





DOW®

ChildFund®

Over 13 Years Of Action in Africa

Practical solutions. Built with communities, for communities in Africa.



Snapshot

For over a decade, ChildFund and Dow have partnered to address some of the most pressing challenges facing children, youth and communities in Africa.

What began as a focused waste management initiative in Addis Ababa has grown into a multi-country partnership delivering integrated community focused solutions across Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and The Gambia.

The partnership brings together ChildFund's deep community presence and work with local partner organizations with Dow's technical expertise to address plastic waste, advance climate action, expand economic opportunities for young people, strengthen education systems, and improve health outcomes. Its success has attracted like-minded partners, including governments, strengthening collaboration and creating opportunities to scale impact while building longterm resilience.

Our approach is simple:

Keep it practical. Keep it local. Back solutions that communities can sustain.

13+
Years of partnership

4
Countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, The Gambia)

600K+
People reached.

Focus Areas

Environmental Sustainability

Youth Development

Livelihoods

Education

Health



Where it all began

ChildFund and Dow's partnership began in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 13 years ago, with a practical question: what if waste could create opportunity?

Plastic waste was building up and communities were dealing with the consequences. At the same time, unemployment among youth and women was high, leaving many excluded from meaningful economic opportunities.

The response was clear and practical. Equip unemployed youth and women. Give them the tools, skills, resources, and access they need to act. Work with communities to strengthen awareness and practices around waste management. Reduce waste. Create income. Build systems that do both, with youth and women at the center, not the margins.

It worked. Youth and women organized collection systems, built small enterprises, and turned what was once discarded into something of value.

What became clear early on is this: when communities lead, change lasts. Sustainable progress begins when local voices shape local solutions. No one understands the challenges and opportunities better than the people living them.

At the same time, technical solutions and innovation from Dow and other private sector actors strengthened what communities were building. When corporate expertise responds to locally identified needs, it makes those solutions more effective and efficient.

We work alongside communities, co-creating programs grounded in lived experience, driven by local leadership, and built to last.

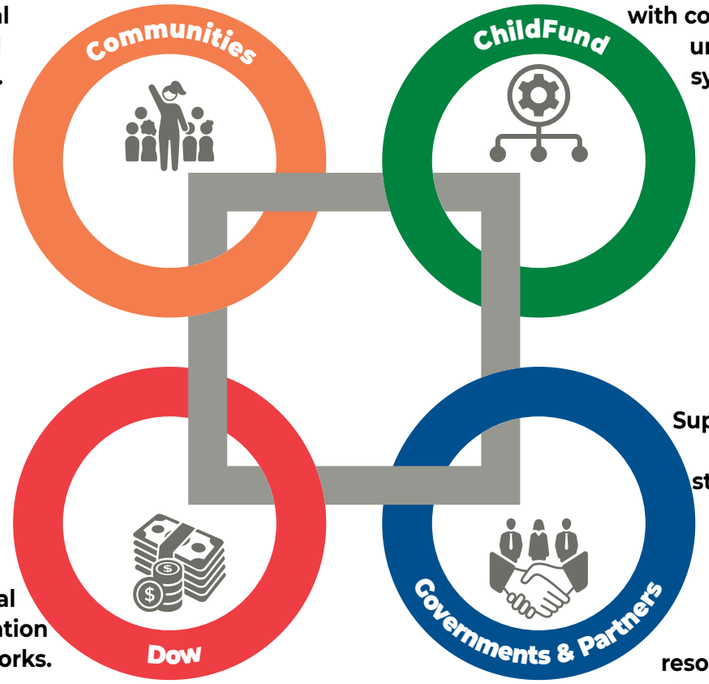
Building on this approach, the partnership expanded across countries and sectors. The model held.
Keep it practical. Keep it local. Back solutions that communities can sustain.

The Model

The partnership brings together four strengths:

Communities' lived experience, local knowledge, and local leadership.

ChildFund's long-term relationships with communities and deep understanding of local systems, working with local partner organizations.



Dow's financial support, technical expertise, innovation and strong networks.

Supportive government systems and strategic partnerships create enabling environments to strengthen sustainability by bringing additional resources, expertise, and opportunities to scale impact.

Over 13 Years Of
Action in Africa

Ethiopia



Environmental Protection and Economic Integration

The Challenge

Africa's rapid urbanization is driving economic growth, but it is also intensifying challenges such as waste management. In many cities, waste collection systems are struggling to keep pace with growing populations and rising plastic consumption.

Addis Ababa reflects this trend, generating more than 2,000 tons of waste daily, much of it plastic. In informal settlements, limited waste collection services often lead to unsafe disposal practices.

At the same time, unemployment remains high, particularly among youth and women, creating a situation where environmental pressure and economic exclusion reinforce each other. Plastic waste becomes part of daily life. At the same time, income opportunities remain out of reach for many households.

The Intervention

The project focused on a practical shift: treat plastic waste as a resource that can generate income while improving the environment. Working in Addis Ketema Sub City, communities were supported to build simple but effective systems that connect waste management with livelihoods.

Households were supported to sort and separate waste at source.

Women and youth were organized into waste management groups and given waste management and processing equipment.

Communities were linked directly to recycling value chains.

Awareness campaigns improved understanding of environmental protection and roles at household and community level.

The Results

Consistent household-level waste segregation now practiced in many areas.

Group enterprises (over 40 members) earning between $5,000–$6,000 monthly, supporting reinvestment and expansion.

Over 400,000 people living in cleaner, healthier environments.

One group acquired trucks for transport of plastic waste and secured land for collection and storage facilities.

Community groups are now recognized by local authorities as effective service providers and linked to government under the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure Development, strengthening coordination and linkages to public structures.

Over 13 Years Of
Action in Africa

Ethiopia



Assistive Technology Access for Children and Youth with Disabilities

The Challenge

Children with disabilities in Ethiopia face major barriers in accessing assistive devices that support mobility and independence. Many of these services are not available locally. Families, especially in remote rural areas, are often forced to travel long distances to access basic rehabilitation and assistive technologies, increasing both cost and delay in care.

The Intervention

The project strengthened local production capacity for assistive devices at the Jimma Cheshire Foundation Orthopedic Workshop.

The workshop was upgraded with modern equipment, including a Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) router machine, replacing manual production methods with precision-based technology. This shift improved both the speed and quality of production, while reducing material waste and improving efficiency.

Local production of assistive devices moved from manual to computerized systems, including a Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) router machine.

Workshop capacity increased significantly, improving turnaround time for devices.

Expanded range of assistive technologies now being designed and produced locally.

The Results

Families no longer need to travel over **400 kilometers** to access essential services.

Production increased from **4 to up to 15 assistive devices per day.**

Improved access to mobility aids for children and youth with disabilities.

Improved efficiency and reduced material waste in production processes.

Reduced travel burden and costs for families in remote areas.

Expanded availability of locally produced assistive technologies.

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Kenya



Fundi Fiti (Skilled Artisans) & Ujenzi Fiti (Quality Construction)

The Challenge

Kenya faces a dual challenge of a significant housing deficit and a shortage of skilled construction workers. At the same time, youth unemployment remains high, partly driven by a mismatch between available training and industry-ready skills in the construction sector.

The construction industry continues to experience a critical skills gap, with a workforce that is largely semi-skilled or unskilled, contributing to rising construction costs and reduced efficiency in delivering infrastructure projects.

The Intervention

Strengthen young artisans through practical skills training, market systems support, and promotion of Appropriate Building Materials and Technologies (ABMTs).

Deliver hands-on training in construction quality, occupational safety, sustainable building technologies, entrepreneurship, and business skills.

Promote climate-smart and affordable solutions such as Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks (ISSB), recycled plastic products, and other resource-efficient building systems. sector.

Support development of the ISSB curriculum to strengthen institutional capacity for sustainable construction training in vocational institutions.

Partner with vocational training institutions, private sector actors, and communities to expand sustainable construction skills and youth participation in the sector.

The Results

Environmental benefits achieved through the recycling of construction materials, including **4,000 plastic/cement paving blocks and 12,000 Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks** (ISSB) produced using locally available resources within one year.

Strengthened vocational training capacity, with cohorts of **50 learners annually** receiving practical construction skills and an estimated **70% transitioning into employment or self-employment.**

Enhanced employability and income opportunities for youth through industry-relevant skills development in modern construction methods.

Improved access to safe and affordable housing for vulnerable households through demonstration of low-cost construction technologies.

Increased credibility and sustainability of vocational training through alignment with national standards and partnerships with regulatory bodies, including the National Industrial Training Authority.

Strengthened institutional capacity of Muguga Vocational Training Centre through development of an ISSB training model and pathway toward formal recognition as a certified training centre.



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Kenya

Plastic Waste Management for Economic Wellbeing

The Challenge

Nairobi is growing rapidly, especially in informal settlements where basic services struggle to keep pace.

The city generates around 2,400 tons of waste daily, with a large share being plastic. Waste systems are overstretched, and disposal practices in densely populated areas create serious environmental and public health risks.

At the same time, youth unemployment remains high. Many young people are ready and willing to work, but lack access to structured, reliable income opportunities. This creates a dual challenge: environmental degradation alongside limited economic opportunity.

The Intervention

The partnership focused on a practical model that connects waste management with youth-led livelihoods. Youth and women were supported to take part in local waste value chains, turning collection and recycling into structured income opportunities.

Youth and women trained in waste management and segregation

Community awareness campaigns promoted clean environments and responsible disposal

Waste collectors linked directly to buyers and recycling markets

Children and schools engaged early to drive behavior change

Community savings groups used to strengthen learning and scale practices

The Results

More than **10,000** community members reached through awareness and clean-up activities.

Over **250,000** people living in improved environmental conditions.

Over **1,500** children engaged as environmental champions in schools and communities.

40 youth and women waste collectors linked to reliable buyers and stable income streams

Average earnings rose from **zero to an average of $5** per day per youth, contributing to household income.

Increased engagement by local authorities in waste management enforcement and coordination.

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Kenya

Regreening Africa

The Challenge

In Kenya's dryland regions, land degradation is reducing agricultural productivity and environmental resilience. At the same time, unemployment among women and youth remains high as limited income opportunities continue to constrain household stability.

The Intervention

ChildFund and Dow supported a practical model that links environmental restoration with livelihoods. Youth and women were equipped to establish and run tree nursery enterprises that produce fruit and agroforestry seedlings. These seedlings are supplied to households, schools, and community restoration efforts, creating a functioning local value chain around reforestation.

The approach integrates income generation with environmental recovery, making restoration economically viable at community level.

The Results

All participating women and youth are engaged in climate-smart agriculture (CSA), supporting jobs, incomes, and environmental conservation.

Key practices adopted include conservation agriculture, tree nurseries, and fruit tree farming.

Climate education:

- **98.29%** of children received training on climate change (up from 58.1%)
- **99.66%** participate in school environmental activities
- Teachers report strong confidence in delivering climate and environmental education

Income:

- **51%** earn above **Ksh 10,000** per month (approx. **USD 333**)
- Indicates improved livelihoods linked to climate-smart agriculture (CSA) participation.

Nutrition and food security:

- Share of households consuming nutritious foods increased from **14.6%** to nearly half of participants
- **50%** report good access to nutritious foods, with children consuming these foods daily.

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Kenya



Tusimame Pamoja (We Stand Together)

The Challenge

Children with disabilities in Kenya often have limited access to rehabilitation services and assistive devices, affecting their mobility, independence, and participation in education and daily life. Families and caregivers also shoulder long-term care responsibilities with limited technical support, making it difficult to sustain consistent therapy at home.

The Intervention

The project improved mobility for children with disabilities and strengthened family capacity to provide consistent care at household level. Children were assessed by qualified health professionals and provided with physical therapy services and assistive devices at the AIC Cure Children's Hospital. Parents and caregivers were trained in basic physical therapy techniques and supported to continue care at home, ensuring rehabilitation extended beyond clinical settings. Families were actively engaged throughout the therapy and recovery process.

The Results

176 children received rehabilitation services and assistive devices.

260 children with disabilities and their families accessed health and essential support services.

Children experienced improved mobility and greater independence.

Family engagement in ongoing rehabilitation and care increased.

Caregivers strengthened their ability to provide consistent home-based therapy.

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Kenya



Advancing Climate-Smart Dairy Enterprises for Women, Youth and Smallholder Farmers

The Challenge

Smallholder farmers in Nyeri and Laikipia face climate shocks that reduce livestock productivity through unreliable feed supply and rising production costs.

Silage production is often labor-intensive and inefficient, limiting consistent access to quality fodder.

Women and youth, despite their central role in dairy farming, have limited access to agribusiness skills, finance, and structured market linkages. This restricts their ability to grow viable and resilient dairy enterprises. Low uptake of climate-smart and regenerative practices further reduces resilience to drought and feed shortages.

The Intervention

ChildFund, Dow and Packaging Industries Limited (PIL), supported farmers to strengthen dairy value chains through improved silage storage and packaging solutions. This reduced post-harvest losses, eased silage production, and improved access to quality livestock feed through durable storage innovations, resulting in increased milk production.

41 demonstration plots (including sugar graze variety) and 11 demonstration farms/ farmers established to support practical learning, farm assessments, and peer exchange

12,000 agroforestry seedlings and fodder seeds distributed, reaching 137 farmers (90 women, 47 youth) to improve feed availability and climate resilience

4 chaff cutter (silage-making) machines provided to farmer groups to improve efficiency and support enterprise development

554 silage bags procured from PIL to support fodder and silage production

The Results

Farmers linked to financial institutions, input suppliers, and extension services, including the establishment and expansion of a revolving fund scheme with Hand in Hand Eastern Africa, reaching 550+ farmers. 62 farmers were linked to a revolving fund managed to improve access to finance; **the fund grew from KES 1 million ($7,700) to KES 1.7 million ($13,100),** with phase two expanding to 223 farmers.

Dairy productivity improved significantly, with milk yields **increasing from 5 to 17 liters in the morning and 4 to 15 liters in the evening** among households.

200 farmers strengthened their agribusiness and climate-smart dairy skills, with 160 applying improved practices within 7 months.

Women and youth participation in dairy value chains increased, supported by stronger service linkages with financial institutions, cooperatives, and extension systems.

11 demonstration farms are functioning as active learning and exchange hubs

Silage-making efficiency improved through deployment of **4** machines supporting farmer groups.

Kenya



Tech Totos (Tech Kids)

The Challenge

Children in early childhood education settings in underserved areas often have limited exposure to digital learning tools. This creates an early gap in digital literacy, affecting their readiness for future learning in an increasingly technology-driven world.

In many schools, access to devices, interactive learning materials, and reliable digital infrastructure remains constrained due to high costs and limited resources. Teachers also face gaps in digital skills, limiting their ability to integrate technology into classroom instruction effectively.

The Intervention

This initiative established a fully functional digital learning lab within a nursery school in Kiambu County to support early childhood digital education for children aged 4 to 6 years.

A disused 40ft shipping container was repurposed into a safe, well-ventilated and secure learning space, fitted with appropriate lighting and child-friendly furnishings. The school was equipped with reliable internet connectivity and digital learning tools to enable consistent access to technology-enabled learning.

Teachers were trained in digital literacy and supported to integrate technology into classroom instruction, ensuring effective use of digital tools in early childhood education.

The Results

A fully operational digital lab has been established, providing a safe, inclusive, and interactive learning environment for early learners.

324 children aged 4 to 6 years now have access to structured digital learning, improving early exposure to technology and foundational skills development.

Teachers are now able to integrate digital tools into daily lessons, improving lesson delivery and learner engagement.

Improved learning outcomes using interactive educational apps, games, and multimedia content supporting literacy, numeracy, and cognitive development.

Reduced digital inequality by ensuring equitable access to learning devices and resources for all learners in the school.

Strengthened teacher capacity in digital instruction, enabling sustained use of technology in early childhood education.

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The Gambia



Youth-Led Plastic Waste Management

The Challenge

Brikama, the largest urban area in The Gambia, faces growing pressure from unmanaged waste, especially plastic. Markets, schools, and health facilities generate significant volumes of waste daily, but collection and disposal systems are limited.

At the same time, youth unemployment remains high, with many young people lacking access to structured and sustainable income opportunities. This creates a combined challenge of environmental degradation and economic exclusion.

The Intervention

The project focused on building a practical system that links waste management with youth employment. Implemented in partnership with Saama Kairo Federation and Brikama Area Council, the intervention strengthened local waste collection and recycling systems while creating structured livelihoods for youth. The model combined infrastructure, training, and market linkages to make waste management functional and income-generating.

Youth groups trained in waste collection, sorting, safe handling, and linked to recycling firms locally and across the border.

Provision of tricycles and protective equipment to support operations.

Waste segregation systems introduced in schools, Brikama Market, and Brikama District Hospital.

Community-wide awareness campaigns targeting students, teachers, vendors, and health workers.

Waste streams organized around plastics, paper, and metal for recycling value chains.

The Results

More than **9,000** children engaged through school-based environmental education.

Over **28,000** people reached through awareness and behavior change activities.

Approximately **7 tons** of waste collected du`ring targeted campaigns within 3 months.

Introduction of tree nursery activities creating additional environmental and income opportunities.

Improved waste segregation systems benefiting an estimated **10,600** users across schools, health facilities, and markets.

Registered youth group with legal status and improved access to finance, engaging **17 youth** in waste collection and recycling, generating income from recyclables.

Established linkages with recycling firms including The Intervention Hub, Fangdema Mbolo, and Kerr Hadim Company (Senegal).

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Uganda



Inclusive Green Jobs for Youth with Disabilities

The Challenge

In Kampala, many youth with disabilities face unemployment and exclusion from skills training and economic opportunities. Despite national policies promoting inclusion, access to practical, income-generating pathways remains limited.

The Intervention

We are implementing an ongoing 6-month pilot across Nakawa, Makindye, and Rubaga divisions to create green livelihood opportunities for youth with disabilities. The initiative combines practical skills training, entrepreneurship support and disability inclusion awareness, working closely with local technical partners in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and environmental sectors.

Training in backyard gardening, kitchen gardening, and urban agriculture.

Entrepreneurship skills including business planning, bookkeeping and financial literacy.

Support to establish small green income-generating activities.

Demonstration learning sites for continued peer learning and replication.

Collaboration with local technical partners in TVET and environmental sectors.

The Results

18 youth with disabilities trained in practical gardening skills.

Stronger awareness of disability inclusion and green livelihood pathways.

16 participants trained in Street Business Skills for enterprise development.

Demonstration sites established for ongoing learning and replication.

Improved household food security and emerging income opportunities.

What Next?

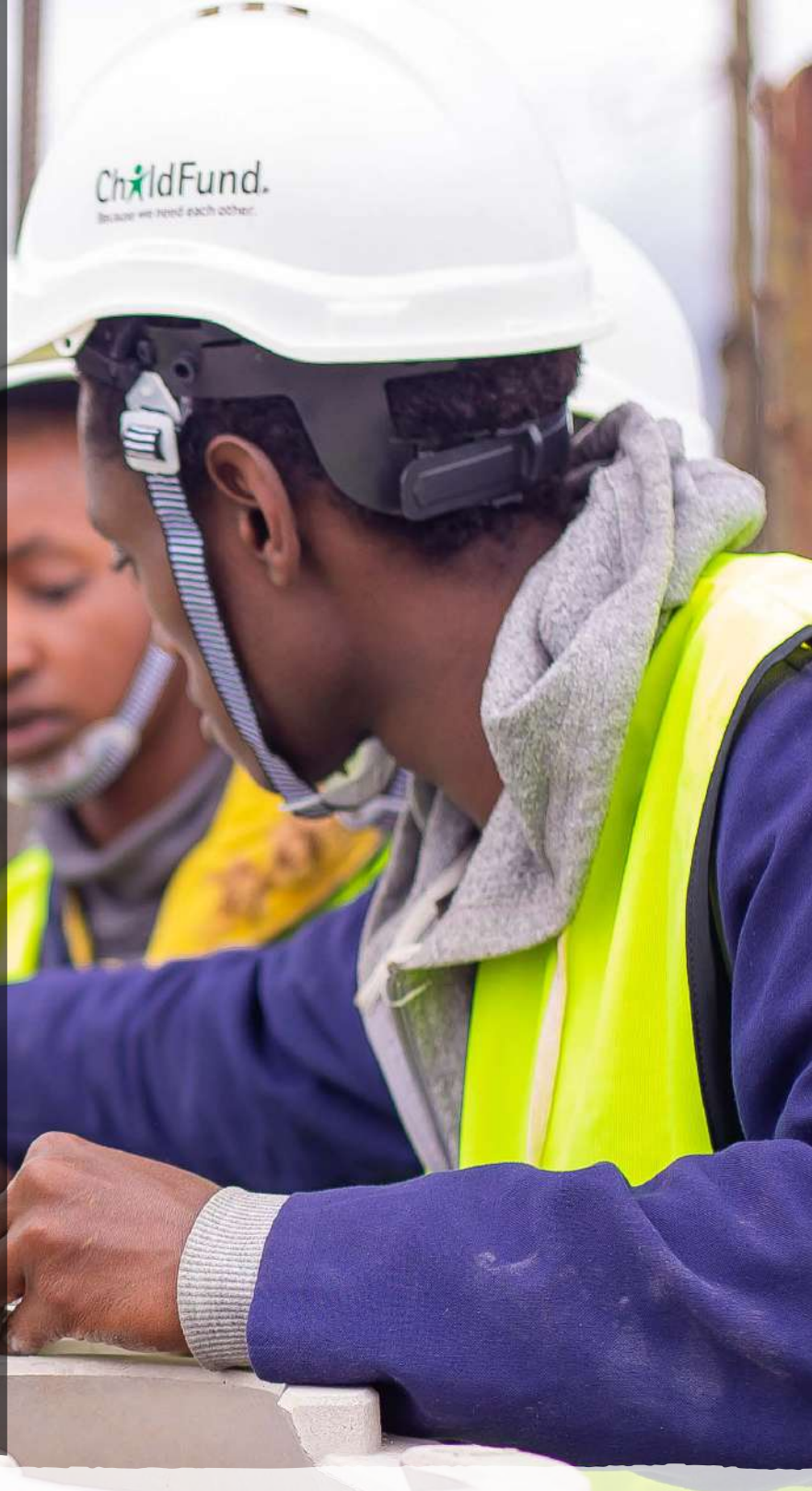
The next phase is about scaling what works for stronger environmental and economic outcomes. Our focus is on reaching more communities, expanding pathways for young people into green jobs, and promoting environmental sustainability.

Progress will depend on more than delivery. It requires stronger systems, including better policies, market linkages, capable institutions, and partnerships that sustain impact over time.

Local leadership is central. Communities, youth, and local actors must continue to own and drive solutions so results last beyond project cycles.

We will continue working with governments and other like-minded partners who bring complementary skills, resources, and reach.

Our direction is clear: practical, locally rooted solutions that support resilient livelihoods and strengthen climate resilience.



DOW®

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