



Building back better

from the COVID-19 pandemic for a more resilient and inclusive future

ANNUAL GLOBAL PROGRAMS AND POLICY REPORT | AUGUST 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, we express our deepest appreciation to the children, youth, families and community members in the areas where we work in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay. We are grateful for the many opportunities to work side-by-side with them to spur changes in their communities.

Contributing to our efforts to fulfill the rights of children, we are grateful to our staff, partners, collaborators and donors. We extend out thanks to our generous supporters and development partners, including Global Affairs Canada, the European Union, ChildFund Korea, ChildFund Taiwan, the Taiwan Alliance in International Development (Taiwan AID), UNICEF and UNOCHA. Our gratitude also goes to our global strategic partners and alliances, including ChildFund Alliance, ChildFund International, Canada World Youth, Cooperation Canada, EDUCO, WeWorld, and our pan-African partners, the Africa Child Policy Forum and the Graça Machel Trust. We deeply appreciate our implementing partners in our countries of operation for their front-line work, often carried out under difficult circumstances (see Annex I for a full list of our implementing partners).

We are indebted to our Chief Executive Officer, Fred Witteveen, the executive leadership team and the Board of Directors' program working committee for their relentless efforts, strategic guidance and leadership.

As this report is the result of collaborations among many individuals and cross-functional teams, we would like to recognize the contributions of the monitoring and evaluation officers/managers, program managers, country directors and communication teams across all of our six country program offices, as well as our Canada-based program and policy team, and marketing and development team members. Our acknowledgement also goes to Dr. Belinda Bennet, chief international program officer, for her program and policy insights, guidance and contributions at the various draft stages of this report.

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Cover: Children Believe intensified its efforts this fiscal year to ensure more girls, including these two Ethiopians, had access to education.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based organization
CoE	Centre of Excellence
CSO	Civil-society organization
ECCD	Early childhood care and development
FY22	Fiscal year 2021 to 2022
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GBV	Gender-based violence
KPI	Key performance indicator
LTP	Learning Through Play
MELKS	Monitoring, evaluation, learning, knowledge sharing
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PICMCA	Preventing Irregular Child Migration in Central America
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

FOREWORD

More than two years since the COVID-19 pandemic began, most of the countries in which Children Believe operates have started to recover from the health and socio-economic shocks. However, their economic outlooks are clouded due to the ongoing impacts of unemployment, rising inflation, growing inequalities, drought, protracted civil war and displacement. Particularly, the rise of learning poverty is concerning as millions of children, notably the most marginalized, have fallen behind in their learning outcomes as a result of displacement and school closures during the pandemic and emergencies, and are at risk of exploitation and violence.

Over the course of the 2022 fiscal year (April 2021 to March 2022), we intensified our efforts to address the impacts of the pandemic, reaching more than 1,034,000 children, their families and members of their communities. We continued to implement inclusive, quality education-focused programs that directly benefited over 465,200 boys and girls, teachers, caretakers and parents. In the area of health and well-being, we helped over 231,800 children, young women and mothers access and benefit from improved maternal and child health-services and nutritional support. We also engaged in extensive awareness-creation programs and strengthened local capacities. More than 429,800 parents, caretakers and community leaders were trained and demonstrated favorable attitudes toward the upbringing and well-being of their children, including positive parenting, violence prevention and gender equality.

Our achievements were accomplished through the adoption an iterative planning and program management approach to fit our new “normal” context, and by working with well-integrated local organizations and grassroots community groups to maintain our operations. Digital technologies were leveraged to overcome our restrictive contexts, engage our staff and bolster our collaboration with our partners who are on the front line working with children, women and community members.

We are grateful to our partners, whose support is foundational to the success of our initiatives, and to our individual sponsors, institutional donors and executive board members for their inspiring compassion and generosity.

We are proud of the commitment and dedication of our executive and global leadership teams, our staff, and especially the children and community members who drive our work. With a refreshed strategy and new innovative solutions, we are confident that we will continue to deliver on our objective to support children, youth and women, and facilitate changes that will improve their futures.

Sincerely,



Fred Witteveen

Chief Executive Officer, Children Believe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children Believe's global program- and policy-influence work during the reporting period (April 2021 to March 2022) focused on supporting communities to build back better following the COVID-19 pandemic, underlying the need for a more inclusive, child-centred, and sustained social and economic recovery.

Providing access to education remained a top priority. We worked with education departments to build the capacity of teachers, and promote gender equality and social inclusion in schools. Our efforts resulted in little to no disparity between female and male student enrolment at the primary level across our communities in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay. Additionally, we helped integrate child safeguarding into teacher training, and supported children and their communities engage in spaces to advocate for child rights and demand greater accountability of all duty-bearers.

We remained committed to reduce maternal and child mortality through promoting a holistic approach focused on strengthening health systems, reducing the burden of diseases and improving nutrition.

We improved the operations of depleted and under-resourced community health clinics, addressed vaccine hesitancy, and increased the delivery and use of essential maternal and child health services. For instance, our capacity-building initiatives contributed to improved childbirth attendance by skilled health personnel. In Burkina Faso, skilled personnel attended 89 percent of childbirths in our operational communities, which is higher than the national average of 80 percent. Similarly, in India, we contributed to an achievement of skilled personnel

attending 100 percent of childbirths in our operational communities in comparison to 81 percent for the national average.

The successful completion of the Preventing Irregular Child Migration in Central America (PICMCA) project, a five-year consortium initiative in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Mexico, resulted in improving the living conditions of at-risk girls, boys, teenagers, and their families and communities.

The Canadian government-funded project demonstrated that investing in the life skills and vocational capabilities of young people, especially young women, reduced their intention to migrate irregularly from their home countries. The development of strong collaborations with private sector institutions increased the ability of youth to enter the job market and secure a livelihood since they had been trained in technical courses and developed skills demanded by the labor market. To help young women overcome the additional barriers they faced, the project supported the adoption of women-friendly workspaces, coaching and championing of role models for young women business leaders. These initiatives are being continued by the EMPUJE ("push" in Spanish) project, a Canadian government-funded youth employment and training initiative.

As we reflect on the outcomes of our hard work in the 2022 fiscal year (FY22) and move into fiscal year 2023, motivation can be gained from recognizing both the achievements made and the needs that continue to persist. While we celebrate our FY22 accomplishments, a solid path has been laid for greater advancements in our work and outcomes over the next fiscal year.

INTRODUCTION



Maternal- and child-health education and training were key elements of Children Believe's work to help communities build back better. Photo: Philip Maher

This annual report presents the key results and achievements of our global program and policy influence work during the 2022 fiscal year (April 2021 to March 2022). It highlights the program performance results, lessons learned and challenges faced in supporting communities to build back better following the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Context

Unprecedented moments of fragility and uncertainty dominated our operational contexts this year. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforced by conflict, displacement and violation of rights, placed heavy tolls on the lives and livelihoods of children, their families and communities in our countries of operation: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

The pandemic diminished local economic activities, eroded the livelihoods of households and curtailed the capacity of already-weakened social services. This was exacerbated by violent attacks and displacement in Burkina Faso; armed conflict and drought in Ethiopia; hurricane-induced disasters and shrinking civic space in Nicaragua; poorly equipped civil service functions in Paraguay; and the social discrimination and isolation of states in India.

These challenges, in turn, reversed decades of hard-won development gains for children. They also jeopardized the accelerated progress needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and realize the rights of vulnerable children across all our operational countries. Table 1 presents country rankings based on the SDG performance index.

Table 1: Ranking of Children Believe’s operational countries by their Sustainable Development Goals performance

COUNTRY	SCORE/100	RANK/163 COUNTRIES
Burkina Faso	54.47	138
Ethiopia	58.01	128
Ghana	60.32	121
India	63.44	110
Nicaragua	67.14	92
Paraguay	67.43	91

Source: SDG Index 2022, adopted from <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>

Against this backdrop, the current situation and future trajectory look fragile for most of these countries. The insecurity in Burkina Faso severely affected access to basic services for the most vulnerable populations. During the reporting period, in our operational regions, 83 health facilities closed and 273 operated at minimum capacity. Continuous displacements led to decreased vaccination coverage and the resurgence of other epidemic threats, particularly cholera, Marburg fever and polio. The insecurity, coupled with COVID-19-related restrictions, further disrupted child protection systems, increasing the risks of emotional, physical and sexual violence against children. In the six regions most impacted by insecurity, one out of every two children were affected by violence. Of these children, 82 percent were girls. One percent of children in these regions became orphans or were separated from their families, making them more vulnerable to illegal adoption, recruitment, child marriage, violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

Burkina Faso

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with armed violence in Burkina Faso, pushed over 3.5 million people in the Sahel, North, Centre-North, Centre-East, East

and Boucle du Mouhoun regions to become dependent on humanitarian assistance. Of the 1.3 million people internally displaced by conflict, 60 percent are children and 23 percent are women. The continued displacement and insecurity disrupted education and led to more than 2,300 school closures across these fragile communities.



A child receives professional care at the Namoungou Health Centre in Burkina Faso. Many health facilities struggled to provide the services needed due to a lack of capacity and resources. Photo: Philip Maher

Ethiopia

Similarly, the humanitarian- and security-situations in Ethiopia remained alarming over the past year with widespread ethnic tensions in several regions. There were regular reports of human rights violations and abuses against women, children and members of various ethnic groups. Active conflicts, displacements and drought were significant challenges in the country's northern (Amhara, Afar and Tigray regions), western (Benishangul-Gumuz, West Wellega and Gambella regions), southern (Borona Zone) and eastern (Somali region) areas.

Although security situations across many of Children Believe's operational areas were relatively more stable than other areas experiencing acute conflict, the conflict disrupted the implementation of a Children Believe project in North Wollo. A reported 7,000 schools were damaged and looted, with some occupied by fighting forces, pushing over 1.7 million children out of school in the Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions. Increasing ethnic clashes and massacres in Oromia region are escalating the urgent humanitarian crisis affecting up to 23.5 million people across the country.

Ghana

In Ghana, the unprecedented economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with school closures and inadequate government assistance, disrupted many children's education, pushing them into exploitative child labour. Loss of access to nutritional- and school-meal programs, including public primary school feeding programs, affected over 2.9 million children.

The health system continued to be challenged by weak coordination mechanisms, the lack of or inadequate quarantine and isolation facilities, and an irregular supply of laboratory and other

medical supplies. The effects were greater for children and their families with pre-existing vulnerabilities and deprivations, particularly in the northern region where Children Believe is operational.

India

The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in India coincided with the start of our reporting period. The pandemic caused colossal disruption and shocked the world, with over 30 million people affected. India's large, informal workforce was the worst hit, as it comprised 75 percent of the 122 million jobs lost.

The full or partial closure of 1.5 million schools impacted 247 million elementary- and secondary-school children, in addition, to the 6 million girls and boys already out of school before the COVID-19 crisis began.



The provision of health equipment, like infrared thermometers, to health facilities and program communities were essential to respond to the health needs of children and families. Photo: Sahil Ali

The long schooling disruption doubled the risk of school dropouts, especially among the poor. The disease spread swiftly among impoverished communities, where people often live in cramped areas with poor sanitation and shared facilities, such as toilets and water sources.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua, unlike other countries, did not close schools in its response to the pandemic. However, many Nicaraguan families experienced livelihood losses from unemployment and declining remittances following international COVID-19 restrictions. The aftermath of Hurricane Eta caused significant damages to homes and infrastructure in communities along the Caribbean coast and in northern Nicaragua, affecting around 1.8 million people. Nearly 700,000 children and youth were forced out of their homes or left in vulnerable situations.

Government restrictions on civic space the over the past year was a cause for concern.

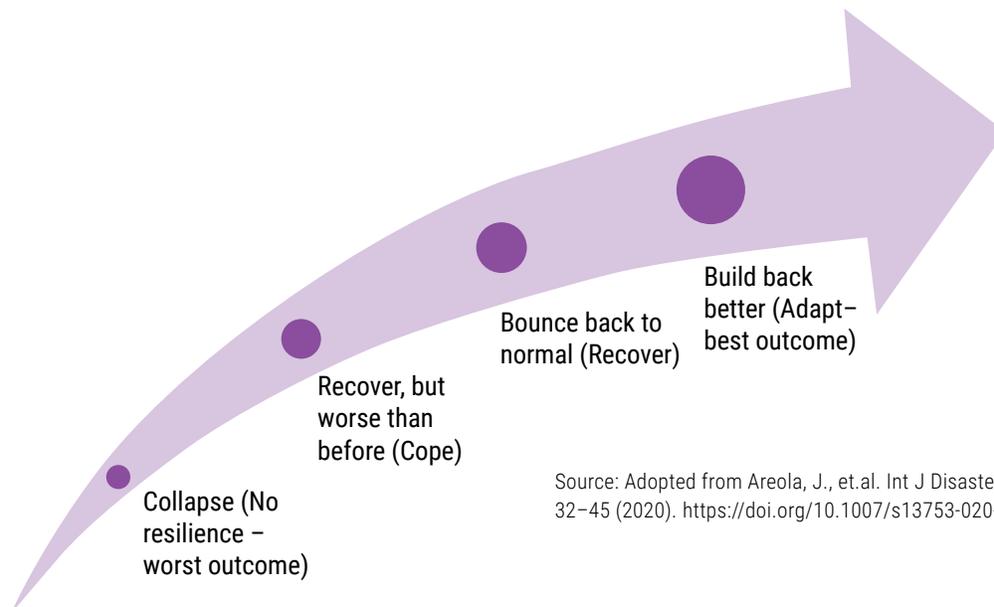
The recent enactment of a bill related to civil society organizations (CSOs) imposed legal and administrative restrictions on the operations of several international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country.

Paraguay

Paraguay was significantly impacted by the pandemic. The national government's first response was to close all school buildings and introduce virtual learning. However, most public schools lacked technological equipment and resources, including adequate internet connectivity, to run remote classrooms effectively. Teachers had very basic training on information and communications technology, and required additional training to run educational apps and virtual classes. Many families were also unprepared for the new format, lacking the resources to support educational activities at home.

Building back better

Diagram 1: Building back better for a more resilient and inclusive future



Source: Adopted from Areola, J., et.al. Int J Disaster Risk Sci 11, 32–45 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13753-020-00246-1>

Children Believe has focused on supporting communities, families, children and women not only to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to adapt to the new “normal” and build back better. Our build-back-better approach to program operations promoted post-pandemic reconstruction and recovery as an opportunity to utilize communities’ human, social, economic, physical and environmental resources to create a more resilient and inclusive future.

In this regard, we prioritized strengthening education as a common good and a safeguard against inequalities. To help address educational inequality and reverse the trend of an increasing gap in access during and after the pandemic, we focused on the inclusion of girls and marginalized children in education.

Children Believe upheld the value of the teaching profession and the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents. Educators’ creativity in engaging with families and communities was nurtured, and we supported the development of resilience and flexibility to cope with unfamiliar, uncertain contexts.

In FY22, we made strides in promoting innovations that helped provide broader options for the delivery of virtual learning. We also worked with education stakeholders to renew the education sector by improving young people’s access to digital devices and connectivity that enable digital communication, collaboration and virtual learning.

For youth, especially young women, we invested in the resumption of soft-skills and vocational-skills training, and small-business development. Similarly, we supported youth- and women-led collectives to improve their employment-creation opportunities and business efforts.

Children Believe strengthened collaborations with multiple existing and new stakeholders over the reporting period. The pandemic galvanized new actors, such as youth volunteers, private business owners and community-based organizations (CBOs), to support children’s learning in our operational communities. Alongside increasing recognition of the essential role of education, the pandemic also spurred the involvement of a cross-section of communities not previously proactively involved in children’s education. We capitalized on new forms of collaboration with community health and social welfare organizations, as well as media and technology companies. Working with our local partners, we leveraged these fresh opportunities to build back better.



Laptops at local Creative Learning Centres (CLCs) supported by Children Believe enabled access to digital learning material and helped children continue their education. Photo: Sahil Ali

BUILDING EDUCATION BACK BETTER



One way Children Believe worked to address learning poverty was providing learning material to children so they could continue their studies at home while schools were closed. Photo: Children Believe

A recent UNICEF global report on learning poverty (2022) indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic, prolonged school closures, poor mitigation effectiveness and household-income shocks were the biggest contributors to learning poverty. It was estimated that the potential impact would see 7 out of 10 children in low- and middle-income countries suffering from learning poverty.

In sub-Saharan Africa, learning poverty now stands at 89 percent, up from 86 percent pre-pandemic. The increase is comparatively smaller than that of other regions as school closures across typically lasted only a few months. In Latin America and the Caribbean, an estimated 80 percent of end-of-primary-school-age children are unable to understand simple

written text, up from about 50 percent pre-pandemic. In South Asia, a reported 78 percent of children lack minimum literacy proficiency, up from 60 percent pre-pandemic. Unless actions are taken, this loss of foundational learning will translate into lower skill levels, which in turn will reduce the productivity and earnings of today's children when they enter the workforce.

The COVID-19 pandemic similarly reinforced vulnerabilities and increased inequalities across our countries of operation. The pandemic also exposed communities' unpreparedness for prolonged school closures or the massive shift to digital- and distance-learning.

Some positive outcomes, however, became increasingly visible during the pandemic.

Ordinary citizens, especially youth, solidified their solidarity and developed a strong, resilient culture to cope with the situation's challenges. Many teachers, families and students demonstrated their resourcefulness, dedication and creativity, building remarkable learning experiences. This, in turn, created appreciation for the multiple roles that schools play in securing the well-being of children and youth, as well as facilitating health-care and nutritional-support, alongside providing academic learning.

Nonetheless, the scars left on the education system by COVID-19 pandemic will not easily fade. The risks of attrition among

teachers and students after schools reopened is still high. The situation for girls is even more dire as thousands dropped out of school due to early marriage or to join the often-exploitative labour force. Long absences from school for boys and girls without alternative learning resources, especially in marginalized communities and among hard-to-reach social groups, threatened the quality of education and contributed to long-term learning losses.

Children Believe and its partners have worked to address these pandemic-induced barriers to education. The following section presents the achievements of our educational initiatives during the reporting period.

Increased access to quality, inclusive early childhood care and development

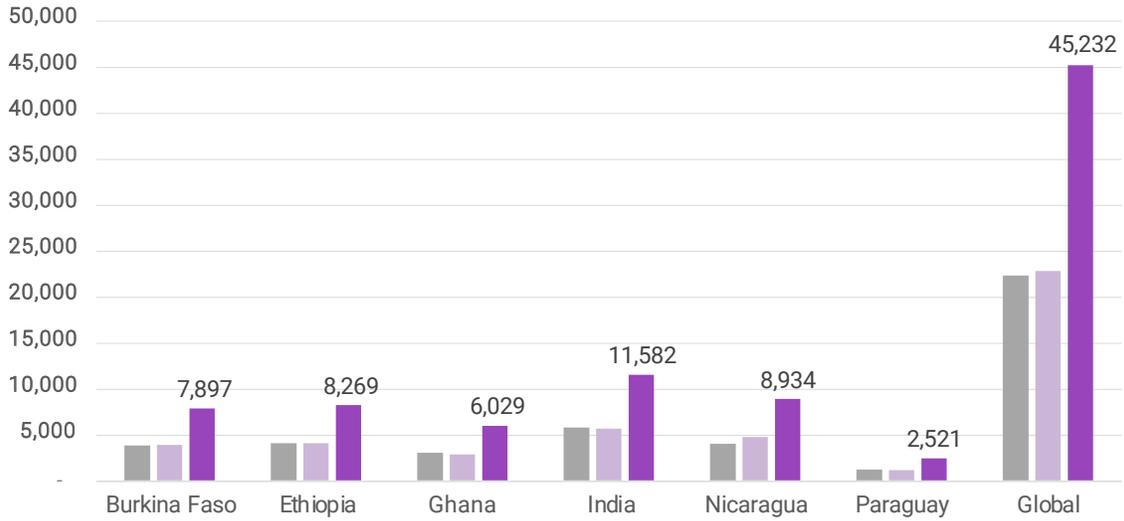
Children Believe's support for early childhood care and development (ECCD) is grounded in our commitment to uphold the right of every child to thrive, and to promote social justice. We focus on supporting children and parents who are in vulnerable situations or face systemic discrimination. Our ECCD work takes a broad developmental approach that backs the provision of services, such as parenting support, as well as maternal and child well-being initiatives. Over the past year, we continued to promote child-centred, high-quality schooling and teacher training, while seeking to strengthen good governance and accountability across educational institutions and systems. We invested tremendously in early-years education with a conviction that creating a solid foundation at an early age (3-6 years old) gives children the best advantage, significantly contributing to their social competency and emotional security at a later age. We also strengthened existing networks and institutions by sharing best practices and introducing new models for early childhood development at the local, country and regional levels.



Young Ghanaian children playing in an early childhood care and development centre, and getting a head start in their development. Photo: Children Believe

Chart 1 illustrates that, during FY22, Children Believe helped create new development opportunities for 45,232 children (22,852 girls) through supporting the renovation, equipping or construction of 442 ECCD centres.

Chart 1: Number of boys and girls under age 5 who had access to early childhood care and development centres in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country

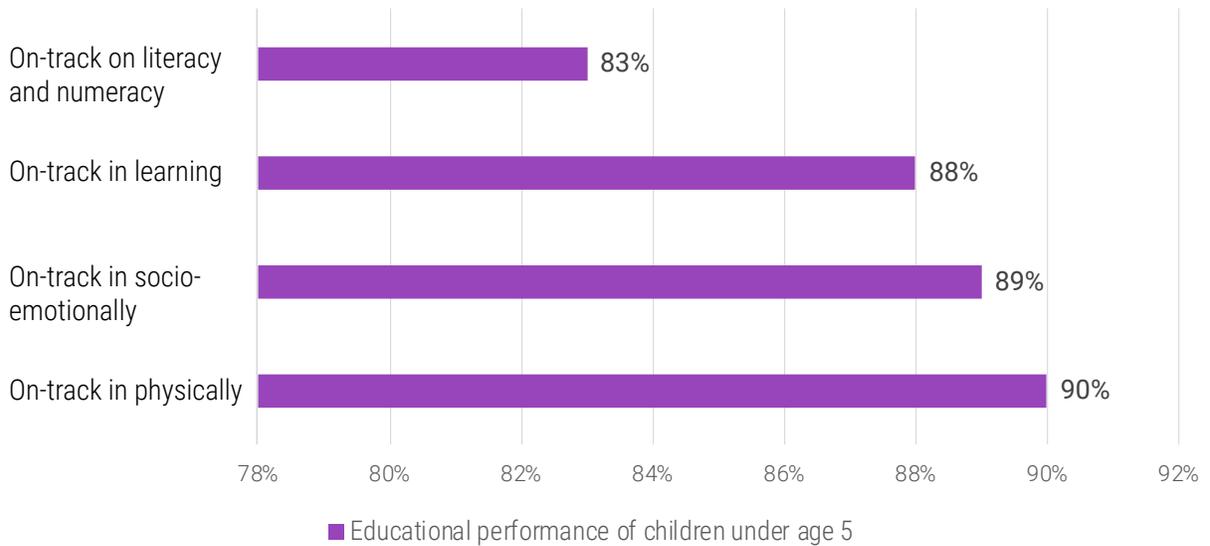


Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

The outcomes for children who attended the ECCD centres in communities where Children Believe serves demonstrate the efficacy of access to early education. As shown in Chart

2, 90 percent of the children were on-track in their physical development, 89 percent in their socio-emotionally development, and 83 percent in literacy and numeracy.

Chart 2: Developmental performance of children under age 5 who attended early childhood care and development centres supported by Children Believe X



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Box 1

Starting off right with access to early childhood care and development in Ethiopia

By Children Believe Ethiopia staff

Like many young children in Gale, a rural community in Ethiopia's Oromia region, Feyise couldn't enrol in school until she reached age 7, when children can walk the long distance to class. The absence of a preschool or pre-primary learning centre in Feyise's community has deprived her and other children of an early start to care and development, putting them well behind their peers in other parts of the world.

Seeing the opportunity to fill this gap, Children Believe and our local partner,



Access to early education and play promotes physical and cognitive growth, relationship building, communication and social skills, emotional maturation and self-confidence in children.
Photo: Philip Maher

Bole Bible Baptist Church Child Care and Community Development – Langano, supported the construction of an early childhood care and development (ECCD) centre in Gale. The centre, which consists of two classrooms that can each host 40 children, is equipped with indoor and outdoor game materials, washrooms and a potable water supply. Upon completion, the local district education office assigned teachers and took responsibility to operate the centre, free of charge.

The presence of a public ECCD centre in Gale resulted in children enrolling earlier in school, significantly lowering the age when they first receive care and educational support. Feyise's father, Bobo Burka, expressed his gratitude for the learning opportunity available to his daughter at a formative age. He says he has noticed positive changes in Feyise's communication, literacy and numeracy skills after she enrolled in the centre.

Many of Bobo's fellow community members who enrolled their children saw similar progress. At the centre, parents participated in positive parenting classes, which helped improve their caregiving skills and created stronger bonds with their children while advancing their development. Today, these parents actively champion early childhood education services in Gale.

Increased access to inclusive, equitable and quality primary education



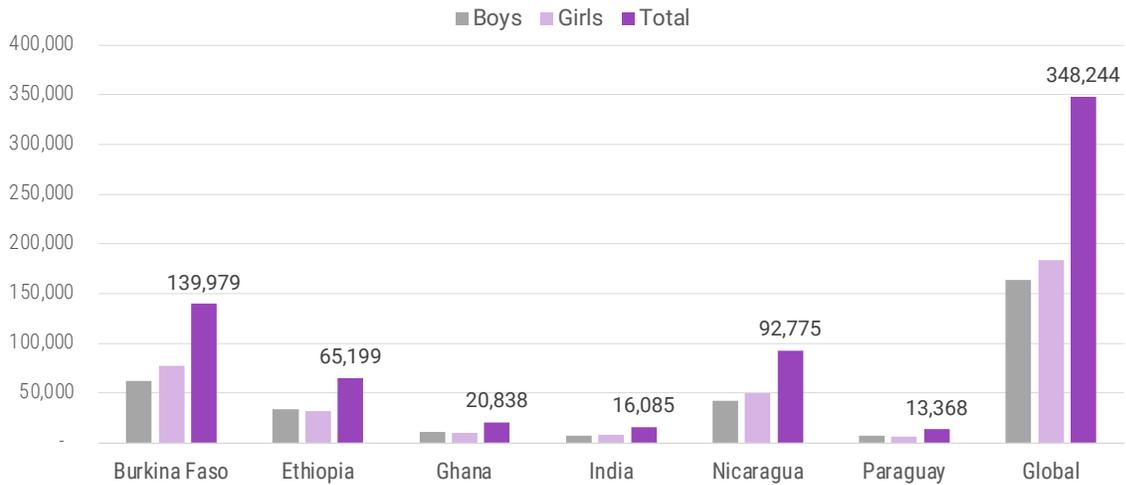
Due to discrimination and poverty, many girls and other vulnerable populations are denied their right to education. Children Believe is changing this by providing training and raising awareness to help more children access education. Photo: Philip Maher

Children Believe and its partners have continued to apply an 'inclusion lens' to identify and dismantle discriminatory barriers to education. Our approach to inclusion is based on equity—recognizing that each child is different, and each needs different types of support and resources to realize his or her education rights. Upon the re-opening of schools, we worked with education departments to build teachers' capacity, integrate child safeguarding into teacher training and promote gender- and social-inclusion in schools. We also supported children and their communities to engage in advocating and demanding greater accountability from all duty-bearers.

Children Believe also worked to promote inclusive education systems for all children

(boys and girls). Through this initiative, the schools that we worked with became instrumental in changing discriminatory attitudes toward those of fairness and justice, and creating school environments that promote equality by transforming the way children think, learn and act. As a result, these schools created access for all children, including those with disabilities, as well as those from excluded social caste/ethnic minority groups and children in difficult circumstances. As indicated in Chart 3, a total of 348,244 students (184,027 girls) were enrolled in 735 Children Believe-supported primary schools during the 2021/22 academic year.

Chart 3: Enrolment in primary school education for girls and boys in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country

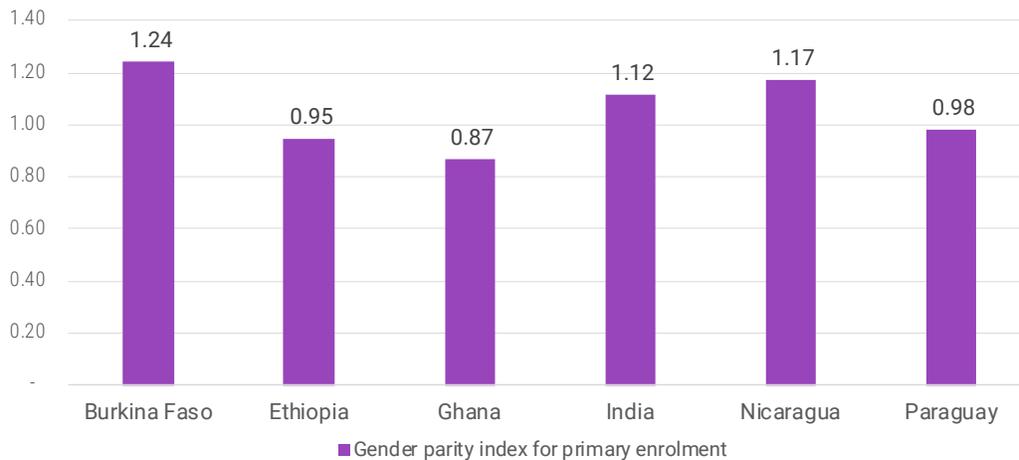


Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Further, Chart 4 depicts that due to the contribution of our primary education interventions, the overall gender parity for primary-school enrolment across our program communities had little/no disparity between female and male students' ratios.¹ The gender parity at the primary education

level in Children Believe's operational communities in North Ghana (0.87) and Ethiopia (0.95) were relatively high and in favour of males, while the gender parity in our communities in Burkina Faso (1.24), Nicaragua (1.17) and India (1.12) were in favour of girls.

Chart 4: Gender parity index for primary school enrolment in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

¹ Notes: Gender parity index on adjusted net enrolment rate is used as the primary source, and where administrative data is not available, household survey data is used. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics global databases, September 2019, based on administrative data for the most recent year available during the period 2012-2018. (<https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/>)

Increased access to affordable, quality and inclusive technical, vocational and higher education

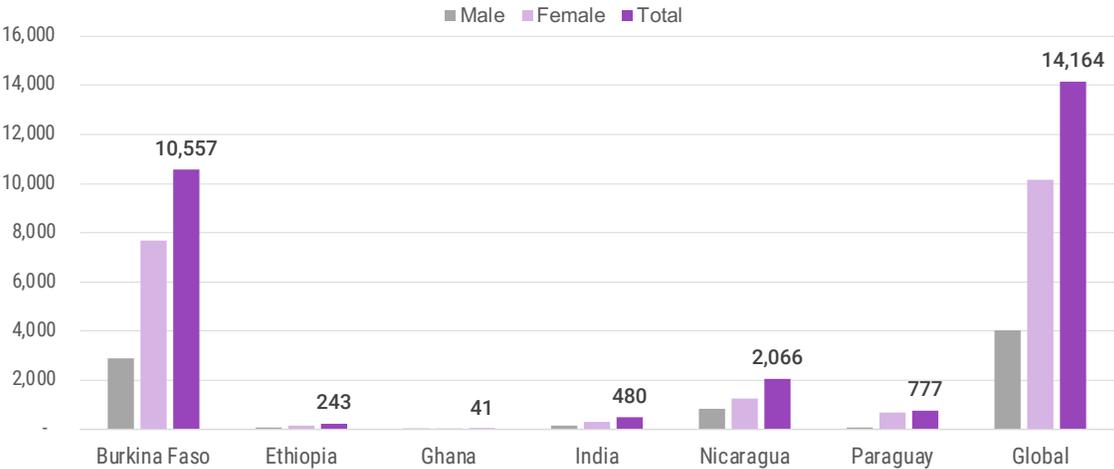
Children Believe recognizes the importance of increasing access to technical- and vocational-skills training for adolescents and young adults (ages 15 to 24) to help deter them from delinquency, addiction, unemployment, irregular migration and violence. In response to the pandemic closures and restrictions, we worked with key stakeholders, notably local governments, and vocational- and technical-centres, to build technical capacities and better facilities and to host online vocational- and soft-skills training.

During the reporting period, we collaborated with 20 local organizations, four like-minded international organizations, and host governments to enable 14,164 young people (72 percent girls and young women) ages 15 to 24, who are primarily from low-income and indigenous families, to develop the relevant skills they need to find employment or generate self-employment (Chart 5).



A young woman participates in vocational training in Nicaragua, helping improve her employment prospects. Photo: Children Believe

Chart 5: Number of young women and men who received vocational/life skills training and had access to employment opportunities, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN



A mother visits a health facility with her child for a check-up with a doctor. Photo: Children Believe

Children Believe promotes maternal- and child health-programs that are informed by human rights approaches and principles. We are committed to reducing maternal- and child-mortality through promoting a holistic approach that focuses on strengthening health systems, reducing the burden of diseases and improving nutrition. Working with regional- and district-level departments of health, as well as local government administrative bodies, we have implemented integrated, holistic health care approaches, primarily targeting mothers, pregnant women, newborns and children under age 5.

Our program interventions in FY22 focused on improving health-care services disrupted by the pandemic, addressing vaccine hesitancy, and increasing the delivery and use of essential maternal- and child health-services.

In addition, we supported our local partners, including government health officers, to improve their technical capacity through training and equipping their health professionals with the necessary skills and materials to deliver child- and maternal health-services.

Improved delivery and use of essential maternal and child health-services

Over the past year, already fragile health-care sectors were burdened with responding to the COVID-19 crisis, resulting in poor capacity to deliver essential maternal-and child health- services.

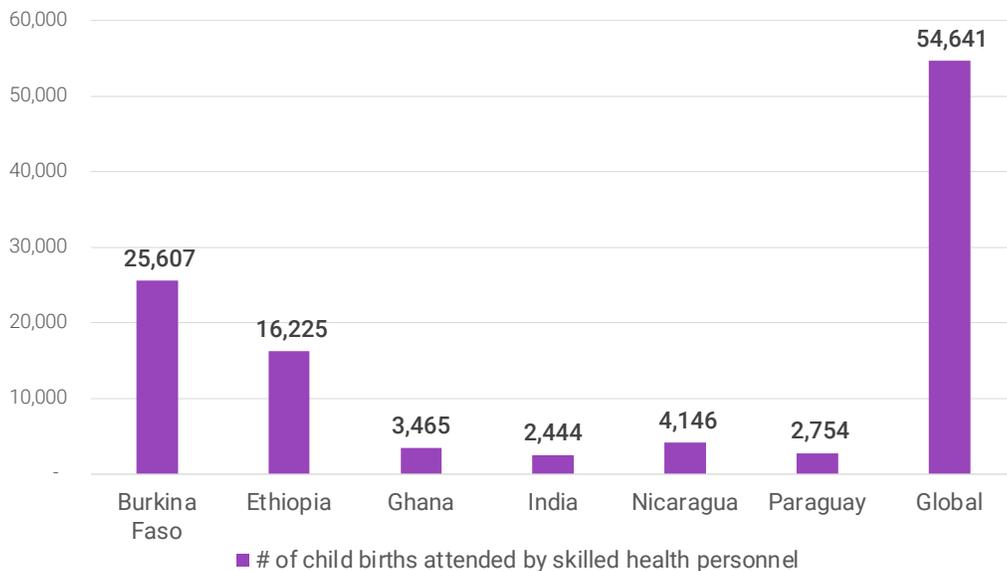
In response to COVID-19, our partners across all six of Children Believe’s operational countries (most significantly in India during the second wave of COVID-19) organized a series of vaccine-awareness campaigns. They also supported the extension of numerous vaccination camps in an effort to increase vaccine access and clear up misinformation about the vaccine and COVID-19, particularly in hard-to-reach communities and those with isolated populations.

Children Believe focused on building and/or upgrading and equipping health facilities to mitigate or minimize disruption caused by

the pandemic, and improve the health service to our primary target groups, including pregnant women, newborns and children under age 5. For example, we renovated and equipped six existing health facilities, four in Ethiopia and two in Nicaragua, with medicines and essential equipment to strengthen their capacities to deliver regular health services. These efforts especially targeted underserved areas. We also worked to increase the knowledge and skills of health personnel to deliver gender-responsive- and child-friendly -services.

Chart 6 shows that skilled health personnel attended 54,641 childbirths across our operational communities during the reporting period, with the highest number in Burkina Faso (25,607), followed by Ethiopia (16,225) and Nicaragua (4,146).

Chart 6: Number of childbirths attended by skilled health personnel in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

In Chart 7, a comparison of the national average of births attended by skilled health personnel compared to those in Children Believe-supported communities illustrates how our capacity-building support to health personnel contributed to improved childbirth attendance. In Nicaragua, our capacity support contributed to the highest percentage of childbirths attended by skilled personnel (100 percent) against the national average of 96 percent. Similarly, in India, our health work among socially marginalized communities resulted in a significant improvement, with 100 percent of childbirths attended by skilled personnel compared to a national average of 81 percent. In Burkina Faso, the percentage was 89 versus the national average of 80 percent. In Paraguay, the percentage of attended births in our operational communities was slightly higher at 99 percent than the national average of 98 percent.

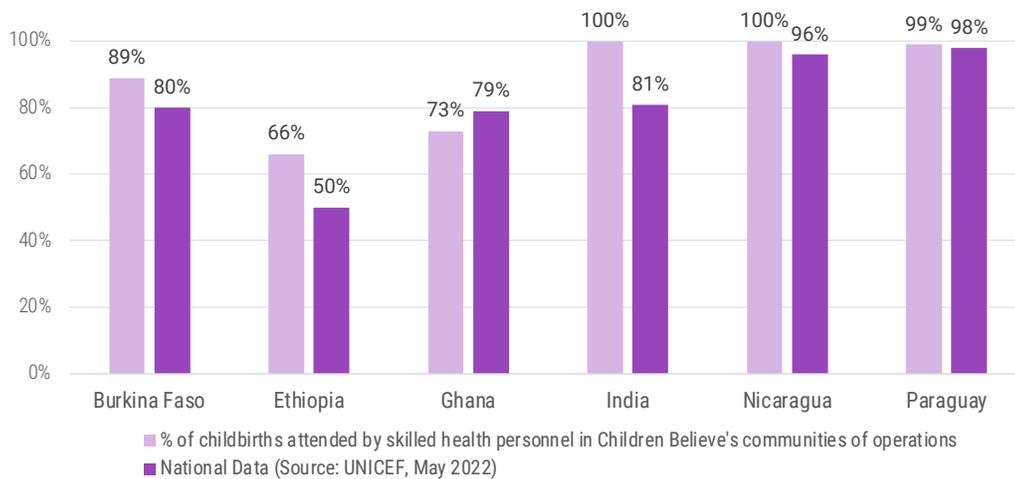


A mother pictured with her baby at a health facility. The capacity-building support provide by Children Believe helped improve the number of childbirths attended by health personnel. Photo: Sahil Ali

The area where Children Believe operates in northern Ghana is structurally underserved. Our investment here lifted the number of childbirths attended by skilled health personnel. However, in comparison to the national average of 79 percent, the percentage for the Children Believe-supported community fell slightly short

at 73 percent. In Ethiopia, although our capacity support contributed to higher proportions of childbirths attended by skilled personnel (66 percent) compared to the national average of 50 percent, the low statistics relative to other countries suggests a worrisome situation for maternal-and child health-care in the country.

Chart 7: Percentage of childbirths attended by skilled health personnel in Children Believe-supported communities compared to the national average, disaggregated by country

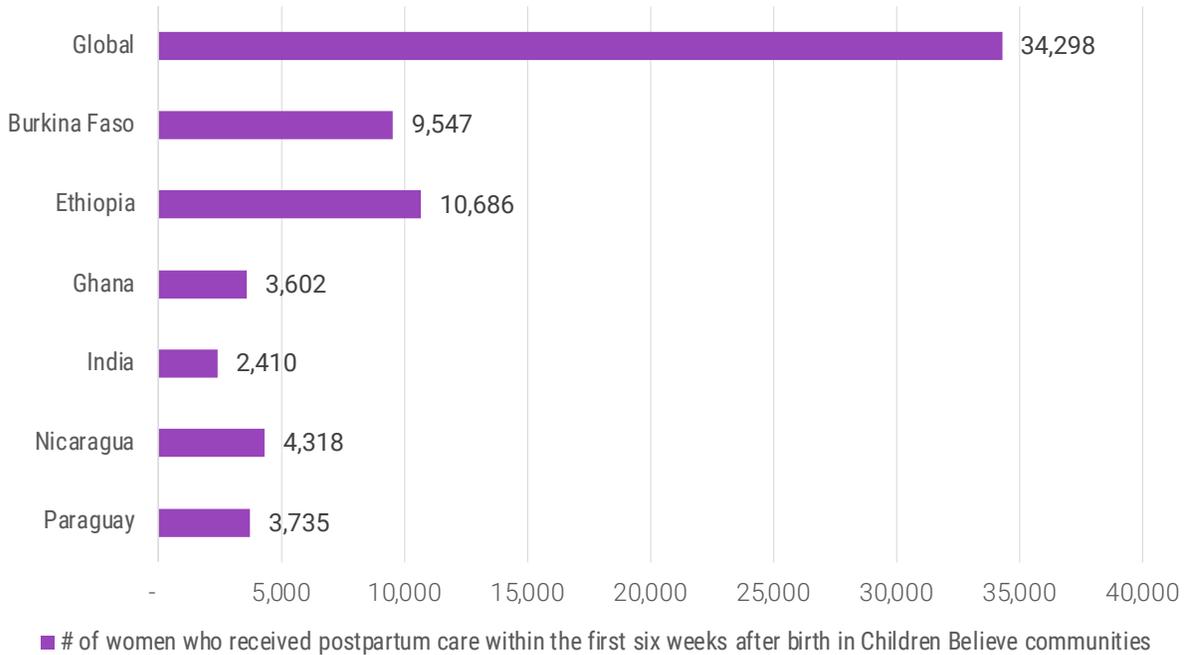


Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

With our partners across the six countries, Children Believe also helped build the capacity of health personnel to provide reproductive health- and postpartum-care.

A total of 34,298 mothers, young women and adolescent girls benefited from this care during the reporting period (Chart 8).

Chart 8: Number of women who received reproductive health- and postpartum-care in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country

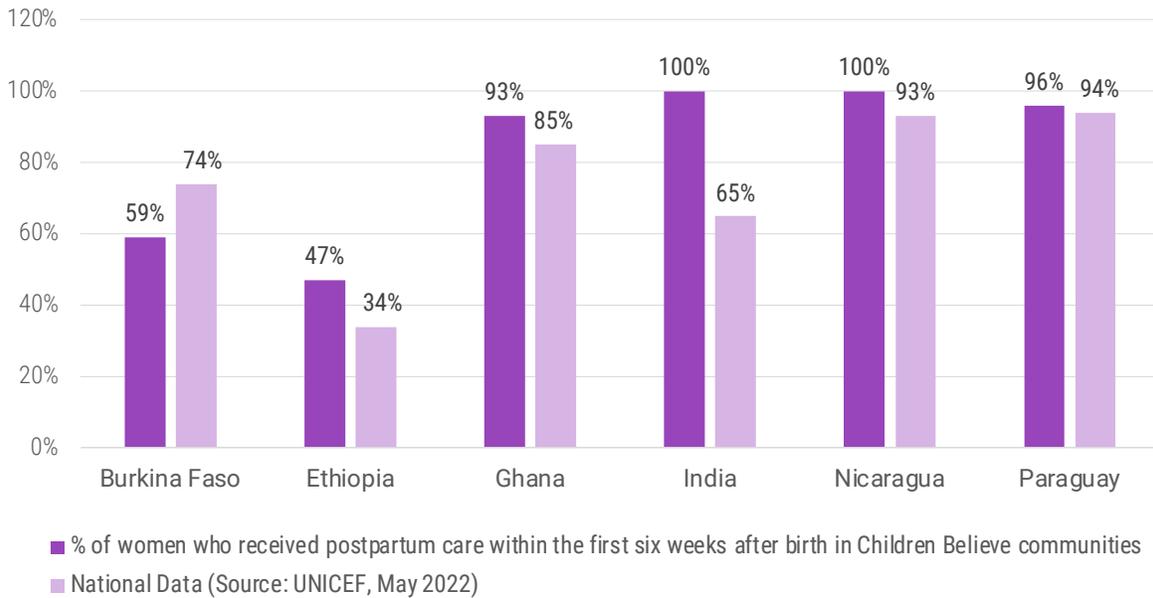


Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Again, compared to the national averages, the overall outcomes for the communities in which we operate demonstrate the efficacy of our efforts. Chart 9 shows that in India and Nicaragua, our capacity support contributed to 100 percent coverage in both countries, surpassing the national averages of 65 percent and 93 percent, respectively. In Paraguay, we achieved a slight improvement at 96 percent in comparison to the national average of 94 percent, but in Ghana, the differential was greater, with an outcome of 93 percent compared to a national average of 85 percent.

The percentage of women accessing postpartum care in our operational communities in Burkina Faso was 59 percent against a 74 percent national average. Although lower than the national average, the outcome still presents positive progress when considering the low start up at the beginning of our operation (estimated lower than 51 percent), where the state of postpartum care in primary health care facilities was limited. In Ethiopia, our efforts have contributed to reaching an outcome of 47 percent, surpassing the national average of 34 percent.

Chart 9: Percentage of women who received reproductive health- and postpartum-care in Children Believe-supported communities compared to the national average, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22



A child's weight being assessed with an upper-arm measuring tape. To help prevent malnutrition, information and training were provided to mothers, caregivers and children. Photo: Children Believe

Along with maternal and child health-delivery, Children Believe recognizes the critical role of nutrition in contributing to well-being. Children who consume nutritious food perform better at school and live healthier lives, on average. Our programs worked to improve nutritional intake practices that prevent stunting, wasting and other consequences of malnutrition. To help improve family nutrition, Children Believe provided information and training for over 34,000 mothers, caregivers and children. Topics included nutritional meal content, promoting balanced diets with fruits and vegetables, healthy eating routines and good hygiene practices for food handlers. We also supported school-feeding initiatives in close collaboration with key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education. Small farms and gardens were established in school compounds, providing food for students and income for schools from the sale of remaining harvests.

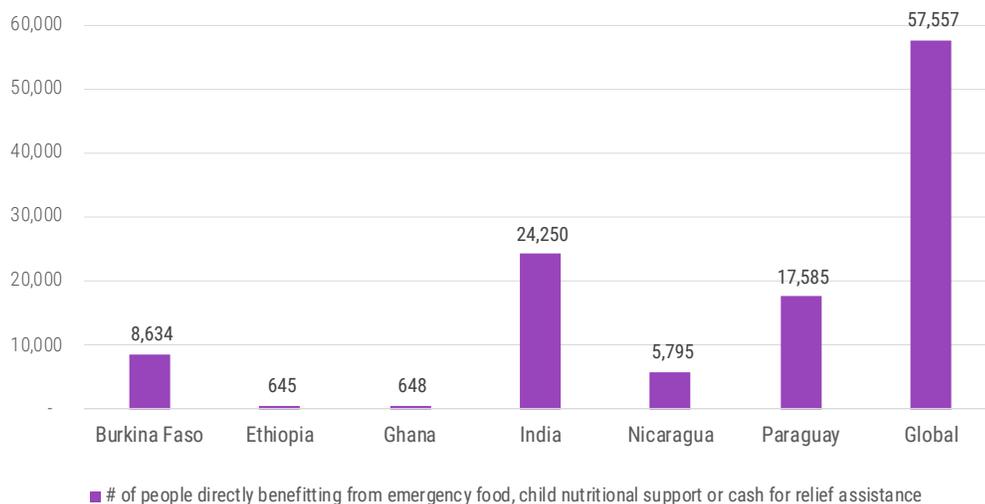
Assistance in emergencies

In response to emergency situations that arose in FY22, Children Believe worked with local partners to provide urgently needed food assistance (rice, wheat flour, oil, pasta and other supplementary food), supporting more than 57,550 people over a three-month period (Chart 10). Due to the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in India, and the hurricane and flooding in Paraguay over the reporting period, the relief distributions in India (24,250 people) and Paraguay (over 17,500) were comparatively larger in their reach than the relief assistance provided in other countries of operation.



For families struggling with food insecurity due to the pandemic and natural disasters, food assistance provided a measure of relief. Photo: Sahil Ali

Chart 10: Number of people who benefited from emergency food, child nutritional support or cash for relief assistance in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

In collaboration with Health Partners International of Canada, Children Believe worked to increase access to medicines and medical supplies for vulnerable communities in our operational countries, as well as in other emergency-affected regions. During the reporting period, we sent C\$2.22 million worth of medicines and medical supplies to

Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Iraq/ Kurdistan and Lebanon. These shipments included much-needed resources for primary health care and specialized areas, such as palliative care, preventive health and emergency health-care needs, which benefited over 1.5 million emergency-affected and internally displaced persons.

Box 2

Stitching together a new future

By Karen Homer, interim director of communications, Children Believe

“Life in my village was beautiful,” recalls 14-year-old Sohaibata, her eyes fixed on the yellow yarn she’s fashioning into a scarf. “When we can go back, I want to start a small business selling things I knit.”

Sohaibata—who has never been to school—embraces her new skill that she learned in one of Children Believe’s 55 child-friendly spaces for displaced children and youth in Kaya, Burkina Faso. Knitting symbolizes her progress and embodies her hope that her family will recover from their terrifying ordeal.

“The shooting started in my village around 11:00 a.m.,” says Sohaibata, her expression stoic. “We ran into the house, grabbed clothes and cooking pots, then fled. People in a nearby village took us in, but the men came for them, too. My family ran from village to village for almost a year until we arrived in Kaya.”

Sadly, Sohaibata’s story is not unique. Of the 1.9 million people displaced in Burkina Faso, more than 61 percent are children. According to Children Believe research, one out of every two children in the six most-affected regions have experienced or witnessed violence. Of these children, 82 per cent are girls.

Children Believe’s child-friendly spaces are safe havens where children can play, learn and have stability—so critical for their recovery and long-term well-being. To date, in partnership with UNICEF, we provided



Sohaibata hopes to turn her new knitting skills into a small business when she returns to her village. Photo: Philip Maher

essential psychosocial support to 66,351 displaced children in the violence-affected East and Centre-North regions.

In the centres, adolescents also learn vocational skills, which offer a mode of therapy and a means of generating income. “The teacher taught me and other girls how to knit,” says Sohaibata, presenting her finished yellow scarf with a satisfied smile. “I can make hats and scarves. I think I can sell them in my village. I hope I can go home soon.”

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE



A girl playing in a child-friendly space in Kaya, Burkina Faso that was created to support the well-being of displaced children. Photo: Children Believe

Children Believe works to prevent all forms of, and violence against children, including child abuse and neglect. We particularly emphasize protecting children from sexual- and gender-based violence,² which often manifest as sexual abuse and harassment, verbal abuse, deprivation of resources, human trafficking and harmful social practices, such as early- and forced-marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Our approach focuses on listening to and working with boys and girls to improve their safety. We also work with school systems to help make them safe and free of violence. Our teams collaborate with governments and community partners to implement progressive laws and policies, increase public awareness and improve the capacity of community child protection systems.

² Sexual and gender-based violence 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 (GBV) 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. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, retrieved August 28, 2020 from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Sexual_and_gender-based_violence.pdf

We worked with local partners and government bodies to strengthen protection systems and increase their capacities. Our ultimate goal is to reduce the vulnerabilities of children facing discrimination, whether due to caste, gender, ethnic identity, disability, forced migration displacement or difficult circumstances, such as homelessness.

Throughout the year, communities actively helped us screen and enrol orphans and other vulnerable children in our sponsorship program, enabling them to access quality- and inclusive- education, basic health-care services and livelihood support.

Protection of children and women from violence

Children Believe works to reduce and mitigate violence against children and women. In FY22, we activated and enhanced the capacities of local protection mechanisms to protect children and women from violence, whether the threat was catalysed by the loss of or separation from primary caregivers, disruption to family income or social isolation. Most of the reported violence manifested in the forms of early marriage, early pregnancy, and sexual- and labour-exploitation perpetuated mostly by family members or persons known to the families.

We carried out community awareness education programs, which encompassed gender-based violence (GBV)-prevention messages, and advised on how to equip community leaders, caregivers and children to prevent and report GBV. Our work benefited 264,092 children, youth, parents and other duty-bearers across 466 community groups in our six countries of operation.



A Nicaraguan mother with her baby. Photo: Children Believe

Box 3

“We are all responsible” campaign fights sexual abuse against children in Paraguay

By Children Believe Paraguay staff

Children Believe joined forces once again this year with fellow international organizations and Paraguay’s Ministry of Children and Adolescents to end the sexual abuse of children—a rampant problem across the country.

- 12 out of 10,000 children under age 19 are victims of sexual violence³
- 80 percent of sexual abuse against children and young people happens within the family⁴
- 2 girls ages 10-14 give birth daily on average⁵
- 1 in 10 maternal deaths is a girl between the ages of 10-19⁶
- 18 out of 1,000 children ages 10-17 are married or live as a couple³

To address the issue, in May, the government launched “*We are all responsible*,” a national annual campaign to drive home the message that sexual abuse of children is a criminal offence. Children are encouraged to call the 147 helpline, which members of the public can also contact to report abuse.

Through the campaign’s awareness activities, children, youth, families, teachers and other community members learned about the signs of abuse (such as excessive crying, difficulty



Campaign messages bringing attention to the issue of child sexual abuse were circulated in public spaces, including national sporting events. Photo: Children Believe

sleeping and social withdrawal), along with tips on how to prevent it (e.g. recognizing inappropriate touching; listening to and providing safe spaces for victims).

The campaign had a measurable effect, building on the impact from previous years. The monthly number of reports of sexual abuse against children more than doubled, from 60 in 2021 to 139 following the outreach, according to government telephone helpline records. Child abuse is more openly discussed in the media, and child abuse offenders are less likely to go unpunished in the courts.

³ CDIA Observa. Índice de desprotección. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdiaobserva.org.py/indice-de-desproteccion/>.

⁴ UNICEF. We are all responsible. Retrieved from: <https://www.unicef.org/paraguay/todos-somos-responsables>.

⁵ Ministerio de Salud Pública y Bienestar Social (April 15, 2019). Infancia en peligro: dos niñas por día dan a luz en Paraguay. Retrieved from: <https://www.mspbs.gov.py/portal/18008/infancia-en-peligro-dos-ninildeas-por-dia-dan-a-luz-en-paraguay.html>.

⁶ Ministerio de Salud Pública y Bienestar Social (2016). Plan Nacional de Salud Adolescente 2016-2021. Retrieved from: <https://paraguay.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Plan%20de%20Salud%20Adolescente.pdf>.

Combating child, early and forced marriage



Child marriage is a complex problem disproportionately affecting girls and tied to poverty, inequality and harmful traditional practices. Photo: Tatevik Galstyan

Child marriage is a critical issue in four of our operating countries, namely Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana and India.⁷ Our approach to ending child marriage recognizes the complex nature of the problem, and the socio-cultural, legal and structural factors underpinning the practice. In alignment with the global SDG 5.3, which focuses on the elimination of “... all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation”, our country teams and partners work with local law enforcement bodies to help communities implement affirmative actions to combat child marriage and other forms of sexual exploitation.

We strengthened the technical and financial capacities of our local partners and other CBOs led by youth and women, preparing them to work with their government counterparts to enforce full implementation of key international

conventions and agreements. This includes Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which specifically states, “the betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage...”

Our local partners and CBOs in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana and India strongly advocated against child marriage, and advanced the recognition of it as a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

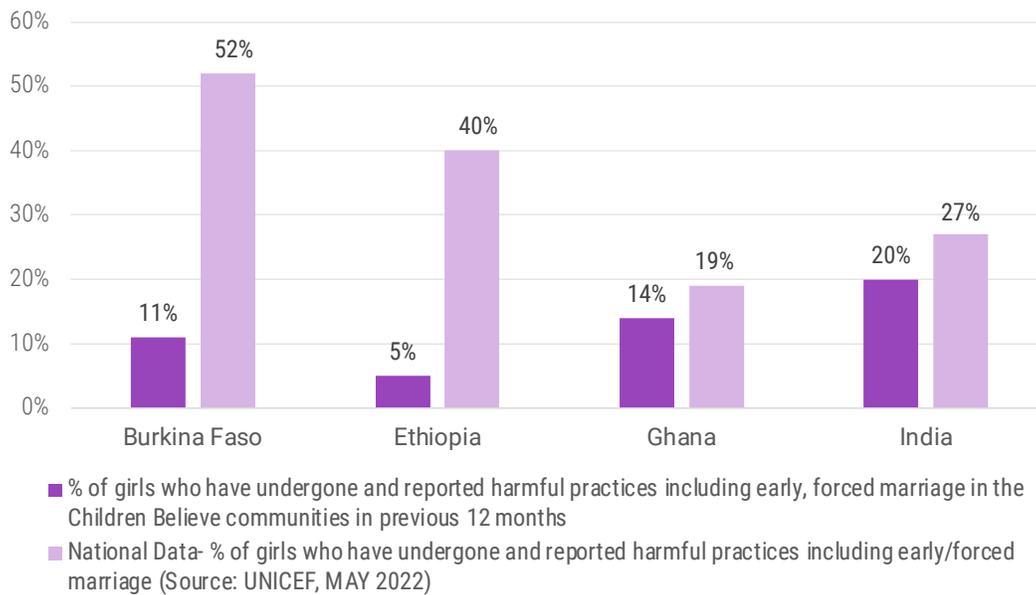
As indicated in Chart 11, compared to national averages, our contributions in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana and India helped reduce the occurrences of harmful practices, including child, early and forced

⁷ This key performance indicator (KPI) is not relevant for Nicaragua and Paraguay.

marriage, and FGM. In our operational communities in Burkina Faso, 11 percent of the girls reported experiencing harmful practices during the reporting period, which is significantly lower than the national average of 52 percent. Our work in Ethiopia was similarly notable, seeing a 5 percent

outcome in our communities against a 40 percent national average. Positive achievements were also registered in Ghana (14 percent in our operational communities versus a 19 percent national average) and in India (20 percent against a 27 percent national average).

Chart 11: Percentage of girls who have experienced and reported harmful practices in the past year in Children Believe-supported communities compared to the national average, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

We worked closely with stakeholders in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Ghana, as well as our pan-African strategic partners, including the Africa Child Policy Forum and the Graça Machel Trust, to establish better technical and human resources capacities. The improved capacities helped enforce the implementation of international

and continental legal instruments, such as the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and the Rights of Women.

Box 4

Standing up against child marriage, Geetha's bravery changes her village

By Siju Mathew, MELKS officer, Children Believe India

Geetha and her family live in Musallamadugu, a remote village in southern India. Her father makes a meagre income as a labourer and her mother takes up seasonal work when available. Struggling financially, her parents decided to follow the traditional practice of families in their culture facing similar hardships. They pulled Geetha out of school and began planning for her marriage. Geetha was only 15.

"I did not want to get married. I wanted to continue my education," says Geetha with conviction.

Being a member of a Children Believe-supported village development committee and a local youth club, she remembered the discussions about child marriage and other village-related issues. "I was hopeful that if I approached [the members], they would help stop my marriage."

Committee members, along with leaders from the village council and community health workers quickly connected with Geetha's parents. Her parents learned about the physical and psychological harm that happens to girls who marry young. They also learned that their decision to marry off their daughter at age 15 was against the law.

"We counselled the parents and re-enrolled Geetha in Grade 10. She continued her education," says Sree Latha, program director of Rural Organization for Poverty Eradication Services, Children Believe's implementing partner.



Geetha's experience has changed attitudes toward child marriage in her community. Photo: Sahil Ali

Today, Geetha is in second year university pursuing a commerce degree. She aspires to become a teacher to help educate and empower more girls. "All girls should stand on their own two legs, know their rights and be able to continue their education," says Geetha.

Geetha's bravery in standing up for her rights sparked change in her traditional community: not a single forced marriage has taken place in Musallamadugu in the past three years. With the support of Children Believe, more than 50 villages and communities in the region have absolved child marriage altogether.

Preventing irregular child migration

Irregular child migration remains one of the most pressing child-rights issues in Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) and Mexico. Pushed by the threat of domestic abuse, gang violence, unemployment and poverty, children and families flee their homes and communities in search of a better life. The combined effects of climate change, extreme weather events, the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures due to the pandemic and natural disasters, have further fuelled migration across the region. However, in their efforts to improve their conditions, young migrants in particular face the risk of being



A young man develops his baking skills as part of Children Believe's skills-building and employment creation initiatives to prevent irregular child migration. Photo: Children Believe

exposed to trafficking, exploitation, kidnapping, violence and even death in their attempts to illegally cross international borders.

During the reporting period, Children Believe worked with partners to protect the rights and safety of at-risk children. We successfully completed and phased out of our five-year consortium initiative project to mitigate irregular migration, child trafficking and youth displacement in Latin America, with funding from the Canadian government through Global Affairs Canada (GAC).⁸

Our interventions 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. This involved improving the knowledge and skills of duty-bearers with the government, public institutions, municipalities, and local organizations.

Youth associations were also equipped with information, particularly regarding the negative consequences of irregular migration and the risks of child trafficking. To improve the conditions for youth locally and deter them from migrating, we increased the employment prospects for over 14,000 young people by facilitating access to skills-development training. We also created opportunities for employment in their home countries. Additionally, we adopted digital technology platforms/services and increased the use of e-learning/employment infrastructures to sustain skills development during and after the COVID-19 lockdowns.

⁸ The Preventing Irregular Child Migration in Central America (PICMICA) project was implemented by a consortium led by Children Believe and included ChildFund International, a US-based affiliate, and EDUCO, a global NGO based in Spain. The project ran from March 2017 through to October 2021 with a total project cost of C\$15.2 million, where by GAC's grant award was C\$12.6 million.

Box 5

PICMCA project effectively helps stem forced migration in Central America

By Karen Homer, interim director of communications, Children Believe

Judy, a 21-year-old entrepreneur, launched her beauty business three years ago in Managua. Today, she is celebrating her success, grateful that she wasn't forced to leave Nicaragua just to survive.

Judy is one of more than 620,000 youth from five Central American countries, as well as 180,000 vulnerable children and 483,000 adults, who were supported by Children Believe to remain in their communities. Over the past five years, our innovative project— Preventing Irregular Child Migration in Central America (PICMCA) — has improved the lives of families at risk and removed many of the factors pushing them to leave their countries.

“Through PICMCA, I was able to start my own business as a make-up artist and become economically stable,” says Judy. “I saw a positive way forward in my community, instead of believing that leaving was my only option.”

More than 281 million international migrants are on the move at any given time, many of them vulnerable women and children. Alarming, according to UNICEF, one-in-five migrants is a young person and 36 million are children.

For most, leaving their homeland is not desirable, but they see no other option. They go in search of basic human rights, such as jobs, education, healthcare, food and safety. Classified as irregular migrants, they lack proper documentation or legal status, becoming stateless and in danger of various forms of exploitation. Families risk everything



Judy Rivera with a client at her beauty salon in Managua, Nicaragua. Photo: Children Believe

— including separation, incarceration and even death — in search of a better life.

Led by Children Believe and in collaboration with its ChildFund Alliance partners, ChildFund International and Educo, PICMCA engaged children and youth in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Mexico. The five-year \$15.2-million regional project was designed to improve the well-being of children and youth who are at risk of irregular migration. The Government of Canada contributed \$12.6 million to the project.

Judy described her big ambitions, now that her business is thriving. “I want to go to university and my small-business venture will help me achieve that,” she explained. “I want to become an architect.... become a professional and provide my family with a better life.”

TOP PICMCA PROJECT RESULTS

- 85 PERCENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE agreed the project improved their living conditions, due to youth skills development, employment training and mentorship programs.
- 15 PERCENT DECLINE in young people's perception of irregular migration as a means of achieving a better life. Creating awareness among children and youth about the dangers of migrating irregularly, and the alternatives offered by their country, proved successful. By the end of

the project only 44 Percent of youth still believed their lives would be better if they migrated to another country.

- 91 PERCENT OF YOUTH participants said they now feel safe in their communities, compared to 84 percent at the beginning. This improvement was achieved by strengthening child-protection services, promoting child rights and gender equality, and improving prevention strategies for children who are victims of child labour, discrimination and violence.

Supporting orphans and vulnerable children

Education and health services from the government are free in most of the countries where Children Believe works, although they are not always of the required quality or in close proximity for families. However, thousands of poor and socially excluded children, especially in many remote African villages, do not attend school because their families cannot afford the minimum costs for school supplies, books and uniforms. Some children go to school hungry and are gradually forced to drop out to earn money for the family or help around the house or farm. Girls face even greater barriers that impact their attendance, including the lack of separate sanitation facilities in schools, lack of feminine hygiene supplies and expectations to help with time-consuming domestic chores, such as fetching water.

Children Believe's well-designed child sponsorship program identifies and supports orphans and other vulnerable children to attend and stay in school by addressing



Children from a village in India return from fetching water. Poverty and distance from schools are barriers preventing children in rural areas from accessing education and improving their circumstances. Photo: Children Believe

some of these challenges. We do this by bringing together individual Canadian donors and children in need, working in partnership with local CSOs, school administrations and community leaders. In FY22, with the involvement of 26 local CSOs across 466 communities in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia,

Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Paraguay, our sponsorship program benefited 41,302 sponsored children (Table 2) and families in who are in greatest need of child-centred, family-focused community development interventions.

Table 2: Number of enrolled⁹ sponsored children who benefited from Children Believe’s community development programs, disaggregated by country

Country	Enrolled sponsored children
Burkina Faso	6,233
Ethiopia	7,960
Ghana	7,881
India	4,637
Nicaragua	6,930
Paraguay	7,661
GLOBAL	41,302

Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Children in our sponsorship programs indicated that their families could cover the basic costs of school attendance. Further, the program offered them the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the improved education and health facilities, adequate water and sanitation facilities, and income-generating opportunities for their families.

regular health check-ups, participating in after-school activities, attending Creative Learning Centres and receiving assisted study time to finish their homework or prepare for exams. The after-school program also helped children develop life skills, and gave them the space and time needed to play.

Most of the children in our sponsorship program also reported having enjoyed

⁹ Enrolled children are those who were screened based on their vulnerability, and selected to participate in and benefit from Children Believe’s programs. Their information and photo could be collected for the purpose of assigning or linking them to an individual sponsor, but they only qualify as ‘paid’ sponsored children when they get an individual sponsor who is committed to extend financial support and establishes a one-to-one relationship with them through a supporter number assigned by Children Believe.

V GENDER EQUALITY



Women members support each other's financial stability through working together in their local Village Savings and Loans Associations. Photo: Children Believe

Children Believe works to ensure that women, men, girls and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Our programs identify opportunities, and respond to the different needs and abilities of all stakeholders, particularly young girls and boys. When women's rights are respected, women are healthier, better educated and better paid, which has a ripple effect. Children thrive and so do communities, organizations and societies, creating lasting benefits for generations to come.

Our programs are designed to address gender inequalities, such as a cultural preference for boys, stereotypes about gender roles and control over productive resources that create barriers to girls' education. Such barriers deny them of equal opportunities and prevent them from contributing to and benefiting from

sustainable development in their communities and countries. We strive for transformative change, working with key stakeholders to identify and address the root causes of gender inequality in the local context. We address social norms and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities. As well, we undertake innovative policy influence work to challenge status quos and enforce the implementation of legislation and policies that promote gender equality or address the gaps between policies and their implementations through evidence-based advocacy.

Gender equality strategies are implemented across all of our programs, and we disaggregate and monitor data by gender. Thus, our programs contribute to Goal 5 of the SDGs (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.)

Our projects are also aligned with all three objectives of Canada’s Feminist International

Assistance Policy. These are:

- 1) enhance the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls;
- 2) increase the participation of women and girls in equal decision-making; and
- 3) give women and girls control over the resources they need to secure economic and social equality.

Box 6 Shahadu bakes up small-business success

By Children Believe Ghana staff

Surrounded by baking equipment and her assistants, Shahadu Laabe is hard at work rolling out dough for the savoury pastries she sells in her shops. This farmer’s wife and mother of four children from Binda, a village in northern Ghana, is preparing for another bustling day—a stark contrast to her previous work routine.

“I used to be a petty trader, selling a few yams and earning an average of 30 cedis (Ghana’s currency) a week (about \$6),” says Shahadu. With a proud smile she adds, “Now I serve my pastries at shops in Yendi, Bimbilla and Nakpayili, making a profit of 90 to 100 cedis (about \$18 to \$20) a week.”

Shahadu’s life changed dramatically since joining the Children Believe-supported Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) in her community. “It used to be very difficult for me to feed my children and support them through school. But from the day I received my start-up kit and seed funding after

participating in the employment training, it has been a blessing.”

The VSLA training and resources enabled Shahadu to switch from selling yams to launching a pastry business. She now generates enough income to cover family necessities and her children’s educational costs.

As a successful woman entrepreneur, Shahadu has become a role model and is helping other females in her community. She explains, “Two of my daughters help prepare the pastries, in addition to another lady. I am training others to help me expand production because there is demand. This gives my co-workers income, and creates learning opportunities for women and girls.”

Reflecting on her achievements, Shahadu is grateful. “Because of the opportunities I received, my income has increased, my family is comfortable and I’ve gained more respect. God bless everyone involved in making this possible.”

Promoting the rights of women and girls

A total of 195,594 women and young girls benefited from various capacity-building support in the form of awareness creation, training, improved adoption and enforcement of gender-sensitive policies, legislations, strategies and actions that give women and girls equal rights to economic resources, financial services, inheritance and natural resources.

Building on foundations laid in previous years in our programs across our six operating countries, technical and financial support was extended for women and adolescent girls who organized themselves into self-help groups, savings and credit groups, or credit cooperatives.

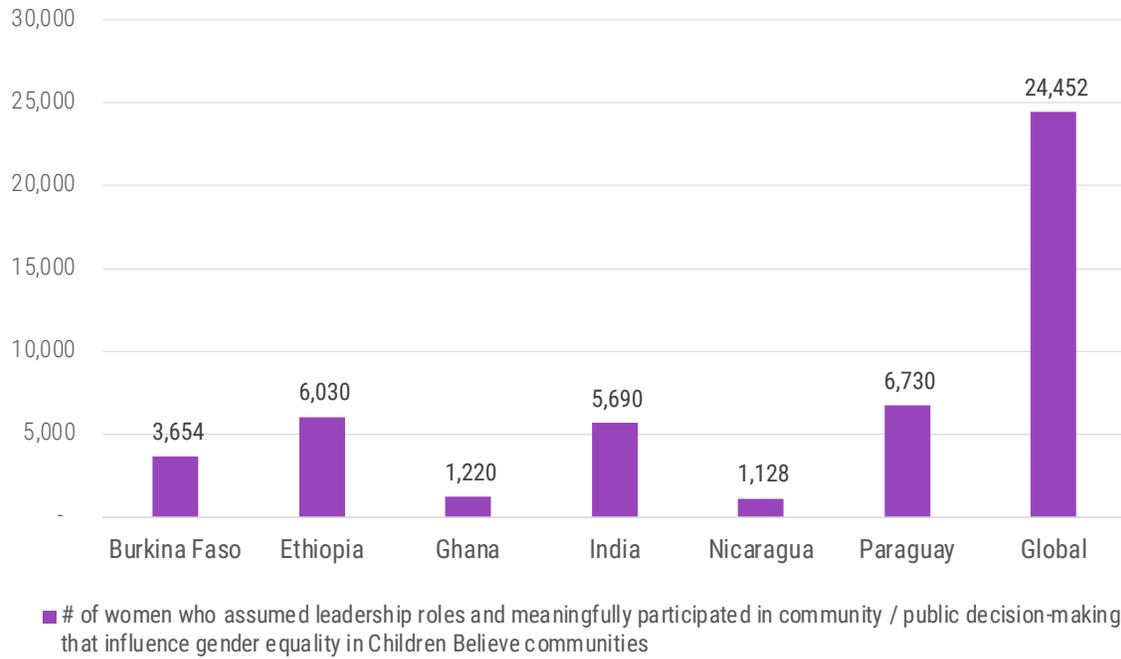
During the reporting period, women's enhanced participation in these CBOs, both as members and leaders, created increased space for women to exercise their social, economic and political rights. In some instances, Children Believe proactively collaborated with local government technical departments to develop or enforce new gender-friendly laws or guidelines.

Our programs helped create community forums or institutional spaces for 24,452 young women and mothers (Chart 12) to exercise their leadership and ensure that their voices are heard in societal decision-making processes. These spaces have inspired women to strengthen their ability to advocate for community-driven, participatory development programs that are gender-sensitive and child-centred.



Skills training and capacity-building support helped Ledys Osorto, 20, develop the confidence and ability to launch her own business. Photo: Nahum Castellon

Chart 12: Number of women who assumed leadership roles and meaningfully participated in community/ public decision-making in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country

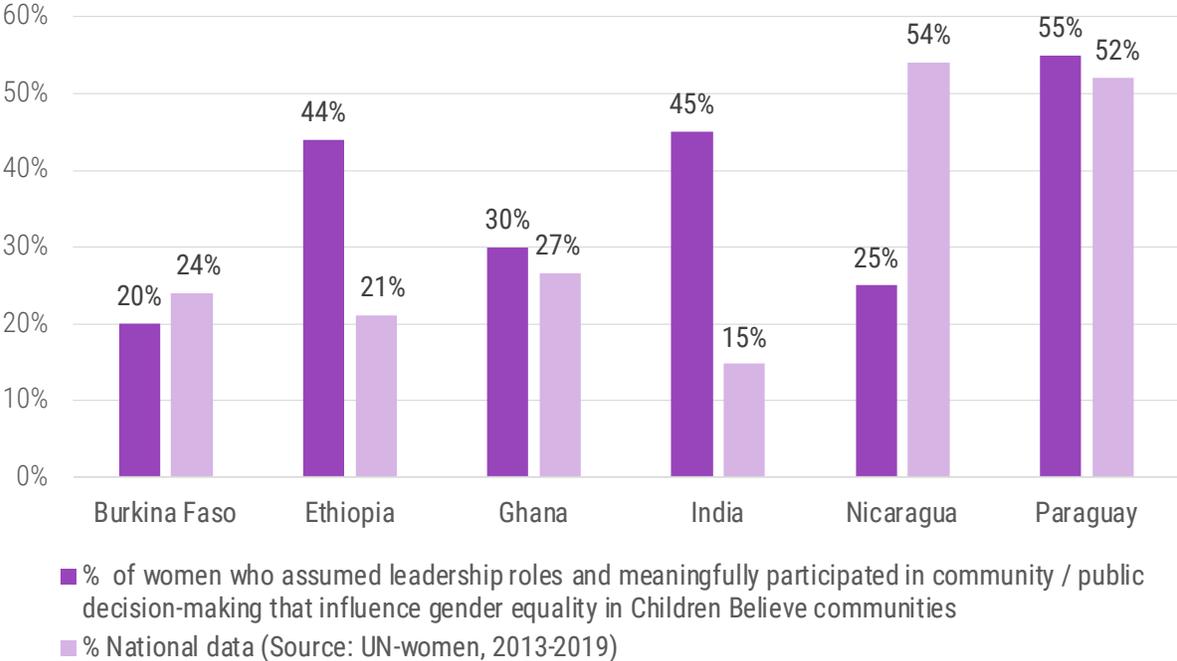


Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Chart 13 shows the percentage of women who assumed leadership roles and meaningfully participated in community/ public decision-making to influence gender equality agendas. During the reporting period, in comparison to the national averages, we saw greater participation of women leaders across the communities in which we work in Paraguay (55 percent against the national average of 52 percent), followed by India (45 percent against 14.8 percent), Ethiopia (44 percent against 21.1 percent) and Ghana (30 percent against 27 percent). This reflects the positive

contributions of our work on gender equality at the grassroots level. Given the structural gender imbalances in India and Ethiopia, the contribution of Children Believe and that of our partners can be said to be immense. In Burkina Faso, there is indication of a progressive trend in our communities, but women’s leadership still lags behind the national average (20 percent against 24 percent). This can be attributed to the insecurity in the communities where we work and the short span of our program interventions in the area, which only recently commenced.

Chart 13: Percentage of women who assumed leadership roles and meaningfully participated in community/public decision-making in Children Believe-supported communities compared to the national average, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

PARTNERING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR CHANGE



Facilitating child and youth groups, like child parliaments and child rights clubs, has resulted in increased civic participation from young people. Photo: Juris Kornets

Children Believe recognizes both the need for youth leaders and their ability to play a pivotal role in creating positive change in their communities. We create opportunities for knowledge-sharing, experience exchanges, and life skills- and vocational -training for young people in our countries of operations.

Grounded in a child rights approach, Children Believe-supported programs help young leaders develop the capacity to lead social change and implement community-driven actions towards a more just world. We work with children and youth to have a say in our programs, and serve their best interests by

enhancing their meaningful participation in the management of the entire program cycle.

In addition, Children Believe's programs strive to break down social barriers, and reach all children without discrimination. As appropriate, we make specific considerations for vulnerable and marginalized children and youth, and support their meaningful participation and contributions. With our partners, we also support child- and youth-focused agencies to have the necessary institutional, technical and financial capacities to influence the change that they want to see in their future.

Strengthening child participation and incorporating the Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology

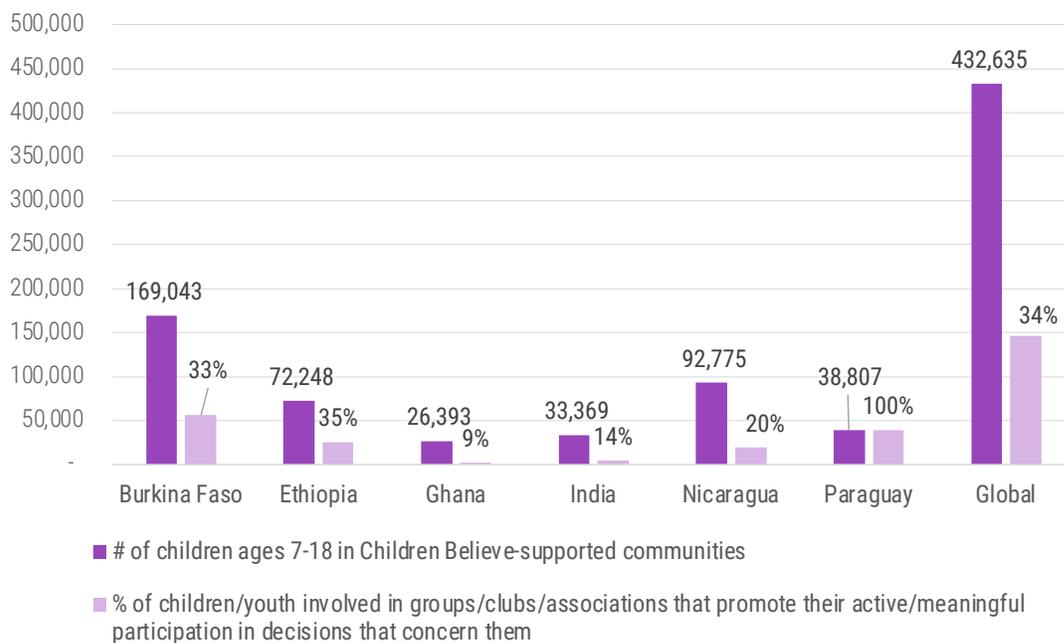
During the reporting period, we continued to advocate for improved social and legislative structures to promote child rights. This included supporting the implementation of the Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology to increase children’s participation in the protection of their rights and create favourable conditions for their voices to be heard. A total of 412,739 children and youth from our operational communities participated in various programs that created awareness about child rights, and improved their knowledge and capabilities (Chart 14). Over a third of these young people (146,629 child- and youth-leaders) actively participated in various community decision-making activities and platforms, including children’s parliaments, to



A young girl with her peers raising their voice to advocate for girls’ rights in Paraguay. Photo: Children Believe’

stand up for their interests and ensure that their voices were heard by administrative, political and religious authorities.

Chart 14: Percentage of children and youth organized and involved in groups, clubs or associations that promote their meaningful participation in public decision-making in Children Believe-supported communities, disaggregated by country



Source: Children Believe- Global Annual Data Report, FY22

Box 7 Speaker of the house

By Children Believe Ethiopia staff

Biruktawit, 17, is choosing to stand up, be heard and make a difference for children across her country as a founding executive member of Ethiopia's first national-level child parliament. Established in March this year, the parliament is enabling children to voice their concerns, exercise their rights, and ensure that policies, strategies and laws regarding children's rights are executed at all levels.

"I am thrilled to be part of this parliament," said Biruktawit during the swearing-in ceremony. "Together with the concerned ministry and government bodies, we can now bring about the change we aspire to see."

Biruktawit, who lives in Sodo, is quickly emerging as a seasoned young politician, encouraged by her father, a policeman, and her mother, a housewife. Gaining advocacy skills through participation in Children Believe's training programs for youth on child rights and child protection equipped her to get involved and take action.

Last year, Biruktawit was elected as speaker of her state-level children's parliament in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region in Ethiopia. She boldly lobbied for children's rights at high-level, inter-agency meetings involving senior adult officials.

With her fellow child parliamentarians, one of her achievements was campaigning to stop the sale of khat, a flowering plant that



Biruktawit, a Grade 12 student, is making a difference in her community through her advocacy for child rights. Photo: Children Believe

contains a potentially addictive substance, near schools across the city. The plant is legal in Ethiopia, where chewing the leaves is a traditional social custom. However, khat use among students, who are still in a stage of development, has been linked to harmful health effects. Police are now enforcing the ban of khat sales around school compounds, thanks in large part to Biruktawit and young lobbyists.

Advocating for children is one way Children Believe is partnering with youth for change, helping young adults like Biruktawit to become active, engaged citizens.

Youth skills development and economic empowerment



In Burkina Faso, a youth learns to weave, helping her develop a skill that she can use to generate income. Photo: Children Believe

Youth are more likely to be safe and lead stable, healthy lives when they have secure livelihoods and can make the transition to decent work. Children Believe and our partners make every effort to support young people's skills development and create opportunities for gainful employment.

During FY22, our youth economic-empowerment programs continued to build the skills of young women and men in leadership and advocacy, technical vocational fields, financial literacy, self-employment and entrepreneurship. We helped form 247 Village Savings and Loans Associations. Complementing this, business linkages between young people and their communities, markets and governments were created so youth had the power and agency to make economic decisions and improve their situations. We particularly supported young

women business champions and youth-led market assessments.

In Nicaragua, Children Believe, as part of the Government of Canada-funded youth employability project (EMPUJE), collaborated with the National Institute of Technology (INATEC) to review and transform its vocational training courses. We also provided the institute with technical support to incorporate a gender-responsive, competency-based curriculum of 66 vocational training courses in commerce, services, industry and construction.

Overall, in FY22, we supported 146,629 adolescents to gain better skills, improve their knowledge and attitudes, foster their agency and resiliently navigate their environments so they can work well with others, and pursue their career aspirations.

Box 8

Deyra navigated her family tour boat business to success with training from the EMPUJE project

By Enmanuel Castro, communications manager, Children Believe Nicaragua

Deyra was a promising industrial engineering university student in Managua, Nicaragua’s capital, when her scholarship funding abruptly ended in 2019. Unable to continue her courses, Deyra shifted her focus to her family’s boat tour business in Granada—one of the country’s biggest tourist destinations—on the shores of Lake Nicaragua.

“I learned to drive boats, and guide tourists around the lake and the islets. That’s how I was earning an income to support my family and save for school,” says Deyra. “It was a challenge for me because, in my culture, this is considered men’s work. I knew I needed to make money but I was ashamed of my job.”

The business was struggling in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic devastated tourism in Nicaragua. The number of foreign visitors dropped by more than 67 percent.

With fewer tourists visiting the lake, Deyra knew she couldn’t save enough to go back to university any time soon. She had to find a way to improve her employment situation, but she faced difficulties. Youth in Nicaragua are affected by numerous barriers to employment, including skills deficits, a lack of knowledge, expertise and information about job opportunities, as well as discrimination based on social status, ethnicity and gender.

Fortunately, Deyra learned about Children Believe’s innovative youth employment project called EMPUJE, (“push” in Spanish).



“I found myself, thanks to the project,” says Deyra, 26, who gained the business skills she needed through EMPUJE, Children Believe’s youth employment project. Photo: Juan David Granda Aranda

Today, she is one of the 12,000 Nicaraguans aged 15 to 30 (including 7,200 women) who are being trained and prepared to find jobs and develop small businesses. As a result of the project, participants have established or expanded 115 small businesses in the last two years, including chicken farms, esthetician services, traditional fast food outlets and tourism services, like Deyra’s family boat tour company.

A five-year initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada, EMPUJE leverages local training, technology and trades. The project provides youth with business and life skills training, as well as technical vocational training, and it is implemented by Children Believe in collaboration with the Nicaraguan National Institute for Vocational Education, and other local partners. The tailored activities enable project participants to grow and thrive in their own communities, break gender stereotypes, create networks and



Deyra has made a success of her boat tours and has plans to grow the family business. Photo: Juan David Granda Aranda

connect with opportunities offered by local corporations and businesses.

“I found myself, thanks to the project,” says Deyra, who is now 26. “I learned that women can do any job, and I started to enjoy my job at my family’s business. Now, I’m breaking gender stereotypes through the work I do.”

As part of the project, Children Believe created an online platform where participants can take free training from anywhere their computers or mobile phones have an internet connection. Leadership, assertive communication, time management and stress management are among the valuable topics covered in the 13 training modules offered.

EMPUJE will also soon launch Krezco (“I grow” in Spanish), an online platform set up for project participants where they can access exclusive employment opportunities with companies that support gender equality and inclusive policies for youth.

Deyra is convinced that she now has the skills needed to grow her family’s small business. She plans to improve the boat garage, expand the tour operation and promote the business internationally.

“The biggest impact the project had on my life has been getting to know myself and my abilities,” says Deyra. “My parents are proud of me because they know that I don’t give up despite challenges. My story is an example for other young women that there are no gender limitations when you want to do a job.”

Youth and climate change

Climate change threatens the future of today's generation as increased heatwaves, droughts and floods impact billions of people worldwide. During the reporting period, we responded to droughts and flooding in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Ethiopia; hurricanes in Nicaragua and Paraguay; and floods, landslides and cyclones in India. Such climate-change catastrophes deeply affected agriculture and livelihoods, contributing to greater poverty, malnutrition and gender inequalities. Recognizing the great potential of young people and their power to shape our future, we mobilized them to engage proactively and responsibly in policies and actions that influence climate and sustainability outcomes. Thousands of youth expressed their dissent towards unfair and misguided global, regional and national economic, social and environmental policies that adversely affect their communities.

The work of Children Believe in India is particularly noteworthy. With support from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, our partners built youth leadership and developed a climate-resilience practice aimed at reducing carbon emission. Youth in 110 villages in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh learned about building lower-carbon lifestyles, and planted trees in "oxy parks". More than 4,000 young people (ages 13-24) organized themselves into action groups. A total of 220 young leaders were trained on climate literacy. In turn, they improved local youth leadership development through cascading the training and introducing comprehensive climate smart action plans.

The youth leaders also looked into climate change effects on girls and women. To this end, the project intentionally incorporated



Youth in India work together to establish green spaces in their communities. Photo: Children Believe'

measures for safeguarding girls from various climate change-induced events. This initiative will be strengthened further in the coming year with the implementation of **YOU-CAN**. This new technological application will provide trained youth leaders with digital support resources to track their education and facilitate in-depth dialogues with fellow youth leaders. The initiative will bring youth further to the forefront in making change and will leverage their ability to help achieve carbon emission targets.

In India, Children Believe is also developing an android app to influence youth to live a low-carbon lifestyle and build climate resilience. The app will provide details on ecology, and the connection between land, climate change and its impacts, which will help promote sustainable practices.

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE



Two youth participants from the PICMCA project in Nicaragua. Nicaragua is Children Believe's Centre of Excellence for gender equality and economic empowerment for youth and women. Photo: Children Believe'

This year, Children Believe consolidated its Centres of Excellence (CoE) initiative. These centres in our six operational countries serve as hubs to leverage innovation, share knowledge, promote networking and advance thought leadership to maximize our impact. Our key strategic priorities are:

- **child rights and participation**—led by Paraguay;
- **early childhood care and development**—co-led by Burkina Faso and Ghana;
- **child protection in disaster risk reduction/emergencies**—led by Ethiopia;
- **gender and social inclusion**—led by India; and
- **gender equality and economic empowerment of youth and women**—led by Nicaragua.

The Ghana and Burkina Faso CoE promoted best practices from implementation of the Learning Through Play¹⁰ (LTP) methodology for ECCD, and strengthened their collaborative

¹⁰ This innovative methodology was first developed by SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health (formerly The Hincks-Dellcrest Centre) and the City of Toronto Public Health Department. It was piloted and implemented by Children Believe since 2014 to deliver early childhood care, education and cognitive development, which are instrumental for healthy brains and lives, and lay the foundation for positive change in the lives of young children.

work with key stakeholders. The education and health departments of the Government of Burkina Faso and the Government of Ghana eventually endorsed replication of LTP, and revised their national training curriculums for primary/preschool teachers, health agents and education supervisors. In Ghana, Children Believe was invited to join the technical working group in charge of reviewing the government's national early childhood development policy, and participated in the consultative process. This created a unique opportunity for Children Believe to contribute to the policy review and improve ECCD for Ghanaian children.

In India, Children Believe consolidated its approach for gender equality and social inclusion. This involved considering the conditions of marginalized indigenous and caste groups in our approach to foster positive gender norms, end child marriage, provide inclusive education, and ensure the safety and dignity of girls and women. Our study on child, early and forced marriage increased our knowledge base and deepened our understanding of child marriage, particularly in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The study's findings were shared with Government of Tamil Nadu's Minister for Social Welfare and Women Empowerment,

and the Directorate of Social Welfare. They agreed to take joint action on bridging the gaps between policy and practice, and to revise standard operating procedures in order to facilitate convergence between various departments.

Similarly, in Nicaragua, Children Believe continued its initiative to enhance the economic empowerment of young women. Based on findings from our study on reducing gender gaps in the economic development sector, we designed a virtual platform to promote the skills development and employability of young women. We also created new evidence-based knowledge products, hosted learning spaces with expert stakeholders and young people, and raised awareness of economic opportunities for youth.

In Paraguay, we made strides in promoting government accountability for child rights and youth participation issues. In collaboration with the Ministry of Children and Adolescents, we completed preparation of the National Policy and Strategy for Child Participation, which sets priorities for promoting child and youth participation, and is expected to shape future direction.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND HARNESING POLICY INFLUENCE



Youth leaders from Children Believe's partnership program with UNICEF in Burkina Faso with our Regional Director of West Africa, Christelle Kalhoule.

During the reporting period, Children Believe consolidated its strategic collaboration and partnerships with national, continental and global organizations to enhance its reach, augment its expertise, increase its impact and broaden its spheres of policy influence.

In Burkina Faso, we collaborated with UNICEF to strengthen local capacities to protect the safety and promote the well-being of displaced children and their families affected by conflict in the Centre-North and Eastern regions. Children Believe

organized a regional forum in partnership with African Child Policy Forum and the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action of Burkina Faso. The forum brought together participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. We continued to serve as the chair of the Permanent Secretariat for Non-Governmental Organizations, which serves as a platform for over 277 national

and international NGO member agencies to interface with policy makers and key government decision-makers.

In Ethiopia, Children Believe enhanced its positive collaboration with the World Bank and UNICEF through scaling up our ECCD initiative. As the founding member of the National Child Advisory Group, we actively participated in inter-departmental collaboration with the federal Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.

Children Believe represented the NGO community in northern Ghana, and served as an advisory member for the regional coordinating council members on ECCD-related policy and practice issues. This group includes relevant government departments, NGOs, local child-rights associations and private education service providers.

In India, we entered a new partnership with the U.K.-based Tony Blair Institute for Global Change to pilot an innovative program. Generation Global, which promotes 21st century skills development for young people (ages 13 to 17), was implemented in two regional languages. Children Believe also forged a partnership with Gooru to pilot a web-based (on/offline) Navigator for Learners application to improve learning outcomes.¹¹

In Nicaragua, we signed a collaborative arrangement with UNICEF to implement an important initiative to prevent violence against children and women, and enhance youth empowerment. This partnership and initiative will further strengthen the capacity of Children Believe in Nicaragua to have greater influence in the area of violence prevention. We organized a learning event

on mitigating irregular child migration based on the results and best practices from our prevention initiatives in Nicaragua. More than 132 participants attended the event, including representatives from GAC, the Secretariat of Central American Social Integration, UN organizations, and private- and public-sector organizations. We also co-led two webinars in collaboration with the Global Movement for Children, Nicaragua chapter.

Children Believe also established new strategic partnerships in Nicaragua with Nestlé, the food and drink multi-national corporation; Gildan, a Canadian clothing manufacturer; and Olam Food Ingredients, an international food and agri-business company. In addition, we entered new strategic collaboration agreements with UNICEF, as well as the humanitarian organization, Convoy of Hope, and the tech hub, NUMU. These partnerships are expected to further deepen the impact of our programs and improve the well-being of children.



Dr. Belinda Bennet, Children Believe's chief international programs officer, meets with community leaders in Ghana. Photo: Children Believe

¹¹ Gooru is a tech-oriented company that uses Navigator for Learners, a data-rich approach rooted in the learning sciences, utilizing real-time information about each user's progress to construct personalized learning pathways. The company believes technology can be a catalyst to unite communities and a linchpin for creating collective impact. It promotes technology that can give learners, instructors and schools real-time analytic tools and unlimited access to engaging effective resources for anywhere, anytime learning. In pursuit of ensuring no learner is left behind, Gooru's Navigator is inclusive by design for all learners across geographies, disciplines and abilities.

In Paraguay, we co-lead the preparation and submission of the National Policy on Child Participation for the Ministry of Children and Adolescents. We are currently working on the approval and implementation of this national policy. Children Believe also represented ChildFund Alliance and served in the Joining Forces Steering Committee,¹² with the goal of harnessing the collective power of these child-focused agencies to pilot and scale up effective child rights and protection approaches worldwide. Children Believe currently serves as the president of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education¹³ in Paraguay to promote child participation at policy, institutional and community levels.

In Canada, Children Believe collaborated with ChildFund Alliance and Canada World Youth during International Development Week

2022 to co-host a virtual panel on “Promising Solutions and Lessons in Addressing the Irregular Migration of Children and Youth in Central America and Mexico.” More than 200 participants from 24 countries participated in the event. We also continued to play critical roles within the Canadian International Education Policy Working Group, contributed to the enhancement of GAC’s programming impact and improved education outcomes for the most marginalized.

Overall, Children Believe built successful strategic collaborations with diverse stakeholders across different contexts throughout the year. This enabled us to maximize our program impact and have greater policy influence at various levels, serving our mission to create a future of hope for children, families and communities.

¹² Joining Forces is an alliance of the six largest child-focused international NGOs, including ChildFund Alliance, Plan International, Save the Children International, SOS Children’s Villages International, Terre Des Hommes International Federation and World Vision International.

¹³ The World Organization for Early Childhood Education (Organisation Mondiale pour l’Éducation Préscolaire, or the acronym OMEP) is an international, non-governmental non-profit organization, which has worked for all aspects of early childhood education and care since 1948. The organization is currently established in over 70 countries, has special consultative status with the UN and UNICEF, and is represented at meetings with other international organizations with similar aims. OMEP defends and promotes the rights of the child worldwide and supports activities, which improve accessibility to high-quality education and care.

LOOKING FORWARD

Children Believe worked tirelessly in FY22 with and through our local partners. Through our dedicated efforts, we achieved our annual targets of promoting children's rights and meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable communities, often operating in fragile contexts. Inspired by these positive outcomes, we stand ready and well-prepared to address even greater challenges in FY23. We recognize that obstacles will need to be navigated as we continue our work in highly fragile contexts, including conflict and drought in Ethiopia, terrorism and displacement in Burkina Faso, and shrinking civic space in Nicaragua.

In response, we will work to strengthen the capacity of our staff and partners, tighten our security-preparedness capacity, promote flexibility in our work modalities and increase our resilience in working under difficult circumstances. Our goal is to further deepen our program impact and increase our policy influence in order to remove the critical barriers to inclusive, quality education for girls and boys.

Looking ahead, Children Believe will prioritize working with additional partners to urgently address learning losses and reach the most marginalized children, including girls, children with disabilities and those living in

fragile contexts. Further, we are committed to exploring new technology and private sector partnerships to help close the digital divide in education and improve learning outcomes. On the prevention and protection front, we will continue to empower parents and caregivers to respond to the abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. We will promote the rights of girls and women to stop child marriage and other forms of gender discrimination. As part of the solution, we will ensure the meaningful participation of children and youth so they can amplify their voices and influence actions that affect their futures.

We are committed to serving as a catalyst among like-minded child-focused organizations. In this respect, we will review and strengthen the humanitarian-response capacity of local development partners working in disaster-prone and fragile-operating areas to improve program agility. We will also work to adopt nature-based solutions to climate change, and support communities in their endeavors to become greener and more sustainable. Despite many hurdles, we are confident in our plans, networks and capacity to support the children, families and communities we serve to move forward towards an more inclusive and just society.

Annex I – Children Believe’s implementing partners

Country of operation	Local implementing partners
Burkina Faso	Christian Organization for Relief and Development
	Christian Relief and Development Organization
	Evangelical Church of the International Missionary Society
	Catholic Organization for Development and Solidarity – Fada, East Region
Ethiopia	Alem Children Support Organization
	Arat Kilo Child Care and Community Development Organization
	Bole Bible Baptist Church Child Care and Community Development
	Emmanuel Development Association
	Ratson – Women, Youth and Children Development Program
	Terepeza Development Association of Wolaitta Kalehiwot Church
Ghana	AG Care
	Baptist Relief and Development Agency
	Markaz Al Bishara
	Participatory Action for Rural Development Alternatives
India	Integrated Rural Community Development Society
	People’s Action for Development
	Rural Organization For Poverty Eradication Services
	Society for People’s Education and Economic Change
Nicaragua	Instituto de Promoción Humana Managua (Institute for Human Promotion Managua); and Instituto de Promoción Humana Estelí (Institute for Human Promotion Estelí)
	Centro de Apoyo a Programas y Proyectos (Program and Project Support Centre)
	Movimiento infantil “Luis Alfonso Velásquez Flores” (Children's Movement "Luis Alfonso Velásquez Flores")
	Instituto de Formación Permanente (Institute of Permanent Training)
Paraguay	Fundación Alda (Alda Foundation)
	Organizacion No Gubernamental Crecer (Non-Governmental Organization, Crecer)
	Global Infancia (Global Childhood)



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.

Children Believe is a member of ChildFund Alliance, a global network of 11 child-focused development organizations working to create opportunities for children and youth, their families and communities. ChildFund helps nearly 23-million children and their families in more than 70 countries overcome poverty and underlying conditions that prevent children from achieving their full potential. We work to end violence against children; provide expertise in emergencies and disasters to ease the harmful impact on children and their communities; and engage children and youth to create lasting change and elevate their voices in decisions that affect their lives.

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