



2024

ENDLINE

EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT IN UGANDA

Client: Ministry of
Foreign Affairs, Iceland

Vashi Impact Group, 8 March's Close,
Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5DX



Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	IV
LIST OF FIGURES	V
LIST OF TABLES	VI
ABBREVIATIONS	VII
DASHBOARD OF PROJECT INDICATORS	VIII
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	IX
INTRODUCTION.....	IX
APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	IX
FINDINGS	IX
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES: GENDER EQUITY AND INNOVATION	XI
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	XII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT.....	1
1.2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW.....	1
1.3. AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION	2
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND METHODS	3
2.1. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	3
2.2. DATA COLLECTION METHODS	3
2.3. SURVEY SAMPLING.....	4
2.3.1. <i>Quantitative survey</i>	4
2.3.2. <i>Qualitative sampling</i>	5
2.4. FIELD WORK.....	6
2.5. DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS.....	6
2.6. DATA TRIANGULATION	8
2.7. LIMITATIONS.....	8
CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS	9
3.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	9
CHAPTER 4: RELEVANCE	12
4.1. RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAMME TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF UGANDA.....	12
4.2. ALIGNMENT OF PROJECT WITH DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORKS	14
4.3. ALIGNMENT WITH THE MANDATE OF UYDEL	15
4.4. ALIGNMENT WITH DONOR PRIORITIES	16
CHAPTER 5: COHERENCE	17
5.1. INTERNAL COHERENCE.....	17
5.2. COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.....	18
5.3. COLLABORATIONS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR.....	20
5.3.1. <i>Factors that limit the extent of collaborations</i>	21
CHAPTER 6: EFFECTIVENESS	22
6.1. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT	22

6.1.1. Outcome level analysis.....	26
CHAPTER 7: IMPACT	42
7.1. POSITIVE CHANGES	42
7.2. UNINTENDED IMPACT	46
CHAPTER 8: EFFICIENCY	47
8.1. AVAILABILITY AND ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES	47
8.2. ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUTPUTS WITHIN THE SET TIMEFRAMES.....	47
CHAPTER 9: SUSTAINABILITY	49
CHAPTER 10: CROSS-CUTTING FINDING.....	51
10.1. GENDER EQUITY	51
10.2. INNOVATION	53
CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION	53
8. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	57
9. ANNEXES	61

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the main and final product of the endline evaluation of the Urban Youth Empowerment Project (YEP). It is a product of extensive consultations of a wide range of stakeholders, both in Uganda and Iceland. Vashi Impact Group (VIG) would like to acknowledge the support provided by these stakeholders for the realisation of this endline evaluation.

We would like to thank Icelandic Church Aid (ICA) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for facilitating the evaluation process. Staff from these institutions were involved at different stages of the evaluation process. We recognise the important in-house support provided by the staff at MFA, particularly Dr. Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir and Sóley Ásgeirsdóttir and at ICA, especially Kristin Ólafsdóttir.

VIG would like to thank all staff from Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) and the Lutheran World Federation – World Service (LWF) who were interviewed within the scope of this evaluation for their critical insights.

The fieldwork operations in Uganda were managed by VIG's research assistants on the ground with oversight responsibility from Ezharulhaq Fazli. Dr. Ritu Mahendru played an invaluable role as quality assurer throughout the evaluation process as well as the development of the report. The report was authored by Busisiwe Moyo, Garikai Zinumwe, and Twinkle Jaspal.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: age and gender of interviewed youth	9
Figure 2: marital status and level of education	9
Figure 3: categories of interviewed project beneficiaries	10
Figure 4: status of school and training attendance	10
Figure 5: % youth who joined courses voluntarily	26
Figure 6: % youth with employable skills who are gainfully employed (including self-employment) as a result of the project	27
Figure 7: youth employment status	29
Figure 8: skills youth were trained in.....	28
Figure 9: support from the centre and use of skills.....	31
Figure 10: % of youth who have increased incomes as result of employment.....	31
Figure 11: % of youth with basic knowledge about SRHR	34
Figure 12: % of youth participants with basic knowledge about SRHR by age and gender	34
Figure 13: % of youth accessing and utilising SRH services.....	35
Figure 14: % youth practicing safe sex	38
Figure 15: % of youth practicing safe sex	39

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sample Size Reach.....	5
Table 2: Key Informant Interviews.....	5
Table 3: Number of focus group discussions.....	6
Table 4: People who youth reside with	11
Table 5: List of organisations targeting youth and were mentioned by FGD participants	20
Table 6: Extent to which the course studied was appropriate.....	24
Table 7: Perceptions on the helpfulness of the training received.....	24
Table 9: Accessibility and utilisation of SRH services within the communities.....	37

ABBREVIATIONS

ART	Anti-retroviral Therapy
CDO	Community Development Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commercial Sex Worker
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-based Violence
ICA	Icelandic Church Aid
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
LWF	Lutheran World Federation – World Service
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PAC	Post Abortion Care
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UPHIA	Uganda Population-based HIV Impact Assessment
UYDEL	Uganda Youth Development Link
YEP	Urban Youth Empowerment Project
VIG	Vashi Impact Group
VHT	Village Health Team

DASHBOARD OF PROJECT INDICATORS

Indicators	Target	Baseline (2019)	Midterm (2021)	Endline (2023)
% youth with employable skills who are gainfully employed (including self-employment) as a result of the project	85%	50%	64%	66%
% of youth who have increased incomes as result of employment	60%	12%	66%	93%
% of youth with basic knowledge about SRHR as a result of the project	90%	65%	99%	92%
% of youth accessing and utilising SRH services	70%	37%	54%	91%
% of youth expressing a positive change from risky sexual behaviour as a result of the project	60%	56%	59%	82%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Urban Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) Phase-II, implemented by Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) and Lutheran World Foundation – World Service (LWF) in collaboration with Icelandic Church Aid (ICA), aimed to address youth unemployment and associated poverty in Kampala's urban slums from 2020 to 2023. With funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the project targeted vulnerable youth aged 13 to 24, offering skills development and sexual reproductive health (SRH) services. The evaluation, aligned with MFA's policy and OECD-DAC standards, focused on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and thematic considerations. It also explored innovation factors and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of MFA-supported projects in Uganda.

Approach and Methodology

The evaluation approach was consultative, involving stakeholders for effective participation and ownership. A theory-based framework, particularly suitable for complex programmes, was employed to assess causal relationships between project activities and outcomes. Aligned with OECD criteria, the evaluation focused on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and thematic considerations. The thematic criterion explored gender equality and human rights, while also addressing the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collection methods included desk reviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and a youth survey in three locations of Kampala, i.e., Makindye, Nakawa and Rubaga. While 400 youth aged between 13 – 24 years were targeted in the survey, the study reached 412 youth across all locations. The qualitative data collection methods, such as FGDs and KIIs, provided rich insights, while quantitative survey offered numerical trends. Ethical practices and respect for anonymity were maintained throughout. The data triangulation approach involving qualitative, quantitative, and secondary data ensured a comprehensive approach to the evaluation providing in-depth insights into the ground realities. Despite difficulties in mobilising dropouts, the evaluation successfully utilised a multi-faceted methodology, providing a nuanced understanding of the Urban Youth Empowerment Project.

Findings

Socio-Economic Demographic Characteristics

The sociodemographic characteristics of the 412-youth interviewed through the quantitative survey offered insights into the composition of the target group. Notably, most of the respondents were females, constituting 67.2%, while males accounted for 32.8%. This trend remained consistent across all locations. The age distribution revealed that a significant proportion of surveyed youth were 18 years and older (77.7%), with 22.3% falling within the 13 to 17 age group. Only 12% (14% females vs 8% males) of the youth reported being married. In terms of educational attainment, 55% had completed secondary education, 43% had finished primary education, and 2% had technical or college education. Only 5.6% were currently attending an educational institution, with variations across locations. Furthermore, 62% of the respondents had undergone training, while 38% were still in the training process at UYDEL. Regarding living arrangements, 35.1% mentioned staying with either their mother or father, 19% with both parents, and 14.6% expressed independence or staying alone. Analysis by gender showed that a higher percentage of males tended to stay alone (24.6%) compared to females (9.4%). This comprehensive socio-demographic profile provides a nuanced understanding of the characteristics of the surveyed youth, essential for interpreting the evaluation findings.

Relevance

The chapter on relevance establishes the Urban Youth Empowerment Project's pronounced alignment with the socio-economic challenges faced by youth in Kampala, particularly those residing in the slums. The research discerns the programme's efficacy in addressing the intricate web of issues stemming from individual, household, community, and national factors. Key findings accentuate the project's pertinence to Uganda's dynamic demographic landscape, marked by rapid population growth and a staggering 62% youth unemployment rate. The YEP's strategic approach, encompassing vocational skills, livelihood development, and comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) education, emerges as a robust response to the complex challenges prevalent among the targeted youth, especially in slum areas. Moreover, the success stories narrated within the chapter serve as compelling testimonials to the tangible impact of the YEP. Instances of transformed lives improved economic standings, and behaviour change underscore the project's efficacy in addressing not only immediate livelihood needs but also contributing to positive shifts in the overall well-being of the youth participants. The chapter also accentuates the YEP's strategic alignment with global and national development frameworks, contributing significantly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and addressing key issues outlined in Uganda's National Youth Employment Policy. While recognising the project's current relevance, the chapter anticipates the importance of adaptive measures to sustain alignment with the ever-evolving socio-economic landscape in the upcoming project phases.

Coherence

The chapter on coherence delves into internal and external partnerships and collaborations of the YEP implemented by UYDEL. Key findings reveal the strength of the partnership between UYDEL and LWF, marked by a complementary relationship drawing on each other's core competencies. This collaboration, spanning over a decade, showcases successful information flow, capacity building, and effective implementation. The communication channels have improved over the project phases, enhancing transparency and coordination. However, the hierarchical communication structure at times leads to delays, suggesting room for improvement in responsiveness to urgent matters. External collaborations, especially with other civil society organisations (CSOs), government institutions, and the private sector, have significantly amplified the project's impact. While YEP focuses on comprehensive services for youth in slums, it strategically collaborates with organisations addressing specific needs, ensuring a more holistic support system. Challenges, such as resource constraints and ineffective referral systems, are acknowledged, emphasising the need for proactive planning and coordination among collaborating entities. The findings relay the importance of these collaborations in addressing complex youth challenges comprehensively. Looking forward, the findings suggest refining coordination mechanisms to capitalise on existing synergies and further enhance the programme's impact on the socio-economic well-being of youth in Kampala's slums.

Effectiveness

The Effectiveness chapter delves into the multifaceted effectiveness of a youth training project, focusing on both Outcome 1 and Outcome 2. Under Outcome 1, which aims to equip vulnerable youth with employable skills, the study unveils insights into the completion rates and challenges faced during training. Among the 412-youth interviewed, 234 completed their courses, with 72.4% receiving certificates. Challenges leading to dropout include issues of distance, mobility, inadequate resources, and economic constraints. Despite falling short of the 85% target, 66% of youth with employable skills secured employment, revealing the impact of the project on enhancing their employability. However, obstacles like discrimination, lack of networks, and inefficient feedback mechanisms highlight areas for improvement in supporting youth employment. Outcome 2, dedicated to increasing youth access to SRH services, indicates a positive trajectory. The project exceeded the set target of 90%, with 92% of youth

demonstrating basic SRHR knowledge. Access to SRHR services rose to 91%, surpassing the 70% target. The findings also shed light on the transformative impact of the project on risky sexual behaviours, with 82% of youth expressing positive changes. Despite challenges such as instances of shame and discrimination during SRHR service seeking, the project has effectively empowered youth, fostering proactive attitudes toward their sexual health. The chapter emphasises the need for targeted interventions considering gender and location variations. Overall, the findings showcase the project's successes while pointing out areas for enhancement to further empower and support vulnerable youth effectively.

Impact

In terms of Impact, the project has undeniably generated positive changes in the lives of targeted youth, fostering self-esteem, economic empowerment, and a renewed sense of purpose. Success stories exemplified by individuals like Namwanje Jackie and Maurice Ssekiziyivu underscore the tangible benefits of vocational training in securing employment and improving overall well-being. The impact extends beyond individual transformations, contributing to reduced involvement in illegal activities and a decline in risky sexual behaviours. However, unintended positive outcomes, such as support from local leaders, and challenges like limited enterprise support and discrimination, have emerged. This concise overview highlights the project's successes and areas for improvement, emphasising the importance of a holistic approach in the subsequent phase to ensure sustained positive impacts.

Efficiency

The project's efficiency was influenced by resource availability and adequacy, with receipt of funds delayed in some instances and impacting timelines. While concerns were raised about insufficient funds affecting practical lessons, effective financial management prevented budget overruns. Despite challenges, the project achieved outputs within set timeframes, including community sensitisation, youth recruitment, skills development, and timely course completion. Some delays, notably due to COVID-19, affected specific activities, but the overall management approach facilitated successful project realisation.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the project reflects the importance of partnerships in the YEP project. UYDEL/LWF effectively leveraged existing networks, forging new collaborations for enduring outcomes. While the project successfully empowered youth, the reliance on external donor funding poses a challenge to long-term sustainability. Stakeholders highlight the need for diverse funding sources, private sector involvement, and alumni contributions. Balancing immediate needs with long-term impact is crucial. The transfer of knowledge to the youth emerges as a lasting aspect, fostering self-reliance. To secure the project's legacy, comprehensive strategies and funding exploration are essential for sustained success beyond current phases.

Cross-Cutting Themes: Gender Equity and Innovation

The cross-cutting themes evaluated within the project highlighted some challenges in course selection, training, and employment. Social norms influenced course choices, occasionally leading to perceived skewness towards courses preferred by females. Unequal treatment and bullying were noted during training, impacting the overall learning environment. In the job market, females faced issues like sexual harassment and discrimination. The findings underscore the need for continuous efforts to address gender-related challenges. On the innovation front, the project successfully introduced sports and talent shows to enhance community relations. Short courses alongside long-term ones showcased adaptability, enabling quicker skill acquisition for economic empowerment. These innovations contribute to the project's effectiveness, reflecting a dynamic approach to address evolving needs.

Recommendations

Project specific recommendations

Recommendations for project improvement include enhancing equipment availability and modernising technology to align with market standards, addressing attendance and completion challenges through innovative strategies, establishing regular feedback mechanisms for training effectiveness assessment, providing start-up kits, strengthening job placement efforts, enhancing post-graduation mentorship, and fostering youth empowerment through diversified course offerings, community awareness programmes, sustainability initiatives, and safeguarding protocols to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all participants.

Feedback and training

Improve the availability of equipment and materials for training: the evaluation has shown the adverse effects stemming from the limited availability of equipment and materials during training sessions. These courses are intended to provide hands-on experience to the youth, but the scarcity of resources hinders this objective. Enhancing the availability of equipment and materials will strengthen the efficiency of practical training sessions.

Limit the number of students per class: considering the size of the classrooms and limited equipment on one hand, and the financial constraint on the other, it is recommended that UYDEL reduces the number of students per class in the interim. Whilst the ultimate strategy would be to expand the facilities and acquire additional equipment (as recommended above), UYDEL should consider limiting the number of students per class in the interim so that there is no congestion, and the number-to-equipment ratio can be minimised too.

Improve the attendance and completion rates: the findings reveal that certain young individuals enrolled at the Centres face obstacles such as irregular attendance and failure to complete their courses due to various factors. These are due to lack of motivation or personal reasons including frequent change in areas of residence. It is recommended that UYDEL facilitates transfers between centres to improve attendance and completion rates by the youth. The food component should become an integral component of similar future programmes as it enhances attendance and completion rates in addition to improving concentration during lessons.

Implement a regular feedback mechanism: establish regular feedback mechanisms to continuously assess the youth's perceptions of the training's effectiveness. Such an ongoing dialogue can help identify areas of improvement in real time and address concerns promptly.

Livelihood and employment

Provision of start-up kits for self-employed youth: this is an important component in changing the opportunities for self-employed youth considering their economic background as well as in the drive to facilitate self-employment as compared to seeking jobs in already existing enterprises. There is evidence indicating that those who have completed training are able to start their own enterprises.

Strengthen job placement strategies: the findings demonstrated that there is a considerable proportion of youths who remain unemployed after training. The evaluation acknowledges that efforts are already being made to place trained youth in existing enterprises. However, due to the high proportion of youth who are unemployed after training, it is essential to enhance efforts of collaborating with the Alumni, private businesses, industries, and local communities to create more avenues for employment matching the skills developed through the project.

Continued mentorship for Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups and supporting them in attaining funding: to support the sustainability of the VSLA groups, UYDEL can maintain ongoing mentorship for the groups with a focus on assisting them in securing funding as well. This would involve continuous guidance in capacity building, including financial management and business development. Additionally, UYDEL could also support VSLAs in scouting for donors willing to fund smaller groups and support these groups with donor stewardship and proposal writing. By combining mentorship, capacity building, donor scouting, and proposal writing, the aim is to empower VSLA groups to navigate challenges, enhance their internal capacities, and successfully access funding to sustain themselves in the longer run.

Youth empowerment

Removing barriers to economic participation, providing tailored support for personal development, and fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration within the youth community can collectively contribute to youth empowerment. As such, by addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by young individuals, UYDEL plays a vital role in nurturing their potential, promoting their well-being, and empowering them to achieve their aspirations. We propose the following recommendations:

Seek alternative funding mechanisms to the youth: the review of the funding mechanism for youth enterprises reveals that the current methods are inadequate in supporting ventures initiated by young individuals. UYDEL and its partners are encouraged to explore alternative funding mechanisms, such as cash transfers or small grants with soft conditions applied to it such as attending mandatory training. This would ensure that the funding mechanism continues to empower youth entrepreneurs while also relieving them from the current loan component.

Enhance individual counselling in private spaces: many young individuals reported facing challenges that they are hesitant to discuss in a public or group setting. By offering private spaces for counselling sessions, UYDEL can create a safe and confidential environment where youth can openly address their concerns, especially for women and those related to SRHR. This personalised approach can promote mental and emotional well-being but can also empower young people to confront and overcome obstacles that may hinder their personal or professional growth.

Alumni network: to ensure long-term sustainability, we recommend strengthening the role of the alumni in offering practical advice and mentorship support to current students. It is further recommended that the youth initiate a crowdfunding campaign based on their experiences to promote further sustainability. The youth can engage with the members of their community to garner support and raise awareness about their crowdfunding campaign.

Gender mainstreaming and safeguarding

The recommendations described have implications for gender mainstreaming and safeguarding, particularly in terms of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for youth. We recommend addressing certain gender stereotypes and establishing a safer environment for young people.

Community awareness: UYDEL can coordinate community outreach programmes aimed at fostering understanding that young people are not infallible and deserve second chances. Communities should refrain from stigmatising or ridiculing youth who have previously engaged in problematic behaviour but are now committed to reforming their lives by participating in the Centres. Additionally, addressing gender stereotypes and gender-based violence should be integral components of these initiatives.

Sustainability through youth engagement: to foster social interactions among youth and combat stigma, UYDEL should enhance hosting of networking social events and workshops where young people can gather and engage. These events, which inclusive sporting activities, should aim to enhance acceptance within society.

Safeguarding: data suggested that there are incidences of breach of the safeguarding policies across all Centres. Therefore, the suggestion is to prominently display pamphlets and posters indicating safe spaces and outlining procedures for addressing instances of bullying or harassment, irrespective of the individual's gender. Integration of safeguarding protocols and upholding the principles of "do no harm" must remain ongoing priorities at policy and programme levels.

Capacity Building of Staff on Gender-related Outcomes: there is a need for UYDEL to enhance capacity of their staff especially in relation to gender-related outcomes. This would involve equipping staff with a deeper understanding of gender dynamics, ensuring they possess the tools and perspectives needed to effectively address gender-related issues within their scope of work.

Recommendations at the institutional level

Learning and Adaptation: data suggests that the collaboration among various project partners is operating efficiently. However, the recommendation is to explore ways to engage the Icelandic Embassy locally. The Embassy can serve a role in monitoring programme activities, both for the MFA Capital and for the ICA, which can also serve as opportunities to facilitate cross-cultural learning.

Resource Mobilisation: allocate resources to facilitate the development of innovative programmes geared towards equipping youth with cutting-edge skills, particularly in technology and other emerging fields.

Regular review of roles and responsibilities of the partners: the evaluation recommends the review of roles and responsibilities within the partnership. The autonomy of each organisation is appreciated, it is essential to have clear roles and responsibilities, which are accompanied by clear lines of communication and transparency. The reviewing of the roles and responsibilities will enable partners such as the MFA to play a more supportive role and draw on possible synergies with the Embassy in Uganda.

Commissioning of regular external project learning reviews by ICA: the evaluation suggests that the ICA should initiate a series of regular external programme assessments. These assessments should encompass baseline studies, midline reviews, and endline evaluations. Such an approach would empower stakeholders to discern the intervention's effectiveness and ascertain its cost-effectiveness. By conducting comprehensive reviews at various stages, ICA and its partners can gain deeper insights into the intervention's impact and its alignment with the resources invested. This proactive stance toward project evaluation will facilitate informed decision-making and optimise the allocation of resources toward impactful initiatives.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the project

The Urban Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) Phase II (2020 – 2023) is an initiative implemented by [Uganda Youth Development Link](#) (UYDEL) in partnership with the [Lutheran World Federation](#) (LWF) – [World Service Uganda Programme](#) with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Iceland through the Icelandic Church Aid (ICA), an independent CSO in Iceland. Eighty percent (80%) of ICA project funding stem from a Development Cooperation Framework Agreement between MFA Iceland and ICA. The remaining 20% of funds are collected through ICA fundraising efforts in Iceland.

Collaboratively building upon insights gained from the previous phase (2017 to 2019), this initiative aimed at effectively addressing the significant challenges of unemployment and associated income poverty, particularly prevalent among the youth residing in slum areas in Kampala, Uganda. This prevalent poverty issue worsened the vulnerability of young individuals to abuse, exploitation, and involvement in criminal activities as a means of livelihood. The project successfully mobilised a substantial cohort of over 2,000 vulnerable young people aged 13 to 24 years and dedicated to establishing sustainable alternative livelihood opportunities across all three divisions of Kampala city. The project's objectives were to:

1. Enhance the employability of vulnerable youth by increasing their access to employable skills and ensuring their rights to economic development are respected and fulfilled by 2023.
2. To improve access to and utilisation of youth-friendly sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR) services and information among vulnerable youth in Kampala by 2023.

1.2. Project Implementation Overview

The YEP is an initiative conceptualised and implemented in response to the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation and soaring youth unemployment in Kampala, Uganda. Within the YEP project, roles are strategically distributed among key partners to ensure effective implementation and accountability. UYDEL takes on the pivotal role of the implementing partner, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the drop-in centres. LWF assumes a crucial guidance role, providing valuable insights and support to UYDEL while also taking on the responsibility of monitoring and reporting to ICA. ICA, in turn, plays a central role in monitoring and reporting to MFA, the ICA governing board, and the public. Annual monitoring visits conducted by ICA to the project area contribute to the overall success and transparency of the project. Notably, MFA functions as the back donor of ICA, currently without a direct role in the project's execution but maintaining a significant position as a key supporter. This distribution of roles ensures a well-organised and collaborative approach to achieve the YEP project's objectives.

The project's second phase built upon the insights gained from its previous phase. Targeting vulnerable youth aged 13 to 24 years in slum areas; the project was strategically designed to improve the pressing issues of unemployment and income poverty prevalent among slum youths in Kampala by providing relevant skills and opportunities. The project aimed to uplift and empower over 2,000 vulnerable young people, fostering sustainable alternative livelihoods across the three divisions including (Makindye, Nakawa and Rubaga) of Kampala focused on enhancing employability and respecting the economic rights of youth by 2023, alongside improving access to youth-friendly sexual reproductive health rights services and information. In these divisions, the interventions and project activities including vocational skills training were being delivered from three UYDEL drop-in centres namely Makindye Centre (Makindye division), Nateete Centre (Rubaga division) and Banda Youth Centre (Nakawa division).

1.3. Aim and Objective of the Evaluation

The aim of the evaluation was to objectively assess the results of the MFA efforts in supporting ICA projects in Uganda. This evaluation adhered to the MFA Evaluation Policy 2020-2023 and followed the current OECD-DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluations. The evaluation focused on seven criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and thematic considerations (gender equality, human rights, and environmental considerations). Additionally, the evaluation aimed to assess the factors of innovation and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic within the context of the projects supported by MFA.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND METHODS

2.1. Methodological Approach

The approach to the evaluation was designed to be consultative in nature through engaging various relevant stakeholders at all stages to ensure participation and ownership of the results. This evaluation adopted a **theory-based evaluation** using a **cross-sectional survey** design as detailed in this methodology. The choice of theory-based evaluation was suited to this evaluation given the complexity of the project. In evaluation designs, complex programmes such as this one which work with young people typically require a theory-based evaluation framework to triangulate the evidence being collected and to refine the assumptions made. The theory-based framework was used because it enables the evaluation team to systematically test and review the relationships between project activities and intended outcomes. This is attained by investigating the causal relationships between context-input-output-outcomes-impact to understand the combination of factors that has led to the intended or unintended outcomes and impacts of the project interventions. Based on the objectives of the evaluation, the approach was largely based on seven OECD evaluation criteria as already outlined above (section 1.3). These different criteria are detailed hereunder.

Relevance: This criterion was to examine the alignment of the MFA and its CSO partners' actions with their stated objectives. It gauged how well the objectives and planning of these interventions addressed the needs of the beneficiaries, as well as institutional requirements.

Coherence: This criterion was used to estimate how well the interventions fit with other development interventions nationally and whether there were duplications of efforts and if synergies were maximised.

Effectiveness: This criterion was used to assess the extent to which the project achieved its objectives and intended results. Under this criterion, the evaluation measured possible gaps, analysed them, and identified success factors and bottlenecks.

Efficiency: This criterion was used to guide the data collection and analysis to measure the extent to which the intervention delivered or was likely to deliver (for future projects/phases) results in an economical and timely manner. We evaluated whether the CSO's financial contributions or co-financing for the project were reliably confirmed.

Impact: This criterion guided the evaluation in assessing whether the intervention generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended higher-level effects.

Sustainability: This criterion was used to measure the extent to which the net benefits of the interventions would continue or likely to be continued.

Thematic criterion: The evaluation focused at the cross-cutting themes of gender equality, human rights, and environmental considerations and was used to verify the extent to which these principles were considered in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the two projects. In addition to this, VIG assessed the extent of innovativeness i.e., to elucidate whether there were any signs or evidence indicating that innovation arose from development initiatives or whether efforts could be restructured to foster innovation. Additionally, VIG incorporated assessments pertaining to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic into the evaluation framework.

2.2. Data Collection Methods

Four interrelated data collection methods were used to gather data for the evaluation. These methods comprised the desk review, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and a youth quantitative survey. The primary data collection exercise was primarily carried out in the three locations

of Kampala - Rubaga, Nakawa and Makindye divisions. KII conducted offered rich qualitative data, reflecting diverse perspectives from a range of internal and external stakeholders, including programme staff, community members etc. Ethical practices, such as obtaining verbal consent, were diligently followed and all the interviews were recorded for the purposes of analysis. FGDs played an important role during data collection, encompassing various demographics, fostering comprehensive assessments of programme relevance. Digital recording and informed consent ensured the quality of insights. The survey was also useful as it provided data on the progress of the project indicators. Gathering data through these methods ensured methodological triangulation for robustness of the results. Additionally, together, these methodologies enriched the understanding of project dynamics, facilitating a robust and comprehensive evaluation process. The different methods used are detailed hereunder.

Desk Review was conducted, encompassing a thorough examination of project documents. This process was instrumental in establishing the contextual backdrop and framework within which the evaluation was executed. Various documents were scrutinized, including but not limited to the project log-frame, project work plans, and field reports. This comprehensive review facilitated a deeper understanding of the project's scope, objectives, and progress, enhancing the evaluation process.

Key Informant Interviews were conducted with carefully selected stakeholders. These interviews aimed at unveiling the challenges encountered and lessons learned during project implementation. KIIs provided much richness of qualitative data to augment the statistical descriptions by providing reasons why certain behaviours, perception attitudes and practices occur. An interview checklist/guide was used to gather data from the final list of key informants. Interviews were held with different selected key stakeholders from LWF, UYDEL, ICA, MFA, health workers, community development officers (CDOs), local leaders and Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA).

Focus Group Discussions were employed as a significant method of data collection for the project evaluation. Similar to KIIs, FGDs yielded valuable qualitative data, aiding in the elucidation of the rationales behind certain statistical findings. The majority of FGD participants consisted of youth, both those undergoing training and those not. Additionally, some group discussions were facilitated by peer educators.

Survey targeted youth (those who completed training, and those who are still in training) between the ages of 13 - 24 years of age. The main objective of this methodology was to track progress on the project indicators. This methodology provided some statistical descriptions on some of the behaviours and attitudes of the youth. Age-appropriate questions for SRHR were asked to the respondents.

The sampling approach and how respondents were sampled for each of the method explained above are detailed in the next sections.

2.3. Survey Sampling

2.3.1. Quantitative survey

As mentioned before, the quantitative survey was conducted targeting young people aged 13 - 24 years in three target settlements of Kampala i.e. Rubaga, Nakawa and Makindye. The sample size was designed to statistically represent a total of 3,508 and 2,028 project direct and indirect beneficiaries reached during the second phase of the project. The sample size was designed with the following assumptions:

- Youth who were trained in sustainable livelihoods also received and or accessed SRHR services and information.
- Equal distribution of the sample sizes in three target locations.

More weight was given to the youth who had already been trained (those that have finished the training) during sampling calculations. Those that were still in training were included to gauge the relevance/appropriateness of the training they were receiving. To determine a representative sample, calculations were based on requiring: a 95% confidence interval, p=0.5, margin of error or the error we were willing to accept is 5% and, 4% was to account for non-response. The required sample size for the quantitative survey was calculated using the Cochran’s sample size formula for categorical data.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P(1 - P)}{(e)^2}$$

Based on the calculations, the sample size calculated was a minimum of 400 youth who were project beneficiaries. As such, the sample was distributed equally across the three locations. Out of the target of 400 youth the survey reached out to 412 which translate to >100% reach. In all locations, the survey reach was at least 100% as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Sample Size Reach

	Target	Reach	Reach
Overall	400	412	103%
Makindye	132	132	100%
Nakawa	135	143	106%
Rubaga	133	137	103%

2.3.2. Qualitative sampling

Key Informant Interviews (KII): Purposive sampling was employed, a deliberate method of participant or case selection based on specific criteria, to identify suitable respondents was used to select respondents. The identification of stakeholders for the KIIs was contingent upon the project's outcomes and outputs. The KIIs encompassed discussions with the core project team. Additionally, interviews were extended to other pertinent stakeholders who played a direct role in project implementation. This broader group of stakeholders included MFA staff, ICA staff, UYDEL staff, community stakeholders, volunteers, and designated contacts for project beneficiaries. To facilitate these interviews, a generic key informant guide to tailor the interviews specifically to the unique perspectives of each stakeholder interviewed was developed. A total of 27 KII were carried out as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews	Number
Development Program Manager (LWF)	1
UYDEL social workers in Rubaga, Nakawa, and Makindye	3
Vocational Local Artisans and trainers (per location)	3
UYDEL Director, Finance Officer, MEL Officer	3
ICA project focal person	1
MFA project focal points	2

Peer educators	3
Volunteers	3
Community Leader (1), Youth Officer (1), CDO (1), Police (1)	4
Health Workers	3
Deputy Executive Director, UYDEL	1
Total	27

Focus Group Discussions: Focus group discussions were used as an effective way to capture and validate qualitative feedback on project impacts from the target beneficiaries. Community-based FGDs were conducted with target groups within their respective communities. To ensure effective communication, the total number of each FGD members did not exceed 12 and each FGD included a minimum of 8 members. A total of 28 FGDs were conducted with beneficiaries of the YEP. Please see table 3.

Table 3: Number of focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussions (F/M) – Per Centre	Number
Youth in Training	6
Youth who completed training and are employed	6
Youth who completed training and are unemployed	6
Youth who dropped out	4
Peer Educators	6
Total	28

2.4. Field Work

Before commencing the data collection phase, public relations activities were undertaken to foster understanding and support for the evaluation. Initially, centre managers were reached out to secure access to young people, with the goal of promoting survey participation and garnering community endorsement for the process. Local enumerators from the area were recruited and subsequently trained at a central location. A total of 6 enumerators were employed to carry out quantitative data collection, with an anticipated rate of 10 surveys per day per enumerator. FGDs and KIIs were conducted by VIG researchers. Additionally, VIG organised refreshments for the youth participating during FGDs, survey, and KIIs. KoboToolbox was used for data collection. As such, quantitative survey was made possible using electronic data collection through GPS-enabled tablets. This method offered advantages, including a reduction in the time lag between data collection and analysis.

2.5. Data Analysis Process

The methodology adopted a multi-faceted approach to ensure a comprehensive evaluation. Data analysis extended beyond individual Centres and encompassed all three locations under study. An evaluation matrix (Annex 1) was developed and that served as the foundation for aligning all project outcomes with specific evaluation questions. Furthermore, secondary data sources, particularly focusing on annual reports were aligned during the analysis. This process involved triangulating data from various sources to ensure robustness and reliability of the findings. Within the research team, the workload was divided between quantitative and qualitative researchers. The qualitative research strand aimed at identifying emerging themes and patterns, which were then organised in a matrix format using the OECD DAC criteria, directly linked to the evaluation questions (see Annex 1. Common themes were systematically identified, and were synthesised under the DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact,

and sustainability. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS, and descriptive and correlational analysis were carried to make sense of the data.

Prioritisation of data and quotes: the research team was aware that compiling a comprehensive report involves addressing the challenges of data inclusion, primarily constrained by limited space. Prioritisation of data was necessary for the research team to maintain the report's readability, emphasising relevant and impactful information while excluding less pertinent or tangential content. As such, data selection for the evaluation centres on its direct relevance to the evaluation's objectives and themes emerged while upholding criteria of quality and reliability, ensuring ethical handling of sensitive information. Quotes were selected based on their ability to enhance the comprehension of the findings, especially their contribution towards the project outcomes, representing diverse viewpoints and offering clarity and impact. Proper attribution and contextual understanding for a balanced approach between inclusivity and relevance was used in the report.

Value of singular quotes: the reader may notice that in some cases, a single quote has been used to make claims. This is because one quote can encapsulate the essence of a larger trend or ideology. By examining a well-chosen quote, the research team has gained insights into the thought processes and motivations of a broader population. A lone quote can act as an early warning sign of emerging issues helping us piece together a more comprehensive understanding of what is happening on the ground and how the programme is progressing. As mentioned elsewhere in the report, truth is subjective, and what may seem insignificant to some can be profoundly meaningful to others. A quote that resonates with a particular audience can become a rallying point, making it important to analyse and contextualise even seemingly isolated expressions. These can also become critical areas of inquiry in the future.

Presentation of data: when presenting data, the research team has aimed at keeping the authenticity in participants' voices. Therefore, the research team has in some instances deliberately provided long quotes as opposed to short quotes. Incorporating colloquial language into the quotes can serve several valuable purposes in qualitative research, particularly when conducting interviews or gathering qualitative data from participants.

Depth of understanding: lengthy quotes provided more context and depth to the participant's response. They allowed researchers to capture the nuances of the participant's thoughts, emotions, and experiences in greater detail. For the research team, this has led to a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation. Long quotes also provided essential context for the participant's statements. They helped answer questions like "Why did the participant say this?" or "What led to this response?" This context was valuable for researchers in interpreting the data accurately. Some topics or experiences are inherently complex. Lengthy quotes allowed participants to express themselves fully, enabling the research to capture the multifaceted nature of their perspectives. This was particularly important in a study such as this which seeks to analysis complex and intersected issues.

Preserving Authenticity: Colloquial language in quotes helped the research team preserve the authenticity of participants' voices. It reflected how people naturally communicated in everyday conversations, which is often less formal and more reflective of their true thoughts and feelings. Presentation of colloquial language also helped researchers demonstrate the rapport and build trust between researchers and participants.

Keeping the quotes anonymous: The research time subscribes to the principle of maintaining anonymity of participants. For this study, some organisations were represented by one individual. This implies that including the name of the organisation on the quote details would reveal the identity of the participant.

For UYDEL senior team, LWF, ICA and MFA, the quotes were referenced as “internal stakeholders.” For UYDEL artisans, volunteers, and social workers, the term “project staff” was adopted.

2.6. Data Triangulation

Qualitative Data: Qualitative data collection methods, such as KIIs, and FGDs, allowed the research team to gather rich, non-numerical information. By triangulating qualitative data, the research team has been able to uncover nuanced insights, understand the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders, and identify qualitative patterns that complement the quantitative findings. This approach provided a holistic view of the stakeholders under study.

Quantitative Data: Quantitative data, collected through structured surveys offered numerical insights and statistical trends. Triangulating quantitative data helped the research team to verify and validate findings from other sources. By comparing quantitative results with qualitative insights, the research team confirmed patterns and made conclusions on key programme indicators.

Secondary Data: Secondary data sources, such as existing research, reports, or publicly available data, provided valuable contextual information. By triangulating secondary data with primary data sources (qualitative and quantitative), some findings were cross-referenced and ensured that the analysis was grounded in a broader knowledge base. It also helped in identifying trends and patterns, especially under the relevance and coherence chapter.

2.7. Limitations

The evaluation was successfully conducted, with only a few limitations encountered. These were mainly faced during the data collection, and are discussed below:

Difficulties in mobilising dropouts: one of the target demographics for evaluation comprised young individuals who withdrew from training programs. It was intended to conduct Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with this cohort across all three designated Centres. However, logistical obstacles impeded successful mobilization efforts. Initially, transportation limitations were cited as a significant barrier by some participants. Remedial measures were implemented to address this issue, yet attendance remained problematic. Consequently, the turnout for FGDs persisted at suboptimal levels regardless of the facilitation of sessions.

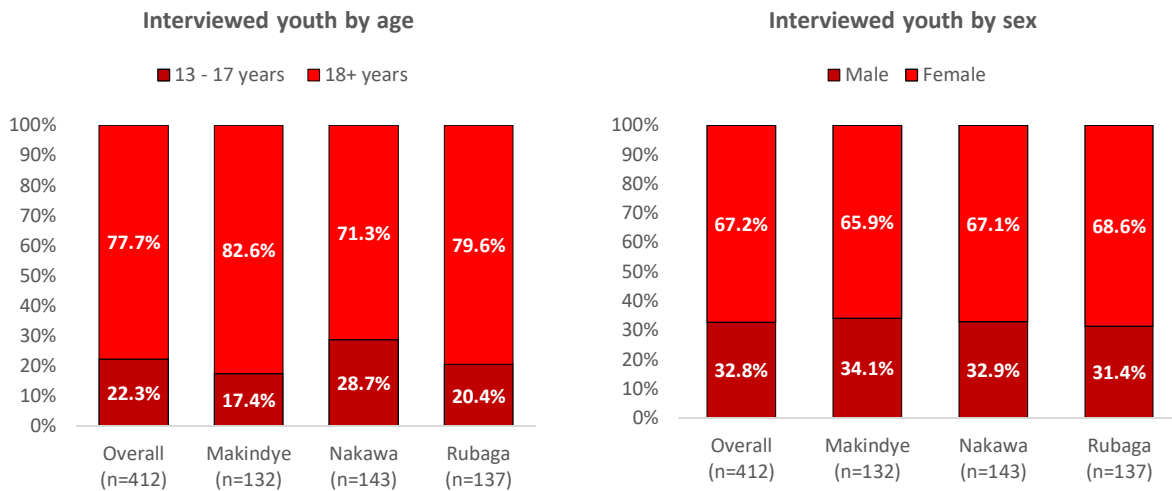
Timing of the data collection exercise: data collection during the Christmas festive season posed challenges in accessing many respondents, as a considerable number had already journeyed back to their villages. Moreover, this period coincided with heightened commercial activity in city centres, with individuals prioritizing their businesses to capitalize on the surge in customer traffic. Additionally, preparations for travelling back to villages for the festivities further diverted the attention of potential respondents.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS

3.1. Socio-Economic Demographic Characteristics

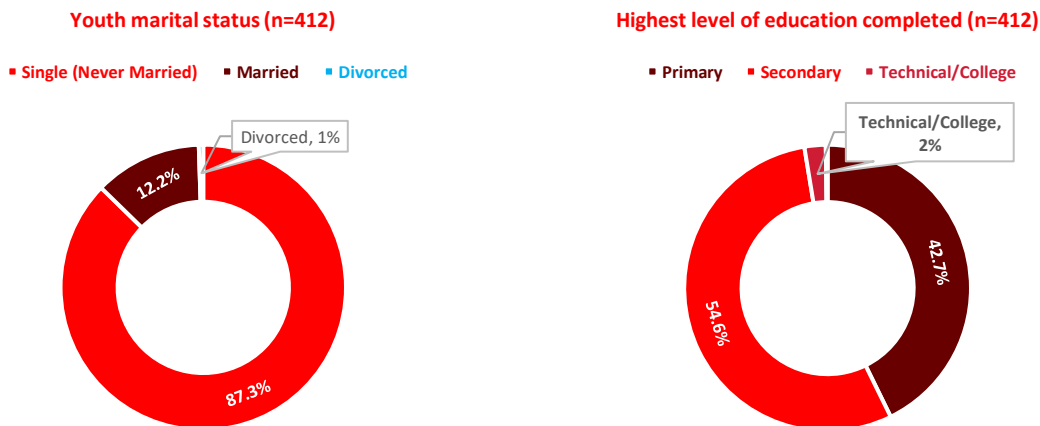
Of the 412 youths interviewed through the quantitative survey, the majority were females (67.2%), while males made up 32.8% of the respondents. No variations were observed when analysing data by location, indicating a consistent trend with females being the predominant group across all locations. Further disaggregation of the data by age revealed that most surveyed youths were 18 years and older (77.7%), with only 22.3% falling within the 13 to 17 age group (see figure 1).

Figure 1: age and gender of interviewed youth



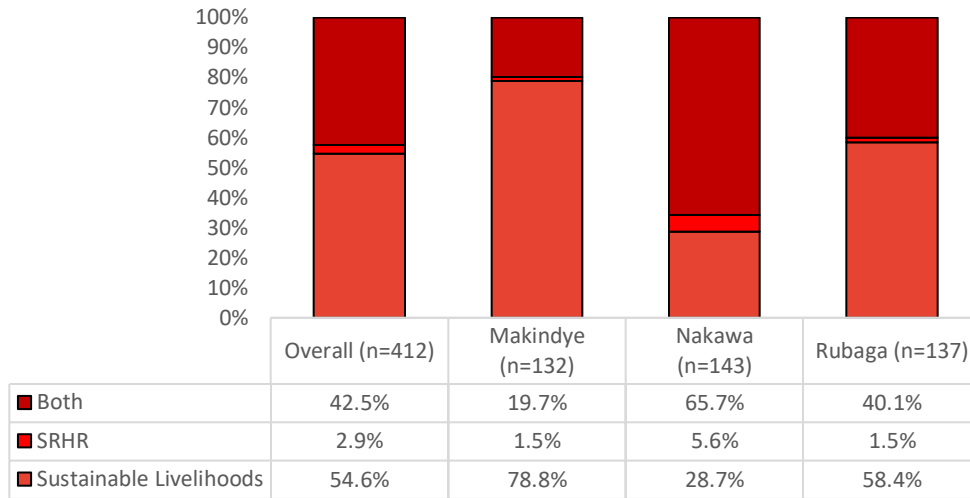
Regarding marital status, only 12% of the youth were reported as married. In terms of educational attainment, approximately 55% had completed secondary education, 43% had completed primary education, and 2% stated that they had finished technical or college education (see figure 2).

Figure 2: marital status and level of education



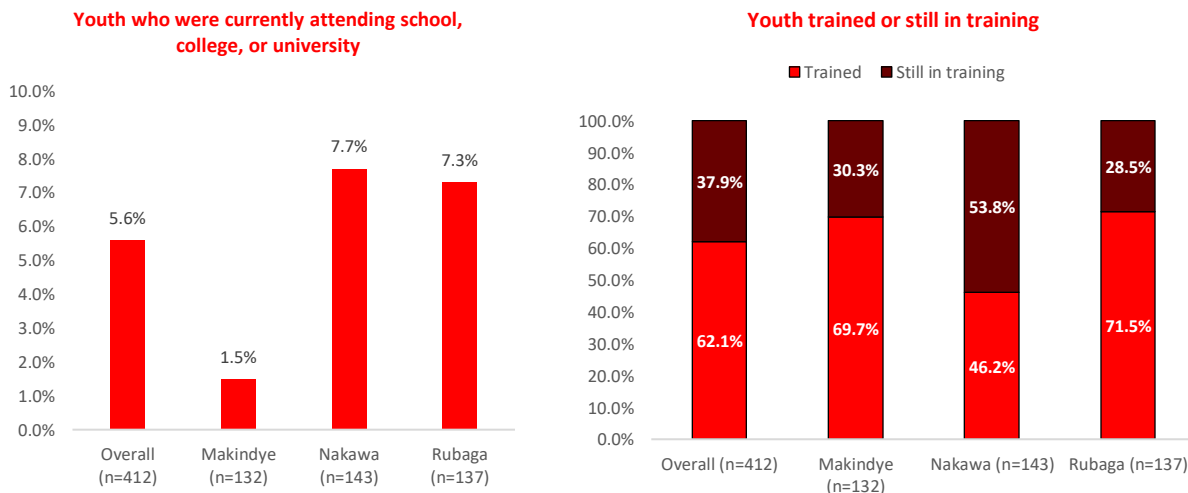
Of the interviewed 412 youth, the majority benefited from the sustainable livelihoods component of the project (54.6%), 42.5% were under both sustainable livelihoods and SRHR and only 3% were under the SRHR component as shown in figure 3:

Figure 3: categories of interviewed project beneficiaries



Interviewed youth were asked about their current enrolment status in schools, colleges, or universities. Among the 412 respondents, only 5.6% indicated that they were attending an educational institution, with specific percentages reported as follows: 7.7% in Nakawa, 7.35% in Rubaga, and 1.5% in Makindye. Further, the youth were asked if they were already trained or still in training. Results show that 62% had undergone training, while approximately 38% reported that they were still in the training process. The majority of those who had received training were interviewed in Rubaga (72%), followed by Makindye (70%) and Nakawa (46%).

Figure 4: status of school and training attendance



When asked about the people they stay with, 35.1% of the youth reported that they stay with either their mother or father. Approximately 19% indicated that they were staying with both parents, and 15.5% mentioned cohabiting with a partner. Notably, 14.6% expressed that they were independent or staying alone. Analysis of data by gender reveal that a higher percentage of males (24.6%) tended to stay alone compared to females (9.4%).

Table 4: People who youth reside with

	Overall			13 - 17 years			18+ years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Both parents	19.5%	18.8%	19.0%	40.6%	26.1%	32.1%	11.6%	16.9%	15.2%
Mother/Father	38.1%	33.5%	35.1%	50.0%	45.7%	47.4%	33.7%	30.3%	31.4%
Partner	9.3%	18.8%	15.5%	3.1%	0.0%	1.3%	11.6%	23.6%	19.7%
Siblings	0.0%	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%
Alone	24.6%	9.4%	14.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.7%	11.8%	18.9%
Other relative	8.5%	19.2%	15.5%	6.3%	28.3%	19.2%	9.3%	16.9%	14.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

CHAPTER 4: RELEVANCE

The evaluation sought to determine the relevance of the YEP to the socio-economic contexts of Kampala and challenges that are encountered by young people (generally referred to as youth) especially those in the slums. It also explored the extent to which the project continues to be relevant considering the changing context. The relevance of the project is notably amplified by the diverse and intersected challenges that are encountered by adolescents and young people in the different facets of their lives. A review of secondary data reveals that the challenges are multi-faceted and emanate from the intersected factors operating from an individual, household, community, and national perspectives.

4.1. Relevance of the programme to the socio-economic and political context of Uganda

Uganda is experiencing rapid population growth, making it one of the countries with the swiftest demographic expansions in Africa. This demographic surge has profound implications for the nation's socio-economic landscape and demands a comprehensive understanding of its demographic composition. The official national statistics show that the population of the youth, aged between 18-30 years stands at 23%¹ (2014 national population Census) and was projected to reach 10,976,000 in 2023. A large proportion of the youth are unemployed and much more underemployed. The project noted that 62% of Ugandan youth are jobless, more than 2 million youth are out of school, and majority of these have no regular work or income making them vulnerable to recruitment into illegal activities. The interplay of factors such as age distribution, unemployment rates among the youth, and the high dependency ratio paints a complex picture of Uganda's evolving population dynamics, necessitating a holistic approach in addressing the issues. Primary data shows that the challenges are more pronounced among youth who reside in the slums of Kampala. The project sought to directly address these challenges among the youth in the slums and adopted a comprehensive approach to service provision. Referrals were made for those services that the project did not offer.

“So, the difference between the different organisations and the government with UYDEL, is that UYDEL does case management, it follows the young person from the start up to the end. So, we don't just train, we make sure even mentally, emotionally, physically, everything is okay for the young person. That is why you have that aspect where we refer and leave the young people to the private and public businesses for job placement.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

According to the project proposal, the rapid urbanisation has resulted in challenges among the youth especially those related to unemployment, particularly for youth with difficult backgrounds such as the ones targeted by the project. This invariably pushes youth to engage in criminal activities and adopt risky behaviour. Most of the youth in the slums dropped out of school and do not have any alternative skills to resort to earn a living. Primary data shows that lack of access to education is compounded by attitudes of parents/guardians. According to the project proposal, the project “will be responding to the need to empower the underprivileged youth with skills; creating employment opportunities through vocational, business skills development, promotion, nurturing and development of sports, music, and dance and drama talent for livelihood improvement.” According to the bi-annual project report² through vocational skills development, young people across the project targeted divisions that acquired skills were able to get employment opportunities, internship placements and further used the acquired skills to start small

¹ <https://www.ubos.org/uganda-profile/>

² LWF-UYDEL YEP II SMPR January – June 2023

businesses leading to income diversification and improved welfare. The recently adopted approach of involving parents has resulted in the integration of youth back into the formal education system.

“Yes, for example, the area being in a slum had a lot of drug addicts, high rates of teenage pregnancies and theft cases. But all these have reduced, especially, drug addiction, there has been increased HIV opening up and check-ups, low levels of teenage pregnancy and confidence among youths especially on SRHR” KII, Project staff

“I used to be a thug before joining YEP. I used to smoke weed and do a lot of unspeakable things for my age. The training I have received from UYDEL has enabled me to turn my life around and start living more responsibly. I now own an electronics shop and have moved on from my ways” FGD participant, Male, Youth in training, Makindye

“We got four boys who were drug addicts that approached us after the training session and asked to join and up to now they are here training, they don’t have time to do drugs.” FGD participant, Peer Educators, Male, Banda

According to the [UNFPA state of Uganda³](#) population report, 1.2 million youth in Uganda aged between 15 and 29 are idle. The proportion for the idle female youth was almost three times higher than that of their male counterparts. Furthermore, the proportion of idle youth is higher in the urban areas as compared to the rural areas. Primary data also shows that the youth in the slums are worse off than other youth in the urban areas. Therefore, the targeting of youth in the slums was found to be relevant as the project targeted the youth who are the most vulnerable. The evaluation also found the higher prioritisation of females than of their male counterparts in training was appropriately established. However, the project still highlighted how gender inequalities in the job market and community at large remained as a stumbling block for females. The relevance of the project also stems from the targeting specific age groups that are deemed to be more vulnerable in the communities.

“We are trying to focus more on younger boys because it’s harder to deal with boys beyond 20. They are very difficult. Their younger counterparts are easier to encourage. I recently just lost one of my relatives who was a thief, I tried to ensure he learned how to work, I contributed to his business, but he was killed in a mob justice because he was trying to break into someone’s house.” KII, Project staff

The SRHR component was also found to be relevant considering the high-risk behaviour of young people. Secondary data shows that Kampala’s urban residents face extremely high rates of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV), but girls, women and children are disproportionately more affected both directly and indirectly by incidences and attitudes toward SGBV. The project proposal quotes various sources to show that Kampala City continues to bear a heavy burden of HIV/AIDS at 6.9%, compared with the national average⁴ of 6.2%. In urban Kampala, HIV prevalence among commercial sex workers (CSWs) is about 37% which is higher than the national and city averages. Primary data obtained through FGDs and KIIs confirms the above trends and thus proving the relevance of the project. In most cases, the young girls are sexually exploited due to economic hardships associated with the inability of their household to provide adequately for them. They are at times forced out of their homes and left to fend for themselves.

³ UNFPA (2018): Evidence to action: Generation for Generation Dialogue

⁴ Uganda population- based HIV impact Assessment UPHIA ,2017 - https://phia.icap.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/UPHIA_Final_Report_Revise_07.11.2019_Final_for-web.pdf

*“I want to state that the project has been relevant. When you look at the international perspective, globally, we have a challenge of youths close to 60 or over 65% of global population is still a youthful population that is faced with a lot of challenges, including unemployment, which comes from limited access to financial capital, limited access to valuable assets that will enable the youths to engage in income generating activities, but also globally, especially in Africa, close to 65% of the youths don't have access to sexual reproductive health services. This is only an identity age group. But you find that time and again, they are limited access to sexual reproductive health services, we are seeing a lot of increased teenage pregnancy, a lot of infections, contracting of STI sexually transmitted infections, a lot that really predisposes them to a lot of vulnerabilities”. **KII, Internal Stakeholder***

*“Sometimes the families are big, the families may not be big, but the families may be staying in small rooms, and they can't absorb don't have capacity that this extra girl who has matured or boy, many of them are pushed out and are told to go and find their life starting.” **KII, Internal Stakeholder***

The project's significance is evident in its dual focus on livelihoods and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The livelihoods component enhances the economic well-being of targeted youth, fostering self-reliance and diminishing the necessity for engaging in risky behaviours related to SRHR as coping mechanisms. Moreover, the project's annual reports feature testimonials from youth who have altered their behaviour due to the combined impact of both the livelihoods and SRHR components. This integrated approach demonstrates the project's effectiveness in not only improving economic conditions but also influencing positive behavioural changes among the youth.

The relevance of the project to the socio-economic context was summed up by stakeholder who said;

*“I don't know who designs these proposals but almost all projects that do come here, do target some specific challenges in Makindye. So, you find that some parishes that have been impacted by UYDEL, and other projects are really doing good, the rate of teenage pregnancies is low and is reducing, while the others (parishes without UYDEL) it is increasing.” **KII, Health Worker, Makindye***

*“So, in summary, we are going to expand the circle because the needs, which are being presented by children, some of them may likely come from the family or may come from the community, not from the individual child all” **KII, Internal Stakeholder***

Although the project remained relevant during the duration of project implementation, the partner organisations are eager to ensure that this is maintained even during the next phase (Phase-III) which is set to be implemented starting in 2024. The envisaged changes to the project in the next phase are bound to keep the project relevant and directly addressing the needs of the young people taking into consideration the socio-economic context.

4.2. Alignment of project with developmental frameworks

Project is aligned and contributes to national development programmes for youth. It was established that the mother ministry for UYDEL is the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development. Therefore, the project contributes to the developmental frameworks of this Ministry. The Ministry has developed several tools, strategies and plans like the Child policy that the project contributes to. Apart from frameworks under this specific Ministry, the project also aligned to the National Development Plan ([NDPIII 2020/21 - 2024/5](#)), which seeks to address issues of poverty.

According to the YEP Project Proposal:

“Line Ministries like Ministry of Internal Affairs where UYDEL is an active member on various National-level taskforces for the rights of vulnerable people, including the National Taskforce against Trafficking of Persons and Working Group on Online Child Sexual Exploitation; Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development (Child Protection Working Group) and Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Health – SRHR Technical Working Group. This presents the partnership with added advantage to engage with national-level stakeholders and policy makers to influence policy change and achievement of project outcomes”.

Therefore, the alignment of YEP to the different national development frameworks have enabled the partnership to make its contributions at a national level.

Through empowering youth and addressing vulnerabilities, the project is aligned to the national objectives of eliminating human trafficking. The causes of human trafficking include poverty, lack of education, the demand for cheap labour/sex, a lack of human rights and lack of legitimate economic opportunities in the [respective order](#)⁵. By addressing some of these factors, the project indirectly addressed human trafficking amongst young people. In addition, the project commemorates important dates that the project is aligned to. For instance, on 26 June 2023, UYDEL commemorated the World Day against Drugs under the theme, “People First: stop stigma and discrimination strengthen prevention”. Similarly, the project participates in commemorating 16 Days of Gender Activism.

“Many of the girls face violence - in that they are raped or there is forced sex, there is the emotional torture, there's issues of stigma, and all these we handle, all these are really featuring very well in the issues of national development and specific strategic plans” KII, Internal Stakeholder

As noted earlier, the YEP-II also contributes to the National Youth Employment Policy agenda by addressing the problems affecting the youth which include: poverty, unemployment, and underemployment that are the main problems affecting youth in Uganda. According to internal stakeholders, the strategic fit of the project to national frameworks was considered during the conceptualisation of the project. Therefore, this is not coincidental. It was also noted that the project is aligned to SDG 1 on ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, SDG 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all at all ages; SDG 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all; target 5.2 on eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation and SDG 8 promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment, and decent work for all. The strategic fit is apparent since the project targets vulnerable young people with vocational skills and promotes learning for those out of the formal school system.

4.3. Alignment with the mandate of UYDEL

The evaluation explored the alignment of the project to the overall mandate of UYDEL. It was established that UYDEL has been implementing interventions targeting youth since 1993. UYDEL’s Vision is to have “A transformed society where young people live a good quality of life free from exploitation” and their mission is “To enhance socio-economic transformation of disadvantaged young people through advocacy and skills development for self-reliance.” The evaluation therefore noted that by implementing the project, UYDEL was furthering its mission and vision.

⁵ <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/10-causes-of-human-trafficking/>

“The main core mission of our organisation is to help disadvantaged young people who are vulnerable. But sadly, who are out of school, and these disadvantaged young people are largely in the slums that are largely in the peri urban areas of the city.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

This implies that UYDEL had the advantage of utilising already existing staff, skills-set and networks that have been developed over time.

“And so, this project fits in very well. And probably we are better placed because we mobilise but also know how to reach out to them.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

Due to the focus on youth, UYDEL implements other interventions targeting youth such as TOPOWA (development of skills for youth), EASY (development of vocational skills for youth) and DREAMS (girl empowerment through vocational skills). Due to the similarity of YEP to other interventions such as EASY, there are instances of confusion among the beneficiaries of the different projects. Although the projects are largely similar, the degree of support differs resulting in allegations of favouritism.

“There is discrimination while giving out basic needs to particular groups” FGD participant, Male, Youth in training, Makindye

“YEP works well with others, however, there was some discrimination at some point when we had beneficiaries from more than one project at the Centre. Project staff and students of the different projects were not on good terms and would put restrictions on the use and access of resources and materials. This affected productivity and relationships at the Centre and among youths at large.” KII, Project staff

Therefore, it is important for UYDEL to convey facts to the beneficiaries under different projects implemented by UYDEL, ensuring that they understand the support that is due to them. This should be done in a manner that promotes understanding and eliminates potential conflicts among the beneficiaries. If facilities permit, UYDEL should consider using different Centres for different projects so that there is no confusion among beneficiaries.

4.4. Alignment with donor priorities

The Urban Youth Empowerment Project resonates strongly with the core values of the Icelandic Church Aid and the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project's comprehensive approach, addressing the diverse challenges faced by vulnerable youth in Kampala's slums, aligns with the ICA and MFA's commitment to holistic development strategies. By emphasising vocational skills, sports, music, and dance, the YEP mirrors the ICA's goal of promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and employment. Additionally, the project aligns seamlessly with national frameworks and policies, engaging with ministries and contributing to policy change in harmony with the MFA's strategic objectives. Overall, the YEP serves as a commendable embodiment of shared values, contributing significantly to socio-economic transformation and the improved quality of life for young people, in alignment with the principles upheld by the ICA and MFA.

CHAPTER 5: COHERENCE

This chapter explores issues relating to partnerships, networks, and collaborations of the UYDEL and other stakeholders internally and externally. It focuses on synergies, alignment and complementarities between the project and other interventions at different levels.

5.1. Internal coherence

Complementarities among the partners

In this section of the coherence chapter, the strengths of the partnership arrangements and possible areas for improvement are explored. In terms of strengths, the focus was on the complementarity of the partnerships, the general flow of information and capacity building efforts among the partners.

The funded partners i.e., UYDEL and LWF have a complementary relationship where each partner draws on the core competencies and experiences of the other. Since 2007, LWF has been implementing interventions aimed at transforming the lives of persons living in the informal settlements of Kampala. The interventions reached out to more than 50,000 slum dwellers who subsequently accessed credit for starting up small businesses, increased their income levels, and experienced improvements in housing, hygiene and health conditions and improvement in participation in the governance in the city through increased engagement with duty bearers⁶. LWF also brought forth its linkages at global and national levels through the national ACT alliance forum, the forum of INGO's in Uganda, its connections within the donor community in Uganda and participation within the UN peer review mechanism. On the other hand, UYDEL has vast experience in working with youth since 1993. The organisation focuses on enhancing the socio-economic livelihoods of disadvantaged young people through advocacy and skills development for self-reliance. They have been building vocational skills for youth since 2007. The experience possessed by both organisations is essential for the successful implementation of the project.

“I think the sort of the collaboration between UYDEL & LWF, and then the ICA, seems to be a positive aspect on the programme. I think that the sort of the approach that UYDEL has there on the ground, they don't really have to do much outreach. They do as there is a component of the programme, but they are well known the youth want to come there. And I think that they have been successful at gaining the trust of the communities and sort of creating a status for the kids that go there” KII, Internal Stakeholder

On the other hand, the partnership between MFA and ICA has been in existence for a long time and has been mutually beneficial. The partnership has enabled ICA to expand reach, enabling them to have presence in different countries such as Uganda and Malawi. MFA hailed the partnership especially as guided by the Framework Agreement signed by the two organisations that enabled ICA to run the project with minimum involvement of MFA.

“From The MFA perspective, we do value ICA, as a really good partner, we have a good working relationship with them.” KII, Internal stakeholder

“...and sort of the better partnership that we have with them now where the CSOs are more in charge of their own funds, rather than us holding the accounts and them having to apply for funding and then maybe getting a no, so we feel it's more efficient, and also gives ICA more opportunities to enhance the capacities off their local partners.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

⁶ Youth Empowerment Project_2020-2023-4_Final proposal

The presence of LWF has made it easier for ICA to manage the project without necessarily going into the ground frequently. LWF plays a supervisory role between the funded partners. This means that they provide general guidance to UYDEL, go through reports before they are submitted to ICA, build the capacity of UYDEL and offer support for challenges that are encountered by UYDEL.

“I think the presence of LWF makes sort of overcoming challenges easier, because ICA then has a partner on site that can talk to you and so like this, problem solving is easier and then of course, when they (UYDEL) report, they usually never report any significant challenges.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“Usually not (get involved). I mean, if we do, it would be more of like a soft guidance or something for them to keep in mind for the next year or the next stage.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

According to MFA, the framework agreements with ICA promotes the building of capacity of the local CSOs. LWF has also supported UYDEL in monitoring and evaluation skills, and communication. This is in addition to other support that they offer to UYDEL.

Communication

In general, communication among the partners has been smooth and there are clear channels for communication. According to one stakeholder, communication has improved during the second phase as compared to the first phase. Initially, communication on issues such as budget disbursements were done between ICA and LWF. This meant that UYDEL would wait for communication from LWF to learn about the disbursements. This resulted in delays in some instances. This has improved in the second phase as ICA copies UYDEL in pertinent communications who then can plan for implementation accordingly. In addition, the communication has enhanced transparency which has cascaded down to LWF and UYDEL. The evaluation established that there are scheduled updates at the different levels and there have been no challenges in holding these. Furthermore, partners are free to communicate outside these scheduled meetings.

“For us, there are never any issues, we just pick up the phone and call(name withheld). And it's just a really positive relationship that we have with them, even if they have any challenges. If there are any sort of delays in the project implementation, we are usually aware and they give us notice, without having to sort of be prompt for it” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“No, we haven't been aware of any challenges. I would say that sort of what we've heard has been positive, there are good conversations people are sort of kept in the loop of information flow and it has been satisfactory as well. So, no challenges that come to mind”. KII, Internal Stakeholder

Although communication was generally found to be smooth among the partners, there is room for improvement in responding to queries especially from UYDEL. The evaluation established that there is hierarchy within the partnership arrangement. This means that issues first go through LWF and if they are not resolved, they are cascaded upwards to ICA. Although this line of communication is appreciated, it at times delays processes on the ground especially where urgent action needs to be taken.

5.2. Collaborations with other stakeholders

The evaluation established that there are many other CSOs and government institutions that are targeting or offering services to youth in Kampala. However, most of these do not offer comprehensive services but address specific needs of the youths. The YEP is the only project focusing on youth in the slums and offering relatively comprehensive services that have the ability of uplifting the socio-economic status of

the youths. Admittedly, YEP does not address all possible needs of the youth and complements the services offered by other CSOs and government institutions. Therefore, the presence of such organisations and institutions has enabled UYDEL to collaborate with them, ensuring that the young people ultimately get more comprehensive services. The evaluation also established that organisation generally value collaborations because of the extent and gravity of challenges among the youth which make it difficult for a single organisation to address the complex challenges comprehensively and adequately.

“We are aware that UYDEL is a very well-known and respected civil society organisation in Kampala, and UYDEL is working closely with governments with other national CSOs” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“There are other organisations that we work with, for example, on the government side, we work with the police, that support us with referrals of young people that have been either arrested or that are in conflict with the law and, may need rehabilitation. So, they refer those ones to us and those that are in juvenile homes that may need rehabilitation and support in terms of livelihood support, but also life skills, training, and reintegration back into their communities.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“I work with a lot of NGOs. Act Together, Slum Dwellers, Plan International, VSO, and Cap AID to name but a few. These organisations have enabled me to do the work I am passionate about and each organisation works on a particular problem that affects young people for example teenage pregnancies have been rampant, so we work with a family planning organisation. I put UYDEL on top because it’s a diverse organisation.” KII, Volunteer

When it comes to SRHR, YEP mainly focuses on knowledge building and promoting safe practices among the youth. The peer educators also provide a limited number of SRH products. Knowledge building under the programme creates a demand for services and products and these are available at local health centres. This has resulted in collaboration with these centres in the project areas. In 2022, the project referred 51 young people for SRH services in the health centres especially for STI treatment, ART, and further information. It was also noted that some health centres that have recruited former UYDEL beneficiaries to reach out to youth living in the slums.

“The UYDEL collaborates with other projects within the community. For example, health centres provide youths access to treatment, free counselling, and guidance. Additionally, the projects work well with the local community ensuring that youths get job connections from various companies and salons around.” KII, Project Staff

“And they have been also sending young people to come and to participate in our teenage center. We provide sexual reproductive health services. Those who come around, they have been engaged in other activities apart from the medical engagement we’ve been giving to those young people. Because I’ve been coming here for medical services, sexual reproductive health services, family planning services, and we’ve been handling them in a special way as young people because we have a special clinic for our younger people who usually come here specifically to get services. So, we have peers who we have set our facility in a way that when we get young people between 13 to 24 have some special people who are handling them when they arrive at the facility.” KII, Health Worker

“But there are also other NGOs like, I’m trying to recall their name, but it’s an NGO that is working with teenage mothers that are girls that are pregnant, and we do not in our facilities, we do not have support for pregnant mothers. So, they support us with the postnatal care and the prenatal care but also support through the delivery process. And then after delivery, they can come back to their vocational skills training.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

The FGD participants were able to mention several organisations that are implementing interventions targeting young people in Kampala. These include the organisations that are listed on the table below.

Table 5: List of organisations targeting youth and were mentioned by FGD participants

Organisation	Area of focus
R2 KIREMA	Skilling PWDs and young talent
Mengo Youth Development Link (MYDEL)	Dealing with vulnerable children, those who dropped out of school to learn a skill that can help them improve their lives.
CODE	They aim also at empowering and transforming the lives of the urban youth dwellers through training,
Worship Harvest church	They train young boys and girls on skills, they pay their school fees, give bursaries with that aim of transforming their lives
KISA, PLS	All these help the vulnerable people by providing basic needs, machines and raw materials
Sosolya wondo	Music, dance, and drama
PLATFORM	Vocational training

“Young Generations’ Alive, Ghetto Network of Young People Living With HIV. These projects work well together because they have the same aim of empowering youths through skills development and at some point, help connect youths to job opportunities” KII, Peer Educator, Female, Nateete

There is collaboration with several government ministries that include the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (which also governs youth affairs), Ministry of Education and Sports, and the Ministry of Health. The projects also engaged with local governance structures such as Kampala City Council Authority. Apart from CSOs and government institutions (such as the Ministry of Health), there is collaboration with local leaders. Due to their proximity on the ground, local leaders play a critical role in mobilising young people for the project. The local leaders also play an important role in ensuring that the youth get job opportunities from various companies and salons in their localities. The ability of the project to involve local leaders in a meaningful way is important as it also contributes to the sustainability of the project in the long-term.

“And then we work with the local leaders, who are mainly supporting the mobilisation, tracking, follow-ups of all the young people that come into our programmes, but also give us feedback on how our programmes are doing within the different communities where we work.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

5.3. Collaborations with the private sector

Collaborations with the private sector were meant to be done particularly for internship and job placements for those in training and who have completed training respectively. For the period January through June 2023, a total of 70 young people had been linked to the private sector for internship and job placements in Banda, Nateete and Makindye centres. More young people were linked to private sector companies for internship and training in different places including UMEME, restaurants, garages, other local saloons, and tailors to enable them to acquire more skills and competences in the field of training⁷. This is especially noteworthy, given that UYDEL faced significant challenges to find placements for youth in the private sector during COVID-19.

⁷ LWF-UYDEL YEP II SMPR January to June 2023

*‘We also work with the private sector, and the public sector for employment opportunities. These help us with linking the young people who we have trained in vocational skills to the job bucket, to find job or Decent Work job opportunities, but also supported a bit better shape, linking them to opportunities and networks where they could grow and sustain businesses, and then also for those that may need internship opportunities.’ **KII, Internal Stakeholder***

*‘There is a fashion and design company near our Centre where some youths have been employed in’ **KII, Programme staff***

5.3.1. Factors that limit the extent of collaborations

However, there are factors that affect the full utilisation of existing synergies. It was realised during the evaluation that at times, CSOs do identify areas of common interest but are unable to take advantage of these because of the lack of resources for effective implementation of activities. The other factor is the ineffective referral system among organisations. The major challenge is that referrals are made but the receiving organisation fails to provide the required services. If such failures occur repeatedly, the referring organisation eventually establishes that it is futile to continue making referrals and thus affecting collaborations. For instance, UYDEL makes referrals for support that they do not provide to their beneficiaries, if such support is not rendered by the other organisation, then it becomes futile for UYDEL to continue making referrals to that specific organisation. It was also established that organisations also lacked financial resources in order to make referrals as well. There are costs that are incurred during the process such as communication costs and these are at times not budgeted for. To avoid such instances, it is important for UYDEL and other collaborating organisations to adequately plan for these collaborations and set resources aside to facilitate the referrals. The other factor cited is that there are differences in approaches and geographic coverage of organisations which further inhibits their potential for collaboration.

*‘Some organisations ask for money when it comes to materials’ **FGD participant, Female, youth in training, Banda***

*‘Some projects ask for registration fee which becomes a constraint on the side of the youths joining these projects’ **FGD participant, Male, youth in training, Banda***

*‘Of course, once in a while we would run out of the supplies and they would need us and yet we don't have the supplies at that particular time, and we would be forced to either reschedule or cancel their, their activities.’ **KII, Health Worker***

In essence, it is essential for the funded partners and potential collaborators to facilitate better coordination so that they can take advantage of synergies that are in existence.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the Urban Youth Empowerment Project's robust internal coherence through effective partnerships and external collaborations with diverse stakeholders. Moving forward, there is a scope to continue recognising shared goals between implementing organisations and external organisations (Governmental or Non-governmental) and refining coordination mechanisms to continue addressing challenges and maximising the programme and future efforts' impact on the youth in Kampala's slums.

CHAPTER 6: EFFECTIVENESS

6.1. Perceptions about the project

Completion of training and dropping out

Youth were trained for different skills including tailoring, baking, computer studies, knitting, hair dressing, fashion & designing, media, motorbike engineering, electrical engineering etc. There are 45 short-term courses such as liquid soap making, bar soap making, bakery, charcoal lighters, mirror decors, urban gardening and, 11 long-term courses such as welding, tailoring and fashion design, metal fabrication, plumbing, motorbike mechanics, hair dressing, electronics, and installation on offer under the project. The short-term courses were introduced during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which made it difficult to convene regular classes. Among the 412 youth who were interviewed, 234 stated that they had completed the course that they were enrolled in. Of those who completed the courses, 412-youth mentioned receiving a certificate upon completion. When asked about the time taken to finish their courses, the youth reported that, on average, knitting and catering required more time compared to other courses (10.6 and 9.8 months, respectively). Baking, on the other hand, took the least amount of time on average, approximately 5.8 months. There is a significant proportion of the youth who did not complete training due to several reasons. These include distance to the centres, the mobility of the youth (changing places of residence frequently), and inadequate equipment and materials. Other young people find the content of the courses very difficult e.g., electrical installation, while others drop out because they dislike the practice of combining new students to old when the courses have already started. The young people have found the practice of mixing old and new students discouraging because they dislike repetition of course content that they have already covered. Some parents were said to be giving girls domestic chores before lessons resulting in absenteeism and late arrival for lessons. With time, such girls tend to drop-out.

“Some dropouts because of lack of transport.” FGD participant, Peer Educators, Makindye

“I can say that 40% will finish because the parents are used that everything is for free and they fail to support the trainees financially then also the fact that some of us come from far places walking to the Centre and if we find that the training materials are not there, most will lose moral, and they drop out of the training” Females Peer Educators, Nateete

“Some due to pressure so they lose interest along the way.” FGD participant, Peer Educators, Makindye

The background context of the youth targeted by the project also plays a significant role in determining their ability to complete training. The young people are stigmatised because of their unfortunate backgrounds. This includes being jeered by those who perceive themselves to be better off. This has resulted in some of the enrolled young people dropping out before they complete their courses. Some of the youth drop out because they must fend for themselves. Attending training means that they must forgo their time to engage in economically productive activities. Since they have obligations like paying rentals, they eventually drop-out of training. In addition, there were youth who dropped out due to relocation, indicating the high mobility of these youth. At times they are forced to change areas of residence forcibly. They are at times evicted by the city authorities e.g., there were some youth who were resident at the railway station and were forced to move due to reconstructions of the place.

“So, they demolish over around 800 households around the railway line. This is where many of our young people are coming from, and some had set up businesses so it's quite difficult. But also recently, just like three weeks back, there were others that were evicted from staying within the army barracks or civilians

were forcefully evicted from the army barracks area. In Banda, so that has also created a setback because now they're looking for housing.” KII, Internal stakeholder

“There are some girls that will drop out because they got pregnant however much you have told them about using condoms while having sex but they will not listen then for boys within the early weeks of joining the programme, others will still be having the old behaviour so may commit some crimes in the community and will run in hiding hence not completing the course.” FGD participant, Male Peer Educators

“We need more support especially in providing basic needs including transport, because we leave our small hustles to come to school but we need to provide basic needs” FGD participant, Male, Youth in training, Makindye

“50% will finish because others are renting for themselves and have to always spare time to work and also come for skilling training” FGD participant, Peer Educators, Banda

“Most boys are bread winners and we lacked so many requirements because we were not able to foot bills and meet the necessary requirements for training and this affected the learning so much.” FGD participant, Trained and employed youth, Male, Makindye

The economic background of the youth also meant that some encountered food shortages. This affected their academic performance and their ability to stay for afternoon sessions on life-skills.

“So, you can imagine it for the last seven years, we won't be providing meals. But now we did this last quarter of the second year. The second phase with provided meals and we are seeing quite tremendous changes, retention is high attendance is high, you know concentration within the classes is high.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“I think the addition of the one meal a day was a good addition and something that needs to be explored further.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

Some of the youth did not complete their courses but “moved on”. This is different from dropping out in the normal sense. In these instances, youth believed that they are adequately skilled and as a result, do not see the need to continue with their courses. The notion that some of the youth start utilising their skills during training was evident when they mentioned during FGDs that they are already earning a living from the acquired skills. Furthermore, some do not return for graduation after internship if they get good opportunities.

“I can say that the completion rate is like 50% then the remaining 50% drop out because sometimes they have learnt something that has enabled them to start working”. FGD participant, Female, Peer Educators, Rubaga division

Duration and appropriateness of the training

Youth who had already undergone training were asked about the appropriateness of the duration of their courses. Findings indicate that 63% of the youth believed the duration was highly suitable. While not statistically significant, the course duration appeared to be more suitable for females than males. This observation may be associated with the nature of the courses, as they are perceived to be well-suited for women (hair dressing, catering, knitting, and tailoring). This was largely with reference to the short-term

courses that are offered under the project. As indicated earlier, there are 45 short-term courses such as liquid soap making, bar soap making, bakery, charcoal lighters, mirror decors, urban gardening.

Table 6: Extent to which the course studied was appropriate

	Overall	Sex		Type of course					
		Male	Female	Tailoring	Electronic	Knitting	Hairdressing	Baking	Catering
N	234	78	156	54	53	5	93	13	15
A greater extent	63.2%	57.7%	66.0%	72.2%	54.7%	40.0%	62.4%	61.5%	60.0%
To some extent	29.1%	33.3%	26.9%	18.5%	37.7%	20.0%	28.0%	38.5%	40.0%
To some/lesser extent	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%	5.6%	0.0%	40.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Neutral	3.8%	5.1%	3.2%	3.7%	7.5%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The survey also assessed the youth's perception of the training's effectiveness and their overall satisfaction with the received training. The results revealed a noteworthy positive correlation ($r=0.468$, $p<0.001$) between the perceived helpfulness of the training and the participants' overall satisfaction with the training. This correlation suggests that as individuals found the training to be more beneficial, their satisfaction levels with the training also increased. The statistical significance ($p<0.001$) underscores the reliability of this correlation, indicating that it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. This finding underscores the importance of considering the perceived helpfulness of training when assessing overall satisfaction among the youth participants. Around 74% (76% males vs 73% females) felt that the training was helpful on the other hand 62% (63% males vs 62% females) were very satisfied with the training that was received.

But like for the girls, they were able to bring their children. It is also, I think, a big attraction. But I didn't really sense that there were any young fathers there that needed to bring their kids. So, they seem to have more flexibility in that sense." KII, Internal Stakeholder

Table 7: Perceptions on the helpfulness of the training received

	Sex			Location		
	Male	Female	Total	Makindye	Banda	Nateete
n	78	156	234	86	52	96
The extent to which the training was helpful						
To some/lesser extent	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Neutral	1.3%	0.6%	0.9%	0.0%	1.9%	1.0%
To some extent	23.1%	25.6%	24.8%	37.2%	26.9%	12.5%
A greater extent	75.6%	73.1%	73.9%	61.6%	71.2%	86.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Level of satisfaction of the training received						
Not satisfied	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%
Somewhat satisfied	5.1%	2.6%	3.4%	1.2%	9.6%	2.1%
Satisfied	32.1%	35.3%	34.2%	39.5%	42.3%	25.0%
Very satisfied	62.8%	61.5%	62.0%	59.3%	46.2%	72.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The youth expressed their satisfaction with the training and offered a wide range of reasons that include welcoming attitude of staff, the exposure they obtained and the general acquisition of skills.

“I gained a lot because here at UYDEL you do other skills apart from the main skill. So, if you fail with tailoring you can’t fail with all other skills” FGD participant, Female, completed training but not employed

“Teachers are like friends to us they are good to everyone.... they are supportive and give advice” FGD participant, Male, Youth still in training, Banda

Challenges faced during training

Youth reported facing several challenges during the training, including difficulties related to the distance to the training centres and a lack of boarding facilities, leading to increased transport costs. Daytime hunger was an issue until food provisions were introduced at the centres. Inadequate equipment and materials, often outdated, hindered effective teaching and learning, impacting youth’s readiness for future employment. Limited space in small classrooms posed challenges in accommodating the number of students. Additionally, the lack of access to the internet and frequent electricity blackouts further compounded the training difficulties.

“Transport was high because at the Centre we had no accommodation”. FGD participant, Female, completed training, Banda

“The main challenges that I saw was the lack of meals at that time and also some trainees could come from far and this greatly affected their attendance.” FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Nateete

“My challenge too was about hunger because I never had what to eat but that has changed now, and we are receiving some meals now.” FGD participant, Female, Currently in Training, Nateete

Few training materials at the Centre like we had one dryer at the Centre.” FGD participant, Female, Youth (those who completed training and working), Banda

“We were not able to get practical knowledge because most training was theory based and this gave me a hard time for example at the workshop.” FGD participant, Male, Completed Training

“For me it was the issue of rain. When it rains, we all have to squeeze ourselves in the building and yet it’s small” FGD Participant, Females, Completed Training but not employed

“No electricity backup like a generator, so when there was a power cut it affected mainly the catering products and electronics.” FGD participant, Male, trained but not working

“And then we’ve also had incidences, especially in one of the slum areas where young people have been evicted, forcefully evicted from where they were staying and working but also living and that has created a huge setback.” KII, Internal stakeholder

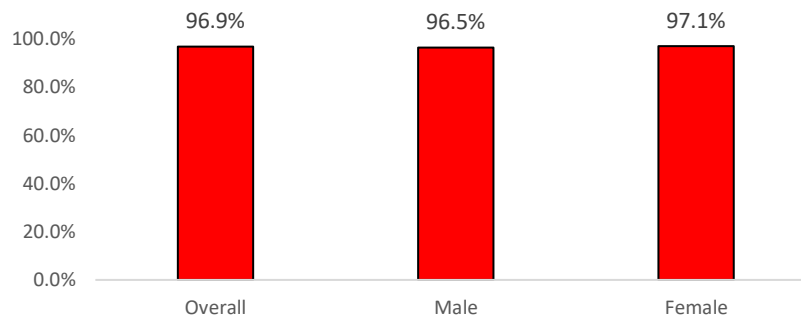
Ability to select courses of choice

When asked if they completed the courses because they wanted them, >95% of the youth were affirmative (see figure 4). This indicated that the youth pursued the courses out of passion. However, in

course selection that boys tend to undervalue opportunities, displaying a preference for quick financial gains over investing in long-term skill development. On the other hand, girls are often more receptive to opportunities. Quantitative survey results show that, although the % of youth completed a course because they wanted it was very high, this was more common among females (97.1%) than males (96.5%). Both qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests a potential gender-related difference in attitudes towards opportunities and skill development. It is important to note that generalisations about gender-based behaviours may not apply universally, as individual preferences and choices can vary widely. Understanding these dynamics can inform targeted interventions to engage and support individuals in skill development based on their specific needs and motivations.

“Boys usually undermine opportunities; they don’t like listening and prefer making quick money to learning long-term skills. Women are more receptive to opportunities. For example, there is a gentleman to whom we contributed funds to train in driving and he left the money there.” KII, Project staff

Figure 5: % youth who joined courses voluntarily



6.1.1. Outcome level analysis

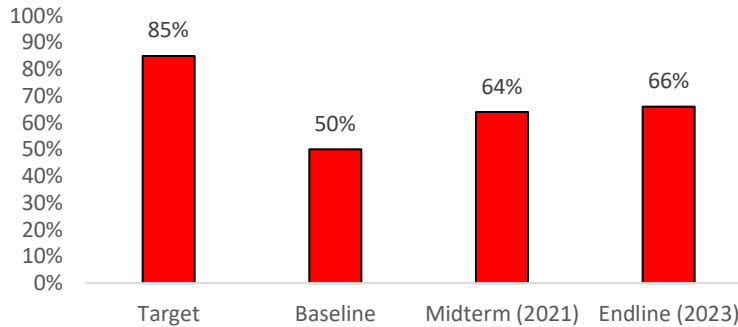
Outcome 1: Vulnerable youth in Kampala have increased access to employable skills, and their rights to economic development are respected and fulfilled by 2023

Under this first outcome, the project targeted 2000 slum youth from Makindye, Nakawa and Rubaga to be equipped with vocational and livelihood skills and be linked to available Job opportunities. To monitor this result, there were two indicators in place: Outcome 1.1: % youth with employable skills who are gainfully employed (including self-employment) as a result of the project and Outcome 1.2: % of youth who have increased incomes as result of employment.

Outcome 1.1: % Youth with employable skills who are gainfully employed (including self-employment) as a result of the project.

This indicator gauged the proportion of youth possessing employable skills who secured employment, including self-employment, due to the project's influence. A set of questions were asked from the youth to assess this particular outcome indicator. The findings indicate that, at the endline 66% of youth with employable skills were successfully employed as a result of the project. Although this marked an improvement from the baseline (50%) and midterm (64%), it fell short of achieving the project's set target of 85% during this implementation phase.

Figure 6: % youth with employable skills who are gainfully employed (including self-employment) as a result of the project



Youth Employment Status

Trained young people were asked questions regarding their employment status. Among the youth who were eligible for employment (those not currently enrolled in school), 49.4% were not employed. Interestingly, a higher percentage of unemployed youth were females (55.9%) compared to males (35.7%) as shown in figure 5. Those who were employed fell into three categories: full-time employment, part-time employment, and self-employment. Approximately 21% of the surveyed youth were engaged in full-time employment, another 21% held part-time positions, and around 9% were self-employed..

Qualitative data from the evaluation revealed several factors that have hindered trained youth from getting employed. The factors include lack of/ inadequate networks, internship and mentoring and follow-ups. Although primary data did not link these aspects to COVID-19, secondary data indicate that these aspects of the project were constrained by the COVID-19 restrictions. According to the YEP project proposal, these aspects were supposed to be an integral part of the project. Findings show that although these were happening, there is room for improvement. In addition, the feedback mechanism was not efficient. This calls for the enhancement of feedback mechanisms and knowledge building on reporting lines in the event of improper business ethics.

“I feel that the project lacks in conducting follow-ups about the progress of the people they empower. Most times, young people relapse and go back to old behaviour, it’s hard to see young people doing or pursuing careers in what they trained in at UYDEL. UYDEL needs to understand how to support youth beyond the training they provide at the centres.” KII, Project staff

“After seeking employment, the challenge we faced was the clients and customers who exploit and cheat us and yet we have nowhere to report them to seek justice for example in cases of robbery.” FGD participant, Male, Completed training.

Furthermore, challenges faced by trained youth extend beyond job unavailability, i.e., discrimination based on economic status, age, education status, and disability are part of the challenges faced. The discrimination faced are particularly due to vulnerabilities associated with young people’s backgrounds, compounding the difficulties they encounter in securing employment opportunities. Economic status becomes a significant factor as it often determines the level of access to financial resources. Trained youth who come from poor backgrounds face bias from employers who hold prejudiced views about their

abilities. This discrimination not only obstructs their entry into the job market but also increases cycles of poverty and inequality. Age discrimination is another prevalent issue, with some employers exhibiting a preference for more experienced candidates. Trained youth, despite possessing relevant qualifications, found themselves overlooked simply due to their age, preventing them from gaining the practical experience necessary to further their careers. Educational status was also mentioned to be a source of discrimination. Trained youth from underprivileged educational backgrounds faced scepticism regarding the quality of their education, creating barriers to entry into certain job markets. The discrimination based on disability adds an additional layer of challenge. People with disabilities face an extra challenge because employers unfairly judge them. Despite possessing the necessary skills, some employers believe individuals with disabilities are incapable of certain tasks. The unfair thinking makes it harder for youth with disabilities to acquire certain jobs. These erroneous beliefs about their capabilities often result in them being excluded from opportunities. Moreover, for young entrepreneurs aspiring to launch their own ventures, the absence of startup kits or tools presents a significant obstacle. They require essential utilities such as equipment or materials to commence operations, and the lack thereof poses a considerable challenge. Without access to these vital resources, it becomes arduous for them to translate their skills and knowledge into thriving enterprises. This shows the importance of not only addressing disparities in job opportunities but also extending assistance to facilitate the establishment and sustainability of their businesses, thereby providing the necessary support they require.

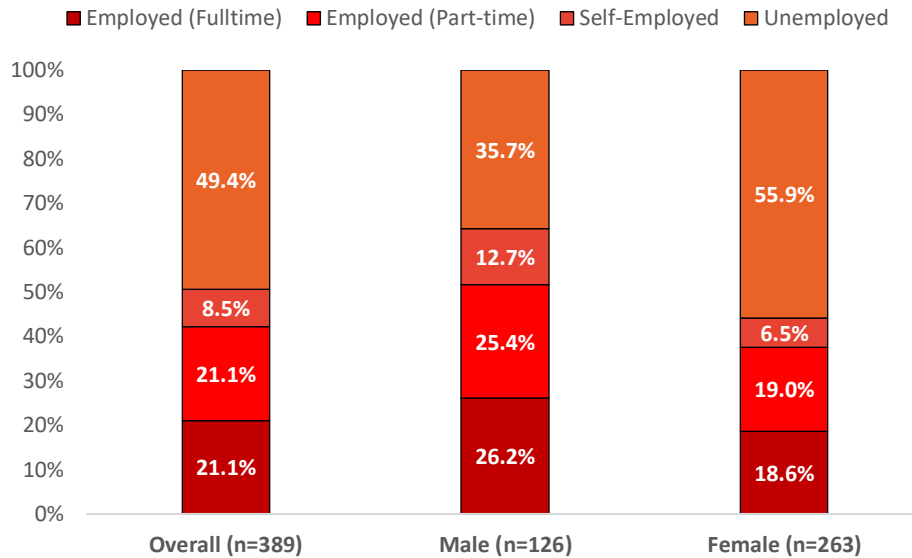
“We didn’t have ovens I didn’t get the right skills that I was hoping to get. We didn’t have enough materials.” FGD participant, Female, Unemployed Female Youth, Makindye

“The challenge was that I never had national ID and other documents and yet they kept on asking for them and also they could undermine my size that I was young to hand electricity related work” FGD participant, Male, completed training but not working, Nateete

“When we are looking for jobs /employment, normally it’s not easy to get the opportunities and most people see how you look, they can even underestimate you when they think you can’t work in their place, but this depends on the place. Others are so good” FGD participant, Female drop-outs, Nateete

“They are very active citizens and responsible, but they are poor at financial management. They need to learn how to save. So, the changes are there but it’s important to teach them management – a lot of them start businesses but don’t know how to sustain them.” KII, Project staff

Figure 7: youth employment status

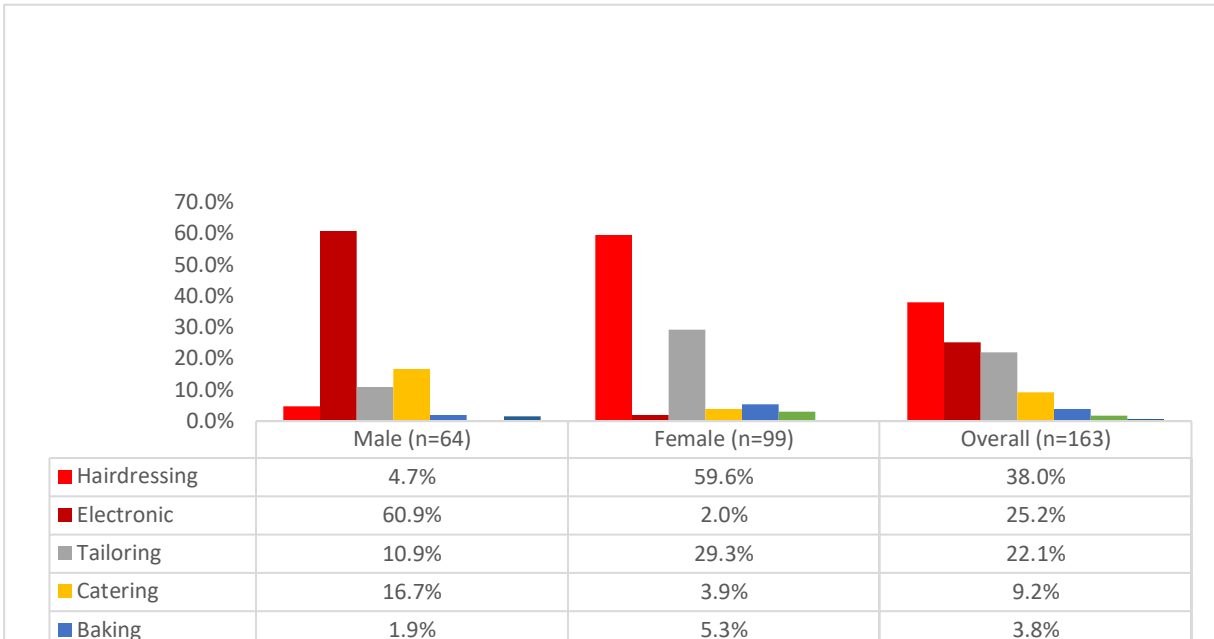


Youth engaged in various forms of employment (full-time, part-time, and self-employment) were asked about their training courses. The top three predominant courses reported were hairdressing (38%), electronics (25.2%), and tailoring (22.1%). Notably, hairdressing and tailoring were more frequently pursued by females (59.6% vs. 29.3%), while male youth tended to have undergone training in electronics and catering courses (60.9% vs. 16.9%) (see figure 6). According to qualitative data, the project has mainly focused on teaching young people skills that are in demand in the community, meeting the needs of the market but there is also a concern that it may be promoting gender stereotypes.

“Most females do hair dressing and tailoring; they can hardly join electrical engineering” FGD participant, Male, Youth still in training, Banda

“To a greater extent, the project has put emphasis on training youths in skills that are on market, which has met the demand in the community.” KII, Project staff

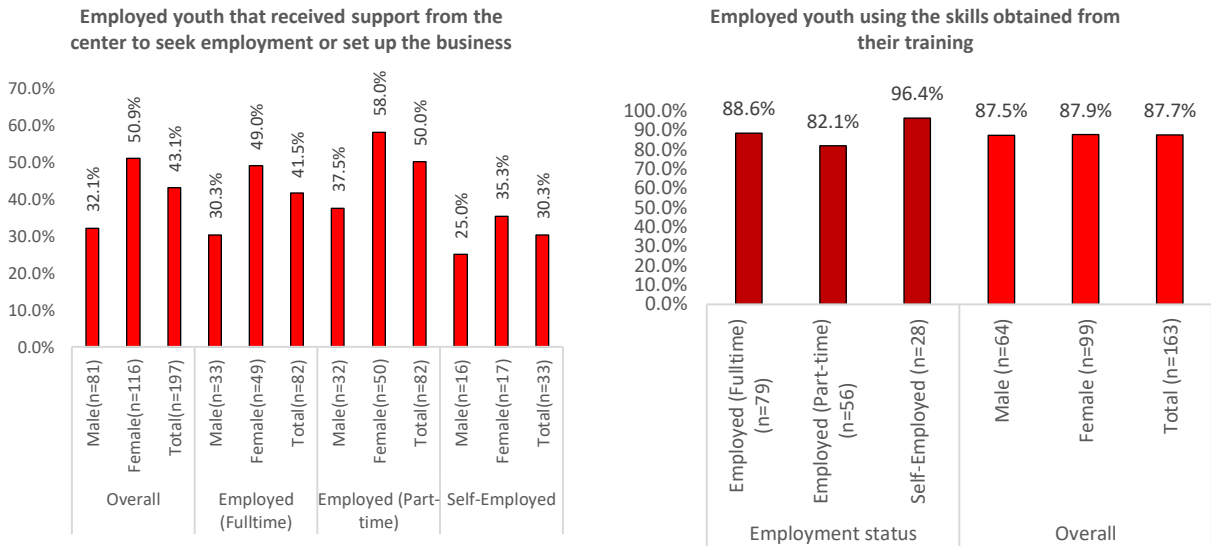
Figure 8: The skills that young individuals received training in



When asked about whether the employed youth received assistance from the Centres in seeking employment or establishing a business, 43.1% of the youth responded affirmatively. This suggests that while the programme has a focus on training young individuals in various skills, the level of support for employment-seeking is relatively lower. Notably, females (50%) were more likely to report receiving support from the Centres compared to males (32.1%). This gender difference could be attributed to the nature of the programmes offered by the centres. Most of the courses offered are commonly for females than for males for example hairdressing, tailoring, catering, and baking. Further analysis by the type of employment revealed interesting findings. Among those who reported receiving support, (assistance from the Centres in seeking employment or establishing a business), part-time employed individuals comprised the highest percentage (50%), followed by those employed full-time (41.5%) and self-employed individuals (30.3%). This breakdown suggests that part-time workers, perhaps due to their more flexible schedules, are more likely to seek and receive support. The relatively lower percentage among self-employed individuals could be due to the perception that they may not require as much external support, or it could be indicative of a gap in support programmes tailored to the unique challenges faced by self-employed youth.

The utilisation of trained skills among employed youth was remarkably high, standing at 87%, indicating that the youth are effectively applying the skills acquired through their training. Notably, there were no significant differences observed between male and female youth in terms of utilising their trained skills in their respective jobs. Additionally, it was observed that the prevalence of utilising skills obtained from training was particularly high among self-employed youth, surpassing 95%. In comparison, those employed full-time exhibited a utilisation rate of 88.6%, while part-time employed individuals showed a slightly lower rate at 82.1%. This suggests that self-employed youth are exceptionally adept at applying the skills honed through their training in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

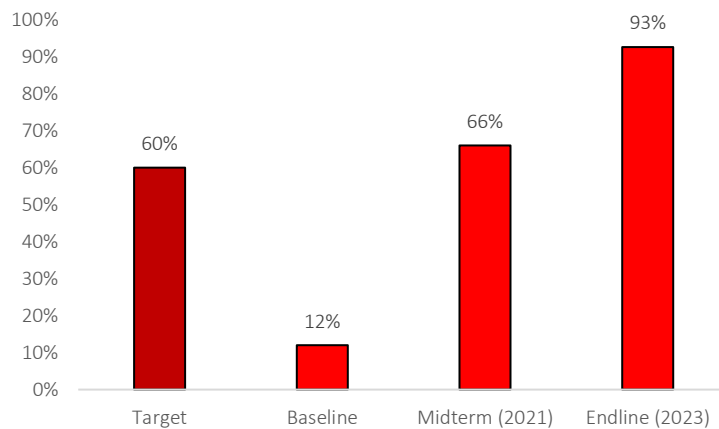
Figure 9: support from the centre and use of skills



Outcome 1.2: Increased incomes as result of employment.

Outcome 1.2 was measuring the percentage of youths who have increased incomes as result of employment. In addressing this indicator, youth were tasked with self-reporting on whether their incomes were on the rise or decline as a result of their employment. At the endline, a substantial 93% of the youth reported that their incomes were increased due to their employment. This represented a notable advancement from the baseline figure of 12% and the midterm result of 66%. Importantly, these results not only exceeded expectations but also surpassed the project target set for Outcome 1.2 (see figure 10).

Figure 10: % of youth who have increased incomes as result of employment



Qualitative data also provided evidence of increased incomes among the youth. For example, health workers noticed a positive change in households that could not afford to buy food or have two meals a day previously. As a result of acquiring skills and securing jobs, youth in these households can now afford

to buy some food, ensuring at least one meal in the morning. This suggests that young people now have extra money to cover their expenses and buy food for the household. Furthermore, evidence shows that youth are able to save money, due to the financial literacy training conducted by the project. The establishment of saving groups reflects that the youth have sufficient income, enabling them to save.

*“To assess and realize you possibly go to the household which could not drink, afford two meals a day, and you find at least they have a meal in the morning. And in the afternoon, you go to a household where people were not employed, and someone tells you know these days he lives in the morning, and he has a job. That’s an improvement.” **KII, Health Worker***

*“To a smaller extent, but we have conducted training sessions on financial literacy for youths, leading some to secure loans from money lenders to initiate their own businesses. Youths at the centre have established VSLA saving groups specifically for youths at the centre, enabling them to save small amounts that can be borrowed internally in case of emergencies.” **KII, Project staff***

Access to credit

Some youth provided evidence of access to startup capital to establish their business. They were even able to establish a business and employ their fellow youth. However, some were not successful in acquiring loans because required credit was only offered to youth who had initiated a small business.

“Respondent 1: yes, after graduation, I was given start-up capital, I established my business and was able to employ my fellow youths.

Respondent 2: yes, I was given start-up capital from the centre.

*Respondent 4: I have not been successful in acquiring a loan” **FGD participants, Females, completed training and employed, Makindye***

*“Previously as we were graduating in 2019, there was a plan to provide us with financial support and it only favoured those who had some small businesses running at that time, so we were not able to get credit.” **FGD Participant, Males***

Furthermore, while these saving groups assisted the youth to start up their own businesses as they had enough savings, however, not all members of these groups experienced the same luck as those that were unemployed or involved in temporary jobs were not able to have enough savings.

*“These savings groups have not only helped us, but it has also helped many youths to start saving within these groups thus growing financially” **FGD participant, Female, completed training and working***

*“I have tried to join the one savings group started by UYDEL here where we are but in most cases I lack the money to keep saving since am not working” **FGD participant, Female, completed training but not employed***

*“For me too I tried to join the one here at UYDEL but normally it’s the issue of money to put in the savings group that has failed me to stay in the group” **FGD participant, Female, Completed Training but not employed***

Outcome 2: Vulnerable youth in Kampala experience increased access to and utilization of youth friendly sexual reproductive health rights services and Information by 2023

This outcome sought to empower young individuals with comprehensive knowledge of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, enabling them to make informed choices and cultivate positive health-seeking behaviours. Simultaneously, it endeavoured to enhance their access to sexual reproductive health services. Three indicators were utilised to monitor this outcome. These include: % of youth with basic knowledge about SRHR because of the project, % of youth accessing and utilising SRH services and % of youth expressing a positive change from risky sexual behaviour because of the project.

Outcome 2.1 % of youth with basic knowledge about SRH&R because of the project

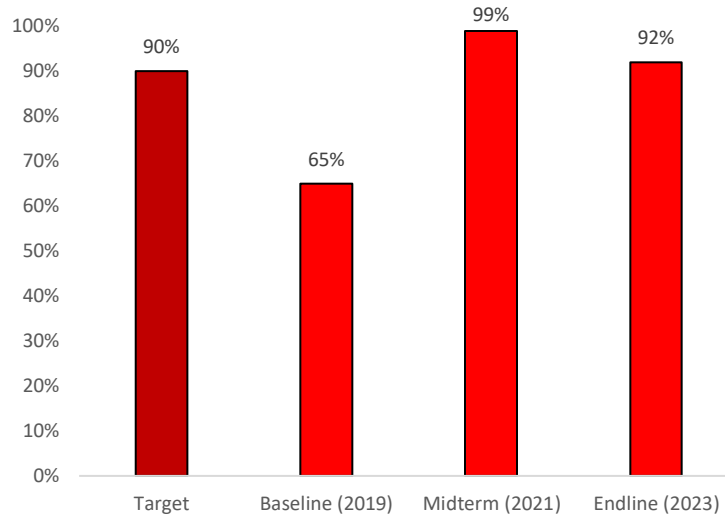
Interviewed youth were asked a series of questions aimed at assessing their understanding of SRHR. These enquiries encompassed topics including contraception, family planning, safe sexual relationships, condom usage, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Given the sensitivity surrounding the SRHR issues, each youth age group (13-17 years and >17 years) were asked different questions pertaining to SRHR. Youth who were below the age of 18 (13–17 years) were mostly asked questions related to the knowledge of SRHR. During analysis, an overall knowledge score was calculated. Results for this indicator showed that at the endline, 92% of the youth demonstrated a basic knowledge of SRHR, marking a slight decline from the midterm figure of 99%. Nevertheless, this represented an improvement from the baseline measurement of 66%. In comparison to the targeted achievement of 90%, results show that the project surpassed the target by 2 percentage points. The results indicate that the SRHR training sessions were effective, as evidenced by a positive knowledge shift from baseline to endline and again exceeding the set target. This suggests an increasing awareness among young people regarding SRHR. Qualitative evidence indicates that further training is required for youth in the realm of SRHR. Moreover, evidence indicated that youth exhibit confidence in discussing their health status with health workers and are now comfortable addressing SRHR topics with their peers. Additionally, the majority of young individuals stated that they have gained awareness of SRHR through project-based learning. Many were also proficient in accurately identifying SRH products and services.

“To some extent we have some knowledge however we still need more training on SRH” FGD participant, Female, Banda

“Respondent 1: Yes, I am now confident to talk about my private health status to a health worker, and topics with other peers freely Respondent 2: yes, I am now in control over my life, my health status unlike before” FGD participant, Female, Completed training but not employed

“We learn to be careful about sex, contraceptives and deciding on having healthy sex listening to your partner and avoiding having sex with multiple partners. Family planning methods as well. i.e. vasectomy” FGD participant, with Youth (In training), Banda

Figure 11: % of youth with basic knowledge about SRHR



Qualitative data indicated improvements in the basic knowledge of SRHR among youth. Prior to their participation in the program, they lacked understanding of SRHR issues. However, upon joining the program, they gained the necessary comprehension and skills to lead sessions and educate other young people on sexual and reproductive health matters. Consequently, they have developed confidence, feeling empowered and resilient. Additionally, youth now demonstrate acceptance of advice from their parents regarding SRHR. Upon joining the project, they have become open to parental guidance and willingly adopt the advice provided. They not only implement the lessons learned but also aspire to share their knowledge with other young people to help them avoid similar challenges. This illustrates the effectiveness of the program in delivering SRHR training.

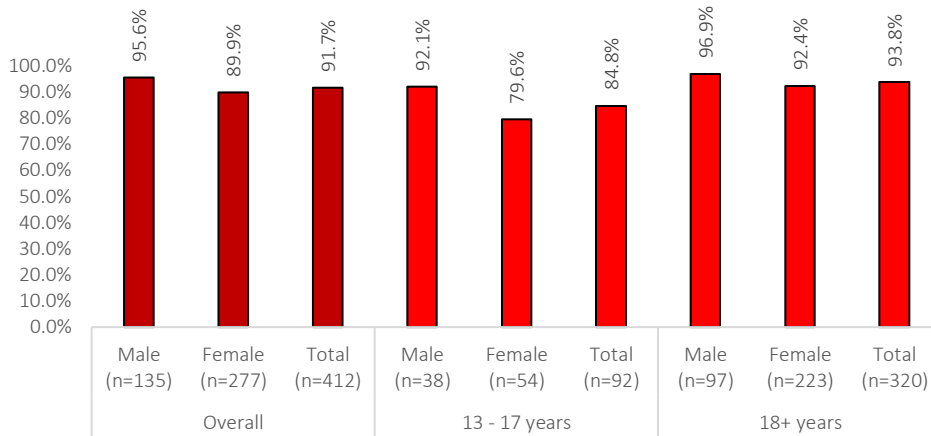
“Before I joined the programme, I didn’t know about SRHR issues but now I can lead sessions and train youth about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. I have confidence and am now strong” FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Nateete

“Before I joined the programme, when my parents try to advise me, I ignore but when I came here and I was advised, I took all the advice I was given and I can even teach other youth because I don’t want them to go through what I went through” FGD participant, Female, completed training but not employed

The analysis also aimed to comprehend the level of basic SRHR knowledge among youth across different age groups and genders. The findings indicated that, overall, youth demonstrated a satisfactory level of basic SRHR knowledge. However, a noticeable gender gap was observed, with a higher percentage of males (96%) possessing basic SRHR knowledge compared to females (90%), and this disparity was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, concerning age, the results revealed that older youth (94%) tended to possess a better understanding of basic SRHR knowledge than younger youth (85%), and this difference was also statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that as youth advance in age, there is a corresponding enhancement in their basic knowledge of SRHR. These findings highlight the necessity of

tailoring SRHR education programmes to address specific gender and age-related discrepancies, thus ensuring a more equitable dissemination of knowledge across diverse demographic groups.

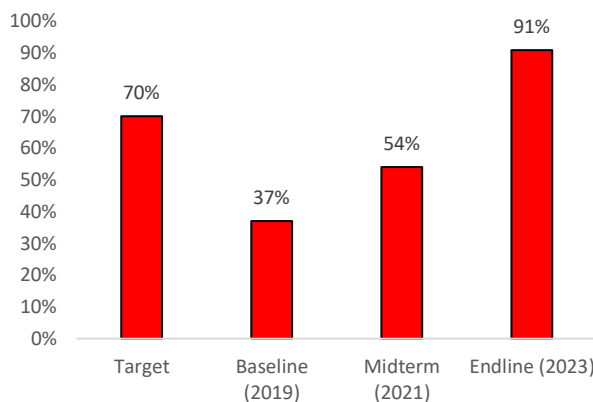
Figure 12: % of youth participants with basic knowledge about SRHR by age and gender



Outcome 2.2 % of youths accessing and utilizing SRH services.

While possessing basic knowledge about SRH is important, ensuring accessible SRH services within communities is equally crucial. Additionally, the utilization of these available services plays a significant role. The second indicator focused on evaluating the access and utilization of SRH services by youth. Before inquiring about access, youth were surveyed about the availability of SRHR services in their communities. Among the surveyed youth, 84.5% (90.8% in Makindye, 83.1% in Banda, and 79.8% in Nateete) indicated the availability of SRHR services in their respective communities, highlighting the presence of services in the surveyed areas. Furthermore, the accessibility of such services was high, with 91% of youth stating that they are currently accessing and utilizing these services, marking a substantial improvement from the baseline (37%) and the midterm (54%). Additionally, the results suggest that the project has surpassed the target for this indicator by more than 20 percentage points, with the target set at 70% and the endline value reaching 91%.

Figure 13: % of youth accessing and utilising SRH services



Qualitative data also provided evidence of the availability of SRH services within the communities. Findings show that SRH services are available, and they encompass a range of health-related support. Qualitative data also show that such services are readily accessible in the community; government health centres play a key role, along with the presence of Village Health Teams (VHTs), community counsellors, and Peer educators. These dedicated individuals and teams collectively contribute to the availability and provision of essential health services within the community.

*“These services are available in our society and people can easily access them, especially in government Health centres, there are also VHTs (Village Health Teams), then also the community counsellors and lastly Peer educators in every community to provide these services”. **Females Peer Educators, Nateete***

The project has shown to have successfully empowered youth, enabling them to approach health facilities with the confidence to access SRHR services. Most youth are now equipped to report instances of sexual/reproductive harassment to the appropriate authorities. The project has also instilled a culture of regular HIV testing and counselling, fostering a proactive approach towards personal health. Moreover, it has emphasised the importance of family planning methods, reaching out to adults in the community. Furthermore, the project has conducted mass HIV tests and awareness campaigns within the community, encouraging youths to be aware of their HIV status and take charge of their lives. This comprehensive approach reflects a commitment to both youth well-being and community-wide health promotion. Youth also because of the availability of SRH services, they have now become more confident in accessing such services.

*“We have empowered them to access health facilities with confidence, report any sexual reproductive harassment to the relevant authorities, go for regular HIV testing and counselling and emphasised family planning methods to the adults. Additionally, the project has done mass community HIV tests and awareness, encouraging youths to know their status and take control of their lives.” **KII, Project staff***

*“Yes. Especially through the BCC sessions and the SRHR. I am now confident when approaching a health centre. I was able to check my HIV status and know it” **FGD Females out of training employed Makindye***

Nevertheless, instances of shame have been reported when attempting to access services, particularly in collecting condoms from SRH facilities. Some youths have also experienced discrimination while seeking SRH services. Despite the presence of government hospitals such as Mulango and Kiswa that offer free services, youth express some fear in utilising these SRH services.

*“Yes, they are available, but I feel ashamed to access some of them like condoms” **FGD participant, Male, Trained but not working***

*“The challenge is that sometimes, in case you go to pick condoms, you get mocked at.” **FGD participant, Male, Trained but not working***

*“We have relationships with government hospitals like Mulago and KISWA which provide services for free. However, youth choose to not go for these services because they either feel too cool or are scared” **KII, Project staff***

Further, findings indicate a high level of accessibility to SRH services within the visited communities. This is evidenced by 77.6% of the youth who mentioned that accessing SRHR services within their communities was very easy/easy. While the data did not reveal significant variations between male and female youth, there is a slight ease of accessibility for young men (78.7%) compared to young women (77%). Further,

analysis of data by location reveals that the ease of accessibility to SRHR services was highest in Nateete (94%), followed by Banda (73.9%) and Makindye (64%). These findings highlight not only the overall positive accessibility of SRH services but also variations across different locations, suggesting potential areas for targeted interventions or improvements in certain communities especially in Banda and Makindye.

Moreover, the extent of youth utilisation of SRHR services indicate that more than half of them, specifically 52.2%, reported utilising these services to a greater extent. Notably, a higher proportion of male youth (54.7%) mentioned a greater extent of utilisation compared to their female counterparts (51.2%). An additional analysis based on location reveals that the highest utilisation of SRHR services was noted in Nateete, where 75.8% of youth reported significant utilisation. These results may be attributed to the high accessibility of SRHR services in Nateete, as evidenced by the earlier finding that 94% of youth in that area found it very easy or easy to access these services. Overall, these results shed light on the significant utilisation of SRHR services among the youth, particularly among males, and the influence of accessibility on service utilisation, with Nateete emerging as a notable case.

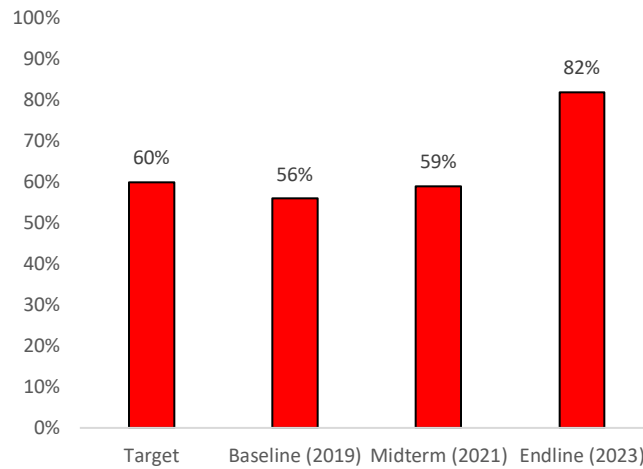
Table 8: Accessibility and utilisation of SRH services within the communities

	Sex			Location		
	Male	Female	Total	Makindye	Nakawa	Rubaga
N	75	170	245	89	69	87
How easy it for the youth to access SRHR services in the communities						
Difficult or very difficult	6.7%	3.5%	4.5%	5.6%	5.8%	2.3%
Not sure	14.7%	19.4%	18.0%	30.3%	20.3%	3.4%
Easy/very easy	78.7%	77.0%	77.6%	64.0%	73.9%	94.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
The extent to which the youth utilise SRHR services						
To some or lesser extent	28.0%	24.1%	25.3%	31.5%	30.4%	14.9%
Neutral	17.3%	24.7%	22.4%	33.7%	24.6%	9.2%
To some/greater extent	54.7%	51.2%	52.2%	34.9%	44.9%	75.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Outcome 2.3 % of youths expressing a positive change from risky sexual behaviour as a result of the project

This indicator assessed the extent to which youth demonstrated a positive transformation from risky sexual behaviour due to the project's intervention. To analyse this indicator, participants were asked about their perspectives on various risky behaviours, encompassing safe sex practices, condom usage, substance abuse, the significance of being aware of STI status, and views on transactional sex, among other factors. During analysis, a score reflecting risky behaviour was calculated in response to the indicator. Findings reveal that 82% of the youth are now practicing safe sex as compared to baseline. This marks an improvement from both the baseline (56%) and the midterm (59%). Notably, the project exceeded the initial target of 60%, reaching 82% by the endline period.

Figure 14: % youth practicing safe sex



Qualitative evidence indicates a notable increase in confidence regarding sexual rights among youth, a positive change attributed to the programme implementation. The promotion of abstinence has played a crucial role in altering sexual risk behaviours, as youth have developed a mindset more receptive to teachings on abstinence. Prior to the training, it was challenging for the youth to heed advice on abstinence.

“Am confident about my rights now on sexuality, which I didn’t know before” FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Nateete

“Before I joined this programme, I didn’t want anyone to tell me anything about abstaining. I was only thinking about sex”. FGD participant, Female, Completed Training but not employed.

“Before I came here for the training, when someone tells me something about abstaining from sex or diseases, I could think that they don’t want me to enjoy but when I came here, I understood everything.” FGD participant, Female, Completed Training but not employed

Project efforts created awareness about SRHR, leading to improved decision-making among the community. Notably, more young individuals, accompanied by their partners, now actively seek HIV testing, contributing to a positive trend. The increased utilisation of family planning methods is aiding in the battle against teenage pregnancies. Furthermore, the availability of Post-Abortion Care (PAC) services has proven crucial in preventing potential fatalities associated with unsafe abortions. The awareness programmes conducted by UYDEL have effectively communicated the availability of PAC services, encouraging individuals to seek assistance in the event of an abortion, emphasising the importance of accessible reproductive health services.

“That has been the core that has been done to its maximum. Now, people have become aware of sexual reproductive services and their rights. So, you find that this has helped them to make informed decisions. We are getting young people coming here with their boyfriends to test for HIV, that is a plus, we are getting many young people coming here to get family planning methods by that we are fighting teenage pregnancies, we are getting many young people coming to get (PAC) post-abortion service and this helped prevent death because without the service the result would be death. Through the UYDEL

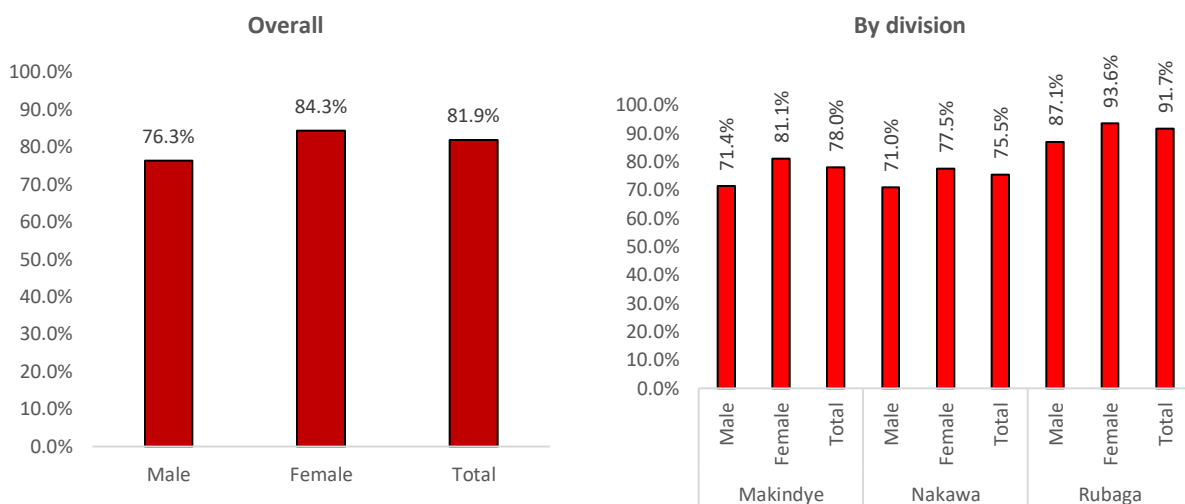
*awareness programme, we have told people that we do offer PAC, in case you do abort or what, please come and we will give you post-abortion care.” **KII, Male Health Worker, Makindye***

*“My views on SRHR have changed since I joined this project and I have been able to know how I can prevent myself and treat some STI in case I am infected compared to the previous time and I feel I need more information since it's at 60%” **FGD, Trained, Male***

*“My views have changed because I used not to know much about SRHR and could think that street life was the best until when I came here. Am confident about the information I received because it has helped me too. The project can only ensure that they emphasize the importance of testing and people protecting themselves by putting up posters along the streets and at the facility” **Males that trained but not working, Nateete***

Expressing a positive change from risky sexual behaviour was analysed by different divisions and genders. Notably, the highest percentage of youth expressing positive change was observed in Rubaga (92%), followed by Makindye (78%) and Nakawa (76%). This indicates a pronounced positive shift in behaviour among youth in Rubaga compared to the other locations. When considering gender differences, the analysis revealed that female youth (84%) were more likely to express positive changes from risky sexual behaviours compared to their male counterparts (76%). This suggests that the project may have a more significant influence on fostering positive behaviour change among females. These findings shows the importance of tailoring interventions to specific locations and gender considerations. Understanding regional and gender variations can help in designing targeted strategies to address the unique needs and challenges faced by youth in different areas and genders.

Figure 15: % of youth practicing safe sex



Impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of activities

Project implementation under the second phase commenced in 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Foremost, the challenges that affected youth in the targeted areas were amplified. Children in Uganda missed out on school more than their peers anywhere else in the world because of the pandemic. Approximately 15 million pupils in Uganda did not attend school for 83 weeks⁸. This led to more children being out-of-school and seeking learning opportunities at the UYDEL Centres and thereby increasing the demand for courses. Furthermore, more cases of STIs and pregnancies were recorded by UYDEL in its project reports.

The stronger organisations enabled us to survive by providing, schools were closed, and a lot of youth dropped out of school. Increased number of students during COVID period due to school closure. UYDEL still was able to provide food supplies to youth in the community. We are still suffering the effects of COVID-19.” KII, Project staff

“They had a lot of negative consequences around people because there are times when we had to stop and close everything. And then when they begin face-to-face meetings, they went to short term projects, which could be done within small, with small numbers within their communities. COVID resulted in teen pregnancies, some of them came back when they had children. It had the more negative effects, but we are recovering from them. And we are now able to disseminate more messages about sexual reproductive and about drug abuse, about mental health, increased a lot of mental health, by the way and a lot of stress, because many people are not able to cope with our families.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

On the other hand, implementation of activities was also affected negatively by the pandemic and the associated containment measures such as the early lockdown. For instance, the design and development of an operational framework for credit services to slum youth which was supposed to be done in the first year of implementation was put on hold because of COVID-19 lockdown and was eventually not undertaken resulting in the funds being reimbursed to LWF. Similarly, other community level activities were also put on hold, especially the peer led sessions. The impact of COVID-19 was also felt by the emerging enterprises of the graduates. These were unable to withstand the negative impact and most of them went under.

“Like I said, some of them, it was due to COVID-19. That brought the setback, the businesses collapsed because they were laid off work and the employers could need to manage the work the huge workforce, versus the input that was limited due to the lockdown, but even after the lockdown the pre lockdown aspects of trying to get back to your feet emerged. Yes, you did the vocational skills training, you acquired all the skills, you had started your business, it has fallen. Now you need to get back on your feet. How do you get back? How do you stand up right? is still a challenge.” KII, Internal stakeholder

UYDEL employed innovative approaches to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on activities. This involved conducting training for smaller groups at the small-scale community level. UYDEL also introduced short-term courses as one of the responses to the pandemic. Further, provision of start-up kits for enterprises that had been affected by the pandemic enabled some of the enterprises to recover.

⁸ Simone Datzberger and Musenze Junior Brian (2021). “Ebola: Uganda’s schools were closed for two years during COVID, now they face more closures – something must change” *The Conversation*

“We would engage the local leaders RDC clearance community distanced classes” KII, Project staff

“Yes, we did door to door recruitment and engagement in their communities. We would leave the machines at the local leaders in the community and did digital teaching with follow ups.” KII, Project staff

The evaluation notes that although the pandemic and the containment measures had a negative impact on project implementation, UYDEL made an effort to counter these impacts in an effective manner.

CHAPTER 7: IMPACT

THE evaluation sought to determine both positive and negative changes that can be attributed to the project. The analysis also sought to identify the positive and negative unintended changes.

7.1. Positive changes

The project was able to influence positive changes especially in the lives of the targeted youth. The changes were experienced in different aspects of their lives including psychological, physical, and financial. It is imperative to note that the impact on the well-being of the youth is a combination effect from the progress made towards the attainment of the project outcomes.

Building of self-esteem

Foremost, the project was able to build the self-esteem of the youth through psychosocial support, counselling and guidance, and behavioural change communication sessions. The project also offered a safe space for youth who face challenges at home. This also acts as evidence that some of the challenges that the youth encountered emanated from their homes. Findings further show that most young people suffered from low self-esteem prior to enrolling under the project. The Centres became an area where they felt safe and accepted and gradually gained their confidence.

“Yes, the time I was here, my stress at home reduced because I would leave in the morning and return late in the evening.” FGD participant, female, youth in training, Makindye

“Yes, I now have good friends who are supportive because of this project thus widening social capital base” FGD participant, Females, Youth still in training, Banda

The improvements in self-esteem have resulted in more social interactions and participation in community activities by the young people. Increased participation in community activities, improved social interactions, connections, and better integration within their communities due to the skills and confidence gained. It is also pertinent to note that the changes have not only occurred at an individual level but at the community level too. The evaluation finds this to be very important factor which would be worth strengthening in the next phase.

“The change I have seen is that now I can sit with people who are prominent and share information with them and they listen, and I feel confident too about the information that am giving compared to before.” FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Nateete

“The changes I have seen are mainly in the community because nowadays the youths can stand and talk, and their opinions are heard which wasn’t the case before” FGD participant, completed trained and employed, Female, Nateete

“From what I can remember there was a boy who was in the Centre and was so talented in writing plays and fine art and it was through UYDEL that his talent was discovered but before people in his community used to discriminate him. His self-esteem is now high than before”. FGD participant, Female, Completed training and working-Females, Nateete

Self-reliance

Most of the young people stated that they have experienced positive changes in their lives because they have been able to utilise the acquired skills to earn a living. This even includes some who are currently undergoing training. Whereas there are young people who prefer to start utilising their skills after they

have completed training, so start earning even as they are still receiving training. The ability to earn has assisted the young people to be self-reliant. Some of the youth mentioned that they are now able to pay their rentals and buy basic commodities. Some are also able to support their families. The positive changes have been attested by internal stakeholders who have had the opportunity of meeting members of the alumni.

Success story: Namwanje Jackie

Jackie is a 22-year-old youth who currently stays with her uncle in Mutundwe. She is an orphan who grew up with her uncle since childhood, she dropped out of school in senior four. Due to lack of basic needs, she started engaging herself in unhealthy behaviours which included sleeping with multiple partners as a way of obtaining money for her basic needs and a few things that her uncle was not in position to provide for her.

Through a community leader she was referred to UYDEL for vocational training and psychosocial support with a purpose of improving her mental wellbeing. While at UYDEL, she was involved in a number of activities which included outdoor games, behavioural change sessions, vocational training in electronics, MDD and trainings which included peer educators training, street smart training and business skills training.

After the completion of her course, she was able to secure a job with Jamillah where she is running an electronic shop that deals in electronic appliances in town at Energy centre. She gets paid a total sum of 200,000 shillings per month. She is also offered training with breakfast and lunch and a transport fee of UGX 10,000 shillings.

Before the intervention, she used to feel bad about her situation because she was struggling to provide for her personal needs and was involved in utilising ill ways to obtain money. She felt worthless because of the situation. The money she earns from this job has now helped her to access basic needs and supporting her family at home. She has a plan of starting own workshop in Kitebi years from now. Her self-esteem and confidence have improved, she makes more informed decisions about her life with the help of the knowledge obtained from UYDEL and this in turn has improved her mental wellbeing. Her nutrition status and health has also greatly improved. She says she is more resilient now in the face of challenges and she does not turn to engagement in risky behaviours for survival. She likes supporting her fellow youth through counselling services to become resilient people like her and she borrows the knowledge she acquired from UYDEL when she was a peer educator.

“I can earn and sustain myself and I can also take care of my family members in times of need” FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Banda

“It’s better than before we did the training because at least I can still get some money from small deals that I get to make some clothes” FGD participant, Female, completed training but not employed

“I have not yet finished but I can try to sew some clothes and get some money. Additionally, my fellow peers have been able to get money from tailoring and they can now support and provide their basic needs” FGD participant, Female, Youth in training, Makindye

“Well, I can say that when we have been there for visits, and we have met with young people who have already graduated, and we see them a year after graduation. As I said the Youth Centres, have quite a

success rate. So, it is sustainable for a lot of the young people who manage, to lead a normal life as, as one student said to me, my wish was just to complete and live a normal life. So, yes, I do think that UYDEL has an enormously positive effect on the lives of the students who will come and graduate at the Centres.” KII, Internal Stakeholder

“Some had started their own businesses through partnerships or linkages we had created but also through UYDEL alumni. And then we've had quite a number of testimonies of success of your people coming back and telling us stories of success. And we've documented some of these good practices and some of these stories of impact change.” KII, Internal stakeholder

“As a young person from the slum, a community member recommended me to UYDEL. I enrolled in their skills programme and, upon completion, stayed on to train other young individuals in the same skill set. Additionally, being familiar with the youths in the community, I could encourage them to abandon negative behaviours, such as drug use, and join the programme.” KII, Project staff

Success story: Maurice Ssekiziyivu

Maurice is a 24-year-old youth, staying in a single roomed house located in Busega. He grew up with his biological mother in the village of Masaka, his father abandoned him at the age of one year and left him to the mother who looked after him until the age of 17 years. Maurice was denied parental love and overall care from both his parents as his mother also struggled to make ends meet.

His mother worked as casual worker to provide for the family because the father was not supportive. Maurice is a primary six dropout due to financial constraints. After school he supported his mother to do casual work which included laundry work and fetching water for community members to earn money for a living. In 2018, he lost his mother, which made life very hard for him because the costs of living became too high for him to handle. He had no one to run to which worsened the situation. He had to look for other alternatives which could earn him income for a living. To sustain himself, he claimed to have stayed on the streets of Kampala sniffing drugs to reduce his stress and collecting scrap to earn an income for survival. While on the streets of Kampala he met with a good Samaritan from Gods wisdom church in Busega who convinced him to join their church and promised to shelter him and provide for his basic needs. He was later referred to UYDEL-Nateete Centre for vocational training, psychosocial support, counselling, and guidance.

While at UYDEL, he was engaged in several activities which included economic empowerment, savings, psychosocial support and counselling guidance, peer sessions, indoor games and outdoor games, behavioural change sessions which helped to improve on his behaviours and he was also engaged in short term skills like door mat making, liquid soap and shampoo making, among others.

After the completion of his course in hairdressing and cosmetology he was able to secure a job in town where he does pedicure and manicure, this job earns him 30,000 shillings to 50,000 shillings daily. It has helped him rent a decent place where he currently stays and provide for his basic needs such as clothing, food, proper medication etc. He is living an independent happy life and is saving money to start his own business in cosmetology in the next few years.

Youth have become refocused in life.

Findings show that the project has enabled youth to refocus and develop a new purpose in life. Whereas most were idle prior to enrolling on the project as demonstrated in the relevance chapter, the project has

given the youth an opportunity to move away from their idle lifestyle and have something meaningful to do. For those who were not exactly idle, the opportunity has given them the chance to even better themselves.

“Yes, there are few idlers in communities”. FGD participant, Female, completed training and working, Banda

“The youths now are very focused in life, and they know what they want” FGDs, Completed training and working-Females from Nateete

“After doing training here at UYDEL you can’t, fail with life. You are better than many who haven't got any training”, FGD participant

“Yes, I used to be disorganized due to career trainings can now look like a girl” FGD, Youth in Training, Female, Banda

“I was a housemaid and was told about the opportunity that I had to utilise to better my life.” FGD with Unemployed Female Youth in Makindye

Reduced involvement in illegal activities

The ability of young people to refocus and gain a new purpose in life has seen some abandoning the wayward behaviour and adopting more responsible actions. Project reports show that young people were involved in illicit substance abuse, criminal activities such as theft and commercial sex work among others. The joint outcomes of activities conducted under the SRHR, and livelihoods components of the project have seen young people being successfully rehabilitated. In some cases, young people who had dropped out of school have returned to formal education especially in instances where the project has also engaged parents/guardians.

Respondent 1 “Yes, reduced drug abuse”

*Respondent 2 “Yes, Youth are no longer idle and not involved in illegal activities”.
FGD participants, Males, Youth Completed training but not working*

“Youth used to be killed over poor acts but these days it’s hard to see a young person die over reckless behaviour – before we would see 2-3 youth die in 2 months due to poor behaviour, they could be shot trying to climb fences or steal.” KII, Project Staff

“Yes, because after getting into my plumbing course, I no longer think of breaking into people’s houses.” FGD, Trained but unemployed, Male, Makindye

“Yes, there has been reduced cases of drug abuse, rape, and theft cases. Some youths are now engaged, inspired and willing to work” KII, Project staff

Prevalence of unwanted pregnancies and HIV among the youth

The project has been able to rehabilitate young people and enabled them to avoid risky sexual behaviour that was predisposing them to unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV. The evaluation was unable to get exact statistics to measure the reductions in unintended pregnancies

and HIV prevalence rates for the target areas. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that these have gone down in the project areas. Both primary and secondary data shows that rehabilitation efforts have reduced teenage pregnancies since girls are now free to talk to the staff, get referrals to hospitals, and have reduced idleness among youth because they now feel empowered and are able to get jobs.

“However, I found out that HIV is prevalent among children who have reached stages of sexual activity but were born with it and are not aware, so they pass it on without knowing their status and also sometimes they prefer to engage in sexual activity with partners that are not HIV positive and keeps increasing the HIV network.” KII, Project Staff

“There were a lot of cases of teenage pregnancies before where 13, 14, 15-year-olds would get pregnant without any prior information about motherhood, and this would become a burden to community leaders. There is a girl that had got pregnant, and her partner used to beat her, but I brought her to the Centre, and she has improved a lot.” FGD participant, peer educator

7.2. Unintended impact

The project registered some unintended effects, and these are both positive and negative. For instance, primary data shows that the project was able to receive easy and free services from the local leaders e.g., the NIN registration and witnessed increased participation of law enforcers in ensuring justice to the violated youths. Although the project sought to establish networks with duty bearers, the mentioned positive support had not been anticipated.

Negative effects were also witnessed primarily among project beneficiaries. During their participation in project activities, the youth were enthusiastic and eager to earn a living through their acquired skills. However, due to the limited support offered by the project in establishing enterprises, some of the young individuals were unable to secure self-employment or traditional employment opportunities. This was heightened by discrimination they experienced from potential employers after training based on age, gender, disability, and class. Coming against a background of hope built on the potential benefits from the training, such individuals were reportedly appeared demoralised.

CHAPTER 8: EFFICIENCY

8.1. Availability and adequacy of resources

Secondary data shows that funds were availed to the project in tranches by ICA to LWF and subsequently to UYDEL. ICA availed funds after receiving biannual narrative and financial reports for the preceding six months and or annual reports for the preceding 12 months. Primary data shows that there were instances when the funds were not received by UYDEL on time and subsequently delayed the implementation of some of the project activities owing to delays in reporting. It was established that the delays were not related to the disbursements from ICA but mainly due to internal reporting challenges.

“We are not sure because sometimes communication comes late. There are incidences where the funds are not yet with them (LWF) but there are incidences when the funds are with them, but they also delayed getting to us.” KII, Internal stakeholder

“I think areas like communication, educational, timely disbursement of funds, where we have delays. Sometimes, you know, we don't get communication in time. So, you will find that the quotation has gone over the budget. There's a little bit of lag and it sometimes disrupts implementation.” KII, Internal stakeholder

There were mixed reactions from the primary data regarding the adequacy of funds. According to some of the key informants, the funds were inadequate and restricted the availability of materials for use during practical lessons. The inadequacy also limited the effectiveness of critical support such as the issuance of start-up kits. This included funds to purchase materials for practical lessons, start-up kits and community awareness sessions. Timely provision of materials to students is very important for sufficient practice before their practical engagement outside the training Centres.

“To a fair extent, the funds were sufficient apart from a few instances that it was delayed, especially during mobilisation and community outreaches” KII, Project staff

“start-up kits were not enough. Additionally, the training materials were not always delivered on time.” KII, Project staff

“The funds were not sufficient. For example, some department such as tailoring and knitting needed more machines that affected youths when they got exposed to the outside world. The salary was not enough” KII, Project Staff

Yes, we utilised the few machines and resources (materials and testing) available to see that we achieve more output “. KII, Internal Stakeholder

However, an analysis of the income and expenditure reports included in the Annual Report for 2023, the project did not record any budget overruns in any of the four years. Resultantly, the total income disbursed to the project was UGX 1,736,012,171 and expenditure was UGX 1,584,408,297. According to internal stakeholders, this was due to proper management of resources and transparency regarding the utilisation of funds.

8.2. Achievements of outputs within the set timeframes

To a greater extent, most of the project outputs and outcomes have been achieved. The project has successfully conducted community sensitisation and awareness, recruited youth into the project, built the

youth's technical skills, provided counselling and guidance, provided lunch in 2023 to the young people during the skilling at the drop-in centres, and also graduated qualified youth who had managed to complete the course. The outputs were achieved mainly due to the management approach that was able to project costs and budget accordingly.

"They have been achieved within the planned time frame, like identifying and equipping the youths with skills." KII, Project staff

"In regard to achievement of projects, we work together closely with programmes departments, and information shared. So, when you look at project achievements, most of the areas have been achieved. For example, SRH, many young people have gotten employment." KII, Internal Stakeholder

"Outputs were achieved with in the budget. Most cases, we knew the prices of the items or services we needed which helped us come up with the exact budgets needed. I have been part of some projects in the past, this particular one has optimized resources to see that we achieve the best, at a fair cost unlike others that were extravagant or too stingy to spend" KII, Project staff

Although most of the outputs were achieved, some activities were delayed and prolonged especially due to COVID-19 wherein community-based activities such as community outreach were negatively affected as already cited under the section on COVID-19.

"COVID-19 was real. There were a lot of negative consequences around people because there are times when we had to stop and close everything" KII, Internal stakeholder

CHAPTER 9: SUSTAINABILITY

According to the YEP project proposal, *“partnerships, linkages and collaboration will be key project approaches that will be adopted to ensure sustainability. The project will not operate in isolation but build on what is already being done by partners and stakeholders.”* This means that UYDEL/LWF were building on and adding to networks and competencies that were already in existence. The project was supposed to build synergies with existing CSOs and government initiatives since this is an ongoing concern. Therefore, existing partnerships e.g. with government ministries were maintained whilst new ones were forged e.g., with KCCA and law enforcement agents under the second phase. Building synergies in this case took place in such a manner that enhanced the sustainability of projects outcomes. Synergies with government institutions have been particularly important as such institutions remain in existence even if CSOs pull out.

The project has effectively empowered youth through skill-building activities and income-generating opportunities, demonstrating positive outcomes and fostering self-reliance. However, the long-term sustainability of training activities is challenged by a heavy reliance on external donor funding, highlighting the critical need for sustainability planning and collaboration with government entities to ensure continued impact beyond current funding cycles. Resources for training are strained even with external donor funding, meaning that continuity would be difficult without such funding opportunities. It is therefore important for UYDEL/LWF to explore other funding mechanisms that can complement external donor funding including the involvement of the private sector. It is also important to bring in the Alumni where possible so that they can contribute to the sustenance of the centres.

“The next generation of youths will miss out on the projects when it has phased out” **KII, Project staff**

“Of course, you know, in the long term, it would be preferable if the Ugandan government or city authorities were the ones able to fund the centres.” **KII, Internal Stakeholder**

“I think all the drop-in centres are in rented housing. They are small, they're getting way more youths than they can have. But I think the graduation aspect of it should bring some level of sustainability because you need to rotate the kids. But some seem to come back again. I'm not sure how long the ICA is planning to continue the funding. This is now the second phase, and they're moving into the third. And if you don't have any sort of contingency measures in place, other donors might be able to take over this part of what they do. So, I think sustainability needs to be something that has to be looked more at, for the programme.” **KII, Internal Stakeholder**

“This would not be done without a funding partner. Be it ICA or somebody else. UYDEL is a nonprofit organisation and they do not have an income. So, it will always be with an external support.” **KII, Internal Stakeholder**

“But also, the fact that now UYDEL is more donor dependent I want to see us see how we can, you know, work towards sustainability of the efforts that we do. I don't know how we can be supported.” **KII, Internal Stakeholder**

On the other hand, the knowledge and skills that have been transferred to young people are expected to be retained by them for the foreseeable future.

“When you talk about project sustainability, the way project activities were designed, we looked at interventions that would enable youths to become self-reliant. I want to state that the number of youths that engaged in income-generating activities, engaged in personal employment opportunities, is

*sustainable in a way that they are, they're putting into practice, the acquired knowledge and the skills. And we further enable them to do this through the support of the startup kits. So, in that aspect, I want to agree that the sustainability progresses more into even the long run, even after the closure or after the end of the of the of the project." **KII, Internal stakeholder***

*"The programme has provided extensive training and skill-building activities that have empowered community youths and members with the knowledge and abilities needed to continue initiatives independently. Facilitated connections and partnerships between community members and local organisations and businesses which can enable ongoing support and resource exchange." **KII, Project staff***

CHAPTER 10: CROSS-CUTTING FINDING

10.1. Gender Equity

The evaluation sought to explore gender-related issues during the selection of courses (enrolment stage), during training and in the job market. Gender-related issues in the job market refers to issues encountered by graduates as they seek employment and after they have been employed.

Gender-related challenges in accessing courses.

The evaluation established that there are factors that influence the choice of courses made by students. Foremost, social norms play a critical role during the selection of courses. These social norms influence girls to take up courses like hairdressing and tailoring. On the contrary, boys are expected to take courses such as electrical and motor bike engineering.

“Culture and societal norms that put pressure on girls or boys not to do a particular course. For example, a female pursuing a course in mechanics” FGD, youth trained and employed, Female, Makindye

There were mixed findings regarding the influence from Centre staff in the selection of courses along gender lines. Most of the FGD participants indicated that students are not coerced into taking specific courses, but any student can select a course of their choice. But there are some students who indicated that they were advised to do specific courses even though they would have preferred other courses. On the contrary, project staff indicated that young people are not forced to take courses that they do not want based on gender lines. The project has tailored activities to accommodate the specific needs of youths, especially females, ensuring equitable access to resources, and considering cultural sensitivities, implemented initiatives that promote gender equality, such as leadership opportunities, reproductive health education, and mentorship opportunities for all youths. However, the evaluation notes that there are possibilities that the project staff too were influenced by social norms and expectations. Hence the use of terms “courses for boys/girls” are common even among the project staff.

“For me personally I wanted to do electrical installation but at that time it wasn’t available at the Centre, so I was advised to take up another course and I decided to take hairdressing, but all this was due to the guidance from the social worker” FGD participant, Completed training and working, Females, Nateete

“Males prefer only one course; they need more courses. However, the project has ensured that all youth have equal access to activities, courses and all programmes at the centre” KII, Project staff

Gender-related challenges experienced during training.

The primary gender-related concern emphasized during training is the apparent preference of female students for the courses offered, compared to their male counterparts. Male students expressed dissatisfaction to **an extent**, perceiving biases favouring female students. Project partners acknowledged that the project leans towards girls in alignment with gender equity principles. This is due to the courses being more popular among females than males.

“During the time when I was at the training centre, we had more of the female trainers who only gave attention to the girls as compared to the boys and when it also came to peer education trainings, there were more of the girls compared to the boys.” FGD participant, Male, completed training and employed youth.

“The majority of the students are girls; I think more than 70%. If I recall correctly, we have, when we are there, asked about the situation, we have asked about why there is not 50:50.... And yes, young women are more vulnerable. And they also have fewer opportunities for them to gain employment.” KII, Internal Stakeholders

“For all three centres, if you'll notice, there will be more girls than boys because of the skills we are offering, some of them are for girls, and there are limited skills for boys. For example, we have a motorbike and motor vehicle mechanics, and we also have carpentry. So, you'll find that those long-term skills for boys – carpentry, mechanics, that they're not found here at these drop-in centres in Kampala. And I think we need to get more skills for the boys. And we had started on that as we deal with different projects, but it is more expensive.” KII, Internal stakeholder

Apart from the issue of courses, the male students felt that they were treated unfairly at the Centres as compared to females. Whereas the issue of the diversity of course might have other compounding factors, unequal treatment of males and females generally has no basis. It is important for UYDEL to closely evaluate the sentiments and ensure that the environment at the Centres holds no bias.

“During the training there were specific tasks for example cleaning that were assigned to the girls and not to the boys and yet we all used the same facilities”. FGD participant, Male, completed training and employed youth, Makindye

Another gender-related concern is that of bullying perpetrated by both sexes within the Centres and to and from the Centres. It was noted that those young people who take courses that are perceived to be for the other sex are mocked. This makes them feel out of place as the mockery makes them feel odd and out of place.

“There's bullying by either boys or girls in certain courses. For example, in plumbing work the girls are bullied, while in hairdressing the boys are bullied by the girls.” FGD, Trained and unemployed, Male, Makindye

“I faced a challenge of doing a hairdressing course because when I joined the course, I realised that I was the only male student in the class, so I did not continue with the course.” FGD, Trained youth Not working, Male

“Bullying of small/ young girls, which brought fear for us to use some routes & mingle with the different departments.” FGD, female youth in training, Makindye

“Safety concerns, especially during travel to and from the Centre affected youths especially girls who used to walk long distances reaching home late. This affected their participation.” FGD, Youth trained and unemployed, Banda

Gender-related challenges in employment

Most of the gender-related challenges were found to be encountered in the job market i.e., either before being employed or after being hired. It was also noted that most of these challenges are faced by females. Sexual harassment was highlighted as being one of the challenges faced mainly by females. The evaluation sought to determine whether the youth are prepared for such occurrences as part of the training. Most of the youth highlighted that such issues are indeed raised during training.

"Our bosses employ us and after they start vibing" FGD, Trained and employed youth, Female, Banda

"Sexual harassment especially for us females looking for employment, most employers, especially the males want us to first sleep with them." FGD, female, youth who dropped out, Banda

"Yes, during trainings, they address issues such as sexual harassment and how to go about it reporting to the relevant authorities" FGD Females out of training employed Makindye

Male FGD participants felt that in general, females are treated better by employers as compared to them. They felt that employers usually prioritise females ahead of them. The evaluation has noted that females too believed that males are prioritised instead of them.

"Discrimination of men in the community, ladies are given priority. Men always pay money in acquiring jobs except ladies" Banda Male FGD with Youth (those who completed training not working)

"In many salons, trimming hair is only for boys." FGD Trained and employed youth, Female, Banda

"Low salaries especially to the females, more so in the saloons." FGD, Trained and unemployed youth, Female, Makindye

"Some employers have a bias on female employees thinking we are lazy." FGD, female, youth who dropped out, Banda

"The most recent challenge I faced is that at some point when you happen to go for work, harder jobs are given to the boys compared to the girls and yet both are supposed to receive the same pay." FGD, trained and employed youth, Makindye

The other gender-related challenge encountered by females is that of balancing domestic chores and work. It is worth noting that the youth generally come from economically vulnerable households and are unable to hire domestic helpers to assist them with chores. They also are not able to engage any helpers (maids) for looking after their children. Hence, they must balance between the demands of parenthood, household duties and employment. If the balance is not achieved, it was established that the affected females are forced to stay at home, defeating the objective of training.

"Failure to freely work with our children. Most employees don't want children at the workplace yet we can't afford house maids" FGD Female out of training, Makindye

"Domestic violence especially to the married women because they go back home late, yet they are overworked at their job" FGD Female out of training, Makindye

"For me the challenge I had was that I was staying far and yet I had to always carry the baby along to work so it was a big challenge" Completed Training but not employed- Females

10.2. Innovation

The project has been able to introduce innovative approaches to enhance the effectiveness of the project strategies and impact. To connect the project and the community, UYDEL/LWF introduced sporting activities between the community and the Centres. This has helped improve the relationship and is expected to further improve the acceptance of youth at the Centres by the communities. It was thus

recommended by project staff to consider more sports, and talent shows as a way of inspiring non-beneficiary youth since most of them love music. They will get attracted and develop their talent.

“Incorporating art, music, or drama therapy as a means of expression, empowerment, and skill-building among youths. We have a band at the Centre which has given a platform to youths to grow their skills”

KII, Programme staff

The project was also innovative in offering short courses in addition to the long-term courses. These have proved to be effective as they enable the youth to quickly acquire skills and start earning a living from the skills. In addition, UYDEL has adopted the family-centred approach so that they can reach out to other family members in addition to the targeted individual. As already mentioned earlier, this is in appreciation of the multiplicity of factors that impact on an individual and some of these emanate from the family environment,

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

Relevance

The evaluation showcases the robust relevance of the Urban Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) within the socio-economic landscape of Kampala, particularly addressing the multifaceted challenges confronted by youth in the slums. In navigating the dynamic contextual shifts, the project's pertinence is evidenced by its adept response to intersecting individual, household, community, and national factors affecting young people. As Uganda experiences rapid demographic expansion, YEP aligns with the imperative of comprehending and addressing the socio-economic and political challenges arising from this growth. Notably, the project's focus on providing comprehensive support beyond training, encompassing mental, emotional, and physical well-being, exemplifies its commitment to holistic youth development. Furthermore, the project effectively addresses urbanisation-induced challenges, emphasising the need for a holistic approach to counter unemployment, crime, and risky behaviour among vulnerable youth in slum areas. The results speak to the project's success in reducing drug addiction, teenage pregnancies, and criminal activities, thereby positively impacting the community. The project's approaches, essentially in the adopted approach of involving parents has resulted in the integration of youth back into the formal education system.

The targeting of idle youth in slums, particularly prioritising vulnerable females, demonstrates YEP's relevance in addressing the most pressing needs. The project's emphasis on empowering youth with skills, fostering employment opportunities, and promoting talent development aligns with global sustainable development goals and contributes substantially to Uganda's national youth employment agenda. By engaging actively with national-level stakeholders and strategically aligning with various ministries and development plans, YEP becomes an integral part of Uganda's broader developmental frameworks. The project's alignment with UYDEL's mandate since 1993, addressing the socio-economic transformation of disadvantaged youth, highlights its role in fulfilling the organisation's vision and mission. Despite occasional challenges, such as allegations of favouritism among beneficiaries of different UYDEL projects, the overall strategic fit within the national and donor priorities remains evident. YEP stands as a commendable embodiment of shared values with the Icelandic Church Aid and the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, contributing significantly to socio-economic transformation and the improved quality of life for young people in alignment with the principles upheld by the ICA and MFA. As the project progresses into its next phase, the commitment to maintaining relevance by addressing evolving socio-economic contexts signals a continued dedication to the holistic empowerment of young people in Kampala.

Coherence

In conclusion, the Coherence chapter delves into the intricate web of partnerships, networks, and collaborations within the Urban Youth Empowerment Project, both internally and externally. This examination primarily centres on the identification of synergies, alignment, and complementarities between the project and various interventions at different levels. Within internal coherence, the chapter meticulously dissects the strengths and potential areas for improvement in partnerships among UYDEL, LWF, MFA, and ICA. The symbiotic relationship between UYDEL and LWF is underscored, highlighting the complementary nature of their collaboration since 2007. LWF's extensive experience in transforming the lives of slum dwellers, coupled with UYDEL's profound work with youth since 1993, forms a robust foundation for the successful implementation of the project. The partnership dynamics between MFA and ICA are lauded for their longstanding and mutually beneficial nature. The Framework Agreement between the two organisations is acknowledged for its role in enabling ICA to run the project with minimal involvement from MFA, promoting efficiency and empowering local partners. The supervisory role of LWF among the funded partners further streamlines processes, providing guidance, reviewing reports, and

offering crucial support to UYDEL. Communication emerges as a key factor in internal coherence, with improvements noted in the second phase. However, the hierarchical communication structure, where issues are first addressed by LWF before escalating to ICA, is identified as a potential bottleneck, especially in urgent situations. Moving beyond internal partnerships, the chapter explores collaborations with other stakeholders, including CSOs, government institutions, and local leaders. The YEP's unique position as the sole project focusing on comprehensive services for youth in the slums underscores the value of collaborations with other organisations addressing specific needs. The importance of such collaborations is emphasised, recognising the gravity of challenges among youth that necessitate a collective, comprehensive approach. Collaborations with the private sector for internship and job placements are detailed, illustrating the project's efforts to link trained youth with employment opportunities. However, challenges hindering full utilisation of synergies, such as resource constraints and an ineffective referral system, are acknowledged. The chapter concludes by emphasising the need for better coordination among funded partners and collaborators to harness existing synergies effectively. In summary, the findings underscore the YEP's robust internal coherence and successful external collaborations with diverse stakeholders. Looking forward, the project is encouraged to continue recognising shared goals, refining coordination mechanisms, and maximising its impact on the youth in Kampala's slums.

Effectiveness

The Effectiveness chapter reveals several key findings regarding the Urban Youth Empowerment Project, encompassing perceptions about the project, completion of training and dropout rates, duration and appropriateness of training, challenges faced during training, the ability to select courses of choice, and outcome level analysis. Perceptions about the project and completion of training demonstrate a mixed picture. Among the youth interviewed, a significant number completed their courses, receiving certificates upon completion. However, challenges leading to non-completion include distance to centres, mobility, inadequate resources, financial constraints, and difficulties with course content. Additionally, social stigmas, parental responsibilities, and economic pressures contribute to dropout rates. The duration and appropriateness of training vary across courses, with notable disparities between genders. While 63% of youth find the duration suitable, the correlation between perceived helpfulness and overall satisfaction highlights the importance of assessing the effectiveness of training. Challenges during training include issues related to infrastructure, hunger, outdated equipment, limited space, and technological constraints. Despite these challenges, the majority of youth complete courses aligned with their passion, revealing gender-related differences in course selection.

Outcome Level Analysis underlines the achievements and challenges of the project. While there is an increase in youth employability and income generation, discrimination, lack of networks, and inefficient feedback mechanisms hinder full realisation of outcomes. The chapter calls for enhanced support mechanisms and targeted interventions to address these challenges. Outcome 2 focuses on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, knowledge, and behaviour change. The findings indicate positive shifts in SRHR knowledge, accessibility, and utilisation of services. The project exceeds targets for youth with basic knowledge about SRHR and those accessing SRH services, reflecting successful empowerment efforts. Despite these successes, challenges such as discrimination and shame in accessing services are highlighted. The positive change in risky sexual behaviour reaches 82%, surpassing the project's target, with regional and gender variations underscored. However, the COVID-19 pandemic poses significant challenges to project implementation, impacting education, STIs, pregnancies, and enterprise sustainability. Innovative approaches, such as smaller group training and start-up kits, are employed to counteract these challenges. In summary, the Effectiveness chapter paints a comprehensive picture of the YEP's achievements and challenges, providing valuable insights for ongoing improvements and future interventions.

Impact

In summary, the evaluation aimed to discern the positive and negative changes attributable to the project, exploring both intended and unintended impacts. The analysis sought to shed light on the transformations experienced by the targeted youth and the wider community. Primarily, the project has yielded positive changes in various facets of the youth's lives, encompassing psychological, physical, and financial dimensions. Notably, the project played a pivotal role in bolstering the self-esteem of the youth through psychosocial support, counselling, and behavioural change communication sessions. The provision of a safe space has proven instrumental in addressing challenges emanating from their homes, fostering increased confidence and acceptance. The improvements in self-esteem have cascaded into enhanced social interactions, community engagement, and integration. Beyond individual growth, these changes have resonated at the community level, underscoring the communal significance of the project's impact. Economically, the acquisition of skills has empowered the youth, enabling them to earn a livelihood. Whether implemented during or after training, the newfound capabilities have facilitated self-reliance. Real-life success stories, exemplified by individuals like Namwanje Jackie and Maurice Ssekiziyivu, illustrate the tangible benefits of vocational training in securing employment and elevating living standards. The impact extends beyond individual transformations to a broader refocusing of the youth's life purposes.

The project successfully redirected idle lifestyles, offering meaningful activities and avenues for personal growth. This shift not only curtailed involvement in illegal activities but also prompted some youth to return to formal education, illustrating a positive ripple effect within the communities. Moreover, the project has contributed significantly to reducing risky sexual behaviours among the youth, subsequently lowering the prevalence of unintended pregnancies and HIV infections. The rehabilitation efforts have empowered young people to make informed decisions about their sexual health, fostering a safer environment. However, amid these positive impacts, unintended effects have surfaced. The project unexpectedly garnered support from local leaders and law enforcers, indicating unforeseen positive outcomes. Conversely, challenges such as limited support for establishing enterprises and discrimination based on age, gender, disability, and class have impeded the employment prospects of the youth. The evaluation underscores the need to transition from an individual-centred to a household-centred approach to address these challenges effectively. In essence, the impact chapter underscores the multifaceted positive changes brought about by the project while shedding light on unintended consequences. It provides valuable insights for refining strategies in the next phase, emphasizing the need for a holistic and inclusive approach to ensure sustained positive outcomes for the targeted youth.

Efficiency

The efficiency of the project's implementation was influenced by the availability and adequacy of resources. While funding was mainly provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through ICA, delays in fund disbursement to UYDEL owing to reporting challenges impacted activity timelines. Mixed opinions emerged regarding the sufficiency of funds, with some key informants expressing concerns about inadequacies affecting practical lessons and start-up kit provisions. However, despite these challenges, the project displayed effective financial management, avoiding budget overruns and maintaining transparency in fund utilisation. Notably, achievements of outputs within set timeframes were substantial, encompassing successful community sensitisation, youth recruitment, skills development, counselling, and timely completion of courses. Though some activities faced delays, largely due to the impact of COVID-19 on community-based endeavours, the overall project management approach facilitated successful realisation of its objectives.

Sustainability

The assessment of sustainability of the project highlights the crucial role of partnerships and collaboration as core approaches for ensuring the continuity of the YEP project. UYDEL/LWF effectively built upon existing networks and competencies, maintaining, and establishing synergies with government institutions and CSOs to enhance sustainability. The project successfully empowered young people through skill-building and income-generating initiatives, showcasing positive outcomes. However, challenges arise in sustaining training activities due to a heavy reliance on external donor funding. Acknowledging this, stakeholders emphasise the need for diversified funding mechanisms, private sector involvement, and alumni contributions. While the current funding cycles pose a threat to the continuity of training programmes, the transfer of knowledge and skills to the youth stands out as a potentially enduring aspect, fostering self-reliance and community development. Balancing the immediate resource needs with long-term impacts becomes pivotal for the sustained success of the YEP project, urging a comprehensive exploration of funding avenues and strategies to fortify the legacy of the project beyond its current phases.

Cross Cutting Themes: Gender Equity and Innovation

The gender equity evaluated within the project revealed key challenges at different stages of the project, focusing on course selection, training, and employment. Social norms influenced course choices, with traditional expectations leading girls towards certain courses and boys towards others. Despite efforts to accommodate diverse preferences, there were instances of students feeling coerced into specific courses. Gender-related concerns persisted during training, including perceived biases and unequal treatment, with male students feeling unfairly treated. Bullying, particularly related to course choices, was noted, impacting the overall training environment. In the job market, females faced challenges such as sexual harassment, perceived discrimination, and the struggle to balance domestic responsibilities with work. The evaluation highlights the need for continuous efforts to address gender-related issues and ensure an inclusive environment at the Centres.

Regarding innovation, the project successfully introduced innovative approaches to enhance its impact. Sporting activities were implemented to strengthen community relations and improve the acceptance of youth at the Centres. The recommendation to expand into more sports and talent shows as avenues for inspiring non-beneficiary youth reflects a strategic approach to community engagement. Additionally, the introduction of short courses alongside long-term ones showcased the project's adaptability, enabling youth to quickly acquire skills and become economically active. These innovations contribute to the overall effectiveness of the project and demonstrate a commitment to dynamic strategies that meet the evolving needs of the target population.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of these recommendations is to provide actionable suggestions that UYDEL/LWF/ICA can implement in the upcoming phase. These recommendations are grounded in evidence presented in the findings Chapters. The recommendations below have been made to guide decision-making, improve effectiveness, advance stakeholder engagement, and promote accountability and transparency. By adopting these recommendations, we anticipate that UYDEL/LWF/ICA can adjust and enhance their strategies, facilitating ongoing learning and improvement toward achieving desired goals and outcomes.

Project specific recommendations

Recommendations for project improvement include enhancing equipment availability and modernising technology to align with market standards, addressing attendance and completion challenges through innovative strategies, establishing regular feedback mechanisms for training effectiveness assessment, providing start-up kits, strengthening job placement efforts, enhancing post-graduation mentorship, and fostering youth empowerment through diversified course offerings, community awareness programmes, sustainability initiatives, and safeguarding protocols to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all participants.

Feedback and training

Improve the availability of equipment and materials for training: The evaluation has shown the adverse effects stemming from the limited availability of equipment and materials during training sessions. These courses are intended to provide hands-on experience to the youth, but the scarcity of resources hinders this objective. Enhancing the availability of equipment and materials will strengthen the efficiency of practical training sessions. Moreover, it is our recommendation that UYDEL ensures that the technology and equipment utilised are aligned with modern market standards to enable the youth to effectively learn and apply their skills.

Limit the number of students per class: Considering the size of the classrooms and limited equipment on one hand, and the financial constraint on the other, it is recommended that UYDEL reduces the number of students per class in the interim. Findings reveal that the classrooms are small considering the numbers that must be accommodated and the equipment is limited. Whilst the ultimate strategy would be to expand the facilities and acquire additional equipment (as recommended above), UYDEL should consider limiting the number of students per class in the interim so that there is no congestion, and the number-to-equipment ratio can be minimised too.

Improve the attendance and completion rates: The findings reveal that certain young individuals enrolled at the Centres face obstacles such as irregular attendance and failure to complete their courses due to various factors. These are due to lack of motivation or personal reasons. It is recommended that UYDEL facilitates transfers between centres to improve attendance and completion rates by the youth. The food component introduced in 2023 should become an integral component of similar future programmes as it enhances attendance and completion rates in addition to improving concentration during lessons.

Implement a regular feedback mechanism: Establish regular feedback mechanisms to continuously assess the youth's perceptions of the training's effectiveness. This ongoing dialogue can help identify areas of improvement in real time and address concerns promptly. The feedback mechanism should offer some privacy so that the youth feel free to share their opinions. The mechanism should also promote the sharing of feedback from the Centres to the youth.

Livelihood and employment

Provision of start-up kits for self-employed youth: This is an important component in changing the opportunities for self-youth considering their economic background as well as in the drive to facilitate self-employment as compared to seeking jobs in already existing enterprises. There is evidence indicating that those who have completed training are able to start their own enterprises. Some tools to start the business are already provided by UYDEL but these be combined with grant and financial training.

Strengthen job placement strategies: The findings demonstrated that there is a considerable proportion of youths who remain unemployed after training. The evaluation acknowledges that efforts are already being made to place trained youth in existing enterprises. However, due to the high proportion of youth who are unemployed after training, it is essential to enhance efforts of collaborating with the Alumni, private businesses, industries, and local communities to create more avenues for employment matching the skills developed through the project. It is advisable to ensure that youth possess the necessary skills to effectively manage their businesses after they have finished the courses. This also includes providing regular financial training sessions. It is essential that this training should be ongoing and subject to periodic monitoring to ensure its effectiveness, rather than being a one-time occurrence.

Continued Mentorship for Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups and supporting them in attaining funding: To support the sustainability of the VSLA groups, UYDEL can maintain ongoing mentorship for VSLA groups with a focus on assisting them in securing funding as well. This would involve continuous guidance in capacity building, including financial management and business development. Additionally, UYDEL could also support VSLAs in scouting for donors willing to fund smaller groups and support these groups with donor stewardship and proposal writing. By combining mentorship, capacity building, donor scouting, and proposal writing, the aim is to empower VSLA groups to navigate challenges, enhance their internal capacities, and successfully access funding in order to sustain themselves in the longer run.

Youth empowerment

Removing barriers to economic participation, providing tailored support for personal development, and fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration within the youth community can collectively contribute to youth empowerment. As such, by addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by young individuals, UYDEL plays a vital role in nurturing their potential, promoting their well-being, and empowering them to achieve their aspirations. We propose the following recommendations:

Seek alternative funding mechanisms to the youth: the review of the funding mechanism for youth enterprises reveals that the current methods are inadequate in supporting ventures initiated by young individuals. UYDEL and its partners are encouraged to explore alternative funding mechanisms, such as cash transfers or small grants with soft conditions applied to it such as attending mandatory training. This would ensure that the funding mechanism continues to empower youth entrepreneurs while also relieving them from the current loan component.

Enhance individual counselling in private spaces: Many young individuals reported facing challenges that they are hesitant to discuss in a public or group setting. By offering private spaces for counselling sessions, UYDEL can create a safe and confidential environment where youth can openly address their concerns, especially for women and those related to SRHR. This personalised approach can promote mental and emotional well-being but can also empower young people to confront and overcome obstacles that may hinder their personal or professional growth. By providing tailored support, UYDEL can empower youth

to take control of their lives and make informed decisions, thereby promoting autonomy and self-confidence.

Alumni network: to ensure long-term sustainability, we recommend strengthening the role of the alumni in offering practical advice and mentorship support to current students. The evaluation acknowledges from the findings that such support can boost the confidence of youth interested in establishing their own enterprises or seeking placements. It is further recommended that the youth initiate a crowdfunding campaign based on their experiences to promote further sustainability. The youth can engage with the members of their community to garner support and raise awareness about their crowdfunding campaign. This can involve organising community meetings, distributing flyers, and leveraging social media platforms to reach a wider audience. They can utilise online platforms to promote their crowdfunding campaign through local media outlets, community events, and word-of-mouth marketing.

Gender mainstreaming and safeguarding

The recommendations described have implications for gender mainstreaming and safeguarding, particularly in terms of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for youth. We recommend addressing certain gender stereotypes and establishing a safer environment for young people.

Community awareness: UYDEL can coordinate community outreach programmes aimed at fostering understanding that young people are not infallible and deserve second chances. Communities should refrain from stigmatising or ridiculing youth who have previously engaged in problematic behaviour but are now committed to reforming their lives by participating in the Centres. Additionally, addressing gender stereotypes and gender-based violence should be integral components of these initiatives. By incorporating discussions and education about gender equality and women's empowerment, these initiatives can promote a more inclusive and equitable society. This involves highlighting the importance of equal opportunities for both young women and men, breaking down barriers that hinder their full participation in private and public spaces.

Sustainability through youth engagement: To foster social interactions among youth and combat stigma, UYDEL should enhance hosting of networking social events and workshops where young people can gather and engage. These events, which inclusive sporting activities, should aim to enhance acceptance within society.

Safeguarding: data suggested that there are incidences of breach of the safeguarding policies across all Centres. Therefore, the suggestion is to prominently display pamphlets and posters indicating safe spaces and outlining procedures for addressing instances of bullying or harassment, irrespective of the individual's gender. Integration of safeguarding protocols and upholding the principles of "do no harm" must remain ongoing priorities at policy and programme levels.

Capacity Building of Staff on Gender-related Outcomes: There is a need for UYDEL to hold enhance capacity of their staff especially in relation to gender-related outcomes. This would involve equipping staff with a deeper understanding of gender dynamics, ensuring they possess the tools and perspectives needed to effectively address gender-related issues within their scope of work. Capacity building efforts could be carried out through training sessions, workshops, and resources designed to promote gender sensitivity, inclusivity, and the integration of gender perspectives into programme planning and implementation. By investing in the capacity building of staff on gender-related outcomes, UYDEL can foster a more inclusive and equitable approach, ultimately contributing to the advancement of gender equality and positive social impacts in their activities and projects.

Recommendations at the institutional level

Learning and Adaptation: It seems that the partnership is functioning effectively. However, the recommendation is to explore ways to engage the Icelandic embassy locally.

The Embassy can serve a role in monitoring programme activities, both for the MFA Capital and for the ICA, which can also serve as opportunities to facilitate cross-cultural learning.

Resource Mobilisation: allocate resources to facilitate the development of innovative programmes geared towards equipping youth with cutting-edge skills, particularly in technology and other emerging fields.

Regular review of roles and responsibilities of the partners: The evaluation recommends the review of roles and responsibilities within the partnership. The autonomy of each organisation is appreciated, it is essential to have clear roles and responsibilities, which are accompanied by clear lines of communication and transparency. The reviewing of the roles and responsibilities will enable partners such as the MFA to play a more supportive role and draw on possible synergies with the Embassy in Uganda.

Commissioning of regular external project reviews by ICA: The evaluation suggests that the ICA should initiate a series of regular external programme assessments. These assessments should encompass baseline studies, midline evaluations, and endline analysis. Such an approach would empower stakeholders to discern the intervention's effectiveness and ascertain its cost-effectiveness. By conducting comprehensive reviews at various stages, ICA and its partners can gain deeper insights into the intervention's impact and its alignment with the resources invested. This proactive stance toward programme evaluation will facilitate informed decision-making and optimise the allocation of resources toward impactful initiatives.

9. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix

[attached separately]

Annex 2: Data collection tools

Attached separately