



Right2Grow

# Cultivating Change, Nourishing Futures

(2021-2025 Project)



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



አወጣጥ ለትምህርት  
ORDA Ethiopia



March 2025, Ethiopia





# Table of Contents

<b>Foreword by Right2Grow Project Partner Organizations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
Background	5
Approach and Challenges	6
Selected Success Stories: Transforming Communities	6
<b>Introduction to the Right2Grow Project</b>	<b>8</b>
Key Objectives of Right2Grow Ethiopia	8
Why the Right2Grow Project is Important for Ethiopia	9
Approach to Implementation	9
Scope of the Project	10
Goal of the Project	11
Governance Structure	11
<b>Key Achievements, Progress, and Milestones: Community, Woreda, Regional and Federal-Level Impact</b>	<b>14</b>
Citizen Voice and Action (CVA):	14
Community Empowerment& Grassroots Advocacy	14
Project Impact in Amhara, Oromia, and Central Ethiopia	15
Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	16
Government Policy & Multi-Sectoral Integration	16
Private Sector Engagement & Market Solutions	17
Enhancing WASH Services	17
Humanitarian-Development-Peace Triple Nexus (HDPN)	18
Sustainability & Inclusion	18
Federal-Level Impact	19
Success Stories as Evidence of Achievements	20
Desalegn Bane: Establishing CBO, Transforming Sanitation and Nutrition	20
Empowering the Health of Mothers and Children, Promoting Agriculture, and Economic Growth	22
Aneley Damte: Empowering Youth for Community-Led Change	24
Birzo Debela:Empowering Zere Kebele Through Citizen's Voice and Action (CVA) Advocacy	26
Wondimeneh Mesfine:Women Empowerment through Waldia CBO, and transforming Baleder Woreda, Gojam Zone	28



Transforming Bedeno and Habro Woredas: A Community-Led Water Solution Success Story	31
Empowering Communities Through CVA: The Right2Grow Project in Action	37
Empowering Bedeno Woreda Through Private Sector and Community Engagement	40
Transforming Sanitation Through Private Sector Collaboration: Seid Ahmed's Sanitation Initiative	43
Transforming Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation through Right2Grow; Success Story of Tegod Abetaye	46
Healthcare Improvements through Community-Led Efforts	48
The Role of CVA in Driving Change	49
Transforming Bedeno Woreda: Community-Led Change Through WASHCO and CVA Task Forces	53
Transforming Health Facility, WASH and Nutrition in Aneded Woreda: A Model for Multi-Sectoral Collaboration	55
<b>Partnerships &amp; Collaboration</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Advocacy and Civic Engagement</b>	<b>57</b>
Community Empowerment through Citizen Voice and Action (CVA)	57
Capacity Building	58
Advocacy Outcomes	58
Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	58
Multi-Sectoral Advocacy and Policy Influence	58
Impact Stories Highlighting Change	59
Adaptive Management and Challenges	59
Partnerships and Sustainability	60
<b>Challenges &amp; Lessons Learned (From Field Research and Insights)</b>	<b>61</b>
Challenges	61
Lessons Learned from the Right2Grow Project's Success Stories and Challenges	62
1. Community Ownership and Sustainability	62
2. Multi-Sector Collaboration	62
3. Youth and Women as Catalysts for Change	63
4. Leveraging Cultural Practices	63
5. Private Sector Engagement	63
6. Practical Education and Skill-Building	63
7. Infrastructure and Renewable Energy	63



8. Advocacy and Accountability	64
9. Healthcare System Strengthening	64
10. Overcoming Stigma and Inclusion	64
11. Media and Advocacy Amplify Community Voices	64
12. Inflation and Resource Constraints Require Innovation	64
<b>The Road Ahead: 2025–2030/ Sustainability and Future Prospects</b>	<b>65</b>
Key Cross-Cutting Priorities	65
<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	<b>66</b>
Conclusion	66
Key Recommendations for Future Projects and Addressing Challenges	67
General Recommendations	68
Recommendations for the Government of Ethiopia	68
Recommendations for NGOs and Development Partners	69
<b>Cross-Cutting Actions</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>70</b>

## Tables

Table 1: List of abbreviations and acronyms	1
Table 2: Definition of terms	2

## Figures

Figure 1: Governance structure of the Right2Grow project in Ethiopia	11
--	----

**Table 1: List of abbreviations and acronyms**

Abbreviation/ acronym	Full Form
ACF	Action Against Hunger
ANC	Antenatal care
BMET	Budget Monitoring & Expenditure Tracking
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CVA	Citizens Voice forAction
CVA TF	Citizen's Voice for action Task force
ECSC-SUN	Ethiopia Civil Society Coalition for Scaling Up Nutrition
ETB	Ethiopian Birr (currency)
FSNC	Food System and Nutrition Council
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HDA	Health Development Army
HDPN	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Triple Nexus
HR	Human Resources
MF-E	Max Foundation in Ethiopia
MFA Netherland	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherland
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoWIE	Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ORDA	Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara
RTA	Resource Tracking and Accountability
SATO	Sanitation Technology Options
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SNNP	South Nation Nationalities people
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
THP-E	The Hunger Project-Ethiopia
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



WDA	Women Development Army
WFP	World Food Programme
WVE	World Vision Ethiopia

**Table 2: Definition of terms**

<b>Advocacy</b>	Efforts aimed at influencing decision-makers and policies to promote specific issues or causes affecting communities.
<b>Capacity Building</b>	Activities aimed at developing the skills, abilities, and resources of individuals and organizations to improve effectiveness.
<b>Citizen Voice and Action (CVA)</b>	A participatory approach that empowers community members to express their views and demand accountability regarding local services.
<b>Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)</b>	Non-governmental organizations that operate in the interest of society to advocate for rights and promote community interests.
<b>Civil Society Strengthening</b>	Initiatives aimed at improving the capacity and effectiveness of civil society organizations in advocating for community needs and rights.
<b>Community Empowerment</b>	The process of enabling individuals and groups to gain control over their lives and influential decision-making.
<b>Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)</b>	Non-profit groups that work at the local level to improve conditions and empower community members through various initiatives.
<b>Community-Led Initiatives</b>	Programs and projects that are designed and implemented by the community members themselves, focusing on local needs and solutions.
<b>Food and Nutrition Council (FSNC)</b>	A governmental body in Ethiopia tasked with overseeing policies and strategies related to food security and nutrition.



### **Government Collaboration**

The partnership between governmental agencies and community organizations to enhance service delivery and governance.

### **Humanitarian- Development-Peace Triple Nexus (HDPN)**

An approach that integrates humanitarian assistance, development efforts, and peace-building activities to achieve holistic solutions.

### **Local Resource Mobilization**

The process of gathering financial and material support within the community to sustain projects and programs without external aid.

### **Multi-Sectoral Coordination**

An approach that promotes collaboration across different sectors (e.g., health, agriculture, education) to achieve comprehensive outcomes.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

A set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations to address social, environmental, and economic challenges by 2030.

### **WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)**

A sector that encompasses access to clean water, safe sanitation, and hygiene practices necessary for health and well-being.



# Foreword by Right2Grow Project Partner Organizations

As proud partners in the Right2Grow project, World Vision Ethiopia, The hunger Project, Action Against Hunger (ACF), and Max Foundation Ethiopia have witnessed first hand the remarkable impact of community-led development initiatives in improving child nutrition and sanitation. This magazine highlights key success stories, best practices, and lessons learned over the past five years. We extend our gratitude to all consortium partners and stakeholders for their invaluable contributions.

## Highlights

**21**

Woredas

**405K**

Beneficiaries

Multisector  
Collaboration

“

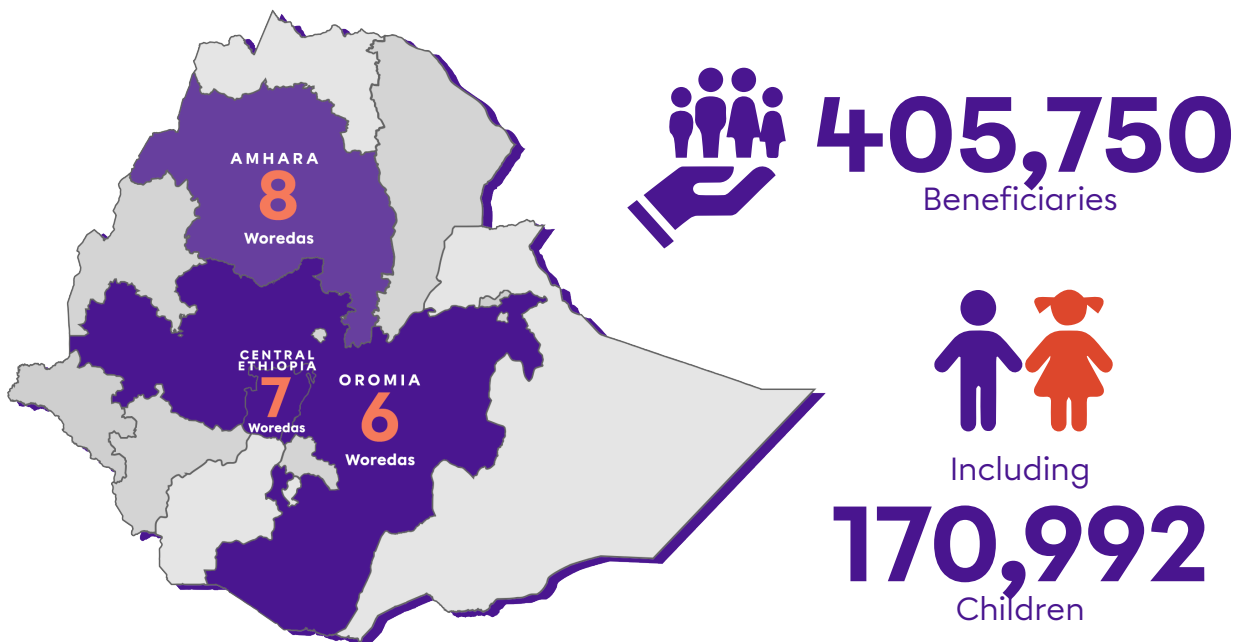
**“Right2Grow is not just a project—it’s a movement. Together, we’ve turned challenges into opportunities, proving that communities hold the power to shape their futures.”**



# Executive Summary

## Background


The Right2Grow Ethiopia Consortium leads an advocacy project aimed at contributing to the nation's efforts to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030. This five-year grant project (2021–2025), funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MFA), has a budget of approximately €4.75 million. In Ethiopia, it is implemented by five prime partners—World Vision Ethiopia, Action Against Hunger, Max Foundation Ethiopia (MF-E), The Hunger Project Ethiopia (THP-E), and the Center for Economic Governance and Accountability in Africa—alongside three local partners: Mother and Children Multisectoral Development Organization, ORDA Ethiopia, and Gurage Development and Culture Association.



Operating in 21 woredas across Oromia (six), Amhara (eight), and Central Ethiopia (seven), the project is led nationally by World Vision Ethiopia. MF-E, ACF, and THP-E serve as regional leads for Amhara, Oromia, and Central Ethiopia, respectively.

Right2Grow Ethiopia addresses malnutrition and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) challenges through a holistic approach that integrates community empowerment, policy advocacy, and multi-sector collaboration. The project has reached 405,750 beneficiaries—including 170,992 children—by improving service quality in the nutrition and WASH sectors and addressing policy implementation gaps through national and local stakeholder engagement.





Key achievements include improving service delivery in health centers and WASH facilities, strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs), engaging the private sector, enhancing multi-sector coordination among duty bearers, and collaborating with international actors to combat malnutrition. The project applies a nutrition-sensitive HDPN approach, developing essential resources such as implementation roadmaps and operational guidelines. Additionally, it has empowered communities by establishing 124 Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) Task Forces, which have secured 189 government commitments, including health center upgrades and budget allocations.

## Approach and Challenges

The project's success stems from an integrated strategy that combines government led multi-sector coordination in food and nutrition sectors with grassroots advocacy tools such as CVA and Budget Monitoring to hold authorities accountable. More than 300 civil society (CSO) & CBO representatives and government officials have been trained in advocacy and leadership, strengthening local capacity.

However, challenges persist, including ongoing conflicts in Amhara and Oromia, which have disrupted activities. Economic inflation has further strained budgets and affected operational efficiency.

## Selected Success Stories: Transforming Communities

Across Ethiopia, community-led initiatives have driven remarkable progress. Desalegn Bane, a teacher with the Children's Aid Society in Gelemso Town, empowered local community-based organizations (CBOs) by integrating sustainable funding models and promoting nutrition through locally available resources. Similarly, the Woldia CBO prioritized women's empowerment by combining agricultural training with traditional Iqub savings systems, while also advancing maternal and child health through increased institutional deliveries and vaccination campaigns. Youth-led efforts spearheaded by Aneley Damte have led to the renovation of health centers, the implementation of rainwater harvesting systems, and the promotion of home gardening to bolster food security.

Meanwhile, Wondimeneh Mesfine strengthened multi-sector coordination by embedding nutrition and WASH initiatives into government planning, ensuring systemic impact. The Lenegereshe Lake community exemplified self-reliance by driving health transformations and prioritizing nutrition, while the Kokir Gedebano CVA Task Force championed sanitation advocacy, home gardening, and community education to foster healthier environments.

Collaborative efforts further amplified these successes. Abdi Liban engaged the private sector to support poultry farming and school feeding programs, mobilizing critical resources for education and nutrition. Seid Ahmed addressed sanitation gaps by distributing SATO latrines and navigating supply chain challenges, while Tegod Abetaye advocated for sustainable home gardening to improve nutrition and hygiene. Birzo Debela's maternal health advocacy significantly increased institutional deliveries and vaccination rates, safeguarding mothers and children. Yusuf Mohammed Yuye and Yusuf Abdulnasir Abdulahi mobilized communities to secure clean water access, leveraging solar-powered solutions for long-term sustainability. Complementing these efforts, Aliya Aliyi strengthened healthcare services by enhancing medication availability and optimizing ambulance systems, ensuring timely care.

The project facilitated improved access to nutrition services and contributed to saving lives and restoring livelihoods of households with acutely malnourished children through revitalizing the growth monitoring and promotion services and establishing partnership with Seqota declaration. The story of the 32-year-old mother of four, Fate, with an acutely malnourished child and a child with disability, in Kufa Kebele, Girawa Woreda. She was able to create a route to a better and more secure future by earning money in addition to producing wholesome food for her family.

Right2Grow partners influenced decision makers to ensure policy implementation and accountability through establishment of regional Food System and Nutrition council. Which is taken as a great success story of the project. The project has also played key advocacy roles to transform and change the country's programming landscape from silos to triple nexus programming through development of operational guide and implementation roadmap which brings humanitarian, development, and Peace actors towards collaborative and complementarity of efforts towards common outcome [i.e. nutrition outcomes] to reduce risk and vulnerabilities in crisis affected communities.

These initiatives highlight the power of localized leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and community-driven innovation in fostering lasting change.

Right2Grow Ethiopia demonstrates the impact of community-led development. By prioritizing local ownership, cross-sector collaboration, and adaptive strategies, the project has laid a foundation for lasting transformation. Continued investment in systemic reforms and renewable energy will ensure that vulnerable communities thrive beyond 2025.

“Together, we’ve turned challenges into opportunities—proving communities hold the power to shape their futures.” — World Vision Ethiopia



# Introduction to the Right2Grow Project

The Right2Grow Project is a multi-sectoral initiative designed to address malnutrition and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) challenges, with a particular focus on children under five, pregnant and lactating mothers, and marginalized groups. The project emphasizes advocacy, community engagement, and stakeholder collaboration, working with governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector actors, and international donors.

Implemented through consortium member organizations and partners, the project adopts a multi-sectoral approach that strengthens community mobilization, civil society participation, public authority engagement, and coordination among development actors. Its motto, “Go for your right with the Right2Grow,” encapsulates its mission to empower communities to advocate for their nutritional rights and improve health outcomes.

## Key Objectives of Right2Grow Ethiopia



### **Empowering Communities**

Encouraging local populations to demand and invest in nutrition and WASH services while addressing barriers through partnerships with the private sector.



### **Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community based organization (CBOs)**

Supporting CSOs to advocate effectively for leadership and good governance in combating malnutrition.



### **Government Engagement**

Promoting an integrated, multi-sectoral approach to nutrition in government decision-making, policy development, and budget allocation.



### **International Collaboration**

Enhancing collaboration among donors and development actors to address the interlinked challenges of the humanitarian, development and peace interventions coordination among donors and development actors to address the root causes of malnutrition through a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach.



# Why the Right2Grow Project is Important for Ethiopia

Ethiopia faces severe challenges related to malnutrition, food security, and inadequate WASH services, making this project essential for long-term development.



**Malnutrition Impact:** Ethiopia has high rates of stunting (39%), wasting (11%), and underweight children (22%). Malnutrition contributes to one-third of child mortality and results in an annual GDP loss of 16%.



**Food Security Issues:** Approximately 50% of the population requires food assistance, with 20% of households classified as food insecure.



**WASH Challenges:** Over 90% of Ethiopians lack access to improved sanitation and hygiene facilities, while 50% have no access to safe drinking water.



**Silos Practice Among International Actors:** There was no common space, common outcomes, and operational guide and roadmap to bring the humanitarian and development actors to address the interlinked challenges of the humanitarian, development and Peace interventions. For instance, the integration of WAHS and Nutrition interventions could bring impactful results on nutrition outcomes but they are funded and implemented in silos. In addition the peace sector is the most neglected sector in both humanitarian and development programming.



## Approach to Implementation

- **Advocacy and Awareness Creation:** Engaging communities and stakeholders to demand improved nutrition and WASH services.
- **Capacity Building:** Training local partners, CSOs, and government entities to strengthen their roles in tackling malnutrition.
- **Policy Engagement:** Addressing policy implementation gaps at the national, regional, and local levels to improve service quality in the nutrition and WASH sectors.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encouraging businesses to invest in nutrition and WASH-related products and services to ensure sustainability.
- **HDP triple nexus approach:** engage humanitarian, Development and Peace actors to collaborate and complement HDP interventions and funding for coherent programming and addressing common outcomes in crisis affected communities.

The Right2Grow Project operates through partnerships with government institutions, civil society organizations, multilateral agencies, and knowledge-based institutions. By leveraging these collaborations, the project aims to establish sustainable, long-term solutions to end malnutrition in Ethiopia.



## Scope of the Project

The Right2Grow Project is a nationwide multi-sectoral initiative focused on reducing malnutrition and improving WASH services. The project operates across 21 woredas in Ethiopia—six in Oromia, eight in Amhara, and seven in Central Ethiopia—working closely with communities, government institutions, CSOs, private sector actors, and international donors to create sustainable solutions for long-term impact.

### Geographical Coverage

Right2Grow Ethiopia focuses on regions with high levels of malnutrition, food insecurity, and poor WASH access. The project works at:

- **Community Level:** Engaging households, local leaders, and health workers.
- **Woreda & Regional Levels:** Strengthening governance, policy implementation, and budget allocation.
- **National Level:** Advocating for policy integration, multi-sectoral collaboration, and institutional capacity building.
- **Regional level:** Share advocacy agendas and lessons across project strategic partners, networks, and coalitions.
- **Global level:** To influence donors and development actors to address cross-cutting global challenges [like climate change, conflict, and COVID 19] as per the need of the community.

### Key Focus Areas

#### 1. Community Engagement & Capacity Building

- Raising awareness about nutrition and WASH practices.
- Establishing partnerships and coordination platforms at different levels.
- Supporting private sector initiatives in nutrition and WASH.

#### 2. Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- Enhancing CSOs' capacity to engage in advocacy and governance.
- Conducting stakeholder mapping and capacity needs assessments.
- Promoting evidence-based advocacy and community-led monitoring.





### 3. Government Policy & Multi-Sectoral Integration

- Supporting the establishment of the Nutrition Council Agency (NCA).
- Facilitating data sharing, peer learning, and adaptation platforms.
- Translating and publishing relevant documents into local languages.

### 4. International Collaboration & Donor Engagement

- Encouraging better coordination among humanitarian and development agencies.
- Advocating for a unified national plan, budget, and reporting system.
- Lobbying for increased funding and make funding multi-year and flexible to address interlinked challenges and reduce risks and vulnerabilities.

## Goal of the Project

Every child in Ethiopia can reach their full Potential. The Right2Grow project focuses on achieving long-term, sustainable change by empowering communities and fostering partnerships at the local, national, regional, and global levels.

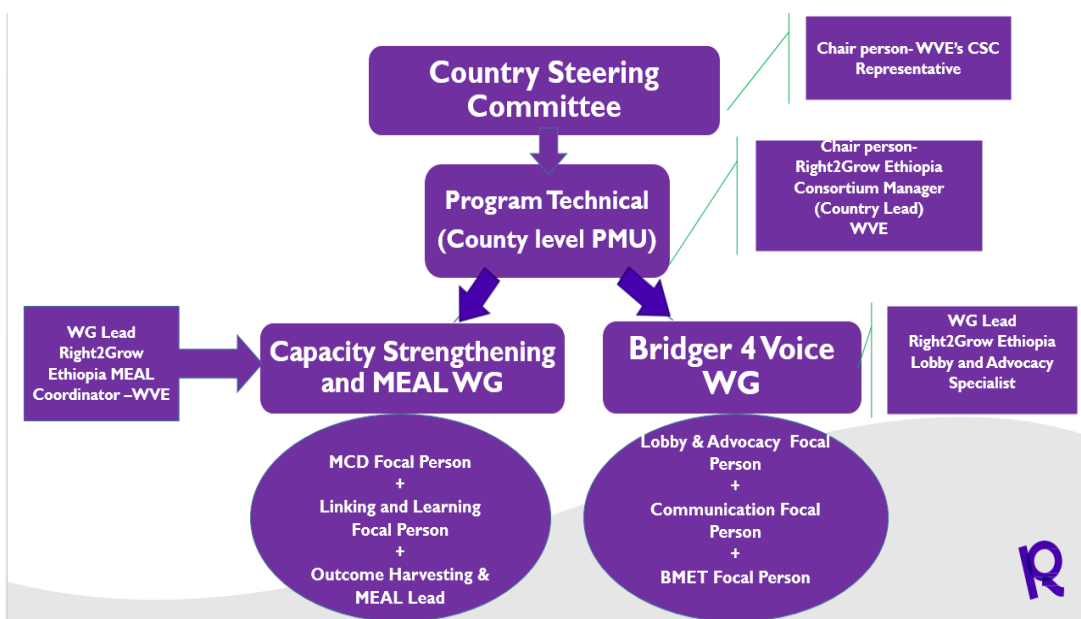
## Governance Structure

- **Global Coordination Committee (GCC):** Govern global strategic partner countries - Ethiopia is represented through country led (WVE)
- **Country Consortium Steering committee:** The last decision making body at country level represented by project prime and local partner's country directors/program directors- World Vision Ethiopia is chairing.
- **Advisory members:** Advising the steering committee whenever necessary. Representing from civil society umbrella and coalition like CCRDA, ECSC-SUN, and ministries (Health).
- **Program Management Unit (PMU):** control the project implementation and manage technical working groups. Representing project managers of all consortium partners including local partners.
- **Thematic Working Group:** Lead the technical aspect of the project implementation and M&E. Lobby & Advocacy, Linking and learning [L&L], Monitoring, & Evaluation (MEAL), and Finance Working groups are represented by all implementation partners.



→ **Woreda Coordination:** This coordination facilitated through project team leaders and officers hired by all partners at woreda level to coordinate the project, multi-sectors and community platforms.

→ **Community platform:** Bring community representatives, primary health care unit, WASHCOO, and Health Extension Workers together for shared vision and goal at kebele level. I.e. CVA Taskforce.



**Figure 1: Governance structure of the Right2Grow project in Ethiopia**

The Governance Structure of the Right2Grow project in Ethiopia is designed to ensure effective management, coordination, and accountability at multiple levels, involving key stakeholders from communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), government institutions, and private sector actors. The governance structure typically includes the following components:

1. **National Steering Committee (NSC):** This committee includes representatives from the Ethiopian government, key ministries (such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation), civil society organizations, and development partners. The NSC provides overall guidance, strategic direction, and policy support to ensure alignment with national development goals and oversee the project's high-level outcomes.
2. **Project Management Unit (PMU):** The PMU is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the project and the alignment of project activities with overall objectives and mission.

3. **Core Teams:** Within the PMU, several core teams focus on distinct areas of the project's implementation:
4. **Advocacy Technical Working Group:** This team engages in advocacy efforts aimed at influencing policies and securing commitments from local authorities and government officials.
5. **Monitoring & Evaluation (MEAL) Team:** Responsible for tracking progress, measuring impact, and ensuring accountability through ongoing evaluation of project initiatives.
6. **Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) Task Forces:** These community-level task forces are crucial for enhancing local accountability and enabling direct dialogue between community members and local government officials. By advocating for improved services and holding authorities accountable, the task forces play a pivotal role in the project's success.
7. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** The Right2Grow Project thrives on partnerships with various stakeholders, including government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local businesses, and community-based organizations. This wide network not only enhances capacity but also fosters a collaborative approach to addressing malnutrition and WASH challenges.

In summary, the Right2Grow Project is built on a solid foundation of community empowerment, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative governance. With its clear vision, mission, and objectives, this initiative aims to create sustainable pathways for health improvement and nutritional security in Ethiopia, ultimately transforming the lives of countless individuals and communities for the better. Through its innovative approaches and effective governance structure, the Right2Grow Project exemplifies a model for successful development initiatives in the region.

# Key Achievements, Progress, and Milestones: Community, Woreda, Regional and Federal-Level Impact

The Right2Grow Project in Ethiopia has driven transformative progress in combating malnutrition and improving WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) through community empowerment, policy advocacy, and multi-sector collaboration. Below are its key achievements at regional and federal levels:

# 1



## Community Empowerment & Grassroots Advocacy

### Citizen Voice and Action (CVA):

- Established **184 CVA Task Forces** (45% women, 10% persons with disabilities) across 21 Woredas, enabling communities to demand better WASH and nutrition services.
- Secured **189 government commitments** (e.g., health staff hiring, water point repairs) through **74 interface meetings**, fostering local ownership.
- Innovative community fundraising (e.g., “**One Cup of Coffee for One Child**”) ensured the sustainability of health programs.
- Institutional gardening as DEMO of multi-sectoral integration and phase over strategy of the project to improve access to diversified food and sustainable local solution.

**184**  
CVA Task Forces

**189**  
Government  
commitments

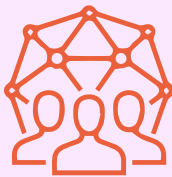


## Project Impact in Amhara, Oromia, and Central Ethiopia

- **In Amhara region:- Aneded Woreda, Fendika PHCU,** advocacy led to upgrades in maternity care (ultrasound machines, blood testing devices) via combined community-government funding. This activity has improved maternal health services and addressed private sector bottlenecks via media dialogues. In Libokemekem and Derra woredas institutional gardening established in 19 institutions by CVA TF members' initiatives and investment.
- **In Oromia region, Habro Woreda** secured clean water access, reducing waterborne diseases through CVA-led initiatives. In Bedeno Woreda, Ilili kebele, 200 Households access to clean and safe water through community investment. In Girawa and Bedeno woredas access to nutrition services [GMP] increased from 50% to 80% through revitalization of the MoH flagship program [GMP]. Ensure accountability through establishment of the regional food system and nutrition council.
  - In the Oromia and Amhara regions, a successful community-led initiative has been realized. The sale of affordable produce from the 'institutional gardens' generated over ETB 180,400, which was directly used to fund the construction of a health post.
- **In Central Ethiopia region:** Strengthened multi-sectoral coordination despite administrative restructuring challenges. Thirty-two (32) regional CSO leaders in Central Ethiopia received training to influence WASH and nutrition policies.



# 2



## Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- Trained above 300 CSO and CBO representatives and government officials on advocacy, policy engagement, and budget tracking, amplifying community voices.
- Established two ECSC-SUN regional support platforms in Oromia and Central Ethiopia which helps to collaborate regional efforts available in CSOs working in the region for effective FNS implementation.
- Revitalized ECSC-SUN chapters and formed 19 Accountability Action Teams, enabling CSOs to influence allocation of ETB 10 million in nutrition/ WASH budgets.
- Developed 3 “Call for Action” papers Jointly with CSC platforms and partnership (CCRDA and ECSC-SUN and Right2Grow) on multi-sectoral coordination, WASH governance, and humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN) programming.

**300+**

CSO Representatives Trained

**2**

ECSC-SUN Platforms Established

**3**

Call for Action Papers Developed

**10M**

ETB Allocated in WASH Budgets

# 3



## Government Policy & Multi-Sectoral Integration

**35+**

Officials Trained on Budget Monitoring

**21**

Woredas Supported in Multi-sectoral planning

- **Advocate national policy frameworks:** Developed policy brief and recommended assessment to identify the legal and programmatic gaps of the establishment of the Food System and Nutrition Council at federal level through national level policy dialogue. Facilitated and Supported to establish two regional FSN councils. Established strategic partnership with the Seqota Declaration roadmap and facilitated the expansion phase of the roadmap through aligning R2G activities to adopt SD roadmap innovative tools in 21 Right2Grow project Woredas.

- Trained more than 35 officials on budget monitoring, which enabled securing ETB 5 million for nutrition-sensitive programs.
- Supported 21 Woredas in multi-sectoral planning, integrating health, agriculture, Water and energy, education, Women, child and social affairs, and finance for holistic impact.

# 4



## Private Sector Engagement & Market Solutions

- Create awareness among 100+ local private sectors to play their roles in the effective implementation of the Food and Nutrition strategy and ONE WASH program including the food based dietary guideline.
- Trained 42 enterprises to produce affordable WASH/nutrition products (e.g., SATO latrines, fortified foods).
- Promoted public-private partnerships (PPPs) for poultry farming, vegetable production, and rural market linkages.

Awareness Creation  
Among

# 100

Local Private Sectors

Trained

# 42

Enterprises

# 5



## Enhancing WASH Services

Mobilized

# 21

Woredas

- Community-led sanitation campaigns drove behavioral change, increasing the adoption of modern hygiene practices.
- Mobilized communities in 21 Woredas of 200+ Kebeles to invest on water extension, maintenance and construction of water schemes at community and institution level.



## Humanitarian-Development-Peace Triple Nexus (HDPN)

- Established technical and advisory team among government, donors, UN-agencies, INGOs, Local partners, networks, and coalitions to develop HDP triple nexus operational guide and implementation roadmap.
  - Supported to develop and disseminate the Nutrition Centric HDP triple nexus operational guide and implementation roadmap.
  - Capacitated the programming skills of 30 federal and regional public sectors and Right2Grow staff on Nutrition Centric HDP triple nexus programming.
  - Lobby donors to fund \$17.5 million USDs to implement HDP triple nexus programs to build resilience households and improve food security of communities in crisis affected regions.

**30**

30 Federal and Regional Public Sectors Capacitated

**\$17.5M**

Funded through Lobbying



## Sustainability & Inclusion

- Ensured 30% women and 5% persons with disabilities in the established local level advocacy and social accountability decision-making platforms.
- Shifted the development mindset of communities from dependency to proactive engagement, striving for their rights and entitlements and influencing duty-bearers to address barriers jointly through Citizen Voice and Action [CVA] approach..
- Strengthened local partners capacity through “shift of the power” and “localization” approaches to generate evidence, navigate the civic spaces, and influence decision makers.
- Adopted innovative and tested tools of the Seqota Declaration that help for nutrition data revolution and promote evidence based decision making at woreda levels.
- Engaged local private sectors to play roles on policy implementation and addressing basic service barriers jointly.
- Positioned humanitarian, Development and Peace actors to reduce risks and vulnerabilities in crisis affected communities through HDP triple nexus approach.

**30%**

Women and

**5%**

PWD included in decision making platforms



# 8



## Federal-Level Impact

- Shaped national policies, strategies, and guidelines: the Initiate dialogue on the National Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy implementation gaps, promote Seqota declaration roadmap expansion phase, and supported the materialization of the HDPN approach.
- Advocated for the allocation of regular budget of more than ETB 10 million budget allocations by responsible sectors for nutrition/WASH and contributed to crisis-response frameworks.
- Incorporated Right2Grow advocacy agenda into the revised government political and financial commitments towards Nutrition for Growth [N4G] agenda.

Advocated for  
allocation of

**10M+**  
ETB budget

The Right2Grow Project has driven transformative change across Ethiopia by empowering communities, strengthening CSOs, and fostering multi-sector collaboration. Regional successes in Amhara and federal-level policy advancements underscore its scalable impact. Despite challenges such as inflation and ongoing conflicts, the project's adaptive strategies and sustainable financing models have ensured lasting progress in nutrition, WASH, and community resilience.

# 10 Success Stories as Evidence of Achievements



## Desalegn Bane: Establishing CBO, Transforming Sanitation and Nutrition

### The Role of Right2Grow Project in Capacity Building

Desalegn Bane, a teacher and Deputy Head of the Children's Aid Society (CBO), reflects on the transformative role of the Right2Grow project. He highlights its impact on children's sanitation and nutrition services by:

- Empowering their CBO to advocate with government authorities.
- Improving children's feeding culture and nutrition.
- Strengthening collaboration with government agencies and other CBOs.

### Advocacy for Improved WASH and Nutrition Services

Previously, malnutrition was rampant due to food scarcity and lack of knowledge. Right2Grow addressed this by:

- Educating on safe drinking water and balanced nutrition using local resources.
- Conducting community outreach to improve sanitation and nutrition.

### Most Valuable Training and Workshops

Desalegn expresses deep gratitude for the training received, stating: "The training was fascinating. After 38 years as a teacher, organizing this CBO has allowed me



to serve humanity, especially vulnerable children.” Thanks to Right2Grow, stunted children now achieve proper growth using locally sourced foods.

## Advocacy and Civic Engagement

Right2Grow enabled the CBO to engage in advocacy by:

- Identifying and targeting disadvantaged communities with high stunting rates.
- Advocating for better nutrition and sanitation services.
- Establishing a nutrition rehabilitation center, preventing further malnutrition through awareness.
- Promoting evidence based decision making to enhance effective nutrition program implementation.

## Community Engagement Strategies

Initially, many believed that a top down and need based approach could solve the challenges of nutrition issues. Right2Grow shifted this mindset by:

- Encouraging community ownership of nutrition and sanitation.
- Mobilizing local resources for sustainability beyond donor funding.
- Applying community-led development approach through CVA model that facilitates bottom up and community capacity based approach. Thus, encourage communities to have a shared vision, to own and lead development interventions and participate in the decision making process to improve nutrition and sanitation. WASH services.

“We now believe in local solutions—our community owns its future.”

## Sustainability Efforts

Desalegn champions local financial sustainability, emphasizing that aid from Western countries comes from prioritized savings. His CBO established a model requiring members to contribute 1 birr per child daily, later increasing to 5 birr. The “One Cup of Coffee for One Child” initiative encourages 20-birr daily donations, generating sustainable funding. Government recognition has further reinforced the initiative’s credibility.

## Most Memorable Experience

During a field visit, Desalegn discovered families living in homes without doors, vulnerable to wild animals. With Right2Grow’s advocacy, they renovated homes, reinforcing his belief in collective action to transform lives.

Therefore, Desalegn’s journey (success story) from teacher to community advocate highlights Right2Grow’s impact. Through capacity building, engagement, and sustainable funding, the Children’s Aid Society has improved child nutrition and sanitation. This success underscores the power of grassroots advocacy, local resource mobilization, and committed leadership in fostering self-reliant communities.





## **Empowering the Health of Mothers and Children, Promoting Agriculture, and Economic Growth**

### **Enhancing Nutrition and Sanitation for Mothers and Children**

As evidenced from a field visit, an interview with one of the representatives from the Nutrition Committee revealed that the Right2Grow project has significantly improved the nutrition and health of both children and pregnant mothers in their community. Recognizing that supporting pregnant women directly benefits the unborn child, we established a community-based organization named Waldia. Their mission is to combat malnutrition and address sanitation issues at the town level, eventually expanding their efforts to rural areas to reach more vulnerable populations.

### **Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Practices**

A member of Waldia CBO has mentioned that the CBO members have been educating communities on enhancing their diets using locally available foods. Additionally, they encourage households to cultivate vegetables such as cabbage and green peppers in their compounds, bolstering food security and dietary diversity. To further support this initiative, the Woldia CBO provided families with five hens each, enabling them to improve both their nutrition and financial income. The Woldia CBO also supplies papaya and banana seedlings for cultivation, ensuring a continuous supply of nutritious food sources.





## Implementing Traditional Savings Mechanisms

As part of the capacity-building efforts under the Right2Grow Project's initiative, the CVA advocacy activity strengthened the practice of participating in Iqub, a traditional Ethiopian rotating savings and credit association, to promote financial independence within the community. A group of 15 women, with support from the project, began saving two eggs daily from the five hens provided. They consumed three eggs and reserved two for the Iqub. By pooling their savings monthly, they were able to purchase a goat for one member. Within 15 months, each participant had acquired a goat, transforming their assets from poultry into livestock and significantly enhancing their economic stability.

## Collaborative Efforts and Organizational Structure

The success of the Right2Grow Project is largely attributed to its capacity-building initiatives that fostered collaboration across multiple sectors. The CVA worked closely with the health office, women and child affairs office, finance office, and local administrative bodies. The organizational structure included a leader, a secretary, and a finance officer, with a dedicated budget to support activities. These efforts not only raised community awareness but also provided tangible assistance. For example, the CVA helped renovate homes for economically disadvantaged families, which attracted interest from other organizations eager to learn from this approach.

## Impactful Success Stories

In Dereku, the CVA organized women into an Iqub group, leading to the successful acquisition of livestock and improved financial security for the participants. In Birbirs Kebele, during a visit to monitor progress, the CVA found a family living in a dilapidated house that posed health risks and threats from wildlife. With the support of local authorities, their home was renovated, improving their safety and well-being.

As one community member concluded, "The Right2Grow project has been instrumental in empowering women and improving the health and nutrition of mothers and children in our community." Through sustainable practices, financial initiatives, and collaborative efforts, the CVA continues to create lasting, positive change.



A portrait of Aneley Damte, a young man with a mustache and goatee, smiling. He is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt over a teal t-shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

# Aneley Damte

## Empowering Youth for Community-Led Change

### A Journey of Advocacy and Service

Aneley Damte, a youth representative for the Right2Grow project in Gedebano Kebele, shares his inspiring journey of how he and his peers mobilized their community to bring tangible improvements in health, nutrition, and sanitation services.

His involvement began with 12 other young volunteers who were passionate about making a difference. Their first initiative was helping the elderly and disabled by providing volunteer services. However, they soon realized that long-term change required addressing deeper community challenges, particularly in nutrition, sanitation, and healthcare accessibility.

### From Individual Efforts to Community Impact

The youth group took an action-oriented approach, starting with small (individual level), and finally it became sustainable community initiatives which had changed the communities behaviour as a result of the training and advocacy from the Right2Grow project. Thus, Aneley and his team empowered the community in the following ways:

- **Household Garden Vegetable Initiative:** Twelve youth members planted vegetables in their compounds, inspiring the community to adopt home



gardening, improving nutrition and food security.

- **Health Center Renovation:** Aneley and his team mobilized resources and labor to restore the local health center, enhancing healthcare services.
- **Addressing Water Challenges:** They are working on rainwater harvesting to alleviate water shortages at the health center and support vegetable farming.

## Driving Social Change Through Advocacy

Aneley emphasizes that awareness and advocacy have been at the heart of their success. Through Right2Grow's training and support, they have been able to:

- **Promote Healthy Practices:** In collaboration with health professionals, they conducted community awareness campaigns on exclusive breastfeeding, child health, and nutrition during community gatherings.
- **Improve Sanitation:** Their advocacy efforts led to the construction of a standard toilet with a handwashing station in the kebele, significantly improving hygiene and sanitation.
- **Enhance Community Engagement in Health Insurance:** The project encouraged active participation in community health insurance, ensuring better access to medical services for families in need.

## A Lasting Impact on the Community

Aneley recalls that, initially, home gardening was not a common practice in their community. However, once people saw the nutritional and economic benefits, they were eager to adopt it. This shift in mindset has contributed to better food security and healthier families. "Seeing the community embrace the household gardening initiative was truly inspiring. It showed me the power of leading by example and how small changes can create a lasting impact."

Aneley believes that youth involvement is key to sustainable development.

In conclusion, Aneley Damte's journey demonstrates the power of youth leadership in community development. Through collaborative efforts, advocacy, and action, he and his peers have created sustainable solutions that have improved health, nutrition, and sanitation in their kebele. His story is a testament to how engaged youth can drive meaningful and lasting transformation in society.

"This project has shown us that real change starts within the community. With the right knowledge and motivation, people can take charge of their own health, nutrition, and environment. I hope this model continues to grow and inspire more youth to take action."

– Aneley Damte







# Birzo Debela

## Empowering Zere Kebele Through Citizen's Voice and Action (CVA) Advocacy

According to Birzo Debela's testimony (a member of CVA TF and beneficiary of the CVA advocacy intervention), in Zere Kebele, Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda, like many rural communities, access to nutritious food, lack of homegrown vegetables, proper cooking methods, quality healthcare, low institutional delivery rates, and limited essential services

(such as low vaccination awareness and social stigma towards children with disabilities) were significant challenges before the implementation of the Right2Grow (R2G) project.

“Before this project, we never grew vegetables at home. Now, not only do we have vegetables, but we also have enough to sell and generate income.” –

Birzo Debela

### Improving Maternal and Child Health through CVA

One of the most life-changing impacts of the Right2Grow project has been in maternal and newborn health. Birzo recalls a heartbreaking incident before the project: *“I remember a*



*pregnant mother who tried to deliver at home and tragically lost her life after a long labor.”*

To address this, Birzo and other women in her community formed a Women’s Development Army to encourage institutional deliveries. Escorted pregnant women to health centers, ensuring they had a safe place to stay before labor.

She said due to the Advocacy through CVA TF “Now, all mothers deliver in health facilities. The survival of mothers and newborns has greatly improved because of this initiative.”

## **Increasing Childhood Immunization and Combating Malnutrition**

Before the Right2Grow Project, vaccination rates were critically low due to a lack of awareness. Birzo admits that even her own children were unvaccinated at the time. However, through CVA advocacy, the community transformed: *“Now, there isn’t a single unvaccinated child in our kebele. This is a major achievement!”* In addition, CVA advocacy promoted exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, a practice that was previously uncommon.

## **Breaking Social Stigmas and Empowering Children with Disabilities**

One of the most profound transformations Birzo witnessed was the community’s acceptance of children with disabilities. Before the project, families often hid children with mental disabilities, believing they could not learn or were cursed. However, through CVA awareness campaigns, families began to recognize and support these children. Birzo recalls a particularly moving story: *“There was a child who had been hidden for years because of a mental disability. The parents never sent the child to school. Our team educated them, showing them that their child had potential.*

*Eventually, they agreed to enroll the child in school. Now, the child is learning and thriving.”* This shift in mindset not only changed one child’s life but transformed the entire community’s perception of disability.

“Right2Grow’s advocacy intervention did not just change our lives—it changed our future. Our lives have changed forever. Even after the project ends, we will continue to grow, learn, and advocate for a healthier future.”

– Birzo Debela



A portrait of Wondimeneh Mesfine, a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a red and black jacket and a gold cross necklace. He is looking slightly to the right with a gentle smile. The background is a blurred corrugated metal wall.

# Wondimeneh Mesfine

## Women Empowerment through Waldia CBO, and transforming Baleder Woreda, Gojam Zone

- Supported Iqub savings groups for sustainable food security
- Promoted poultry farming and community-led nutrition education

## Strengthening Nutrition and WASH Through Multi-Sector Coordination

Before the Right2Grow (R2G) Project, nutrition awareness in Baleder Woreda was limited. As Wondimeneh Mesfine, a Nutrition Technical Committee (NTC) member and Women's Affairs Awareness Creation Expert, explained before Right2Grow:

- The community prioritized food quantity over nutritional value, unaware of the importance of variety,
- Parents did not understand children's food refusals, nor did they offer alternative options,
- Pregnant women saw nutrition as solely benefiting themselves, overlooking fetal health,
- Poor sanitation worsened malnutrition and disease, especially in children and
- There was no coordinated effort among key sectors to address nutrition and WASH issues effectively.

According to Wondimeneh's idea, these challenges hindered effective coordination and sustainable improvements in community health and nutrition.

## Key Interventions by Right2Grow in Baleder Woreda

Right2Grow identified gaps in nutrition coordination and targeted multi-sector collaboration, which facilitated the following key interventions as recalled by Wondimeneh:

- Conducted training with stakeholders to enhance multi-sector engagement.
- Trained woreda officials on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, WASH, and behavioral change communication which has improved multisectorial collaboration.
- Integrated nutrition scorecards into woreda planning and evaluation.
- Advocated for clean water sources, leading to protected drinking water supplies.
- Strengthened community engagement, making the community responsible for sustaining improvements.

## Visible Impact on Nutrition and WASH Practices in Baleder Woreda

### 1. Nutrition Awareness and Behavior Change

- Parents now prioritize balanced diets, focusing on the nutritional value of food rather than just filling hunger.
- Caregivers now understand that a child's appetite loss may indicate underlying health issues, prompting better feeding practices.
- Pregnant mothers recognize that nutrition benefits both themselves and their unborn child, leading to better maternal health outcomes.

### 2. Improvements in WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)

- Community members have fenced off water sources and dug additional trenches to prevent contamination.
- Households have built proper sanitation facilities, reducing waterborne diseases.
- School-based WASH programs have led to cleaner environments and improved school attendance rates.

## Sustainability and Future Prospects in Baleder Woreda

“

“Right2Grow didn't just bring solutions; it empowered us to coordinate our own solutions,” – Wondimeneh Mesfine



“Now, the community actively protects its water sources, ensuring they remain safe for drinking year-round,” – Wondimeneh Mesfine

Wondimeneh believes the Right2Grow project initiatives will sustain themselves because:

- The community has fully embraced nutrition and WASH improvements.
- Government officials have integrated multi-sector coordination into planning.
- Households actively apply what they learned, even without external support.

The final reflection of Wondimeneh was, *“This project taught us that solutions come from within. We no longer wait for external support—our community leads its own development.”*

Thanks to Right2Grow, Baleder Woreda has transformed its approach to nutrition and WASH, creating a healthier future for generations to come.

“Thus, I am 100% sure this change will last long . The community now owns these solutions and will continue scaling them up,”

Wondimeneh Mesfine







## Transforming Bedeno and Habro Woredas: A Community-Led Water Solution Success Story

### Overcoming Water Scarcity for a Better Future

From the story of Yusuf Mohammed (resident of Bedeno Woreda, Ililli Derartu Kebele and Yusuf Abdulnasir (resident of Bedeno Woreda, Hasen Umer Kebele), the Right2Grow's advocacy intervention mobilized the community to construct fuel-powered water systems, reducing reliance on contaminated sources. This has impacted thousands of lives by ensuring sustainable clean water access in their kebeles.

### The CVA Process: Community-Led Change

As noted, one of Right2Grow's key advocacy tools is Citizen Voice and Action (CVA). The project organized and trained community members to become advocates for local issues by joining CVA Task Forces. Yusuf Mohammed Yuye, a resident of Bedeno Woreda, Ililli Derartu Kebele, reflects on the challenges his community faced before the Right2Grow Project and how the CVA process played a crucial role in advocating for improved water services.







Before the Right2Grow Project, access to clean water was a major struggle. Yusuf Mohammed recalls:

- There was no nearby water source, forcing the community to walk long distances to fetch water.
- Even after walking for hours, the only available water came from contaminated lakes or ponds, leading to frequent illnesses in the community.
- Women and children bore the burden of carrying water, which affected productivity, sanitation, and school attendance.
- Pregnant women were particularly vulnerable, sometimes going into labor on their way to fetch water in remote areas.

In addition to these stories, Ayisha Abdurkerim, a beneficiary of the project and resident of Habro Woreda, Hasen Umer Kebele, shares her experience with Right2Grow.



Before the project's implementation, accessing clean and safe drinking water was one of the biggest challenges for Ayisha and her community. She recalls:

- **Unsafe Drinking Water:** Her family and many others depended on an unclean lake for drinking water. When the lake became too contaminated, they had no choice but to walk long distances to fetch water from a river.
- **Physical and Economic Burdens:** Due to financial constraints, they couldn't afford a donkey for transportation. Instead, they had to carry heavy water containers on their heads over long distances.
- **Health Hazards:** Drinking unsafe water led to frequent illnesses, particularly among children, causing diarrheal diseases and malnutrition.
- **Loss of Valuable Time:** Women and children spent more than 2 hours every day fetching water, taking away time from work, education, and other important activities.

Similarly, Raha Umer (resident of Habro woreda, Hasan Umer kebele) recalls the severe water shortage that affected her community for years. The nearest source of drinking water was the Lega Bira River, which required: A two-hour journey on foot and unsafe drinking water, leading to frequent illnesses in her family, especially among her children.

She mentioned that due to water scarcity, maintaining basic sanitation was nearly impossible, further worsening health conditions. Raha expressed these struggles with deep emotion, remembering the physical exhaustion and the uncertainty of securing clean water for her family.

Despite these struggles, Yusuf Mohammed and his community mobilized through the CVA process, advocating for change. Through collective action, they engaged local authorities, raised awareness, and secured support for a new clean water supply system under the Right2Grow project advocacy intervention.



## Transformation Through the Right2Grow Project

With the installation of a tap water system, the community of Habro woreda, Lege Bira kebele and Bedeno woreda, Illilli derartu Kebele has witnessed significant improvements:

- Clean water is now accessible near their homes, eliminating the need for long and dangerous journeys.
- Health conditions have improved, with fewer cases of waterborne diseases.
- Women and children are no longer burdened with fetching water, allowing them to focus on their education and daily activities.
- Pregnant women are safer, no longer risking childbirth in unsafe conditions while searching for water.

However, Yusuf Mohammed highlights a major ongoing challenge—the high cost of fuel for the water pump generator. The community bears the financial burden of maintaining the water supply, raising concerns about sustainability. Yusuf urges





government authorities and development partners to step in and support the transition to solar-powered water pumps, reducing dependency on expensive fuel and ensuring long-term access to clean water.

### **A Painful Memory: The Cost of Water Scarcity**

One of the most heartbreaking experiences Yusuf Mohammed recalls is that of a pregnant woman who went into labor while walking to fetch water.

She had traveled over two hours on foot to reach the river, only to give birth in an open area with no medical assistance. Without proper tools, the umbilical cord had to be cut with a sharp stone as there were no nearby homes or medical supplies. Women and girls also faced dangers from robbers and attackers while traveling to remote water sources, making each journey a life-threatening risk including rape.

For Yusuf Mohammed, these experiences serve as a powerful reminder of the devastating consequences of water scarcity and the urgent need for sustainable solutions.



## Community-Driven Efforts to Solve Water Scarcity

Unlike many development projects that rely on external funding, the Right2Grow water scheme in Habro woreda, Hasen Umer Kebele, was initiated and largely funded by the community itself. Yusuf Abdulnasir explains how the process unfolded:

- **Community-Led Mobilization:** Local residents took the initiative to collect funds and advocate for water access at different government levels—from the kebele to the regional administration.
- **Voluntary Contributions:** The community not only raised money but also contributed physical labor equivalent to what would have cost millions of birr if paid in wages.
- **Government's Role:** While the government helped organize the project, the financial and labor contributions came entirely from the community.

Through these collective efforts, a water well was successfully dug more than 5 kilometers deep, providing safe and clean water to the community.

In addition, Thanks to the Right2Grow project, Ayisha Abdurkerim and her community now have access to clean and safe water near their homes. She highlights the major benefits:

- **Safe and Reliable Water Supply:** A new water scheme was built through a joint contribution from the community and the government.
- **Community-Driven Initiative:** The project was initiated when a group of visitors saw the poor water conditions. They mobilized the community to contribute 500 birr per household, which everyone supported willingly.
- **Elimination of Long-Distance Travel:** Families no longer have to walk more than two hours to fetch water, saving time and reducing physical strain.
- **Improved Health and Well-Being:** The availability of clean water has significantly reduced diarrheal diseases and malnutrition, leading to healthier children and families.
- **Financial Relief:** With fewer health-related expenses, families save money that was previously spent on medical treatments and also the money that we have to buy donkeys for fetching water from river.
- **More Productive Lives:** Without the burden of fetching water, families can now focus on their daily activities, work, and education.

“

"Before, we suffered greatly, walking for hours just for a bucket of unsafe water. Now, with clean water nearby, our lives have changed completely. We are healthier, stronger, and hopeful for the future."

Raha Umer



Ayisha Abdurkerim the beneficiary of the project and resident of Hasen Umer Kebele expresses her gratitude for the project, saying: "We no longer struggle to find clean water. Our children are healthier, we save money, and we have time to focus on our work. This project has truly changed our lives."

Moreover, thanks to the Right2Grow project, Raha's community now has access to clean tap water near their homes. During her interview, Raha was fetching safe drinking water with her children, a moment that symbolizes freedom from years of struggle. Raha expresses deep gratitude for the Right2Grow project and the organizations that supported it. She emphasizes:

Raha highlights the life-changing benefits of the project:

- **Improved Health:** With access to clean water, her children no longer suffer from frequent waterborne diseases.
- **Saved Time & Energy:** No more long and exhausting trips to fetch water, allowing women and girls to focus on education, work, and family.
- **Economic Relief:** Less money spent on medical treatment for water-related illnesses.
- **Reliability:** Unlike the seasonal river, the new tap water system provides a consistent and safe supply.
- **Improved Sanitation:** With access to clean water, families can now maintain proper hygiene, reducing the risk of infections and disease outbreaks.

Therefore, her story is a powerful testament to how community-driven initiatives and advocacy can transform lives, providing sustainable and essential resources for a brighter future.

## Looking Ahead: Ensuring a Sustainable Future

While Yusuf Mohammed, Yusuf Abdulnasir and their community celebrate the progress brought by the Right2Grow project, they remain concerned about the long-term sustainability of their water supply. Thus, continued community engagement and advocacy will be crucial in maintaining and expanding access to safe water for all. Therefore, the Right2Grow project has to focus on advocacy and multi sector engagement in solving this problem.

The story is a testament to the power of community action, showing how people's voices can drive real change. His determination and advocacy serve as an inspiration for others fighting for access to clean water and a better quality of life.

"This project shows the power of community action. We didn't wait for external help—we took the lead in solving our problem. Now, we need further support to ensure the sustainability of our clean water supply." – Yusuf Abdulnasir







## **Empowering Communities Through CVA: The Right2Grow Project in Action**

**Story of Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda CVA Task Force Members  
(FGD): Nefisa Beshir & Leyla Ahimed**

### **Understanding and Engagement of CVA TF Members on the CVA Tool**

The CVA tool has been a transformative initiative under the Right2Grow (R2G) project, implemented since 2021 (2014 EC). The CVA TF members in Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda have played a pivotal role in advocating for improved WASH and nutrition services in their communities.

Nefisa Beshir, a resident of Tilamo Kebele and an active CVA TF member, describes the impact of the CVA process in her community. Through the project, she and her peers have:

- Advocated for proper sanitation practices, including the use of plastic toilets to improve hygiene.
- Educated the community on proper cooking methods to preserve nutrients in vegetables like cabbage and potatoes.
- Promoted home gardening to ensure access to nutritious food, reducing reliance on external sources.
- Raised awareness on the importance of standard toilets to prevent disease transmission from flies.

Nefisa reflects on the transformation brought by the R2G project, highlighting how the community previously lacked awareness of proper sanitation and nutrition practices. Before the project:

- Many families did not cultivate vegetables in their compounds.
- Malnutrition among children was a serious issue.
- Overcooking of vegetables leads to the loss of essential nutrients. However, due to training and advocacy, these challenges have been successfully addressed.

### Right2Grow Ethiopia's CVA Advocacy Interventions

Leyla Ahimed, a CVA TF member from Ochena Kebele, Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda, shares her personal experience with the Right2Grow project's advocacy interventions.

Before the project, the community believed that certain vegetables like beetroot, Ethiopian kale, and cabbage could not be grown in their area. However, through advocacy and hands-on training, they learned that:

- Vegetables can thrive in small home gardens, ensuring food security.
- Poultry farming is an excellent source of nutrition and income.

Leyla initially started with five hens, using their eggs for family nutrition and selling the surplus for additional income. Over time, she scaled up her efforts:

- From poultry farming, she purchased a calf and later a cow.
- With the income generated, she bought a television for her child.

### Service Quality Before the Project

Before the Right2Grow project, the community faced severe challenges in WASH and nutrition services:

- Lack of clean water forced residents to fetch water from rivers.
- Limited nutrition awareness led to monotonous diets with low nutritional value.
- Poor sanitation contributed to the spread of diseases.

The CVA TF actively engaged the community in addressing these issues, advocating for:

- Installation of tap water systems to reduce dependency on unsafe river water.

“

“Now, everyone has vegetables in their compound, and we no longer see cases of malnutrition in our kebele. Our diet has improved significantly!”

Nefisa Beshir

”

- Improved sanitation practices through education and access to better toilet facilities.
- Diversified food sources, promoting vegetable gardening and poultry farming.

### Improvements in Services and Future Sustainability

Since the implementation of the Right2Grow project and the CVA process, the community in Ochena Kebele, Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda, and Chafe Kebele has witnessed remarkable changes:

- Improved WASH facilities, reducing disease outbreaks.
- Sustainable access to nutritious food through home gardens and livestock farming.
- Greater community engagement in ensuring long-term service improvements.

“This advocacy completely changed my life. I went from just trying to secure food to actually generating income and improving my family’s well-being.”  
– Leyla Ahimed

“We are ready to share our experiences with other kebeles because we have seen how impactful this project is. We want more communities to benefit from it.” – Leyla Ahimed

However, as the project phases out, the CVA TF members are committed to sustaining and scaling up these efforts. Leyla emphasizes the growing demand for expansion, as neighboring kebeles request to be included due to the visible impact on livelihoods. With dedicated CVA TF members like Nefisa and Leyla, the impact of the project will continue, ensuring that the progress made is not only sustained but also expanded to benefit more communities.





## Empowering Bedeno Woreda Through Private Sector and Community Engagement

### The Story of Abdi Liban, Nutrition Focal Person at Bedeno Woreda Education Office: The Challenges Before Right2Grow

In Bedeno Woreda, challenges in nutrition, WASH, and education were deeply rooted. As the Nutrition Focal Person at the Woreda Education Office, Mr. Abdi Liban witnessed firsthand the struggles faced by the community

- **Limited access to nutritious food:** No poultry farming, forcing the community to import poultry products from other areas.
- **Lack of school feeding programs:** Many children dropped out due to food insecurity at home.
- **Inadequate private sector engagement:** Businesses were not involved in solving nutrition and WASH challenges.
- **Poor WASH facilities in schools:** Lack of proper toilets and clean water affected school attendance, especially for girls.
- **No structured community accountability mechanisms:** There was no system to evaluate service quality in education, health, or WASH.

“The Right2Grow project was different—it didn’t just give materials but empowered us to find solutions ourselves.” – Abdi Liban



## The Role of Right2Grow in Transforming Nutrition and WASH Services

When the Right2Grow Project was introduced in Bedeno Woreda, it provided a new approach—not through material handouts but through advocacy and empowerment.

As a government representative, Abdi played a key role in:

- Establishing school-based nutrition clubs to promote awareness and behavior change.
- Advocating for private sector engagement, leading to the introduction of poultry farming in multiple kebeles.
- Mobilizing communities for school feeding programs, reducing dropout rates.
- Using participatory scorecards to assess and improve services in WASH, nutrition, and education.

### Engaging the Private Sector to Improve Nutrition and Livelihoods

A major success of Right2Grow in Bedeno Woreda was mobilizing the private sector to support nutrition initiatives. Before the project:

- There was no poultry farming in the woreda. Households had limited access to protein-rich food. Poultry products had to be imported from other woredas, increasing costs.

Through advocacy efforts, Abdi and his team:

- Convinced private sector representatives to invest in poultry farming.
- Distributed hens to 25 schools, teaching students and school staff about sustainable poultry farming.
- Expanded local poultry farming, reducing reliance on imports and improving income for households.

“

“Now, families have access to poultry products, improving their nutrition, and they also generate income by selling surplus eggs.”

Abdi Liban

### Improving School Feeding Programs and Education Quality

Before the Right2Grow Project, many students went to school hungry or dropped out due to food shortages.

Through community mobilization and advocacy, Abdi and his team:

- Launched a school feeding program in 97 schools.
- Encouraged families to contribute food for the program, ensuring long-term sustainability.
- Grew vegetables in school gardens, reducing feeding costs and improving dietary diversity.





Thanks to this initiative, school attendance improved, and students performed better academically.

### Using Scorecards to Improve Service Delivery

The Right2Grow Project introduced community scorecards, a tool to evaluate service quality and hold institutions accountable.

How scorecards transformed services in Bedeno Woreda:

- Used to assess WASH conditions in schools.
- Helped identify gaps in education quality, leading to investor involvement.
- Strengthened budget planning for school feeding programs.

One major success was in Grade 12 education quality improvement. The project:

- Mobilized former students and investors from the woreda to support local schools.
- Established a community-based support organization (CBO) to raise funds for education.
- Secured 2,000,000 birr in donations from former students.
- Convinced an investor to donate 72,000,000 birr, leading to the construction of a new secondary school.

### Sustainability and Future Goals

As Right2Grow phases out, Abdi and his team are focused on:

- Continuing school feeding programs through government budget allocations.
- Expanding poultry farming initiatives to more schools and households.
- Improving school-based WASH facilities, especially toilets and menstrual sanitation programs.
- Enhancing reading and writing skills through the HMM (research-based literacy) program.

### A Model for Sustainable Development

The Right2Grow Project in Bedeno Woreda has demonstrated the power of advocacy and community engagement by:

- Integrating nutrition education into schools and households.

“

“Previously, nutrition was seen as the responsibility of the health sector. Now, we realize that education, agriculture, and private businesses all play a role.” – Abdi Liban

”



- Engaging the private sector, leading to increased food production and economic benefits.
- Launching sustainable school feeding programs, reducing dropouts and improving student performance.
- Using scorecards to evaluate and improve services, including education quality and WASH facilities.
- Mobilizing investors, securing millions in funding for new schools and infrastructure.

With leaders like Abdi Liban, the impact of Right2Grow will last far beyond the project's duration, ensuring a healthier, more educated future for Bedeno Woreda.



## Transforming Sanitation Through Private Sector Collaboration: Seid Ahmed's Sanitation Initiative

- Distributed SATO latrines to reduce open defecation rates
- Established a profitable and sustainable sanitation business model

### Engagement with the Right2Grow Project

Mr. Seid Ahmed recalls how his journey with the Right2Grow project began in Gedebano Gutazer Wolene Woreda. His involvement started when he was approached by R2G representatives regarding the supply of SATO pan—a specialized plastic toilet cover designed to improve sanitation and hygiene in the community.



“After realizing the health benefits for the whole community, I decided to keep the price fair, ensuring affordability for everyone. The advantage is mutual—better health for the people and a sustainable business for me.” – Seid Ahmed

After attending a training session in Gurage Zone, he learned about the benefits of SATO latrines, including:

- Preventing environmental contamination
- Reducing toilet odor
- Minimizing fly infestation and disease spread
- Ease of cleaning and maintenance

Following the training, Mr. Seid integrated SATO pans into his business and started distributing them to the community, playing a crucial role in improving local sanitation standards.

### Economic and Health Benefits

According to Mr. Seid, his partnership with Right2Grow has yielded two major benefits:

- **Economic Empowerment** – The sale of SATO pans created a new business opportunity, helping him expand his trade and generate income.
- **Improved Community Hygiene** – By increasing access to affordable, hygienic toilet solutions, the project elevated sanitation standards and reduced disease outbreaks related to poor hygiene.

### Challenges and Community Acceptance

Initially, the community was hesitant to adopt the SATO latrine due to a lack of awareness. However, through advocacy efforts led by R2G-trained individuals, people gradually recognized its value.

- **Early Hesitation:** At first, adoption was slow.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** R2G-supported community outreach improved understanding.
- **Growing Demand:** As more people experienced the benefits firsthand, demand rapidly increased.

“Now, the selling rate is high because people clearly see the difference it makes in their daily lives.” Seid Ahmed



## Overcoming Supply Challenges and Future Sustainability

One of the major hurdles faced by Mr. Seid was supply chain disruptions—since SATO latrines were imported, there were occasional shortages. To address this:

- He explored alternative plastic latrine options to meet demand.
- The government supported transportation, providing a one-time vehicle to help distribute the latrines.
- Right2Grow offered continuous support, including business advice, motivation, and additional training.

Looking ahead, Mr. Seid is committed to sustaining the SATO latrine supply beyond the Right2Grow project phase-out. He is confident that the skills, market connections, and business strategies he developed during the collaboration will enable him to continue providing affordable sanitation solutions to his community.

## A Call for Continued Collaboration

“The Right2Grow project has brought real change to our community, but there’s still more to do. Continued support for sanitation initiatives will ensure even greater progress in public health.” Seid Ahmed

Mr. Seid Ahmed’s story highlights the critical role of private sector engagement in enhancing WASH services and creating sustainable business opportunities—demonstrating how social impact and economic growth can go hand in hand.







## **Transforming Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation through Right2Grow; Success Story of Tegod Abetaye**

### **A Life Transformed by Right2Grow Ethiopia's Project**

Tegod Abetaye reflects on the remarkable changes in her family's life since joining the Right2Grow project. She recalls that before the project, sanitation practices were poor, and their diet lacked variety and essential nutrients. However, with the knowledge and training she received, her family's lifestyle has been completely transformed.

### **Empowered with Knowledge for Better Health and Nutrition**

Through Right2Grow's training sessions, Tegod learned practical skills that significantly improved her family's well-being through balanced nutrition & cooking skills. She gained knowledge on preparing diverse and nutritious meals using locally available ingredients. Instead of relying on monotonous diets, she now includes a variety of vegetables and proteins to ensure a healthier diet for her family. Besides, home gardening for food security – Inspired by the training, she started a small home vegetable garden. This has helped her add fresh, homegrown produce to her family's meals, improving their nutrition and reducing food expenses.



Furthermore, before the project, waste management in Tegod home and community was unstructured. Through Right2Grow, she learned proper sanitation practices, including:

- Separating dry and liquid waste for easier disposal.
- Keeping her home and environment clean to prevent diseases.

These simple yet powerful changes have greatly improved hygiene in her household and community.

## A Visible Impact on Family and Community

Tegod proudly shares that these changes have positively influenced not just her family but also her neighbors. Seeing her improvements, other families in the community have also started home gardening and adopted better sanitation practices.

## Looking to the Future

Tegod's Next Steps:

- Expanding her home garden to grow more diverse vegetables.
- Encouraging other women in her community to adopt better nutrition and sanitation practices.
- Ensuring her family continues to eat healthy and practice good hygiene.

In summary, Tegod Abetaye's journey is a powerful example of how education and community-driven initiatives can transform lives. With simple yet effective interventions in nutrition, hygiene, and food security, she has improved her family's well-being and inspired positive change in her community.

“

"Before, we didn't think much about what we ate or how we managed waste. Now, we understand the importance of a balanced diet and a clean environment. The Right2Grow project has truly changed our lives."  
- Tegod Abetaye

”

“The knowledge I gained from Right2Grow is something I will carry for life. I now understand that small, consistent changes can lead to a healthier, happier future.” Tegod Abetaye





## Healthcare Improvements through Community-Led Efforts

### Challenges Before the Right2Grow Project

Alemayehu Tegene, a member of CVA, recalls the benefits of the project. He said, before the implementation of the Right2Grow project, our community faced several challenges in accessing quality healthcare services. These included:

- Poor handling and processing of medical records.
- Frequent stockouts of essential medications.
- Lack of motivation among healthcare workers to serve patients.
- Overall limited capacity of health centers to provide adequate care.

He added that these issues particularly affected vulnerable groups, such as children and persons with disabilities, making it difficult for them to receive timely and effective treatment.

### Improvements After the Project

Alemayehu Tegene witnessed that, through their collective efforts, the quality of healthcare services has significantly improved. Key improvements include:

Increased availability of medications to ensure continuous treatment, improved patient care due to better organization and motivation of healthcare workers and enhanced maternal and child healthcare services, with improved follow-ups for pregnant women. Currently, these issues have been effectively addressed, and the health center is providing much better services to the community.







## The Role of CVA in Driving Change

Aliya Aliyi a member of CVA recalls the benefit of the project. As a member of the CVA organization, she has been actively involved in advocating for better healthcare services. Thus, their contributions included ensuring better access to essential medicines, increasing the number of hospital beds, and advocating for more healthcare professionals. Engaging with relevant authorities to push for necessary improvements in healthcare infrastructure. Strengthening pediatric care services through persistent advocacy and community engagement.

Their efforts have been successful, and they are proud to see the positive impact of the Right2Grow project on their community. The transformation in healthcare services has not only improved patient care but has also fostered a stronger sense of trust between the community and health institutions.

This success demonstrates that with collective effort and strong advocacy, we can bring meaningful and lasting change to our communities.

## Transforming Community Healthcare Through Advocacy Challenges Before the Right2Grow Project

Before the intervention of the Right2Grow project, our community faced numerous challenges in accessing quality healthcare. As Aliya recalls, some of the major issues included:

- Lack of motivation among healthcare workers to serve patients with dedication.
- Frequent medication stockouts, leaving patients without necessary treatment.
- Poor time management, causing long delays in receiving care.





- Inefficient processing of medical cards, creating unnecessary difficulties for first-time patients.
- Lack of an effective ambulance service, as emergency calls often went unanswered.

These challenges disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, such as children, pregnant mothers, and persons with disabilities, making it difficult for them to receive timely and adequate medical attention.

“

“Nothing makes me happier than witnessing the joy of people receiving full healthcare services. Seeing my persistent efforts through repeated facility visits and follow-ups, which result in real change, is truly rewarding. The healthcare workers are now highly cooperative and responsive to our feedback, which further motivates us to continue our advocacy.”

- Aliya Aliyi

”

## Improvements After the Right2Grow Project in health care service

With the intervention of the Right2Grow project and the advocacy efforts of the CVA organization, the quality of healthcare services has significantly improved. Key achievements include:

- **Enhanced Motivation Among Health Workers:** Patients now receive care with compassion and professionalism.
- **Availability of Medications:** Stockouts have decreased, and in cases where medicines are unavailable at the health center, patients are immediately referred to the Red Cross Society’s pharmacy—a service that was not easily accessible before.
- **Improved Time Management and Medical Card Processing:** Patients now experience a more efficient system with reduced waiting times.
- **Reliable Ambulance Service:** Unlike before, ambulances now respond promptly, even in areas with challenging road conditions, ensuring pregnant women and emergency cases receive immediate care.

Aliya expresses her joy in seeing the transformation at the health facility. The community not only acknowledges the efforts of the healthcare professionals but also appreciates the role of the CVA organization in driving these changes.

## A Memorable Experience in the Project

When asked about a moment that stood out, Aliya shared:



## The Role of CVA in Health and Sanitation Advocacy

The CVA plays a crucial role in ensuring continuous improvements in healthcare services. Currently, the organization consists of four dedicated members working on various issues, including:

- Healthcare service improvement
- Sanitation and hygiene awareness
- Access to clean water

Through sustained advocacy and community engagement, the Right2Grow project has transformed the health facility, creating a more efficient, responsive, and patient-centered healthcare system.

## Success Story of Angatu Raju: Transforming Maternal and Child Health through the Right2Grow Project

### Enhancing Antenatal Care Services

Angatu Raju Beneficiary of improved healthcare services witnessed the importance of the Right2Grow project. Before the implementation of the Right2Grow project, antenatal care (ANC) services in our community were limited. Pregnant women typically received no more than four follow-up visits per pregnancy, primarily due to low service quality and limited awareness about the importance of ANC. This insufficient care often led to adverse outcomes for both mothers and infants.

With the advent of the Right2Grow project, significant improvements have been realized. I personally experienced an increase to eight ANC visits during my pregnancy. Each session was comprehensive and informative, covering essential topics such as recognizing danger signs like bleeding and emphasizing the importance of immediate medical attention. Moreover, the consistent availability of iron tablets enhanced adherence to supplementation protocols, contributing to better maternal health outcomes.

These enhancements align with broader findings that optimal ANC care positively impacts maternal and perinatal health, reducing risks such as respiratory and cardiovascular disorders in newborns.

### Addressing Child Malnutrition

The Right2Grow project has also revolutionized the approach to managing child malnutrition in our community. When my child exhibited signs of malnutrition, the health center provided immediate and compassionate care. The treatment regimen included therapeutic foods like milk and Plumpy'Nut, a ready-to-use therapeutic food specifically designed for severe acute malnutrition.



The healthcare providers offered guidance on proper feeding practices and maintaining sanitation, ensuring effective home-based care. They also supplied us with Plumpy'Nut to continue the nutritional rehabilitation at home, leading to a noticeable improvement in my child's health.

This community-based management of severe acute malnutrition has proven effective, allowing for treatment without the need for prolonged hospitalization.

## **Community Impact and Service Quality Enhancement**

The transformation in healthcare services brought about by the Right2Grow project has been profound. The emphasis on education, increased ANC visits, and improved management of malnutrition has not only elevated the quality of care but also fostered a culture of proactive health-seeking behavior.

These advancements have been particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups, including children and persons living with disabilities, ensuring they receive timely and appropriate care. The project's holistic approach has strengthened the community's overall health infrastructure, leading to sustainable improvements in health outcomes.

Angatu Raju concluded that the Right2Grow project exemplifies how targeted interventions and community engagement can lead to substantial enhancements in maternal and child health services. Through continued support and education, our community is now better equipped to address health challenges and promote well-being for all its members.

# Transforming Bedeno Woreda: Community-Led Change Through WASHCO and CVA Task Forces

## Empowering Change: Usmael Aliyi Adem's Role

For the past three years, Usmael Aliyi Adem has played a pivotal role in Bedeno Woreda as a WASHCO (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Committee) Focal Person and CVA Task Force member within the Right2Grow project. His leadership has been instrumental in improving water, sanitation, hygiene, and health services.

## Establishing the Community Platform

The Right2Grow project began by training woreda and zonal-level teams, who then worked with kebele administrators to organize community gatherings. Residents identified and prioritized key issues, categorizing them by the required level of intervention—community-led, kebele-led, or woreda/zonal support.

The CVA Task Force (TF) was formed at the kebele level with 20 members, including community leaders like Abba Gada and Hadha Sinke. At the woreda level, the NBC Committee was established, while at the regional level, the Nutrition Technical Committee (NTC) was set up to coordinate solutions.

## Problem Identification and Prioritization

Using a community scorecard, residents ranked issues by urgency. WASHCO developed an action plan, outlining problem prioritization, resource allocation, and resolution timelines. One of their first successes was addressing acute water shortages in Illilli Derartu Kebele, achieved through community participation and advocacy.

## Key Roles of Local Administrators

Woreda and kebele administrators played a crucial role by:

- Approving the formation of the CVA Task Force
- Organizing community meetings for advocacy and awareness
- Allocating resources (transportation, experts, and materials) for infrastructure projects
- Providing financial support, including per diems for field experts
- Ensuring security for community mobilization efforts

## Challenges Before the Right2Grow Project

Prior to the project, Bedeno Woreda faced severe issues, including:

- Water scarcity and inadequate sanitation infrastructure
- Poor nutrition services due to limited vegetable harvesting and awareness
- High malnutrition rates, particularly in Illilli Derartu Kebele





## Transformative Impact of Right2Grow

With Right2Grow's implementation, the community experienced significant improvements:

- Shift from dependency to self-reliance in solving local challenges
- Partial resolution of water shortages at the woreda level
- Elimination of open defecation and improved sanitation standards
- Enhanced agricultural practices, leading to better nutrition
- Health facility renovations and waste disposal site establishment
- Greater community engagement in advocacy efforts

## Advocacy and Government Engagement

A major success of CVA TF's advocacy was the creation of the Bedeno Woreda Community Support Group, which raised 15,000,000 birr from wealthy residents and diaspora members to improve local nutrition and sanitation.

## Implementation Challenges and Recommendations

Despite achievements, challenges persisted:

- Limited funding to meet community demands
- Logistical barriers, including poor transportation and remote locations
- Overburdened CVA TF members due to understaffing

**Recommendation:** Increasing the number of CVA TF members per kebele (currently 20 members in each of 42 kebeles) would help distribute the workload and enhance impact.

## Sustainability and Future Prospects

While significant progress has been made, long-term sustainability remains uncertain. Usmael emphasizes the need for continued support from Right2Grow to ensure lasting community empowerment.





## Transforming Health Facility, WASH and Nutrition in Aneded Woreda: A Model for Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

In Aneded Woreda, part of the Right2Grow project in Ethiopia, a powerful community-led initiative has addressed critical issues of waterborne diseases and undernutrition. The region, located 25 kilometers east of Debre-Markos, faced severe challenges due to lack of access to potable water, which directly impacted health service delivery. Health professional Tesfa Alemayehu, a key member of the Woreda Nutrition Technical Committee, led efforts to bring change through community engagement and multi-sectoral collaboration. With training in nutrition leadership and advocacy from Right2Grow, Tesfa and his team secured a budget allocation of 180,000 birr for the installation of a water point at the health center, alongside a nutrition gardening initiative. Tesfa stated that, this transformed the facility, improving WASH services, infection control, and institutional nutrition. The health center now serves as a model for community-driven solutions, providing clean water to both the facility and surrounding areas, saving costs (estimated to be 20,000 birr per month), and improving health outcomes. Tesfa's leadership exemplifies the power of collective action, and the success has inspired further advocacy for increased nutrition budgets and stronger multi-sectoral partnerships in the future.

Inspired by this success, Tesfa and his co-workers in Aneded Woreda are committed to strengthening multi-sectoral platforms and advocating for increased nutrition budgets. Their efforts have not only improved the standard of living for the community but have also restored dignity and recognition to the health center staff. Tesfa's leadership has positioned the health center as a role model for other institutions, showcasing how collaboration and innovation can transform lives and community.

“

“I see hope in the future because I've witnessed what we can achieve together. This experience has shown me the power of a multi-sectoral approach in addressing undernutrition.”

”





## Partnerships & Collaboration

---

The Right2Grow project in Ethiopia employs a multi-tiered partnership structure to address undernutrition and WASH challenges. Below is a structured overview of the partnerships and collaborations:

The Right2Grow project demonstrates that advocacy and civic engagement are most effective when rooted in local leadership, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable practices. By empowering communities to voice their needs and hold institutions accountable, the project has created a blueprint for addressing undernutrition and WASH challenges in Ethiopia and beyond.

"When communities own the process,  
advocacy becomes a catalyst for  
lasting change."





# Advocacy and Civic Engagement

## 1 Community Empowerment through Citizen Voice and Action (CVA)



**Approach:** The CVA social accountability tool empowered communities to demand improved nutrition and WASH services. Key activities included:

Establishment of 118 CVA Task forces in 21 operation Woredas, comprising community leaders, women, youth, and marginalized groups. Seventy-four (74) interface meetings were held at cluster and woreda-level, resulting in 189 out of 345 government commitments fulfilled (e.g., water point repairs, hiring health staff).

**Impact:** Communities addressed barriers such as non-functional water points and irregular nutrition screenings. For example, in Enimay Woreda (Amhara), 64% of water points were repaired after community advocacy.





# 2

## Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)



### Capacity Building

More than 300 CSO and CBO representatives, and government officials including 21 women, were trained in advocacy, lobbying, and communication. Ethiopian Civil Society Coalition for Scale up Nutrition [ECSC-SUN] regional support platforms are strategically effective to collaborate efforts for impactful results on the implementation of the food and nutrition strategy. So far Right2Grow partnership was successful on the establishment of the Oromia support platform with a member of 10 steering committee [5 local partners] and which has been endorsed by the General assembly in 2024. The Amhara region support platform has been revitalized with five steering committee members elected. Right2Grow partner has been nominated to establish and lead the Central Ethiopia ECSC-SUN support platform by the general assembly.

**Private Sector:** Forty-two (42) enterprises were trained to supply affordable WASH and nutrition products, with SATO pan distributors expanding their reach.

### Advocacy Outcomes

CSOs secured 118 engagements in government-led platforms (e.g., National Nutrition Coordination Body) and developed 5 advocacy agendas, including WASH governance and HDPN programming. Twenty-five (25) CSOs in Amhara created detailed advocacy plans for WASH and nutrition issues, influencing local budget allocations.

# 3

## Multi-Sectoral Advocacy and Policy Influence



**National Policy Dialogue:** Facilitated high-level discussions on establishing the Food System and Nutrition Council (FSNC).

### Key outcomes:

- Consensus on conducting a legal gap analysis to draft a proclamation for FSNC.
- Advocacy for inclusive CSO/private sector representation in governance structures, inspired by Brazil's model.
- **Media Engagement:** A panel discussion on multisectoral nutrition aired on regional TV, reaching 36 participants and broader audiences.



## 4 Impact Stories Highlighting Change



- **Water Access in Geta Woreda:** Through CVA, **254 SATO toilet pans** were supplied, improving sanitation and reducing waterborne diseases.
- **Health Service Improvement:** In Fendika Health Center (Amhara), communities mobilized **ETB 900,000** to purchase ultrasound/CBC machines, enhancing maternal care.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Fish and meat suppliers in Habro Woreda began supplying nutrition products after advocacy efforts.

## 5 Adaptive Management and Challenges



- **Security and Inflation:** Conflicts in Amhara and Oromia contributed to delays in the implementation of planned activities. Prevailing high inflation also affected the number of targets and overall scope. Corrective measures such as shifting intervention regions and zones, familiarize virtual meetings, relocating training venue, and cost-sharing modality among partners were some of adaptive measures applied in a timely manner.
- **Learning:** flexibility allowed to stay being implemented in some of the project sites in conflict contexts, but challenges like limited internet connectivity hindered data tracking. Which was mitigated through hard copy data collection and phone call communication and then coming to internet functioning sites to enter data.



## Partnerships and Sustainability



- **Government Collaboration:** Supported 17 woredas in multi-sectoral planning using Seqota Declaration tools, influencing ETB 5 million in nutrition budgets. Right2Grow partners accomplished different interventions and brought results in collaboration with government sectors. For instance, adopt the RTPM, UNISE, GMP and BMET tools in three regions and 21 woredas which helped to establish an additional platform, namely Triangle of Knowledge partnership [TOKP] to realize the data revolution of the SD innovative approach. TOKP established between policy makers, implementers and universities to collect program and resources data, analysis and writing policy brief for evidence based decisions at Woreda level.
- **Donor Engagement:** Partnered with the Dutch Embassy on workshops that helped to share best experiences among Dutch government funded projects and partners. In addition, Right2Grow partners received capacity building training on data security and safety, M&E of gender and inclusion, advocating financial literacy and HDPN programming. In addition, Right2Grow partners engage potential donors and secure \$17.5 million USDs to implement the HDP triple nexus program to improve food security and build resilience in crisis affected communities.
- R2G Ethiopia's advocacy efforts successfully amplified community voices, strengthened CSOs, and influenced multi-sectoral policies. Despite challenges, adaptive strategies and partnerships ensured progress toward reducing undernutrition and improving WASH access. Future focus includes scaling HDPN initiatives and institutionalizing the Food System and Nutrition Council (FSNC).

# Challenges & Lessons Learned (From Field Research and Insights)

## Challenges

### Fuel Dependency:

Solar energy solutions are needed to sustain water pumps (e.g., Yusuf Mohammed Yuye's call for solar power).

**Hyperinflation:** (28.7% in Dec 2023 vs. projected 2%) eroded budgets, forcing partners to reduce activities, merge interventions, and share costs. Travel, training, and material expenses exceeded initial allocations.<sup>1</sup>

**Weak Regional Platforms:** Poorly functioning ECSC-SUN and CCRDA platforms at regional levels limited advocacy efforts and constituency-building for nutrition and WASH initiatives.

### Government Staff Turnover:

Frequent changes in government officials (especially at regional/ Woreda levels) and project staff required repeated re-engagement and capacity-building efforts.

Restructuring of the SNNP Region into new administrative zones (e.g., Central Ethiopia Region) destabilized regional support structures, delaying advocacy efforts and policy cascading.

**Scaling Innovations:** Demand for SATO latrines and poultry farming exceeds current supply chains.

**Conflicts:** Progressive conflicts in Oromia and Amhara project woredas affected project outreach. The ongoing conflict in northern Ethiopia necessitated the relocation of project sites from Tigray and Amhara to safer areas within the Amhara and Oromia regional states. Later, the context urged to shift the development mindset of the community into lifesaving and relief expectant from external sources.

**COVID-19 Restrictions:** Movement limitations and remote working hindered community engagement and slowed project events, despite adaptations like virtual meetings.

**Economic Instability:** High inflation led to staff turnover, budget revisions, and operational challenges, complicating resource allocation and expenditure tracking.



1

Reference: Ethiopia's inflation rate for December 2023 rises to 28.7 percent | APAnews - African Press Agency



# Lessons Learned from the Right2Grow Project's Success Stories and Challenges

- Community ownership is key to long-term success
- Youth and women drive transformational change
- Managing flexible projects like Right2Grow is helpful to overcome challenges like conflict and inflation.
- Shifting silos programming to triple nexus programming could address the cyclical nature of the crisis and the donors fatigue with repeated humanitarian responses.

## 1. Community Ownership and Sustainability

- **Lesson:** The **Citizen Voice and Action (CVA)** approach empowered communities to monitor services, demand accountability, and co-create solutions. Over 74 interface meetings and 189 commitments addressed barriers to WASH and nutrition services.
- Local initiatives like the “One Cup of Coffee for One Child” (from instructor Desalegn Bane’s story) and traditional savings groups (Iqub) from the Woldia community-based organization demonstrate that community-driven funding models foster ownership and long-term sustainability.
- Projects thrive when there is transparency and a functional system that makes service providers accountable for delivering poor-quality social services. Communities in kind and financial contribution are also helpful to reduce dependency on external aid to fix Nutrition and WASH-related problems affecting their daily living.

## 2. Multi-Sector Collaboration

- Advocacy for the Food System and Nutrition Council (FSNC) and joint planning with sectors (health, agriculture, WASH, education, women affairs and finance) reduced duplication of efforts and improved resource efficiency.
- Breaking silos between health, agriculture, education, and WASH sectors amplifies impact. Coordination ensures holistic solutions to malnutrition, sanitation, and healthcare challenges

### 3. Youth and Women as Catalysts for Change

- Training CSOs, CBOs, and government officials on BMET, Policy Minor, and advocacy skills- enhanced their ability to advocate for marginalized groups' rights and entitlement to get quality Nutrition and WASH service as stipulated in policy standards and by allocating a fair budget.
- Youth-led initiatives (e.g., household gardens, health center renovations) highlight the innovative potential of young leaders.
- Women's empowerment through agricultural training, savings groups, and maternal health advocacy drives economic and health improvements (Woldia CBO, Birzo Debela).

### 4. Leveraging Cultural Practices

- Integrating local traditions (e.g., Iqub savings) increases acceptance and participation, ensuring initiatives align with community values.

### 5. Private Sector Engagement

- Partnerships with businesses (e.g., poultry farming, SATO latrines) created economic opportunities while addressing public health needs. Private sector involvement enhances scalability and resource mobilization (Abdi Liban, Mr. Seid Ahmed).

### 6. Practical Education and Skill-Building

- Training in home gardening, nutrition, and sanitation empowers households to adopt healthier practices (Tegod Abetaye). Simple, actionable education leads to lasting behavioral change.

### 7. Infrastructure and Renewable Energy

- Community-led water projects address immediate needs but require sustainable energy solutions (e.g., solar pumps) to avoid fuel dependency and ensure long-term access (Yusuf Mohammed Yuye).

## 8. Advocacy and Accountability

- Tools like participatory scorecards and Citizens' Voice for Action (CVA) empower communities to hold institutions accountable, improving service delivery (Abdi Liban, Aliya Aliyi).

## 9. Healthcare System Strengthening

- Increasing antenatal care visits, Growth monitoring and promotion, malnutrition treatment, and reliable ambulance services save lives. and ensuring medication availability are critical (Angatu Raju, Alemayehu Tegene).

## 10. Overcoming Stigma and Inclusion

- Advocacy campaigns reduced the stigma toward children with disabilities and encouraged inclusive education, proving that mindset shifts are foundational to equitable development (Birzo Debela).

## 11. Media and Advocacy Amplify Community Voices

- Media dialogues (e.g., panel discussions broadcasted on regional TV) raised public awareness and pressured decision-makers to prioritize nutrition/WASH issues.

## 12. Inflation and Resource Constraints Require Innovation

- High inflation (28.7% in 2023) forced partners to merge activities, share costs, and prioritize low-cost, high-impact interventions.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion, the Right2Grow project underscores that sustainable development hinges on empowering communities to lead, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and integrating local knowledge. By prioritizing ownership, education, and inclusive partnerships, even resource-constrained communities can achieve transformative, lasting change.

2 The Right2Grow Ethiopia 2023 annual report).

# The Road Ahead: 2025–2030/ Sustainability and Future Prospects

- Local Resource Mobilization and Financial Sustainability
- Strengthening Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- Long-Term Impact and Future Goals
- Roll out the HDP triple nexus programming.

Building on the transformative successes of the Right2Grow (Right2Grow) project, the following strategies will guide efforts to ensure sustainability and scale impact from 2025 to 2030:

By 2030, Right2Grow’s legacy will be a network of self-reliant communities where:

- Zero children suffer from preventable malnutrition or waterborne diseases.
- Women and youth lead 50% of local development initiatives.
- 100% of households have access to clean water, sanitation, and diversified diets.
- Multi-sector collaboration is the norm, ensuring sustainable health, education, and economic outcomes.

Through continued innovation, community empowerment, and systemic collaboration, Right2Grow will pave the way for equitable, resilient societies across Ethiopia and beyond.

## Key Cross-Cutting Priorities

- **Disability Inclusion:** Integrate disability awareness into all programs, ensuring access to education and healthcare.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Use R2G’s success stories to influence national policies on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and universal healthcare.

Through these efforts, R2G Ethiopia aims to leave a legacy of self-reliant communities and equitable systems that continue to thrive beyond the project’s lifespan.

“

“The power of local solutions lies in their sustainability. Together, we can turn today’s successes into tomorrow’s legacy.” – Inspired by the Stories of Right2Grow Champions

”







# Conclusion and Recommendations

---

## Conclusion

The Right2Grow Ethiopia's key achievements include the establishment of 124 CVA Task Forces, revitalization of ECSC-SUN chapters in two regions, and advocacy successes such as influencing policy dialogues for the Food System and Nutrition Council (FSNC), establishment of CBO like 'one cup of coffee for one child' local fundraising, strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs) via capacity-building initiatives, advancing multi-sectoral coordination for nutrition and WASH, and fostering partnerships with government and private sectors.

The project empowered communities to address critical challenges in nutrition, WASH, healthcare, and education. Key achievements include:

- **Enhanced Accountability:** Communities advocated for improved services, leading to better healthcare access, clean water systems, and nutrition programs.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Local solutions like home gardening, poultry farming, and traditional savings mechanisms (Iqub) fostered self-reliance.
- **Inclusive Participation:** Women, youth, and persons with disabilities actively shaped decision-making, ensuring equitable outcomes.
- **Resilience Amid Challenges:** Despite security issues, inflation, and climate shocks, communities demonstrated adaptability, leveraging advocacy and collaboration to sustain progress.

However, challenges persist, including political instability/ security issues, COVID-19, delays in FSNC establishment, weak regional platforms, and donor coordination gaps, budget limitations, and inflation-driven implementation hurdles. Despite these, adaptive management strategies, such as remote engagement and shifting activities to safer locations, ensured continued progress.

## Key Recommendations for Future Projects and Addressing Challenges

To strengthen nutrition and WASH outcomes in Ethiopia, several key recommendations have been identified. These include scaling the Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) model to other regions while ensuring the inclusion of women, youth, and people with disabilities. Strengthening links between humanitarian, development, and peace actors (HDPN) is essential to reducing vulnerabilities and improving nutrition. Advocating for legal frameworks, such as the FSNC proclamation, will help institutionalize multi-sectoral coordination. Documenting and sharing community success stories can inspire replication and attract donor engagement.

Additionally, capacity building for government officials is crucial to accelerating the implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions. Cost-sharing for regional initiatives and leveraging internal expertise in partnerships will enhance project effectiveness. Engaging media to raise public awareness, strengthening partner involvement in governance structures, and revising the Theory of Change to align with Ethiopia's socio-political context are also critical. Transitioning to renewable energy, securing budget allocations for WASH and school feeding programs, and promoting local fundraising efforts will further ensure sustainability. Finally, continuous education and multi-year flexible funding are essential for implementing collaborative, high-impact interventions.

Despite challenges in 2023, such as political instability and environmental crises, the Right2Grow project demonstrated the power of community-driven advocacy, adaptive governance, and multi-stakeholder collaboration in addressing undernutrition and WASH access. Moving forward, adaptive management, strengthened partnerships, and flexible budgeting will be key to overcoming obstacles and ensuring long-term impact.



## General Recommendations

- **Adaptive Management:** Continue to implement flexible project management to address security-sensitive areas effectively.
- **Platform Collaboration:** Partner with existing WASH and nutrition platforms (e.g., ECSC-SUN) to advocate for multi-sectoral councils.
- **Donor Engagement:** Mobilize resources and engage international donors to support the project.
- **Global Support:** Maintain face-to-face communication with global thematic teams for better coordination.
- **Grow Platform Utilization:** Enhance the usage of the “Grow” platform to facilitate better coordination and event planning.
- **Multi-Sectoral Integration:** Strengthen efforts to establish Nutrition Councils at regional and Woreda levels.
- **Visibility Materials:** Address procurement delays by ensuring timely bid processes for quality suppliers.



## Recommendations for the Government of Ethiopia

- **Accelerate Institutional Reforms:** Prioritize the establishment of the Food System and Nutrition Council (FSNC) and ensure inclusive representation in government-led nutrition platforms.
- **Enhance Multi-Sectoral Coordination:** Strengthen regional and Woreda nutrition coordination bodies, integrate Resource Tracking and Partnership Management (RTPM) tools for better data quality.
- **Increase Budget Allocations:** Allocate dedicated budgets for nutrition-sensitive interventions with transparent expenditure tracking.
- **Adopt HDPN Approaches:** Collaborate with NGOs and donors to align humanitarian and development efforts in conflict-affected regions.
- **Invest in Sustainable Infrastructure:** Transition water pumps to solar energy and expand WASH facilities in schools and healthcare centers.
- **Enhance Security and Stability:** Prioritize conflict resolution to safeguard project activities.
- **Capacity Development:** Train officials in social accountability, adaptive management, and gender-sensitive programming.
- **Policy Integration:** Mainstream gender equality and disability inclusion into national frameworks for equitable service delivery.



## Recommendations for NGOs and Development Partners

- **Scale Community-Led Advocacy:** Expand the CVA model to new regions and document success stories to advocate for replication.
- **Strengthen CSO Capacity:** Provide training in budget advocacy, media engagement, and adaptive management for local CSOs and CBOs.
- **Engage the Private Sector:** Facilitate partnerships between private enterprises and local governments to improve access to affordable WASH and nutrition products.
- **Prioritize Adaptive Management:** Develop contingency plans for conflict-affected areas and advocate for flexible funding.
- **Leverage Media and Technology:** Use regional media to broadcast advocacy messages and invest in digital tools to enhance data collection.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Support community-led fundraising initiatives and encourage donor alignment under the humanitarian-development nexus.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Document best practices and lessons learned to inform national policies and global frameworks.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Foster public-private partnerships for scalable solutions in sanitation and nutrition, such as SATO latrines and poultry farming.

These combined recommendations aim to enhance program effectiveness, sustainability, and stakeholder collaboration, ultimately improving the nutrition and WASH landscape in Ethiopia.



# Cross-Cutting Actions

- **Media Engagement:** Use media partnerships to raise public awareness and hold decision-makers accountable.
- **Private Sector Mobilization:** Foster public-private partnerships to improve access to nutrition/WASH products and services.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Document and disseminate lessons learned to inform national policies and global best practices.

# Acknowledgments



- Community Leaders & Volunteers

“Your resilience inspires us daily.”

– World Vision Ethiopia



**“Right2Grow didn’t just change  
lives—it rewrote our future.” –  
Birzo Debela**

**R Right2Grow**



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



The  
Hunger  
Project



አወጪድ ለትምህርት  
ORDA Ethiopia



World Vision Ethiopia | [www.wvi.org/ethiopia](http://www.wvi.org/ethiopia) | #Right2GrowEthiopia

Compilation and Design: FIRMA Media and Communications PLC