



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



We Lead to claim our
Sexual Reproductive
Health and Rights





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A. Introduction

The 2024 annual plan was pivotal in the We lead journey. It was written at the backdrop of a Mid-term review (MTR) which was undertaken in the second half of 2023. Having learned from the first two years of the program, the MTR had a raft of recommendations intended to support the accelerated processes and activities towards realization of the programme goal. Key pillars of the programme such as safety and security, local ownership approaches, capacity strengthening, improved communication and collaborations were adjusted in a bid to improve performance and accelerate results. These changes led to the framing of the 2024 annual plan which was pitched as the year of readjustment, refocusing, consolidation and results.

This annual report therefore will focus on the changes and programmatic adjustments implemented in 2024, highlighting key changes realized at all levels of programme implementation. These adjustments were a combination of a response to the recommendations of the MTR as well as the programme's aspirations on accelerated results in the fourth year of implementation. Marked improvement was realized through the implementation of the MTR recommendations. The grant making process continued to improve with all the grants to Host Organizations (HOs) having gone out within the first quarter of the year thereby enabling the HOs to roll out funds to the Communities of Action (CoAs) in good time. The linking and learning component of the programme took off with key innovations such as learning webinars, country-based learning exchanges, Communities of Practice (CoPs), podcasts and regional conventions being unveiled in 2024.

The program significantly enhanced its external communication, successfully packaging and disseminating content across multiple channels. This not only increased visibility but also sparked interest among a broader audience of young people. As a result, our supporter base grew impressively: LinkedIn followers have surged to over 59,000, our X-account boasts over 21,000 followers, Instagram has reached 10,800 followers, and our website has attracted over 120,000 active users this year.

In terms of programme management, the programme teams worked with great intensity in the execution of work plans and with the program operating at full capacity. All vacant positions were filled within the first quarter of the year. A key area of implementation where results were realized includes safety and security where after hiring the safety and security officer, the safety and security working group was reactivated and tools and processes put in place to support the country teams on safety and security matters. In advocacy and communication, the programme made a big impact not only in participating in various advocacy platforms but also in accompanying right holders to such forums ensuring their safe and effective participation.

Capacity strengthening (CS) also took off with many CoAs and right holders registering marked improvement in their strategies and organizational processes. In Design Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (DMEL) much progress was realized in outcome harvesting as well as continued research as demonstrated in the DMEL section of this report.

The results of the adjusted grant making process were quite visible. Having learnt about the negative impact of delayed grants through the MTR, 2024 was the first year where we tested a fast-tracked regranting process by way of giving multiyear contracts to host organizations and improving the reports review process. This made the disbursement of funds much more efficient thereby cutting the contracting process by two months. All these efforts contributed a great deal to improved performance and the realization of results.



B. Context Analysis

The fourth year of the We Lead programme presented significant contextual challenges that required flexible and adaptive programming to ensure little disruption to operations. Despite having anticipated some of these challenges during the annual planning process and including them in the risk assessment and mitigation plan, the intensity of the political and social economic challenges experienced in 2024 were unprecedented. They resulted in new and continued political instability and economic hardship across the countries of implementation. Previous annual reports had assessed the context as deteriorating with 2023 being rated the most difficult year so far. However, the events of 2024 have contributed to a deeper crisis in most of the countries making 2024 one of the most traumatic and difficult years for We Lead.

In **Kenya**, widespread public opposition to a controversial fiscal law sparked weeks of deadly youth-led protests, which severely disrupted planned activities and necessitated significant adjustments to program implementation strategy due to unrest and heightened security concerns. These protests erupted in the backdrop of a prolonged doctors' strike that began in quarter one of 2024 that affected young women's access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services in profound ways. The strike caused widespread disruptions across healthcare facilities, severely impacting services such as maternal health care, family planning, and HIV treatment. These disruptions posed significant health risks for young women and highlighted the urgent need for healthcare system reforms and resilience-building measures.

Just before the doctor's strike, the country witnessed a massive protest against government inaction in addressing rising cases of femicide, a situation that has continued to rob young Kenyan women of their lives. Kenya also suffered severe flooding occasioned by heavy and prolonged rains that killed people, and left thousands displaced. This also impacted access to SRHR services to sections of We Lead Right holders, especially those in urban poor areas and some of the rural areas that were heavily affected by the floods.

██████████ programming remained limited in 2024 given the safety and security concerns that came with the post-coup context.

Heightened insecurity increased the cost of implementing activities like workshops and field visits, making it difficult to run the programme. As a result, some partners significantly scaled down their activities. On several occasions, the Community of Action (CoA) in ████████ needed to go outside the country to attend some of the training due to safety and security concerns. In situations where CoA organizations needed to make field visits to areas that were experiencing insecurity, they had to incur extra costs to pay for security escorts to those places.

Uganda conducted a national population and housing census whose preliminary report indicated a 33% increase in the population from 34.6 million in 2014 to 45.9 million in 2024 of which 50.5% are below 17 years and 22.7% between 18 to 30 years. This young population has remained susceptible to SRH-R challenges including teenage pregnancy (24%), HIV (2.5%) among young women aged 15 to 25 years highlighting a high burden of SRHR challenges among young women, and urgent need to respond to these critical issues.

The effects of the Anti-Homosexuality (AHA) Act that was passed in 2023 continued to shape the socio-political discussions. In April 2024 the Uganda Court of Justice nullified Sections 3(2)(c), 9, 11(2)(d) and 14 of the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 noting that these clauses contradicted the Constitution of Uganda 1995. The nullified sections relate to renting of premises to ██████████ promotion of ██████████ and duty to report suspected persons engaged in ██████████ This created anxiety among the We Lead partners and rights holders and a fertile ground for their harassment by security agents and the general population.

As **Mozambique** was slowly recovering from the effects of pockets of violence experienced in previous years especially in Cabo Del Gado region, the country experienced post-election tensions that resulted in protests and violence in October 2024. This meant that all activities planned for the last quarter of 2024 were pushed to early 2025 as it was impossible to hold any activities in the last quarter of 2024.

Additionally, Mozambique experienced various climatic events including the occurrence of cyclones, floods and droughts that left many girls and their families in situations of vulnerability and critical poverty. Without access to basic services such as health, water, food or shelter and without income-generating activities, families are forced to marry off their daughters to obtain material goods, to reduce pressure on the supply of food and other necessities. Many families in these situations think that girls will have a better life when married off.

Climate change has also increased insecurity, exposed girls and women to risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including exploitation, and limited access to basic social services that were already scarce before. More girls and women are exposed to sexual abuse, exploitation, as well as child marriage and forced marriages. Thus, without many options, adolescents end up becoming sexually involved with small traders and other people with economic power at the level of their communities.

The [REDACTED] as well as people living with HIV and AIDS and in situations of displacement continue to be discriminated against in Mozambique. Persons with disabilities are mistakenly assumed to be asexual and therefore their right to sexuality and reproductive health are not prioritized.

Geopolitical crises and policy changes in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, including a full-scale war in **Lebanon** which displaced approximately 1.2 million people and halted local activities, affected both project implementation and team morale. Our consortium partners Positive Vibes (PV) and Marsa had to pause their activities due to war. Marsa's SRH-R center in Beirut closed for several days during the Israeli aggression as it was near areas being constantly bombed. Marsa's staff members were also forcibly displaced from their homes and had to find safer areas to move to. Meanwhile, Syrian refugees and migrant workers in Lebanon faced compounded marginalization, being excluded from essential services deepening their vulnerabilities and prompting a re-examination and intensification of strategies essential to dismantle systemic barriers and rebuild inclusive frameworks that guarantee equitable access to vital services for all displaced young women in Lebanon. However, the unforeseen challenges resulting from the escalation of the war in Lebanon, prompted CoAs across the country to intervene within their local communities and many organizations, including consortium partner Marsa, were able to mobilize resources and collaborate to respond to emerging SRH-R needs of vulnerable young and adult women impacted by the war and/or internal displacement. This is a clear indication of the positive impact of the We Lead program in fostering an adaptive and responsive SRHR movement in Lebanon.

The situation in Lebanon also impacted neighboring **Jordan** where colleagues and partners faced anxiety, fear and dwindling morale due to the prolonged turbulent situation in the region. Despite having resources available, the shifting context made programme implementation increasingly difficult. This was exacerbated by external factors such as government surveillance, restrictions, and the overall security situation, which presented substantial obstacles to our work.

In **Nigeria**, gender inequality is manifested in many ways including denial of access to essential health and SRHR services, poor-quality care, and practices such as forced early marriages and female genital mutilation. These violations have far-reaching consequences, impacting health, survival, and economic development. Despite the existence of frameworks linking the fulfillment of SRHR for women and girls to fundamental human rights, such as the right to health, life, privacy, education, freedom from torture, and protection from discrimination, SRHR of women and girls are persistently violated.

In Central America, **Guatemala** maintained relative political stability under a new government, allowing for continued advocacy, whereas in Honduras, the banning of the sex education law forced a strategic pivot towards engaging government leaders directly. Despite these hurdles, youth advocates in both countries made notable progress including the approval of emergency contraception sales in Honduras, underscoring their resilient commitment to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights.



C. Progress under each Benchmark

Program Management

2024 was projected to be the year when programme implementation would be accelerated to recover some of the time lost in earlier years during the programme set up. Thus, the programme teams were focused on accelerated execution of work plans and with the program operating at full capacity. All vacant positions were filled. Hivos hired a Safety and Security Officer in March and immediately reactivated the Safety and Security Working Group, integrating all focal points from the nine CoAs and updating the safety protocols. The DMEL position in the MENA region was also filled, reducing the workload of the Global DMEL Manager. However, in the third quarter, the DMEL Manager left the program. After a thorough analysis of the implications of hiring a new person at the end of 2024, the management team decided to reorganize the positions, which were redistributed among different We Lead team members, to ensure continuity and delivery on the set target, especially the End Term Evaluation (ETE) process.

At national level, the CoAs proved to be consolidated with strong leadership from rights holders, who positioned themselves at the center of the program. The country ownership and the empowerment of RHs within the CoA organizations was strengthened in most countries, and the results of permanent capacity strengthening in all areas were evident. The CoA facilitators and their teams also became stronger. Unlike the previous year, only two facilitators transitioned from the programme (■■■■ and Uganda), the rest remain in their CoAs and have become established and strengthened. Host organizations improved relationships between themselves and the CoAs and provided them with the support required in playing their role effectively.

Based on the results of the capacity assessment and the MTR recommendations, Hivos, the consortium members, and the program team identified gaps and addressed the needs indicated by the CoAs. Although some challenges remain, the program improved coordination and collaboration both at the consortium level and at the country level. Joint activities were carried out, leveraging the CoAs' country plans to create spaces for joint learning, reducing the need for solitary activities. This lightened the burden on the CoAs by concentrating training sessions, workshops, and meetings in shorter periods.

In accordance with the We Lead Action Plan, the program also solidified its governance, leadership, and decision-making structures. The working groups were restructured allowing for the integration of CoA facilitators and RHs, ensuring that decision-making was always based on the local and national perspective. All Working Groups met periodically, discussing the actions and strategies necessary to meet the goals related to Advocacy, Communication, Capacity Strengthening, DMEL S&S, and Finance.

Both the Global Management Team (GMT) and the Global Coordination Team (GCT) slightly changed their way of working, including in-depth thematic discussions on their agendas, which contributed to more informed decision-making. In line with the program values, the global and regional governance structures were proactive in providing solidarity and psychological support to colleagues and RHs in difficult contexts. Coordination was especially close in Lebanon due to the war, in Mozambique due to political instability, and in ■■■■ which is still under military rule. The Steering Committee (SC) continued to offer support in strategic thinking and decision making allowing the program to run efficiently. Two meetings were held in 2024, in March and June. The December meeting was postponed to January 2025. In all meetings, an update was made on the technical, financial, and contextual aspects of the program. The SC also participated actively in the review and modification of the budget within the first quarter of 2024 and provided technical follow-up and approved the annual and semi-annual reports.

Following the transition of the three Rights holders (RHs) representatives from Africa, MENA, and LATAM to the steering committee, the new team began working in 2024 and participated in both meetings. They were inducted on their role by Restless Development and briefed before each meeting to ensure their effective participation.



Lobby and Advocacy

Lobbying and advocacy has remained the cornerstone of the programme whose main objective has been to offer platforms for young feminists to share their perspectives and policy needs as well as contribute to policy decisions. The programme continued to support diverse teams of right holders to participate in global, regional and national advocacy spaces where they interacted not only with other young feminists but also with policy makers. This section highlights the successes of the Lobby & Advocacy work in 2024. As the final full year of implementation, 2024 marked an opportunity for the program to harvest from its investments on capacity strengthening, alliance building and establishing relationships with stakeholders all of which strengthened the position of the rights holders in advocacy processes. These results are reported in alignment with the programme outcome areas:

Intermediate outcome 1: Strengthened CSOs are inclusive of or led by young women from four rights holder groups, and work together in a CoA to defend and promote their SRH-R.

Globally the programme was represented in five key advocacy spaces including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 68), the 57th Session of the conference on Population and Development, the International Aids Conference, the Summit of the future and the AWID Forum. In total 57 rights holders participated in these international forums on behalf of We Lead in 2024. Through the programme's accompaniment strategy, the rights holders were coached for a safe and successful experience in New York City, Cotonou, Munich and Bangkok where the conferences took place.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)

In March 2024, the programme supported ten rights holders (from Jordan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Kenya, Guatemala, and Honduras) to participate in panel discussions and youth dialogues at CSW68 where they gained knowledge to improve their advocacy skills and strategies to meaningfully participate in panel discussions and youth dialogues. During the event, they gained knowledge to improve their advocacy skills and strategies as demonstrated by their testimonies. The CoA facilitators from Lebanon noted that her leadership skills had improved as she was able to take initiative, support others and create opportunities for them to engage. Consortium member Marsa presented in a panel on the backlash on human rights witnessed in the MENA region and shared their insights on approaches to responding to

these threats, in this discussion Marsa highlighted the importance of local partnerships with local RH organizations and reflected on the work of CoA organizations and their role in sustaining the SRH-R movement even in times of backlash. Meanwhile, following this engagement, a rightsholder from Central America was invited to an indigenous women's event in Canada, where she engaged with networks exchanging information with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). A rightsholder from Honduras had the opportunity to speak on a panel, boosting her public speaking and networking skills. During the official civil society briefing, one rightsholder from Kenya was able to address the commission, highlighting the importance of meaningful participation of young women in all levels of decision making.

AfricaDisruptCSW68

The Midterm Evaluation of the program identified barriers preventing rights holders, feminists, and women's rights advocates from participating in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Challenges included visa difficulties, high travel costs, and limited virtual accessibility due to internet and device constraints. In response, FEMNET hosted #AfricaDisruptCSW68, a co-curated space amplifying African voices in global gender equality discussions. A hybrid participation approach enabled over 500 delegates from 21 African countries—including a rightsholder from Niger—to engage virtually and physically in Lilongwe, Malawi, ensuring broader representation. Sustained advocacy increased Global South participation at CSW67 to 48%. FEMNET also curated and disseminated key advocacy documents in collaboration with the CoAs, including the Position Statement and Lilongwe Declaration. The CoAs in Africa actively contributed to these processes, reinforcing grassroots women and young feminist leaders' influence in global advocacy.

ICPD30 Global Youth Dialogue

The year 2024 marked the 30th anniversary of the Program of Action established at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1995. In its review process, We Lead participated in the Global Dialogue focusing on young people's perspectives. Two rights holders (from Lebanon and Honduras) were supported to join the conference in Cotonou, Benin. They contributed to recommendations and co-authored a research paper based on their discussions.

The 25th International AIDS Conference (AIDS2024)

In July, the program supported rights holders from Central America, MENA, and Africa to attend the AIDS 2024 Conference. The team hosted the We Lead flagship event, 'WE LEAD, WE UNITE!', advocating for inclusive strategies that promote prevention, treatment access, and sexual rights. We also secured speaking slots for young leaders and contributed to the Youth Pavilion advocacy statement. We served as one of the supporting partners of the Munich Youth Force, a collaborative of youth-led and -serving organizations. The Youth Force offered a safe space for young activists in the Youth Pavilion, as well as facilitated collective advocacy messaging on behalf of young people at the conference.



*We Lead Consortium members and CoAF at AIDS
2024 in Munich, Germany*

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) Forum

At the AWID Forum, the CoA from Lebanon hosted a session titled Feminist Organizing in Crisis Contexts: Experiences from Lebanon. At the time of submission, none of them could have foreseen Israel's intensified attacks on Lebanon. Because of the consequent logistical challenges and visa restrictions, only the CoA Facilitator and two CoA members were able to attend the AWID Forum in person, with one speaker joining virtually. AWID's closing plenary offered a powerful platform for young feminists to issue calls to action for global feminist movements. The CoA facilitator from Lebanon passionately urged attendees to hold governments accountable. Hivos and FEMNET also co-created a panel on "Rethinking and Reclaiming SRHR - countering the anti-rights and anti-gender movement" at the AWID forum where stakeholders discussed strategies to counter the anti-rights movement.

Intermediate Outcome 3: Health service providers are more aware of the SRHR needs and situations of rightsholder groups, and increasingly provide accessible, comprehensive, high-quality, inclusive, and respectful SRHR information and services.

In addition to the global process, the programme supported rights holders' participation in various country level advocacy processes as outlined below;

As a result of the skills gained during the Youth Led Accountability (YLA) training in Uganda in August 2023, Resilience Uganda conducted community-led monitoring in Amuru District. The findings led to advocacy for Omen Health Center II's accreditation to Health Center I. District leaders presented these findings to the Ministry of Health, and by March 2024, the facility was accredited, with a midwife and clinical officer assigned. This initiative aims to improve access to services such as Prevention of Mother-To-Child Transmission (PMTCT) and Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) for rights holders in Layima parish.

Several CoA organizations in Guatemala collaboratively engaged in advocacy work, leveraging the Health Systems Monitoring and Accountability (HSMA) work led by Positive Vibes alongside the Leadership Lab of Restless Development. Following data analysis, the findings have been useful for quality improvement, advocacy, program design, and strategic adaptation to better engage hard-to-reach communities with essential services. The organizations are preparing a comprehensive report to present to the Ministry of Health to promote changes that advance sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This joint effort underscores the growing leadership of local CSOs in driving impactful policy advocacy and promoting SRHR for youth and communities. In November 2024, CoA organization [REDACTED] was approached by an HIV clinic seeking a health system monitoring process after seeing data analysis work conducted at a nearby youth clinic. This interaction demonstrates that healthcare workers value the insights provided by rights holders and their partner organizations in improving local health systems.

In Mozambique, in October 2023, AESMO, supported by Positive Vibes, hosted a health systems monitoring process called 'Setting the Levels' at the São Damaso Health Center. Following the process, more service users felt able to report incidents of corruption, a major issue identified during the monitoring. This led to the restructuring and replacement of staff. New staff members were briefed on the health systems monitoring work in a meeting with AESMO in September 2024.

Intermediate Outcome 4: Duty-bearers increasingly design, adopt, and implement laws and policies that respect and protect the SRH-R of young women from rightsholder groups.



Rightsholders participating in Data Analysis process in Guatemala as part of health system monitoring process

_____ successfully advocated for the approval of the Municipal Law on Disability in the municipality of Progreso, Department of Yoro, Honduras.

The _____ participated as permanent members of multiple roundtables, including the Women and Disabilities Roundtable, the Care Roundtable, the Ciudad-Mujer Territory Roundtable, and the Migrant Roundtable. It also engaged with the Multi-stakeholder Roundtable to verify comprehensive compliance with the law on equity and comprehensive development for people with disabilities (Decree 160-2005).

FEMNET facilitated five in-country training courses on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Advocacy for the CoAs. In each country, GRB training included dialogue sessions with government officials from different ministries (education, health, gender, environment) to create entry points for CSOs in policy discussions and technical working groups. In _____ where security concerns limited in-country training, FEMNET ensured that local CSOs could still participate by hosting the training in Nigeria. Recognizing the media's role in influencing public opinion and shaping SRHR discourse, FEMNET integrated media engagement into the training. Journalists and media professionals engaged with rights holders and CoAs

A CoA member _____ in Kenya worked with youth advocacy champions to lead change and advocate effectively for youth and community needs. In Dadaab refugee camp, twenty young women affected by displacement were trained as community youth advocate champions, leading efforts to advance youth engagement in decision-making, particularly in SRHR and health facility policies. Building on the training, _____ co-authored a research paper on best practices from the We Lead project, presented at the Reproductive Health Network in Kenya (RHNK) Conference, amplifying youth-led perspectives. A community scorecard assessment at IFO, a Health Centre in Dadaab refugee camp led to tangible improvements, including a service charter, new signage, renovated areas, and the hiring of two youth champions as language interpreters. These efforts contributed to policy impact, such as the active involvement of right-holders in the creation of the Garissa County Anti-FGM Policy, ensuring that it incorporates the needs and perspectives of young women affected by displacement.

Rights holders in Kenya from _____ participated in the technical review of the Siaya County Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) Bill in July 2024. The rights holders depicted the growth and amplification of SRHR in the policy-making space. Specifically, the RHs contributed to drafting the clause on Reproductive, maternal and neonatal health services. They successfully lobbied for language on services "free from discrimination, coercion and violence for special groups, persons with disability and the elderly."

Communications

Communicating the successes and the need for the program becomes increasingly important as the We Lead is approaching the final year. 2024 was a visible year for the program having significantly enhanced its external communication, successfully packaging and disseminating content across multiple channels. This not only increased visibility but also sparked interest among a broader audience of young people. As a result, our supporter base has grown impressively: LinkedIn followers have surged to over 59,000, our X-account boasts over 21,000 followers, Instagram has reached 10,800 followers, and our website has attracted over 120,000 active users this year. Other key success in program communication is reported in alignment with programme outcome areas as demonstrated below:

Intermediate Outcome 2: The public increasingly acknowledges and supports young women's SRH-R

The program's key success stories began in Nigeria in the first quarter of 2024. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a persistent problem in Nigeria where two in three women reportedly experience violence from an intimate partner. Yet, this kind of violence is seen as a private matter, not for outside intervention. To change people's attitudes, the program together with the technical partner M&C Saatchi partnered with Nigerian film stars Charles Inojie and Ali Nuhu, who created a movement against domestic violence: "Make We Halla." Halla means to raise one's voice or scream and shout in Nigerian Pidgin. From March to June 2024, the core video reached over 11 million Nigerians, with over 2,000 comments and 537 posts using the hashtag #MakeWeHalla. M&C Saatchi surveyed 1,500 Nigerians, proportionally representative of the population, before and after the campaign. The survey recorded a 9 percent decrease in beliefs that violence is a private issue, and a 14 percent increase in likelihood that respondents would show their disapproval when they were aware domestic violence was taking place.

From Nigeria the communications team moved to Kenya where in April, [REDACTED] hosted a book launch showcasing the artwork and stories of women with disabilities from Kilifi County in Kenya. The Art for Healing workshop, held in 2023, included eleven women with disabilities who participated in a self-image workshop using art as a medium for healing. Their artwork and stories were compiled into a publication advocating for the sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities. The event was attended by local duty bearers,

including the county governor, who discussed how issues of disability and inclusion are being addressed across different sectors. The event emphasized the importance of art in creating a shared platform for self-expression. This was a pivotal moment for the women to oversee their own narratives, build confidence, and advocate for themselves.

In Guatemala, the [REDACTED] held meetings with the Secretariat of the Presidency, responsible for generating a communication strategy to shift attitudes and eliminate violence against adolescents and young women living with HIV. This strategy marked the first national campaign addressing HIV as both a cause and consequence of violence against women in its various forms, before, during, and after a diagnosis.

Following the Uganda CoA workshop on Youth-Led Accountability, the CoA developed and executed an advocacy action plan to equip rights holders with tools and strategies to influence public opinion on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRH-R). In March 2024, during International Women's Day, a CoA member, the [REDACTED] mobilized 45 young SRH-R champions from four sub-counties in Tororo and Busia districts, focusing on intersectional vulnerabilities. [REDACTED] supported these champions in amplifying their voices through various advocacy platforms, contributing to the next edition of [REDACTED] five-year feminist advocacy agenda for sex workers in Uganda.

In Lebanon Marsa developed an online educational platform (www.marsa.me) that was launched in 2024. This platform serves as a reference for inclusive and non-stigmatizing information and resources on SRH-R for Arabic speaking people as well as the rest of the world in English and possibly French in the future. Among the resources of this platform are several topics, including sexuality, pleasure, and other taboo topics that cannot be freely shared on social media platforms, especially following the latest crackdown on the [REDACTED] community in the region. The website offers a safer and freer platform to be able to share more inclusive and comprehensive content.



The Netherlands

Within the program, Hivos has a unique responsibility to raise awareness on the need for development cooperation and We Lead's work within the Dutch society. By informing and involving likeminded people (including Hivos' almost 20,000 individual donors) and initiating dialogues by those who find themselves in the middle, Hivos strives to increase general support for human rights and gender equality. In 2024, Hivos hosted presentations at fashion brand MR MARVIS and SONY in the Amsterdam Tower. Hivos continued its collaboration with (queer) film festivals in Amsterdam, Utrecht and Leiden, and handed out the Winq International Activist Award for the third year in a row.

Hivos is an active member of WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform, Dutch Human Rights Platform (BMO) and the SRHR lobby platform. With the latter, Hivos co-organized the launch of the Multi Party Initiative on Global Health and SRHR. This collaboration with MPs, representing most of the Parliament, offers a platform to collectively speak out in favor of investing in health system strengthening and SRHR.

At the end of 2024, Hivos initiated a partnership with Meute, a political campaigning agency, to start an initiative to gain more political support for women's rights globally. The campaign will target policy makers in the political middle and will be launched in 2025.

Capacity Strengthening, Linking and Learning

The implementation of capacity strengthening (CS) activities remained aligned with We Lead’s goals, as outlined in the program’s CS Strategy. Over the reporting period, key shifts emerged in both approach and focus—such as stronger collaboration among partners and a heightened emphasis on economic, political, and technical sustainability. By addressing challenges identified in earlier assessments, the consortium refined its CS efforts to better support integrated programming.

The program experienced strengthened networking and collaboration among its consortium partners and CoAs, enhancing the implementation of CS processes and activities. These partnerships created synergies that improved work quality, optimized resources, and fostered adaptability in response to challenges such as shifting political contexts and security concerns. Notable examples include the joint technical and economic partnership between Restless Development and Positive Vibes, which streamlined activities with Niger rights holders in Kenya. Similarly, collaboration among Positive Vibes, Hivos, and Restless Development supported the LATAM LILO Facilitators’ Community of Interest and Practice (CoIP), extending its scope beyond Looking in Looking Out (LILO) methodologies to broader facilitation skills. These organizations also partnered with FCAM to implement the Feminist Bootcamp and School.

Additionally, improved coordination with other Hivos programs, such as Free to Be Me, created expanded capacity-building opportunities for We Lead rights holders and CoAs. For instance, through Positive Vibes, three We Lead organizations participated in the pathways to sustainability workshop in Uganda, while two LATAM facilitators received “LILO Up” training on economic development in Kenya. Furthermore, Kenya’s CoA facilitator was selected for the Free to Lead (F2L) fellowship, further strengthening leadership development within the program.

As the program nears its conclusion, capacity-strengthening initiatives have increasingly focused on

creating conditions for sustainability—one of the most critical identified needs during MTR. In 2024, consortium partners made deliberate efforts to reinforce sustainability not only in financial terms but also by strengthening local leadership among young women, fostering local ownership of CS efforts, and enhancing networking, knowledge-sharing, and learning opportunities.

Key examples of this progress include the active involvement of CoAs in revising, adapting, and localizing methodologies such as LILO Inclusive Facilitation, integrating a feminist perspective, and refining LILO Women to be more inclusive and accessible to women with disabilities. Additionally, the replication of these methodologies with minimal intervention from consortium members, along with the emergence of new programming approaches driven by CoA organizations, demonstrates the growing local capacity to sustain and expand these efforts beyond the We Lead program.

Intermediate Outcome 1: Strengthened CSOs are inclusive of or led by young women from four rights holder groups and work together in a CoA to defend and promote SRHR.

Psychosocial Wellbeing, self-confidence and self-efficacy

Positive Vibes expanded its impactful work through LILO methodologies, building on previous achievements to enhance psychosocial wellbeing, self-confidence and self-efficacy. The innovative use of art served as both a healing tool and advocacy entry point. In supervised LILO Women workshops, newly trained facilitators in Guatemala and Honduras empowered 28 additional rights holders (15 in Guatemala, 13 in Honduras) to strengthen their personal agency. As one participant shared: *“I learned about tools that help manage my emotions, set limits”* (LILO Women participant, Guatemala).



The new *"Seen and Heard"* methodology specifically supported displaced rightsholders, with pilots reaching 10 participants in Kenya/Uganda and 19 in Honduras. This approach successfully created spaces for storytelling and connection, culminating in powerful advocacy outputs. In Honduras, participants developed stop-motion animations that were exhibited to 92 community members, sparking dialogue about violence against migrant women. The methodology's transformative impact was evident in Kenya, where one participant, [REDACTED] gained the confidence to report her issues to police after the workshop.

Leadership Capacity Building

Restless Development's leadership trainings yielded measurable results across multiple countries:

- Nigeria: 17 participants showed knowledge gains from 46.5% to 76.3% in post-assessments
- Uganda: 21 youth from 14 CoA organizations achieved ~30% knowledge increase
- Kenya: 8 CoA members gained 20 percentage points in understanding

Participants valued the practical approach, with one noting: *"I have learnt the difference between leadership, power, authority and influence, and how each of these concepts can interact in achieving our goals."* Another highlighted: *"The real-world examples made the abstract concepts tangible and easy to grasp."* (Uganda workshop participant).

A Kenya participant added: *"I now feel more confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to youth-led initiatives."*

The immersive CoA Facilitators bootcamp (attended by 7 of 9 members) and 35 one-on-one mentoring sessions provided crucial leadership support. Jordan's CoAF Haneen Al Fayoumi reflected: *"The one to one provided supported me in two levels...it opened my eyes to goals and interests I had not thought about."*

Honduras CoAF [REDACTED] noted: *"Being a CoAF is a challenge...but it allows me to have a comprehensive view of the entire program."*

Youth representation grew through Steering Committee engagement, with Honduras representative [REDACTED] stating: *"To me, being part of the Steering Committee has meant being a young voice that is trustworthy and leads."*

FCAM significantly contributed to leadership development by organizing both virtual and in-person Feminist Schools for rights holders from Guatemala and Honduras. These safe spaces enabled participants to examine intersectional violence through a feminist lens and develop inclusive leadership approaches. The initiative fostered stronger connections between organizations and young women's collectives through peer learning and self-determined leadership development. Restless Development, Hivos, and Positive Vibes supported these efforts through technical and resource assistance. A prime example of sustainable capacity building emerged through Positive Vibes' support to the LATAM LILO Facilitators' Community of Interest and Practice (CoIP). In 2024, this included: A new Training of Facilitators workshop for 8 women from Honduras and Guatemala; Coordination by two locally trained facilitators (2022 cohort) with consortium support; A peer-mentorship model pairing new and experienced facilitators; and A 3-day CoIP learning meeting co-created through needs assessment.

The approach proved effective in building local ownership, as one participant noted: *"I like the way of creating the relationship and of breaking ice between participants and facilitators."* These efforts not only expanded the reach of LILO methodologies but also identified areas for continued growth, such as crisis intervention skills, while establishing sustainable structures for ongoing capacity development.

In response to the Lebanon CoA's identified needs from the mid-term capacity assessment, Positive Vibes and Restless Development partnered with a consultant to enhance their inclusive facilitation methodology. Building on the 2021 training framework, they integrated feminist facilitation principles to better address local requirements. While security concerns in the region necessitated postponing the training, the updated facilitation manual has been finalized and stands ready for implementation once conditions improve. This adaptive approach demonstrates the program's commitment to responsive, context-sensitive capacity building that prioritizes both participant safety and feminist principles.

SRH-R Advocacy Capacity Strengthening

FEMNET's Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) training equipped 55 women across five countries (Mozambique, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and [REDACTED]) with budget advocacy skills, stakeholder engagement, and innovative financing mechanisms to explore funding for SRHR initiatives. The outcomes were clear as highlighted by the following comments from the participants.

- "I can now track the National budgeting cycle and see how to target my advocacy" (Uganda)
- "I learnt how to critique a budget plan as regards to it being gender responsive" (Kenya)
- "I understood the skills of preparing a gender sensitive budget" (Nigeria)

In [REDACTED], 12 young women gained advocacy skills through combined LILO Voice and accountability training. One shared: *"It was the first time I had met CoA and I felt safe and able to share my experiences without shame."*

The Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) training in LATAM empowered 20 rights holders with transformative outcomes, as reflected in their powerful testimonies: *"This workshop gave me the possibility to carry out actions for concrete meaningful participation of young women within the alliance, create spaces for intergenerational dialogue to exchange and discuss with the organization's members"* shared a participant from Guatemala, while a Honduran rightsholder noted, *"It helped me identify that women's spaces are not safe just because they are for women; there is also violence or power dynamics, but identifying, communicating, and discussing them is what makes spaces safe. I also learned to communicate in simple language and not to stop using technical terms, but rather to explain them."*

Social Accountability and Monitoring based on the Youth-Led Accountability (YLA)

Restless Development advanced advocacy capacities through a Youth-Led Accountability (YLA) training for 14 Kenya CoA members, including nine rights holders working with a local partner organization. The session enabled participants to establish a community of practice and develop Social Accountability and Monitoring strategies, building on their previous year's implementation experience. The training achieved remarkable results, with participants demonstrating a 52% increase in understanding critical concepts.

Hivos and consortium partners bolstered capacities by supporting CoAs and rights holders in international advocacy and linking/learning events. This included preparatory sessions and on-the-ground accompaniment to enhance participation and collective learning. In LATAM, Hivos' tailored support enabled participants to navigate global forums more effectively, leveraging these opportunities to inform and influence national-level advocacy efforts.



Marsa enhanced knowledge on key SRH-R subjects through a 3-day training (May 21-23) for 20 Jordan CoA participants, with 16 Lebanese counterparts also attending. The workshop refreshed knowledge for returning participants and addressed gaps for newer members. A key focus was Jordan's legal framework, responding directly to CoA-identified needs.

Advancing Financial Sustainability

Addressing a key need identified in the capacity assessment process, Positive Vibes enabled three Ugandan CoA organizations to participate in the **Pathways to Sustainability** workshop under the Free to Be Me project. This initiative helps organizations build donor pipelines and strengthen their long-term viability. The training yielded immediate results:

██████████ applied workshop insights during a UN meeting, securing high-level discussions with the UN Youth Office's Assistant Secretary-General, Felipe Paullier and his team from their department on Youth Engagement Partnerships, Advocacy and Communications Section, in New York to explore collaboration opportunities.

Positive Vibes supported two LATAM representatives (Guatemala/Honduras) to complete Free to Be Me's LILO Up ToT in Nairobi—an economic empowerment methodology. Participants subsequently introduced the approach to LATAM's LILO CoIP, initiating plans for regional adaptation and rollout by local facilitators. Concurrently, the Safety & Security program addressed critical needs through 18 country-level training (2 per country) covering physical security, SRHR violation documentation, and wellbeing—further detailed in the S&S section.

Intermediate Outcome 3: Health service providers are more aware of the SRHR needs and situation of rights-holder groups, and increasingly provide accessible, comprehensive, high-quality, inclusive and respectful SRHR information and services

In 2024, CoA organizations in Nigeria, Mozambique, Kenya and Guatemala demonstrated measurable improvements in their capacity to monitor health services and influence providers, with strengthened relationships between monitoring teams and health facilities. Positive Vibes played a crucial role in this progress by developing monitoring methodologies and providing technical accompaniment, with sustained impact in Guatemala made possible through Hivos' long-term collaboration and financial support, resulting in tangible advances in health system accountability and rightsholder engagement.

The data analysis conducted by CoA organizations in Guatemala has become a powerful tool for health system improvement, yielding actionable insights for service quality enhancement, advocacy efforts, and program design - particularly for hard-to-reach communities. Organizations like ██████████ have established themselves as key players in advancing health accountability, with their monitoring methodology now being actively sought by healthcare providers. A notable example occurred in November 2024 when ██████████ was approached by an HIV clinic requesting their monitoring services after observing their impactful work at a youth clinic. Similarly, ██████████ data analysis initiative in Guatemala City attracted interest from a neighboring HIV clinic, demonstrating growing institutional recognition of this community-led approach.

These developments mark a significant shift, positioning rightsholder organizations as essential partners in strengthening Guatemala's health system through participatory monitoring and social accountability mechanisms.



In Kenya, ██████ PV-supported monitoring of Kambajo Dispensary led to tangible clinic improvements in late 2024. Using Quality Improvement funds, they installed new signage that enhanced both accessibility and confidentiality for patients, who reported easier navigation and reduced need for directional inquiries. Mozambique saw equally transformative results at São Damaso Health Center, where one of the CoAs, ██████ produced a report on "Setting the Levels" monitoring empowered users to report corruption. These reports prompted staff restructuring, with new hires committing to collaboration during a September 2024 briefing. The incoming team pledged to implement ██████ feedback to improve service delivery.

Linking and Learning

Through our Learning Partner, The Constellation, the Program successfully organized the Global Linking and Learning Festival 2024 (GLF) in Maputo, Mozambique under the theme #WeLink#WeLearn#WeLead. The event brought together 70 participants including We Lead staff, implementing organizations, consortium members and rights holders from across the programme's nine countries.

The GLF placed rights holders at the center. The rights holders presented their approaches in country stands that were set up in Market Place Style where they presented their approaches using materials, stories and their own voices. The recognition awards for Most Inclusive, Most Innovative and Best in Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) generated celebrations and new collaboration opportunities.

Five Maputo-based rights holder groups hosted Learn Visits, with young women leading discussions about their SRH-R practices. These visits created profound learning moments, as one participant from the MENA region reflected:

"Being here made us realize we're not alone in our struggles." Another participant from Kenya, ██████ highlighted *"From community visits to innovative solutions, every moment fostered growth and connection."* A particularly powerful moment occurred when rights holders from Kenya and Uganda, inspired by Mozambique's ██████ community, openly shared their ARV medication experiences with all GLF participants.

The learning continued beyond Maputo through Regional Linking and Learning exchanges. In July 2024, a ██████ Nigeria exchange introduced CoA members to the Learn Visit concept, helping them identify key takeaways and follow-up actions. Kenya built on this through a series of activities: a mid-August workshop trained 14 CoA members in Learn Visit facilitation, followed by four practical applications hosted by 5 different COAs between August and October 2024.

The We Lead Summit in Kenya (26-28 November 2024) brought together CoAs and rights holders from Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria to showcase achievements and strengthen cross-border collaboration. Our learning partner facilitated the learn visit methodology during this event, which combined knowledge sharing with wellness activities to reinforce sustainable SRH-R advocacy networks.

Throughout these initiatives, the programme maintained its commitment to peer-to-peer learning and rights holder leadership, creating spaces for authentic exchange while developing practical tools for ongoing collaboration. The After Experience Review process consistently highlighted learn visits as a powerful tool for Learning and Adapting.



A Partner Learn Visit during the Global Linking and Learning meeting in Maputo



In the course of the year, We Lead broadened its learning and engagement platforms by hosting two thematic webinars – one on Wellness and Collective Care in May and another on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in July. Additionally, the programme launched the We Speak Podcast, <https://hivos.org/we-speak-podcast/> releasing two episodes that amplified the voices of rightsholders and team members.

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D: Design Monitoring Evaluation Learning (DMEL) and Research

The program DMEL remained committed to local ownership, leadership, transparency, and mutual accountability, empowering partners with effective M&E approaches. The focus was on generating actionable evidence, simplifying processes for flexibility, and ensuring high accountability standards at the grassroots level. We fostered innovation across partner countries and conducted quarterly capacity-strengthening sessions on outcome harvesting, data management, and learning. Additionally, a DMEL Community of Practice (CoP) was established to facilitate knowledge exchange. To enhance data security, internal risk assessments were conducted and protective measures reinforced, ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of the collected data. The programme also initiated the End-Term Evaluation (ETE) process in the last quarter of 2024, setting up all the support mechanisms such as the Global Reference Group and the Country Committees.

Research – Evidence and data/Community Led Monitoring

Positive Vibes supported partners to continue advancing the IMAQI (Integrated Monitoring and Accountability for Quality Improvement) cycle used for health systems monitoring and accountability (HSMA) including the use of Setting the Levels in Kenya [REDACTED] and Guatemala [REDACTED], for example. Data obtained through Ma' Box (the online feedback platform used in the HSMA process to give feedback on healthcare facility experiences) was used for data driven advocacy to duty-bearers to emphasize the impact of affordability of healthcare and how the cost of living directly limits access. For further details see results on pages 11 and 12.

Restless Development continued with the integration of Youth-Led Research (YLR) and Social Accountability

Monitoring (SAM) methodologies which have proven to be a powerful tool for young women to advocate for their SRH-R. [REDACTED] in Uganda conducted a YLR study on the SRH-R needs of displaced young women, influencing policy and improving SRH-R responses. In Amuru District, [REDACTED] used YLA training findings to advocate for the accreditation of Ome Health Center II, enhancing access to PMTCT and ART services. In Kenya, [REDACTED] used SAM methodologies to improve service delivery at Dandora II Health Center while [REDACTED] Kenya co-authored a research paper on We Lead Program best practices, presented at the 2024 RNHK Conference, Mombasa Kenya, amplifying youth led perspectives. A community scorecard at IFO Health Centre in Dadaab improved healthcare services, leading to a service charter, renovations, and hiring youth champions as interpreters. These efforts highlight the power of youth-led, data-driven advocacy in influencing policy, ensuring accountability, and improving SRH-R services for marginalized young women.

In collaboration with Wageningen University, Hivos conducted research titled *'The Community of Action (CoA) as a Pathway to Local Ownership in Rights-Based Programming'*. The findings illustrate that local ownership enhances inclusive decision-making by ensuring local organizations and rights holders actively participate in program planning and implementation. The CoA plays a key role in strengthening local capacity through training, resources, and leadership development, empowering communities to take ownership of rights-based initiatives. By fostering collaborative partnerships, peer-learning opportunities, and advocacy efforts, the CoA amplifies local voices and strengthens community ties. The research recommends that the CoA should strengthen networking by fostering solidarity, mentorship, and inclusive partnerships. Transparent communication and accountability mechanisms, including clear funding updates, are essential, while power dynamics must be managed by maximizing leadership and representation.

Capacity strengthening should remain a priority, emphasizing peer-led, context-specific learning. Overall, a CoA must balance global and local efforts while promoting inclusivity, collaboration, and sustainable impact.

Adaptive Management, Reflection and Learning

As part of the adaptive management and learning processes, each country engaged in a Theory of Change (ToC) review and sense-making exercise. This process involved comparing and analyzing the intended outcomes of the 2024 ToC against the actual harvested outcomes. Teams were encouraged to critically reflect on two key questions: **What did we plan in our ToC? and What outcomes did we achieve through our program?**

To ensure a structured reflection, teams categorized outcomes within the four intermediate outcome areas and examined various dimensions of change. They assessed the specific shifts observed under each outcome and identified the key actors involved, such as government institutions, health practitioners, communities, and CoAs. Additionally, they analyzed whether these changes were expected or unexpected, as well as their positive or negative implications. The nature of each change was also explored, considering whether it influenced policy, practice, behavior, agenda-setting, or collaboration. Furthermore, teams reflected on the scope of the change, determining whether its impact was localized, national, regional, or international. This reflective exercise provided valuable insights into the program’s effectiveness, enabling teams to identify patterns, adapt strategies, and strengthen 2025 annual planning.

A comprehensive review identified 82 distinct outcomes across the nine participating countries. These results were categorized according to the program’s four intermediate outcomes. The following table presents this distribution in greater detail:

Intermediate outcomes	No of Outcomes	Key Countries
1. Strengthened CSOs led by rightsholders	18 (22%)	Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Niger, Honduras
2. General public supports SRH-R	16 (19%)	Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Guatemala, Lebanon
3. Health-service providers improve SRH-R services	22 (26%)	Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Honduras, Jordan
4. Duty-bearers adopt SRH-R laws/policies	27 (33%)	Kenya, Uganda, Honduras, Guatemala, Jordan

This breakdown demonstrates that policy-level changes (Intermediate Outcome 4) represented the largest proportion of achievements, while all four outcome categories showed significant progress across the intervention countries. The distribution reflects both the program’s emphasis on systemic change and the successful implementation of grassroots initiatives.

The analysis reveals a clear grassroots dominance, with 61% of outcomes driven by community-led initiatives such as CBO registrations, peer education, and local advocacy campaigns. This emphasis reflects the program’s focus on rightsholder leadership and context-specific solutions. For example, in Kenya, rights holders directly influenced health facility improvements—like installing signage at Kambajo Dispensary—demonstrating how hyper-local

advocacy can yield tangible results. These efforts thrived where communities had ownership, though their scalability often depended on external support.

While grassroots efforts led the way, policy changes still played a critical role, accounting for 33% of outcomes. Many policy wins—such as Uganda's disability ordinance or Kenya's Kilifi County budget for persons with disabilities—were direct responses to grassroots pressure, showcasing the power of bottom-up advocacy. Notably, policy successes clustered in countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Honduras, where structured collaboration between CSOs and government actors existed. However, bureaucratic delays, conflict and instability in some of the countries (Lebanon and [REDACTED]) as well as political resistance (Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria) have limited impact in some contexts, underscoring the need for sustained advocacy.

A smaller but strategic subset of outcomes (12 in total) leveraged hybrid approaches, blending grassroots mobilization with policy engagement for greater sustainability. For instance, Jordan's National HIV Task Force emerged from civil society advocacy but gained traction through government buy-in. Similarly, Mozambique's TV Surdo documentary amplified disability inclusion both publicly and institutionally. These cases highlight the potential of integrated strategies, where community-driven evidence informs systemic change, creating a feedback loop between local action and policy adoption.

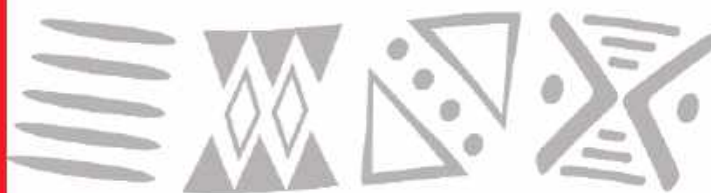
Stakeholder Impact Analysis

Under Outcome One, civil society organizations (CSOs) played a crucial role in leadership development, advocacy, and creating inclusive platforms for marginalized groups. International CSOs contributed through funding (e.g., the Global Fund's support in Uganda) and legal recognition (e.g., MoUs in Gulu District). In Outcome Two, public campaigns and media—both traditional and social—were instrumental in shifting societal attitudes and amplifying marginalized voices. CSOs facilitated content creation and dissemination, such as the TV Surdo documentary in Mozambique, while also driving community outreach efforts.

Outcome Three highlights direct service improvements, primarily driven by health facility management and frontline workers through infrastructure upgrades and training. Policymakers also played a key role in enabling systemic changes, such as the Gulu District Health Officer's authorization of MoUs with Key Population CSOs. For Outcome Four, legislative and policy changes were led by government bodies, the judiciary, and international institutions. CSOs actively advocated for reforms, as seen in [REDACTED] legal advocacy in Honduras and Uganda Network on Law, Ethics, and HIV/AIDS (UGANET's) launch of an online SRH-R directory in Uganda, ensuring sustained impact on policy and service accessibility.

Sustainability and Long-Term Impact Analysis

Many of the outcomes (60%) demonstrated long-term sustainability potential, with the most significant contributions coming from policy and systemic changes (32%). These included legislative wins like Uganda's disability ordinance, institutional reforms such as Jordan's National HIV Task Force, and budget commitments like Kenya's Kilifi County funding for persons with disabilities. Such policy-level changes create enduring frameworks that outlive project cycles, though their full impact depends on consistent implementation and enforcement. Another 20% of outcomes focused on structural improvements, particularly in health service delivery. Examples like Uganda's youth-friendly health centers and Kenya's Kambajo Dispensary signage upgrades represent tangible infrastructure changes that continue benefiting communities for years. A smaller but critical 8% comprised sustainable programs, including Kenya's Women Space for Empowerment CBO and Uganda's Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), which are designed to operate independently beyond initial support.



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Short-term outcomes accounted for 34% of results, split between one-time events (20%) like Kenya's Dandora SRHR camp and Guatemala's Pride Parade, and training initiatives (14%) such as Lebanon's teacher workshops. While valuable for immediate impact, these interventions risk fading without follow-up. Interestingly, 6% of outcomes represented hybrid cases with potential for scaling, like █████ peer education and Kenya's radio dramas, which could transition from awareness-raising to sustained behavior change with proper support.

To enhance sustainability, four key strategies emerge: First, institutionalizing short-term wins, such as making Kenya's Dandora camp a quarterly program. Second, bridging policy and practice by, for example, using Uganda's disability law to train health workers. Third, investing in institutional capacity, like expanding Niger's peer education nationally. Finally, rigorously monitoring hybrid initiatives to assess their long-term effectiveness, such as tracking stigma reduction from Kenya's radio dramas. These approaches would help convert more outcomes into lasting change while maintaining the program's community-driven ethos.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations and Implementation Status

The Mid-Term Review's recommendations catalyzed a multi-level response across We Lead's implementation regions, from global strategy adjustments to locally tailored initiatives. This adaptive approach ensured each recommendation was contextualized while maintaining program coherence.

Community-Led Advocacy and Engagement

The Midterm Evaluation recommended shifting advocacy efforts from government and legislative levels to grassroots activism. In response, Positive Vibes continued the implementation of their integrated community engagement approach placing communities at the forefront of accountability processes therefore shifting public mindsets and mobilizing activists. A notable example is the Seen and Heard pilot in Honduras, where a public exhibition engaged 92 attendees, demonstrating tangible grassroots impact. Additionally, thematic roundtables were held in █████ bringing together local decision-makers, community leaders, and youth and women's groups. These discussions led to the development of local roadmaps, with decision-makers in █████ signing written commitments to improve access to SRH services.

Strengthening Partnerships and Local Ownership

To enhance collaboration among consortium members and sustain efforts beyond We Lead, partners coordinated workshops and training sessions, strengthening regional support structures. This included targeted training for COAs and engagement within the Community of Practice. To reinforce local ownership, We Lead adopted an accompaniment strategy that supports CoA-led programming while fostering collaboration and reducing siloed work.



The We Lead Africa COAs actively contributed to these processes, reinforcing grassroots women and young feminist leaders' influence in global advocacy.

Leveraging ICT for Youth-Led Advocacy

To amplify youth-led movements and sexual and reproductive health rights advocacy, the program expanded its use of ICT. Digital campaigns now integrate insights gathered from We Lead events, enhancing visibility and engagement on key issues. These efforts ensure that advocacy messages reach broader audiences, reinforcing the impact of youth-led movements.

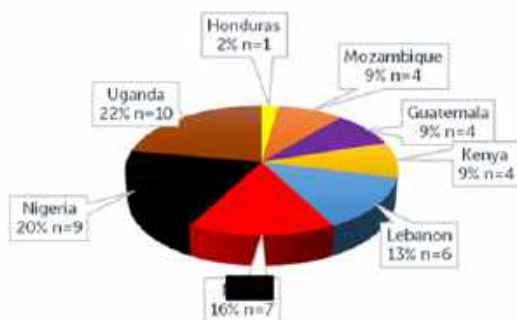
While significant strides have been made in improving accessibility, strengthening local ownership, enhancing safety, and leveraging ICT for advocacy, continued efforts are needed to further dismantle systemic barriers. In 2025, the program will ensure the following are sustained:

- Strengthening advocacy for visa facilitation and travel support for Global South participants.
- Enhancing digital inclusion initiatives to improve virtual engagement.
- Sustaining and expanding alternative convening spaces like #AfricaDisruptCSW.
- Further embedding risk assessment measures in planning processes to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all participants.



E: Safety and Security

2024 was a difficult year for We lead. The programme experienced unprecedented safety and security challenges, incidents, threats and attacks across nine countries. The safety and security team received, investigated, documented and responded to 45 security incidents/threats/attacks on rights holders, Communities of Actions (CoAs), CoAs' staff, Consortium partner organizations, Host organization (HO), and HO's staff. Uganda bore the heaviest toll, with 10 cases, (22%) of the total, as shown in Figure 1 below. Though Jordan did not report any direct security incidents/threats/attacks, it suffered greatly from rapidly shrinking space occasioned by the Cyber Security Act that was enacted on 13 August 2023.



We Lead 2024 Safety and Security Incidents/attacks: Country distribution (We lead 2024)

Out of the 45 security incidents/threats/attacks reported and handled, 41 were direct attacks on rights holders both on and offline, CoAs, and Consortium staff with the rest being general security incidents. This stark reality underscores the immense risks faced by women and girls in the 9 countries. CoA organizations were the most attacked, registering a total of 22 security incidents/threats/attacks, followed by the rights holders at 13 security incidents/threats/attacks while host organizations and consortium partners recording 1 incident each as shown in the figure 2 below.



Below is a highlight of some of the cases and security incidents reported and documented:

In Nairobi, Kenya a visiting CoA staff member was stabbed while on a walk in downtown Nairobi; In Kampala staff members of [REDACTED] were gripped by the uncertainty surrounding decisions by Uganda financial intelligence authority (UFIA), living under constant threat after an arrest of their staff in 2023 and ongoing investigation on [REDACTED] permit was abruptly revoked by the government, effectively shutting them down. In Nigeria, [REDACTED] staff members were forced into hiding for a month to avoid arrest following a crackdown on [REDACTED] organizations. In Beirut, Lebanon, almost a half of our CoAs fled their homes amidst escalating violence MENA that threatened their safety. In Guatemala, relentless social media attacks subjected CoAs to continuous harassment and intimidation.

In addition to direct security incidents that affected the program the overall working conditions across all countries were severely impacted by the escalating security challenges specific to each context: for example, Hurricanes in Honduras increasingly threatened the safety of program rights holders, many of whom reside in flood-prone areas. In Jordan, the government instigated restrictions tightened around the civic space by introducing a cyber security law that threatened freedom of expression. In [REDACTED], the introduction of stricter moral regulations under [REDACTED] rule led to the closure of several NGOs, including some within We Lead's network. In Nigeria, conservative forces amplified their attacks on [REDACTED] advocacy, targeting our consortium partners and CoAs through social media campaigns^{[1][2][3]}. Uganda saw the intensification of the Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA) implementation, which created unease among strategic partners and technical leads who had to travel. In Mozambique, deadly protests erupted following contested presidential election results forcing staff to work from home, uncertain of when they would be able to return to normal. These conditions added significant pressure, but our commitment to advancing the We Lead program persists despite the heightened risks.

The program responded to the attacks and safety incidents, initiating rapid and thorough investigations to assess the full scope and impact of the situation. The investigations were spearheaded by our dedicated country teams, alongside the global technical lead for safety and security, ensuring a comprehensive and strategic approach. Based on the findings, the programme provided detailed guidance for immediate steps to mitigate the impact and prevent future incidents. These recommendations were designed to both address the immediate aftermath of the attacks and strengthen their security measures, while minimizing any further disruption to the organization's operations. This proactive and tailored response exemplifies our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the integrity and resilience of our partners, ensuring they can continue their vital work without compromise.

[1] [REDACTED]
[2] [REDACTED]
[3] [REDACTED]



Trainers (ToT) workshop/team building session for country safety and security focal points (CSSFPs) in Mombasa, Kenya, from November 10-15, 2024 (We lead 2024)

The safety and security team facilitated 18 in-country training courses (2 per country) focused on physical security, documentation of SRH-R violations, Wellbeing and Wellness training. The training courses were a blend of virtual and in-person sessions, led by both our internal experts and external consultants, with technical oversight from the Safety and security officer. A Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop was also done with the safety and Security focal points from all countries except Lebanon and Jordan. This initiative aimed to empower Country safety and Security Focal Points (CSSFPs) with the skills to train CoAs and rights holders in their countries.

Despite safety and security incidents/threats/attacks/challenges, our unwavering focus on safety, security resilience, and empowerment has led to success stories. CoAs have taken proactive steps to ensure the safety and security of their teams and rights holders, including training staff and having designated Safety and Security Focal Points. In Lebanon, the [REDACTED] successfully operated a shelter, providing vital protection, food distribution, and psychosocial support during the ongoing crisis. Additionally, CoAs organizations / members? like [REDACTED] Uganda secured new office spaces, enhancing operational security and providing a stable foundation for future success. A cultural shift within our CoAs has empowered communities to openly discuss safety concerns, fostering a strong, supportive environment where everyone works together to ensure collective well-being.

In 2024, the implementation of the We Lead program taught us valuable safety and security lessons, emphasizing the integration of well-being activities into safety strategies. This approach not only enhanced security but also fostered a holistic care model for both staff and beneficiaries, promoting a balanced safety culture. The appointment of dedicated safety and security focal points within CoA organizations facilitated swift coordination, real-time updates, and prompt incident response. Furthermore, ongoing collaboration through regular meetings and feedback loops boosted security capacity across implementing countries, enabling the sharing of best practices and improving the management of security challenges.



Group photo during Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop/team building session for country safety and security focal points (CSSFPs) in Mombasa, Kenya, from November 10-15, 2024 (We lead 2024)

F: Networking and collaboration (strategic partnering with local partners and local ownership)

The program operates within a dynamic multi-stakeholder ecosystem, collaborating with diverse actors, including civil society organizations (CSOs), grassroots movements, advocacy groups, and government entities. This collaboration is crucial to ensuring that SRHR advocacy efforts align with broader human rights and protection initiatives. It also takes different approaches in different regions based on the context and priorities within the regions and countries. In MENA for instance the regional approach to collaboration involved coordination with embassies in Jordan and Lebanon to foster strategic partnerships, link and learn and update each other on programme progress. Other forms of collaboration in 2024 included:

Engagement with Government Entities

The programme had active engagement with government institutions to strengthen collaboration and align program activities with national priorities. Different countries engaged different stakeholders as outlined in the following section. In MENA Meetings were held with representatives from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) in Jordan, where discussions focused on integrating the project's activities with Jordan's National Strategy for Reproductive and Sexual Health. By emphasizing alignment with national frameworks, Hivos aims to enhance government support and advance SRH-R goals.

In Kenya the programme fostered strong collaboration between CoA members, government bodies, and other stakeholders to amplify SRHR advocacy. Through a participatory process involving the Ministry of Health, county departments, and rights holders, the project co-created tailored advocacy messages for four RH groups, enhancing

contextual relevance and sustainability. Kenya also participated in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process that saw the collaboration with over 20 national stakeholders, including [REDACTED], and was further bolstered by joint efforts with She Leads and Right here Right Now programmes. This unified front, supported by the Dutch and Danish MoFAs, strengthened Kenya's SRH-R position during peer review.

In Uganda, the CoA strategically engaged government ministries, Members of parliament (MPs), and national bodies like the Uganda AIDS Commission and Parliamentary Youth Forum, amplifying SRHR concerns in policy spaces. Notably, HRAPF and SIPD, through sensitization meetings with Parliamentarians, laid groundwork for a future intersex rights bill by fostering informed political support. Partnerships with district leadership and community officials improved local oversight, enabled rights holders' access to economic opportunities like small loans and Parish Development Model funds, and encouraged their participation in accountability fora.

In Nigeria, the CoA collaborated with several government bodies, such as the representatives of the Minister of Health, Minister of Women's Affairs, in the various states where they operate. [REDACTED] collaborated with National Youth Service Corps members with the aim of raising the visibility of the situation of intersex people and helping to fight against the inequalities suffered by this group. Deaf Women Initiative collaborated with the Disability Commission to enhance inclusive SRH-R access for deaf women, including launching a research report and fact sheet with commitments from the commission. [REDACTED] worked with Police Command, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, and the National Human Rights Commission, through awareness-raising visits to include the needs of [REDACTED] people in health policies.

In [REDACTED] the CoA collaborated with the technical services of government entities, in particular the regional directorate of health and social affairs, (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs), and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. These collaborations were crucial in facilitating the smooth implementation of the project, particularly in view of the country's political context since 2023. These collaborations facilitated dialogue with regional authorities and customary and traditional leaders, which in turn facilitated interactions with the communities in which the groups of right-holders evolved.

Collaboration with Non-Profit Stakeholders

The programme teams participated in a Linking and Learning Conference where the Jordanian and Lebanese COAFs, COAs, and other SRHR stakeholders exchanged knowledge, information and built networks, and strengthened collaboration. They also held meetings with like-minded organizations such as Oxfam, exploring potential joint advocacy efforts and collaborative events under the POVs framework in Jordan to maximize the impact of SRHR initiatives.

Coordination with Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies

The Jordanian CoAs maintain close coordination with various non-governmental institutions including; Information and Research Center – King Hussein Foundation (IRCKHF) - Steering Committee. The IRCKHF initiated the formation of the Steering Committee under the We Lead Program, identifying and selecting key stakeholders such as: Higher Population Council, Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Health Care Institutions Accreditation Council, Institute for Family Health, National Center for Human Rights, Nurses and Midwives Union, Jordanian National Commission for Women, National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), Office of the Chief Justice, and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

This diverse stakeholder engagement strengthens advocacy efforts, facilitates policy collaboration, and leverages research findings to raise awareness and mobilize support for SRHR initiatives.

Additionally, the [REDACTED] established the National Task Force under the We Lead Program, to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for piloting the integration of HIV services into SRHR services within public health facilities. The task force comprises representatives from: Ministry of Health (MOH), Supreme Judge Department, Ministry of [REDACTED] and Religious Affairs, Various civil society organizations and the National Woman's Health Care Center (NWHCC). This initiative aims to ensure a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to SRHR service delivery, integrating HIV-related services into public healthcare frameworks.

On the other hand, National and local partnerships strengthened technical and movement building capacity. For instance, Infectious Disease Institute and The AIDS Support Organization supported economic empowerment camps, while programs like She Leads and Girls Not Brides collaborations led to the formation of a Girls and Young Women with Disabilities Environmental Defenders Network.

[REDACTED] in partnership with the MTN Foundation, supported the Girls in ICT training program for urban refugees in Kampala, Uganda with 30 girls set to graduate in March 2025. This initiative has strengthened and expanded collaboration across We Lead program districts. Further, [REDACTED] in worked with Tororo's cultural institution and local radio stations to promote disability-inclusive messaging. In Kamuli, [REDACTED] popularized a new ordinance for persons with disabilities. In Gulu, Amuru, and Terego, partnerships resulted in tangible improvements such as health facility infrastructure while uniting community voices for HIV/SRHR advocacy.

One of the greatest achievements of this collaboration was the organization of the "WE TALK" forum to mark the 16 days of activism against violence against women and girls. This forum, which was a first of its kind, gave a voice to women and girl survivors of GBV, so that they themselves could talk about their experiences and the consequences of this violence on their lives, in the presence of religious and customary leaders, civil society organizations, and duty bearers (Gendarmerie and national police). The forum was organized in close collaboration with the Women's Division of the Ministry of Health and was well received by public opinion.

The organizations have also collaborated with non-governmental bodies such as the African Network of Adolescents and Young Persons Development (ANAYD) and the Association of Positive Youths in Nigeria (APYIN) as well as UNFPA in the aim to strengthen their efforts to address Right holders' group's needs. They have initiated protection networks enabling them to identify the needs of [REDACTED] population and take charge of the cases of people whose safety is at risk, by evacuating them to other states.

In Mozambique our HO AMODEFA, coordinated a consortium of 14 organizations (including [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]) worked across six provinces: Maputo, Inhambane, Zambézia, Manica, Nampula, and Maputo City to address systemic issues hindering effective access to SRHR services. Key areas of collaboration included: Strengthening ties with government institutions such as the Ministries of Health, Gender, and Justice, and local leaders to advance inclusive SRHR services; Partnerships with local hospitals and SAAJs to expand service provision. The COA also Engaged with media (e.g., Radio Mozambique, TV channels, and local press) for public awareness.

Joint advocacy with other civil society actors helped influence national policy discussions and strengthened the collective voice for marginalized groups, including [REDACTED] people with disabilities, and displaced women.

The CoA in Guatemala established strategic alliances at local, departmental, and national levels with both governmental and non-governmental entities, particularly those focused on promoting (SRHR). These collaborations were instrumental in advancing advocacy efforts, ensuring the rights of Rights Holders (TdD), and amplifying the program's impact. Key government entities with whom the programme collaborated include; Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS): to improve SRH-R services and policies, Executive Secretariat for Presidential Coordination: who engaged in dialogues to integrate SRHR into national development agendas, Health Area Directorate (DAS): who trained healthcare providers in inclusive and differentiated care for TdD in regions like Quetzaltenango and Huehuetenango and System of Development Councils of Guatemala (SISCODE): who Participated in regional dialogue tables to advocate for civil society inclusion in policy-making.

Further collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society was pursued with different partners including Cultural Center of Spain to host educational and advocacy events, Center for Continuing Education of the Meritorious Committee for the Blind and Deaf of Guatemala who Developed accessible SRHR materials for women with disabilities, Secretariat Against Sexual Violence, Exploitation, and Human Trafficking (SVET): Coordinated inter-institutional efforts to protect vulnerable groups and the Digital Defenders Partnership to Enhance digital security for CoA organizations facing online threats.

The CoA also engaged with Protection Networks and Advocacy Groups such as Inter-institutional Networks (e.g., PADF, REDMMUTRANS). Strengthened support for trans women and other marginalized groups through joint initiatives and Women's and Feminist Organizations (e.g., Political Alliance Women's Sector, RED NOVI): Collaborated on campaigns, public actions, and policy advocacy. This resulted the promotion of legislative initiatives, such as the Public Policy Proposal for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents and training health workers (e.g., 166 providers in intercultural SRH-R services) and monitoring of public health systems (e.g., Ma'Box tool). It also contributed to

public actions on International Women's Day, PRIDE, and other key dates amplified TdD voices and demands and the establishment of protocols and response networks for security incidents targeting [REDACTED] communities and women with disabilities. These collaborations underscore the CoA's commitment to sustainable, intersectional SRH-R progress, rooted in local leadership and collective action.

In Honduras the Programme strengthened its impact through strategic collaborations with various stakeholders, including government entities, civil society organizations, national and international partners, media, and community leaders. Below is an overview of key collaborations and their contributions: Secretariat of the Presidency, Ciudad Mujer - National: Collaborated on initiatives to promote women's rights and SRH-R, SEDESOL, DIGEDEPTI, DINAF: Engaged in dialogues to integrate SRH-R into social development programs, SESAL (Health Secretariat): Worked on the [REDACTED] Care Protocol and improved health services for marginalized groups. The public Ministry, National Migration Institute: Addressed migration-related SRHR challenges and protection for migrant women, while the Local Governments (e.g., M.D.C. Mayor's Office): Partnered on community-based advocacy and policy implementation.

Collaboration with Civil Society Organizations included DIMUF, CATRACHAS, CIPRODEH: Joint advocacy for legal reforms and human rights protection, Doctors Without Borders, Plan International, Oxfam who Supported health fairs, training, and awareness campaigns and Visitación Padilla, Lutheran World Federation: Collaborated on feminist movements and grassroots activism.

National and Academic Institutions such as UNAH, UNITEC, CEUTEC: Conducted research, workshops, and educational programs on SRHR. Community Leaders and Ethics Committees: Ensured local ownership and cultural relevance of interventions while Media Partners such as Contra Corriente, Radio Progreso, HCH helped amplify SRH-R messaging through podcasts, articles, and social media and Criterio.HN, ERIC-SJ Provided platforms for rights holders to share their stories.

Regional and International Networks such as Central American Umbrella, Alharaca (El Salvador): Shared best practices and regional advocacy strategies while IPPF, REDLACTR, RIADIS: Strengthened cross-border initiatives for migrant women and disability-inclusive SRHR. These collaborations resulted in key advocacy outcomes including: the reform of the Disability Law to include SRHR provisions, trained health providers, justice operators, and educators on inclusive SRHR services, leveraged media partnerships to reach over 45,000 people with podcasts and fairs and established alliances with security and justice sectors to safeguard rights holders. Furthermore, these partnerships ensured local ownership, scalability, and sustainability of the program's interventions, aligning with the We Lead goal of empowering young women and marginalized groups in Honduras.



G: Programming Shifts

The experiences of 2023 related to difficulties in operating context coupled with recommendations arising from the MTR necessitated some programmatic shifts in 2024. Some shifts were more general and in response to prevailing context while others were more specific to the outcome areas of the programme. Under pathway two which is about increasing public support to SRHR policies and laws, the programme was facing challenges related to hostilities towards [REDACTED] RH) especially in Lebanon, Honduras and Uganda.

A shift that worked well was a more nuanced approach to lobby and advocacy and communications to avoid public backlash. This approach worked with positive results being posted in Honduras and Nigeria where we implemented a communications campaign in partnership with MC Saatchi targeting voices that were otherwise considered anti-women and [REDACTED] rights.

In Nigeria, "#the let's make halla" <https://hivos.org/story/lets-make-halla-against-domestic-violence-in-nigeria/> campaign was received very positively with men being at the forefront of challenging traditional attitudes and practices that promoted Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Another strategy proposed during the annual planning was joining other social networks as a way of creating solidarity and community to increase support and ideas around promoting SRH-R. The program utilized global and regional advocacy spaces to do this. Working closely with the feminist networks, the program positioned rights holders in these spaces highlighting SRH-R challenges and calling for more coordinated and intersectional approaches. One such forum was the CSW 68 where rights holders reported meaningful engagement with other feminist networks as captured in the following quotes: *"I enjoyed meeting others from the CoA and taking part in panel discussions with feminists' networks such as FEMNET"*

Another right holder remarked, *"Getting to speak about Gaza and the women's struggle, participating in the rally for Gaza, being approached by a German organization interested in funding SRH-R in the MENA region, and planning an opportunity of collaboration between Jordan CoA and Lebanon were great experiences. One person approached me after the panel for partnerships or funding conversations"*

Another forum in which rights holders appreciated connecting was the AWID forum where We joined other feminists on a global stage to address issues that have been blocking progress on SRHR. During the AWID forum, We Lead in partnership with the Institute for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA) led a discussion on countering the anti-rights movement at the forum. As a result of this discussion, We Lead with the leadership of FEMNET is producing an SRH-R charter specifically for African feminists that will be used to strengthen SRH-R advocacy in Africa.

The 2024 annual plan had also proposed a more coordinated and streamlined partnership between We Lead and other rapid response funds in countries with difficult contexts. In 2024, our safety and security work became more structured with training and capacity strengthening taking center stage and with a better and closer relationship with the Bessi Ferrera Fund (BFF) being forged through the Digital Defenders Partnership (DDP). This was instrumental in supporting We Lead countries that were experiencing security challenges including Honduras, [REDACTED] and Nigeria. Additionally, the programme sought partnerships with two organizations that are specialized in playing the role of fiscal host in contexts that are insecure or difficult to move funds. One of these partners supported us in rolling out a grant to an [REDACTED] that we were unable to support in 2023 due to security concerns. This partnership provided useful lessons in terms of how unconventional partnerships and having a flexible programming approach can make things possible in difficult contexts.

Strengthening collaboration with consortium partners was another recommendation of the MTR. A work plan was developed which also tasked individual consortium partners with the responsibility of implementing this recommendation. Restless Development (RD) led some of the coordination working closely with PV, Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres (FCAM), Hivos, and Marsa across all regions. RD's activities were aligned with regional Capacity Strengthening Plans, ensuring that CoAs benefited from a comprehensive program experience. Moving away from siloed efforts, methodologies were integrated to enhance partner-led training, fostering a unified and impactful approach for all participants.

In alignment with the MTR's recommendation to extend our reach to the most marginalized rights holders, partners such as RD broadened their activities beyond urban centers. A notable example is the leadership lab in Honduras, which was held in a rural community on the Caribbean Coast, engaging populations previously unconnected to the CoA. Similarly, the Uganda leadership training included rights holders from rural areas, providing direct, on-the-ground involvement. Furthermore, methodologies have been refined through a feminist and inclusive approach, updating existing frameworks to better reflect these principles, as emphasized in the MTR.

The programme has been intentional in elevating and supporting young women in leadership roles, both within the CoA and Steering Committee across all regions. By inviting rights holders to co-facilitate sessions and participate in various initiatives, their leadership journeys have been celebrated. Exemplary leaders such as [REDACTED], who served as experts during the Intergenerational Leadership Session, and [REDACTED], who led a session at the Youth Power Summit and was recognized as a Youth Power Champion, stand as testaments to this commitment. Furthermore, the Community of Action Facilitator (COAF) from Honduras [REDACTED] was honored as a Values Champion within Restless Development and spotlighted as a Youth Power "shero" in the Youth Collective newsletter. These efforts demonstrate the programme's unwavering dedication to empowering young women and amplifying their leadership both within the program and in the broader community.

H: Cross cutting themes

Since inception, We Lead has strived to implement an intersectional approach across all the activities at a country level, regionally and globally. In line with this vision, the programme has tackled different cross cutting themes based on the strengths and approaches employed by the partners from the consortium to the community of action level. These approaches consist of different programme interventions as well as networks and convenings that the programme has engaged with.

A key approach that has facilitated the engagement on cross cutting issues is the accompaniment that has been adopted at various levels. In the context of global advocacy spaces, We Lead has rolled out the accompaniment plan that ensures that Rights Holders (RH) are well supported and accompanied to engage in different platforms and with different themes to advance SRH-R in global advocacy platforms. In the context of programme activities PV has invested in accompaniment and contextualization of methodologies to ensure country-based realities are well considered in We Lead ways of working. Other methodologies in which cross cutting issues have been addressed are the implementation of local ownership and addressing gendered power dynamics. Understanding and engaging on gendered power dynamics is at the heart of the We Lead programme.

Through the leadership of PV, the Looking in Looking Out (LILO) methodologies, particularly LILO Women, allow participants, partner organizations and PV to collectively examine these power dynamics starting from the personal. PV has also supported the process of exploration of the use of art for advocacy with diverse groups of women which extends this thinking and practice. Accompaniment, and continual critical reflection opens space for us to explore local ownership with partner organizations to allow for more meaningful and equal partnerships. Through such innovations the programme has tackled gender inequality by breaking down structural barriers limiting young women's autonomy, including GBV, unequal access to SRHR, and economic exclusion. Special attention has been given to [REDACTED] youth, young women with disabilities, and those living with HIV or displaced.

Other cross cutting themes have also been explored with other partners including:

Conflict sensitivity: With the ever-changing operating context and with the constricting civic space in all the countries, conflict sensitivity was especially critical this reporting period and more so in Lebanon [REDACTED] and Kenya where there was a high level of insecurity and political violence. Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda also experienced some level of political instability occasioned by contested elections results and enactment of restrictive laws. Our partners in these countries had spearhead interventions that prioritized community dialogue, contributed to promotion of peace and stability rather than exacerbate tensions.

They also embraced a flexible approach to activity implementation, having community engagement on the ongoing tensions and providing support to those in difficult situations especially in Lebanon and Jordan. Partners employed strategies that foster inclusion and dialogue among diverse communities. In [REDACTED] where political instability and insurgency have persisted since 2023, the programme emphasized community resilience and promoted peaceful coexistence. The Nigerien CoA was supported through training together

with other countries such as Kenya to create a space to dialogue and share experiences as well as offer solidarity to those impacted by the conflict and instability.

In Uganda, We Lead partners provided local communities with the skills on safety and security guidelines needed to ensure development initiatives are conflict sensitive. By integrating conflict sensitivity through the safety and security guidelines and safety leads in each country an environment where peace and development can co-exist is created contributing to long-term stability and prosperity in these countries.

Livelihood support and entrepreneurship:

The mid-term review informed several programmatic adjustments in 2024. Among the key recommendations made by the midterm review was the incorporation of livelihood support to We lead RHs in the programme. In line with this recommendation, RD incorporated Entrepreneurship Exchange Series within their training activities with youth collective members which explored how young entrepreneurs are driving sustainable enterprises amidst environmental challenges. This process also highlighted innovative solutions in renewable energy, waste management, and agriculture, emphasizing the role of collaboration and supportive policies in fostering economic growth and resilience within local communities. These series focused on how young entrepreneurs are shaping the future of startups, education, evolving investment models, and fostering female leadership in the tech industry. These learning spaces were important in opening these discussions in the CoA as a way of entrenching the livelihood component.



Youth Leadership: Youth Power

is central to We Lead. With a consortium partner whose vision and mission are to ensure meaningful youth engagement, the programme continued to make great strides in promoting youth leadership in 2024. With the leadership of RD, the programme supported the process of onboarding five exceptional Youth Power Champions from across Africa, Asia, MENA, LATAM, and Europe, who will serve as advocates and champions for young people demonstrating Youth Power. These dynamic leaders will utilize the Youth Collective platform to celebrate and amplify the contributions of youth worldwide. Among them is [REDACTED], a member of the We Lead Steering Committee and a representative from the Honduras CoA. With her extensive experience in the digital realm and deep expertise in empowering youth in Honduras, [REDACTED] is committed to equipping young people with the knowledge and resources to make informed, healthy decisions about their sexuality.

Environmental and climate justice:

The impact of climate change continues to be felt in all We Lead countries and, in some instances, We Lead right holders have been negatively impacted. In 2024, there was severe flooding in some of the countries including Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda and [REDACTED] where young women suffered displacement and lack of access to SRHR services because of this displacement. We Lead CoAs had to coordinate with the Host organizations to find ways of supporting rights holders who were impacted by the floods. Programme activities also had to be adjusted in some cases where movement became difficult, and communities became inaccessible. In Guatemala and Honduras young women organizations and collectives working on issues of migration and forced displacement were forced to seek ways to promote the need to define the link between climate impact, the accessibility of resources, and the way in which states provide health services and products. These experiences have strengthened the Programmes resolve to join with other movements especially the environmental justice movements to improve knowledge and skills on how to address such challenges.

Civil and political rights:

As more and more countries continued to experience civil unrest in 2024, it became clearer that there can be no access to sexual and reproductive rights for people who are not recognized by the system. [REDACTED] organizations have been at the center of promoting civil and political rights along with the sexual and reproductive rights. This linkage makes it critically important to continue sharpening our intersectional approach as we seek more innovative ways to counter the growing anti gender and anti-rights movement. This fact was also acknowledged in the 2025 annual plan and will continue to inform our networking and efforts to create linkages with other social movements.

I: Sustainability

Sustainability remains a critical theme in We Lead. In 2024, conversations around sustainability began to deepen as we continue to prepare for post 2025. Different partners have been implementing different ideas towards sustainability which will continue to be pursued in 2025. In the MENA region, our consortium partner Marsa spearheaded the sustainability initiatives by launching a new educational platform that improves access to inclusive and evidence-based sexual and reproductive health information contextualized to the region. This website allows individuals from across the region to access the information for free and enjoy an engaging visual experience. The website will remain accessible even after the end of the program and as such is sustainably improving access to contextualized and inclusive SRHR knowledge. Marsa's Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on sexual health education equipped RHs with necessary skills to become effective peer educators on SRH-R. The certification provided jointly by Marsa and the University of Saint Joseph(USJ) is an asset as it improves employment opportunities of the RHs in the field of peer education and SRH-R.

Capacity strengthening

Marsa also led in the capacity strengthening of SR health providers, including frontline healthcare workers from across the countries, in Lebanon and Jordan. This initiative contributes to a more robust and inclusive healthcare system that will continue to operate beyond the programme period. In fact, healthcare providers who have participated in previous editions of Marsa's workshop reported utilizing the information they gained from the workshop when responding to the internal displacement crisis. Additionally, Marsa has strived to strengthen the role of the CoA organizations and fostering a supportive environment for them to grow and increase their capacity, especially in financial reporting and documentation. This has contributed to improved ability of the CoAs to receive more funding from other funders and sustain their work.

This has particularly complimented work done by other consortium partners towards sustained funding to CoAs. For example, in Guatemala and Honduras FCAM continues to support We Lead CoAs in their funding portfolio by ensuring they also receive general support grants to strengthen the organizations and overall work, beyond the project. FCAM also provides organizations with the knowledge, relations and skills to access other funding sources, diversify their funding base, and increase their internal capacities for the development, implementation and monitoring of their own plans and strategies. Additionally, the CoAs in Uganda benefited from the Pathways to Sustainability workshop offered by PV. These initiatives have been complemented with providing skills to the CoAs and RHs to enable the shifting of decision-making power to communities and grassroots organizations, ensuring they define funding priorities based on their own needs as well as supporting locally driven solutions that continue beyond the program's funding cycle.

The consortium partners have been supporting CoAs in developing skills for proposal writing and fundraising. They have also supported them to understand reporting and compliance through training them on narrative and financial reporting to meet donor requirements and effectively document progress. Additionally, they have been supported to undertake donor mapping and engagement and building relationships for long-term funding to ensure financial sustainability.

RD finalized the development of the Youth Power Toolkit, a vital resource designed to support young leaders and youth-led organizations in understanding power dynamics, inclusive leadership, and the process of claiming and utilizing their own power to lead, while also facilitating the transfer of power to communities. This comprehensive toolkit will equip CoAs with the knowledge and tools required to independently train and incorporate inclusive, youth-led methodologies into their initiatives. The toolkit will be available in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Arabic to ensure broad accessibility.

Besides training and developing resource material, RD has continued to support efforts towards securing funding for the Youth Collective ensuring that CoA organizations, as members of the collective, can continue to thrive and benefit from the Youth Collective platform well beyond the We Lead programme. All CoA organizations have been invited to remain part of the Youth Collective, where they will continue to receive ongoing support and access to valuable opportunities through this platform. Restless Development has also played an integral role as a member of the We Lead Capacity Strengthening Working Group, contributing to the development of a comprehensive plan designed to address the sustainability needs of CoAs across all countries. This plan has been crafted through a collaborative, regional approach, ensuring that the necessary resources are mobilized to support the continued success of CoA initiatives beyond the programme period.

Good Practices

During 2024, focus has been given to augmenting the skills of in-country facilitators and strengthening organizations for sustainability. This has been done through interventions such as the linking and learning meeting in Honduras in January which brought together existing facilitators to share their experiences of roll-out and then in the supervised LILO Women workshops in Guatemala and Honduras where these existing facilitators supported emerging facilitators. PV has worked to support the transfer of methodologies including in translation, localization and training opportunities so that the CoAs can use these methodologies in future implementation beyond the programme.

In MENA, Marsa continued to support the programme through sub granting the informal organizations in Lebanon. This involvement in subgranting has enhanced the working relationship between Marsa and the CoA, bringing them closer, improving communication and building more trust. This working relationship has been mutually beneficial as it has also strengthened Marsa's capacity to support smaller collectives through resource mobilization and financial training. Marsa reports that they have been making efforts to always be more inclusive as demonstrated in the way they prioritized accessibility during the relocation of their center.

In keeping with its vision of supporting youth leadership, RD led a co-facilitation process with rights holders. During a recent leadership bootcamp, rights holders were invited to co-facilitate sessions on topics they are passionate about, providing a platform for them to share their expertise and knowledge. This approach was mirrored during the Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) training in Honduras, where rights holders played a pivotal role as co-facilitators, demonstrating the practical application of the skills and knowledge they gained throughout the program. This strategy not only strengthens their individual capacities but also enhances their ability to lead and influence movements that advocate for inclusive policies, practices, and laws. It ensures that, by 2025, these resilient young women will be at the forefront of organizations and movements, effectively securing public support and engaging duty-bearers and health-service providers to respect and protect their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRH-R).

RD also organized and led a Youth Power Summit where young women—particularly those with disabilities, living with HIV, affected by displacement, or identifying as [REDACTED] participated alongside the Summit of the Future in New York in September 2024. This event brought together diverse youth and partner organizations, creating a platform for these young women to lead sessions, share insights, and advocate for their rights. By facilitating connections with key stakeholders such as activists, organizations, and donors, we fostered a space for impactful dialogue that advances the protection of their sexual and reproductive health rights (SRH-R) and encourages duty-bearers.

Lessons Learned

As anticipated at the beginning of the programme, adaptability has remained an important approach to We lead as it has facilitated flexibility in situations where context has demanded it. This was particularly important in 2024 where many changes were experienced in several countries necessitating more flexibility. Among the key activities where flexibility was required was the organization of the LILO Voice workshop for the Niger CoA. This workshop was moved to Kenya and implemented in collaboration with Restless Development to include the youth leadership element. A key lesson learnt was the importance of ensuring that CoAs are involved in the decision making, planning, preparation and design of workshops. Although not an entirely new lesson, implementing this approach turned out to be a key accelerator, as rights holders took ownership to ensure the success of the event.

PV has led the process of exploring art as an entry point to conversations in the programme. This has been a useful learning journey for PV, the CoAs and the entire consortium. It has created an opportunity to explore deeper the possible longer-term changes that may result from these experiences both in relation to participants and the artworks they created.

In terms of leadership development RD has been consistent in developing the leadership skills of CoA facilitators. At the beginning of 2024, they brought all the COAFs together in Mozambique to discuss and explore their leadership journeys. This meeting was an important moment to reflect and understand the unique needs of COAFs in their role and their leadership journey. It also allowed them to discuss among themselves how their contexts have evolved and analyze their similarities and differences. It was also an important opportunity for RD to gather information on the CoAF's leadership journey, which was put together in this [COAF experiences](#) video documenting their personal and professional journey within this project. These in-person team meetings for the CoAFs proved a valuable space to continue the conversation on leadership skills which has also fostered team development and contributed to overall programme success.

Related to this was what RD refers to responsive capacity-building. Recognizing and addressing the specific needs of CoAs leads to greater effectiveness. For example, the Youth-led Accountability Training was instrumental in establishing a community of practice for social accountability monitoring in Kenya. Building on this, future capacity-building efforts will take a responsive, customized approach to provide CoAs with the most relevant and efficient support.

Another key lesson learnt is the significance of creating platforms that enable young people to engage with global initiatives, enhancing their skills and visibility. This is what inspired the launch of Youth Power Champions initiative which allows young people worldwide to join RD's communication team and share stories from their communities. A notable example is ██████████, a COA member from Honduras, who was selected as one of five Youth Power Champions. ██████████ has already showcased the impactful work of Central America's CoAs through We Lead. This experience has reinforced the value of empowering youth to tell their own stories, fostering greater connection and impact.

RD undertook collaborative planning and delivery training between Community of Action Organizations (COAs), Host Organizations (HOs), and other partners. This approach contributed to better time management, reduced burnout, and greater efficiency. By entrusting HOs with logistical coordination and in-country payments, activity delivery has accelerated, implementation timelines improved, and costs were reduced by avoiding delays from international transactions. This approach underscores the importance of shared accountability and highlights the value of leveraging local expertise during project execution.

It is necessary to include rights holders in the feedback process and the development of methodologies. It has been an enriching experience to have young people who feel called upon to propose spaces for dialogue, new topics to address, and feedback on previous processes to generate and share knowledge that would otherwise remain invisible.



The monitoring of security incidents together with the country teams and the linkage with FCAM's and Hivos allied organizations has served to contain risky situations and/or provide psychosocial support to the affected members of organizations and collectives.

There has been increased interest in participating in international advocacy actions occasioned by the vibrant discussions held in spaces that have been created within the programme for the participants to share their experiences. A key lesson emanating from this is the need for proper planning and coordination of those sessions. Notably, the operating context continues to be constrained with more hostility being directed towards human rights activists and feminists. The rise of conservative opposition to SRHR, gender equality, and [REDACTED] inclusion is real and requires strong counter-narratives and coalition-building strategies. As such, we have learnt that legal and political restrictions require proactive, adaptive advocacy strategies to ensure that rights holders and advocates remain not only engaged but also protected from emerging threats to be able to work effectively despite hostile environments.

Additionally, we have learnt that direct policy engagement with governments is more effective when framed within broader development goals (e.g., economic growth, healthcare access, youth empowerment) rather than solely as SRHR advocacy. Related to this is the strategy around engaging male allies, religious leaders, and traditional gatekeepers which has proved effective in shifting cultural attitudes and reducing resistance to SRHR advocacy. Successful policy influence is built through multi-sectoral collaboration—involving CSOs, government agencies, media, healthcare providers, the media and community leaders.



J: Budget management

Below is an overview of the budget implementation in 2024. A more detailed Consolidated Year 4 Financial Progress Report will be submitted as an annex.



We Lead - Financial Report by Year- 2024 (Year 4)				
	Revenue/ Budget	Actual Expenditures	Variance / Actual Rollover to Year 5	Burn Rate
Revenue	€	€	€	%
Grant Received	€ 10 673 201			
Interest Earned/Accrued				
Total Revenue	€ 10 673 201			
Expenditure				
I. Direct staff costs				
A. Staff costs	€ 1 019 352	€ 1 035 079	€ (15 727)	102%
B. Local staff costs	€ 619 214	€ 600 663	€ 18 551	97%
C. Consultants and advisers	€ 32 716	€ 16 773	€ 15 943	51%
Subtotal I	€ 1 671 282	€ 1 652 515	€ 18 767	99%
II. Other direct programme costs				
A. Activity costs	€ 857 060	€ 860 912	€ (3 852)	100%
B. Costs of consortium partners and local NGOs	€ 6 339 091	€ 6 314 878	€ 24 213	100%
C. Activity-related travel costs	€ 328 456	€ 343 142	€ (14 686)	104%
D. Project office costs (if applicable)	€ 37 781	€ 25 110	€ 12 671	66%
E. Equipment and investments	€ 12 970	€ 6 475	€ 6 495	50%
F. Monitoring, evaluation and auditing	€ 107 587	€ 93 396	€ 14 190	87%
Subtotal II	€ 7 682 945	€ 7 643 914	€ 39 030	99%
Total of I and II	€ 9 354 227	€ 9 296 430	€ 57 797	99%
III. Overheads / indirect costs				
A. Costs of support staff	€ -		€ -	
B. Not directly allocable administrative costs	€ -		€ -	
C. Other non-allocable costs	€ 1 318 974	€ 1 315 804	€ 3 170	100%
Contingencies (max. 5 %)	€ -	€ -	€ -	
TOTAL	€ 10 673 201	€ 10 612 234	€ 60 967	99%

ANNEXES: The annexes have been submitted as separate documents.

Annex 1: Risk Assessment

Annex 2: Planned Activities and Results to date

Annex 3: Basket indicators and results

Annex 4: Financial report