

# Annual Global Program and Policy Report

August 2020

FY20

April 2019 - March 2020



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Front cover image: *Providing access to education for children around the world is key to our work. Among our results, in Ethiopia 120,100 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels.*

# ACRONYMS

ANC	Antenatal Care
CAIA-MNCM	Canada Africa Initiative to address Maternal Neonatal and Child Mortality
CB	Children Believe
CBO	Community-Based Organization
COE	Centre of Excellence
CAD	Canadian Dollar
CFA	ChildFund Alliance
CFI	ChildFund International
CFAM	Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology
CLC	Creative Learning Centre
CO	Country Office
CP	Child Protection
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FY	Fiscal year
GC	Gift Catalogue
GeSI	Gender and Social Inclusion
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
MELKS	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, Knowledge Sharing
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PNC	Postnatal Care
PROMISE	Promoting Maternal, Newborn, Infant and Child Sustainable Health Efforts
RMNCH	Reproductive Maternal Neonatal and Child Health
RtE	Right to Education
SaCC	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHG	Self Help Group
SMC	School Management Committee
ToT	Training of Trainers
U5 MR	Under five years Mortality Rate
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
VLCPC	Village Level Child Protection Committee
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We express our deepest appreciation to the communities, children, youth and families who offered us the opportunities to work together and accompany them in creating positive futures. We are grateful to all our staff, partners, collaborators, and donors who contributed to our work to fulfil the rights of all children to survive, develop and reach their full potential. We sincerely acknowledge the generous support of Global Affairs Canada, European Union, Child Fund Korea, Child Fund Taiwan, Taiwan Alliance in International Development (Taiwan AID), and UNICEF. We also benefited from the successful partnership and implementation of consortium project grants and, hence, we are grateful to Child Fund Alliance, Child Fund International, and EDUCO, as well as our international and regional not-for-profit partners: African Child Policy Forum, AMREF-Health Africa, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA Canada), Canada World Youth (CWY), Centro Empresarial Pellas (CEP), Emmanuel International Canada (EIC), Graça Machel Trust, Heifer Project International and SickKids Foundation.

This report is the result of collaboration among many individuals. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of all the country directors, program, communication, and monitoring and evaluation managers of all our six country offices and partners program offices, as well as all the staff of Program Effectiveness and Resources Management and Program Development and External Engagement whose contributions made this report possible. We appreciate our executive board members, volunteers, and sponsors who have given us all their support in the course of the planning and implementation of all our work. We are indebted to our executive leadership team for their relentless efforts and strategic guidance to navigate the implementation of the first year of our strategic plan.

Our acknowledgement also goes to Feleke Tadele, PhD (Director, Program Effectiveness and Resourced Management) for his technical direction, coordination, and co-writing of the global report; to Erin Palmer, for her technical editing; and to Belinda Bennet, for her technical insights and contributions at the very draft stage of the report. Sincere appreciation is also extended to the communication team and for their permission to use the pictures that they have produced to feature the various aspects of our program and policy work during the course of the year.

**Children Believe, 2020**

# FOREWORD

Children Believe is pleased to release our Annual Global Program and Policy Report for the fiscal year extending from April 2019 to March 2020 (FY20). During the year we reached more than 1,029,000 children, their families, and members of their communities with programs that improved access to inclusive and quality education, improved maternal and child health and prevented malnutrition. We also addressed children's rights and protection needs, promoted gender equality, and strengthened institutions led by children and young people. However, while we celebrate our successes from the year, we are also deeply concerned about the unprecedented impact that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is having on the wellbeing of the children, women, families and communities we serve.

Despite the strains the pandemic has placed on the scope of our programming and policy work, we remain convinced that our strategic direction and program priorities remain critical to the future success of children and young people in our countries of operation. In the meantime, we will adapt our programs to respond to the COVID-19 crisis while maintaining our focus on developing long-term, sustainable solutions that address the education, health, human rights, protection, gender equality, and empowerment of children and youth.

The results summarized in this annual report clearly demonstrate Children Believe's increased capacity to help children and young people survive and thrive. Our expanded reach extends to more than 12 countries and 161 communities, in partnership with more than 26 national and five international non-government organizations, as well as national governments. We are deeply proud of the commitment and dedication of our partners, our staff, the children and community members, as well as our generous sponsors, institutional donors, and executive board members who helped us navigate the implementation of the first year of our strategic plan.

For 60 years, Children Believe has supported children and young people who face significant barriers to their education, health, security, participation, and wellbeing. We continue, with increased integrity and transparency, to deliver on our promises to help them overcome these barriers in pursuit of a better life. As we move into the next fiscal year, we call upon our sponsors, donors, and partners to do the same in enabling children, young people, and women to effect change that will improve their futures.



**FRED WITTEVEEN**  
Chief Executive Officer, CEO

# I—EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FY20 marks the first year of implementing Children Believe’s new Global Strategic Plan — FY20-22. This annual report highlights the key successes of the first year—from April 2019 through March 2020—and presents the results we have achieved in overcoming barriers that prevent children, youth, and women from reaching their full potential. The report also informs our internal and external stakeholders about the challenges we have faced and key lessons learned.

During the year, we developed a coherent operational guideline for the program and instituted a newly developed monitoring, evaluation, learning and knowledge sharing (MELKS) system to undergird the strategic priorities and

promote shared program approaches across our six countries of operation (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay).<sup>1</sup> We mobilized our human, technical, and financial resources to help children, women, and other community members drive local development initiatives and ignite the changes they want to see in their communities. Our work aligns with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as set out below.

In FY20, we were proud to serve 1,029,000 children, youth, women, and other community members through programming focused on education, health, child rights, child protection, gender equality, and youth, to foster change across our six main countries of operation and six other grant implementing countries.<sup>2</sup>

## Pathways for Change



## Alignments with SDGs

<p><b>Children are educated</b> Improve, expanding and sustaining learning outcomes</p>	<p>SDG 4.2: Equal Access to quality pre-primary Education SDG 4.3 Equal access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education SDG 4.5 Eliminate all discrimination in education SDG 4.A Build and upgrade inclusive and safe schools SDG 4.C Increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries</p>
<p><b>Children are healthy, in empowered communities</b> Children’s wellbeing in empowered communities nurtured</p>	<p>SDG 3.7 Universal access to sexual and reproductive care , family planning and education SDG 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage SDG 6.1 Safe and affordable drinking water SDG 6.2 End open defecation and provide access to sanitation and hygiene SDG 17.17 Encourage effective partnerships SDG 1.5 Build resilience to environmental, economic and social disasters SDG 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related disasters. SDG 1 No poverty SDG 2.1 Universal access to safe and nutritious food</p>
<p><b>Advancing Child Right and Protection</b> All forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices against children reduced</p>	<p>SDG 16.2 Protect children from abuse , exploitation, trafficking and violence SDG 5.2 End all violence against and exploitation of women and girls SDG 5.3 Eliminate forced marriages and genital mutilation</p>
<p><b>Promoting Equality For Girls</b> Empowered girls, women and responsive communities overcome gender inequality</p>	<p>SDG 5.A Equal rights to economic resources , Property ownership and financial services SDG 5.C Adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality SDG 5 Gender Equality SDG 5.3 Eliminate forced marriages and genital mutilation</p>
<p><b>Partnering with Children For Change</b> Meaningful and equal participation of girls, boys and youth, making stakeholders accountable</p>	<p>SDG 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making</p>

<sup>1</sup> Please see the country profiles in Annex 2.

<sup>2</sup> The latter Includes El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Malawi, Mexico, and Rwanda

Our activities to improve access to formal and/or non-formal education for girls and boys include building institutional capacities, adding value to child development services, providing educational materials, upgrading school infrastructure, and improving teachers' technical abilities. We also work with adolescent youth to strengthen their vocational skills and help them start new businesses for self-employment. In addition, we improve the quality of children's learning experience by creating safe and child-friendly environments, motivating teachers, and promoting appropriate instruction in languages and techniques that children in each community can understand.

## HIGHLIGHTS

In the course of doing this work, Children Believe collaborated with 26 local partners and 161 fragile, vulnerable, and marginalized communities to give 465,950 boys, girls, and youth increased access to inclusive and quality education.

We built or upgraded more than 189 classrooms and libraries in pre-primary and primary schools across the six countries of operation. We also equipped these facilities with more than 314,000 teaching aids, computers, furniture, and play materials.

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**We collaborated with 20 local organizations,<sup>3</sup> five like-minded international organizations, and government departments to support 7,640 young people aged 15 to 24, primarily from low-income and indigenous families. Through this collaboration, youth develop the skills they need to gain adequate employment that will set the course for success in their future lives.**

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We supported the establishment of 224 early childhood development centres that created new opportunities for more than 6,700 children. We also facilitated training

in "learning through play" for more than 1,200 teachers, parents, and caregivers.

We have directly reached more than 254,300 mothers, children, and other community members and helped them reduce preventable child and maternal mortality. We have improved the delivery of services of 45 essential primary health centers in Ghana, Rwanda, and Malawi. We addressed nutritional deficiencies and increased

Children Believe worked with 526 groups of children (13 to 17 years old) and youth (18 to 24 years old) to create child-friendly spaces that engage their participation, dialogue, and critical thinking skills. We also created platforms that enabled young people to participate in child-oriented programs and to form children- and youth-led agencies.

the consumption of nutritious food and supplements of 115,000 pregnant women, mothers, and children under the age of five years.

We empowered 180,000 children, youth, parents, and other duty bearers across 161 communities in our six countries of operation to learn about child rights and protection and to take action against child abuse, exploitation, and marriage.

In collaboration with 26 local civil society organizations across 161 communities in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua, and Paraguay, we enrolled and sponsored 47,006 children to continue their education.

A total of 51,947 men and women, girls and boys participated in our efforts to reduce multiple forms of gender-based violence. Besides educating themselves and their peers, this cross-section of community members held dialogues in their respective communities and created grassroots platforms to have a critical reflection of these issues. Steps were also taken to end domestic violence and sexual harassment in schools, and to bring perpetrators of early and forced child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting to justice.

<sup>3</sup> Canada World Youth (CWY), Centro Empresarial Pellas (CEP), ChildFund International (CFI), EDUCO, Heifer Project Int.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

As we navigated our first year of program implementation, we were able to learn both from challenges and successes. Aligning our program priorities and change pathways towards the global Sustainable Development Goals enabled us to focus our resources on issues that critically affect the rights of children.

By collaborating with local partners, we maximize our ability to reach out to greater numbers of children, women, and community members of diverse cultural and social backgrounds. We realize that exploring opportunities to work with partners will add significant value and maximize our program impact, deepen our influence, and increase our reach to the most vulnerable children and women.

Our investment in inclusive and quality education has yielded a great social dividend by improving the lives of girls and boys who live in marginalized, fragile, conflict, and displacement contexts. We learned that investing in early childhood curriculum development and influencing education departments to adopt the “learning through play” methodology in professional teacher training programs has the potential to transform the way early childhood education is provided in local education systems.

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**Our child-centered community development approach has built social capital for sustainability and local leadership. Similarly, our “learning through play” methodology was found by parents, other caregivers, and local schools to be an innovative approach that was able to reach many communities that had no early child care and development programs for children under age five. Our child-friendly accountability methodology brought added value by drawing various inter-sectoral interventions together and promoting a holistic approach to ending child poverty.**

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Major project-based grants from Global Affairs Canada contributed significantly to our annual program results, especially those for maternal and child health in Africa and prevention of irregular child migration in the Americas.

The two grant-funded maternal and child health programs in Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Malawi were successfully concluded in March 2020. However, the positive results these programs achieved for years are under threat from the COVID-19 pandemic, which is diverting scarce resources away from reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health programming. To respond successfully to this new reality, Children Believe will need to mobilize new and diverse resources to design and implement COVID-19 focused health programs.

Given the successful completion, or near completion of these long-term projects, we are committed to diversifying our sources of funding and replicating best practices in new countries and communities.

We have achieved significant results in promoting meaningful, safe participation of children and youth across all our programming aimed at ensuring sustained children’s well-being in thriving communities. Nonetheless, the institutional capacities of associations and networks being led by children and youth have still been limited. A more targeted investment is required to support the agencies of children and youth at macro, meso and micro levels.

The Centre of Excellence initiatives are relevant for building our technical competence, enhancing program quality, scaling up best practices, and increasing program influence on priority issues—child protection in emergencies/disaster risk management (Ethiopia), gender and social inclusion (India), and child rights and protection (Paraguay). However, these issues will require increased budget allocations and dedicated full-time subject-matter specialists. Together with technical, institutional, and financial resources leveraged from critical stakeholders, we hope to enhance the scope of our program influence and further build our thought leadership.

The new program strategies fueled our aspiration to build strategic partnerships with national governments, UN

agencies, new donors, and new collaborators. In addition, strengthening our existing relationships was a focus, with ChildFund Alliance members (Child Fund Korea, Taiwan, and the Alliance Secretariat) and donors such as Global Affairs Canada, the European Union, and Taiwan Aid.

We have begun promoting regional programming and collaboration by launching our West Africa regional hub, out of Burkina Faso, as many of the child rights issues we work on transcend national borders.

We closed FY20 with a great sense of accomplishment, even while preparing for a new year challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and its severe consequences on children's education. Nonetheless, we will stand together with our children, youth, community members, and local partners to be resilient. As we welcome the second year of implementation, we will continue searching for innovative solutions and new opportunities to better serve our children and their communities.



Children Believe's Christelle Kalhoulé, director of West Africa, presents children with books following an academic competition.

# II—TOWARDS DISMANTLING THE BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

Education is a fundamental human right that is essential for overcoming poverty, maintaining peace, and achieving sustainable development. For children, it is a powerful key that can unlock their full potential and open up opportunities in their lives.

Children Believe works to help children access inclusive, quality education. Our activities focus on dismantling barriers to education for girls and boys, in alignment with the core targets set out in Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (See Annex 1, page 36).

## FY20—PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

### Access to Education

Despite advances made over the past two decades, millions of children around the world are still unable to access their right to an inclusive and quality education. Globally, more than 175 million children of pre-primary school age, and 262 million children of primary and secondary age—one in five—are not receiving an education (UNICEF, 2019).

This situation is evident in the countries where Children Believe works. Baseline studies conducted in 2019 across six countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua, and Paraguay) revealed that more than one-fifth of children between the ages of six and 11 and one-third of youth between the ages of 12 and 14 lacked access to education as a result of several interrelated and reinforcing factors. They included poverty, harmful cultural practices, geographic location, and the mothers' level of education. In all countries, the poorest children—particularly orphans and other vulnerable children—had fewer opportunities to attend school than did children from families that were more well-off. Children from rural areas, socially excluded communities, pastoralist groups, and urban slums, as well

as those with single mothers, were found to have the most limited opportunities. Even where schools exist in these communities, boys are much more likely to be enrolled in school—and to remain there—than are girls.

To address these barriers, Children Believe has prioritized access to education in the most inaccessible and remote communities in each of the six countries. Our strategies for increasing access to education emphasize improving infrastructure and increasing educational opportunities for girls, children with disabilities, children from ethnic minorities or indigenous communities, and children from poor households.

During FY20, Children Believe and our partners built or renovated schools and classrooms to be safe and suitable for all children. We established creative learning centres and supplied them with educational materials. We helped families generate more income so they could afford fees and other costs of sending their children to school. We also trained parents in childcare and early childhood development, so they could give their children the best start in life.

Throughout the year, Children Believe worked with and through 26 local partners in 161 fragile, vulnerable, and marginalized communities to support 465,950 boys, girls, and their parents or caregivers to have access to inclusive and quality education.

**Increased access to safer schools, educational facilities and supplies**—During FY20, Children Believe built or upgraded more than 189 classrooms and libraries in pre-primary and primary schools across the six countries of operation. We also equipped these facilities with more than 314,000 teaching aids, computers, furniture, and play materials. Based on focus group discussions with children and youth, the increased availability of educational facilities and supplies has improved the learning environment for both newly enrolled students and those who were already attending.

**Increased access to early childhood development education**—Children Believe invests in early childhood development and education based on our conviction that creating solid foundations for children at an early age (36 to 59 months) gives them the best advantage. Access to good quality care and education at an early age contributes significantly to social competency and emotional develop-

ment at a later age and increases children's desire to continue their education. This is particularly critical in our countries of operation, since only one in four children in sub-Saharan Africa and around six-in-ten children in Asia have had access to early childhood education.

Children Believe collaborated with host governments, particularly education departments, in all six countries to develop relevant curriculum and convince government departments to increase their budgetary allocations for early childhood education. We also worked with 20 local partners to improve the public's understanding about the importance of early childhood development. During FY20, Children Believe supported the establishment of 224 early childhood development centres that helped create new opportunities for more than 6,700 children. We also facilitated training in "learning through play"<sup>4</sup> for more than

1,200 teachers, parents, and caregivers.

**Increased access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education**—Children Believe recognizes the importance of increasing access to technical and vocational skills training for adolescents and young adults (15 to 24 years old) to help deter them from delinquency, addiction, unemployment, irregular migration, and violence. During FY20, Children Believe took action to increase youth employment by providing young people with vocational training, access to capital, and other support to help them develop small businesses. We collaborated with 20 local organizations, four like-minded international organizations, and host governments to support 7,640 young people aged 15 to 24, primarily from low-income and indigenous families, to develop the skills they need to find employment or generate self-employment.

## ACCESS: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

### ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

**Burkina Faso:** 56,900 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, and primary levels. Of these, 4,992 children (aged 3 to 6 years, 2,595 female) attended and benefited from early childhood education and care programs. In addition, 7,435 children (3,866 female) received educational materials and tutoring to help them succeed in their primary-level education.

**Ethiopia:** 120,100 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels. Of these, 1,280 children (aged 3 to 6 years, 675 female) who previously remained at home, enrolled in 32 newly established or renovated early childhood education centres.

**Ghana:** 38,700 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels. The program renovated three new and two existing classroom blocks to increase access at pre-primary and primary levels. It also trained 1,770 parents (1,250 female) in early childhood development and "learning through play".

**India:** 71,560 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, and primary levels. We equipped 60 early childhood care and development centres and 113 primary schools with education materials, giving 15,700 children (8,164 girls; 229 children from Dalit and tribal communities) access to early childhood and primary education. In addition, 7,000 (5,250 female) parents and caregivers completed training in parenting and early childhood development.

**Nicaragua:** 79,900 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels. The program renovated 76 learning centres, giving 9,524 children (5,950 female) access to early childhood education. In addition, 315 (261 female) parents and community members received training and support in parenting and childcare skills for early childhood education.

**Paraguay:** 14,400 boys and girls accessed inclusive, quality education at early childhood, pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels. The program renovated 51 teaching spaces and equipped 45 early childhood spaces. In addition, we constructed three computer labs, three playgrounds and a cultural centre, giving access to 9,980 children (5,190 female). A total of 1,925 children (1,002 female) from remote communities received support to access early childhood education through itinerant classes.

<sup>4</sup> "Learning through play" is an educational psychology tool developed to help children learn and make sense of the world around them. Through play, children can develop social and cognitive skills, mature emotionally, and gain the self-confidence required to engage in new experiences and environments.

## ACCESS: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

### ACCESS TO TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL, AND HIGHER EDUCATION

**Burkina Faso:** 600 girls and young women between the ages of 17 and 25 received training in soap production and life skills development.

**Ethiopia:** 571 youth (457 female) completed skills training to enable them to start their own businesses. In addition, 135 poor students (81 female) received financial support to attend higher education institutions.

**Ghana:** 152 youth (122 women) completed vocational training and received materials and seed capital to start micro-businesses in tailoring, production of soap and sanitary products, food processing, and bee-keeping.

**India:** 465 adolescents (328 female) completed vocational skills training and received business development support.

**Nicaragua:** 220 youth (136 female) completed skills training; 35 of these young people have already started their own small business and the others have developed plans to start their own business within the next three years.

**Paraguay:** 630 youth (390 female) completed skills training (in collaboration with the National Professional Promotion Service) and received other types of support to help them become self-employed.

## Inclusive Education

In the countries where we work, many children are excluded from attending school because of their gender, ethnicity, physical or intellectual disability, or socio-economic status. In order to promote broader inclusion, Children Believe and our partners used an ‘inclusion lens’ to identify and then dismantle exclusionary barriers. Our approach to inclusion is based on equity—that is, recognizing that each child

is different and may need different types of support and resources to realize his or her education rights.

During FY20, our actions included working with education departments, building the capacity of teachers, promoting gender and social inclusion in schools, integrating child safeguarding into teacher training, and supporting youth and their communities to engage in common platforms to advocate for and demand their rights from government.

## INCLUSION: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

### GENDER EQUALITY

**Burkina Faso:** In total, 100 girls from poor families received scholarships to help them continue their primary and secondary education, preventing them from dropping out of school.

**Ethiopia:** Ongoing awareness-raising in program communities about girls’ education and activities to enrol young girls in school contributed to an increase in the ratio of girls to boys attending school from 1 to 0.98 at the beginning of the year to 1 to 1.06 at the end of it.

**Ghana:** As a result of training in “learning through play” and gender equality for parents of both sexes, 1,575 parents (755 fathers) became actively engaged in the care of their children from an early age.

**India:** 15,700 boys and girls participated in children’s clubs and increased their awareness about the importance of education and gender equality. They also worked with parents to re-enrol 529 girls between the ages of 15 and 24.

**Nicaragua:** A total of 400 (250 female) parents were trained to raise their awareness and enhance child care and development.

**Paraguay:** Community sensitization to strengthen gender equality and promote the equal participation of girls in education contributed to an increase in girls’ enrolment in primary school from 51 percent at the start of the year to 58 percent by the end of it.

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## INCLUSION: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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### INCOME EQUALITY

**Burkina Faso:** Organized 325 poor mothers into 13 village savings and loans associations to help them augment their income so they could pay for their children’s school fees and other educational expenses.

**Ethiopia:** Provided 8,930 children (4,640 female) from low-income families, orphans, and other vulnerable children with educational materials, reference books and teaching aids.

**Ghana:** Enabled 15,911 poor children (8,270 female) between the ages of 5 and 11 to gain free access to teaching and learning materials and enrolled them in one of five new classrooms constructed by Children Believe and our partners.

**India:** Assisted 203 children (138 girls) from poor families to have access to financial support that enabled them to attend school. In addition, 329 young women and 127 young men completed vocational and skills training and participated in employment generation schemes free of charge.

**Nicaragua:** By providing their families with monthly food rations, Children Believe eliminated the need for 154 children to work, allowing them to return to school. In addition, 9,529 children and youth received educational kits that provide poor families with reasonable access to books outside of school.

**Paraguay:** 467 poor young women received support to complete vocational training and start their own small businesses.

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### SOCIAL EQUALITY

**Burkina Faso:** More than 10,400 girls under the age of 25 who survived terrorist attacks received psychosocial counselling and vocational rehabilitation.

**Ethiopia:** A total of 471 socially and economically marginalized young women (drop-outs, street vendors, domestic servants) received “soft” loans and free access to technical, vocational, and life skills training and employment creation schemes.

**Ghana:** Rescued four children from an illegal mining site in the Upper East Region and provided logistical and psycho-social support to reintegrate them into schools. Supported their parents and caregivers with livestock to improve their livelihoods so they could afford to send their children to school.

**India:** Rescued 1,050 children (530 girls) children of Dalit and tribal communities from child labour and re-enrolled them in school.

**Nicaragua:** 722 street children were reunited with their families and their parents completed training in positive parenting, including how to demonstrate affection, early brain stimulation, and non-violent discipline methods.

**Paraguay:** 57 girls led 11 rounds of trainings on children’s rights and participation for gender equality.

### Zem's Story

Zem Adem is a 13-year-old girl from a poor, vulnerable family living in the drought-prone rural area of Arsi Negele District in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Her parents struggled to keep her in school up to grade three, but couldn't afford to continue her education beyond that. She never thought she would be able to return to school.

However, the parents' committee in Zem's community selected her to be enrolled in a school program run by Children Believe and our partners. In addition, they bought and gave her parents a cow so they could augment their income by selling dairy products and thus afford to pay for Zem to continue her education. Our program also renovated her school and equipped it with reading materials, text books, and other learning aids to help children from families like Zem's perform better.

Zem says she's proud of her school's upgraded facilities, which include a library, a potable water supply, and a separate latrine for girls. She is excited about her classes, and performed so well that she stood first in her class. She says other parents in her neighbourhood have seen how going back to school has changed her life and it has motivated them to send their own daughters back to school. She appreciates the support from Children Believe and our local partners and dreams of being a doctor when she grows up.

## Quality Education

During FY20, Children Believe and our partners contributed to improving the quality of learning in the communities where we work by creating a safe and friendly classroom environment, and by training nearly 4,800 teachers in interactive teaching skills, gender and social inclusion, and

children's rights. Children Believe also worked with parents and other caregivers to make them aware of the importance of early childhood development and to teach them how to stimulate brain development of their young children at home to give them the best advantage when they start school.

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## INCLUSION: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**Burkina Faso:** To improve the safety and quality of education in areas of conflict and displaced communities, 44 teachers from the conflict ridden provinces of Fada and Diapaga (50 percent female) completed training on inclusive education and education in emergencies.

**Ethiopia:** 2,280 teachers (1,220 female) completed pre-service and in-service training, including training in inclusive education and early childhood development.

**Ghana:** 527 teachers (327 female) from early childhood development centres and primary schools, as well as community facilitators, completed in-service training on "learning through play" methodologies and other child development approaches.

**India:** 394 ECD teachers and parents completed training on "learning through play" and on the importance of a child's first 1,000 days of life to brain development.

**Nicaragua:** 1,051 teachers in 16 municipalities completed training on how to use inclusive educational counselling and guidance protocols. In addition, 696 teachers completed training in early childhood education.

**Paraguay:** 485 teachers completed training in inclusive education and appropriate teaching methodologies. They also received complementary educational materials, including pedagogical guides, stories, and an audio recording of songs.

### Rosina's Story

Rosina is one of the girls from the poorest families in the community of Remansito, Paraguay, who participated in the Technological Innovations for Education program implemented by Children Believe and our local partner. The program taught students about basic computer programming and helped them build robots—educational activities that are normally only available to wealthier children in large cities.

For the first time, Rosina had the opportunity to explore science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. Through the program, she and the other students developed their creativity, ability to collaborate, tolerance for others, logic, and life skills. In addition, Rosina has begun to get better grades in science and math, giving her more confidence and motivation to take on new challenges. Her new skills have contributed to her personal development and will serve her well as she pursues her education and transitions into a career.

The Technological Innovations for Education program has been declared to be of “national interest” by Paraguay’s Ministry of Education and Sciences.



Community sensitization to strengthen gender equality and promote the equal participation of girls in education contributed to an increase in girls' enrolment in primary school from 51 percent at the start of the year to 58 percent by the end of it.

# III—IMPROVING MATERNAL, NEWBORN, AND CHILD HEALTH

Children who are healthy and well-nourished have a better chance of succeeding in their education. That’s why

Children Believe’s *Roadmap for Change* aims to ensure that children live in healthy and empowered communities.

All the countries where we work have high maternal mortality and under five years mortality rates (MMR and U-5MR, respectively; see Table 1, below). This is particularly acute in Africa, in the three program countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Ghana), as well as in Malawi and Rwanda, where Children Believe leads a consortium to implement the PROMISE health project, funded by Global Affairs Canada.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1: Maternal and child mortality in countries where Children Believe works**

Mortality Rate	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Malawi	Rwanda	India	Nicaragua	Paraguay
MMR (per 100,000 live births) <sup>ii</sup>	320	401	308	349	248	145	198	84
U-5MR (per 1,000 live births) <sup>iii</sup>	76	55	48	50	35	37	18	20

These countries also struggle with deadly childhood illnesses—such as pneumonia, diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, and intestinal parasites—and alarming rates of malnutrition and stunting, all of which contribute to child mortality. They also experience a high incidence of many preventable causes of maternal mortality, including hemorrhage, unsafe abortions, sepsis, and obstructed labour, mostly because of unskilled birth attendants, unhygienic delivery conditions, and inadequate healthcare services and facilities.

Children Believe’s pathway for health aims to reduce maternal and child mortality using a holistic approach that focuses on strengthening health systems, reducing the

burden of diseases, and improving nutrition. We work with regional and district-level ministries of health and local governments to promote integrated and interconnected healthcare approaches that will benefit mothers, pregnant women, newborns, and children under age five.

Our strategy focuses on achieving three key outcomes for these beneficiaries: improved delivery of essential health services, improved use of these essential health services, and increased consumption of nutritious foods and supplements. These priorities are in alignment with core targets set out for Goal 2 and Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (See Annex 1).

## FY20—PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

During the year—primarily with grant support from the Government of Canada—Children Believe’s health interventions directly benefited more than 254,300 mothers, children, and others and contributed to reducing preventable child and maternal mortality across the communities where we work. While we implement health interventions in all our countries of operation, our health programming is currently focused primarily on our African operations.

### Improved delivery of essential health services

The communities we work in are poor and mostly rural—some of them are remote. Many have no health facilities themselves and none nearby. Where there are facilities, they are poorly staffed and equipped, and unwelcoming to women and children. In addition, many communities lack an effective referral system for complicated deliveries and the means to transport women to hospitals when they need specialized or emergency care.

To improve the delivery of essential health services to pregnant women, newborns, and children under age five, our program focused on building or upgrading and equipping health facilities, especially in remote areas, and

increasing the knowledge and skills of health personnel to deliver *gender-responsive*<sup>iv</sup> and child-friendly services.

Over the year, we renovated 45 health facilities and equipped 67 of them with medicines and essential equipment. We provided practical training and technical assistance to 5,578 (3,987 female) health workers. We also enhanced local referral systems and strengthened relationships and coordination among healthcare stakeholders in each community, and provided motorbikes, tricycle and bicycle ambulances, and stretchers to help transport patients being referred to other health facilities.

Overall, the support we provided improved operations at targeted health facilities. It also reduced unnecessary obstetric referrals while improving timely emergency referrals. The improved health facilities have delivered important antenatal (or pre-natal) care services to pregnant women, advised their male partners, and provided family planning education. Most important, as a result of the life-saving health services provided with our support, no maternal death was recorded in any of our communities during the year.

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## IMPROVED DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**Burkina Faso:** Two health centres were upgraded with hand-washing facilities and equipped with necessary medical equipment and supplies.

**Ethiopia:** Twenty five health centres and a zonal hospital were equipped with medical equipment, supplies, and locally produced stretchers.

More than 98 locally made stretchers distributed to 16 health facilities.

Three health centres were upgraded with new water,

sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities.

Three hundred and forty-eight government health workers received training in integrated childhood illness management, basic emergency obstetric care, and waste management and infection prevention.

Improvements to labour and delivery rooms benefitted more than 33,500 women.

## IMPROVED DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

**Ghana:** A reported 79.5 percent of newborns received positive care (skin-to-skin contact, drying immediately after birth, wrapping immediately after drying, and delayed first bath for at least 24 hours) this year, as compared to 70.4 percent reported last year.

Thirty health facilities (27 primary care, three secondary care) were supplied with essential equipment and medicines for maternal, newborn, and child health, including for paediatric care.

Six paediatric nurses sponsored by Children Believe returned to work in the program areas when they

graduated, benefitting 68,863 children (30,834 female, 38,029 male) indirectly.

A referral system was established for 10 health facilities, resulting in the referral of 3,370 medical cases to appropriate health facilities.

Six health facilities were equipped with tricycle and bicycle ambulances.

**Malawi:**

In districts where Children Believe works, a reported 76.43 percent of newborns received positive care this year, as compared to 60 percent reported last year.

### Improved use of essential health services

In addition to improving the supply of health services for women and children in the communities where we operate, we also aim to increase the demand for and use of these services. Many women and their families are unaware of the health services available to them and their children, or of optimal health and hygiene practices. Instead, they may follow traditional practices that can be ineffective and sometimes harmful.

Over the year, Children Believe and our local partners worked to improve women's and children's use of essential health services by raising awareness of appropriate antenatal and maternal healthcare, complications of pregnancy and delivery, newborn care, and childhood diseases. We also engaged women and others in the communities to change perceptions about women's and children's health, and women's role in decision-making around health.

During our annual program review, beneficiaries were able to cite specific knowledge they gained about antenatal care, warning signs for pregnant women, hospital care, hygiene, infant and child health, and disease prevention. They were also able to say how they put this knowledge into action by adopting good hygiene practices, attending antenatal care services, going to hospitals for delivery, and sharing parenting roles between female and male partners. Beneficiaries also noted that community health committees established by our program have provided a useful platform to help and guide pregnant women.



Children Believe engaged women and others in the communities to change perceptions about women's and children's health, and women's role in decision-making around health.

## IMPROVED DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

**Burkina Faso:** Improved the nutritional intake of 9,000 internally displaced people living in four fragile and conflict provinces.

Of these, 6,300 young women benefited from nutritional counselling and training in production of fortified foods and provision of iron-folic acid supplementation.

More than 2,700 children under age five received deworming and supplementary food.

**Ethiopia:**

More than 3,000 new mothers and pregnant women received training in preparing nutritious food and childcare.

**Ghana:**

Children between six and 23 months of age who received adequate nutrition increased from 61.2 percent to 79.0 percent for girls and from 67.4 percent to 87.5 percent for boys during the year.

By year's end, messages about nutrition had reached 21,463 people (13,657 female, 7,805 male)

A total of 15,303 children under age five (685 female, 8,451 male) and 900 adolescents (480 female, 420 male) received deworming treatments.

**Malawi:** The percentage of children between the ages of six and 23 months receiving adequate nutrition increased from 19.8 percent to 28.6.0 percent among girls and 11.4 percent to 23.9 percent for boys over the year.

Exclusive breastfeeding of children from birth to five months increased significantly from 86.2 percent to 96.7 percent for girls and 84.8 percent to 90.9 percent for boys in operational communities.

**Rwanda:**

Children between the ages of six and 23 months receiving adequate nutrition increased from 44.8 percent to 56 percent among girls and from 40.7 percent to 62.4 percent for boys in operational communities during the year.

Exclusive breastfeeding of children from birth to five months increased significantly from 89.5 percent to 100 percent for girls and 82.6 percent to 90.5 percent for boys.

Established 6,942 kitchen gardens, facilitated 54 community dialogues, and disseminated educational materials, increasing the consumption of nutritious foods and supplements by 10,000 mothers, pregnant women, newborns, and children under age five.



More than 3,000 new mothers and pregnant women received training in preparing nutritious food and childcare.

# IV—PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Children are among the most vulnerable people, because—especially at a young age—they must depend on adults for their physical and emotional well-being. In the communities where we work, children’s vulnerability to violence, abuse, and neglect is intensified by poverty, conflict and crisis, traditional beliefs about parenting and physical discipline, harmful cultural practices, and weak protection mechanisms. Girls, orphans, and other disadvantaged children are particularly vulnerable.

Children Believe works to prevent all forms of violence against, and abuse and neglect of, children. We put particular emphasis on protecting children from *sexual and gender-based violence*,<sup>v</sup> which is often manifested as sexual abuse and harassment, verbal abuse, deprivation of resources, human trafficking, or harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage.

Our approach focuses on listening to and working with boys and girls to improve their safety. We also work with schools to make them safe and free of violence and collaborate with governments and community partners to implement progressive laws and policies, increase public

awareness, and improve the capacity of communities to protect children. We also lead a consortium<sup>vi</sup> to mitigate irregular migration, child trafficking, and youth displacement in Central America (El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Mexico), with funding from Global Affairs Canada. In addition, we sponsor orphans and other vulnerable children to attend school, have nutritious meals, and receive healthcare. Our work in child protection is aligned with Goals 5 and 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (see Annex 1).

During FY20, we reached 180,000 children, youth, parents and other duty bearers across 160 communities in six countries of operation to raise their awareness of children’s rights and protection and to help them take action against child abuse and exploitation and stop child marriage. In addition, we sponsored more than 47,000 children in six countries.

## FY20—PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the past year, our work has focused on specific key issues—ending child marriage, and preventing irregular child migration—as well as on our sponsorship program.

### Ending Child Marriage

At Children Believe, we are deeply concerned about the widespread practice of child marriage—which can take the form of a formal or informal union between girls and boys under the age of 18. The countries in which we work have some of the highest rates of child marriage—Table 2 shows the percentage of girls who marry or enter into an informal

**Table 2: Incidence of child marriage in program countries**

	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	India	Nicaragua	Paraguay
Percentage of girls in a formal or informal union before age 18	52	40	30	27	35	22

Source: UNICEF, 2019

union before the age of 18.

Child marriage, or early marriage, is any formal or informal conjugal union where at least one party is under the age of 18. It is a harmful practice and a human rights violation that disproportionately affects girls, prematurely ending their education and robbing them of their agency to make decisions about their health and other aspects of their lives. It also limits girls' economic, social, and political participation, and brings with it an increased risk of violence, abuse, ill health, and early death.

Our experience working in these countries, and that of our local partners, has shown that multiple, interrelated

factors drive the practice of child marriage. They include poverty and financial considerations, concern for chastity and preserving family honour, tradition, customary or religious laws that condone the practice, an inadequate legislative framework, and weak law enforcement measures. Our interventions during the year involved collaborating with local and national partners to raise public awareness about the negative consequences of child marriage and the benefits of empowering girls, especially to complete their education. Children Believe and its partners also supported adolescent girls and boys, parents, community leaders, and governments to implement actions against child marriage.

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## ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**Burkina Faso:** 20,000 children (10,920 girls) participated in and benefited from education and awareness campaigns advocating the end of child marriage.

One hundred and twenty-three children (70 girls) who survived sexual and physical violence received rehabilitative medical, psycho-social and material support.

A total of 986 (490 female) community leaders and local law enforcement officers received training and were engaged in influencing the implementation of existing national laws against child marriage.

**Ethiopia:** As a result of ongoing participation in community dialogues, more than 17,800 people (9,000 female) increased their awareness of the negative aspects of child marriage and local government administrators, police officers, religious leaders, women, youth and children worked together to detect signs of early marriage and prevent it from happening.

**Ghana:** Child protection committees comprised of religious

and traditional leaders, youth, women, and opinion leaders were established in two districts of the Northern Region to detect and prevent child marriages.

Twenty child-to-child clubs were strengthened and members completed training on the early warning signs of impending child marriage in their communities.

Two hundred and fifty youth (240 young women) completed skill training and received start-up capital for establishing their own small businesses to lessen the financial pressure to marry.

**India:** Formed a strategic partnership with Girls Not Brides and other existing platforms to campaign for ending the practice of child marriage in India.

A total of 275 village development committees resolved to end child marriage in their communities.

Formed 113 child-friendly accountability groups that took action to end child marriages across 50 communities that declared themselves to be child-marriage-free villages.

### Sangeetha's Story

Sangeetha is a 17-year-old girl who lives in Venkatapuram Village, in Andhra Pradesh, India. When she was 15, her parents arranged for her to be married to a man who was nine years older. Although she did not want to get married at the time, she was not able to convince her parents to stop making plans.

Desperate, Sangeetha first thought of running away from home or even committing suicide. Fortunately, however, she heard about the child protection committee Children Believe had established in her village and she contacted one of the committee members. After reviewing her case, the committee intervened and convinced Sangeetha's parents to abandon their marriage plans for her.

Sangeetha's escape from an early marriage was a turning point in her life, opening the door for her to continue her education. She is now completing high school and plans to continue her education, with the goal of becoming an accredited nurse.

## PREVENTING IRREGULAR CHILD MIGRATION

Child migration refers to the movement of young people between the ages of three and 18 to another country or region, with or without their parents or a legal guardian. Irregular migration happens outside any governing laws, regulations, or international agreements.

Children Believe is concerned about the increasing outflow of young migrants from Central America and Mexico. A Children Believe study conducted in 2019 showed that thousands of young people between the ages of 15 and 24, desperate to escape the endless cycles of violence, deprivation, and poverty in their home countries, were seeking better futures elsewhere. Their reasons for leaving included lack of employment opportunities (65 percent), lack of educational opportunities (34 percent), desire to reunite with other family members (25 percent), and to escape sexual violence (12 percent).

To address these issues and to prevent further migration of youth and children, Children Believe designed and

implemented a project to improve the living conditions of at-risk girls, boys and teenagers, and the family and community environment across El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Mexico.

Our interventions over the past year included strengthening partnerships and improving the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to design and implement effective child protection systems and promote actions to end violence in schools and communities.

We increased young people's employment prospects by giving them skills training to help them find a job or start a small business. We also strengthened youth associations by equipping them with information about the negative consequences of irregular migration and the risks of child trafficking, as well as about opportunities for employment in their home countries and those offered by well-planned, formal migration.

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## PREVENTING IRREGULAR CHILD MIGRATION: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**El Salvador:** 205 decision-makers and officials from protection institutions successfully completed training on child protection and violence prevention.

A total of 152 youth (80 girls) were linked to internships, mentors, and seed capital to start small businesses.

Thirty-four youth leaders participated in a regional youth conference and forum, co-organized by our implementing partner in San Salvador, to advocate for alternatives to irregular migration.

**Guatemala:** 28 schools in targeted communities implemented tutoring programs with youth volunteers and teachers and provided supplemental guidance and counselling to help students aged 6 to 12 with learning difficulties perform better at school and prevent them from dropping out.

Five hundred and sixty-three youth (330 female) completed entrepreneurship training and developed business plans for small enterprises.

Two hundred and six youth (110 female) completed entrepreneurship training and received technical support through six youth business incubation centres.

**Honduras:** 306 staff (160 female) of civil society organizations and community-based organizations, as well as school directors, teachers, and community leaders completed training on violence prevention and child protection mechanisms.

Three hundred and eighteen youth (162 female) completed a training program to improve their knowledge and technical skills to help them gain employment or start small enterprises.

Fourty four youth (25 female) graduates of technical courses in industrial technology and marketing found formal employment.

### **Mexico**

Two hundred and twenty-one staff (115 female) consisting of health workers, teachers, local authorities, and human rights advocates completed training on child protection reference systems and how to implement them.

A total of 2,997 youth (1,500 girls) at risk of irregular migration completed training in digital literacy and problem-solving skills.

Two hundred and fifty-five youth (130 female) completed training on the risks of irregular migration, women's safety audit methodology, gender equality, and prevention of gender-based violence.

### **Nicaragua**

Four hundred child protection system staff (210 female), including border control officials, successfully completed training on issues related to international and national legislation and prevention of crimes such as human trafficking, smuggling and sexual exploitation.

One hundred and twenty semi-urban youth (65 female) completed training in vocational skills and business development to upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to gain employment or start small enterprises.

Five youth-led conferences and advocacy platforms on irregular migration were conducted to share lessons among youth participants and bolster actions that prevent irregular migration.

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## SPONSORING AND SUPPORTING ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Although education and health services are free in most of the rural villages where Children Believe works, they are not always of good quality or in close proximity.

Even where we construct or rehabilitate school facilities, thousands of poor and socially excluded children are

unable to attend school because their families cannot afford the additional cost of books and uniforms.

Some children go to school hungry and are gradually forced to drop out of school to earn money and help around the house or farm. Girls face additional barriers that limit their attendance, such as the lack of separate sanitation facilities for girls, inadequate menstrual hygiene, and domestic chores, such as fetching water.

To address these challenges, and in partnership with

local civil society organizations, school administrations, and community leaders, Children Believe designed a sponsorship mechanism to identify and support orphans and other vulnerable children to go to school. Our program matches individual Canadian donors with children in need. During FY20, with the involvement of 26 local civil society organizations across 161 communities in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay, we used this mechanism to enrol and sponsor 47,006 children who were in greatest need.

Our child sponsorship programs enable these children and their families to cover the basic cost of school attendance, giving them the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the improved school and health facilities, water and sanitation points, and income generation options in their communities. The relationships developed between Canadian sponsors and the children they support has also helped build the children’s confidence and encouraged them to create a brighter future for themselves. Most of the sponsored children also enjoy regular health check-ups, participate in after school activities, attend creative learning centres and receive supervised study time in the evening to finish their homework or prepare for exams. An after-school program also helps children develop life skills and give them time to play. The children’s parents or caregivers participate in training and are fully engaged.

**Table 3: FY20  
Enrolled- Sponsored Children  
in Program Countries**

Country	Sponsored Children
Burkina Faso	7,512
Ethiopia	7,880
Ghana	9,591
India	5,676
Nicaragua	8,469
Paraguay	7,878
Total	47,006



In FY20, Children Believe had 5,676 enrolled-sponsored children in India.

# V—GENDER EQUALITY

Although women and girls make up half the world’s population, persistent and pervasive gender inequalities keep them socially and economically disadvantaged. These inequalities not only prevent women and girls from realizing their own potential—they also limit the contributions they are able to make to sustainable development in their countries.

Therefore, gender equality is not only one of our four strategic pathways to change—it is also integral to all the other pathways and program priorities. Children Believe works to ensure that women, men, girls, and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Our programs identify and respond to the different needs, abilities and opportunities of all stakeholders, particularly young girls and boys.

Our programming is designed to address gender inequalities—such as a cultural preference for boys, stereotypes about gender roles and control over material resources— that create barriers to girls’ education and

prevent them from contributing to and benefiting from sustainable development in their communities and countries. We strive for gender transformative change, working with key stakeholders to identify and transform the root causes of gender inequality. This requires addressing social norms and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities, and undertaking innovative advocacy work to influence the implementation of legislation and policies that promote gender equality.

We integrate gender equality results across all our programming and pathways, and disaggregate monitoring data by sex. Our programming is in alignment with Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), with particular focus on Target 5.3 (eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation) and Target 5.5 (ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life).

## FY20—PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Gender inequality remains high in our six program countries, with the exception of Nicaragua, as shown in Table 3. Despite progressive legal reforms and other national actions taken in recent years, especially in Nicaragua and Ethiopia, girls and women still suffer from disproportionate access to and control over economic, social and political resources across all the countries.

Over the year, Children Believe’s activities reached 51,947 women, men, girls and boys, helping to reduce multiple forms of gender-based violence and increasing girls’ and boys’ access to quality education, health services, improved livelihoods, and economic resources.

**Table 4: Gender Inequality Index (2020)<sup>vii</sup> across Children Believe Program Countries**

Country	Global Rank	GII Score
Nicaragua	5	0.804
Ethiopia	82	0.705
Paraguay	100	0.683
Ghana	107	0.673
India	112	0.668
Burkina Faso	129	0.635

## GENDER EQUALITY: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

**Burkina Faso:** 20,000 girls and boys participated in workshops to raise their awareness about child marriage, female genital mutilation, and violence against children.

One hundred and forty-five women and four men benefited from income generating schemes implemented through Village Savings and Loans Associations; this included 35 women who used to perform female circumcision and have since voluntarily and publicly denounced the practice.

A total of 15,000 women completed training and coaching in financial literacy and management of income generation schemes.

**Ethiopia:** 7,800 young women and mothers (aged 19 to 45) actively worked with local government agencies (such as ministries and departments of women and children's affairs, social security, justice, municipal administration, trade and industry, and economic development) and microfinance institutions to improve the enforcement of legislation and programs to promote women's access to economic resources and job opportunities.

Children Believe fostered community conversations and mobilized community members to take action, contributing to the reduction of female genital mutilation in 50 rural communities.

### **Ghana:**

Three hundred and ninety young people (204 female) were organized into Youth-led Savings and Loans Association (YSLA) groups and completed business skills development training.

- All community-based organizations (CBOs) and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) committees mobilized and supported by Children Believe and our partners have included at least 50 percent and 60 percent representation by women, respectively.

A total of 7,638 youth members (80 percent female) were mobilized to undertake voluntary service in their communities and educate others in the community about promoting girls' education, denouncing female genital mutilation, and ending early marriage.

### **India:**

Fifty villages have made resolutions declaring their communities as child marriage free.

Sixty five percent of the 1,782 leaders of community-based organizations working with the program are women who actively participate in decision-making around village development plans and advocate for women's rights and

empowerment of girls.

A total of 487 girls (49 percent from Dalit and 8 percent from tribal communities) led mobilization and advocacy work that engaged 3,934 girls to promote violence-free environments for children, especially girls.

Two hundred and two women's self-help groups helped 1,891 women members raise their household income by leveraging CAD \$32,000 in savings to engage in cattle rearing, crop production, and small businesses or micro-enterprises.

The women's self-help groups also established linkages with the government's social protection schemes, enabling 4,701 women and girls (50 percent from Dalit, tribal and other marginalized groups) to benefit from education, women's mobility, and widow's pensions, among other social programs.

### **Nicaragua:**

- An affirmative gender equality action plan was designed and 609 young women have actively participated in and benefited from the women's economic support program.

Two hundred and fifty men completed gender and masculinities training to raise their awareness about gender equality and engage them in championing women's rights, preventing violence against women, and supporting women's entrepreneurship.

- Children Believe and our local partner adopted and implemented a youth employment model training to support young women's entrepreneurs and enable them to have better creative skills in business planning and development; guide them to take calculative risks in financial loans and business investment and to become confident in the start up of their own business.

- In collaboration with the private sector, 50 women participated in vocational training and apprenticeships in customer service, financial literacy, and public speaking to increase their entrepreneurial skills; of these women, 19 received seed capital to start their own small business.

### **Paraguay:**

Eighty staff members of our partner organizations completed training in gender norms and gender mainstreaming strategies and practices.

Eleven community-based organizations led by women and 22 children's organizations led by girls engaged in advocacy platforms to combat violence against women and girls.

A total of 186 women were organized into 12 savings and loan groups and completed training on income generation and saving.

# VI—PARTNERING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR CHANGE

Children Believe understands that children and youth are the protagonists of their own development. They have fundamental roles to play in bringing about change that will not only improve their own lives, but also contribute to social progress and prosperity.

However, in our six countries of operation, the voices of children and youth are seldom heard. In Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Nicaragua, where political spaces are limited and poverty, conflict, and displacement have disrupted life, the participation of children and youth is low. Ghana, India, and Paraguay have weak institutional capacities to support the agency of children. Children Believe works to amplify the voices of children and youth to claim their human rights and to express their opinions on matters that affect them. Our programming puts boys and girls at the centre, strengthens child-friendly spaces, supports the agency of children and youth, and improves the implementation of laws, policies or strategies that protect and support children. We also support the development of child-led associations that give children a public voice and help them develop leadership skills.

## FY20—PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

### Enhancing child-friendly spaces and stakeholder accountability

In FY20, Children Believe introduced and began implementing our Child-friendly Accountability Tool as a mechanism to enhance the participation of children and youth and strengthen collective accountability *among duty-bearers*<sup>viii</sup>. We also supported more than 150 communities to establish over 526 groups of children and youth between the ages of 13 and 17 to work with their peers and improve the participation of children in both in-school and out-of-school settings. These groups worked with their respective communities and duty bearers—particularly parents, teachers, community leaders, faith-based agencies, local police departments, and court offices—to implement concrete actions designed to improve children’s situations.

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## CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES AND ACCOUNTABILITY: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**Burkina Faso:** 86 leaders of children’s clubs organized 10 child-led initiatives that engaged 2,100 children (1,090 female) to participate in local development planning and implementation of initiatives that address child rights.

**Ethiopia:** Children Believe participated in three key national technical working groups to review, update, and enforce the national guidelines for early childhood education and children’s participation.

**Ghana:** A total of 29,016 children (14,600 female) participated in child protection activities, such as raising awareness about children’s rights, mitigating violence at school, mitigating child marriage and trafficking at the community level, and organizing and promoting village-level savings and loans associations.

**India:** A total of 7,224 children (3,834 girls) between the age of 13 and 17 were organized into 340 collectives; 57 percent were from the most oppressed social groups, such as Dalits.

Twenty children’s rights campaigns were conducted, reaching 117,025 people (59,000 female) and creating an environment in which children could raise their voices and claim their rights.

**Nicaragua:** A total of 12,058 children (6,100 female) participated in child-friendly forums organized by youth associations and children’s clubs.

Six hundred children (310 female) promoted children’s rights by organizing art, culture, and sports events.

**Paraguay:** Child-led associations and clubs conducted 24 advocacy/policy dialogue sessions to discuss and address child rights concerns in their communities/country.

Identified and co-signed an accountability agreement with the Government of Paraguay to implement 20 commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Eight hundred and twenty-seven girls and boys formed 46 children’s rights groups, reaching 4,344 (230 female) community members through their advocacy work on children’s rights and participation.

A total of 281 girls, boys, and adolescents participated in the Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology pilot project, representing 21 groups which each coordinated specific accountability spaces such as implementation of the national action plan to promote the rights of children and allocation of budget for children’s rights agendas.

## Partnering with youth for change

Children Believe has been exploring new ways to undertake a meaningful journey with youth while deepening the impact of our programs. In FY20, we developed and launched the Global Youth Ambassador Program to create opportunities for young people between the ages of 18 and 25 from around the world to engage with us about the issues that are most important to them. Designed to empower youth to become change-makers in their communities, the program has attracted partnerships with leading youth organizations including Rotaract (Rotary International's youth arm), Canadian Volunteer Centres, and the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh International Award.

Our vision is to bring a small group of selected young people together from the Global South (initially Ghana and Paraguay) and Canada to prioritize issues and actions that will contribute to accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. With the support of mentors, these youth ambassadors will also formulate social innovation projects they can implement in their home communities. Every project will be eligible for seed funding. The intention is to establish stepping stones youth ambassadors can use to build the momentum for a

global movement driven by the aspirations of children and youth. Ultimately, we envision tens of thousands of small, purposeful actions taken and shared by young people in our operational countries and in Canada that will inspire systemic change in girls' education, gender equality, child protection and participation.

In Canada, we invited young people between 18 and 25 years of age to apply to be youth ambassadors through the Duke of Edinburgh International Award, Volunteer Centres throughout the country, and the International Baccalaureate program in selected high schools. A panel of representatives of partner organizations reviewed the applications, interviewed shortlisted candidates, and selected 11 youth ambassadors (nine females and two males). Following best practices, the Ghana and Paraguay country offices also recruited youth ambassadors—10 in Ghana (five females and five males) and 8 in Paraguay (six females and two males).

Plans had been made for a gathering in Toronto of all youth ambassadors to pitch their social innovation projects for possible seed funding, and to initiate mentorship through Rotary International. However, we have had to postpone these plans because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



A group of Youth Ambassadors from Canada visited Paraguay.

## PARTNERING WITH YOUTH FOR CHANGE: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

**Canada:** Four Canadian youth ambassadors visited field operations in Paraguay and Ghana. They observed the implementation of programs and visited sponsored children and health centres. Upon returning to Canada, they presented information to Children Believe and their peers about the important socioeconomic change Children Believe accomplishes by working in communities.

- Youth ambassadors supported Children Believe’s goal of helping the needy by volunteering in their communities during the pandemic—for example, delivering groceries to elderly citizens.

**Ghana:** Ghana’s Youth Ambassador Program is unique because some of the youth ambassadors were formerly sponsored by Children Believe and/or were students of our science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. They are invested in advancing Children Believe’s

goals to advocate for Ghana’s most vulnerable children.

Before the lockdown, youth ambassadors helped collect stories about positive change that Children Believe is making during the pandemic.

Youth ambassador Daniella, the recipient of MasterCard Foundation funding to continue her studies in the US with a focus on prosthetics and robotics, raised awareness about Children Believe’s work during the program launch.

### Paraguay:

With the guidance of our staff, youth ambassadors distributed essential supplies (food and personal protective equipment) to Children Believe’s communities during the pandemic, prior to lockdown.

Children Believe helped a youth ambassador obtain an internship in the Finance Department of Paraguay Office.

### Youth for Equality in Paraguay

With our local partner, Children Believe facilitated the formation of the “Youth for Equality” network, in the city of Masaya, Nicaragua. The youth members of the network completed training in drawing and painting and learned how to use art to raise awareness about children’s rights.

Belkis is one of the young people sponsored by Children Believe who joined the network. He is proud of the street art campaigns the network has undertaken to draw attention to violence against children.

“I love art,” he says, “especially painting, because it

inspires me to air out my inner feelings and share messages to positively change the perception of the youth. Our paintings show the importance of equality between women and men and send powerful messages about preventing violence against children in my community.”

Belkis is also grateful for the training in trauma and stress management he and his network members received. They found the training very relevant and effective for overcoming the depression that had set in among so many Nicaraguan youths amidst the political violence they have witnessed over the past two years.



Youth in Paraguay have the opportunity to participate in the Youth for Equality network, to raise awareness about children’s rights.

## VII—CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE INITIATIVES

Children Believe is establishing centres of excellence to enhance its technical and thought leadership in areas of strategic priority and to help us achieve greater impact in the lives of children, families, and communities.

Each centre will serve as a central hub for building knowledge and networks and advancing research, training, and advocacy. By the end of FY22, we will have created five centres of excellence, in: i) child protection and participation (led by Paraguay); ii) early childhood education, care, and development (co-led by Burkina Faso and Ghana); iii) child protection in disaster risk reduction/emergencies (led by Ethiopia); iv) gender and social inclusion (led by India); and v) gender equality and economic empowerment of women and girls (led by Nicaragua).

In FY20, Children Believe's Ethiopia, India, and Paraguay offices launched their centres of excellence. The two remaining centres will be launched in West Africa (Ghana and Burkina Faso) and Nicaragua in FY21.

**Within their areas of strategic priority, the purposes of each centre of excellence are to:**

- generate knowledge and best practices on issues of strategic priority.
- develop harmonized approaches, technical and programming guidance, and models for Children Believe to apply to a given issue.
- use evidence from best practices to enhance the design and impact of projects supported by Children Believe.
- build alliances and partnerships with other centres of excellence in Canada and around the world in order to strengthen sectoral expertise and to inform and influence key stakeholders.
- provide expert opinion for use in government relations and funding proposals.
- facilitate continuous improvement within the organization on a specific issue.
- build capacity across the organization.
- contribute to program and project impact evaluations and documentation of best practices.

### CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

**Ethiopia:** The Ethiopia office established Children Believe's centre of excellence for child protection in disaster risk reduction/emergencies.

Through its core program, 21,896 children and 39,744 community members benefited from the establishment of clubs and awareness-raising about child protection and disaster risk reduction.

The centre provided technical and material support to the creation of child parliaments to give children a venue for discussing their interests and concerns.

The centre implemented community-based disaster risk reduction programs to increase the ability of communities to withstand the impact of drought through irrigation, conservation of water, and environment-friendly agriculture techniques.

**India:** The India country office launched its centre of excellence for gender and social inclusion.

It integrated gender and social inclusion into its core programming to address structural barriers that prevent children from having access to quality education.

The centre strengthened partners' capacity to work on gender transformative approaches, inclusion, and intersectionality.

Through the centre, the India office strengthened children's agency and influenced communities to invest in positive gender norms around education and health, especially for girls from excluded communities.

The centre produced two documents: a case study on promoting the agency of children to become change makers and break barriers to education, and a centre of excellence position paper.

**Paraguay:** Building on its past advocacy efforts and strengthening its centre of excellence initiatives on child protection and participation, the Paraguay office worked with

## CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

the Office of the President of the Government of Paraguay and key Ministries to get the government to sign 20 commitments in favour of child rights as an historic milestone in promoting child protection and participation.

Taking advantage of Paraguay's status as a *Pathfinder* country,<sup>ix</sup> the office worked with other organizations and networks on national and international advocacy to end all forms of violence against children.

Through the centre, Children Believe Paraguay applied a child protection “traffic light” tool to monitor violation of children's rights in the country.

The centre facilitated and promoted the child-friendly accountability methodology to empower children and build their capacity to monitor and advocate for their rights.

The Paraguay office developed contextualized, local Children Believe policies on child protection, child participation, and influence, which will be published in FY21.

**Ghana:** The Ghana office aspires for the West Africa centre of excellence—which will become operational next year—to become the NGO of choice in early childhood and development (ECD) education, and to increase its ability to influence decision makers.

In pursuit of this goal, the office has increased its collaborations with the Ministry of Gender, Children and

Social Protection, and participated in and contributed to the technical committee reviewing Ghana's ECD policy and mapping key individuals and organizations working in ECD in the country.

**Burkina Faso:** The country program has already developed a good reputation among key stakeholders for technical expertise in early child development.

**In preparation for launching the centre of excellence in FY21, the Burkina Faso office has:**

- Developed a training manual on ECD/“learning through play” and adapted it for emergency contexts;
- Commissioned an external impact evaluation of its ECD programs to understand their impact and consolidate learning;
- Established 30 ECD/“learning through play” groups; and
- Organized a radio program about ECD to reach out to all CB intervention areas.

**Nicaragua:** The Nicaragua office is currently preparing for the FY21 launch of its centre of excellence in gender equality and economic empowerment of women and girls, which will engage the public and private sector to co-create solutions to advance youth empowerment.

The office sees an opportunity to capitalize and build on the expertise and credibility it has gained in success with grant-funded programs in the sector.



A teacher in Nyolugu, Ghana leads a group in an early childhood development classroom. The Ghana team's goal is to be a centre of excellence by FY21.

# VIII—STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Our new strategy prioritizes increased collaboration with other organizations to enhance our reach, augment our skills and expertise, and increase our impact. In this first year of implementation, we invested significant effort in building strategic alliances and partnerships with national and international organizations that are working toward the same goals we are.

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## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

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**Burkina Faso:** Children Believe signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Health, which has now formalized the co-engagement to promote the inclusion of ECD in early child care.

The country office has formed a strategic partnership with the National Assembly to promote child and youth participation in government.

The office also entered into strategic partnerships with UNICEF for a project to end child marriage and two projects addressing issues around internally displaced people and birth registration.

Children Believe obtained a grant from the European Union for youth participation using the child-friendly accountability model.

**Ethiopia:** The Ethiopia office has developed strategic partnerships, collaborated, and networked with key national and international agencies that have a similar program focus.

The office has created strong partnerships with the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), PATH, Christian Aid, Bethany Global, and Islamic Relief, among other local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private companies.

As part of conducting research and generating evidence for programming, the country office has partnered with Addis Ababa University and Ambo University.

**Ghana:** The country office entered into a standing agreement with the Ghana Coalition of NGOs Against Child Trafficking (CNACT)—made up of 24 local and international NGOs—for joint fundraising to promote child protection.

The office entered into an agreement with World Vision to undertake joint actions on the International Day of the African Child and International Women’s Day.

Children Believe in Ghana collaborated with the decentralized departments of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to promote child protection.

The Ghana team created a strong partnership with Ghana Health Service, with which it implemented the Canada-funded MNCH project.

**India:** The India country office established partnerships with the following technical and strategic organizations:

Girls Not Brides UK to contribute to ending child marriage in India.

India Education Collective, GOORU and Ignus ERG as technical partners to improve learning outcomes for children, which resulted in the Government of Tamilnadu committing to adapt its “learning navigator” methodology across public schools in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Tamil Nadu School Education Department, State Planning Commission and Andhra Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights as strategic and knowledge partners.

**Nicaragua:** The Nicaragua office established and strengthened its strategic relationships around key issues—such as irregular migration, youth empowerment, and child protection—with several organizations, including:

- UN agencies, including UNFPA, UNICEF and IOM.
- Bilateral agencies, including the embassies of

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: FY20 TOP RESULTS BY COUNTRY

Germany, Canada, and Luxembourg.

- The European Union.
- Private sector organizations such as Pellas Businesses and Network Business Woman.
- Civil society organizations, including HEIFER, EDUCO, Horizon 3000, Action Against Hunger, and Global Movement for Children, which includes the 12 largest organizations focused on children's rights.
- Government, including the Ministry of the Family and the Ministry of Education, with which Children Believe successfully implemented two projects.
- Regional organizations—such as the Central American Integration System (SICA), and corporate social responsibility organizations such as FUNDEMAS in El Salvador, FUNDHARSE in Honduras, FOPREL in Nicaragua, and CEMEFI in Mexico—to expand Children Believe's visibility in Central America.

**Paraguay:** Over the year, the Paraguay country office collaborated with:

The Government of Paraguay to develop program innovations, conduct a national awareness campaign, and advocate for monitoring of budgets allocated for child rights.

The National Network of Childhood and Adolescence, and the Association for the Defence of Children's Rights, providing them with technical and logistic support and training to shape and execute local, national and international advocacy campaigns.

Other local and international non-governmental organizations, UNICEF, and international networks such as the ChildFund Alliance, for local and international advocacy.

Major alliances for global campaigns, such as the Global Partnership to End Violence and initiatives with the International Institute of Children and Global Children's Movement, Latin American Chapter, to end violence against children.



From left, Teresa Martínez, Paraguay's minister of childhood and adolescence; Mario Abdo Benítez, Paraguay's President; and Jorge Mendez, country director, Children Believe Paraguay and coordinator of the Front for Childhood and Adolescence, together signing the 20 commitments to support children's well-being.

# IX—LOOKING FORWARD

Entering the new fiscal year (FY21), the entire world faces uncertainty as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We fully expect the pandemic to continue until at least the end of this strategic period and, while its full impact has not yet been realized, we know it will be significant.

The pandemic has created noticeable gaps in meeting our targets for increasing access to inclusive and quality education for girls and boys; in fact, the virus could prevent many more children having access to learning. Schools in countries where we work are struggling with reopening plans. Many schools in our operational communities—particularly those in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Burkina Faso—lack adequate handwashing services, which are a basic prerequisite for schools being able to reopen.

Studies have also indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major disruptions to the delivery of essential health services in our operational areas. The safety of health workers, especially in the three African countries, continues to be a critical concern as growing numbers of health workers lack access to personal protective equipment (PPE). As a result, many health professionals are becoming infected and being admitted to quarantine centers, while those who remain healthy and able to perform are becoming increasingly scarce.

The ripple effects of COVID-19 are expected to have significantly negative political, economic, and social im-

pacts around the globe. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated that the pandemic costs the global economy USD \$375 billion a month and predicted a cumulative loss to the global economy of more than USD \$12 trillion over two years. The situation could be even worse in the countries where we operate.

In order to respond effectively to COVID-19 and help our children and young people adapt to the new normal, we will repurpose our programs and budget allocations for FY21. We will undertake a thorough audit of the current state of school conditions across our operational areas and explore opportunities to work with education departments to improve these facilities and make them safer for reopening. We will work with other like-minded organizations on innovative and digitally-supported learning activities, especially in remote villages.

We will bolster support to local health facilities to protect their health workers and to increase COVID-19 awareness and prevention efforts at the community level. We will seek innovative mechanisms that strengthen child protection systems and reduce violence against girls and women. We will also explore opportunities for new and diversified funding to increase employment opportunities and protect the livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable children, families and community members.



## ANNEX 1—CHILD-RELATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INDICATORS

01-No poverty
1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban/rural)
1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age
1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable
1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services
1.b.1 Pro-poor public social spending
02-Zero Hunger
2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age
2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
2.2.3 Prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15 to 49 years, by pregnancy status (percentage)
03-Good Health and Wellbeing
3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio
3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate
3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate
3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations
3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population
3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (ages 15-19) per 1,000 women in that age group
3.8.1 Proportion of the target population covered by essential health services
3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution
3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older

## ANNEX 1—CHILD-RELATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INDICATORS

3.b.1 Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme
04- Quality Education
4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)
4.2.1 Proportion of children under five years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex
4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
4.a.1 Proportion of schools offering basic services, by type of service
05-Gender Equality
5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age
5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age
5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex
06-Clean Water and Sanitation
6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services
6.2.1 Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water
07- Affordable and Clean Energy
7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity
7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology
08-Decent Work and Economic Growth
8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged five-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age
10-Reduced inequalities

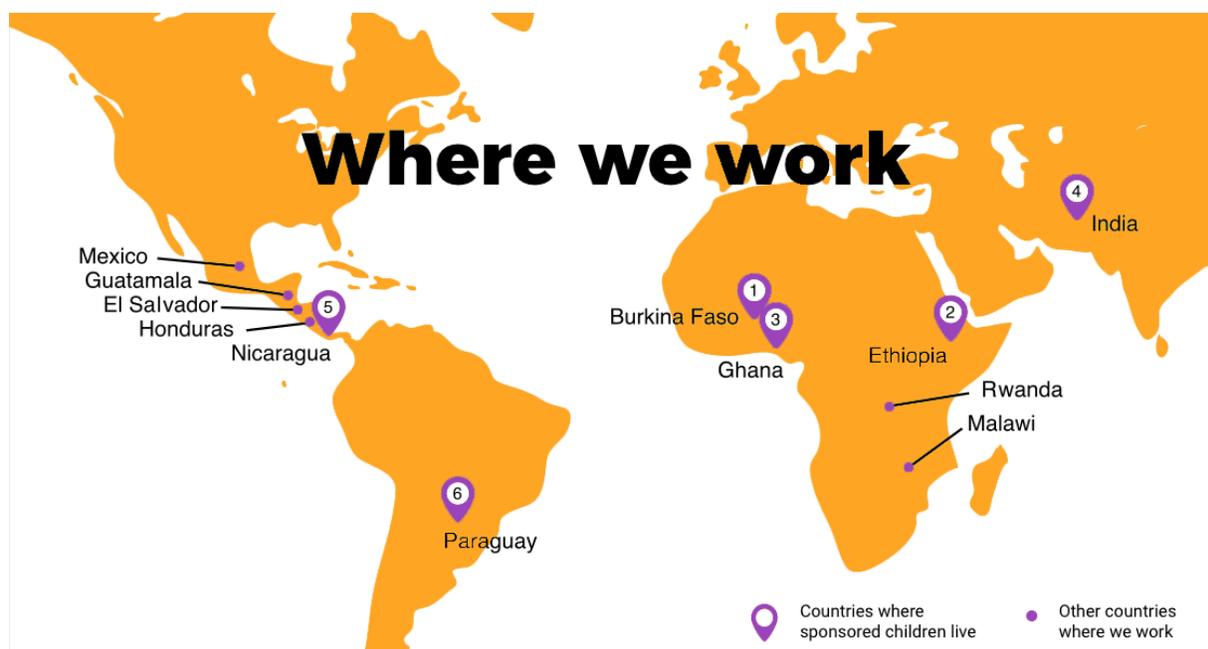
## ANNEX 1—CHILD-RELATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INDICATORS

10.3.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law
13-Climate Action
13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
16-Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age
16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause
16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months
16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area where they live
16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month
16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation
16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18
16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms
16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age
17-Partnership for the Goals
17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet
17.19.2 Proportion of countries that (a) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (b) have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration

## ANNEX 2—CHILDREN BELIEVE COUNTRIES OF OPERATION: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROFILES (DECEMBER 2019)

s/n	Key Human Development Indicators	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	India	Nicaragua	Paraguay
1	Human Development Index	0.434	0.470	0.596	0.647	0.651	0.724
2	Global Rank	182	173	142	129	126	98
3	Life expectancy at birth (years)	61.2	66.2	63.8	69.4	74.3	74.1
4	Expected years of schooling (years)	8.9	8.7	11.5	12.3	12.2	12.7
5	Gross national income (GNI) per capita (2011 PPP \$)	1,705	1,782	4099	6,829	4,790	11,720
6	Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI)	0.303	0.337	0.427	0.538	0.501	0.562
7	Gender Development Index (GDI)	0.875	0.844	0.912	0.829	1.013	0.968
8	Employment to population ratio (percent aged 15 and older)	62.6	78.9	63.0	50.6	63.7	67.3
9	Internet users, total (percent of population)	16.0	18.6	39.0	34.5	27.9	65.0
10	Total population (millions)	19.8	109.2	29.8	1,352.6	6.5	7.0
11	Skilled labour force (percent of labour force)	3.9	6.8	28.6	17.6	30.5	43.7

Source: UNDP <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries>



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## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> The consortium partners are Emmanuel International Canada (EIC) in Malawi (EI-MW) and ADRA Canada in Rwanda.
- <sup>ii</sup> Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division) at [childmortality.org](http://childmortality.org). Retrieved August 26, 2020 at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.MORT>
- <sup>iii</sup> WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group, and the United Nations Population Division. Trends in Maternal Mortality: 2000 to 2017. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2019. Retrieved August 26, 2020 at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.MMRT>
- <sup>iv</sup> A gender-responsive approach assesses the different needs and interests of women and girls, and men and boys, and develops interventions that respond to those needs in order to overcome historical biases. For example, gender-responsive health services will accommodate the specific needs of women and girls, such as for privacy and safety.
- <sup>v</sup> Sexual and gender-based violence is (SGBV) refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. Gender-based violence is considered to be any harmful act directed against individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender. It may include sexual violence, domestic violence, trafficking, forced/early marriage and harmful traditional practices. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), retrieved August 28, 2020 from [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Sexual\\_and\\_gender-based\\_violence.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Sexual_and_gender-based_violence.pdf)
- <sup>vi</sup> Preventing Irregular Child and Youth Migration in Central America is implemented by a consortium led by Children Believe, and including Child Fund International, a US-based affiliate and EDUCO, a global NGO, based in Spain, working for more than 25 years to defend children and their rights.
- <sup>vii</sup> The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. The higher the GII value the greater the disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development.
- <sup>viii</sup> "Duty-bearers are those actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realise human rights and to abstain from human rights violations. The term is most commonly used to refer to State actors, but non-State actors can also be considered duty-bearers. An obvious example is private armed forces or rebel groups, which under international law have a negative obligation to refrain from human rights violations. Depending on the context, individuals (e.g., parents), local organisations, private companies, aid donors and international institutions can also be duty-bearers." UNICEF Gender Equality - UN Coherence and You – Glossary: p.1.
- <sup>ix</sup> The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, launched in July 2016, promotes the concept of Pathfinding to raise awareness, stimulate leadership commitment, galvanize action, and establish a standard of national violence prevention throughout the world. Pathfinding countries are those whose government leaders make a formal, public commitment to comprehensive action to end all forms of violence against children; and request to become a pathfinder within the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children.



Children Believe works globally to empower children to dream fearlessly, stand up for what they believe in — and be heard. For 60+ years, we've brought together brave young dreamers, caring supporters and partners, and unabashed idealists. Together, we're driven by a common belief: creating access to education — inside and outside of classrooms — is the most powerful tool children can use to change their world.

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