



Uwezo Uganda Annual Plan – 2025:

Renewed Commitment to Promote Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education for All

[Approved by Uwezo Uganda Board on 17th December 2024]



UWEZO UGANDA

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Abbreviations

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
ALIVE	Action for Life Skills and Values in East Africa
BAICE	British Association for International Comparative Education
CLA	Citizen-led Assessment
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ECE	Early children education
ELANA	Early Learning and Numeracy Assessment
ESG	Social and Government
GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
PAL	People's Action for Learning
RELI	Regional Education Learning Initiative
ToC	Theory of change
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board

Introduction: Our Renewed Commitment to Promote Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education for All

The 2025 plan is anchored on our new 4-year Uwezo Uganda 2025-2028 strategy: Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education for All. The strategy is built around three strategic pillars of assessment, research and engagement, and two cross-cutting strands of monitoring, evaluation & learning and institutional development. The annual plan is a culmination of a consultative process by Uwezo staff that climaxed with a week-long staff retreat and Technical Advisory Committee and Board Meeting between November 12th – 15th. The plan is a huge opportunity for us to kickstart the implementation of our strategy, and get all staff and partners subscribe and contribute to our vision of a society in which all children are learning and realising their full potential. The plan highlights key achievements registered and lessons learned from the previous year to shape a renewed journey in 2025 that advances inclusive and equitable quality Education. We have also thought through the anticipated risks and highlighted mitigation measures to respond to them.

Our ways of working, including the execution of the 2025 plan will also be shaped by our theory of change (ToC) and guiding principles rearticulated in the subsequent sections. It's through observing the ToC and principles that this plan will make sense not just for us, but for critical stakeholders in the education sector that are pivotal in facilitating the realisation of our vision, mission and strategic objectives. One new critical principle that we set out to adopt more in our operations and plans in 2025 is '*Protect the environment and the community you serve*'. Recognising that this is an emerging area where we all have to learn, the plan will prioritise preliminary actions that can enable us position ourselves do more in this area. The other emerging area that our 2025 plan will prioritise is the promotion of citizen journalism as a way of diversifying our reach and ultimately amplifying the voices of those that experience the issues we raise.

Our Theory of Change

This section presents our new theory of change (ToC), starting with our vision and mission statements, which guide our undertakings in the next four years, starting with the year 2025.

Vision

A society in which all children are learning and realising their full potential

Mission

To promote support for inclusive and equitable quality education for all through assessment, research, engagement and influencing, in collaboration with other stakeholders

Long-term impact and desired outcomes

To work towards our vision and realise our mission, we have put our desired long-term impact at the top of our theory of change (see Figure 1 below); underneath we have identified all the desired outcomes that must be in place. The arrows placed in-between indicate the causal relations between the impact and outcomes. Finally, the ToC contains our core work areas, divided into three core pillars and two cross-cutting strands, that will contribute to achieving the desired outcomes.

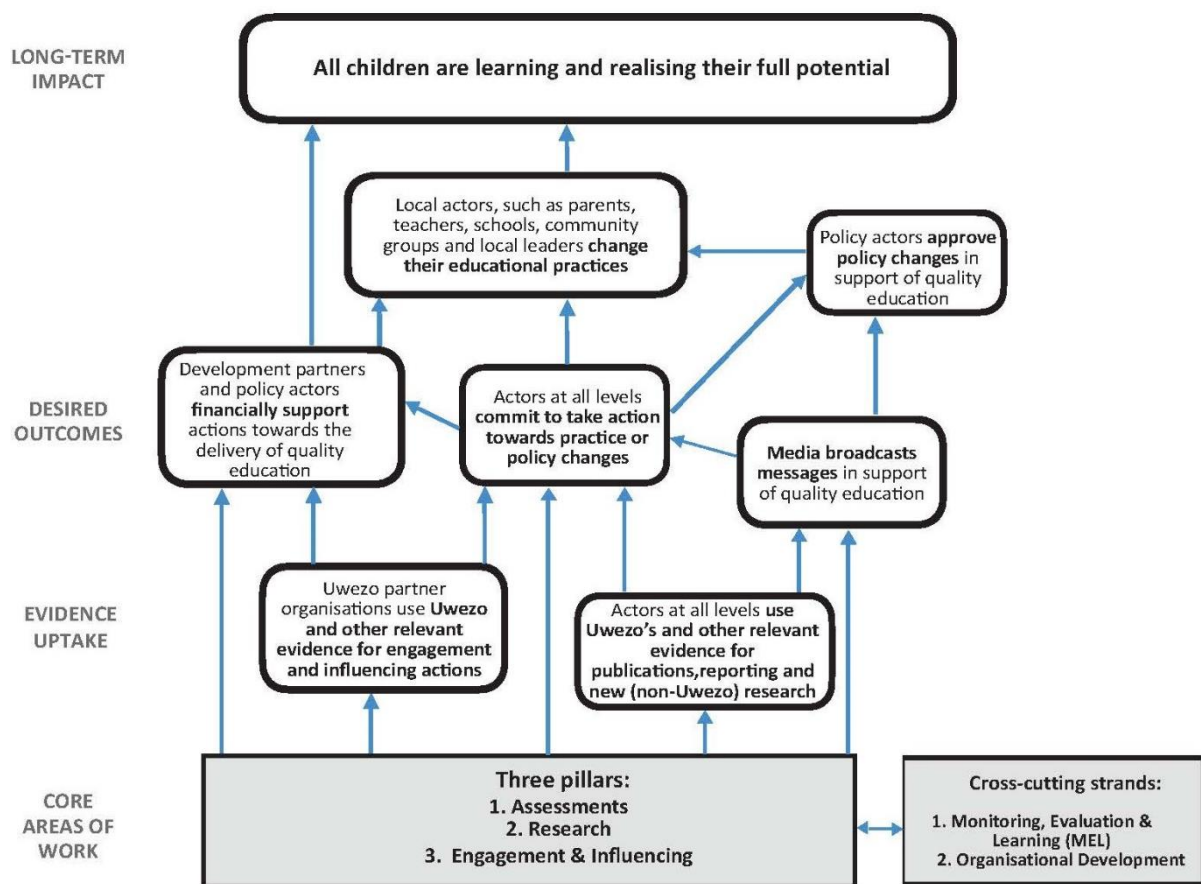


Figure 1: Uwezo Uganda Theory of Change

Long-term impact

All children learning and realising their full potential.

Evidence uptake and desired outcomes

- i. **Practice change:** Local actors, such as parents, teachers, schools, community groups and local leaders change their educational practices
- ii. **Policy change:** Policy actors approve policy changes in support of equitable and inclusive education for all
- iii. **Increased funding:** Development partners and policy actors financially support interventions towards the delivery of quality education, particularly for public schools
- iv. **Commitment towards policy or practice change:** Actors at all levels, such as policy actors or development partners commit to take action towards practice or policy changes
- v. **Media exposure:** Media broadcasts messages in support of quality learning
- vi. **Use of Uwezo and other relevant evidence for reporting or new research:** Actors at all levels, such as policy actors, international organisations and research institutions use Uwezo's and other related evidence for publications, reporting and new (non-Uwezo) research, thereby building upon and spreading Uwezo's evidence
- vii. **Use of Uwezo and other relevant evidence by partner organisations:** Uwezo partner organisations use Uwezo's and other related evidence for engagement and influencing actions

Starting at the top, we believe that local actors, such as parents, teachers, schools, community groups and local leaders that change their educational practices can directly contribute to achieving the **long-term impact**. We aim for **practice change** that is lasting and wide-spread, so that learning outcomes structurally improve. With regards to **policy change**, we believe that there is great need for increased attention and support for the implementation of policies. We therefore think that policy changes should lead to practice changes, before the long-term impact can be achieved. We have already seen **many actors expressing support for changes of policy and practice**, but more commitment will be needed before these changes actually take place.

Government bodies and development partners that financially support interventions towards the delivery of quality public education (**increased funding**), are of key importance for our **long-term impact**. Currently funding is limited, and we hope that additional funding contributes, directly or indirectly, to equitable and inclusive education for all.

We have found that the **use of our evidence by partner organisations** leads to (commitments towards) policy and practice changes, and increased funding. Our partner organisations that participate in our activities feel strengthened and are able to influence change based on their familiarity with the Uwezo evidence. They have proven to be capable of addressing a range of contextual-relevant problems and cooperating with political and development actors to achieve change in their districts.

We have also seen that other actors, such as **policy actors, international organisations and research institutions occasionally use our evidence** to inform their own publications, reporting and new (non-Uwezo) research, thereby building upon and spreading Uwezo's and other related evidence, which can lead directly or indirectly to (commitments towards) policy and practice changes, and increased funding.

Finally, we are convinced that the **media** can broadcast important messages in support of quality education and particularly the importance of promoting foundational literacy, numeracy and life skills. Media exposure can contribute directly and indirectly to stimulating development actors at all levels to commit to policy or practice change. Media is inclusive of mainstream media and journalism/communication done by ordinary citizens.

Our Shared Guiding Principles

We are committed to producing the best quality evidence possible through our assessments and research. We have learned that to make change happen it is not enough to simply publish our evidence, in the hope that it will be picked up and used. That is why we put effort into engagement and influencing at all levels (our third pillar): by ad-hoc engagements at international level, forming an alliance with like-minded CSOs at national level, supporting a Community of Practice for our district partners that conduct engagement and influencing at local level and encouraging citizen-journalism.

Our like-minded CSOs at national level and our partner organisations in the districts play a crucial role in ensuring the uptake of our evidence and insights. That is why we have jointly developed shared principles¹ that translate our shared values into practical guidelines for the effective use of Uwezo evidence for engagement and influencing at all levels. The following principles are meant for us and all Uwezo evidence users to provide guidance in taking strategic and intentional decisions about how to use Uwezo insights effectively for engagement and influencing.

1. **Treat all children as equal:** Aim to unlock the learning potential of ALL children without distinction as to gender, race, language, religion, disability or geographical location. Focus particularly on

¹ Principles are all around us, but often misunderstood in their purpose. In our view, principles guide our thinking and behaviour toward achieving outcomes and are especially useful for complex, dynamic systems such as initiatives that strive for systems change like ours. According to Patton (2018), "A good principle provides guidance for making choices and decisions, is useful in setting priorities, inspires and supports ongoing development and adaptation" (p. 9).

reaching those children who are missing out most on learning and education, including those affected by emergencies/displacement and those in hard-to-reach areas.

2. **Understand the context:** Be aware of the agendas and motivations of different actors, who is influencing whom. Keep your eyes open for any new opportunities for getting your messages across – rather than sticking to targeting a few acquainted stakeholders.
3. **Prioritise lasting practical changes:** Prioritise advocating for policy and practice change. Policies influence practice. A lack of policy can make it more difficult to prevent undesirable practices. Simultaneously, aim for lasting widespread and structural change, over small-scale or incidental change.
4. **Work evidence-based:** Select messages from the available Uwezo evidence and other relevant data sources that are aligned with the problem(s) at hand, rather than advocating for issues based on opinion or hear-say.
5. **Develop appropriate content:** Adapt the presentation of evidence to suit different audiences – international, national or local, specialist and non-specialist.
6. **Be prepared to adapt:** Remain adaptable in your engagement and influencing approach when the environment around you changes, instead of relying on a linear planning model. Put learning and adaptation at the centre of your approach.
7. **Collaborate based on trust and mutual respect:** Collaborate with other Uwezo partners and stakeholders based on trust, mutual respect and reciprocity. Share your experiences generously and help each other where you can. Realise that you cannot do it alone.
8. **Protect the environment and the community you serve:** Embrace Environmental, Social and Government (ESG) standards to provide a wholistic accountability framework of your impact on the environment and the community you serve. This requires embracing sustainable practices such as energy-efficient actions, reduced paper use, waste management, enhanced social responsibility and equitable governance practices.

Treat all children as equal

We believe that every child should be treated with dignity and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy. We have a strong conviction that the school system should be responsive to the unique needs of every child. This first Uwezo principle is meant to ensure that we advocate for a fair distribution of benefits and opportunities and initiatives that promote quality education, inclusive of poor and marginalised groups. It is aligned with SDG 4: 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

Understand the context

To monitor the context, try to sense changes in policy, politics, environment, economics and society related to your engagement and influencing efforts. How is the political, economic or organisational context changing? To what extent will these changes affect your initiative? Understanding the context will entail knowing about the people in charge of the policy area and their incentives. Be aware of changing perceptions of our evidence, as well as the wider system of stakeholders. Avoid sticking to targeting a few acquainted stakeholders.

Prioritise lasting changes in practice

Successful policy implementation advances sustainable outcomes. However, in Uganda and the world over, many policies fail to achieve their intended objectives, as efforts towards policy implementation are not prioritised. This second Uwezo principle points to the need for the implementation of policies and advocates for increased attention and support for changes that have an effect on practice. Simultaneously, this practice change should not be incidental, meaning that its effect might disappear over time. Nor should this practice change be small-scale, such as affecting only a single school. That is why this principle aims for lasting wide-spread and structural change to increase the changes for maximum impact.

Base advocacy on evidence

Evidence-based engagement and influencing means using the best available knowledge when advocating for a goal. Our core activity is generating rigorous large-scale evidence and insights. We collect and curate large volumes of data, evidence from all over Uganda and use them in our shared engagement and influencing efforts. Realise that research findings do not in a direct way translate into government policies or for donor funding. Select messages from the available Uwezo evidence and explain what this means for current policy and practice (Booth, 2011)².

Develop appropriate content

Developing appropriate content helps stakeholders to connect with the priority problem in their context on a deeper level and improves their likelihood to participate in solving it. It is about understanding the nuances of different (local) cultures and how your content will be received by your stakeholders. Appropriate content is the key to catching your stakeholders' attention, at international, national and local level. For a local context, consider translating the evidence into the local language. Examples include factsheets, research synopses, briefs for policymakers, project reports, articles, briefing papers, web pages, presentations, animations.

Be prepared to adapt

Change is inevitable. Being prepared to react to change is the essence of adaptive programming (Valters et al, 2016)³. We need to be prepared to respond to changes in the (local) political and socio-economic environment. This might seem obvious, but much development practice happens according to linear planning models which discourage adaptation. Adaptation and learning are two sides of the same coin. Put learning at the centre and focus on how information and knowledge can inform adaptations in your approach.

Collaboration based on trust and mutual respect

There is power in working with, and learning with and from others. Policy engagement and influencing is an inherently collaborative exercise. Collaboration triggers new relationships, new knowledge, and new initiatives. Local initiatives across different regions that use Uwezo evidence for engagement and influencing can feed into national and global initiatives and vice versa. We encourage all Uwezo evidence users to come together to work toward change in the educational sector at a systems level. This collaboration is based on trust, mutual respect and reciprocity. Be generous in sharing your experiences. The Uwezo secretariat cannot do it alone. We need everyone on board.

Protect the environment and the community you serve

Integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards as a framework for organisations to assess and improve their impact on the environment and the community they serve is no longer an option, but a requirement to fit in the national and global development agenda. As an organisation, we will focus on reducing our own ecological footprint and also advocate for sustainable practices like conserving energy, minimising waste through effective recycling, and reducing resource consumption for instance through strengthening the transitioning to digital platforms, cloud storage, and electronic communication to minimise paper dependency (environment), enhance social responsibility by supporting local communities through education program partnerships, or partnerships to improve societal outcomes (social) and foster equitable governance practices through encouraging diverse leadership, ethical business practices, and maintaining accountability through clear policies and regular reporting (Governance).

² Booth, D. (2011). *Working with the grain and swimming against the tide: Barriers to uptake of research findings on governance and public services in low-income Africa*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

³ Valters, C., Cummings, C., Nixon, H. (2016). *Putting learning at the centre - Adaptive development programming in practice*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Embracing ESG enables us to actively contribute to protecting the environment and improving the quality of foundational learning (including early childhood education), while fostering a culture of accountability, transparency, and equity. This will create a sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship between Uwezo, the education sector, and the planet.

Our Plans for 2025 Under each Pillar/Strand

Assessment Pillar

Evidence generation which is a core element of this pillar and the strategy serves as a foundation that supports and stimulates other pillars to contribute to achieving the organisation's mission and vision. Through conducting assessments to generate evidence on learning outcomes, and on functionality (including life skills and preparedness for the world of work), we not only will reveal the status of learning in Uganda but we will also be able to set the stage for action and fostering engagement to be done.

In 2024 we have we executed a national learning assessment basic literacy and numeracy in 29 districts. We managed to embrace the integration of technology in pre-assessment and assessment phases, which enhanced efficiency and saved resources that would have been spent on printing paper survey booklets. Analysis of the assessment data is ongoing. The report will be finalised and launched in the first part of 2025. Furthermore, we completed a report based on an assessment of workplace and everyday literacy and numeracy skills that we conducted in 2023. The report is pending formal publication and launch. In addition, we **contributed to generation of evidence to inform evaluations, design of interventions and data utilisation activities as well as for engagement**. This amplified the need to prioritise foundational skills at national and global levels through joint assessments. We also conducted joint assessments at national and global level that employed the Citizen-led Assessment (CLA) approach including the People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network Early Learning and Numeracy Assessment (ELANA), and the Action for Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE) assessment conducted in collaboration with our partners in Oyam, Kasese and Jinja districts. We also supported other **Partners to utilise Uwezo tools and approaches**, for example the Charlene's project impact and a baseline assessment focused on improving early years literacy in 8 schools in Kiryandongo district and capacity building extended to Stromme Foundation.

Looking ahead in 2025, the Assessment pillar will focus on the following activities;

- a) Working with other individual and institutional researchers to mine and do further analysis of our existing data to inform generation of tailor-made products such as blogs, policy briefs, and academic papers. This is intended at increasing uptake of Uwezo assessment tools, methodology, data and findings. The work builds on, and extends the effort we have previously undertaken in partnership with universities, which has resulted into publication of six academic papers to-date. The themes of the publications/products will include, but not limited to school feeding, water sanitation and hygiene, life skills and values, workplace literacy and numeracy skills, governance and school leadership, violence against children, and others.
- b) Values and Life skills assessments – This will be a continuation of the work that started in 2024 as part of our contribution to the ALiVE initiative. Today, we have drafted items for upper primary and lower secondary in collaboration with Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). In 2025 we will seek to complete item development, pretesting and piloting of the items.
- c) Large-Scale Common Learning Assessment: Collaboratively with People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network of which Uwezo Uganda is a member organisation, we plan to conduct a common assessment of foundational learning together with counterparts in 14 other countries in the Global South to provide nationally representative data (or estimations) of numeracy, language,

and literacy for children 5 to 16 years old. The proposed 15-country assessment will provide (i) globally relevant snapshots of children's foundational learning, (ii) align with SDG 4 targets, and (iii) help track progress until 2030. Findings from this assessment will be used to support resource distribution, education planning, and decision-making at the global, regional, national, and local levels. These findings will also showcase the agency of local actors on an international stage.

We intend to collectively use the assessment results for advocacy purposes at global, regional, and national levels. The data will inform discussions about achieving global goals post-pandemic and will be leveraged to influence relevant global initiatives and collaborate with regional bodies. At the national level, the results will be used to advocate for improved education policies and highlight successful cases of achieving foundational learning for all children.

- d) We will also seek to finalise and publish outstanding assessment reports in a timely manner.

Research Pillar

This pillar enables us to produce independent evidence focusing on those areas that need further attention in the context of Uganda and provide a repository of high-quality evidence and insights on the learning levels of children, factors that affect learning outcomes and their distribution, and the state of the education system in Uganda that can be used by all actors in education.

In 2024 we completed the *Spotlight report on basic education completion and foundational learning: Uganda* and it was published by UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) Team and Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). In addition we jointly published an article with our counterparts at Cambridge University REAL Centre on 'Understanding Access to and Learning Outcomes from early children education (ECE) Among Refugees and Non-Refugee Populations in Uganda'. The article was published in the *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 38(sup1). We also published a book chapter on 'Opportunities and Challenges in Household-based Assessment of Life Skills' in an edited book edition on *The Contextualisation of 21st Century Skills: Assessment in East Africa*. eBook: published by Springer. In the pipeline is a research article from our study into community-based pre-schools in Uganda that has been written and submitted to the international journal of childcare and education policy, awaiting publishing. In addition, we developed a report on absenteeism and enrolment, and a policy brief based on the report is being developed. Also, a refugee study report was completed and some of the findings presented at the British Association for International Comparative Education (BAICE) conference. Finally, we completed the design, piloting of tools and data collection for a study that explored family and community influences on children's learning outcomes using a positive deviance approach across four districts, covering nine villages, 36 house-holds and reaching 72 children and 36 parents. The data analysis and report writing process is ongoing and a report will be in place in the first half of 2025.

Just like the assessment products, we will seek to improve the ways in which we finalise, publish and disseminate our research projects in a timely manner to increase their reach and utilisation by other researchers and practitioners.

Building on the above successes and lessons, we will priorities the following in 2025

- a) Mining existing datasets and package research products on various themes to suit different audiences at all levels. The themes may include, but not limited to, school feeding, life skills and values, absenteeism / non-enrolment, workplace literacy/numeracy, school leadership/governance, violence against children, teacher/pupil attendance, etc.
- b) Generate key messages from research products to drive action
- c) Map research that has been done on Special Needs Education in Sub Saharan Africa including Uganda to identify gaps for further research. This one of the research themes we have proposed

to pursue in our new strategy to address the dearth of evidence on this important topic. We see a high need for a focus on **children with disabilities and other special educational needs (SEN)**, although we recognise that this is a challenging research area. Provision for SEN (described as Special Needs Education in Uganda) is limited and is severely under-resourced. Mainstreaming of children with SEN, i.e. their inclusion in regular schools or classes) is socially desirable except in extreme cases or where economies of scale are essential (as in schools for the deaf), but mainstreaming may fail if the support provided is insufficient. For children with disabilities, linkage between the education and health sectors is needed. We will explore if we can help with data requirements and advocacy by mixed-method research: surveys at the school level together with portraits of individual children. For us to do this effectively, we will need to first explore what research is available and what evidence gaps it points to.

- d) Convene a national conference on what works in girls' education to provide a platform for diverse stakeholders to address challenges, share solutions, and catalyse progress. At the heart of the Uwezo Uganda's 2025-2028 strategy, is promoting inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Our learning assessments and other studies have found that the challenges that the sector continues to grapple with disproportionately affect girls.

The 2024 UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report notes that while significant progress has been registered in enrolment and school transition by girls, gender gaps remain wide in sub-Saharan Africa, where the pace of progress over the past decade has been half of that in Central and Southern Asia, the only other region where girls are behind boys.

Notably, the quest for equity was inherent in the formulation of SDG 4, given its reference to education and lifelong opportunities 'for all'. Target 4.1 calls on countries to ensure that 'all boys' and girls' complete primary and secondary education.

The report further notes that there are dividends accruing from initiatives that seek to empower school girls. In Uganda, interventions on vocational training and information on sex, marriage and reproduction were found to have impact on girls' employability. Four years after the intervention, the girls were more likely to be self-employed and delay family formation (Bandiera et al., 2020)⁴.

The Uganda 2024 PLE results showed that majority of the girls passed in division tree and four, and the biggest number of them failed to attain any grading and were consequently placed in division four.

Why Convene the girls' Education Conference? Convening a national conference on girls' education offers numerous valuable benefits, serving as a platform for diverse stakeholders to address challenges, share solutions, and catalyse progress. It also offers the opportunity to enhance the voice of girls, an opportunity for girls to voice their experiences, challenges, and aspirations and space to showcase success stories from women leaders and organisations, and achievers who benefited from education.

For Uwezo Uganda to effectively spotlight and sustain issues related to girl education to shape policy and practice change, identifying data and knowledge needed to improve the quality and use of intersectional, gender-responsive data for more effective, targeted planning and efficient tracking of gender equality outcomes is key. This is in addition to building strategic partnerships at local, national, regional and global levels.

On the collaborative front, RELI Africa has identified Girl Education as one of the strategic focuses. To this end, a Regional Convening on creating impact at the local level for girls' education was

⁴ [Women's Empowerment in Action: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial in Africa - American Economic Association](#)

convened in April 2024 drawing participation from up to 100 Civil Society and Government Representatives. These explored actionable solutions to the persisting exclusion of children, especially girls living in adversity, from the mainstream of education in the East African region; building on insights from studies done in the area. Therefore, this approach complements and aligns our regional collaboration efforts to further amplifying voices, provide space for conversations and actions to align our efforts towards revitalising the movement of and for girls' education.

Engagement and Influencing Pillar

This pillar continues to be at the heart of Uwezo Uganda with the aim of engaging and influencing policies and practices for improved learning outcomes using the evidence we generate from assessment and research.

The key achievements registered in 2024 under this pillar include; sharing of generated evidence at global and regional levels, contributing to global knowledge on education and foundational learning through publications and presenting at conferences such as the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), the co-hosted in East African Community inaugural conference on education and the British Association for International Comparative Education (BAICE) conference.

At national level, we continued to share evidence emerging from our learning assessments at key events such as the celebration of the international literacy day and the launch and dissemination of the Global Education Monitoring spotlight series report on *on basic education completion and foundational learning*.

We registered enhanced media engagement including spotlight by the Monitor news paper as well as other electronic and social platforms. Engagement of media in the Uwezo/ALiVE activities has also been instrumental in creating awareness and advocating for life skills and values and the need to have them nurtured and assessed.

Looking ahead in 2025, we set out to implement the follow key activities, among others;

- a) Global-level engagement - including participation in regional partnership activities e.g. those organised by the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) and PAL Network as well as presentation at a variety of international conferences
- b) Involvement key partners, including media, in our assessment, research and engagement activities
- c) Nurturing a community of practice of our district partners, volunteers, village coordinators.
- d) Promoting citizen-journalism in education
- e) Launch of our national assessment report and district reports

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Strand

The overall purpose of our MEL approach is for Uwezo Uganda to become a principal-focussed adaptive initiative that influences the education system. The MEL approach has three key objectives namely; to find ways to improve our operations, continuously improve our contextual knowledge, and adjust our strategies in order to improve our effectiveness.

The major achievement registered in 2024 was the development of the outcome harvesting report from our undertakings in the first strategic period (2020-2023) and the commencement of the development of a MEL framework. The proposed activities will lay a solid foundation for us to fully operationalise the proposed MEL Framework by the end of 2025. In this plan, outcome Harvesting will be an integral part of our MEL approach. The overall focus of MEL will be on learning and adaptation.

The specific focus will be on the following, but not limited to:

- a) Start implementing the new framework to fill the internal gaps in M&E skills and capacity,
- b) Prepare to launch the planned bi-annual Outcome Harvesting assessment in Q4 of 2025
- c) Partner and staff induction on the shared guiding principles
- d) Generating quarterly and annual output reports
- e) Undertake continuous research uptake and media monitoring
- f) Continue piloting organisational learning improvements through various ALiVE initiatives such as the Learning Management Information System (LMIS) and Learning for Inclusive Practice (LIP) in Gender and Disability practice.
- g) Conduct end of activity After Action Reviews (AARs). After an activity, such as an assessment or research has taken place, we will organise an AAR. We will bring together the team physically or virtually to reflect on three simple questions: what was supposed to happen, what actually happened and why were there differences? AARs are designed to be quick and light – not requiring a facilitator, an agenda or too much time – and collect any information that might otherwise be forgotten and lost once the activity passes. Therefore, we will include them as part of the activity itself and schedule them right at the end. We will file away the notes from the meeting and bring them out at the next reflection point.

Institutional Development Strand

This strand aims at strengthening and enhancing Uwezo Uganda as an organisation working towards promoting support for inclusive and equitable quality education for all in partnership with stakeholders.

In 2024, the following achievements were registered namely; completing the development of the new organisational strategy 2025-2028 which will be critical for steering operations for the next four years, retaining all staff and sustaining consultants that have supported us to deliver on our annual plan.

We have also Sustained existing partnerships at global, national and sub-national levels and nurtured new ones including strengthening our contribution to education in the East African Community, evidenced in co-convening of the inaugural East African Community education conference.

Furthermore, we continued to have in place accountable systems, strengthened by our existing policy frameworks and continued advice and oversight by our Board and Technical Advisory Committee. We also obtained a data protection certificate in addition to obtaining an unqualified audit opinion from our external auditors, Ernst & Young for the year ended 2023

In 2025, we will execute following, among others;

- a) Attract and retain human resource to support data management, writing, advocacy and fundraising
- b) Develop a data management and protection policy
- c) Develop an ESG Framework
- d) Operationalise our MEL Framework
- e) Conclude and publish the citizen-led Uwezo guidelines to support our assessment activities and uptake of our approach by other stakeholders
- f) Maintain sound accountability structures, including the Board and Technical Advisory Committee.
- g) Sustaining our engagements in national regional and global partnerships
- h) Retain a core team of full-time staff and long-term consultants

Anticipated Risks and how these will be Mitigated

As part of our new strategy, development, we have mapped out risks that are likely to affect our operations in the next four years (see Table 1 below). We will keep tracking and updating these during the course of 2025.

Table 1: Uwezo Uganda Risk Mapping

Risk	Pillar/Strand	Likelihood	Impact	Preventive mitigation measures	Responsive mitigation measures
Funders change their priorities resulting in reduced funding for education globally (not just for Uwezo, but for education in general)	Organisational Development	Likely	Significant	Keep donors informed of our findings to ensure that relevance for quality education is felt.	Intensify our engagement and influencing efforts towards funders. Engage with experts who can influence funders.
Increased insecurity (regional conflicts)	Assessment Research Engagement	Likely	Significant	Monitor the security situation in the areas in which we work.	Take safety measures to not endanger our staff, partners or volunteers.
Narrowing of civic space	Engagement	Likely	Severe	Engage in planning with relevant authorities. Avoid involvement in party politics.	Engage with experts who can influence funders and authorities.
Failure to sustain operations due to high dependence on limited restricted funds.	Organisational Development	Possible	Severe	Develop and implement fundraising and resource mobilisation strategy that targets diverse funding sources. Budget based on secured funding. Hire fundraising expertise.	Adjust budget solely based on secured funding and adjust our programmes accordingly Adapt fundraising and resource mobilisation strategy. Make more resources and staff time available for increased fundraising efforts.
Failure to meet deadlines due to workload of staff being too high	Assessment Research Engagement Organisational Development	Very likely	Significant	Maintain a list of reliable experts and consultants who can be called upon if needed. Improve the sequencing of activities.	Temporarily hire external experts or consultants to reduce the workload of staff. Plan ahead and communicate well.

				Promote rest and prioritise health.	
Human resource attrition. Staff seek other opportunities.	Organisational Development	Possible	Moderate	Put in place motivation measures. Strengthen capacity Provide opportunities for growth Have policies for recruitment, retention, progression.	Adhere to staffing policy. Allow people to take on new challenges Seek support from partners and networks
Over reliance on a narrow range of funding bodies.	Organisational Development	Possible	Severe	Ensure a wide range of partners is involved in our activities. Develop and implement fundraising and resource mobilisation strategy to ensure a wide range of partners can be taken on board.	Find new partners to involve in our activities.
Abuse of children/ respondents by any of our partners or representatives during Uwezo work	Assessment Research	Likely	Significant	Develop clear child protection and safeguarding policy, orient and share with respective partners. Conduct rigorous due diligence assessment of our partners. Safeguarding issues incorporated in the training manuals and actual training of our partners and volunteers.	Take measures as described in our safeguarding policy without hesitation.

Limited capacity for integrating ESG framework	Organisational Development	Likely	Significant	Engage an ESG Expert to provide technical assistance and mentorship of staff	Conduct regular training on ESG for all staff.
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Specific to the year 2025 is the effect of the forthcoming January 2026 Uganda General Election. The year 2025 will be laden with political campaigns across the country and this might affect mobilisation and further squeeze the civic space. Pre-election could affect assessment, research and engagement activities which may limit partners' timely delivery on essential commitments. To mitigate this risk, we will be mindful of the messages, messengers and map out partners and areas most likely to be affected and plan flexibly. We will also endeavour to implement the core activities in the first three quarters of the year and also use ICT e.g. virtual meetings and engagements with our partners as much as necessary.

Budget

The estimated budget for executing our 2025 annual plan is **\$1,698,068** as summarised in Table 1 below.

UWEZO UGANDA BUDGET 2025	
DETAILS	2025
	USD
Pillar 1: Assessments	739,605
Human resource costs – Assessment	180,320
Total Pillar 1	919,926
Pillar 2 : Research and Experimentation	75,000
Human resource costs - Research and Experimentation	90,017
Total Pillar 2	165,017
Pillar 3: Public and Policy Engagements	183,725
Human resource costs – Public and Policy Engagements	82,100
Total Pillar 3	265,825
Pillar 4: Monitoring, Education and Learning	
Learning, monitoring and evaluation systems	40,700
Total Pillar 4: Monitoring, Education and Learning	40,700
Pillar 5: Institutional Development	
Strengthening organisational systems and governance structures	68,270
Strengthen policies, standards and procedures on staffing	79,354
Establishment and maintenance of partnerships with relevant stakeholders from the village to the global level to support achievement and sustenance of Uwezo mission.	6,000
Human resource costs - Institutional Development	152,975
Total Pillar 5: Institutional Development	306,599
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,698,068