ChildFund®

Because we need each other.

www.childfund.org



Building Sustainability



Every child has the right to a clean, healthy, sustainable and abundant environment.

Every child has the right to grow up in a clean, healthy, sustainable and abundant environment. Yet across Africa, this right is under severe threat. Rising temperatures, biodiversity loss and pollution are reshaping lives and livelihoods. Extreme shifts in weather patterns such as erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, devastating floods and intense heatwaves are becoming more frequent, particularly in East and West Africa.

According to UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index, 39 out of 49 African countries assessed fall into "extremely high" or "high" risk categories. For children, this translates into harsher realities: malnutrition caused by food insecurity, disrupted education from displacement or school closures, and greater exposure to child protection risks such as early marriage and child labor. These overlapping crises compound, denying children the chance to grow up healthy, educated, skilled, safe and prepared to lead the future. Safeguarding their right to a safe and sustainable environment is therefore not optional. It is urgent and essential.

ChildFund in Africa

A Trusted Name with Deep Roots

For over 65 years, ChildFund has been present in Africa, working hand in hand with families, communities, and governments. In 2024 alone, we reached more than 29 million children and their families across 12 countries through over 57 local partners. With support from the ChildFund Alliance, a global network of 11 child-focused development and humanitarian organizations, we implement long-term development and humanitarian programs that protect children, strengthen families, and build resilient communities.

Child-Centered, Community-Led Programs

Our approach is rooted in the lived experiences and leadership of local communities, powered by trusted partners who are embedded within them. This ensures that solutions are contextually relevant, community-owned, and child and youth centric. From intergenerational knowledge exchanges and land restoration practices to youth-led initiatives that inspire sustainable behavioral change, our work uplifts the wisdom and agency of those most connected to the land. We prioritize the integration of Indigenous and local knowledge systems with modern science to restore ecosystems and strengthen community resilience. By honoring traditional ecological practices and advancing sustainable solutions, we support the localization of sustainability and efforts that are culturally grounded for the next generations. For example, in Kenya, our early warning systems combine traditional methods of weather prediction alongside scientific methods.

Representation of local communities and indigenous youth in decision-making forums: From local governance to international platforms, our youth are ensuring that community voices are heard. For example, during the UNCCD COP16, Kenyan delegates who represent the Maasi community, lifted their voices at the conference, connecting the lived experience in their communities and the impacts of land degradation and desertification. Read this blog by Simon Oleku, one of our supported youth on how young pastoralist communities in Kenya are leading sustainable land management efforts.

> By honoring traditional ecological practices and advancing sustainable solutions, we support the localization of sustainability and efforts that are culturally grounded for the next generations.

Measurable Social Value Creation

Resilient households:
Smart agriculture and green livelihoods raised crop yields by up to 84% and increased incomes by 37% in Uganda.

Youth employment:
Over 40,000 young people have been engaged in green jobs like recycling, silage production, and agroforestry.

Women's leadership:
In Ethiopia's Oromia region, 1,200 women in savings groups established 15 nurseries producing over 321,000 seedlings, restoring degraded land and improving incomes.

Environmental impact:
In Kenya's Regreening Africa project, 146,000 trees were planted with a 91% survival rate, directly improving nutrition and biodiversity.



Strong Partnerships and Policy Influence

ChildFund collaborates with governments, UN agencies, multilaterals, and corporates to scale results. Examples include:

- Serving on the board of Kenya's World Bank-supported FLLoCA program, the first national model for decentralized climate finance.
- Partnering with the Coca-Cola Foundation to clear over 2,200 metric tons of plastic waste in Kenya, transforming it into income opportunities for 470 youth.
- Co-hosting the National Children and Youth Conference on Climate Change in The Gambia with UNICEF, giving young advocates a national policy platform.

A Bridge for Scale

ChildFund strengthens the link between community-driven action and national and global platforms. Our children and youth advocates have presented at COP27, COP28, COP29, and the Africa Climate Summit, ensuring Africa's youngest voices are meaningfully engaged and heard in shaping policies that impact their future.

Our Programs

- Child Protection
- Early Childhood Development
- Education
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Food Security
- Livelihoods
- Health and Nutrition
- Youth Development
- Environmental Sustainability
- Humanitarian Response
- Advocacy

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Our Work for a Sustainable Future



Our Commitment to a Sustainable Future for Every Child

ChildFund's global sustainability strategy is rooted in systemic, child-centered change to secure every child's right to a safe, clean and healthy environment. Children are the least responsible for the current challenges we are faced with, yet they bear the heaviest burden. Recognizing the triple planetary crisis of extreme and irregular weather, biodiversity loss and pollution as one of the greatest threats to children's development, we are embedding sustainability across everything we do.

We work with children, youth, communities, local partners organizations, governments, civil society, the private sector and international development partners to scale sustainable solutions that protect children and nature together. Our approach is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 13–15) and guided by the principles of "do no harm."

What sets ChildFund apart is our child-centered and locally led approach. Our programs are anchored in communities, powered by young voices and strengthened by national systems. From building resilient schools and health systems to supporting sustainable livelihoods and regenerative actions for nature, we put children and their communities at the heart of action to a just and clean transition of systems. When we invest in children today by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, resilience and opportunities they need, we lay the foundation for a resilient, equitable and sustainable Africa tomorrow.

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1

Nature-Based Solutions for Livelihood Resilience

In Senegal, Kenya, Ethiopia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Uganda, ChildFund advances community-led, nature-based solutions that integrate smart agriculture, sustainable agroforestry, soil conservation, beekeeping, and energy-efficient irrigation systems. These green livelihood approaches restore degraded ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, and build resilience to environmental shocks, while directly improving household food security and incomes. By connecting eco-friendly solutions with sustainable livelihoods, we work with youth and women to generate income, strengthen community cohesion, and contribute to low-carbon, climate-resilient development across Africa.



HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

Women Restoring Degraded Lands in Oromia Region, Ethiopia

In Ethiopia's Oromia Region, women are leading the restoration of degraded lands through a community-led livelihood initiative supported by ChildFund. Sixty Women's Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), representing over 1,200 women, have established 15 community-run tree nurseries, producing more than 321,000 seedlings of fruit, shade, and medicinal trees in just three years. These trees have transformed barren landscapes, cooling school compounds to improve learning conditions. In addition, shade, medicinal and fruits covered the once degraded communal lands, and the women sold fruits for additional income and contributed to an increase of 80% in tree cover in the areas allocated for tree-planting by government helping prevent soil erosion and flooding. The women groups established nursery sites, ensuring a continuous supply of a variety of high-quality fruit, medicinal, and shade tree seedlings and these were sold and/or used to improve their plots of land in their homesteads increasing local biodiversity.

Promoting a Green Economy through Agro-Tech Development, Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, ChildFund, working with the European Union and Tradin Organic, is implementing an innovative agro-tech project in Kailahun, Kenema, and Kono districts to promote agroforestry and sustainable livelihoods. The project strengthens financial management through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) while enhancing smart agricultural practices. It brings together farmers, communities, government, the private sector, and local organizations to invest in environmentally resilient approaches. The project tackles both environmental and socio-economic challenges, improving livelihoods, promoting child protection, and supporting adaptation efforts.



In Koinadugu District's chiefdoms of Biriwa, Safroko Limba, and Paki Masabong, deforestation driven by timber production and charcoal burning has eroded soils, depleted wildlife, and reduced water sources. In response, ChildFund and the Munafa-M'Patie Federation have mobilized children as environmental champions in a bold reforestation effort. Over 1,000 fruit and ornamental trees have been distributed to schools and communities, alongside training for more than 1,000 people, including schoolchildren, on the importance and techniques of environmental conservation.

Regreening Africa: Youth and Women Championing Sustainable Land Restoration

In Kenya, the Regreening Africa Project, implemented by ChildFund with support from Dow Chemical, has strengthened the resilience of women, youth, and children across three counties. More than 1,000 young people have been trained to establish and manage commercial fruit and agroforestry nurseries, supplying trees to schools, households, and communities. To date, over 146,000 trees have been planted with a remarkable 91% survival rate, improving nutrition through greater access to fruits and vegetables while promoting sustainable land use.

Building on this success, Phase II aims to plant one million high-value trees by 2030, potentially sequestering 200,000 metric tons of CO_2. It will equip over 1,500 community members with skills in agroforestry, apiculture, and carbon literacy, connect smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, to carbon offset markets, and create new income streams from climate-smart practices. The initiative also promotes intergenerational leadership through school clubs, Aflatoun program and hands-on environmental education, ensuring restoration efforts are sustained for decades to come.

Youth Farmers Leading Smart Agriculture in Uganda

In Uganda, ChildFund advances resilience through smart agriculture, an integrated approach that equips farmers with sustainable, low-emission, and adaptive farming techniques. Communities are supported to grow resilient crops, conserve soil, manage water resources through watershed reclamation, and adopt drought-tolerant livestock. Re-greening degraded areas is a central focus, using tree planting, Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), and expanded access to clean water to restore ecosystems and protect livelihoods.

In the Teso and Lango sub-regions, these approaches have been translated into tangible gains- With Support from BMZ, 847 farmers have been trained in smart agriculture and green vocational skills, crop yields have risen by up to 32% (and as high as 84% in Dokolo district), and over 20,000 trees have been planted to rehabilitate landscapes. Communities have developed disaster risk reduction plans, 36 farmer groups are producing energy-saving stoves, and 400 young people have secured marketable skills for green jobs, 63% of whom are now employed. Households have recorded a 37% increase in monthly income, underscoring how environmental restoration, sustainable agriculture, and livelihood diversification work together to strengthen resilience.

Sustainable Silage Solutions by Women and Youth in Kenya

In Kenya, the Lishe Bora na Mama Silage Scale-Up Initiative is transforming smallholder dairy farming into a climate-smart, market-driven enterprise. Building on the Phase 1 success, this scaled up initiative targets vulnerable women and youth farmers in Nyeri and Laikipia Counties promoting silage as a sustainable livestock feed solution through hands-on training in production, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. It intends to integrate agroforestry by distributing 12,000 drought-resistant seedlings and training farmers in regenerative practices that combine fodder trees with forage systems. 10 model demonstration farms and two community-managed silage choppers improve innovation, processing efficiency, and farmer-to-farmer learning. By expanding access to revolving funds, digital market linkages, and partnerships with financial institutions and cooperatives, the initiative boosts livestock productivity, food security, and household incomes, positioning silage as both a profitable and climate-resilient solution for rural communities.



2

Children and Youth Championing Environmental Stewardship

Children leading the way in environmental action start naturally in and around schools. Therefore, ChildFund works with young advocates to lead community-driven initiatives, inspiring their peers and driving grassroots action for environmental stewardship and reconnections with the land and nature. **In Guinea, Senegal, Gambia, and Kenya** ChildFund supports schools' clubs and communities to regenerate the land and nature by leading conservation, waste and water management initiatives. **In Kenya** ChildFund supports children-led Aflatoun and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) clubs, establish over 40 model green schools in drought-prone communities, that has earned national recognition for their efforts.



HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

A Pan-African Youth-Led Environmental Protection Campaign

With more than 60% of Africa's population under the age of 25, ChildFund is helping to put young people at the forefront of environmental stewardship and community development. Through the annual **Youth Day of Service** — a week-long Pan-African campaign, ChildFund in partnership with LEAP Africa and with support from Dow Chemical — equips youth with the skills, tools, and platforms to lead change aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Each August, over 7000 youths across **Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Zambia, Mozambique, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Guinea** engage in hands-on activities such as tree planting, waste collection, and market clean-ups, while also raising awareness on environmental conservation, waste management, and reproductive health. The initiative goes beyond a single event, local partners nurture tree seedlings to ensure survival, and partnerships with local governments help sustain environmental and health services.

"My Tree, My Sponsor" Initiative in The Gambia

In **The Gambia,** ChildFund integrates environmental conservation into its child sponsorship program through the "My Tree, My Sponsor" initiative. Every newly sponsored child plants a tree in honor of their sponsor. Since 2015, more than 20,000 trees have been planted, enhancing biodiversity and fostering a lifelong conservation ethic among children.

Women and Youth Driving Environmental Change in West Africa

Across West Africa, ChildFund is engaging women and youth as champions of environmental conservation and adaptation. In Senegal, a partnership with the local NGO Eau Vie et Environnement (EVE) has mobilized over 500 young people in Dakar to lead community advocacy, promote sustainable practices, and implement adaptation strategies, while also supporting women's economic independence. The initiative has fostered knowledge exchange and strengthened local capacity to safeguard natural resources. Similarly, **In Senegal's** Nyassia region, youth are restoring degraded mangrove ecosystems in partnership with local government and ChildFund. Under the banner "Youth in Action Against Environmental Degradation," they are leading efforts to revive these vital habitats. ChildFund and its partners aim to expand the youth centered community project, to restore at least five additional hectares of degraded mangroves, adding 60,000 more trees within the coming year.

In **The Gambia,** reforestation is at the heart of community action. Working with partners such as Foundation Nurseries, ChildFund supports the planting of more than 3,000 trees each year to restore forest cover, combat desertification, and promote biodiversity. Schools are central to these efforts, with students learning and practicing sustainable environmental stewardship that extends beyond the classroom.

Youth and Women Engagement in Circular Economy

Across **Senegal, The Gambia, Kenya, and Ethiopia,** ChildFund is creating sustainable, green livelihoods by empowering over 40,000 women and youth in waste collection, recycling, and value-addition enterprises. These initiatives have boosted monthly incomes by up to 60%, improved living standards, and reduced environmental pollution.

In **Kenya,** with support from the Coca-Cola Foundation, ChildFund cleared 2,268 metric tons of plastic waste, transforming it into economic opportunity for 470 youth through organized collection groups. Participants received training in financial literacy and entrepreneurship and were linked directly to recycling markets. More than 35,000 community members took part in clean-up campaigns and waste-management awareness activities, while multi-stakeholder forums were strengthened to ensure lasting improvements in local waste-management systems.



3

Renewable Energy & Clean Approaches for Just Transitions

Across Zambia, Senegal, The Gambia, Kenya and Sierra Leone, ChildFund is advancing just transitions through renewable energy and clean technologies that align with national climate strategies. Our work introduces solar power, biogas, and energy-efficient cooking solutions, alongside circular economic initiatives in plastic and waste management, to reduce emissions and protect natural resources. In schools and households, solar installations are improving learning conditions, strengthening child protection, and enabling community services to operate sustainably. These initiatives not only reduce reliance on nonrenewable fuels but also create green livelihood opportunities, contributing to low-carbon emissions.





HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

Household Biogas Solution in Zambia

In Zambia, ChildFund introduced biodigesters in Kafue district, training 320 people, in biogas use for cooking and bio slurry for farming. The project reduced dependence on firewood by 75%, saving women and girls up to 6 hours daily previously spent on fuel collection and cooking. Improved agricultural yields from bio-slurry fertilizer enhanced food security, tackling malnutrition (currently at 35%) and fostering gender equality by redistributing household labor burdens.

Clean Energy Solutions in Senegal and The Gambia

In Senegal, ChildFund is expanding access to renewable energy in schools and communities through partnerships with local and international organizations. Solar panel installations, clean cooking alternatives, and irrigation systems are reducing dependence on harmful, nonrenewable sources while improving health, food security, and community well-being. In the Diourbel region of Senegal, 28 household biodigesters are turning organic waste into biogas for cooking, cutting emissions, protecting forests, and lowering energy costs.

In The Gambia, ChildFund is equipping youth with skills to produce energy-efficient cooking stoves that use waste materials such as sawdust and groundnut shells. These stoves reduce reliance on firewood and charcoal, helping to curb deforestation and harmful emissions, promoting environmental sustainability while creating new green livelihood opportunities for young entrepreneurs.

Bikes for Education in The Gambia

In The Gambia, ChildFund, in partnership with Education Above All (Qatar), UNICEF, and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, is implementing the Zero out of School project to enroll 66,765 out-of-school children and adolescents in primary schools. To address travel barriers and ensure safer commutes, ChildFund distributed 4,100 eco-friendly bicycles, along with helmets and safety nets, to children. This has reduced long travel times, particularly for girls, improving school attendance and retention rates. The project provides non-motorized urban mobility and improves access to education in underserved areas, promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing access to education.

4

Sustainability Education & Advocacy for Children and Youth

ChildFund empowers children and youth to become influential advocates for environmental sustainability, ensuring their voices shape policies and sustainability strategies at global, regional, and national levels. Through active participation in key platforms, including UNFCCC COP28, COP29, UNCCD COP 16, Kenya's NDC review process, NAP Expo and the Africa Climate Summit 1 &2, young leaders have championed the rights and needs of future generations in decision-making. Notably, ChildFund Sustainability Ambassador and youth advocates, has been a leading voice for children and youth in global environmental discussions at both COP 28 and COP 29 and at the 2023 Africa Climate Summit.



HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

Children Leading the Way in Environmental Action

In Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, we work with young advocates to lead community-driven initiatives, inspiring their peers and driving grassroots action for environmental care. Through children-led Aflatoun and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) clubs, they have helped establish over 40 model green schools in drought-prone communities and earned national recognition for their effort.

National Children and Youth Conference on Climate Change in the Gambia

In partnership with Clean Earth Gambia and UNICEF, ChildFund cohosted the first National Children and Youth Conference on Climate Change. The event trained and commissioned 10 Environmental Ambassadors to advocate sustainable action and empower youth-led solutions to address environmental challenges.

Meaningful Participation of Children and Youth in Promoting Environmental Sustainability

ChildFund supports young advocates to amplify their voices and contribute to shaping policies to promote environmental sustainability. Child and youth participation in Global, Regional and National platforms e.g NDC Review, Africa Climate Summit and COPs. At the Africa Climate Summit, Philipa presented a statement to the continent's leaders on behalf of all African children, underscoring the critical need for children's inclusion in environmental action to safeguard their future and urging leaders to adopt bold, child-centered environmental policies.



5 Sustainability Action In Humanitarian And Peacebuilding Contexts

ChildFund integrates environmental sustainability into its humanitarian interventions to ensure that emergency response builds the foundation for long-term resilience. Across Africa, we combine lifesaving relief with environmental restoration, biodiversity protection, and conflict-sensitive approaches. From providing safe spaces, school supplies, and emergency food aid in the wake of floods and cyclones, to planting drought-resistant trees in disaster-affected schools, our efforts address immediate needs while fostering adaptation and mitigation. In fragile contexts where environmental stress fuels resource-based tensions, we link peacebuilding with sustainable land and water management, enabling communities to recover, rebuild, and thrive in the face of environmental shocks.



HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

Integrating Environmental Sustainability into Humanitarian Response

In Mozambique, following the 2023 floods and Cyclone Chido in 2024, we reached over 1,500 children and families with life-saving assistance, establishing 8 child-friendly spaces, distributing school kits to 875 children and 120 teachers, and providing emergency food relief to 300 families. To promote recovery and adaptation, we planted 1,328 shade and fruit trees in 10 schools, enhancing biodiversity, supporting ecosystem restoration, and strengthening local capacity to adapt to environmental shocks.

In Senegal's Casamance region, where environmental degradation, food insecurity, and water scarcity threaten stability, ChildFund combines environmental rehabilitation with peacebuilding. Initiatives such as Resilient and Transformed United Green Communities and Assisted Natural Soil Regeneration address the root causes of resource-related tensions while improving livelihoods, fostering social cohesion, and reducing conflict risks in climate-affected communities.

6 Embedding Sustainability in Our Daily Operations

Across our country offices, we are embedding environmental stewardship into our day-to-day operations reducing our carbon footprint, inspiring communities, and leading by example. For example, in Sierra Leone, ChildFund and two local partners; Daindemben Federation and Munafa Mpatie Federation who have fully transitioned their offices to solar power with support from ChildFund. This clean energy shift reduces carbon footprint, lowers operational costs, and demonstrates our commitment to renewable energy solutions.

Driving Sustainability Through Partnerships

- **Dow Chemical:** Restoration efforts, waste management and smart dairy farming.
- **Davis and Shirtliff:** Supply and installation of solar powered pumps, rehabilitation of boreholes and provision of water testing technologies.
- **DuPont:** Supply and installation of solar powered pumps, rehabilitation of boreholes and provision of water testing technologies.
- **Econic Earth Foundation:** Provision of solar lamps for school children.
- **Leap Africa:** Youth-led tree planting and environmental advocacy during the annual Youth Day of service.
- **Procter & Gamble:** Provision of water purifier sachets and bio-filtration systems.
- **Spowdi and Barnfonden:** Smart farming through solar-powered, mobile, water distribution systems for micro-irrigation.
- The Coca-Cola Foundation: Waste management, green jobs and youth skills development.
- **German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ):** Sustainable youth- and women-led smart farming and restoration programs.
- **National and local Government Institutions:** Policy advocacy and review, technical and financial support, and community-based environmental initiatives.

Our Future Plans

At ChildFund, we know that protecting children and protecting nature go hand in hand. We champion measurable, scalable, and locally-led solutions that put children and youth at the center. Together with communities, we are building resilience, restoring the environment, and creating a future where every child can thrive.

For ChildFund in Africa, we are seeking:

- Opportunities to scale sustainable solutions such as solar energy, nature-based approaches, and sustainability-smart innovations.
- Partnerships to equip children and youth with the skills, knowledge, and resources to build sustainable futures in just transitions.
- Collaboration to bridge the gap between communities and policymakers for stronger local and national policy engagement.
- Impact-driven investments that deliver co-benefits for children, communities, and the environment.
- Opportunities to strengthen humanitarian preparedness and resilience in disaster-prone communities.
- Support for innovative and technology-driven solutions that enhance access to education, health, and livelihoods.
- Invitation to co-design, co-invest, and co-implement to build a future with and for children.

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