CSO and private sector involvement in the government-led nutrition coordination body which is absent in the current policy framework.
- Nutrition Leadership Training:** Nutrition leadership training in collaboration with Ministry of Health to develop the leadership capacities of decision-makers, council representatives, and nutrition experts on national to Woreda level. Participants are observed to be influencing nutrition decision-making including budget allocation and facilitating smooth implementation of advocacy initiatives in their areas.
- Capacity-building on Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET):** Trainings for CBOs, CSOs and government representatives focused on understanding and practice of budget allocation and expenditure tracking and skills on resource management in nutrition and WASH sector. As a result of capacity building, budget analysis and public hearings, and advocacy on BMET, Right2Grow influenced 16 out of 21 Woredas and 1 zonal administration to allocate a total of ETB 5,051,470 (US\$ 91,844) additional budget for nutrition sensitive activities and functioning of the multi-sector coordination platforms.

- **Training on Resources Tracking and Partnership Management (RTPM):** Training on RTPM, a web-based tool for resourcing tracking and partner mapping tool, for all Right2Grow operation Woredas and Zones Food and Nutrition Policy signatory ministries experts. Done in collaboration with the Ministry of Health's Seqota Declaration Programme Delivery Unit. RTPM address challenges on inaccessible and poor quality of nutrition public budget allocation and spending.
- **Support on multi-sectoral planning:** Workshops on multi-sectoral integrated planning on regional and Woreda level, focused on review performance past year and planning for coming year. The integration planning exercise was facilitated using the Seqota Declaration multi-sectoral planning tool listing low-cost and high-impact nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions with estimated costs and targets. This contributes to reducing duplication of efforts, improving resource allocation, utilization and efficiency, and consequently improving policy implementation on the ground.

Results

Code	Indicator	Baseline value	Target (year 3/overall)	Year 3 achievement	Notes/ comments
R2G.OC.3.1	# of laws, policies implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	0	4	4	<p>Food and Nutrition Policy We are carrying out effective advocacy for the proper implementation of making working for the implementation of Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy by supporting multi-sectoral coordination efforts and advocating for the establishment of a nutrition council and agency at all levels. During the reporting period, we have influenced for the functionality of the newly and existing established multi-sectoral coordination body at sub-national level. We also effectively lobbied for the establishment of nutrition council at national and regional level. As a result of our efforts, the federal government is working to address the gap in the legislative framework the impeded the establishment of nutrition council.</p> <p>Seqota Declaration (SD) Implementation Plan (2016 – 2030) We have also supported the execution of SD implementation plan by supporting role out of RTPM in the Right2Grow target Woredas. As a result of our effort, we are able scale up the SD program beyond the target woredas. This helped the Right2Grow target Woredas to properly implement the multi-sectoral coordination mechanism, joint planning and reporting, and</p>

					<p>tracking partners and nutrition resource in their respective woredas.</p> <p>National Food and Nutrition Strategy (2022-2030) The strategy has been launched recently. MoH has conducted baseline study for the strategy. Right2Grow partners provided technical and financial support for the study.</p> <p>ONE WASH programme we have provided capacity building for the effective implementation of ONE WASH programme at Woreda and Zonal level.</p>
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2.4. Donors and international development actor’s coordination to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition (Pathway 4)

- Support on Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (HDPN) approach:** Positioned in the established technical working group and advisor team to support on the national nutrition centric-HDPN initiative. Right2Grow provided financial, technical and strategic support during landscape study, situational analysis, local experience sharing and strategic document development of operational guideline and implementation roadmap on how to materialize the HDPN approach to address malnutrition and reduce risk vulnerability as envisioned collective outcomes.

Results

Code	Indicator	Baseline value	Target (year 3/overall)	Year 3 achievement	Notes/ comments
R2G.OC.4.2	Degree of integration of the WASH-Nutrition-Peace programming by donors along the humanitarian-development nexus to address the underlying determinants of undernutrition.	0	2	2: HDPN concept is in place. Actors show interest and key staffs have awareness.	Significant improvement in understanding of HDPN concepts by donors, international actors and other nutrition actors. For example, Humanitarian Response Plan Ethiopia 2022 and 2023, jointly realised by Commissioner for the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission of Ethiopia and OCHA, plans to strengthen HDPN. Donors and international actors have increasing interest in support advancing HDPN through guidelines and establishment of platforms. Right2Grow and other CSOs have increased capacity on HDPN and to lobby and advocate towards influencing donors and international actors for WASH and nutrition nexus along the HDPN.

3. Advocacy Initiatives, impact stories and learning

Country advocacy priorities includes (1) amplify community voice, (2) widen civic space, (3) Food System and Nutrition Council establishment, (4) adopt triple nexus and (5) private sectors role in getting to zero undernutrition and zero people without access to basic WASH services. In 2023, Right2Grow has carried out various advocacy efforts under each priority to achieve the envisioned collective outcomes. The adoption of the Bridge4Voices approach put local communities and most vulnerable groups in the driving seat of advocacy efforts. The CVA approach empowers local communities and amplifies community voices in line with their needs and priorities to hold local government accountable for their decisions and actions. Further, Right2Grow enhances CSOs capacities and legitimacy on advocacy roles and strategic positioning to make a direct impact in influencing policies and budgeting practices.

3.1. Reflection on learnings and communication of results for scaling

One of the key achievements on national level is the impactful national policy dialogue on the establishment of Food System and Nutrition Council. Identifying the policy implementation gaps, Right2Grow built consensus to conduct legal assessment and draft proclamation which will further the process as well as influenced key decision makers to widen civic space for civil society organizations and private sectors. Moreover, Right2Grow provided financial and technical support for Ministry of Health's nutrition centric HDPN initiative. Right2Grow is well positioned in the national NC-HDPN technical working group and advisor team to collaborate and provide technical support in the further process to materialize the nexus approach. Collaborative efforts with CCRDA and ECSC-SUN and capacity-building of CSOs show promising progress to widen civic space and influence policies for strategic leadership and good governance. Strengthening of multi-sectoral coordination efforts and resource tracking system through nutrition coordination body and nutrition technical committee at all levels directly contribute to the overall implementation of Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy as well as Seqota Declaration programme. On local level, implementation of social accountability approach CVA have been effective to improve health, nutrition and WASH services according to the needs and priorities of the community.

3.2. Impact story: Policy Dialogues as Advocacy Tool

At Right2Grow, empowering local advocacy efforts to influence policy is at the core of our mission. If communities can get a seat at the table where change truly can happen at a national scale, we can create sustainable change for future generations. Ethiopia recently had a high-level policy dialogue on the establishment of a Nutrition and Food System Council. The event brought together senior government officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Prime Minister's Office, as well as representatives from non-governmental actors such as FAO, UNICEF, USAID, and R2G partner organizations, and private sector stakeholders.

The dialogue focused on an in-depth examination of the existing legal and institutional framework governing food systems and nutrition across the country. Participants highlighted Ethiopia's commendable efforts to implement a variety of legal and institutional frameworks aimed at improving food security and nutrition. However, a dedicated, independent government agency to oversee food systems and nutrition functions is still not part of existing policy.

Such events are essential when it comes to bringing different parties and perspectives to the table. Right2Grow aims to empower and mobilise civil society and political entities to lead to such moments where everyone can bring in their expertise and inefficient policy. To recognise the urgency of addressing this gap, such dialogues can create a roadmap on how to move forward with a decisive plan of action.

In the case of Ethiopia, this included the creation of a task force of nutrition and legal experts. The primary objective of this task force will be to conduct a rapid and comprehensive assessment of the legal and institutional landscape to identify gaps in Ethiopia's food systems and nutrition sector. The expected outcome is a set of strategic recommendations designed to engage and persuade senior government officials to formally establish the much-needed National Food Systems and Nutrition Council.



This unprecedented initiative marks a significant step forward in strengthening Ethiopia's commitment to effective governance of its food systems and nutrition sector, ensuring the well-being of its citizens and promoting sustainable development. This dialogue resulted in a convincing policy brief, and serves as a critical milestone in the pursuit of a healthier, more secure future for all.

4. Partnership and collaboration reflections

In 2023, the consortium continued to build on the fruitful collaborations contributing to the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme. A strong focus reflecting the strive to shift the power was on national partners, who play an essential role in consortium engagements and implementation. National partners were facilitated to engage in international capacity-building and learning opportunities as well as thematic focal point positions within the consortium. They are also capacitated to represent, collaborate with and lead zonal and regional platforms, influencing decision-makers on Right2Grow advocacy agendas such as nutrition budget allocations, improving service delivery, adopting the HDPN approach, and strengthen multisector coordination efforts of government, private sectors and CSOs operating in the localities. In programming, shift of power is seen in the focus on community-led CVA task forces for advocacy and social accountability on local level as well as efforts to enhancing local CSOs to be an amplifier of community voices.

The established partnership with CCRDA and ECSC-SUN were further strengthened and founded successful regional and national capacity-building on advocacy, enhancing capacities of CSOs, CBOs and other stakeholders to jointly work on nutrition and WASH programs in their operational areas. Right2Grow also had effective collaborations with government actors like Ministry of Health, Seqota Declaration Programme Delivery Unit, and other sectors. This was essential for supporting and influencing initiatives around Food and Nutrition strategy, strengthening of multisector efforts, and integration of BMET and resource tracking and partnership management tool. Right2Grow maintained cordial relations with the Dutch Embassy, reflecting a commitment to collaboration also seen through the initiative to assess and link strategic partnerships in Ethiopia. Engagement of the Embassy on key events such as MTR process as well as high-level policy dialogue on Food System and Nutrition Council was of great value to Right2Grow.

Adaptive management was primarily activated due to the security situation in Amhara. In close collaboration with local government structures, Right2Grow developed a conflict scenario and contingency plan to manage situations of heightened security issues and consequences of state of emergency such as public gathering and travel restrictions. Showcasing flexibility and commitment to objectives, some activities could be remotely managed by phone and some capacity building could shift from community, Woreda and zonal levels to regional level. Additionally, due to continued disintegration and restructuring of the SNNP regional structure, partners focused implementation on Woreda and Zonal level planned activities by engaging responsible government sectors, CSOs and Private sectors until the dissolving of the region were formal.

5. Programme reflections

Reflecting on implementation 2023, Right2Grow is progressing well towards most of the objectives. Capacitated community-led social accountability structures are contributing to community empowerment on rights and entitlements, inclusive community participation and exercise of accountability towards key sectors, with the result of improved nutrition and WASH services. Local CSOs show increased ability to engage with government platforms and offices, creating space for CSO advocacy. On government level, improved multi-sectoral ownership for nutrition, particularly at Woreda levels, and strengthened multi-sectoral nutrition coordination platforms to jointly plan, report

and monitor performance is notable. Particularly, there are strong results of influencing decision makers to allocate a budget for nutrition on regional and local level. Steps are achieved to support materializing of HDPN, within the initiative of Ministry of Health's operational guideline and implementation roadmap, while further work is required to achieve related objectives. The expenditure in 2023 was in line with the budget. While important progress has been made in implementing programme objectives, a hampering factor in especially Amhara region was the security context and related consequences.

Valuable lessons learned include the importance of established CVA task forces in enhancing inclusive community participation and social accountability towards duty bearers, as well as the importance of capacity building of government staff. Particularly the nutrition leadership training play a key role in capacity and commitment of government experts to take meaningful actions to improve the nutritional status of the community they serve. Additionally, the partnership with Seqota Declaration coordination office at national level contributed to successful efforts to integrate BMET and resource tracking tools within Seqota Declaration implementation plan in expansion phase woredas. Further, Right2Grow is making deliberate efforts to ensure sustainability of the programme. Capacity strengthening of communities and shifting the power to local level CBOs/CSOs, exemplified by CVA task forces and Accountability Action Teams, create local leadership and ownership. Strengthening of government structures aim to enhance multisector approaches and coordination within plans and resource allocation. To exemplify this, local government now have capacity and tools to conduct budget monitoring and expenditure tracking and multi-sectoral integrated planning, based actions on the voice of the community and system to generate evidence for decision-making provided through CVA task forces. Moreover, joint efforts with key stakeholders such as CCRDA, ECSC-SUN, and government actors enable synergies and stronger advocacy.

6. Conclusion and way forward

In conclusion, the program has made significant strides in achieving country advocacy objectives, particularly in fostering community empowerment and multi-sectoral collaboration to address nutrition and WASH challenges. Despite challenges such as security context, the program has established valuable collaborations, empowered community structures, and influenced policy implementation at various levels. Strengthening of existing partnerships and effective utilization of existing civic space like coordination platforms and networks will be important moving forward, also emphasized in the mid-term review. In 2024-2025, the program will prioritize follow up and establishment of the Food System and Nutrition Council at all levels to enhance the system and governance on nutrition. Focus will also be on influencing and advancing the HDPN initiative and engagement of private sector through capacity building and system strengthening to address critical barriers on accessing basic services.

Budgeting 2024 and 2025 considered progress during 2023 and therefore allow for achievement of objectives. However, there is need for close monitoring of fund spending and implementation progress particularly related to security context to ensure management of 5-year allocation and objectives.