REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Overall Progress Report April 2023 – Dec 2025

ACCELERATING ACCESS TO MARKET BASED SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES

SUPPORTED BY

water for people UGANDA

KCCA KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AUTHORITY For a better City

UGANDA WATER & SANITATION NETWORK

IRC Supporting water sanitation and hygiene services for life

FINISH

Funded By

SHF The Sanitation & Hygiene Fund

Table of Contents

1 Executive Summary

The Sanitation and Hygiene Fund (SHF) project is a two-year and nine-month initiative (April 2023 – December 2025) designed to accelerate access to improved sanitation and hygiene services using market-based approaches across seven districts in Uganda-Kabarole, Kayunga, Kamuli, Buikwe, Buyende, Luuka, and Kole. Its strategic objectives focus on scaling up household sanitation and hygiene services, enhancing sustainable water, sanitation, hygiene, and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) in schools and healthcare facilities, and promoting innovation for safely managed sanitation and hygiene.

Throughout its implementation period, the grant accelerated access to inclusive, climate-resilient, market-driven sanitation and hygiene services for households, schools, and healthcare facilities. Additionally, through a systems-strengthening lens, the grant supported national and subnational institutions and empowered private-sector and community actors.

This report outlines the key milestones reached, activities carried out during the reporting period, the beneficiaries reached, major communication and visibility efforts, the challenges encountered during implementation, and the recommendations proposed to strengthen future delivery.

The grant has helped energize the sanitation economy by bringing together households, local businesses, trained artisans, and service providers to improve sanitation and hygiene across the seven districts. Our work has made it easier for families and institutions to access quality sanitation services while creating real economic opportunities in the sector.

> **Additionally, through a systems-strengthening lens, the grant supported national and subnational institutions and empowered private-sector and community actors.**

KEY **RESULTS**

69,985

people have gained access to safely managed sanitation

198,639

people have basic sanitation.

371

masons were trained to build better toilets

208

CHWs were equipped to guide and motivate communities to improve their sanitation practices.

1,134

villages were triggered, helping to spark community action and boost demand for sanitation products and services.

180,883

people gained access to handwashing facilities, improving daily hygiene practices in homes and communities.

$ 10,032,148

Households mobilized for sanitation investments, showing strong willingness to pay for improved services.

30

schools now have climate-resilient, gender-friendly sanitation facilities

20

Healthcare Facilities have been upgraded to offer safer and more dignified sanitation and MHH services.

2 Background

Uganda continues to face significant sanitation and hygiene challenges that affect public health, education outcomes, and socio-economic growth. While progress has been made, national WASH indicators show that access to safe, reliable, and dignified sanitation services remains far below the levels needed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6. The 2024 National Population and Housing Census reports that only 41.2% of Ugandans use basic sanitation services, meaning the majority of households still rely on facilities that are either unimproved, shared, or do not ensure safe treatment and disposal of waste. Other national assessments indicate that access to basic sanitation remains low, with some sources noting that only 19% of the population consistently uses toilets that meet minimum safety and quality requirements.

Although the general sanitation coverage appears higher in some areas—reaching 90.8% in urban settings and about 79.5% in rural communities—these figures mask large service-level disparities. Many households have toilets that do not meet JMP or SDG definitions of basic or safely managed sanitation. As a result, millions of Ugandans remain exposed to preventable sanitation-related diseases, high healthcare costs, and recurrent outbreaks of diarrhoea and cholera, especially in densely populated and rapidly growing communities.

> **The Ministry of Health reports that only 46% of facilities have basic hand hygiene services, and just 21% meet advanced hand hygiene standards.**

Hygiene coverage shows equally concerning gaps. National, up-to-date household-level data on basic handwashing services remain limited, but existing assessments highlight substantial challenges. In healthcare facilities, where sanitation and hygiene are essential for safe service delivery, the Ministry of Health reports that only 46% of facilities have basic hand hygiene services, and just 21% meet advanced hand hygiene standards. These gaps increase the risk of infections, compromise patient safety, and place additional strain on health workers. In schools, inadequate handwashing facilities and weak menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) systems continue to affect learning outcomes and disproportionately impact adolescent girls, who often miss classes due to lack of privacy or proper disposal facilities.

These sanitation challenges are more so constrained by limited private-sector capacity, poor access to finance, and weak supply chains for sanitation products and services. Artisans, masons, and pit emptying service providers often lack training, tools, and capital to deliver quality services at scale. Climate change further undermines progress as flooding, high water tables, and unpredictable weather patterns frequently damage latrines and contaminate water sources, raising operation and maintenance costs for households and institutions.

Despite these constraints, Uganda has demonstrated strong commitment to improving sanitation and hygiene through national policies, regulatory frameworks, and investments from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Environment, and Ministry of Education and Sports. Within this context, the Sanitation and Hygiene Fund (SHF) project (April 2023–December 2025) was launched to accelerate progress by strengthening sanitation markets, improving service delivery in schools and healthcare facilities, expanding household access to improved sanitation, and building inclusive, climate-resilient systems that can be sustained long after the project concludes. This report highlights continued progress toward scaling up household sanitation, improving sanitation and hygiene, and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) in schools and healthcare facilities, and fostering innovation in sanitation and hygiene management.

2.1. Strategic Objective 1: Scale-up household sanitation and hygiene services in households

2.1.1. Strengthening the Household Sanitation Market

The project strongly activated the sanitation economy by driving community demand, strengthening supply chains, and unlocking household investment in improved sanitation. Through intensive community engagement, 1,134 villages were triggered using market-based sanitation implementation approach (MBSIA). These sessions reached 26,875 people, motivating households to prioritise safe sanitation and move decisively away from open defecation. As community demand grew, households responded by investing directly resources in improved sanitation facilities.

Access to improved sanitation in communities has grown significantly. Cumulatively, 198,639 people now have basic sanitation, surpassing the target of 180,832, and 66,223 people have moved up to safely managed sanitation, exceeding the target of 56,510. Handwashing facilities have scaled up impressively, reaching 180,883. Climate resilience is embedded in these improvements as all facilities constructed at community level are made of permanent structures hence able to withstand the adverse weather conditions.

On the business side, the sanitation market is becoming a real economic driver. So far, 1,017 enterprises have been supported, and 5,058 jobs have been created, including 765 jobs for women. This quarter alone added 60 enterprises and 1,307 jobs, 151 being for women. These businesses are not just providing services—they are building a sustainable sanitation economy that creates livelihoods while meeting community needs.

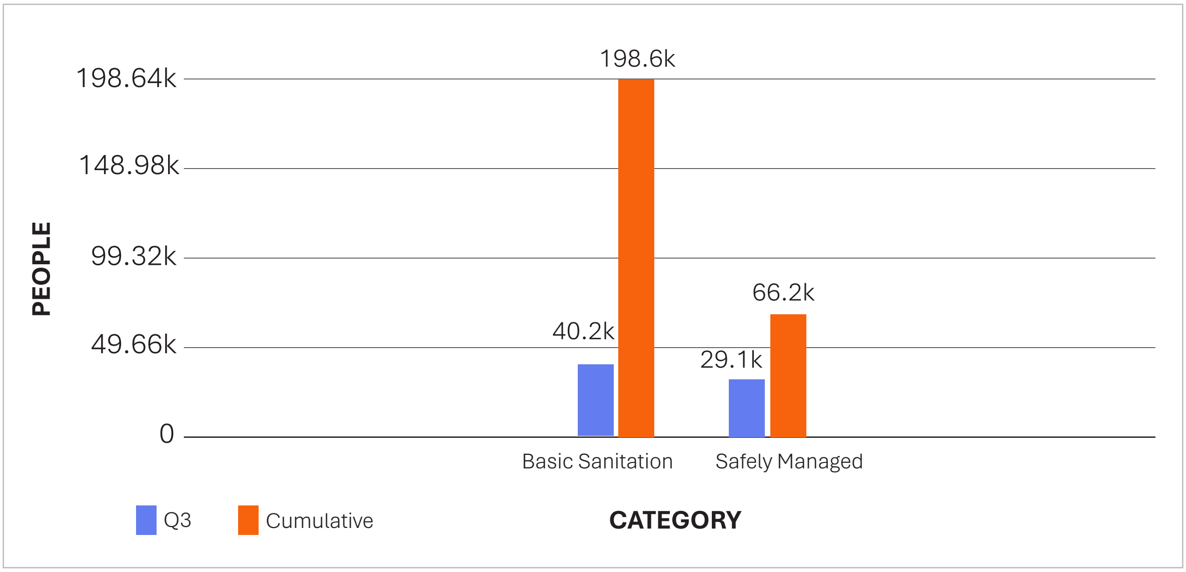


Figure 2.1. Bar graph showing access to improved sanitation facilities in at household level

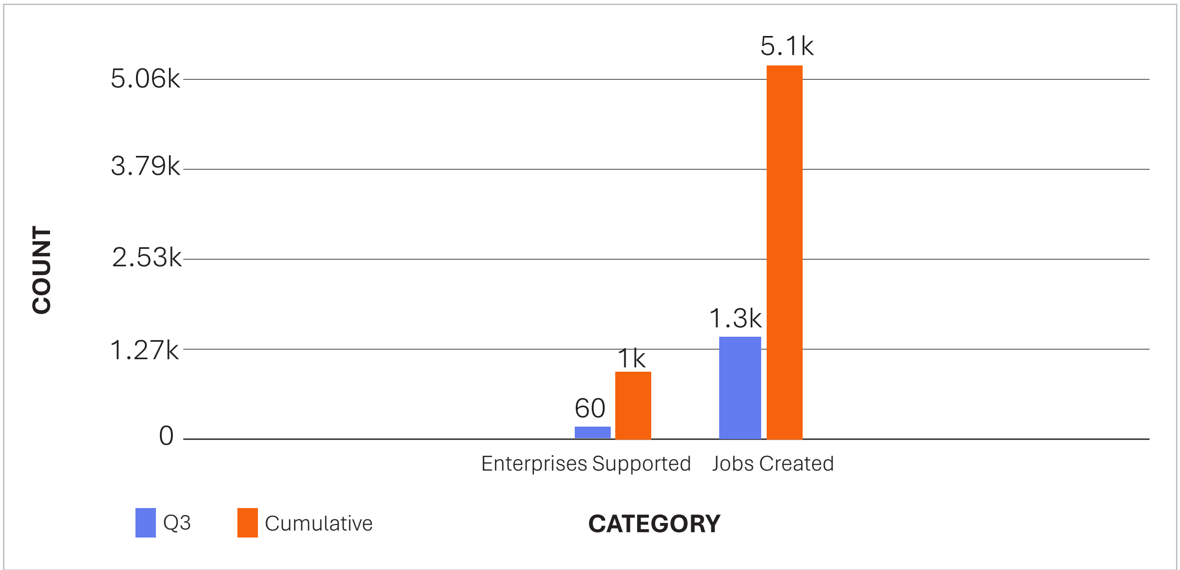


Figure 2.2. Bar graph showing the enterprises supported and jobs created

These outcomes were fuelled by robust demand-generation activities, including triggering in 1,134 villages, 338 targeted follow-up visits, and extensive mass media campaigns promoting sanitation financing, product options, and positive behaviour change. Additionally, the grant built capacity across the entire value chain. This included training 431 masons using the National Sanitation Artisan Curriculum, onboarding and linking pit diggers, bricklayers, and sand suppliers to emerging demand, and equipping them with sanitation marketing tools and job aids. Engagement with vocational training institutions helped mainstream sanitation skills into formal skilling pathways, while refresher trainings enhanced the technical, business, and entrepreneurial competencies of local artisans.

Figure 2.3. An improved sanitation facility constructed in Kyawakada Village, Kahangi Parish, Hakibaale Sub County-Kabarole District.

> **The outcomes were fuelled by robust demand-generation activities, including triggering in 1,134 villages, 338 targeted follow-up visits, and extensive mass media campaigns promoting sanitation financing, product options, and positive behaviour change.**

2.1.2. Promoting uptake for improved sanitation and hygiene through marketing of SATO Technologies

With the objective of accelerating household uptake of affordable and aspirational sanitation solutions, the grant partnered with LIXIL Uganda through Orion Concepts, the authorized national SATO distributor. This partnership enabled the rollout of an integrated SATO marketing, sales, and demand activation campaign across the seven target districts.

A blended communication and last-mile engagement approach was adopted to unlock demand and connect households to local satopreneurs and supply-chain actors. This included airing localized radio jingles and talk shows on six radio stations, conducting fourteen high-traffic market activations in major trading centers, and deploying trained community mobilizers for door-to-door behavior change and product awareness campaigns.

These interventions contributed to an estimated radio listenership reach of over 300,000 people, more than 1,800 community members engaged through market activations, and 6,797 SATO products sold and installed across the districts. The initiative demonstrated that context-specific messaging drives stronger conversion live product demonstrations accelerate purchase decisions, and leveraging local leadership and satopreneur networks builds trust and facilitates last-mile service delivery.

Going forward, it is recommended to scale household-level engagement, increase the frequency and timing of radio spots to align with peak agricultural income cycles, and strengthen satopreneur business networks to improve product availability, delivery efficiency, and installation turnaround time thereby sustaining and expanding the impact within the sanitation market ecosystem.

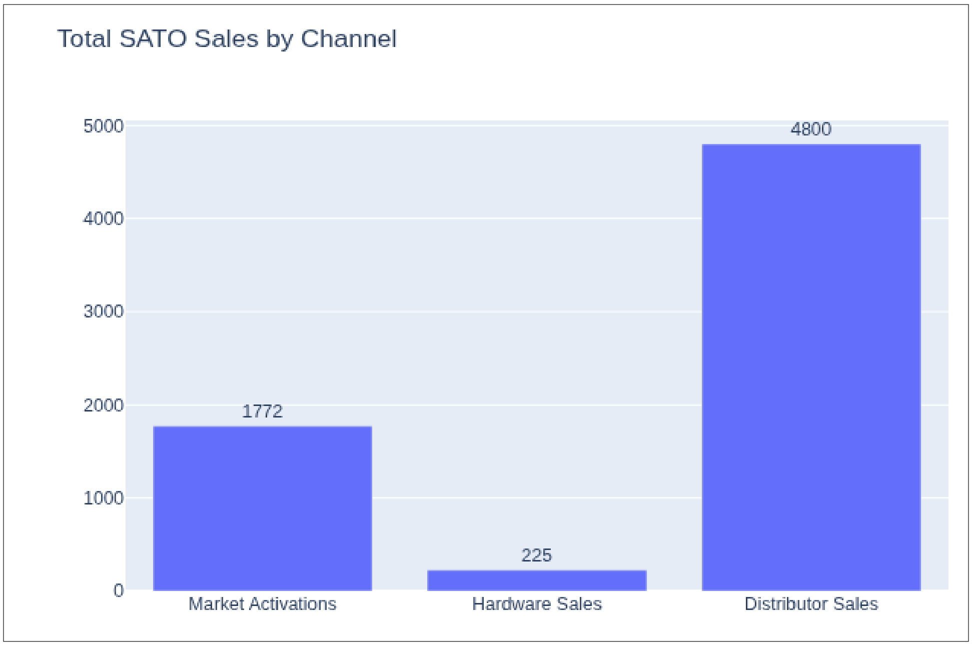


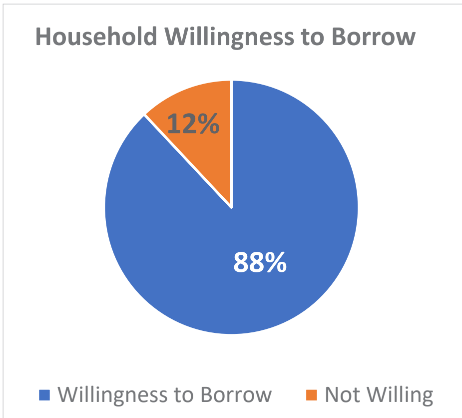
Figure 2.4. Photo showing the marketing of the products

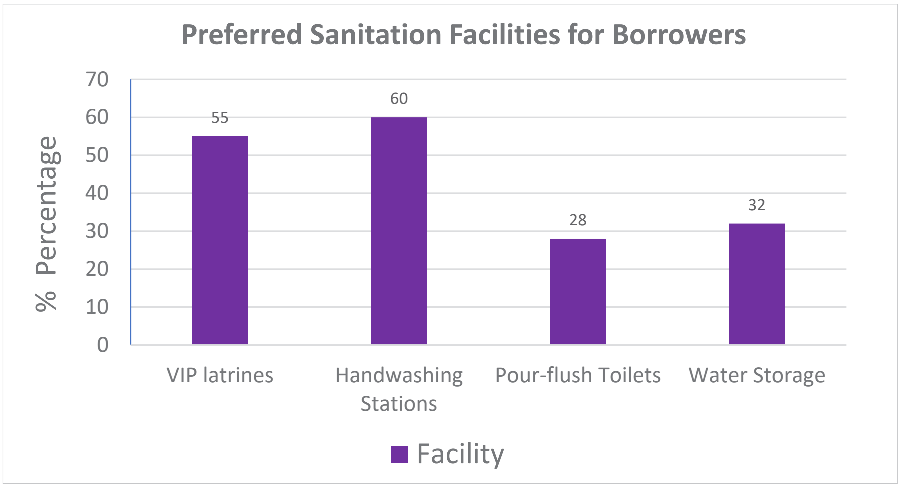
> **These interventions contributed to an estimated radio listenership reach of over 300,000 people, more than 1,800 community members engaged through market activations, and 6,797 SATO products sold and installed across the districts.**

2.1.3. Building a Functional Sanitation Finance Ecosystem at Local Level, partnering with Association of Microfinance Institutions

Partnering with the Association of Microfinace Institutions (AMFIU), the grant made steady progress in helping households in Kamuli and Luuka districts access improved sanitation and hygiene services. By working through four financial institutions—Bugadde SACCO, Bukanga Agali Awamu SACCO, Mbulamuti SACCO, and Development Microfinance Ltd—the project supported the introduction of sanitation loan products and encouraged more households to invest in better sanitation options. This work was made possible through support from the Sanitation and Hygiene Fund, which aims to expand access to affordable sanitation and strengthen the wider sanitation market.

To understand the needs of communities, the project first carried out market research to learn what types of sanitation facilities households preferred, how much they could afford, and their willingness to borrow. The findings showed a strong interest in sanitation improvement, with most households expressing readiness to take a l an if the terms matched their income levels. VIP latrines, handwashing stations, and pour-flush toilets were the most preferred options, and many households were comfortable with loan amounts between UGX 300,000 and UGX 3,000,000, repayable over six to twenty-four months. This information helped shape loan products that are practical and relevant to community needs.





Each participating financial institution also went through a capacity assessment to understand their preparedness to offer sanitation loans. While they all had solid governance structures and experienced credit teams, none had specific sanitation products or recent training in sanitation finance. This highlighted the importance of providing targeted support to help institutions design and manage sanitation loans effectively.

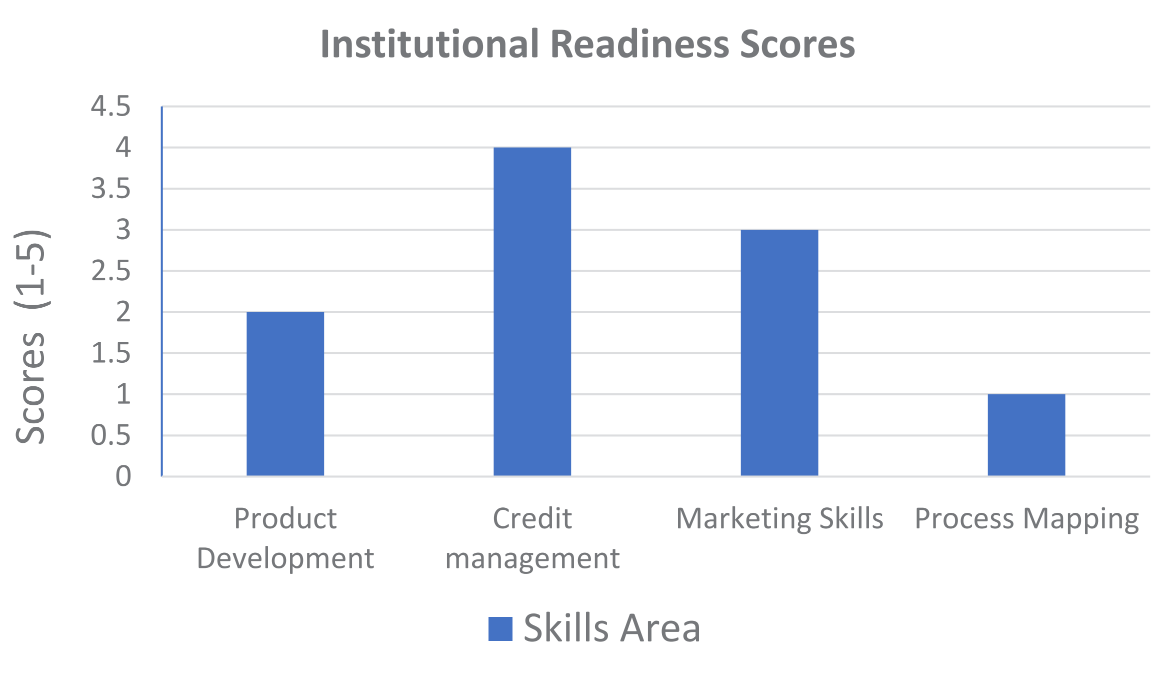


Figure 2.5. Graph showing Institutional Readiness Scores

Training was done for the SACCO staff and board members from all the participating SACCOs, focusing on product development, risk management, client engagement, and working with local partners. Thirty-one people attended, and the team developed an action plan outlining the next steps for piloting their sanitation loan product. The training also helped staff understand how sanitation loans could broaden the sanitation market, including the role of artisans and suppliers.

Using the research findings and feedback from staff, the SACCOs developed sanitation loan products with flexible loan sizes, repayment periods suited to household income patterns, and a disbursement approach linked to construction progress. The product will be piloted in Kamuli and Luuka districts first before being expanded further to other districts.

> **The training also helped staff understand how sanitation loans could broaden the sanitation market, including the role of artisans and suppliers.**

Figure 2.6. Employees and board members of Buggade SACCO poze for a picture after completion of the training

The project recorded several important achievements. It generated useful market information on household demand, strengthened institutional readiness to introduce sanitation loans, and built the capacity of staff to manage these new products. Institutions also developed action plans with clear timelines, and the project strengthened relationships with artisans, local government, and NGOs to ensure that households receiving loans can easily access construction services and products.

Following the engagement, the SACCOS have made noticeable progress in rolling out the sanitation loan products. Overall, 12 loan applications worth 8,200 USDs have been received. The loans range from three hundred thousand to five million Uganda shillings, and clients can repay over six to twenty-four months. The interest rate for sanitation loans is set at 1.5 percent per month, making it more affordable compared to the 2.5 to 3 percent charged on other products across the different financial institutions.

SACCO	Membership Growth (%)	Portfolio Growth (%)
Mbulamuti Tunhikire	33.85	15.54
Bukanga Agali Awamu	0.50	7.44
Bugadde	0.46	0.50
Development Microfinance Ltd	2.71	0.82

2.2. Strategic Objective 3: Increase sustainable water, sanitation, hygiene and MHH in Schools and Health Care Facilities

2.2.1. Continued Implementation of WASH and MHH Activities in Schools and Health Care Facilities

The grant focused on strengthening access to sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), including menstrual health and hygiene (MHH), in schools and health care facilities (HCFs) across seven districts. This included a combination of infrastructure improvements and capacity-building initiatives. At the school level, planning and reflection meetings were held with 44 schools, complemented by learner and parent engagement sessions on MHH. Follow-up training for adolescent girls on MHH practices was conducted, targeting girls aged 12 and above, while additional WASH-related support continued with School Management Committees (SMCs), School Health Clubs (SHCs), and teachers. In health care facilities, mentorship and refresher training were provided to 175 staff members across 20 HCFs, alongside technical support for Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).

Follow-up MHH training for adolescent girls continued, reaching an additional 3,725 girls. The sessions focused on reinforcing proper hygiene practices, addressing challenges girls face at school and in the community, and co-developing context-specific solutions in collaboration with head teachers, Senior Woman Teachers, and district facilitators. This peer-to-peer learning approach has strengthened learners' ownership of sanitation facilities and enhanced their confidence in discussing menstrual health.

In HCFs, the WASH Facility Improvement Tool (WASH FIT) assessments carried out in March–April 2025. The follow-up assessments allowed HCF teams to review progress since the initial evaluation, refine action plans, and strengthen MHH interventions within health facilities. Capacity building for janitors and cleaners continued, with ongoing training and the provision of color-coded bins and biohazard liners to improve disposal of menstrual waste.

There was focus on scaling peer-to-peer learning in both schools and HCFs to maximize adoption of best practices while preparing for a programmatic shift towards strengthening climate-resilient WASH in HCFs. Efforts included private sector-led skills transfer, mentorship, and capacity-building initiatives aligned with the Health National Adaptation Plan, aimed at long-term resilience and sustainability of health services.

> **Capacity building for janitors and cleaners continued, with ongoing training and the provision of color-coded bins and biohazard liners to improve disposal of menstrual waste.**

As a result of these sustained activities, schools have seen increased parental involvement, improved disposal of used menstrual pads, and continued availability of menstrual hygiene materials. Learners have demonstrated ownership of facilities, maintaining cleanliness and ensuring proper use over weekends Despite ongoing challenges, such as limited water supply in some schools and competing priorities within school schedules, the integrated hardware and software approaches have contributed to meaningful improvements in hygiene behavior, MHH management, and overall WASH outcomes across the target districts.

2.2.2. Supporting the Ministry of Education and Sports to conduct the 3rd National WASH in schools Symposium

The Ministry of Education and Sports, with support from partners including the SHF grant, successfully held the 3rd National WASH in Schools Symposium. The event brought together learners, teachers, district leaders, government ministries, civil society, and development partners to advance safe, inclusive, and climate-resilient WASH services in schools. The symposium opened with a Learners' WASH Parliament in Kamuli District, where pupils from four districts discussed school sanitation challenges and proposed solutions, demonstrating strong knowledge and agency. This set momentum for the main event in Jinja City.

At the symposium, MoES reiterated the critical role of WASH in learner health, attendance, and performance, calling for stronger coordination, adequate financing, and improved governance. The National Planning Authority identified gaps in sanitation coverage, maintenance and menstrual hygiene support and aligned school WASH priorities with Vision 2040 and NDP IV, emphasising climate-resilient investments and better data systems. Participants discussed digital tools for improved WASH monitoring, reviewed a draft Climate Resilience Manual for WASH in Schools, and reflected on evidence showing climate impacts across seven districts.

The Permanent Secretary closed the event by calling upon stakeholders for accelerated action and stricter accountability. Participants reached a consensus that success in school WASH requires five critical pillars: **coordination, financing, reliable data, community engagement, and climate resilience.**

Figure 2.7. Participants at the National Event in Jinja

2.2.3. Development of the National Climate-Resilient WASH in Schools Manual

The SHF grant made it possible for Uganda to develop its first national manual on climate-resilient WASH in schools. With this support, the Ministry of Education and Sports brought together experts, districts, teachers, engineers, and climate officers to understand the real problems schools are facing and to agree on practical solutions.

Currently in its final stages of development, the manual will be used in a very practical way to help schools, districts, and ministries to make sure that water, sanitation, and hygiene services continue working even as the climate changes. Schools and districts will use it when planning and budgeting, so that new latrines, water systems, and handwashing stations are built in the right places and made strong enough to withstand floods, drought, heavy rains, and strong winds. Engineers and builders will follow the manual to construct better, safer, and longer-lasting facilities - like raised or lined toilets, reliable rainwater harvesting systems, solar-powered water pumps, and durable handwashing setups. It will also help schools assess the risks they face, so they can understand which climate problems affect them most and what actions they should take.

The manual will guide teachers and school management on how to take care of WASH facilities through simple routines like checking gutters, cleaning tanks, fixing leaks early, and making sure water remains safe after floods. It will also help teachers and School Health Clubs teach students how to use water wisely during droughts, handle waste properly during rainy seasons, and practice good hygiene even when conditions are difficult. District officials will use the manual to monitor schools more effectively and to make sure WASH facilities are meeting safe and climate-resilient standards.

The manual will also help build skills by serving as a training tool for teachers, health assistants, and local technicians, ensuring everyone knows how to keep school WASH systems strong and functional. Finally, it will help ministries and partners work together more closely and attract more funding, because it gives the country a clear, shared plan for making school WASH services resilient to climate change.

2.3. Strategic Objective 4: Support innovation towards safely managed sanitation, hygiene and MHH

The project advanced innovations that support safely managed sanitation, improved hygiene, and menstrual health and hygiene (MHH). The focus for this objective is to promote new and practical approaches that make sanitation services more accessible, reliable, and inclusive. Key interventions included popularization of the central regional one-stop call centre, establishment of an additional call center in mid western, rolling out Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to expand safely managed pit emptying services, supporting private fecal sludge management (FSM) operators, and advancing the development of town sanitation plans. Progress made this quarter is summarised below.

2.3.1. Operationalisation of two Regional Sanitation Call Centres

The grant established two call centres: for Central Umbrella, serving 29 districts and Mid Western which serves 19 districts. These two call centers will continue to link customers to service providers/ enterpreneurs with a range of sanitation and hygiene services, including pit emptying, toilet construction, SATO products, briquettes, and other sanitation solutions in the central and mid western regions. By the end of the reporting period, the two call centres had served over 5,340 clients and service providers, demonstrating their growing role as a referral and coordination platform for sanitation services in the region.

> **The manual will also help build skills by serving as a training tool for teachers, health assistants, and local technicians, ensuring everyone knows how to keep school WASH systems strong and functional.**

Figure 2.8. Photos showing the community engagement in Kayunga to roll out the call center at community level

2.3.2. Market Activation to Increase Demand for Fecal Sludge Management

Market activation and demand generation activities were initiated in Fort Portal City and Kamuli Municipality to strengthen linkages between pit emptying entrepreneurs and potential clients and to enhance access to safe pit emptying services. In Fort Portal, 30 community meetings were conducted across 30 villages, enabling pit emptying entrepreneurs to secure commitments from several households for sanitation installations and pit emptying services. 67 prospects (individuals and cooperatives) expressed interest, with follow-up assessments planned. The community engagements in Fort Portal city reached 750 participants (338 males and 412 females). A separate meeting was also held with school head teachers, health facility in-charges, representatives from city and district technical teams, and pit emptying operators from Kleanova and Unimax Sanitation Services, during which the companies registered interest from over 10 schools inviting them for assessments for potential emptying services. This meeting involved 40 participants (17 males and 23 females). In Kamuli Municipality, health workers and pit emptying operators conducted community dialogue meetings and focus group discussions across 21 cells. These sessions reached 756 people (326 males and 430 females), contributing to increased awareness of available safe pit emptying services.

2.3.3. Development of viable business Models for Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs)

A stakeholder engagement on Business Models for Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) was held to identify and document feasible management and pricing models, as well as clarify stakeholder roles in sustaining FSTP operations. The workshop brought together representatives from the Ministry of Water and Environment, local governments of Jinja, Buyende, Kamuli, Luuka, service providers in emptying and haulage, the Eastern Umbrella of Water and Sanitation, and Water For People, with a total of 54 participants (13 female, 41 male). Key outputs included agreed emptying rates UGX 250,000 for a single trip and UGX 200,000 for multiple trips within Kamuli; UGX 350,000 single and UGX 250,000 multiple in Buyende, Luuka, and Kaliro and standardized disposal charges at FSTPs set at UGX 5,000 for tuk-tuks and UGX 20,000 for trucks.

2.3.4. Development and Review of Town Sanitation Plans (TSPs)

During the period, significant progress was made in strengthening town sanitation planning. Down Sanitation Plans were completed for Kamuli Municipality, Kayunga Town Council, and Fort Portal City. The Ministry of Water and Environment facilitated the validation processes, after which the plans were disseminated to the respective sanitation task forces and key town stakeholders. The plans for Kayunga and Kamuli were approved and launched by the district while that for Fort Poral City is scheduled to be presented to the City Council for its final approval and formal adoption.

Figure 2.9. The launch of the Kayunga Town Council TSP

2.3.5. Promotion of Sanitation Through the DQ Selling Approach

To boost household uptake of improved sanitation technologies, Water For People partnered with Whitten and Roy Partnership to rollout of the Decision Quotient (DQ) Selling approach across the seven implementation districts. DQ Selling focuses on helping customers make informed and confident decisions based on their needs, rather than pushing a product sale. It emphasizes, customer-centred decision-making, identifying customer problems and designing tailored solutions, building trust and long-term relationships, professionalizing sales beyond traditional transactional models and improving execution and learning from customer interactions.

By the end of September, a total of 183 sanitation facilities had been improved to basic level of service through installation of sato pans and washable floors.

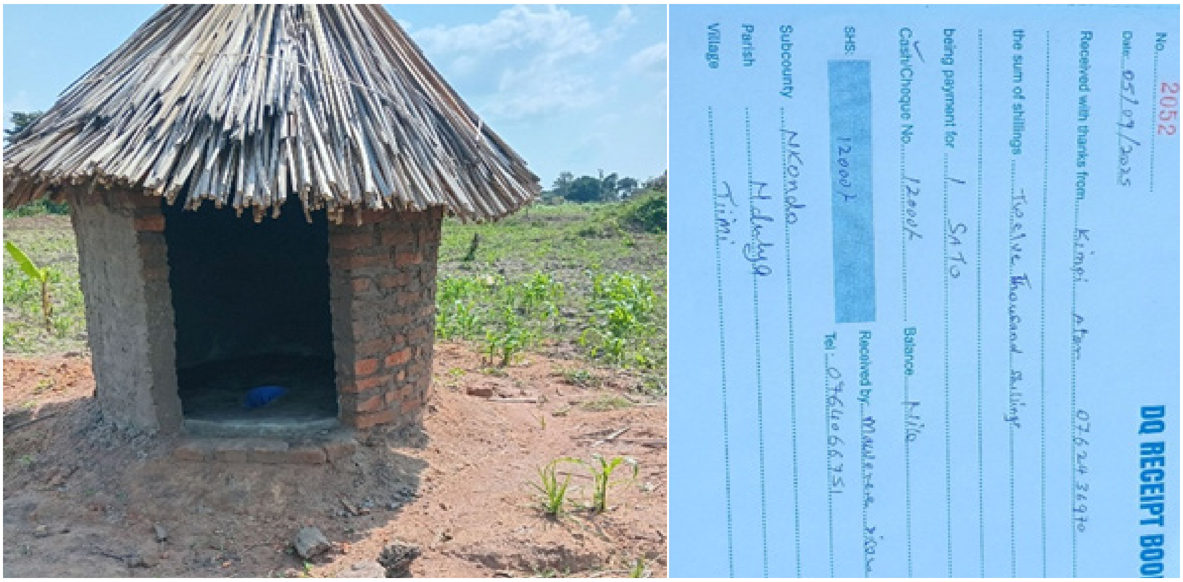


Figure 2.10. Household sanitation improvement through DQ sales approach

2.3.6. Linkage of value chain actors to the communities and institutions that demand emptying services

During the reporting period, linkage meetings were held between pit emptying service providers and the communities/ institutions that demand the service. These engagements started with training of schools and health care facilities on sustainable operation and maintenance of sanitation facilities. The training highlighted that although most institutions have emptiable latrines, lack of clear arrangements for timely and safe pit emptying, would pose risks such as overflowing latrines, unhygienic environments, and increased disease transmission. To address this gap, the project introduced schools to verified pit emptying operators, working closely with the District Health Offices and the private FSM providers.

During the O&M sessions, school stakeholders were sensitized on the importance of scheduled emptying, how to identify approved service providers, the dangers of using informal emptiers, and key considerations such as service standards, disposal practices, and approximate pricing. Schools were given direct contacts for certified service providers, along with guidance on communication, scheduling, and emergency arrangements to ensure that support is accessible whenever needed.

As part of the O&M planning process, each school integrated pit monitoring and emptying into its operation and maintenance plan, including budgeting for routine emptying, defining roles of the SMC and PTA, and establishing simple indicators for when emptying should be carried out

2.3.7. Accelerating pit emptying services through service level agreements in pit emptiers in Kampala

The grant is working with pit emptiers in Kampala under Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to improve how faecal sludge is managed and safely disposed of at designated treatment plants. The goal of these agreements is to increase the volumes of feacal sludge that is safely disposed at the treatment plants by providing incentives to the emptying companies for extra volume of sludge. By formalizing these relationships, we can hold providers accountable and make sure they deliver quality services to households, institutions, and businesses.

During the reporting period, the three main treatment plants—Lubigi, Nalukolongo, and Bugolobi—have received a combined total of 77,289 cubic meters of sludge. This shows how active the private sector has been in supporting urban sanitation. The revenue generated from these operations is totaling UGX 3.88 billion.

Looking at the types of premises served, the numbers are fairly balanced: 7,533 institutions, 7,818 households, and 8,388 commercial properties. This suggests that emptiers are meeting the needs of different customer groups. In terms of company types, cesspool emptiers dominate the market with 20,479 engagements, while gulpers account for 3,260, showing that mechanized emptying is still the preferred method.

3 Partnering with Countries to Transform Sanitation Economies and Menstrual Health Markets

3.1. Strategic engagement and partnerships for market-based sanitation economies and menstrual health markets

3.1.1. Policy Engagement and Partnerships

During the implementation period, the Ministry of Health, in continued partnership with the multistakeholder coordination steering committee comprising the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE), MoES, Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), Water For People, UNICEF, and other implementing partners, advanced the development of Uganda's first standalone Sanitation and Hygiene Policy. Building on the foundation laid in the previous period, efforts were made to ensure the policy translates into tangible outcomes at national and sub-national levels, particularly through increased focus on strengthening coordination, resource mobilization, and integration of cross-cutting issues such as climate adaptation, MHH, gender equity, and private sector participation. The final draft is currently undergoing internal technical reviews at the Ministry of Health. It was approved by the Community Health Technical Working Group and scheduled for approval by the Senior Management Committee. Thereafter more reviews with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the Cabinet Secretariat will be undertaken for final approval. Once approved this will be rolled out to all key sector players for guided implementation.

Furthermore, the MoH finalized and **validated the National Environmental Health Strategy,** designed to strengthen the enabling environment for environmental health service delivery. The strategy has been approved by Community Health Technical Working Group and now scheduled for approval by Senior Management Committee, once approved, this will be rolled out to guide environmental health strategic interventions for reduction of the disease burden.

Finalisation of a WASH inaction study; During this period, the WASH inaction study was completed, highlighting the challenges of inadequate access to WASH services in Uganda and aimed at using the evidence to build an Investments Case (IC) on the required investments and funding. Additionally, key messages and briefs are under development to be used for engagement and influence. In the next period, effort will be placed on development of a presidential compact utilizing facts highlighted in the study report to make a strong influence case.

Launch of National Cleaning Days Initiative: During this reporting period, following approval by the MoH's Technical and Top Management Committees, and endorsement by the Office of the Prime Minister, preparations for the nationwide rollout of the National Cleaning Days initiative was started. The Cabinet of Uganda approved this initiative on 11th August 2025 for country-wide implementation. This is a ‘’ whole of Government ‘’ approach of empowering communities to be responsible for their own health through addressing the social determinants of health.

A detailed implementation framework, protocols and plan were developed, and inter-ministerial consultations commenced to secure full government buy-in. Ongoing is high level media engagement to build up awareness and momentum for the National Launch which is pending confirmation by His Excellency the President of Uganda so that national roll-out is undertaken.

> **Key messages and briefs are under development to be used for engagement and influence. In the next period, effort will be placed on development of a presidential compact utilizing facts highlighted in the study report to make a strong influence case.**

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Environmental Health workers:

The Ministry of Health together with the line Ministries of Water and Environment, Ministry of Education and Sports supported the development of Key Performance Indicators for Environmental Health workers at sub-national level. This was aimed at addressing the weak performance reporting, monitoring mechanisms for environmental health service delivery. Comprehensive environmental health indicators and health inspection tools were developed and are currently being rolled out in the districts for operationalization. Plans are underway to digitize these indicators and tools to enable real-time data collection, integration and visualization for evidence based-decision making at all levels.

Key Learnings

- A standalone sanitation and hygiene policy creates a stronger framework for attracting investments, addressing market failures, and coordinating public-private partnerships.
- Sustained political commitment, resource mobilization, and local government readiness are necessary to translate policy into impact, especially as Uganda accelerates efforts toward universal access to safely managed sanitation and hygiene services.
- Identification and mapping of high interest and high influence offices and persons is critical in "pushing" and influencing for greater allocation for sanitation. and it is a process and message that has to be maintained with provision of facts.

3.1.2. Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

The Ministry of Health has used the expertise of the multi stakeholder coordination committee to steer strategic discussions in the sound development of key sector policies including the National Sanitation Policy and the National Environmental Health Strategy as detailed above.

Below are additional strategic stakeholder engagements conducted to profile sanitation at the national level and country wide; Sanitation week commemorations, 2025: The launch of the National Sanitation Week was presided over by the Hon. Minister of Health- Jane Ruth Achieng , the Permanent Secretary and the State Minister for primary health care, This launch was conducted in Kampala City, in one of the unplanned settlements with a focus on improving the state of the country's sanitation in cities, with a focus on the need for safe solid and fecal waste management if a healthy community will be attained. Additionally, the sanitation week celebrations were held in Sembabule district, and the Hon. Minister- Justine Lumumba for General Duties (Office of the Prime Minister) as the guest of honor to profile the importance of sanitation in the attainment of national health outcomes. A total of approximately 5,000 people were engaged at these events.

The Environmental Health Department in partnership with the Planning, Financing and Policy Department of the Ministry of Health conducted a joint consultative retreat between the Ministry of Health and selected Local Governments to update the Primary Healthcare

(PHC) guidelines and develop the Health Sub program Budget/Grant Implementation guidelines for FY 25/26. There was participation from about 63 stakeholders.

A major outcome of these engagements is the increased and separate allocation for sanitation and hygiene of up to 9% of the PHC Non- wage recurrent grant included in the revised health sub-programme budget implementation guidelines. This will guide districts in planning, allocation and utilization of public funds for implementation of sanitation and hygiene related interventions in communities and health care facilities.

Learnings included:

- The need for collective action and leveraging of resources from several players and entities if major reforms will be made in the sector.
- Particularly for the presidential compact development, there is need for clear targeted message extracts from the Cost of Inaction aimed at "catching" the attention of the highest office including integration messages on WASH and livelihoods, WASH and health, WASH and Education, WASH and security among others
- It is important to align and contribute to national and global processes and frameworks like SWA to have greater impact on sanitation. The cost of inaction study will contribute to development of the presidential compact for Uganda is an outcome of Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)

3.1.3. Knowledge management & research

Using the outcome harvesting approach of documentation, human interest and impact stories have been documented including;

As a result of the training on the 3-Star Approach conducted in July 2024 by Water For People, IRC, and Buyende District Local Government, Kakoge Primary School Management Committee developed a costed WASH action plan. This led to the establishment of a consolidated WASH budget, financed through parental contributions each child per term. By November 2024, the SMC engaged parents in a meeting to review the work plan and agree on key actions, including contributions for WASH operations and hygiene items such as toilet paper. Consequently, the school now has a sustainable mechanism for WASH financing, addressing the gap where over 70% of schools in Buyende previously lacked dedicated budgets for WASH operation and maintenance. This improvement supports a safer and more enabling learning environment, contributing to learner retention and improved academic performance.

Success stories:

<u>Article Merewoma's Journey to Better Sanitation and Community Transformation .pdf.pdf</u>

<u>Article A New Washroom An Exciting Opportunity for Adolescent Girls at Kaboyo Primary School.pdf.pdf</u>

3.1.4. Development and Harmonization of Global Standards

Support the WASH sector with harmonization of WASH indicators to be aligned with the JMP reporting

The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education and Sports with support from SHF grant and other stakeholders, reviewed and updated the "Guide to Monitoring of Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Sector Indicators." The intent of the review and update was to enhance effectiveness in monitoring of WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) in Uganda by aligning national indicators with global frameworks such as the Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) and the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP). The review and update of the WASH monitoring guide culminated into drafting of the policy brief with intent to operationalize the WASH monitoring guide; Key to note from the recommendations presented in the policy brief are;

- Building Human Capacity for WASH M&E (Conduct a national M&E capacity needs assessment, develop standardized M&E training modules and manuals, deliver national and district-level trainings for WASH M&E officers and establish a mentorship and coaching program)
- Operationalizing Routine Programme Monitoring (Integrate WASH indicators into EMIS, HMIS, WEMIS, and UBOS survey tools, develop a centralized, interoperable WASH data dashboard, ensure real-time access for key ministries and LGs, establish data governance and security protocols)

Pursuant to the recommendations presented above, MWE together with MOH conducted capacity building and training of 93 WASH actors on SDG 6.2 in the project districts leveraging the existing Electronic Community Health Information System(eCHIS) and WASH Management Information System (MIS). Additionally, the grant tooled the district with desktop computers with the aim of analyzing the data collected across the villages and reporting routinely to the line ministries to enhance informed decision making.

> **Building Human Capacity for WASH M&E (Conduct a national M&E capacity needs assessment, develop standardized M&E training modules and manuals, deliver national and district-level trainings for WASH M&E officers and establish a mentorship and coaching program)**

3.2. Partnering with countries to transform sanitation economies and menstrual health markets

3.2.1. Validated Assessment Frameworks

The SANMET tool developed by UNOPS has been reviewed by stakeholders in- county. The administration of the tool was completed with the National and Sub National Stakeholders (Fort Portal City and Kabarole district. Additionally, the enterprise tool was also completed and administered.

National dissemination of the revised SANMET tool and report is ongoing. A plan to conduct district level assessments using the tool in the coming period is also in the pipeline.

3.2.2. Investment Analysis and Sector Reform

No update.

3.2.3. Capacity Strengthening in Key Institutions

During this reporting period, effort has been directed towards building and strengthening micro finance institutions in the Eastern region of the country (4 MFIs). General strengthening of the MFI structures resulting in an increase in membership and portfolio growth. Capacity on sanitation product designing and WASH financing has been built- 12 sanitation loan applications are under review for financing. Additionally, lower local governments; towns, municipals and city authorities have been trained on town sanitation planning and regulation to enable sanitation business. Kamuli Municipal has approved sanitation bye- laws as a result of the grant support, to regulate and enable private sector players in sanitation service provision. 07 District local governments have been trained on WASH management information System- sanitation data collection and routine reporting, leading to timely national data update.

3.2.4. Policy and Regulatory Development

During the reporting period, A SWA task force meeting was convened to refine the cost of inaction study including a stakeholder analysis to identify power centers and a pathway to the president's office. A refined report is ready.

3.3. Promoting private sector development and access to finance for long-term market growth

3.3.1. Inclusive Private Sector Development

The program continued to strengthen the sanitation market by supporting enterprises and creating jobs across the value chain. By the end of the reporting period, 1,017 sanitation enterprises had received direct support, and these businesses created 5,058 new jobs, including 765 for women. In just this quarter, an additional 60 enterprises were added to the market and 1,307 new jobs were created, with 151 taken up by women.

This effort contributed to a more vibrant and inclusive sanitation economy where masons, pit diggers, satopreneurs, and supply-chain actors now benefit from increased household demand. Capacity-building played a central role, with 60 masons trained using the

National Sanitation Artisan Curriculum and continuous engagement with bricklayers, sand suppliers, and vocational institutions. By linking artisans to villages where demand had been triggered, the program ensured they could access real business opportunities, helping them grow their enterprises while improving community access to improved sanitation services.

3.3.2. Public-Private Partnerships

The grant strengthened partnerships between local governments, private service providers, and community actors to increase access to sanitation services. In Fort Portal City and Kamuli Municipality, the grant linked private pit emptying companies with households, schools, and health facilities. These activities resulted in 67 potential clients expressing interest in pit emptying services in Fort Portal and over 10 schools requesting on-site assessments.

Additionally, the private sector played a strong role in managing faecal sludge under Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in Kampala, where cesspool truck operators and gulpers collaborated with Kampala Capital City Authority to increase the volume of faceal sludge that is safely disposed at the 03 treatment plants. This quarter, the three treatment plants of Lubigi, Nalukolongo, and Bugoloobi received a total of 77,289 m^3 of sludge, generating UGX 3.88 billion in revenue.

3.3.3. Mobilization of Capital for Sanitation

Efforts to mobilize capital for household sanitation yielded strong results. Since the start of the program, households have invested USD 5,296,232 in constructing or upgrading toilets. In Q3 alone, USD 351,314 was mobilized at community level, with USD 36,418 taken up as sanitation loans.

Through collaborations with AMFIU and four financial institutions of Bugadde SACCO, Bukanga Agali Awamu SACCO, Mbulamuti SACCO, and Development Microfinance Ltd, the grant helped unlock new financing options for households in Kamuli and Luuka. The SACCOs received training, conducted market research, and designed tailored sanitation loan products. 12 sanitation applications worth 8200 USD are in the pipeline under review with loan sizes ranging from UGX 300,000 to UGX 5,000,000, payable over six to twenty-four months.

3.3.4. Increased Access to Finance and Innovative Financing Models

To improve household access to affordable sanitation solutions, the program supported the rollout of innovative financing models, particularly through the SACCO-based sanitation loan products developed with AMFIU. These financial products were designed using insights from market research, ensuring they matched household income patterns and preferred repayment timelines. The interest rate for sanitation loans is at a rate of 1.5% per month which is significantly lower than other credit products at (2.5–3%), making sanitation financing more accessible.

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