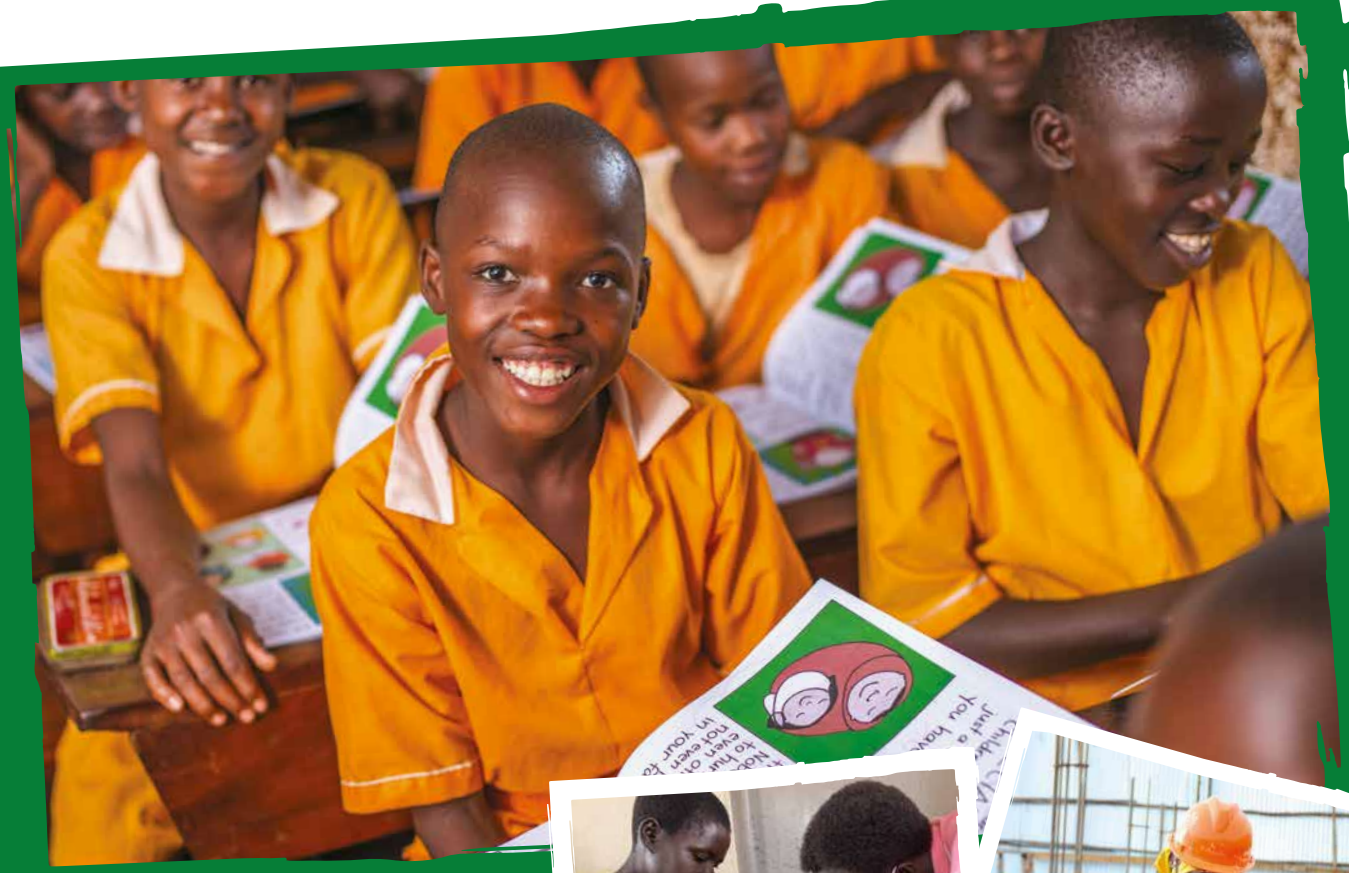
ChildFund
Uganda









# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

www.childfund.org



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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| BTVET | Business Technical Vocational Education and Training |
| CBCP | Community-Based Child Protection |
| CCTs | Center Coordinating Tutor |
| CFA | Child-Friendly Accountability |
| CFPU | Child and Family Protection Unit |
| CMC | Centre Management Committees |
| CoP | Community of Practice |
| CPC | Child Protection Committee |
| CSA | Climate Smart Agriculture |
| DAC | Day of the African Child |
| DEI | Diversity, Equity and Inclusion |
| DIT | Directorate of Industrial Training |
| DDMC | District Disaster Management Committee |
| ECD | Early Childhood Development |
| EGRA | Early Grade Reading Assessment |
| EGMA | Early Grade Mathematics Assessment |
| GBV | Gender-based violence |
| HUMC | Health Unit Management Committee |
| IECD | Integrated Early Childhood Development |
| IGAs | Income Generating Activities |
| LPs | Local Partners |
| MGLSD | Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development |
| MdM | Miles de Manos |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| MOES | Ministry of Education and Sports |
| NACS | Nutrition Assessment Counselling and Support |
| NIECD | National Integrated Early Childhood and Development |
| NACS | Nutritional Assessment Counseling and Support |
| PAC | Post Abortion Care |
| PFA | Psychological First Aid |
| PSEA | Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse |
| PTA | Parents Teachers Association |
| RPPPM | Responsive and Protective Parenting Program Model |
| SAM | Severe Acute Malnutrition |
| SEL | Social and Emotional Learning |
| SMC | School Management Committees |
| SPWO | Single Parent Women's Organization |
| SRHR | Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights |
| TOTs | Trainer of Trainees |
| VAS | Vitamin A Supplementation |
| VHTs | Village Health Teams |
| VSLA | Village Savings and Loans Association |
| WASH | Water Sanitation and Hygiene |
| WYEE | Women and Youth Economic Empowerment |

# Country Director's note



## Dear Supporters,

I am delighted to present our FY23 (July 2022 to June 2023) annual report, reflecting on the remarkable journey we have undertaken together over the past year. Your unwavering support has enabled us to achieve meaningful milestones and I am immensely proud of the impact we have made.

Our commitment to reaching more lives has been at the forefront of our efforts. This year, we intensified our focus on ensuring that our services have a tangible and demonstrable impact on the lives of those we serve. A case in point are two major projects, the Women Youth Economic Empowerment and Resilient Livelihoods Projects that achieved over 100percent success. Through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, we have not only expanded our reach but also provided irrefutable evidence of the positive changes we bring to communities.

Our focus this year has also been on building foundations for climate action, resilience and green jobs for youth. This has been through exploration of new frontiers and opportunities as well as building capacities. Additionally, we dedicated substantial efforts to building foundations for climate action, fostering resilience within communities and creating job opportunities for the youth. By empowering the next generation with sustainable solutions, we are contributing to a more resilient and environmentally conscious future.

Collaboration has always been a cornerstone of our success. This year, we worked tirelessly to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new collaborations. These connections are crucial for sustaining resources and ensuring lasting outcomes. By uniting with like-minded organizations and stakeholders, we amplify our impact and create a stronger foundation for our shared goals.

In a landscape where resources are finite, innovation becomes our ally. Our teams have embraced innovative program delivery approaches such as the Magic Adventure Application, allowing us to do more with less. By fostering a culture of creativity and adaptability, we have implemented solutions that maximize efficiency without compromising the quality and depth of our interventions.

Recognizing the importance of sustainability through local solutions, we continue to strengthen our strategy to support our local partners who are interfacing with the communities daily. We particularly directed more resources towards strengthening their capacities to deliver high quality interventions. Our investment in local expertise ensures that our impact endures, leaving lasting positive effects on the communities we serve.

The above notwithstanding, the ever-changing funding environment poses challenges, but it also offers opportunities for strategic growth. We navigated the volatility by diversifying our funding sources, creating robust contingency plans and enhancing financial sustainability. These measures ensure our ability to weather uncertainties and continue our mission without compromise.

At the heart of our work is protection of children from all forms of violence and abuse. Our commitment to the wellbeing of children remains unwavering. We have reinforced our efforts to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse. Through strengthened safeguards and targeted interventions, we are creating safe spaces where every child can thrive and live up to their full potential.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of this year, let us also look forward with renewed determination. Together we have the power to create lasting change and build a future that is more just, sustainable and compassionate. We cannot thank you more for walking this journey with us.



**MOSES OTAI**

# About Us

ChildFund is a child focused international development organisation that works throughout Africa, Asia and the Americas to connect children with people, resources and institutions they need to grow up safe, healthy, educated and skilled wherever they are.

In Uganda, ChildFund works through nine implementing partners spread over 34 districts, addressing underlying conditions that prevent children and youth from achieving their full potential. Our programs serve thousands of children, families and community members.

# Our Vision

A world in which every child realizes their rights and achieves their potential.

# Our Mission

**Help** deprived, excluded and vulnerable children have the capacity to improve their lives and the opportunity to become young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting and positive change in their communities.

**Promote** societies whose individuals and institutions participate in valuing, protecting and advancing the worth and rights of children.

**Enrich** supporters' lives through their support of our cause.

# Our core values

**Connection:** We build effective partnership and long-lasting relationships through effective communication and being responsive to needs.

**Honesty:** We resolve to be truthful, authentic and follow through our commitments even when situations are uncomfortable and outcomes are unknown.

**Innovation:** We are curious, creative, adaptable and not afraid to try new things using a human-centered design approach as we strive for excellence.

**Learning:** We are an organisation who seeks, analyses and measures the collective voices and experiences of others for continuous support.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility:** We create a culture where the diversity of people, thought and experience are welcomed, celebrated and everyone feels valued.

# Our funding

Our funding comes from a diversified resource base that includes individual donors, local and international donor agencies, foundations, philanthropies, research institutes, the private sector, and other development organizations.



# PROGRAM PRIORITIES



Early Childhood Development



Household Economic Strengthening



Education



Youth Engagement and Participation



Health and Nutrition



Emergency Response



Child Protection



Disaster Risk Reduction



Water Sanitation and Hygiene



Climate Change Adaptation



Food Security



Advocacy

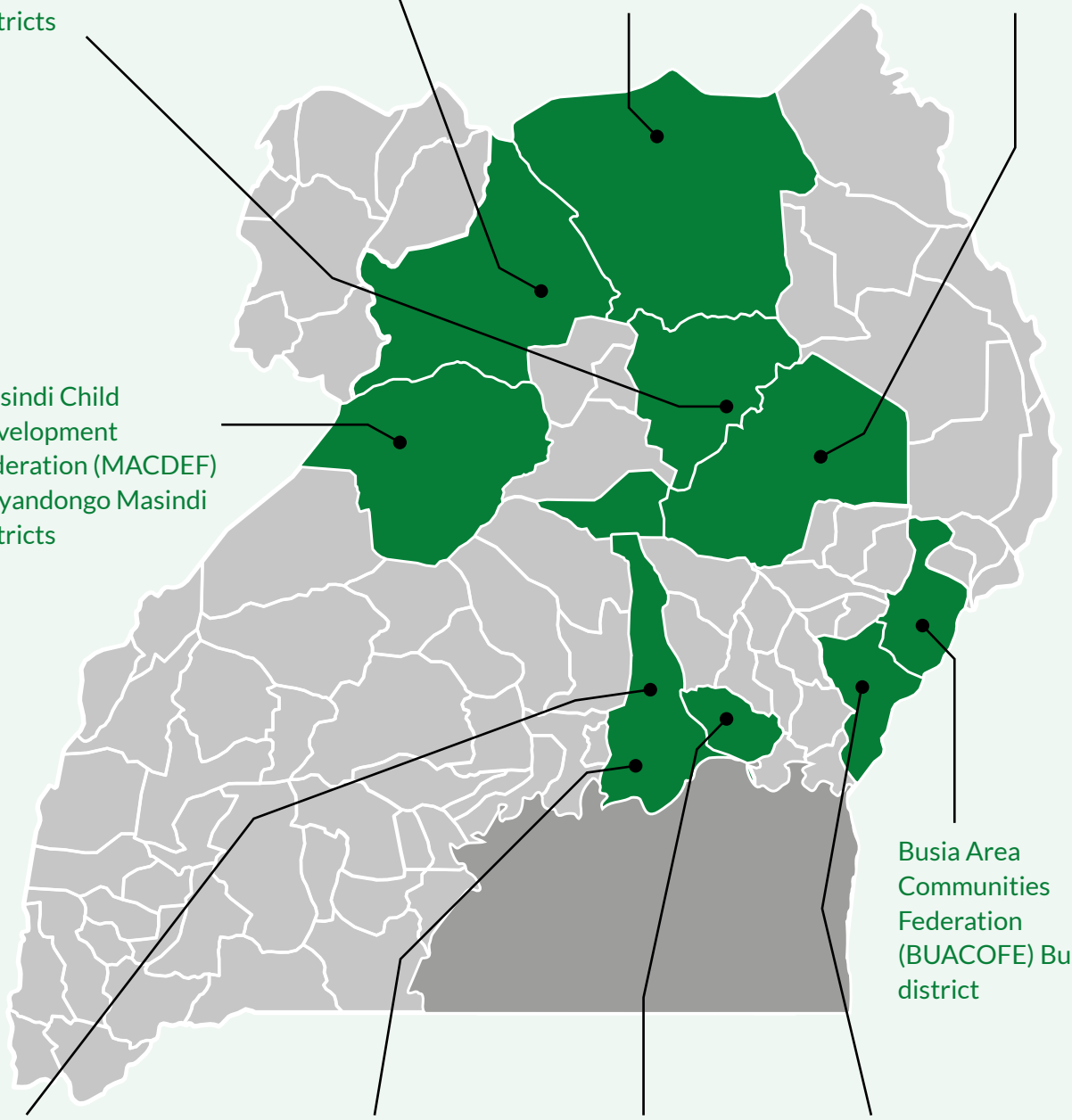
# AREAS OF OPERATION

Lango Child and Community Development Federation (LACCODEF) Dokolo, Kole, Kwania, Lira districts

Building Resilience and Protection Systems (BREPs) project Obongi district

Acholi Child and Famil Program (ACFP) Agago, Gulu, Kitgum districts

Partners for Children Worldwide (PfCW) Amuria, Kaberamaido, Kapelebyong, Katakwi, Serere, Soroti districts



Masindi Child Development Federation (MACDEF) Kiryandongo Masindi districts

Busia Area Communities Federation (BUACOFE) Busia district

Community Efforts for Child Empowerment (CECE) Kyankwanzi, Luwero, Wakiso districts Building Resilience and Protection Systems (BREPs) project Obongi district

Kampala Area Federation of Communities (KAFOC) Kampala, Wakiso districts

Jinja Area Communities Federation (JIACOFE) Jinja, Kamuli, Mayuge districts

Mbale Area Federation of Communities (MAFOC) Budaka, Bulambuli, Butaleja, Butebo, Kibuku, Mbale, Pallisa, Sironko districts

# PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

## Over 5 million

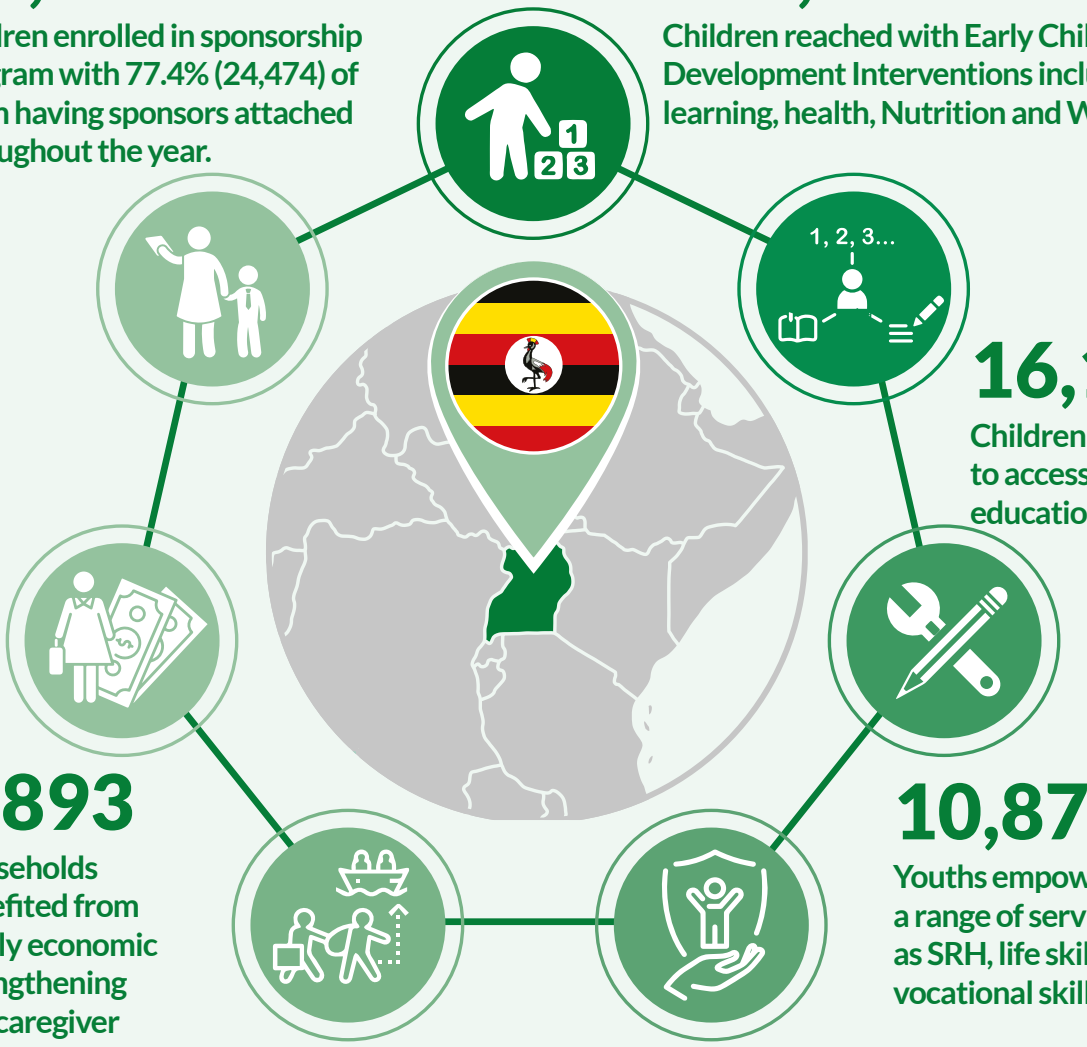
boys, girls, men and women were reached with different programmatic interventions.

**31,629**

children enrolled in sponsorship program with 77.4% (24,474) of them having sponsors attached throughout the year.

**628,206**

Children reached with Early Childhood Development Interventions including early learning, health, Nutrition and WASH.




**16,115**

Children supported to access basic education.

**3,893**

Households benefited from family economic strengthening and caregiver empowerment initiatives.

**10,873**

Youths empowered with a range of services such as SRH, life skills and vocational skills training.

**8,770**

Children and Adult community members reached with refugee response interventions.

**4,698,657**

community members reached through child protection and advocacy interventions.

# 1. HEALTHY AND SECURE INFANTS



The initial stages of childhood represent a critical juncture in a child's developmental journey. This stage serves as the cornerstone that lays the groundwork for the acquisition of essential skills needed for a successful transition into adulthood. This phase not only shapes individual capacities but also establishes the foundational elements that are crucial for educational success, economic productivity, responsible citizenship, lifelong health, vibrant community life and effective parenting for subsequent generations.

Recognising the significance of this developmental window, ChildFund has strategically devised and executed interventions with the explicit goal of enhancing the cognitive, social and physical capabilities of children aged 0-8 years within targeted communities. These interventions were implemented in a collaborative manner with different stakeholders who provided technical support during the entire project cycle. Below are highlights of the major interventions.

## 1.1 Promotion of responsive and protective parenting practices

ChildFund strives to give children 0-5 years the best start in life through creating a stimulating environment by influencing the parents to take appropriate behaviors at the household level. In collaboration with four implementing partners ACFP-Agago, Gulu, Kitgum districts, MACDEF-Kiryandongo, Masindi districts, BUACOFE-Busia district and PFCW-Amuria, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, Kapelebyong, Serere and Soroti districts, we implemented the Responsive and Protective Parenting Program Model (RPPPM) in the above 12 districts. This entailed capacity building of local community volunteers to engage parents of children 0-5 years in parenting sessions. A total of 1,512 caregiver sessions were conducted where 2833 parents (1846F, 987M) organized in groups of 25-30 parents attended. Some positive changes are arising out of these parenting engagements. Reflective supervisions were conducted to share strategies for improving implementation of the model. A total of 450 males and 1259 females attended. One of the major lessons was that RPPM, when integrated into other programs such as VSLA, can generate a significant impact in influencing child well-being outcomes at the household level including child early learning, nutrition and protection from abuse.

For instance, in Kitgum, RPPPM facilitators are consulted for resolving gender-based violence (GBV) challenges, contributing to protecting children from abuse arising from parental violence. In Masindi, men have changed their attitudes and currently support their wives by soothing their shoulders during breastfeeding sessions. In Busia, parents attending RPPPM sessions have been influenced to take their children 3-5 years to ECD centers at the appropriate age.



## 1.2 Training caregivers in Early Learning Centers

ChildFund facilitated the selection and training of 203 (102F:101M) centre management committees (CMC) members on Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) and on their roles in managing ECD centres. The training strengthened the management skills of the CMCs and overall operations of ChildFund supported ECD Centres in Mbale, Wakiso, and Luwero districts. Relatedly, a total of 152 (82F:70M) members of the Centre Management Committees, IECD committee, and ECD caregivers in Soroti, Katakwi, Serere, Kumi, Kole, Kwania and Dokolo districts have been mentored by local government education officers on the management of ECD centres, learning assessment methods, and first aid provision.

## 1.3 ECD infrastructure development at the early learning centers

A favourable learning environment was created through the provision of infrastructure for ECD centres. This included construction, renovation, and equipment which is crucial in ensuring a conducive learning environment. One ECD Centre has been renovated in Masindi while furniture was provided to seven centres in Kole, Kwania and Dokolo districts. A total of 13 ECD centres were also supported with play and leaning materials in Mbale area.



## 1.4 Community engagements on ECD

Parental involvement in ECD has a significant impact on its success. A total of **3983 parents (2202F:1781M:)** were mobilized and sensitized on the value of integrated ECD, participation in centre management, and transition management for children. To date, parents support their children in the ECD Centres across six local partners (Acholi, Soroti, Lango, Jinja, Masindi and Kiboga) in feeding and providing stipends for ECD teachers.



## 1.5 Strengthened Transition Management for Children

The activity was aimed at creating awareness of the importance of early learning and sensitizing parents on their role in ensuring that children learn during the next level of the education progress. ChildFund trained ECD caregivers and lower primary teachers in transition management in the 16 ECD centres in Mbale, Soroti and Masindi districts. Sixteen monitoring visits were conducted to ensure adequate preparation for the transition. *A total of 1,025 children (424M:611F) were able to transition from ECD centres to primary schools.*



## 1.6 Improve Water Access, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH)

ChildFund facilitated the establishment of operational water user committees in 35 schools to ensure the water facilities are maintained and serviced. This was accomplished by conducting refresher training sessions for both existing and new committee members, with a total of 294 community members actively participating in these sessions. Additionally, six boreholes were drilled to serve neighbouring schools, health facilities and communities, involving the participation of 228 community members. In the same period, ChildFund supported 62 schools, ensuring their access to safe water through the rehabilitation of nearby gravity flow schemes.

## 1.7 Support adoption of recommended family health care practices:

ChildFund strengthened family healthcare practices to enhance nutritional habits in households, particularly targeting children aged 0-59 months. This involved supporting practices like nutritional assessment counseling and support (NACS). The approach included quarterly mentorship sessions conducted with health workers and community volunteers (VHTs) to educate them on suitable nutrition practices. This encompassed nutrition demonstrations and referral of critical health cases for medical attention.

In this context, a total of 228 VHTs (182F:46M) underwent training and mentorship on NACS, reaching and supporting 1553 households to receive NACS services. Additionally, 43 acutely malnourished children were identified and referred to health facilities for specialized facility-based care. The NACS interventions also addressed other services such as family planning, hygiene and sanitation, malaria, and timely healthcare seeking for sick infants as part of a comprehensive package.

## 1.8 Promoted community participation in healthcare delivery:

The engagement and enthusiastic participation of regular citizens represent an efficient and enduring approach to provide healthcare services. The engagement and enthusiastic participation of regular citizens represent an efficient and enduring approach to provide healthcare services. Quarterly reflection sessions were organized for community health structures, including Village Health Teams (VHTs), Health Unit Management Committees (HUMCs), and health workers, to ensure the incorporation of community perspectives and effective strategies for enhancing service delivery. In FY23, a total of 128 HUMC members (46F:79M) attended these reflection meetings. Empowered and knowledgeable HUMCs and VHTs initiated dialogue sessions with 816 local community members, focusing on fostering ownership and implementing improved approaches to service delivery.

## 1.9 Supported access to health care services in critically underserved & hard to reach communities:

ChildFund focused on enhancing maternal and child health services in hard-to-reach communities, with the primary goal of ensuring the safe delivery of mothers and newborns in health facilities. Okole Health Centre III in, Kole district, received support in the form of delivery equipment, including a delivery bed and two sets of delivery kits. This intervention significantly improved the safety of deliveries for mothers, subsequently encouraging neighboring communities to choose the facility for childbirth.

In Dokolo district, ChildFund reconstructed the outpatient ward at Kangai Health Centre III that had been damaged by a heavy rainstorm that had blown off the roof, rendering the population inaccessible to medical care. According to health center reports, over 100 people seek medical care daily from this facility. To bring healthcare services closer to hard-to-reach communities, integrated outreaches were carried out in Kyankwanzi district. During these outreaches, 1,611 children (1010F:601M) were immunized, and caregivers received education on appropriate infant feeding practices, along with encouragement for timely healthcare seeking for sick infants at health facilities. Medical examinations were conducted on 13,812 children (9532F:6280M), revealing 464 children (189F:275M) with medical ailments requiring specialized care at higher health facilities. These cases, predominantly related to malaria with severe anemia, were referred and treated accordingly. Notably, some districts in the Lango and Elgon subregions reported an increase in malaria cases, with a few declaring epidemics.



## 1.10 Grant Funded Early Childhood Development projects

ChildFund implemented two grants; **'Come Play with Me'** funded by the LEGO Foundation and **Early Childhood Care and Education improvement project,** funded by ChildFund Korea. Below is a summary of activities implemented by each grant.

## Come Play with Me

**"Come Play with Me,"** was a one-year cross-country initiative funded by the Lego Foundation. It aimed to enhance playful parenting practices and facilitate growth and learning in children aged 0-8, primarily through remote and hybrid (remote + in-person) activities. Various approaches, such as radio broadcasts, EduTabs, and Megaphones, were utilized alongside in-person activities to engage participants and convey educational and health messages in a playful manner.

## The project's key accomplishments are outlined below.

## Caregivers trained in crafting play and learning materials using local resources:

Besides distributing various indoor play and learning materials to 3600 households, a total of 4382 caregivers underwent training on developing play and learning materials using locally available resources such as fiber. This training empowered parents to comprehend and value the significance of play, with feedback indicating that the materials significantly supported the play and development of their children across all domains.

## Caregivers trained in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Community-Based Facilitators successfully cascaded Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) training to 4539 parents, aiming to enhance self-awareness, self-protection, and social interactions among children and caregivers.









## Caregivers trained in Covid-19 prevention and integrated health and protection services

ChildFund raised awareness about COVID-19 prevention among caregivers, integrating key messages such as handwashing, wearing of face masks and taking up vaccination. Dissemination of these messages was integrated into other health services, including routine immunization, birth registration awareness, child protection, and referral information.



## Development of assorted radio spot messages:

A set of 25 spot messages on early childhood development and playful parenting were created and aired daily on local radio stations, reaching an estimated listenership of 51,124 parents in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum, and Obongi.

## Distribution of educative materials to caregivers:

In collaboration with the National Curriculum Development Centre, ChildFund Uganda developed, printed, and distributed 3,000 copies of educative short story books, riddles, action song books and parent boost guides. These materials promoted a culture of parents reading stories to their children and were also audio-recorded for parents who couldn't read, played on solar-powered radios.



## Distribution of 900 Edutabs with play and learning materials:

ChildFund uploaded audio and visual play and learning materials on 900 tablets for use by children and caregivers, supporting cognitive, social, and language development.

Provision of 1000 solar-powered radios and flash disks:

ChildFund procured and distributed 1,000 flash disks with audio play and learning content, improving early years stimulation and playful parenting when played on the distributed radios.



## 1.10 Early Childhood Care and Education Improvement Project

The Early Childhood Care and Education Improvement project, funded by ChildFund Korea and implemented in Busia, focuses on enhancing access to quality center-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) services for children and building the income-generating capacity of caregivers to meet their children's basic needs. The following summarizes the activities conducted during the FY:

## Capacity Strengthening of Community-Based Facilitators:

A total of thirty community facilitators (12F:18M) received mentoring and support to effectively conduct parenting sessions. Supervision and monthly review meetings were conducted by Project staff and Subcounty Health Inspectors, strengthening the facilitators' abilities to deliver responsive and protective parenting sessions in all 24 caregiver groups.

## Facilitation of Parenting Education Sessions:

Community facilitators, with support from the District Health department, conducted 376 parenting sessions among twenty-four caregiver groups in Busia district.

A total of 601 caregivers (420F:181M) of 647 children aged 0-5 years received parenting messages, contributing to an improvement in parenting knowledge and practices from 54.5% at baseline to 75.5% at midline.

## Training on Village Savings and Loaning Associates (VSLA) Approach:

A total of 156 caregivers (124F:32M) underwent training in the Village Savings and Loans Association methodology. Significant improvement in savings and access to loans was observed among caregivers, with twenty-four groups cumulatively saving UGX 39,235,900 (USD 10,604.29) and accessing loans totalling UGX 43,573,000 (USD 11,776.5). The success of the saving culture is attributed to commitment to investing in their group income generating activities.




> ***"From the money borrowed from the VSLA, I have been able to start a business of selling dry cassava which helps me support my family,"*** Olive, a single mother from Notoola Soluya Group in Buhasaba Community testifies.



*Mary received sh300,000 to start a kiosk. The money has empowered her to earn a living and fend for her children in school.*

## In-Kind Grants for Business Start-up and Growth:

Relatedly, a total of 156 caregivers (123F:32M) were supported with in-kind grants for business startup and growth, receiving between UGX 120,000 (USD 32.4) to 150,000 (USD 40.5) based on their investment needs. Caregivers engaged in small businesses, expanding their outlook, and are benefiting from connections to other development agendas by the government, aimed at linking the rural people into the money economy.

## Equipping ECD Centers with Play and Learning Materials:

ChildFund provided indoor play and learning materials to Butula and Buyengo A ECD centers. Working with the National Curriculum Development Centre, the organisation developed an assortment of indoor materials for the two EDC Centres.

ECD caregivers were supported to develop play materials using locally available resources, benefitting 168 children (83F:85M) in promoting early stimulation and learning among children aged 3-5.

## Quarterly Supervision and Mentorship for ECD Caregivers and Lower Primary School Teachers:

Center Coordinating Tutors and Inspectors provided quarterly support, supervision, and mentorship for teachers of lower primary and ECD caregivers in the sixteen supported ECD centers and twenty primary schools. A total of 8436 children (2350 from ECD centers and 6080 from lower primary schools) benefited from this activity.

## Training ECD Caregivers and Teachers on Effective Teaching Practices:

A total of 43 ECD caregivers (41F:2M) were trained on the ECD learning framework and emergent literacy, focusing on literacy teaching skills. The training covered areas such as scheming and lesson planning, adherence to the daily routine, and effective use of sessions like morning cycles for teaching literacy.



## The Vitamin A Supplementation Project

From November 2022 to June 2023, ChildFund received funding from Nutrition International to support the Ministry of Health in carrying out mop-up campaigns for Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS). The objective was to increase Vitamin A supplementation coverage in the 13 districts of Central and Western Uganda. ChildFund took on the responsibility of managing the funds. Through this project, over 600,000 children under the age of five received vitamin A supplementation.



*10 weeks old Angela being vacinated at a clinic in Katakwi District.*

## Networking and Partnerships

ChildFund established and strengthened partnerships with Early Childhood Development (ECD) stakeholders at national and local levels, collaborating with Ministries of Education, Health and other government departments and agencies. At national level, the project worked with National Curriculum Development Centre to develop several play and learning materials like educative short stories, action songs, puzzles and riddles for children aged 3-8 years.

The project actively participated in the ECD Community of Practice (CoP) chaired by the Ministry of Education and Sports, advocating for reinforcing parents' capacity in playful parenting practices.

ChildFund has been an active ECD Community of Practice (CoP) member. This CoP chaired by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), brings together all organizations in the country that implement play-based pedagogy. Whereas the Ministry and the other partners focused mainly on play-based learning at schools, ChildFund Uganda used the platform to advocate for the need to reinforce the capacity of parents on playful parenting practices.

# 2. EDUCATED AND CONFIDENT CHILDREN



## Promoting Basic Education

ChildFund's basic education program is a crucial component of our strategy to intervene in the lives of children aged 6 to14. The education program aims to contribute to ensuring that children not only attend school but also stay in school and achieve good academic performance. ChildFund implemented various strategic interventions to create child-friendly learning environments, promote literacy and numeracy skills, participatory school governance, household economic strengthening, and capacity strengthening for stakeholders.

## 2.1 Education Awareness Campaigns

ChildFund conducted 70 awareness sessions on the role of parents/caregivers in children's education in the districts of Kole, Kwania, and Dokolo in Lango subregion, as well as Mayuge, Jinja, and Kamuli in Busoga subregion. A total of 5,694 parents (2908F:2786M) participated in these sessions. The aim was to emphasize the roles and responsibilities of caregivers/families in fostering positive personal and family values in children.

## 2.2 Supported Development of Communication and Oral-Language Competences:

In a comprehensive effort, a total of 57 schools (24 in Kole, Kwania, and Dokolo, 3 in Kyankwanzi, 2 in Luwero, 4 in Kampala-Wakiso, 16 in Soroti, and 8 in Gulu) engaged in nurturing communication and oral-language competence among 4,089 learners. Initiatives included reading, writing, spelling bee competitions, quizzes, and debating competitions coordinated with the respective district education offices, promoting language skills and effective communication.

## 2.3 Promoted Early Grade Reading and Mathematics:

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) learning approaches were conducted during holidays.

A total of 72 sessions in the communities of Buwaaya, Buwenge, Buwuda, Kamuli, and Imanyiro in Busoga subregion were conducted. Teachers were equipped with innovative tools to enhance early literacy skills among learners. A total of 3,141 learners benefited from this program. Community staff engagement revealed that learners in lower primary demonstrated the ability to read, write, and attempt simple arithmetic.



*Teacher Nyadoi shares a light moment with pupils before lessons.*

Additionally, a total of 1,947 children in Katakwi and Masindi districts received learning materials and sanitary towels, enabling them to access educational resources both in schools and at home.

A total of 240 teachers successfully trained in thematic, transition, child-centred learning, code of conduct, and subject-based curriculum in Gulu, Soroti and Lango. This will empower them to provide high-quality education. The setting of assessment materials equally strengthened the capacity of 251 teachers in the same areas.

## 2.4 Building Capacity in Psychological First Aid Provision

The objective of Psychological First Aid (PFA) is to offer immediate, practical, and empathetic assistance to individuals who have undergone a crisis, traumatic incident, or significant stress. PFA aims to enhance the short-term and long-term mental and emotional well-being of children, youth, and caregivers by addressing their fundamental psychological needs and fostering resilience. Staff from four implementing partners underwent training as trainers in providing psychological first aid in Busia, Jinja, Lango, Kampala, and Gulu. They then disseminated this training to 168 diverse stakeholders.

## 2.5 Engagement of Education Stakeholders in Children's Learning

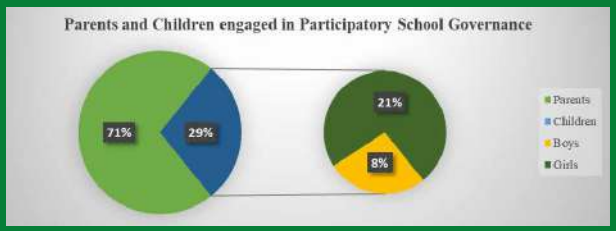
Collaborating with District Inspectors of Schools and Center Coordinating Tutors in Dokolo, Kole, Kwania, Gulu, and Busia districts, a total of 82 support supervision visits were conducted in 43 supported schools. These sessions involved discussions on school academic performance, drawing lessons, and making recommendations for improvement. Additionally, 38 feedback meetings were organized to disseminate action plans for enhancing the overall learning environment for pupils in the supported schools. Furthermore, 94 termly education stakeholders' forums were held in the districts of Dokolo, Kole, Kwania, Gulu, and Busia, providing a platform for key stakeholders, including DIS/CCTs, SMT/PTA, teachers, pupils, and parents, to engage in discussions about school performance.



*Kaudha helps her daughter Lairat with homework. This helps them bond further.*

## 2.6 Promotion of Participatory School Governance:

In the pursuit of cultivating child-friendly learning environments, ChildFund's primary intervention has been facilitating dialogues between parents and pupils on children's learning at the school level. The goal is to actively involve parents and pupils in the educational process. A total of 32 dialogue meetings took place in 32 schools in Busia and Mbale districts. This signifies a strong commitment to engaging parents and pupils in the education of children, with 1,126 parents and 448 children actively participating in participatory school governance.






*Commissioner Basic Education and other Ministry officials upon launching the Education for Protection and Wellbeing program at the Ministry of Education and Sports headquarters in Kampala.*

## 2.7 Roll-out of the Education for Protection and Wellbeing (EPW) Program Model

ChildFund's comprehensive Education for Protection and Wellbeing (EPW) Program model was introduced at the Ministry of Education and Sports and is currently undergoing a trial run in Luubu and Bishop Hannington Primary Schools in Mayuge district. The model empowers children to actively engage in classroom lessons or extra-curricular activities, fostering the development of social and emotional skills, as well as self-protection skills. This equips them to safeguard themselves and others from harm while simultaneously enhancing their learning competencies.

The program focuses on reinforcing children's resilience by imparting skills such as effective communication, relationship-building, and knowledge about various forms of violence, protection measures, and appropriate responses. Notably, the model extends its reach to both adults and children, including teachers and caregivers. Employing the Miles de Manos methodology, which signifies "it takes 1000 hands to protect children," caregivers and educators are guided through proven strategies aimed at reducing the risks of Violence Against Children by fostering behaviour change.

During the reporting period, a total of 410 primary 3 and 4 children in Luubu and Bishop Hannington Primary Schools benefited from Social and Emotional Learning/Self-Protection (SEL/SP) sessions. Additionally, 410 caregivers, 26 community facilitators, and 30 teachers participated in Miles de Manos (MdM) sessions.

# 3. SKILLED AND INVOLVED YOUTH



*Brenda, attained vocational skills in Building and Concrete Practice*

ChildFund's initiative to provide young people with vocational and entrepreneurial skills is driven by the recognition that youth form the largest segment of the population in the country. They often grapple with high rates of school dropout and face unemployment due to a lack of necessary skills, resulting in a lack of reliable sources of livelihood. To address this issue, ChildFund collaborated with 8 implementing partners in the program areas of Kampala, Jinja, Mbale, Busia, Soroti, Lango, Masindi, and Kiboga, achieving the following outcomes.

## 3.1 Vocational and Technical Skills:

A total of 3,076 out-of-school youth underwent career guidance and counselling to help them make informed choices regarding non-exploitative work. Among them, 741 youth who displayed a keen interest in vocational skills received training in areas such as carpentry, metal fabrication, apiary, hairdressing, cosmetology, catering, bricklaying, concrete practice, motor vehicle mechanics, and driving. This training utilized the artisan and institutional youth skilling models. The youth apprentices underwent assessment based on the DIT curriculum before being equipped with startup tools.





*(From left to right) Joyce, who now owns a saloon was trained in hair-dressing while Agnes learnt skills in weaving.*

## 3.2 Youth Sexual Reproductive Health Promotion:

The organisation implemented initiatives to reinforce community systems, facilitating the mobilization of youths and adolescents to access health services and commodities from health facilities. ChildFund also established platforms for disseminating standardized messages to positively influence their behaviour. Recognizing that youths and adolescents encounter stigma arising from structural barriers at health facilities, ChildFund collaborated with health facility staff and youths to foster connections for the collaborative implementation and support of sexual reproductive health programs.

A total of 129 Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) peer educators from 7 ChildFund implementing partners underwent training to reach out to a broader audience of adolescents and youths in the community, providing a comprehensive package of SRH services. Supported by 86 health facilities, these trained SRH peer educators conducted integrated SRH outreaches. At the community level, 10,273 youths were reached with SRH services and commodities, while 2,161 (1,321F: 840M) youths and adolescents accessed services at the health facility level. The SRH package encompassed health education, HIV/AIDS testing, mental health, psychosocial support/counselling, STI screening and treatment, vaccination, distribution of SRH commodities, drug abuse management, Post Abortion Care (PAC), growth monitoring, among others.

## 3.3 Sexual Reproductive Health and Life Skills

ChildFund's programs for youth focused on strengthening community systems to mobilize youths and adolescents to access health services, create platforms for sharing standard messages to influence behavior and address stigma challenges arising from structural barriers at health facilities. Additionally, ChildFund engaged health facility staff in joint sessions to connect and collaborate for the joint implementation and support of sexual reproductive health programs.

Thus, in FY23, 129 SRH peer educators from 7 ChildFund implementing partners were trained to reach out to the wider adolescents and youth in the community with a package of SRH services. During the same period, 86 Health facilities supported and trained SRH peer educators to conduct integrated SRH outreaches where 2873 (4894F, 3216M) youth and adolescents were reached with SRH services and commodities at the community level while 2161 youth and adolescents accessed services at the health facility level.

By the end of FY23, a total of 10,217 youths had accessed services within ChildFund's sexual reproductive health programs. As part of empowering females to address their SRH aspects, 40 girls in MACDEF were trained on making reusable sanitary pads during FY23. This intervention was later extended to 1,150 females, enabling them to make their own reusable sanitary pads. A package of sexual reproductive health services includes SRH Health education, HIV/AIDS testing, mental health, psychosocial support/counselling, STI screening and treatment, vaccination, distribution of commodities for SRH, drug abuse management, Post abortion care (PAC), growth monitoring, among others.



*A nurse immunizes Martha's (right) baby while Nambooze (left) awaits antenatal care.*

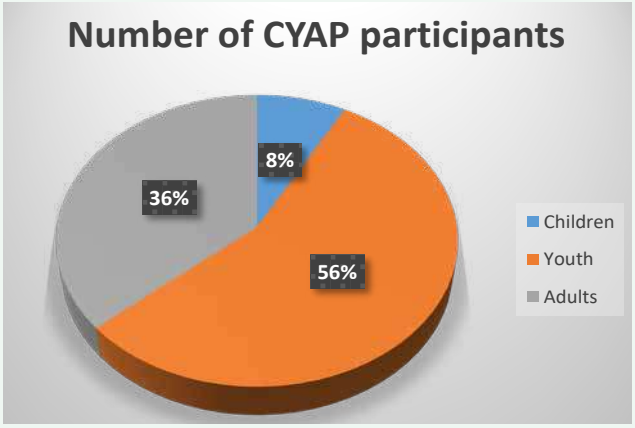


*Youth in Budaka who have now become peer educators hold a session on how to support their peers attain sexual reproductive health services.*

## 3.4 Promotion of youth community civic engagements and leadership:

ChildFund also promoted youth community civic engagements and leadership through the Voice Now initiative. This involved forming youth groups, building their capacity to initiate discussions, generate solutions, identify resources, and engage duty bearers for action. A total of 990 youths in program areas such as Lango, Masindi, Kampala, Kiboga, and Jinja participated in 12 community outreaches and 3 radio talk shows, addressing topics like youth participation, self-help initiatives, challenges of teenage pregnancy, life skills, safety, protection, and climate change action.

***Children and Youth-Adult Partnership (CYAP):***




The CYAP initiative was developed in lieu of the cultural norms in which young people and adults discriminate against each other during community development actions. This initiative is aimed at fostering a positive relationship, in which both young people and adults view each other as allies of positive change. The youth tap the experience and wisdom of adults, while the adults tap on the zeal, innovation, and vigor of young people to have a collective outcome of community development. ChildFund therefore worked with 5 implementing partners in Mbale, Kampala, Busia, Jinja and Acholi to roll out this initiative. The Children and youth executive committees were facilitated to conduct 20 dialogue sessions between young people and Adults, reaching a total of 305 participants constituting 24 children, 170 youths and 111 adults. The participant reach is indicated in the chart above.

## 3.5 Resilient Livelihoods project:

The Resilient Livelihoods project, funded by BMZ, spans three years and was implemented in the Teso and Lango sub regions. It aimed to tackle elevated rates of youth unemployment, insufficient household income, food insecurity, and environmental degradation through the implementation of climate-resilient agriculture and vocational skills development. The project was designed to benefit 800 farming households and 400 youths across four districts, namely Katakwi, Amuria, Serere, and Dokolo.

***Key achievements include;***

- 840 farmers (380F:460M) trained in climate-resilient farming methods.
- 400 youths trained in vocational and entrepreneurship skills.
- 4 district local governments and 6 sub counties trained in Disaster risk reduction.


A maize huller installed in Aakum Community in Soroti program area

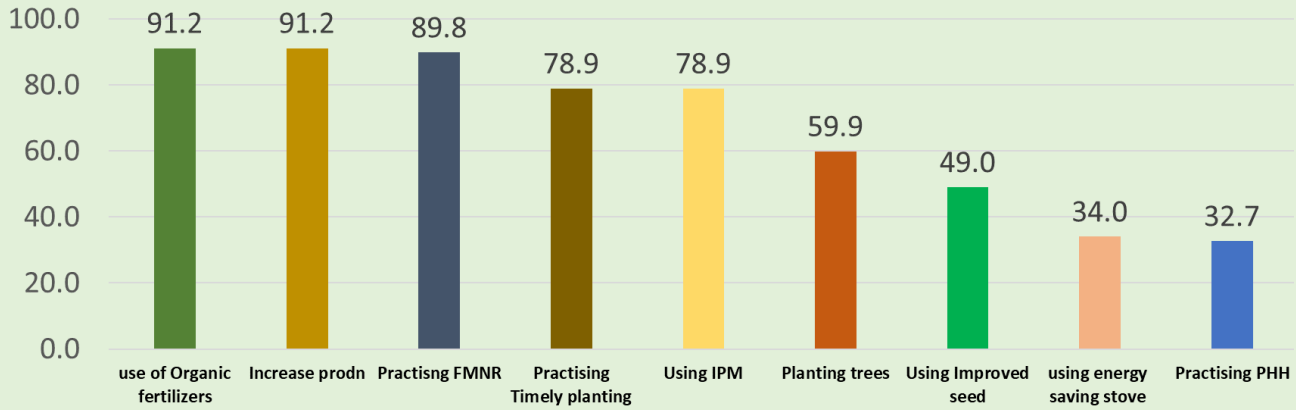
*"This year 2023, I have considered integrating crop farming with rearing and that's why I decided to go for poultry as a business. This is because I know my maize brand will help in supplying feeds for the chicken"*, said Simon-one of the project participants.

*"I am very happy that the project supported me with 350,000 at a critical time I lost hope, I began to slaughter goats in our center and at least I can now get profits daily and support my family to buy basic needs and save for the family"* notes Otengei Emasia.

*Farmers have since adopted different Climate Smart Agriculture practices.*



**Climate Smart Agriculture adoption among Farmers**



# CULTIVATING SUCCESS FROM HARDSHIP





At 25, Opio may seem to have it all, but his journey is a testament to the enduring spirit of hard work and overcoming challenges.

Born into a family of eight, Opio and his siblings faced one challenge after another. The tough days were when the family was unable to have a meal.

Despite completing his Primary Seven education, Opio ventured into constructing grass-thatched huts, but this did not yield much since he got a meagre income of sh5,000 ($1.3) occasionally.

This income was insufficient to meet his basic needs, leaving him without soap, proper clothes, and lacking medical care when he fell ill.

Recognizing the challenges faced by youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, Opio was identified and enrolled in a micro-enterprise development training program. This led him to pursue a six-month training program in Horticulture and Animal Husbandry at Bobi Polytechnics in Lira district. His journey into agriculture began with an internship at Alito C&D, where he gained hands-on experience.

"I cultivate a variety of crops, including tomatoes, onions, carrots, green peppers, eggplants, watermelon, passion fruits, and cabbage. I have also ventured into poultry farming, with a total of 111 birds, and I am actively involved in piggery," he says.

Opio's determination to improve his living conditions led him to sell seven pigs, using the proceeds to purchase iron sheets for building his house.

Opio takes pride in his agricultural endeavors, selling his produce at nearby markets such as Kabalega and Agaya. His earnings reflect his hard work, with watermelon alone bringing in approximately sh300,000 to sh500,000 ($130), and onions fetching sh120,000 per sack. His records book shows a significant achievement of sh2,000,000 ($523) as his highest earnings.

Beyond personal success, Opio has expanded his impact by training youth in his village on horticulture and animal husbandry, earning him the title of a consultant for his voluntary service to the community.

"Despite the achievements, there are challenges of harsh climate conditions, such as prolonged sunshine that affects crop growth. Because I do not have a nearby water source, fetching water from the distant borehole for irrigation has become an uphill task," he says, adding that he plans to buy a water tank for efficient irrigation.

Opio's dedication to hard work and persistence transformed his life, and he no longer idles around the village.

"In future, I plan to establish a large-scale farm, integrating horticulture, poultry, and piggery projects," As a beneficiary of the ongoing government program, Parish Development Model, Opio intends to use the funds to construct a bigger chicken house and further expand his agricultural endeavors.

## 3.6 Women and Youth Economic Empowerment (WYEE Project):

The WYEE project was created to address the prevalent issues of teenage pregnancy and unemployment among girls and women. Supported by The Coca Cola Foundation, ChildFund executed a 15-month initiative focused on providing vocational and entrepreneurship skills to teenage mothers, youths, and women in the districts of Amuria, Katakwi, Serere, and Dokolo. The project placed particular emphasis on imparting non-conventional skills such as crafts-making, apiary, horticulture, weaving, and textile, among others. The project targeted 440 participants, including Mary and Rebecca, featured in the photos below.





*(From left to right) Mary and Marita received sh640,000 ($167) each to startup businesses. Mary setup a kiosk while Marita ventured in selling shoes.*

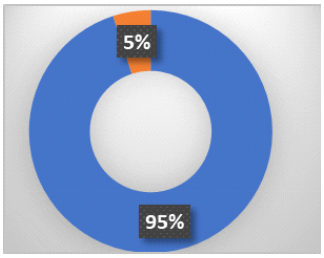
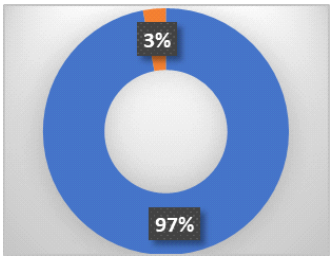
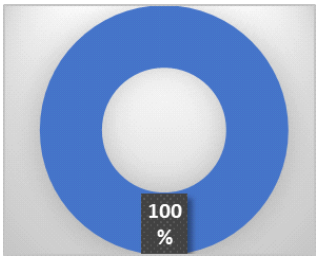
*Below is a cross section of teenage mothers selling a range of food items at Kabalega market in Dokolo district.*



***Key results***

- 240 women were trained in Climate smart agriculture.
- 100 youths were trained in non-conventional vocational skills.
- 100 teenage mothers were trained in entrepreneurship and business development.

***The figure below shows the extent to which the project participants are applying acquired knowledge and skills.***

| Youth (N=100) | Teenage Mothers (N=100) | Women (N=240) |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |



Applying skills Not applying skills



*Participants and their achievements*




*Some of the creations from the teenage mothers.*



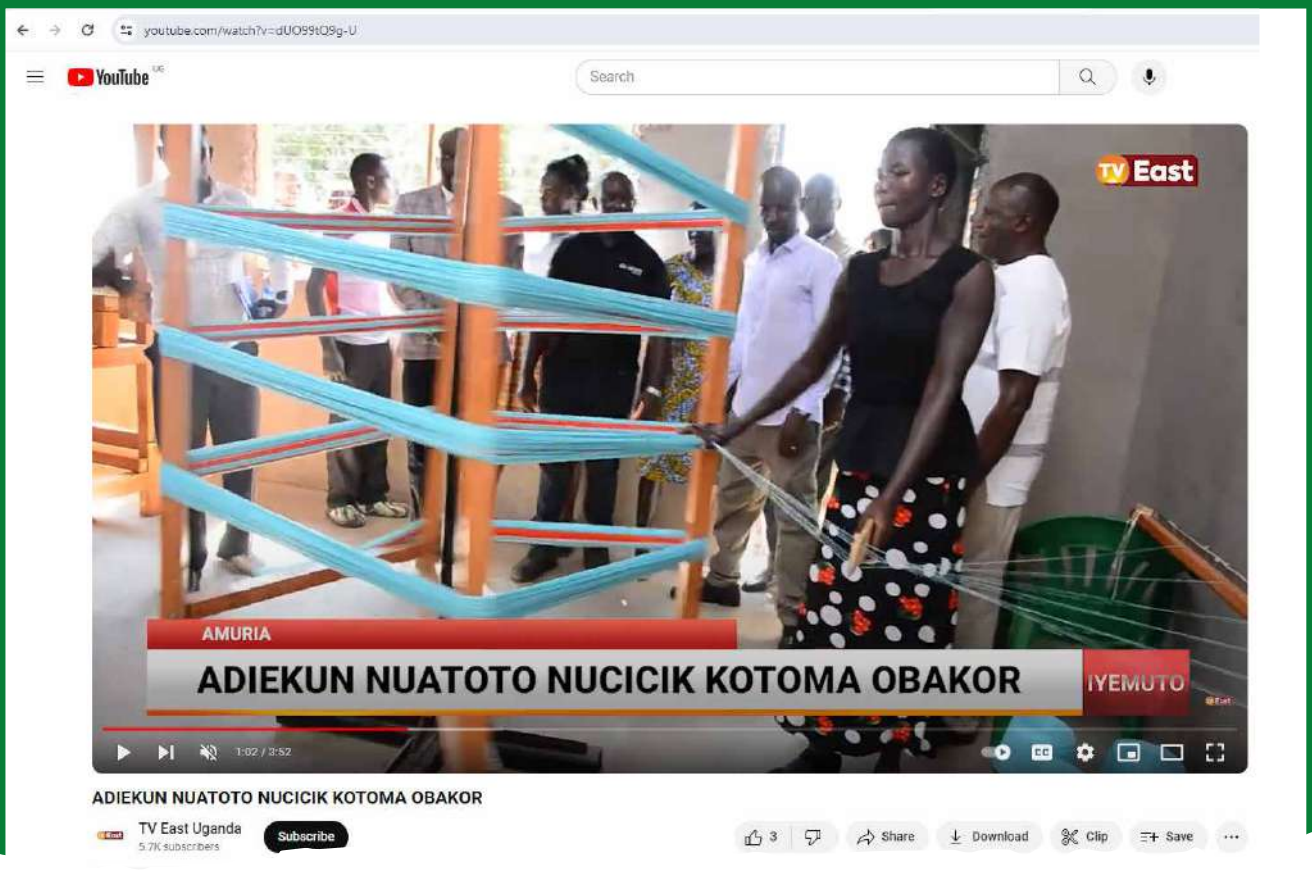


# MEDIA PUBLISHED STORIES ON THE WYEE PROJECT










## Links to the stories

https://eastnews.co.ug/2023/11/30/child-fund-coca-cola-empower-440-teenage-mothers-youth-to-escape-poverty/

https://tnnuganda.com/2023/11/28/440-mothers-from-teso-lango-equipped-with-agribusiness-skills/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUO99tQ9g-U

# 4. HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STRENGTHENING



ChildFund's household economic strengthening initiatives aim to enhance the financial well-being, food security, and overall welfare of enrolled children and their families. This is achieved through both conditional and unconditional cash transfers, as well as by improving access to microenterprise and business development projects. We also focus on increasing access to financial services and enhancing farming methods. These efforts are guided by a vulnerability assessment of households, which helps identify and engage participants effectively.

## 4.1 Extended social assistance to vulnerable household caregivers and youth:

In the fiscal year under consideration, ChildFund collaborated with its nine implementing partners to extend social assistance to vulnerable household caregivers and youth. This involved providing both conditional and unconditional cash transfers to 626 households, thereby contributing to the improvement of the welfare of enrolled children and their families.

## 4.2 Access to saving and credit among caregivers/ youth:

Additionally, ChildFund, in partnership with all nine local collaborators, supported caregivers and young adults in accessing saving and credit opportunities. To promote financial literacy and a culture of saving, the organization conducted training sessions for caregivers and youth groups using the Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLA) methodology. A total of 2,252 participants (1,694 females and 558 males) were trained in various aspects, including group dynamics, financial literacy, and action audit. VSLA kits were provided to facilitate saving and loan activities. Monitoring efforts assessed the functionality of 457 groups, revealing that group savings in the Masindi and Soroti program areas reached UGShs207,940,000, with loans amounting to UgShs104,508,000.




*Members of a village savings group in Gulu district meet once every week to save money in their communal savings scheme. This money, they say, has helped them in times of need but also acquire capital to venture into various businesses.*

*"Through saving, I was able to access a loan of UgShs500,000 and hire land for 2 years. Am now able to grow cassava and other food crops which I sell to cover the loan, pay school fees for my 13 children and above all, I stocked some food for them"*, said Fred.

## 4.3 Enterprise Development:

ChildFund implemented an enterprise development initiative by providing caregivers and youths with an entrepreneurship and business development package. The focus was on strengthening agricultural livelihoods, value addition, and ultimately creating employment opportunities, either through wage labour or self-employment. A total of 314 groups comprising caregivers and youth participated in training sessions covering group dynamics and the management of income-generating activities (IGAs). These groups were further supported with seed capital for their enterprises, which spanned various sectors, including agriculture and general merchandise. The program covered diverse areas, including Masindi, Busia, Kiboga, Kampala, Lango, Mbale, and Soroti, benefiting 1,228 individuals.

In addition, 748 caregivers and youth groups, totaling 1,656 members, in program areas such as Acholi, Mbale, Soroti, Lango, Jinja, Busia, Masindi, and Kiboga, underwent training in treating farming as a business. They were also provided with improved agricultural inputs, responding to the identified increased market demand for agricultural produce. This intervention not only had a positive impact on household income but also contributed to enhancing food security within the targeted communities.



# 5. CHILD PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY



ChildFund collaborated directly with 9 implementing partners and enhanced cooperation with external entities, including the government to implement child protection interventions. The focus of these interventions primarily centered on reinforcing the Community-Based Child Protection System (CBCP), advocating for child participation, strengthening connections between child protection structures and the community, and engaging in advocacy efforts.

## 5.1 Strengthening Community Based Child Protection (CBCP) System:

Under this initiative, a total of 47 District and Subcounty Child wellbeing coordination meetings were conducted, engaging 814 child protection stakeholders. Participants included district and subcounty department heads, Child and Family Protection Units (CFPUs), Child Protection Committee members, parasocial workers, representatives from Civil Society Organizations, religious and cultural leaders, and health workers. These meetings served as platforms for sharing experiences, discussing good practices, addressing challenges in case management, establishing referral pathways, and addressing emerging child protection concerns. Key issues were discussed, and action plans were developed.

All 9 implementing partners organized a total of 68 child protection community dialogues, involving 3,839 duty bearers. Facilitated by District Probation and Social Welfare Officers, Sub-County Community Development Officers (CDOs), and Police Child and Family Protection Units (CFPU), these dialogues addressed issues such as teenage pregnancies, defilement, child neglect, child marriages, and child labour. Through collaboration with child protection service providers, 554 children (280 females and 274 males) received support in accessing health services, psychosocial support, basic needs, scholastic materials, and justice-related services.

## 5.2 Child Participation:

In the realm of Child Participation, employing the Child-Friendly Accountability (CFA) Methodology, 674 stakeholders, including children (354 females and 320 males), engaged in dialogue sessions between children and duty bearers across the districts of Agago, Gulu, and Kitgum. During these sessions, children held duty bearers accountable for issues affecting their well-being. Identified issues included limited prioritization of children's concerns by key duty bearers, bureaucratic handling of children's cases, minimal involvement of children in decision-making, child marriages, defilement, child neglect, denial of education, and physical/emotional abuse. Duty bearers developed action plans to address the raised concerns.

Additionally, a total of 247 members of Child Rights Clubs in Masindi were involved in creating awareness within their communities to prevent child abuse practices. Topics discussed included early teenage pregnancies, child battering, neglect, and forced and early marriages. Parents acknowledged the initiative and committed to refraining from harmful practices. Furthermore, 146 children (22 females and 24 males) were identified, trained, and facilitated to conduct CFA dialogue sessions in different communities, reinforcing systems for managing reported cases and achieving justice. In Sironko, Butaleja, and Budaka, a total of 33 cases (11 females and 22 males) were supported by the Single Parent Women's Organization (SPWO) to obtain justice in the courts of law.



# Advocacy

In collaboration with AfriChild, ChildFund supported the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development in disseminating the National Child Policy. ChildFund established the District Child Wellbeing Committee in Lwengo, Kiruhura, and Kisoro Districts. The Chief Administrative Officers of Lwengo and Kiruhura committed to implementing the National Child Policy and incorporating its provisions into the district's implementation plan for the fiscal year 2023/2024.

ChildFund, along with its partners, participated in the global observance of the Day of the African Child, themed "Promoting and Protecting Children's Rights in the Digital Era." This commemoration served as a platform to raise awareness about online abuse and exploitation of children, emphasizing online safety for children at the District, School, and National levels. The messages on online safety reached a total of 3,656 individuals (2,119 females and 1,537 males).

Working with UNICEF and AfriChild, ChildFund built the capacity of members of the Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children (UPFC) on child-sensitive budgeting in Jinja District.

The training was aimed at strengthening the capacity of Parliamentarians on child focused planning and budget analysis, implementation, and monitoring, enhanced the capacity of the UPFC members to read, understand and advocate for the pursuing of child rights in the budgets. The MPs committed to moving a motion to have the Child certificate on the floor of Parliament to ensure that there is always a percentage allocated to addressing children's issues before the budgets are approved.



*Santa Maria (in picture) presented a children's petition to the state minister for Children and Youth Affairs during the Day of the African Child event commemorated At Royal Suites Hotel in Bugolobi, on June 16th 2023.*



*John is a child rights advocate at his school. He has helped his peers speak up about the challenges they face at school and home.*

## 5.3 Joining Forces for Africa (JOFA) Project:

The JOFA Project, implemented in Uganda, Mali, Senegal, Kenya, and Ethiopia, was specifically designed to swiftly respond to the urgent challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic and address the long-term impact beyond the crisis. Recognizing that children were vulnerable victims of the pandemic, the project aimed to safeguard their well-being, particularly in terms of protection, as they faced increased risks of violence, neglect, exploitation, and abuse.

In Uganda, ChildFund, through the JOFA project, provided financial and material support for twelve child protection Case Conferences. These conferences brought together professionals from the Child and Family Protection Unit of the police, Para Social workers, Probation and Social Welfare Officers, and Community Development Officers in Kampala and Wakiso districts. A total of 1,742 participants (932 females and 810 males), including 14 children with disabilities (3 females and 11 males) in Kampala and Wakiso Districts, received support through various case management services. These services included access to justice, counselling, basic needs support, referral to appropriate services, and family reunification, among others. Additionally, Probation and Social Welfare Officers were assisted in responding to 138 cases (70 females and 68 males) reported through the National Child Helpline (NCHL) in the DAC of Rubaga and Kawempe Divisions.

To contribute to the eradication of Violence Against Children, 258 parents (162 females and 69 males) and 285 children (156 females and 129 males) were enrolled in Parenting Without Violence life skills sessions in selected schools in Kampala and Wakiso Districts. This initiative led to Parenting Without Violence dialogues in the two districts, involving 367 parents (266



females and 101 males) and 208 children (127 females and 81 males). The dialogues covered topics such as the SBCC campaign messages (Hands for Good-H4G), different parenting skills/styles, good parenting practices, challenges in parenting, and action plans to address these challenges. The Hands for Good campaign, broadcast on two national television channels, emerged as one of the most popular advocacy initiatives, estimated to have reached over 4,698,657 individuals nationwide.

To strengthen the child protection coordination mechanism, JOFA supported the Community Development Officers (CDO's) and PSWO's to conduct quarterly Child Wellbeing Committee meetings in Rubaga, and Kawempe Divisions in Kampala and Katabi and Wakiso Sub Counties in Wakiso District and with special consideration to active child participation. A total of 97 adults and 18 children were reached out.

Provided mentorship and support to Child-Friendly Accountability implementing members in Wakiso and Kampala Districts for in and out of school activities. Through Peer-to-Peer support, home visits, general sensitization and awareness during assemblies and engagements in four quarterly Child wellbeing committee meetings, the CFA members were able to directly reach a total of 4712 Children in Wakiso and 4418 Children (2543F:2169M) in Kampala. A total of 61 children with disabilities were among those who participated in the activities.






*Pupils showcase some of the play skills learnt during the team up sessions.*



*"Before the Parenting Without Violence sessions, I never used to listen to people's advice and would do the total opposite of what my parents would tell me. But now I listen and understand them and get where they are coming from,"* says Abigail.



*"What I learnt about Parenting without Violence is the cooperation between an adult and a child. I have also learnt to cooperate with my younger siblings. But in the past, I would not care and would slap them if I found them playing with any of my belongings. But now I know that they are young and those are their ways,"* says Hannan.

*Hannan and Abigail are among the pupils who participated in parenting without violence sessions.*

## 5.4 Palorinya Refugee Settlement Humanitarian Response.

ChildFund Uganda, in partnership with ChildFund Korea and with funding from KOICA, executed the "Building Resilience and Protection Systems for the Well-being of Children" project within the Parolinya Refugee Settlement, located in the Obongi District of the West Nile sub-region. The project concentrated on addressing critical child protection issues and minimizing risks faced by children in both the refugee settlement and the host community. Its primary focus was on strengthening effective community-based child protection mechanisms to prevent and respond to various child protection risks.

Notable achievements include the training and empowerment of 221 community members involved in Community-Based Child Protection. The training emphasized case identification, reporting, referral processes, risk identification, mitigation strategies, and the prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

This initiative successfully reached 11,589 community members, delivering impactful messages related to child protection, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), and response strategies.

Furthermore, the project significantly improved the living conditions of 150 vulnerable children in Zone 3 East and West by providing essential items such as mattresses, bedsheets, and soap. The identification of these vulnerable children was a collaborative effort involving volunteers from Child-Friendly Spaces and Community-Based Child Protection Structures.

Acknowledging the crucial role of Child-Friendly Spaces, the project conducted training sessions for 30 CFS facilitators and 3 Chairpersons of the Centre Management Committees. Operating within Zone 3 of the Palorinya Refugee Settlement, these individuals focused on creating CFS environments prioritizing child protection, engagement in play, socialization, learning, and self-expression, positively





impacting the psychological well-being of the participating children. Each day, these CFSs accommodate between 563 to 788 children actively engaging in group-based CFS activities under the supervision of trained facilitators.

Additionally, 6 parenting sessions were organized across all three CFSs, with a total







of 512 participants. These sessions aimed to empower caregivers with the knowledge and skills necessary for the holistic well-being of the children under their care. Through these collective efforts, the project made significant strides in establishing a safer and more resilient environment for the well-being of children in the Parolinya Refugee Settlement and the surrounding community.

*Rose (with raised hand) attends lessons at one of the schools in the Palorinya Refugee Settlement while children skip rope in one of the play areas.*

# 6. DISASTER RISK REDUCTION



Throughout the year, ChildFund enhanced the skills and capabilities of 21 individuals (5 females and 16 males), including local partners and district local government staff in Busia district, through training in Disaster Risk Management. The trained participants have committed to disseminating the acquired knowledge to the members of the community.



*A group of youth in Dokolo district practicing climate smart agriculture.*

## 6.1 Disaster Preparedness:

A Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) assessment was conducted in nine districts within the Mt Elgon region and Teso sub-region to improve preparedness, mitigation, and recovery strategies for flooding and drought in the area. The assessment report identified a lack of contingency plans, funding constraints, and inadequate coping mechanisms among women, girls, and boys in the communities. The final report was disseminated during a joint meeting, leading to the formulation of an action plan by the 9 districts to address the identified gaps.

In collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister, the Disaster Department took the lead in developing a district contingency plan for Dokolo, Katakwi, and Amuria districts. This initiative aimed to enhance the preparedness level of the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in responding to climate change. The final versions of the contingency plans were shared with the Office of the Prime Minister for ultimate endorsement.

ChildFund actively participated in three National Interagency meetings, chaired by the Office of the Prime Minister Refugee Department, and co-chaired by UNHCR. Despite addressing various needs such as livelihood, food, education, health, access to justice, child protection, environmental management, infrastructure, and the poor living conditions of refugees in Uganda, these meetings highlighted persistent funding gaps.



*Faith from Amuria district plants trees such as Jackfruits and Mangoes in her garden. She says these trees not only protect the environment but also provide her with fruits that she can consume during the dry spell.*

# 7. FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS



## 7.1 Strengthening Partner Operational Capability for Efficiency and Effectiveness:

ChildFund trained 9 local partner boards and staff on business ethics, child safeguarding, human resource performance management, and procurement management. This initiative aimed to enhance their knowledge and skills in these critical areas for more effective operations. Additionally, the Country Office management team held a meeting with the local partner boards in March 2023, focusing on fraud awareness and legal compliance. The partners offered feedback on progress made in addressing identified legal and regulatory gaps, leading to actions such as revising constitutions, electing new governance structures, and registering trustees for their affiliate community-based organizations (CBOs).

## 7.2 Enhancing Tax Compliance Capacity:

In response to evolving tax laws and regulations, ChildFund collaborated with Grand and Noble tax consultants to assess and train the 9 local partners in tax compliance. This effort empowered the partners to identify weaknesses and formulate action plans to improve tax compliance.

## 7.3 Providing Technical Monitoring and Support to Implementing Partners:

To align local partner programs with the ChildFund Global Strategy goal of reaching '100-Million children and family members,' ChildFund supported the planning and budgeting processes of all 9 local partners. Participation in stakeholder meetings facilitated consensus building on priorities for local partner strategic plans from 2023 to 2028. Technical support visits and quarterly performance review meetings were conducted to address challenges and enhance continuous improvement.

## 7.4 Conducting Annual Partnership Review:

ChildFund held an annual partnership review meeting in June 2023 with the 9 local partners, discussing partner capacity, performance, and relationships. Performance trends in program delivery, financial management, sponsorship management, and governance were shared using various data points. Key recommendations included efforts to comply with legal and regulatory requirements, expand strategic partnerships, strengthen monitoring and evaluation, increase resource mobilization, and review operational and governance structures for effectiveness.

## 7.5 Advancing Localization Agenda:

In May 2023, the Country Office collaborated with the Uganda Management Institute to build the capacity of key staff from the nine local partners and the Country office itself. The training focused on effective project planning and management in the evolving grant-making landscape. Notably, three local partners secured funding outside ChildFund during the year. They included Jinja Area Communities Federation (JIACOFE)-216,2,16 USD, Mbale Area Federation of Communities (MAFOC)-76,079 and Acholi Child and Family Program (ACFP)-25,945USD.



## 7.6 Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships:

ChildFund continued building partnerships, particularly with Street Business School (SBS). Two ChildFund staff and six staff from three local partners were trained as lead coaches for the SBS entrepreneurial curriculum. This innovative program aimed to break traditional stereotypes, build confidence, provide hands-on business skills, and offer 1-on-1 coaching. We hope to unlock the potential of our supported communities to start and grow small businesses for sustainable livelihoods. The 3 local partners; Kampala Area Federation of Communities (KAFOC), Community Efforts for Child Empowerment (CECE) and Jinja Area Communities Federation (JIACOFE) have started piloting the SBS ready-to-deliver entrepreneurial training program designed specifically for individuals living in poverty.

Collaborations were also established with organizations such as Strong Minds, Makerere University's Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Makerere University School of Public Health, focusing on mental health programming. These partnerships were sought to ensure impact by aligning with organizations sharing core values and strategic priorities.

The partnerships include.

- Davis and Shirtliff (D&S) to support providing water solutions for our community beneficiaries.
- Longhorn Publishers and Integrated Child and Youth Development (ICYD) to promote early-grade reading in 15 districts of Uganda.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to enhance the resilience of ecosystems and livelihoods through sustainable forest and land use management in Northern Uganda and Kidepo landscapes.




*We partnered with Makerere University to bolster research in key public health areas.*

# CHILD SPONSORSHIP



*Kadyen, communicates to his sponser using the Magic Adventure App.*

The Child Sponsorship program plays a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of ChildFund's initiatives in Uganda. By the close of the financial year, the country office had a total enrolment of 31,629 children, with 24,474 (77.4%) of them being sponsored. To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of sponsorship operations, there has been a further adoption and expansion of digital initiatives across the nine local partners and their communities. These initiatives include the Magic Adventure app, Digital Child Progress Reports (CPR), Child File Digitalization, and the utilization of Digital Child Visitation forms.

## Magic Adventure Application:

The Magic Adventure app was introduced to leverage technology in reducing the time between a child initiating communication and its delivery to the sponsor. After analyzing the positive impact in local partner pilots, the country office expanded the app to all communities served by the nine local partners. A total of 86,995 correspondences were processed by the children and sent to their sponsors through the app. The reduced turnaround time for replies increased the frequency of communication between sponsors and children, fostering stronger connections and contributing to sponsor retention.

## Digitalizing Child Files:

Cloud-based filing and storage of child files were introduced to enhance efficiency in file management, reduce associated costs, minimize risks of damage or loss, and improve remote access to file content for authorized personnel. The number of communities adopting digital child filing increased from three to 16, resulting in a rise in the total number of digitized child files from 1,642 to 6,684.

## Digitalized Child Monitoring:

Following a successful pilot test in three communities, the Kobo Collect tool was used for data collection and verification of 1,919 enrolled children's presence and participation in Partners for Children Worldwide. The tool was subsequently expanded to all nine local partners this year. The Kobo tool adaptation for family visitation improved the use of collected data, facilitating real-time responses to identified issues during visits. This approach enhanced accountability for child presence and participation in planned program activities by the nine local partners, with a total of 20,347 enrolled children being visited at least once every quarter.

## ChildFund Sweden visit

ChildFund Uganda hosted Julia and Kristina from the Sweden Alliance office who interacted with teams on sponsorship processes at the Country Office and Local Partner levels. They also visited participants supported by ChildFund Sweden.



*Julia inspects a library at Yelekeni Primary School Masindi, which was equipped with reading materials and solar by ChildFund Uganda with support from Barnfoden.*



*Kristina interacts with a youth in Gulu who was supported to study a vocational course in mechanics. He has since opened a workshop where he mainly repairs motorcycles and bicycles within his community.*

# HUMAN RESOURCES



ChildFund Uganda has a dedicated team of highly involved technical personnel led by the Country Director with support from the Senior Management Team.



The human resources department collaborates closely with the Human Resource Manager's Association of Uganda, the INGO HR Network, and the Federation of Uganda Employers. Active participation in network meetings is maintained, particularly in the HR Network, where discussions largely revolve around the management of the COVID-19 situation. This includes its impact on the network of delegations, the vaccination campaign, and related topics. Members exchange perspectives and best practices on Human Resources, diversity & inclusion, disability, transforming relationships with money in partnership with HR, performance management training, embracing diversity, inclusion and equity for enhancing organizational employee satisfaction, leadership skills, and understanding organizational dynamics, among other relevant subjects.

*Staff share a light moment after training on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility at Hotel Onomo in Nakasero, Kampala.*









*A cross section of staff awarded with certificates for their long service at the organisation.*

Continuous training and development initiatives were implemented to provide ongoing access for all staff to essential courses, including mandatory ones, and the opportunity to engage in online learning. The focus of training sessions encompassed various areas such as safety and security, Monitoring and Evaluation, safe driving practices for drivers, leadership skills for top management, and more. Additionally, supervisors conducted mentoring programs to support new staff members.

The organization continued to strengthen staff engagement through an action plan focused on areas of improvement, implementing the MAGIC experience. MAGIC Champions conducted refresher sessions, including participation and engagement, along with a follow-up Leading at the Speed of Trust training facilitated by the VP of Human Resources and Human Resources Business Partner. A team-building event was organized at the end of the calendar year.

HR operations were reinforced by reviewing the HR Manual for legal compliance, and Global Human Resources enhanced the We-Connect Performance Management system by introducing additional components, such as competency assessment, to improve the performance management process.

In recognition of their dedication and hard work, staff members who had served 5+ years were appreciated and recognized during staff meetings. The Human Resources team expressed gratitude for the ongoing support and assistance from ChildFund staff, acknowledging their crucial role in the successful execution of duties.

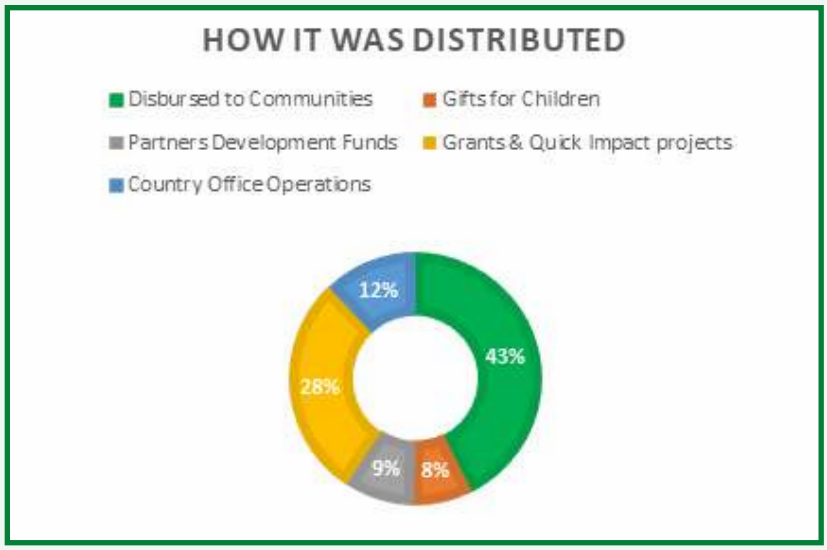
*From left to right, Irene Masaba Gwambe (in grey) has worked at ChildFund for 20 years while Ivas Kwikiriza Kuteesa (in kitenge dress) has served for 6 years now.*





# FINANCIALS

| Source of income | Total Income (US$) | How it was Spent (US$) |
|---|---|---|
| Sponsorship-43% | 3,222,622 | 3,222,622 |
| Gifts for Children-8% | 583,762 | 583,762 |
| Partners Development Funds- | 679,867 | 679,867 |
| Grants & Quick Impact projects-29% | 2,158,393 | 2,158,393 |
| Country Office Operations-12% | 913,253 | 913,253 |
| Total Income (US$) | 7,557,898 | 7,557,898 |




| Partners Investments by Sector | percentage |
|---|---|
| Health & Sanitation | 7% |
| Nutrition | 3% |
| ECD | 10% |
| Basic Education | 18% |
| Micro Enterprise | 23% |
| Emergencies | 4% |
| Program Support | 36% |

# OUR DONORS & PARTNERS

AfriChild
Research. Policy. Impact.
The Centre for the study of the African Child

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KOICA
Korea International Cooperation Agency

BMZ
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

NUTRITION INTERNATIONAL
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Partners For Children Worldwide
'with the children for the children against child poverty'

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AREA COMMUNITIES FEDERATION

LACCODEF

KAMPALA AREA FEDERATION OF COMMUNITIES
K.A.F.O.C
A Happy Child in a Happy Community

MASINDI CHILD DEVELOPMENT FEDERATION
Delivering On Child Development

MBALE AREA FEDERATION OF COMMUNITIES

BRIGHT FUTURES
Improving Chances for Children

# SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Mar 1, 2023

After obtaining tailoring skills through our sponsorship programme, Zalika now sells her merchandise at an open market. She is one of 556 youth we enrolled for vocational skills training #empower @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund




1 3 19 1.4K

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Mar 8, 2023

With an initial capital of sh1m, Kica Ber Village Savings Loans Association in Onyama village, Gulu district now boasts of sh4.25m in savings. They are now planning on a joint farming project to boost their savings #InternationalWomensDay @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund



2 12 326

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Mar 23, 2023

Working with our local partner, Community Efforts for Child Empowerment, a total of 270 children have since transitioned from nursery to primary school in this ECD centre in Kyankwanzi district. #EarlyChildhoodEducation @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund @Barnfonden



6 27 607

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Apr 4, 2023

Joyce from Amuria district is among 100 teens receiving support following funding from The Coca-Cola Foundation to respond to high rates of teenage pregnancy in Lango &Teso sub regions. #empower @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund




1 4 27 550

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · May 4, 2023

Anna, 20, from Amuria district is a proud owner of 5 goats. Her business model is however very interesting. She deals in the buying and selling of mature goats. Her reason is that she is able to earn more profits. #business #skills #YOUTH @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund




1 12 230

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · May 17, 2023

Josephine, 20 from Serere district setup a grocery shop to expand her income base. As we speak, she earns between sh50,000 and sh70,000 daily. She uses her profit to buy more stock while part of it goes to taking care of her son #MILESTONE @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund



3 4 17 550

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · May 24, 2023

Investing in adolescent friendly health services is an investment in the present and future wellbeing of our #YOUTH. Meet peer educators from Eastern Uganda, who were trained to sensitize fellow youth on sexual reproductive health services
@MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund



2 19 352

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Mar 20, 2023

We caught up with Mary, a beneficiary of a microgrant worth sh300,000. She says owning three huts is no mean achievement. The money has also empowered her to earn a living & fend for her children in school.
#WomensHistoryMonth @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund
@Barnfonden



1 3 16 633

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · May 5, 2023

A cross section of teenage mothers in Dokolo district started up businesses that are helping them fend for their young families. Majority prefer to sell food stuffs such as tomatoes, rice, beans, silver fish, gnuts because this is ideally food that every household consumes #Food



4 3 19 452

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Mar 22, 2023

Before this borehole was constructed, Saban from Mazimasa in Butaleja district says they often suffered from diarrhoea due to consuming contaminated water. This is no more. Celebrating milestones.
linkedin.com/pulse/water-li...
#WorldWaterDay2023 @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica @ChildFund




1 17 313

# OFF THE PRESS

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Feb 8, 2023

Our Education and Learning Expert, Lukiya Kibone, weighs in on the role of inspectors in monitoring & supervising teachers in schools. This was during @RadioOneFM90 Spectrum show on Understanding the challenges & opportunities for the education sector.







**ChildFund Uganda**
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ChildFund Uganda partners with Makerere University to bolster research in key public health areas




ChildFund Uganda and USAID's Integrated Child and Youth Development Activity partner to improve literacy among learners

ChildFund Uganda on LinkedIn • 3 min read

**Makerere School of Public Health**
@MakSPH

We are so excited to announce our collaboration with ChildFund Uganda.

The collaboration will enable @MakSPH to support @ChildFundUganda in public health emergencies, water, and sanitation as well as building capacity in research methods, data analysis, and health informatics.

> **ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Feb 15, 2023
> Find out more about our partnership with @MakSPH in this article linkedin.com/pulse/childfun...

**ChildFund Uganda** @ChildFundUganda · Feb 28, 2023

Happening Now: Our Child Protection Specialist Dillis Ekany, exhibits some of ChildFund's work at the second @AfriChildCentre annual conference. The conference theme is "Using research evidence to improve child-well being in Uganda. @MosesOtai1 @ChildFundAfrica #Children



2 7 34 940

EXPANSION IN ONLINE TECHNOLOGIES IS EXPOSING CHILDREN TO THREATS, MADE WORSE BY INSUFFICIENT POLICIES

# DEFENDING CHILDREN'S SAFETY, INNOCENCE IN THE DIGITAL ERA

By Vision Reporter

In the vast landscape of the digital era, screens glow and information flows. However, a new frontier has emerged: the protection of children in the virtual realm.

Gone are the days when playgrounds and classrooms were the primary arenas for a child's exploration and growth.

Today, children across the globe navigate an intricate maze of online platforms, social media networks and virtual communities.

With each click, tap and swipe, they enter a world where boundaries are blurred, where their voices are amplified and where their vulnerability to risks is heightened.

"From cyber bullying, exploitation, exposure to inappropriate content, the digital world presents a multitude of threats that can infringe on a child's rights, stifle their development and scar their futures," Moses Otai, the country director of ChildFund International Uganda, says.

ChildFund is an international child-focused development organisation that works to connect children with the people, resources and institutions they need to grow up safe, healthy, educated and skilled wherever they are.

While technology alone cannot be blamed for some of the challenges children face, Otai says it is important to take proactive measures to protect children in the digital era.

"All children have a right to be safe online and that is why we are committed to building an accessible, safe and inclusive digital world for all children and young people, based on a framework that requires governments, industry, community members and families to take action," Otai says.



Children's access to the Internet should be supervised by parents



Jean Akite, ChildFund Uganda's child protection and advocacy manager

**THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD**

To increase more awareness on digital safety, this year's Day of the African Child, commemorated every June 16, will be celebrated under the theme; *Promoting and Protecting Children's Rights in the Digital Era.*

The Day of the African Child is celebrated in honour of children who participated in the 1976 Soweto Uprising. It also raises awareness about the need for improvement of education provided to African children.

Whereas digital connectivity is a key factor in improving the wellbeing of children and youth, increased access to information, learning resources and expanded opportunities for social and civic engagement, the rapid expansion in online technologies is exposing children to an increasing range of threats.

This is even made worse by the insufficient and inconsistent laws and policies globally to keep young people safe online.

**MORE CONNECTIONS AND RISKS**

According to the Uganda Communications Commission 2022 First Quarter (January-March) Market Performance Report, there are 23.5 million broadband (internet) connections in the country.

The report further reveals that the number of devices (phones, tablets, car trackers and all SIM card-using devices) accessing the telecom network grew from 34.1 million in December 2021 to 35 million in March last year.

Among the devices, there were 10.48 million smartphones in the country. Contrary to the feature phones (*kabiriti*), smartphones are multipurpose and can be used to download software, browse the Internet, watch television, take pictures and videos, as well as organise or participate in virtual engagements.

"The downside of this, however, is that there is an alarming increase in online child sexual exploitation and abuse," Dillis Ekany, a child protection specialist with ChildFund Uganda, says.

Lydia Jean Akite, the ChildFund Uganda child protection and advocacy manager, explains that limited safeguards on children's access to the Internet, coupled with limited supervision by the parents and caregivers as they utilise digital devices, has led to children interacting with wrong elements on different social platforms and sites who eventually manipulate and abuse them.

Akite also advises parents and guardians to continuously educate their children about the dangers that come with utilising digital platforms.

"They should also report suspicious individuals to any trusted adult or authority, including the Police or Sauti 116 child helpline," Akite says.

Ekany says while important strides have been made in protecting children online through legislation and policies, online child sexual abuse and exploitation and harmful content is not always adequately defined, and identification of perpetrators too often relies on community policing.

**INTERVENTIONS**

ChildFund Uganda, together with its alliance partners, are currently implementing a campaign dubbed *Web Safe and Wise.*

The initiative, launched in May last year, focuses on addressing the risks emerging in new technologies, while empowering children and young people to become effective digital citizens empowered to participate online safely, ethically, and responsibly. Among the key objectives of the campaign is advocacy for new or strengthened laws and policies to protect children while online, support for children in raising awareness about child rights violations in the digital era as well as to holding their duty bearers accountable.

"ChildFund is working with all stakeholders including the Government, private sector, civil society organisations, development partners at all levels to build an accessible, safe, and inclusive digital world for all children based on a framework that requires us all to take action on the rights of the children in the Digital era," Ekany says.

## WHERE IS ALL THE EXPOSURE COMING FROM?



**A child using a tablet. Using internet-enabled gadgets without safety knowledge makes them vulnerable**

The Digital era refers to a period in human history characterised by the shift from traditional industry to an economy based on information and communications technology.

Online safety, on the other hand, refers to the awareness and understanding of the threats that exist in the digital environment. It involves having the requisite skills and knowledge to identify the threats and engage in preventative measures to stay safe. The digital revolution and internet access and usage have increased drastically.

As of May last year, there were about 590 million users (43% internet penetration) in Africa. These figures include children, who represent a third of all internet users in the world. It is also estimated that more than 1.7 million children go online for the first time every day.

# Bolster job strategies to spur inclusive growth among youth

MOSES OTAI

Uganda is endowed with immense potential. Whereas this should provide decent jobs to young adults joining the labour market as well as the working population at large, accessing dignified work, particularly for the youth exiting tertiary institutions, remains an uphill task.

It is worse for those who have not obtained any qualifications in recognised skills. Consequently, the majority who contribute to the informal economy encounter several challenges, including abuse of labour rights.

A wide range of draft Bills were promoted to improve the status of the labour market in recent years, especially job creation and decent work, but several have not yet signed and are therefore not law.

Among these, for example, the labour ministry has the job externalisation strategy for those heading to the Middle East and Asia for mostly low-key menial work, various unco-ordinated skilling initiatives in the public and private sectors, tertiary institutions internship programmes, but not fully supervised and co-ordinated with employers or the ministry responsible to ensure better outcomes.

The recent strikes by the senior house officers and junior doctors practising in hospitals for non-payment of the basics to enable them carry out their noble duties, typify the situation.

The planning challenge has also reared its ugly head as seen by the Ministry of Health's failure to deploy intern doctors for the mandatory one-year supervised tour of duty before independent practice.

The outcome of this is, we will continue to miss opportunities to build a skilled human capital pool with the right work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit.

Important to note is that the country is experiencing high population growth with the attendant positive and negative effects that come with a young population. The World Bank reports that Uganda is one of the youngest countries in the world, with a median age of 15.9 years.

In addition, it has one of the highest fertility rates in the world at 5.91 children per mother. The combination of youthfulness and high fertility rate means growth in the working age population is rapid. It was 3.92% growth per annum between 2011 and 2017, faster than GDP growth in three of the six years from 2012-2017 (using WDI data).

It is estimated that an additional 13 million workers will enter the job market by 2030. This and Uganda's high dependency rate – of 1.42 dependants per employed person, means Uganda must raise labour productivity while increasing the number of jobs created in order to match the per capita income growth of other economies with lower dependency.

This requires, on the one hand, increasing the productivity of agriculture where most people work, while simultaneously increasing the rate of movement of young workers away from agriculture into higher productivity industry and service jobs.

With this research, planners for this country, primarily the Executive and Legislature as policymakers, need to band together to reflect and purpose to take this as an opportunity to build for the future by crafting, legislating, financing connected job policies and strategies that respond to the labour market and capture the country's future potential for sustained inclusive growth.

The focus should be on providing internship and apprenticeship practice hubs, employer preparation both in public and private sectors, innovation incubator hubs to support idearation to promote further self-employment for future populations.

Approximately 700,000 young people reach working age every year in Uganda. This is expected to rise to an average of one million in the decade from 2030-2040, and it is already creating a mismatch between labour demand and supply.

While Uganda's youth are renowned for being highly enterprising, fewer than 4% of Ugandans are employers.

About half or 52% are working for themselves only, and 43% are unpaid family workers. About 77% of the population aged 15-64 work.



Unemployment is negligible at 3.2% for the adult population and 5.3% for youth. The quality of jobs however, is low. Only one in five workers are in waged employment, although outside of agriculture, the share is about half in waged work. Most Ugandans (two-thirds) still work for themselves or for their families in agriculture.

Among the youth, three in five work in unpaid occupations, contributing to household enterprises, which are mostly farms. To stem labour flight, however attractive the attendant remittances maybe for the short-run as it is the case now, there is a need to ensure that first the quality of the labour joining the market is reasonably high to spur the needed production, productivity and innovation.

There is also a need to ensure that the jobs created and available meet the expectations of those entering the market by way of their quality and the attendant work-life balance they would offer.

This requires boldly rethinking how to streamline our informal sector to ensure proper capital access and diffusion, as well as innovation, which increases the purchasing power for goods and services for sustained inclusive economic growth. There is also a need to ensure that the mainstay sectors of our jobs, which continue to be agriculture, tourism, industry, and services, receive appropriate financing and policy enablers to attract investments, both local and foreign.

Nations that have had sustained growth and development such as the Asian Tigers have deliberately invested in human capital as well as laid strategies for decent job creation opportunities in critical sectors of the economy.

Uganda has the potential with its youthful population, natural resource endowment, agriculture and tourism, to have inclusive growth, with sustained job growth at its centre.

As we celebrate the International Labour Day, let the country take the opportunity to place the youth at the centre of inclusive economic growth through focusing on strategies that promote dignified jobs.

*The writer is the Country Director ChildFund International, Uganda Programme*



ChildFund®

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