



**STRONGER
TOGETHER:**

Amplifying Our
Impact Through
Connection
and Innovation



2025
IMPACT
REPORT



Students wave at a ChildFund-supported school in Kwanja District, Uganda. Here, ChildFund facilitates the debate club, which teaches leadership skills and builds confidence, as well as the child rights club, where young people discuss their challenges and learn about their rights.

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Dear Friends,

We share ChildFund's fifth Impact Report at a time of unprecedented challenges to the child development ecosystem as children's lives are increasingly shaped by conflict, the triple planetary crisis, inequality and instability, and as seismic shifts in the foreign assistance landscape are forcing the entire global aid apparatus to evolve.

ChildFund is no exception. But we are also no stranger to unprecedented times. Our nearly 90-year journey began as a response to children suffering in war and today we find ourselves actively and urgently reimagining how we deliver impact for and with children.

Thankfully, we are well-situated to do so due to our diversified revenue anchored by long-term support from hundreds of thousands of individual donors. This steady funding empowers critical long-term partnerships within communities worldwide, fueling locally led impact to meet children's needs. Our deep local connections also position us for collaboration with government, private sector and other local and national actors to strengthen systems so that children's needs *continue* being met.

This is how we achieve sustainable impact — by shifting not only individual outcomes for children but also the systems surrounding them. We help individual children and families build their skills, knowledge and agency. We also work with communities to transform norms, relationships and access to services. More broadly, together with children, youth, families, government, business and others, we influence policy, institutions and systems, creating lasting change for millions. Finally, we strive to measure the impact that we are having on children, families and communities in order to continuously learn from and improve our work and deliver high-quality evidence-based programming.

In these pages you will find many diverse examples of our impact across this individual-to-community-to-system continuum. Altogether, our Impact Report captures the current moment of our journey toward delivering impact that is meaningful, scalable and sustainable and that truly helps children grow, learn and become the people they can be.

We evolve so that the difference we make will contribute toward children's ability to make their own. What better challenge could we ask for?

Thank you for walking with us in this work.

Isam Ghanim
President and CEO



President and CEO Isam Ghanim visits with children from Guatemala's western highlands who participate in the Growing With You program, which focuses on early learning in the home.

Executive Summary

ChildFund 2025 Impact Report

STRONGER TOGETHER: Amplifying Our Impact Through Connection and Innovation

For nearly 90 years, ChildFund has partnered with children, families, local organizations and governments to create environments where children can be healthy, educated, skilled and safe. Rooted in strong local partnerships and driven by evidence, our work continues to deliver measurable, lasting change for millions of children worldwide.

Our **2025 Impact Report** highlights progress achieved between 2021 and 2024 across Africa, the Americas and Asia. It reflects the first four years of implementing our organizational strategy, *Growing Connections 2030*, and demonstrates how locally led, high-impact programming is shifting systems and improving outcomes for children and youth globally.

Global Reach and Impact

ChildFund works with **170 local partners in 23 countries**, reaching **35.3 million children**.

We demonstrate our **meaningful impact for children** through:

- **Global monitoring** of key child wellbeing indicators;
- **Programmatic evidence** demonstrating significant positive change; and
- **Feedback** from children, families, partners and local organizations.

Across these approaches, we see consistent gains in health, early childhood development, education, economic well-being, and child protection.

Mother and daughter (aged 2) attend a group parenting session led by a ChildFund facilitator as part of the Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care program in Busia County, Kenya.

2



Key Areas of Impact

Health

ChildFund's health programs expand access to essential services and build healthier environments for children and families. Our global data from 2022–2023 shows strong improvements in children's health knowledge and early childhood growth outcomes.

- **50%+ of children** understood the importance of handwashing, driven by a **5-point rise in Asia**.
- **61% of children** ages 0–5 received growth monitoring — an **8-point global increase**.

Evidence from **49 evaluated programs in 13 countries across all three regions** demonstrates positive change in access to safe water, improved hygiene, sanitation, maternal and child health services, immunizations and nutrition.

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

ChildFund's ECD programming equips caregivers, communities and systems to support young children. Our global data show that:

- **70% of caregivers** completed nurturing-care training, a **9-point global increase**.
- **Engagement in early stimulation activities rose significantly**, especially in the Americas and Asia.

Across **43 evaluated programs in 13 countries across all three regions**, ChildFund improved early learning opportunities at home and in early education centers. Countries saw gains in developmental milestones, caregiver responsiveness and primary school readiness.

Education

ChildFund's education programs ensure safe, inclusive learning environments, promote social-emotional learning, and improve education systems. Between 2022 and 2023, students globally made progress in foundational skills:

- **Nearly one-quarter** of children ages 9–14 could perform division-level math.
- **Over one-third** of children ages 9–14 could read with adequate fluency and comprehension, with the highest achievement in Asia and the Americas.

Evidence from **24 programs in 10 countries across all three regions** shows improved academic achievement, safer school environments, increased caregiver engagement and strengthened social-emotional skills for children.

Two girls play together at a ChildFund-supported Child Resource Center in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka. Many participants' parents are migrant laborers who are often not home in the afternoons or for extended periods of time, and the centers provide a safe space for them to play and also engage in supervised study and homework sessions.



Livelihood Strengthening

ChildFund's livelihoods programming empowers youth and families to build economic resilience. From 2022–2023:

- Youth participation in employability and entrepreneurship training grew from **28% to 31%**, driven by a 7-point increase in Asia.

Across **44 programs in 13 countries across all three regions**, youth gained skills for employment, entrepreneurship and civic engagement. Programs strengthened financial inclusion through savings groups, literacy training and access to capital.

Protection

ChildFund's protection work continues to advance safer environments for children. Our global data from 2022–2023 shows that:

- **94% of caregivers** reported their community is safe for children.
- **86% of children** ages 6–14 shared the same confidence — a significant rise from 2022.

Evidence from **32 programs in 12 countries across all three regions** shows improvements in caregiver discipline practices, reductions in physical and emotional harm, strengthened community-based protection systems and improved policy engagement.

3

Emerging Areas of Impact

Children in Crisis

Amid growing humanitarian needs, ChildFund expanded **crisis response across nine countries**. A review of three programs (2017–2024) in the Americas found positive impact for **133,026 individuals**, including 61,126 youth, in areas including safety, mental health, anti-trafficking, civic engagement and violence prevention.

Building Sustainability

Through child-centered environmental action, ChildFund engages children and youth as leaders in climate resilience. In the Philippines, the **Eco-Scout initiative** supported more than **23,800 children and youth** in environmental stewardship, disaster preparedness and community education.

Online Protection

ChildFund is a global leader in addressing online sexual exploitation and abuse. Recent achievements include:

- A Memorandum of Understanding with the **African Union** to develop a model law on online safety.
- Nationwide digital-safety initiatives with the **Ecuadorian Ministry of Education**.
- Legal reforms strengthening online protections in **Guatemala** and **Kenya**.

Looking Ahead

ChildFund is committed to scaling innovation, strengthening local systems and driving global advocacy to secure safer, healthier and more equitable futures for children. Our priorities include:

- **Deepening evidence-based impact** through enhanced monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- **Advancing localization** by empowering partners toward greater autonomy and sustainability.
- **Elevating global leadership** to drive coordinated action against online child exploitation.
- **Transforming systems** through policy engagement and multisector collaboration.

Children in Guatemala attend a session led by ChildFund to learn about online risks and how to report crimes when they occur.



Together with children, partners and communities,
we are creating lasting change so every child can thrive
— growing up healthy, educated, skilled and safe.



Children play a game at a ChildFund-supported early childhood development center in Turkana County, Kenya.

Introduction



This father of nine, a participant in ChildFund's Integrated Care for Early Childhood Development project in Mozambique, laughs with his 2-year-old daughter.

Growing Connections – Our Global Progress

For nearly 90 years, ChildFund has partnered with children, families, local organizations and governments to create environments where children can be healthy, educated, skilled and safe. Rooted in strong local partnerships and driven by evidence, our work continues to deliver measurable, lasting change for millions of children worldwide. Because we need each other!

Our Vision

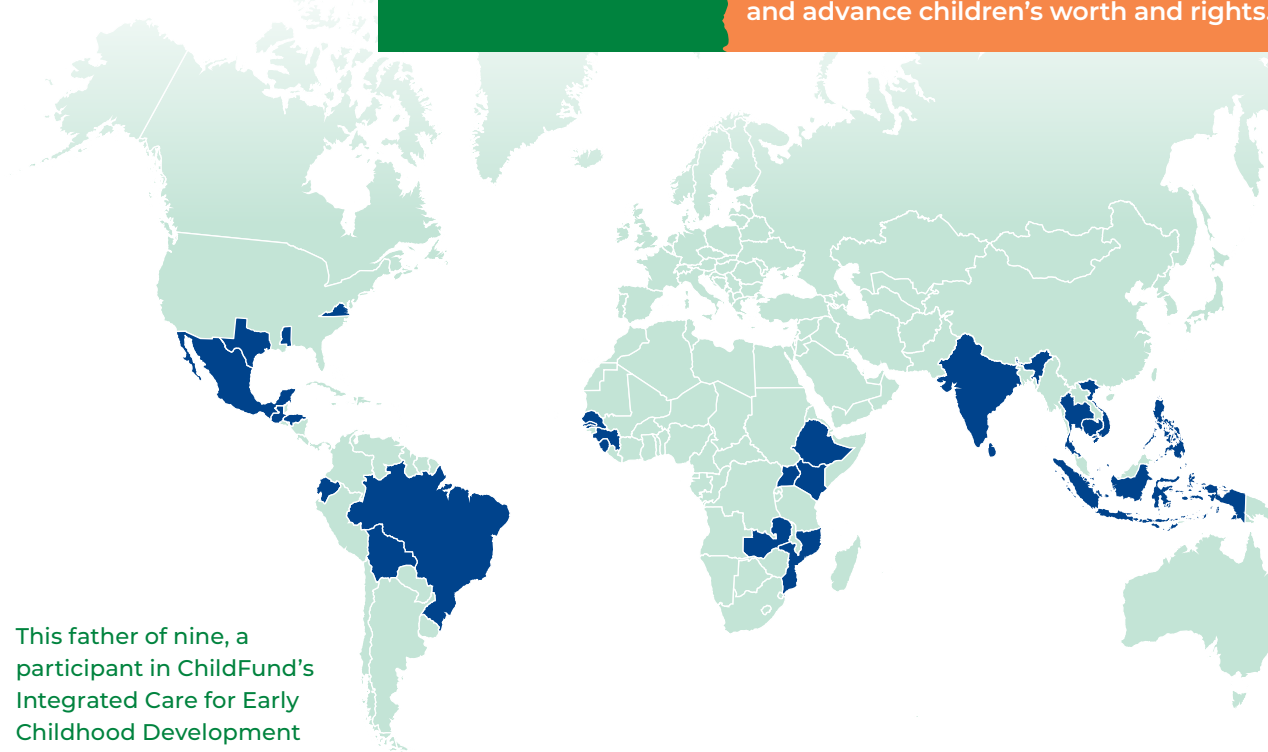
A world in which every child realizes their rights and achieves their potential.

Our Mission

Help children experiencing deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability improve their lives and become adults who bring positive change in their communities, and support societies that value, protect and advance children's worth and rights.

Where We Work:

ChildFund works closely with 195 local partner organizations and other local, national and global partners across 23 countries.



- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Cambodia
- Ecuador
- Ethiopia
- The Gambia
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Honduras
- India
- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Mexico
- Mozambique
- Philippines
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Uganda
- United States
- Vietnam
- Zambia

Midway through our current organizational strategy, *Growing Connections*, our understanding of how to reach children — and what reach means — has evolved in a short period of time. This is in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic which, for all of its many challenges, forced us to pivot in unforeseen ways to reach the children and families in our programs. This shift in programming in many instances has remained in place as we realized we could impact far more children through innovative remote delivery and hyper-local approaches.

Growing Connections 2030
 Growing Connections, ChildFund's 10-year organizational strategy, means more children participating in proven programs supported by trusted partners. Five years in, ChildFund continues with a bold commitment to foster more and stronger connections with children, communities, partners, sponsors and donors to ensure that children grow up healthy, educated, skilled and, above all, safe so that their development can come to fruition.

“True impact goes beyond the surface level – it includes addressing education and protection needs, capacity building and food security. Ensuring that children are standing on their own That’s the kind of impact that we want to see.”

Chege Ngugi, Regional Director, Africa

Introducing our Global Results Framework

A comprehensive Global Results Framework was designed in 2024 to support ChildFund's Growing Connections strategy and to better assess our contributions to children's health, education, skills and safety. Broad enough to capture outcomes related to our core programmatic areas (and aligned with ChildFund's existing programmatic building blocks), the Framework enables us to uniformly and globally monitor essential program indicators and the contributions and impact of our program and advocacy reach.

The Global Results Framework is a standardized measurement structure and approach for collectively measuring ChildFund's contributions to key outcomes. It is also a building block for our strategy as it:

- Focuses and allows us to better assess and articulate the impact of our work.
- Standardizes the outcome data collected across country offices (COs) to better describe the impact stories linked to our reach.
- Shows the impact of our programming and policy advocacy on children, families, communities and systems.



Our Niche Areas of Focus

We advance sustainable social change at multiple levels so every child can fulfill their right to grow up healthy, educated, skilled and — above all — safe. **Our impact is ...**

Child-Centered

Individual supporters power programs that help communities transform so their children can dream, achieve and contribute. Partnerships and grants build on this deep-rooted work.

Locally Driven

Local leadership unlocks local resources to create relevant, sustainable impact with and for children. That's why we've invested over \$700 million in local organizations worldwide over the last 10 years.

Transforming Systems

Systems change changes lives at scale. Together with children and youth, we collaborate and advocate locally, nationally and even globally to shape a future where children can exercise their rights freely.

Sharing Our Impact

This report is the fifth report in our series of Impact Reports. It shares our impact on children and their families and communities, primarily between 2021 to 2024, the first three years of implementing our Growing Connections strategy.

Since our first report in 2015, our approach to measuring and reporting on impact has evolved significantly. In this latest report, we have a robust body of data with which to measure our progress toward improving children's lives and can see significant change and positive impact in the areas where we work. We measure and validate impact for children across Africa, the Americas and Asia in four ways. **These include:**

1. Global monitoring of key indicators.
2. Global assessment of where we see significant positive change from program delivery, i.e. our programming evidence.
3. Gathering feedback from children, families and partners on the difference our programs make in their lives and communities.
4. Assessing our contributions toward global, collective outcomes for children and families — the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our work contributes toward 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

ChildFund's Tiered Evidence Levels

In alignment with our 2020 impact report, we organize outcome evidence by level of rigor: preliminary, promising or effective.

PRELIMINARY

Qualitative or observational studies show positive change in an outcome related to ChildFund's Global Results Framework.

PROMISING

A high- or moderate-quality impact study using a high-quality, quasi-experimental design has found favorable, statistically significant impacts in an outcome related to ChildFund's Global Results Framework.

EFFECTIVE

A study using an experimental study design (i.e., with random assignment to intervention and comparison/control groups) has found favorable, statistically significant impacts in an outcome related to ChildFund's Global Results Framework.

A NOTE ABOUT MEASUREMENT TERMINOLOGY

Percentage points (pp) name the difference between one percentage and another. A percentage (%) denotes a proportion relative to a whole.

Leading With Impact in HEALTH



A 4-year-old girl washes her hands at a tap installed by ChildFund at her school in Imbabura Province, Ecuador.

Our Focus

Good health is vital to a child's well-being and development, and there are many factors at play that can lead to — or prevent — children from being healthy. Our health programming addresses a broad spectrum of children's needs; however, we have a strong focus on areas where we can have the greatest impact. We connect children and families to basic health care services for regular checkups and immunizations, prenatal and emergency care, as well as access to clean water, nutritious food and basic hygiene essentials like handwashing stations. Communities also receive basic hygiene education and childhood illness screenings to provide a solid foundation for good health outcomes for children as they grow. Our work also promotes access to quality, age-appropriate health services and information so that children, young people and families can make healthy decisions about their bodies.

ChildFund's community-based approach is at the heart of our health programming. In our work to support maternal and child health, we provide education and access to peer learning networks for new parents and caregivers, where they access knowledge and support. Our collaborative approach involves the Nurturing Care Framework, ensuring that children receive comprehensive care encompassing health, nutrition, early learning, responsive caregiving, and safety and security.

By engaging community health workers and local leaders, we create a supportive environment that promotes optimal outcomes for mothers and their babies.

We also focus on several intersecting areas to deliver positive impact on children's health by working through trusted local partner organizations as well as local and national health systems to support communities. Strengthening health systems to improve nutrition, for example, involves addressing health care infrastructure, workforce and supply chains to deliver essential nutrition services such as micronutrient supplementation, counseling and malnutrition treatment. This is just one way we support local capacities to improve health for children and families, and to strengthen the overall health infrastructure in the countries and regions where we work. Through these initiatives and approaches, ChildFund is committed to building healthier futures for children worldwide.

This impact chapter shares the progress we see in our global M&E data and our evidence related to our program focus on improving health outcomes for children, their caregivers and the wider community. It also shares a case study on the role systems strengthening plays in achieving and maintaining these outcomes.



“
At first, [the community] didn't know that the idea for the water pipeline came from the Youth Circle. So, there was no thank-you, but they felt the benefits because they had nearby access to water. Finally, we told them that it was part of our advocacy. And the village government helped spread the word.”

Youth Circle group leader, 26, Indonesia

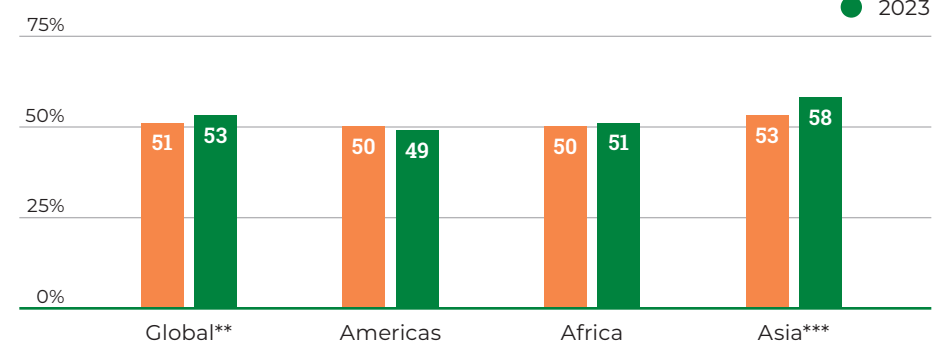
Our Global Progress

ChildFund's global monitoring of health outcomes shows positive impact trends from 2022 to 2023 for children's water, sanitation and hygiene knowledge, growth monitoring, maternal and child health, youth reproductive health outcomes, and access to health care

Here are highlights of some of the positive program outcomes contributing to these impacts.

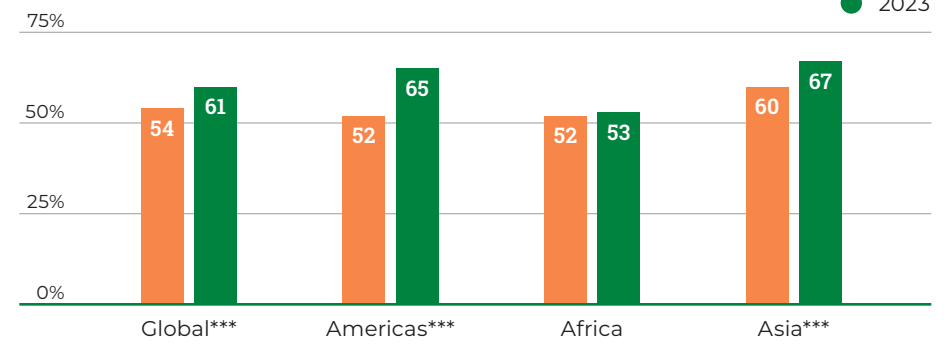
Growth Monitoring
 Globally, **61%** of children ages 0 to 5 have had their growth monitored, a significant 7pp increase from 2022, with significant change seen in the Americas (13pp) and Asia (7pp) (Figure 2-2).

FIGURE 2-1
Percentage of Children (Ages 6–14) with Appropriate Knowledge About Washing Hands to Prevent Disease



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

FIGURE 2-2
Percentage of Children (Ages 0–5) Who Visited a Health Clinic or Professional for a Growth Monitoring Visit



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Knowledge About Handwashing

Globally, over **50%** of children now know about washing hands to prevent disease — a significant increase from 2022, led by the increase in Asia (5 percentage points [pp]*) (Figure 2-1).

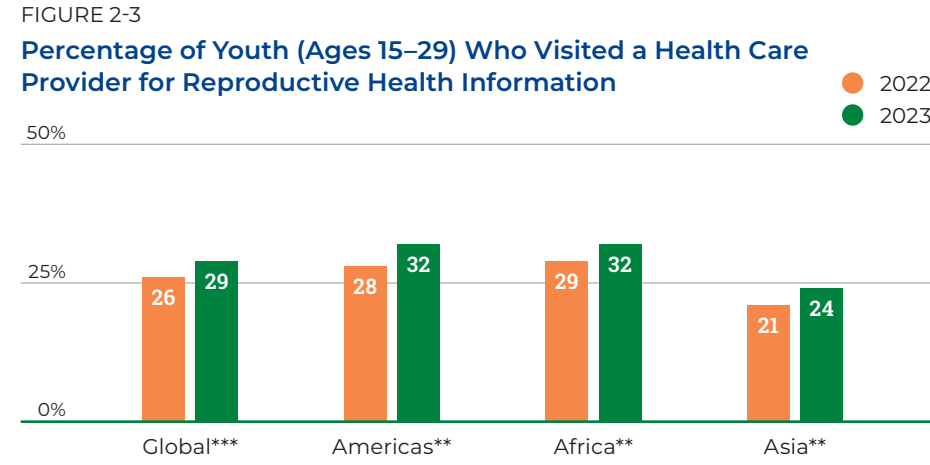
*Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and help us measure change over time.

Our Health Programs Evidence Spotlight

Safe Water, Healthy Start to Life and Food to Thrive

Use of Health Services by Youth

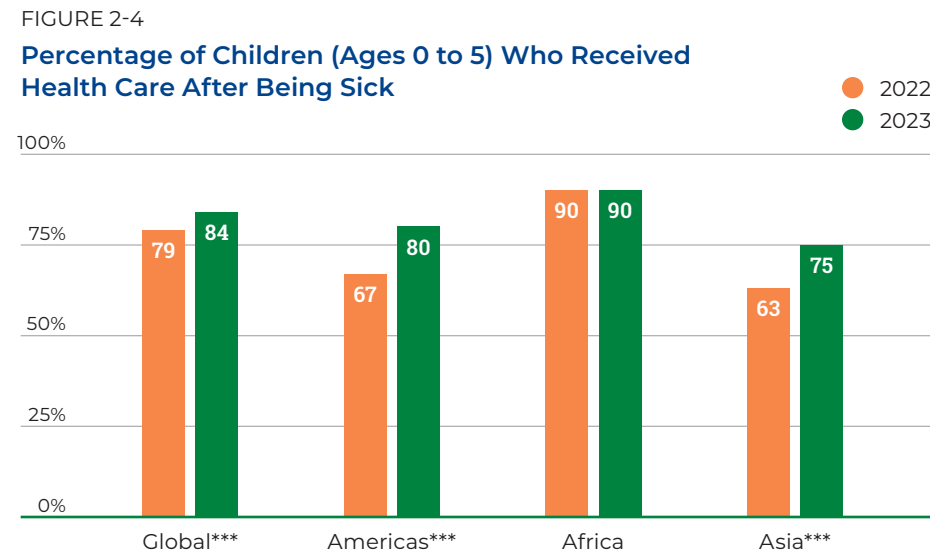
Globally, close to **1/3** of young people had accessed health services for reproductive health information, a significant increase from 2022, with the largest increases seen in the Americas (Figure 2-3).



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Access to Health Care

Globally, **84%** of young children (ages 0 to 5) were receiving health care, a 5pp increase from 2022 with significant increases in the Americas (13pp) and Asia (12pp) (Figure 2-4).



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Safe Water: Improving Access to and Use of Safe Water

ChildFund’s water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programs are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of children and their communities by enhancing access to essential services. Our efforts focus on three key outcomes: providing safe drinking water, improving sanitation facilities and promoting better hygiene practices.

We measure success by the proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water sources, ensuring that clean and safe water is readily available to families, particularly benefiting children. This includes increasing access to both point-of-consumption treatment methods, such as water purification packets and education, and systemic solutions like dug wells to permanently bring clean water to communities in need. By providing access to safe water, we help reduce the risk of waterborne disease — a significant threat to children’s health.

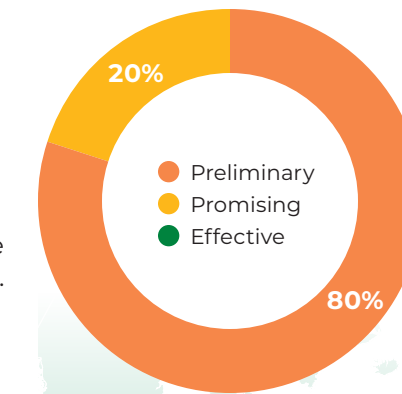
In addition to safe water, our programs aim to increase the proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities. We target areas where children spend most of their time, such as homes and schools. By ensuring that sanitation facilities are safe, clean and easily accessible, we help prevent the spread of disease and create a healthier environment for children to grow and learn.

Our Programming Evidence for WASH Outcomes

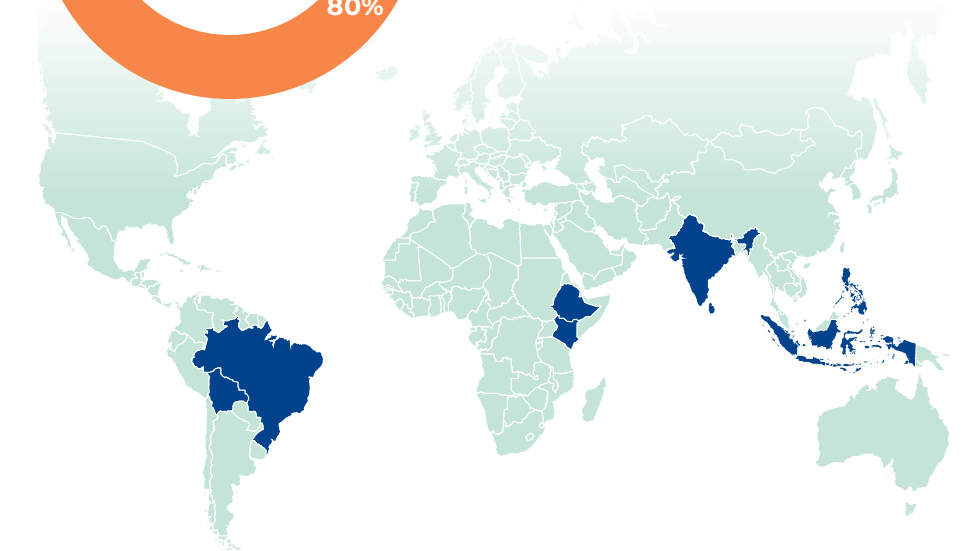
15 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in WASH-related outcomes, specifically for: access to safe drinking water (eight programs), improved sanitation facilities (four programs) and hygiene practices (10 programs). In addition, two programs evidenced positive change in waterborne disease-related outcomes.

As shown in **Figure 2-5**, three (20%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence, and another 12 (80%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to WASH outcomes.

FIGURE 2-5: Evidence for Positive Change in WASH Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **eight countries** (two countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya; two countries in the Americas — Bolivia, Brazil; four countries in Asia — India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka).





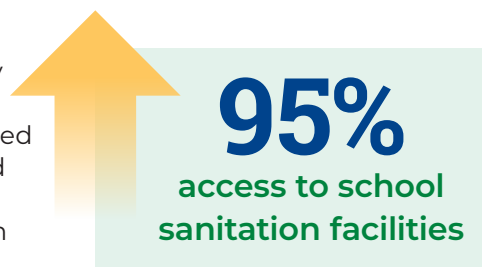
In my house we collect water from the river – to cook, wash, to drink, for everything. Since I started drinking water with the sachets, we no longer have stomachaches and I don't miss classes anymore.

Sixteen-year-old participant in the CSDW program, Minas Gerais State, Brazil

Examples of the Positive Change We See for WASH Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — The **Children's Safe Drinking Water (CSDW) Program**¹ was implemented, with support from Procter & Gamble, from 2014 to 2021 in 12 municipalities in the Vale do Jequitinhonha Meso region of **Brazil**, benefitting 7,150 families (28,600 people). The program aimed to expand potable water access and reduce waterborne diseases among people living in rural communities through distributing water purification sachets and promoting WASH best practices. Study findings showed that compared to municipalities in the control group, CSDW municipalities had a sharper reduction in hospitalization rates for water-related diseases. The gross change rate dropped 43.2% among the CSDW municipalities and 18.3% among the control group. The average change rate over time ("moving average") was 52.4% and 35.2%, respectively.

PRELIMINARY — The **Prevention and Treatment of Trachoma** project² implemented in **Ethiopia's** Silti district reached 76,604 people between 2020 and 2022 and sought to reduce the prevalence of trachoma — a bacterial infection that affects the eyes and can cause blindness — by delivering trichiasis treatment, prevention education, improving community WASH awareness, improving toilets and washrooms in schools, and organizing village hygiene committees. Through the project, children's year-round access to school sanitation facilities improved, increasing by 62.7pp from 32.3% to 95%; and household access to safe drinking water saw a 35.7pp increase, from 3.1% to 38.8%, in households using protected springs as their main source of drinking water. Additionally, the proportion of community members who were able to apply their disease prevention and management knowledge increased by 26.3pp (from 54.7% to 81%) and the prevalence of trachomatous trichiasis decreased by 16pp (from 17.6% to 1.6%).



¹ Wan Der Maas, L.P., Braga Carvalho, P.F., & Silva de Moura, C. (2022). Evaluation of the children's safe drinking water program in Brazil. Belo Horizonte: Author.

² Center of Excellence International Consult (CEIC) Plc. (2022). Final evaluation for 'prevention and treatment of trachoma in silti district SNNPR Ethiopia'. Addis Ababa: Author.

PRELIMINARY — In **Kenya**, the **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) and Nutrition Project**³ was implemented from 2017–2020 in Turkana North, Turkana South and Loima subcounties. Through the use and adoption of a community-led total sanitation strategy (CLTS) approach, households increased their use of soap and water for washing hands by 13pp (from 59% to 72%) and daily bathing by 17pp (from 74% to 91%), and household reporting of diarrhea cases declined by 23pp (from 34% to 11%).

PRELIMINARY — The **Safe Drinking Water for People Using Earthen Dams, Sand Dams and River Water in Machakos and Kitui Counties Project**⁴ in **Kenya** focused on improving water quality, access to and use of safe water to reduce death and diarrhea from contaminated drinking water. The project reached 12,000 households, 24 primary schools, and 10 health facilities between 2020 and 2022 through a variety of strategies, including distribution of water purification sachets and handwashing kits, community outreach on safe water use and good hygiene practices. The project contributed to enhanced access to safe water — the proportion of households relying on drinking water from improved sources increased by 21.1pp (from 17.7% to 38.8%) — and improved hygiene practices, with the proportion of household members who wash their hands after handling garbage increasing by 31.3pp (from 0.9% to 32.2%).

PRELIMINARY — The **Procter & Gamble Safe Drinking Water Grant Project**⁵ in **Kenya** focused on increasing access to safe and clean drinking water for people using water from unprotected sources (earth dams, sand dams, hand-dug wells) and increasing community awareness and knowledge of the use of safe and clean water; impact focus groups included children under 5 years of age as well as people living with HIV/AIDS in an effort to reduce morbidity cases related to the consumption of unsafe water. The project helped to increase household use of water treatment by 53pp (from 46% to 99%).

³ Waweru, T., Moru, J., & Wanjau, K. (2020). Endline evaluation of WASH and nutrition project in Turkana north, Turkana south and Loima subcounties. Nairobi: African Research and Development Ltd.

⁴ Waweru, T., Wanyama, H., & Mutuku, V. (2022). Endline evaluation report for Safe drinking water for people using earthen dams, sand dams and river water in Machakos and Kitui counties project. Nairobi: African Research and Economic Development Consultants Limited (AFREDEC).

⁵ Waweru, T. (2018). Endline evaluation report for Procter & Gamble grant: The safe drinking water project. Nairobi: OCRA Company Limited.

⁶ PASS Asia. (2021). Evaluation report: Water and sanitation in schools and communities in Batticaloa district - phase 2 project. Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte: Author.

PRELIMINARY — The **Water and Sanitation in Schools and Communities in Batticaloa District – Phase 2 Project**⁶ in **Sri Lanka** (2019 to 2021) aimed to enhance the health status of children in marginalized and vulnerable communities through improved water and hygiene facilities and practices. The project contributed to families and school children increasing their use of safe and healthy water and sanitation facilities by 16.5pp (from 50% to 66.5%) and 26.1pp (from 70% to 96.1%), respectively. The project also helped to increase the proportion of adults and children using improved hygiene and sanitation practices (such as hand washing with soap, drinking boiled water and bathing regularly) by 14.5pp for the adults (from 40% to 54.5%) and 10.6pp for the children (from 50% to 60.6%). Additional positive changes observed included households with a water source at home increasing by 30.8pp (from 31% to 61.8%), schools without safe drinking water facilities decreasing by 10pp (from 20% to 10%), and households with toilet facilities at home increasing by 36.3pp (from 50% to 86.3%).

Early Start to Life – Improving Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

ChildFund's maternal and child health (MCH) programs are designed to ensure safe deliveries, increase access to antenatal care and boost child immunization coverage. We work to increase the proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants or in a health facility, and the proportion of newborns receiving essential newborn care. By prioritizing skilled attendance at birth and comprehensive postnatal care, we aim to significantly reduce maternal and neonatal mortality rates and enhance the health and well-being of mothers and their babies.

We also promote access to and the utilization of antenatal care (ANC), measured by the proportion of women receiving four to eight antenatal care visits. Regular visits are crucial for monitoring the health of both mother and unborn child, providing necessary interventions, and preparing for safe delivery. Finally, we aim to expand child immunization coverage, measured by the proportion of 1-year-old children who have received their full schedule of recommended vaccinations. Immunizations are a vital component of child health, protecting against life-threatening diseases and fostering long-term health resilience.

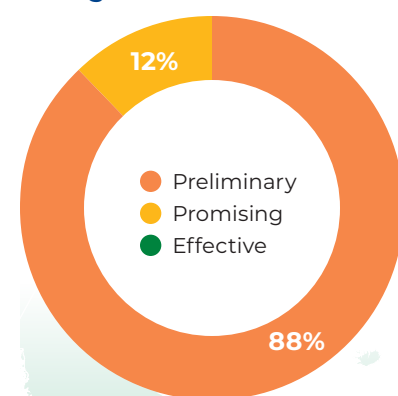
Our Programming Evidence for Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

17 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in MCH-related outcomes, specifically for safe deliveries (including deliveries in a health facility and/or by a skilled health professional), access to antenatal care (including caregiver attendance at antenatal visits), and child immunization coverage (including children's receipt of age-appropriate vaccinations). Additional MCH outcomes with observed positive change included iron supplementation, postnatal care, newborn birthweight and infant mortality rates.

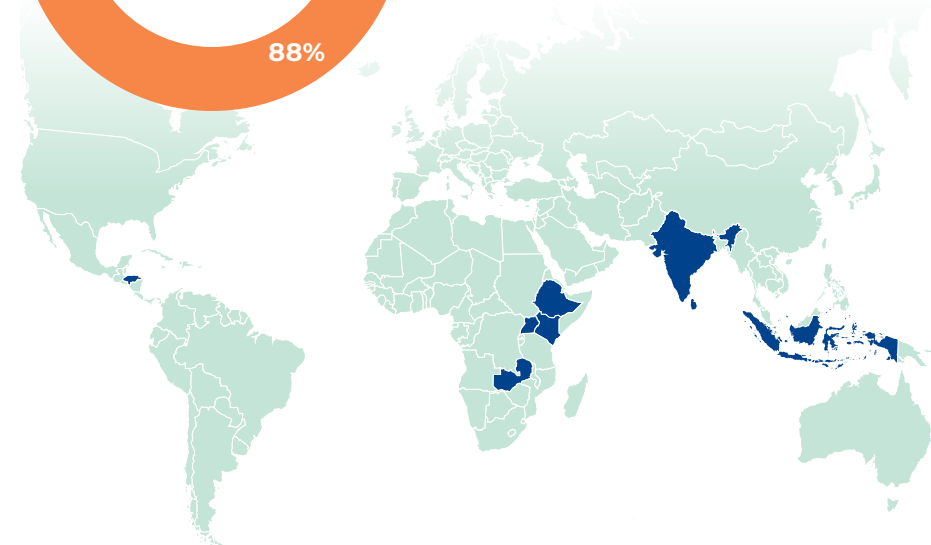
As shown in **Figure 2-6**, two (12%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence and another 15 (88%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to MCH outcomes, with no programs generating effective evidence.

FIGURE 2-6

Our Evidence for Positive Change in MCH Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **eight countries** (four countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia; three countries in Asia — India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka); and one country in the Americas — Honduras).



Examples of the Positive Change We See for Maternal and Child Health Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — The **Lalan Palan** project⁷ (July 2016 to June 2021) in rural and marginalized communities in **India** delivered counseling sessions at community meetings and home visits that included education and training for pregnant women on birth preparation, including healthy nutritional practices. The project contributed to increasing the positive practices of pregnant women in the intervention villages at significantly higher rates than pregnant women in comparison villages on a set of MCH outcomes including: a) 95.2% of mothers in intervention areas opting for institutional delivery of their youngest child compared to 81.7% of mothers in control areas; and b) 10.1% of mothers in control areas reporting their youngest child's birth weight as being below 2 kg as compared to 3.2% of mothers in intervention areas. There was also a greater percentage of mothers in intervention areas (43.9%) having children within a normal birth weight of 2.5 kg to 3.0 kg as compared to mothers in the control areas (27.5%).

PROMISING — The **GSS Child Development Project**⁸ in **India** was implemented between 2004 and 2015, delivering counseling of mothers and primary caregivers on proper care of children, community awareness on different issues of mother-and-child health and nutrition, and capacity building training of frontline workers. The project contributed to improving the practices of mothers in the intervention villages at higher rates than in comparison villages on the following MCH outcomes: a) 11% of pregnant women in intervention villages reported receiving more than three antenatal care checkups compared to 1% of pregnant women in comparison villages; and b) 66% of mothers in intervention villages reported receiving postnatal care (neo-natal checkups) compared to 28% of mothers in comparison villages, with 89% of mothers in intervention villages receiving their first checkup within 24 hours compared to 65% of mothers in comparison villages.

PRELIMINARY — In **Ethiopia**, the **Improving Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Project**⁹, implemented between 2015 and 2017, delivered training sessions and education materials on prenatal and

⁷ Agarwal, V.K. (2019). Endline evaluation of Lalan Palan project of ChildFund India. Delhi: Author.

⁸ Dexter Consultancy Pvt. Ltd. (2015). Impact assessment of child development project. Project No: GSS-4117. Ahmedabad: Author.

⁹ HAMED Consultancy Services PLC. (2018). Evaluation of projects: Strengthening holistic ECD services and improving safe motherhoods and reproductive health in Fentale Woreda, Ethiopia final report. Addis Ababa: Author.

postnatal care both for the caregiver and her infant. The project contributed to safer deliveries, with a 19.3pp increase (from 68.5% to 87.8%) in the proportion of mothers reporting that they gave birth at hospitals, health centers or private clinics during their last pregnancy and a 16.4pp increase (from 68.7% to 85.1%) in the proportion of mothers reporting that they were attended by a skilled health professional (i.e. doctor, nurse, midwife, health officer) during their last pregnancy. The project also contributed to a 16.2pp increase (from 62.2% to 78.4%) in the proportion of mothers who reported that they had taken/received iron tablets during their last pregnancy.

PRELIMINARY — The **Community-Based Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Innovation (Child Survival) Project**¹⁰ in **Honduras** was implemented from October 2009 to September 2013 targeting systems strengthening for the provision of MCH services. The project, with its impact goal focused on reducing maternal, neonatal, infant and under-5 child mortality in project areas, reached 14,573 children under 5 and 26,454 women of reproductive age through a community-based model of integrated basic maternal, neonatal, and child health and nutrition services. The project contributed to a 21.5pp increase (from 46.5% to 68%) in the number of women who received at least five prenatal care visits and a 31pp increase (from 31% to 62%) in postnatal care for newborns by a health volunteer within three days after birth. The project also contributed to an 11pp increase (from 58% to 69%) in hospital delivery. Based on the project's established mortality surveillance system for community-level reporting, for the five-year period from 2008 to 2013, the project observed decreasing trends in the community's overall mortality among children under age 5 (from 74 deaths to 54 deaths) and infant mortality (from 41 deaths to 19 deaths).

PRELIMINARY — The **Sustainable Nutrition Education and Health (SNEH) Project**¹¹ in **India** aimed to address child malnutrition through critical support to mothers and children from conception to age 5. Implemented between 2015 and 2019, the project contributed to the following MCH-related outcomes: a) The proportion of mothers who received three antenatal check-ups increased by 38pp (from 50% to

¹⁰ Torrez, R. L. (2013). Evaluation: Community Based Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Innovation In The Context Of The National Health System Decentralization In Francisco Morazan Sur, Honduras. Washington, D.C.: USAID.

¹¹ Centre for Social and Scientific Research (CSSR). (2019). Assessment on program effectiveness and monitoring system: SNEH project. New Delhi: Author.

¹² Vu, J.A. (2021). A strengthened partnership for nurturing care: Outcome study endline evaluation for Kenya. Gaithersburg: Author

¹³ Vu, J.A. (2021). A strengthened partnership for nurturing care: Outcome study endline evaluation for Zambia. Gaithersburg: Author.



A nurse gives a 3-month-old boy, held by his mother, a vaccination at a clinic in Katakwi District, Uganda.

88%) and the proportion of mothers who received a minimum of three postnatal check-ups increased by 35pp (from 48% to 83%); b) institutional deliveries increased by 50pp (from 50% to 100%); c) babies born with normal birth weight increased by 35pp (from 52% to 87%); and d) consumption of nutritious diets by pregnant women increased by 44pp (from 40% to 84%).

PRELIMINARY — **A Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care** (Phase II of the Conrad Hilton Foundation-funded parenting program) in **Kenya**¹² aimed to ensure that children aged 0-5 affected by HIV or AIDS would meet developmental milestones supported by responsive caregivers and to strengthen multisectoral collaboration for nurturing care. The program reached 4,203 caregivers and 4,378 infants and young children between August 2018 and October 2021 and contributed to a 22.4pp increase (from 66.7% to 89.1%) in the proportion of children aged 0-5 reported as being completely up to date on all immunizations.

PRELIMINARY — **A Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care** (Phase II of the Conrad Hilton Foundation-funded parenting program) in **Zambia**¹³, like in Kenya, focused on supporting children aged 0-5 who were affected by HIV or AIDS to meet developmental milestones through responsive caregiving and nurturing care. The program reached 3,185 caregivers and 3,961 infants and young children between August 2018 and October 2021 and contributed to a 58pp increase (from 0 to 58%) in the proportion of children aged 0-5 reported as being completely up to date on immunizations.

Food to Thrive: Enhancing Nutrition Outcomes for Infants and Young Children

Our nutrition programs focus on reducing malnutrition and enhancing infant and young child feeding practices, with a strong emphasis on community-based education and maternal nutrition. Programs are designed to promote cost-effective interventions to reduce the proportion of children under 5 with severe acute malnutrition by enhancing screening and promoting exclusive breastfeeding for infants under 6 months. By working closely with communities, we help caregivers build the knowledge and skills to recognize the signs and symptoms of malnutrition and ensure that children receive the care and nutrition they need during their most vulnerable years.

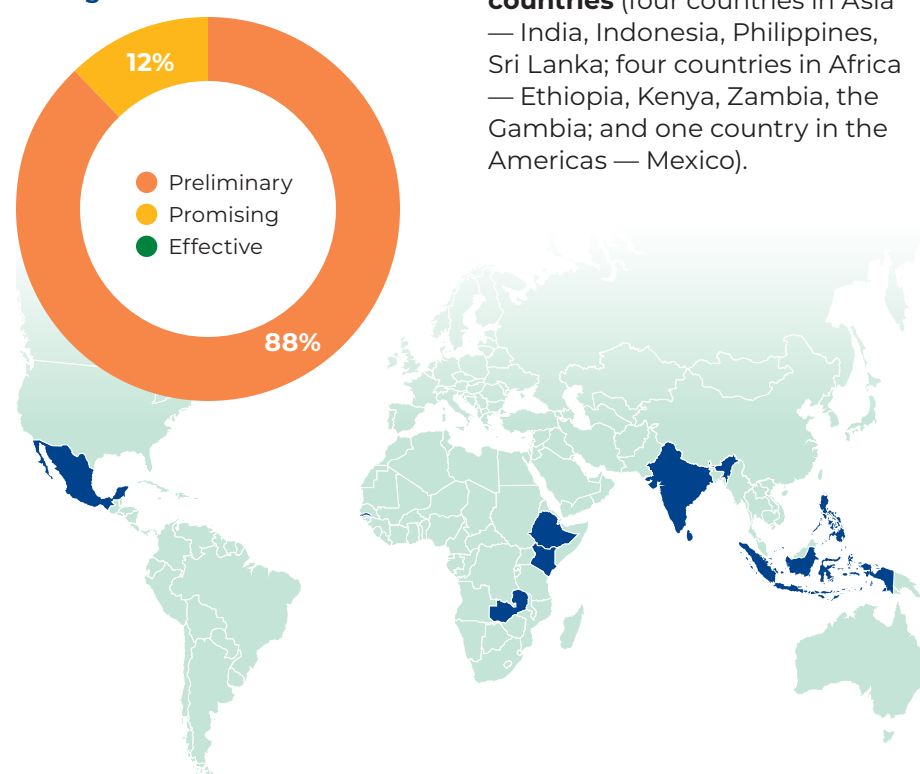
Central to our approach is educating caregivers about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, which is vital for a child's early development. We provide targeted support through our MCH programming, where we emphasize maternal nutrition as a crucial factor in the overall health and well-being of both mothers and children. This holistic strategy ensures that mothers are well-nourished, enabling them to provide adequate nutrition to their infants, thus fostering healthier communities and reducing the prevalence of malnutrition among young children.

Our Programming Evidence for Nutrition Outcomes

17 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in nutrition-related outcomes, specifically for malnutrition (including stunting and underweight prevalence) and infant and young child feeding practices (including exclusive breastfeeding for children under 6 months, meal frequency and dietary diversity).

As shown in **Figure 2-7**, two (12%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence and another 15 (88%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to nutrition outcomes.

FIGURE 2-7
Our Evidence for Positive Change in Nutrition Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **nine countries** (four countries in Asia — India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka; four countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, the Gambia; and one country in the Americas — Mexico).

Examples of the Positive Change We See for Nutrition Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — The **Lalan Palan project**¹⁴ (July 2016 to June 2019) in rural and marginalized communities in **India** delivered — through counseling sessions at community meetings and home visits — education and training to: a) pregnant women on birth preparation, including healthy nutritional practices; and b) caregivers of infants and young children (ages 0 to 6 years) on infant feeding practices. The project contributed to positive change in complementary feeding practices. At endline, significantly more mothers in the intervention areas (compared to those in control areas) were more likely to supplement the children's diet at age 6 months with diverse foods (an average of 45pp more likely

¹⁴ Agarwal, V.K. (2019). Endline evaluation of Lalan Palan project of ChildFund India. Delhi: Author.

across food types). These included fruit juice, soup or sabudana liquid, tinned milk or fresh milk, kheer, yellow colored vitamin C-rich mashed vegetables, carbohydrate-rich mashed vegetables, vitamin A-rich fruits and iron-rich green leafy vegetables.

PROMISING — The **Indonesia Responsive Parenting Project**¹⁵, implemented with 15 partner organizations in eight provinces between July 2018 and June 2021, trained 540 community representative facilitators who reached 10,330 parents and children through responsive parenting class sessions. The project contributed to the following nutrition-related outcomes: a) at endline, among children aged 6–23 months, 33% of children in the intervention group met the Minimum Dietary Diversity requirement (defined as children consuming at least five of eight food groups) compared to 17% of children in the non-intervention group, and among children over 23 months, 42% of children in the intervention group consumed the minimum variety of foods, compared to 31% of children in the non-intervention group; b) at endline, 34% of children 6–23 months in the intervention group met the Minimum Acceptable Diet (defined as children receiving a minimum intake of various foods in accordance with the minimum meal frequency standards) compared to 23% of children in the non-intervention group.

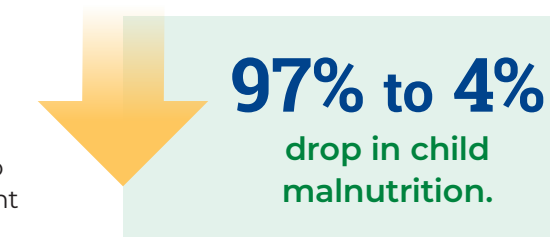
In the Ziguinchor Region of Senegal, a mother feeds her children (13 months, R, and 4 years, L) a healthy meal at a monthly ChildFund-supported growth monitoring session and nutritional seminar.



PRELIMINARY — In **Ethiopia**, the **Strengthening Holistic Early Childhood (ECD) Services project**¹⁶ provided, at the district level, integrated quality early childhood services, including nutrition services. The project strengthened early feeding practices by helping to increase the proportion of mothers who fed their newborns exclusively on breast milk for the first 6 months by 41pp (from 51% to 92%). The project also contributed to a 35pp reduction (from 35% to 0) in malnutrition prevalence among 2,691 children enrolled in targeted growth monitoring and receiving supplementary and therapeutic feeding.

PRELIMINARY — In **Kenya**, the **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) and Nutrition Project**¹⁷ (March 2017–March 2020) in Turkana North, Turkana South and Loima subcounties, through enhanced nutrition education in communities and support to farmers on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, contributed to the reduction of reported malnutrition rates for children under 5 years by 19pp (from 32% to 13%), as well as an increase in dietary diversity. The Minimum Dietary Diversity score for women increased by 41.6pp (from 32.4% to 74%) while the Dietary Diversity Score for children aged 6–23 months increased by 57.7pp (from 16.3% to 74%).

PRELIMINARY — The **Mukti (Phase 1) program**¹⁸ in **India** was an innovative results-based nutrition financing, supplementation and education program that sought to improve the nutritional status and treatment compliance of tuberculosis patients. The program reached 1,000 participants between March 2020 and April 2021 through home visits, one-on-one and group counseling, food basket distribution, and assistance in obtaining government benefits. The program contributed to a 93.2pp decline in malnutrition among children (from 97% prior to Mukti to 4% after treatment and Mukti services).



¹⁵ ChildFund Indonesia (2021). Action research report on ChildFund and partners' responsive parenting program implementation (2018-2021). Jakarta: Author.

¹⁶ HAMEL Consultancy Services PLC. (2018). Evaluation of projects: Strengthening holistic ECD services and improving safe motherhoods and reproductive health in Fentale Woreda, Ethiopia final report. Addis Ababa: Author.

¹⁷ Waweru, T., Moru, J., & Wanjau, K. (2020). Endline evaluation of WASH and nutrition project in Turkana north, Turkana south and Loima subcounties. Nairobi: African Research and Development Ltd.

¹⁸ Howell, E., Dammala, R. R., Pandey, P., Strouse, D., Sharma, A., Rao, N., ... and Dowling, R. (2023). Evaluation of a results-based financing nutrition intervention for tuberculosis patients in Madhya Pradesh, India, implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. BMC Global and Public Health, 1(1), 13.

PRELIMINARY — The Batagor (Bogor City’s Resilient Mother Child) Project¹⁹ in Indonesia, implemented from January to June 2021, aimed to improve the behavior of parents and community members to support the quality of children’s growth and development through responsive parenting and nutrition classes. The project contributed to a reduction in the prevalence of underweight children under 5 years by 18pp (from 58.7% to 40.7%).

PRELIMINARY — The Project for the Well-Being of Totonac Children²⁰ in Mexico benefited 100 families between January 2020 to December 2021, with the goal of improving their food security, food production, economic resources, nutritional status and health status. The project contributed to a 16pp increase (from 57% to 73%) in the proportion of Totonac families who reported nutritional status of “normal” weight for at least one household member and a 17pp increase (from 68% to 85%) in reported access to a healthy and varied diet.

PRELIMINARY — The Bajau Ongka-Kumpit and Transition to School (BOAT School) project²¹ in the Philippines implemented from April 2020 to April 2022 aimed to address education access and quality issues faced by Bajau learners through the training of community learning facilitators to deliver preschool and multi-grade sessions. The project contributed to a 13.7pp increase (from 32.6% to 46.3%) in the proportion of children aged 36–71 months with “normal” weight for age.

PRELIMINARY (See Impact Case Study) — The Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) pilot initiative²² in Sri Lanka implemented from March 2023 to June 2024 was designed to enhance school nutrition and support local agriculture by integrating protein-rich, locally sourced food into school meal programs. Key components of the project included the establishment of school kitchens, the development of

school and home gardens, and improvements in the agricultural value chain, all contributing to a community-driven approach to school feeding that benefited 500 children aged 6–11. The project contributed to a 24pp decline (from 44% to 20%) in the proportion of children who were underweight.

PRELIMINARY — The Responsive and Protective Parenting (RPP) Program Model²³ in Kenya had the long-term goal of infants and young children (0-5) having improved age-appropriate development and early learning outcomes as well as protection at home and in their communities. RPP, implemented from January 2021 to December 2022, contributed to a 23.8pp increase (from 70.5% to 94.3%) in the proportion of children aged 0–6 months exclusively breastfed and a 79pp increase (from 7% to 86%) in the proportion of caregivers who had used existing nutrition services in their communities.

Our Impact Footprint

In summary, we see impact progress in our contributions to improving the physical health and well-being of children and their families, and to giving children a healthy start in life.



IMPACT CASE STUDY

Home-Grown School Feeding Program – Sri Lanka

Health – Nutrition
– Livelihoods

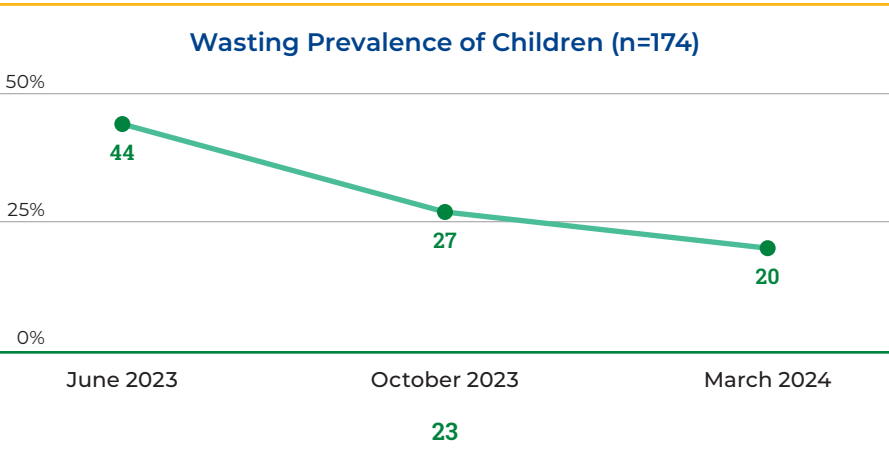
Caregivers and children credited the HGSF program with improving attendance and participation in school activities, as children looked forward to the nutritious meals and milk provided. Caregivers shared that starting the day with a wholesome meal boosted children’s enthusiasm for learning and engagement in class.

Farm-to-School Feeding Program Cuts Child Undernutrition in Sri Lanka

ChildFund’s Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) program in Sri Lanka’s second-largest district, Monaragala, located in Uva Province, integrated primary school nutrition, agricultural development and women’s economic empowerment. Implemented from March 2023 to June 2024, the program contributed to a 54.6% decline in wasting rates among children across five primary schools, from 44% to 20% (n=174) on average.* Through the HGSF program, 500 children aged 6 to 11 across five primary schools received daily protein-rich meals using food grown by nearby smallholder farm organizations — including vegetable, poultry and dairy farmers — as well as from home and school gardens established through the program and cultivated by the children’s caregivers, often with the children’s involvement. In addition, around 700 caregivers received guidance on how to create diverse, nourishing meals for their families.

To ensure a consistent and nutritious food supply, ChildFund trained farmers in crop productivity, post-harvest handling and value addition. Nearly 50 women received targeted support to launch and manage small-scale agricultural enterprises, including business planning, technical training, and financial assistance. As part of the HGSF program, these smallholder farms and agricultural enterprises helped to provide nutritious crops to the five participating schools.

In focus group discussions, participants shared that they had better knowledge of nutrition and crop diversification, notable increases in farm output (by changing from multiple cropping to dual cropping), increased household income, and improved production of diverse, locally produced foods with value chain improvements — all thanks to what they learned in the program.



ChildFund’s Home-Grown School Feeding pilot program contributed to a **54.6%** reduction in the prevalence of underweight children, decreasing from 44% to 20% (n=174).



Children involved in the school gardens forged and maintained friendships with their peers.

Leading With Impact in EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Our Focus

From birth to age 5 is the most critical time in a child's life for learning and development. Without a solid foundation that includes safe, nurturing home and school environments, loving caregivers and proper nutrition and health care, many children will struggle to build the foundational skills and learning to thrive as they grow.

ChildFund's Early Childhood Development (ECD) approach focuses on helping local organizations and governments support families to create the conditions that their youngest children need for healthy development during their earliest years. To ensure sustainable program implementation, we provide opportunities for local partner organizations to build their knowledge through workshops and learning exchanges on positive parenting practices. Parenting mentors and facilitators engage in training and supervision to effectively support caregivers to improve their knowledge, attitudes and practices around parenting and early childhood development. Interactive group sessions and personalized home visits ensure that the support is tailored to the participants' needs, especially those in vulnerable situations or remote, hard-to-reach communities.

To create a more equitable, accessible and high-quality ECD system that supports the holistic development of every child, our approach encompasses a broad range of activities,

from policy reform and practice innovation to shifts in resource allocation and stakeholder engagement.

We partner with local organizations and government-funded ECD services to ensure a comprehensive support network for facilitators, and to reinforce the local- and national-level infrastructure necessary for children's development.

Community-based Solutions

Our programs work with community-based organizations to promote responsive and protective parenting — and to deliver quality center-based education for children aged 5 and younger. Parenting education is delivered through home visits and group sessions, as well as remote modalities, focusing on parent-child play activities that increase children's cognitive, language and fine-motor skills, preparing them for early childhood learning and primary school.

ChildFund's ECD program goals are to help the youngest children develop to their potential, enjoy good physical and mental health, live in supportive communities and be part of stable households that interact in nonviolent ways. Our programming achieves these goals through promoting: 1.) Responsive caregiver education and livelihood support for parents; 2.) Access to early learning environments

In Indonesia, this 2-year-old boy lives with his elderly grandparents. They have learned about the importance of play through the local ChildFund ECD center.



“ When [my son] comes home from school, he proudly tells me, ‘Dad, today we learned to draw! Dad, today we learned to count!’... As parents, we feel very grateful because he is now growing and developing well.

Father of 4-year-old boy who participates in the Responsive Parenting project in rural Timor Island, Indonesia.

”

Advocacy

The impact of our ECD programming includes the role and contribution of advocacy efforts in promoting new legislation and policies. Recent examples of key accomplishments include:

- **Guatemala:** Through ChildFund’s community consultations, the country passed a **national ECD Public Policy**.
- **Brazil:** The recently sanctioned **Law 2861/2023** establishes positive parenting and the right to play as priority strategies for preventing violence against children. The legislative text came directly from ChildFund Brazil’s political advocacy work in the National Congress, supported by the Come Play with Me project.
- **U.S.:** As members of the Thrive Coalition, we pushed for the implementation of the **Global Child Thrive Act**, which became law in 2021. It directs the U.S. government to integrate early childhood development programming for children and family members throughout foreign assistance programs.

Continued from p. 21

for children through collaborating with trained guide mothers and supporting high-quality preschools; 3.) Safe and protective home and community environments; 4.) Children’s and families’ access to health care and nutrition.

To achieve these goals, our programs take into account caregivers’ needs during program design and implementation. We help community volunteers, ECD teachers, and/or Child Protection Committees learn to support families experiencing vulnerability through education and child protection. Community leaders, local partners and government representatives are also engaged to help them better understand the challenges facing very young children and translating this engagement into advocacy wins so that better structures for support of children aged 0–5 can be realized in the countries where we work.

This impact chapter shares the progress we see in our global M&E data and our evidence related to our program focus on improving early learning outcomes for children, through interventions including early stimulation from caregivers and quality center-based education. It also shares an Impact Case Study highlighting the successful scaling and positive impacts of our Come Play with Me program.



A young girl participates in an exercise as part of the ChildFund-led consultation with the Guatemalan government to shape their national policy on ECD. Photo credit: Mafer Morán

Our Global Progress

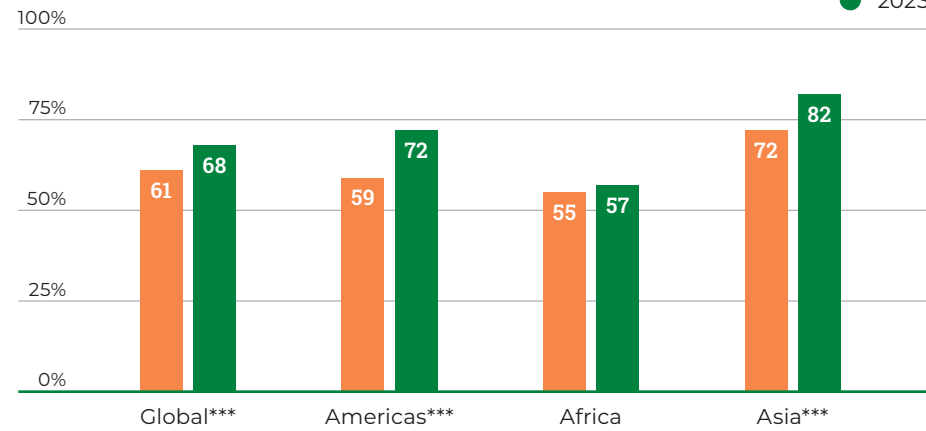
From 2022 to 2023, through our annual global monitoring of early learning outcomes, we observed significant positive change for children under age 5 in caregiver participation in nurturing care training and caregiver engagement in early stimulation activities.

Early Stimulation by Caregiver

Globally, we see **21%** of children engaging weekly in four or more early stimulation activities with their caregivers — a significant increase from 2022, led by increases in the Americas and Asia (Figure 3-2).

FIGURE 3-1

Percentage of Caregivers Attending Meetings/Workshops or Receiving Home Visits on Nurturing Care



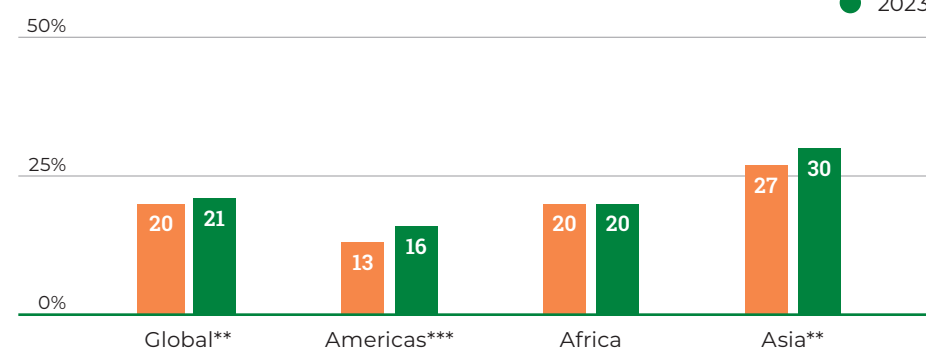
Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Caregiver Participation in Nurturing Care Training

Globally, we see close to **70%** of caregivers of children ages 0 to 5 engaged in nurturing care training, a significant (7 percentage points [pp]*) increase from 2022, with significant change seen in two regions (13pp in the Americas, 10pp in Asia) (Figure 3-1).

FIGURE 3-2

Percentage of Children Engaging in Four or More Early Stimulation Activities with Caregivers



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

* Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and helps us measure change over time.

Our ECD Programs Evidence Spotlight

Early Learning in and Outside the Home

Early Learning in the Home: Promoting Early Stimulation and Responsive Caregiving

Delivered through home visits, group sessions and remote modalities like radio, our ECD programs prioritize quality parent-child play activities and promote positive or responsive parenting practices: ensuring that children have adequate supervision as well as proper nutrition, hygiene and sanitation. By transforming their relationships with their children through direct engagement, including play, parents can build, repair and strengthen bonds with their children, and even with the broader community. These connections are social, but also deeply rooted in the cognitive and emotional development of young children. Through consistent and responsive interactions, caregivers and service providers can develop more secure attachments, making children feel safer. This sense of security and belonging is crucial for exploration and learning, as it gives children the confidence to engage with their environment and new experiences.

We measure success by the proportion of children under age 5 who have opportunities and support for early learning in the home. This includes access to children's books and age-appropriate playthings as well as their caregivers' engagement in activities that promote early learning and school readiness.

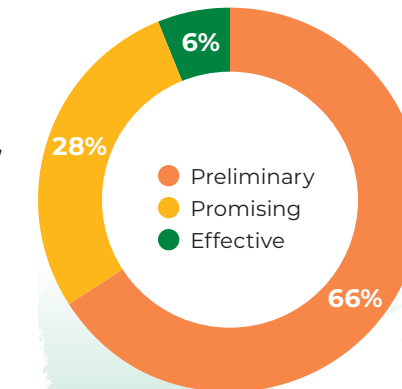
Our Programming Evidence for Early Learning in the Home

32 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in Early Learning in the Home-related outcomes, specifically for early stimulation and responsive care, opportunities for early learning in the home, and achievement of child development milestones.

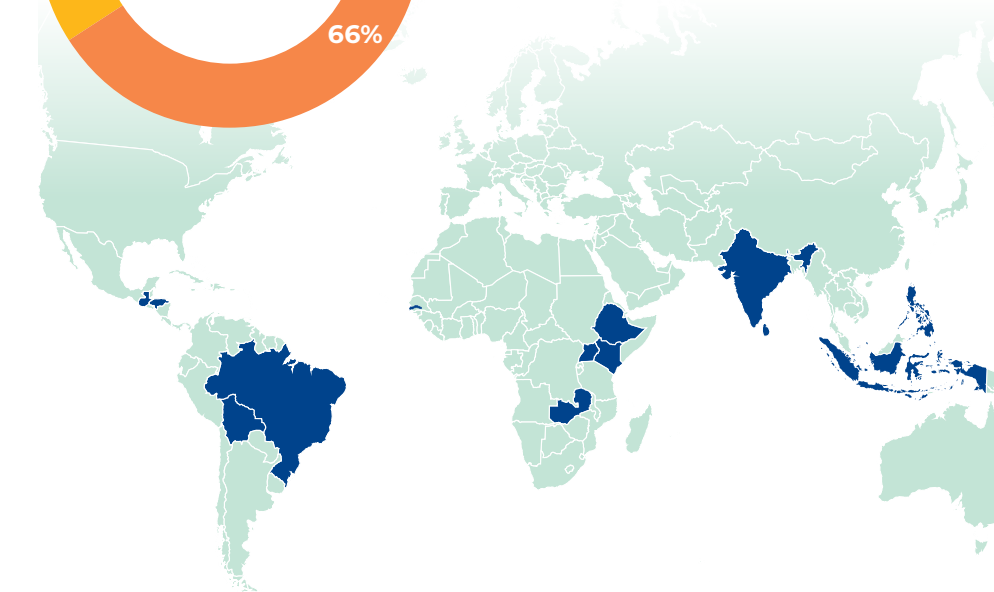
As shown in **Figure 3-3**, two (6%) of the evaluated programs have generated effective evidence, nine (28%) showed promising evidence and another 21 (66%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to early learning in the home outcomes.

FIGURE 3-3

Our Evidence for Positive Change for Early Learning in the Home Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **13 countries** (five countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, The Gambia, Uganda, Zambia; four countries in the Americas — Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras; four countries in Asia — India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka).



Examples of the Positive Change We See for Early Learning in the Home Outcomes, by Evidence Level

EFFECTIVE — **A Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care Program**¹ (Phase III of ChildFund's Hilton Foundation-supported parenting program) delivered in rural **Kenya** is a community-based peer-group intervention designed to support caregivers of children aged 0-3 years. Implemented by ChildFund Kenya and local partners from January 2024 to November 2024 in 64 villages in Ndhiwa sub-county (Homabay County) and Bunyala sub-county (Busia County), the program, grounded in the Nurturing Care Framework, aims to improve ECD outcomes by enhancing caregivers' parenting knowledge, attitudes and practices, and supporting caregiver well-being. The program led to significant moderate-to-large improvements in caregiver stimulation practices and several indicators of the Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) Inventory, including overall scores and selected sub-domain scores, specifically for: a) the overall home caregiving environment scores; b) for primary caregiver stimulation, with greater improvements in the intervention group (3.3 to 4.9) compared to the control group (3.6 to 4.2); and c) a substantial increase in learning materials in the intervention group (1.5 to 5.8) compared to the control group (1.7 to 3.7).

A Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care program in Kenya taught this father, playing here with his 4-year-old daughter, how to be more involved and loving.



Chapter 3 | Early Childhood Development

PROMISING — **Indonesia's Responsive Parenting Project**² was implemented in eight provinces from July 2018 to June 2021, positively impacting 10,330 caregivers and children through responsive parenting classes on how to stimulate optimal cognitive, motor, language and socio-emotional development of infants and young children without violence. The program led to significant improvements in parenting quality and child development. Children aged 42 to 72 months in the intervention group achieved age-appropriate development milestones (as measured by the International Development and Early Learning Assessment) at a higher rate than the comparison group for motor development and executive function. For children ages 0 to 36 months, parents receiving the intervention, compared to those in the comparison group, were better able to organize family activities and provide a safe and supportive environment for their child's optimal growth and development (as measured by the HOME Inventory). For children 42-72 months, the program yielded higher rates of improvement for program caregivers on seven of the eight HOME Inventory sub-domains (learning materials, language stimulation, physical environment, parental responsiveness, academic stimulation, modelling and variety in daily stimulation).

PROMISING — The **Child Development Program** in **India**³ was implemented in 13 states for more than 10 years and delivered a comprehensive package of services across sectors aimed at the overall development of children and youth from families in underresourced communities. The program contributed to improved early stimulation and responsive care through enhanced family member engagement in daily activities of children. Study findings showed that in the intervention area, 72% of children had caregivers play with them and 66% had caregivers read or look at picture books with them compared to 60% and 50% of caregivers in the control area, respectively.

1 Jeong, J. & Mcann, J. (2025). Endline evaluation of a community-based peer group parenting program to promote nurturing care and early childhood development in Western Kenya: Evidence from a cluster-randomized controlled trial and qualitative process evaluation.

2 ChildFund Indonesia (2021). Action research report on ChildFund & partners' responsive parenting program implementation (2018-2021). Jakarta: Author.

3 Ganesh, P. & Innacy Saint Rock, Q. (2018). Outcome evaluation of ChildFund India supported child development program. New Delhi: Centre for Social and Scientific Research (CSSR).

PROMISING (see *Impact Case Study*) — The remote, in-person, and hybrid delivery of ChildFund's **Come Play with Me** program, with support from the LEGO Foundation, was scaled to and tested in four countries — **Brazil, Honduras, Ethiopia, and Uganda**⁴. From March 2022 to August 2023, the four countries delivered remote and in-person strategies and activities aiming to strengthen playful parenting practices (including a focus on socioemotional learning) and COVID-19 prevention and management. The program yielded significant improvements (compared to a control group) in all four countries for caregiver knowledge about the importance of early learning and learning through play. In **Ethiopia** and **Uganda**, results demonstrated a significant increase in caregiver engagement in early learning activities after the delivery of the 12-week program (for both remote and hybrid delivery).

PROMISING (see *Impact Case Study*) — The remote delivery of ChildFund's **Come Play with Me** program, with support from the LEGO Foundation, was further tested from 2021 to 2023 in six departments in **Guatemala**, Totonicapán, San Marcos, Quiché, Alta Verapaz, Chiquimula, and Sololá⁵. Program content, framed as radio theater skits educating listeners about playful parenting and nurturing care to promote child development, was broadcasted through community radio stations (in communities where the radio signal was unstable or non-existent, the programs were transmitted through mobile loudspeakers). This pilot program reached 31,050 caregivers and 19,454 children (9,450 girls and 10,004 boys) across 21 municipalities and 294 communities. The program led to increases in caregiver knowledge and behavioral outcomes as well as key child development outcomes. On average, listening to the radio program was significantly associated with the child being developmentally on track in the domains of language/cognitive, physical, social-emotional well-being and learning combined. Listening to the radio program was also significantly associated with caregivers practicing four or more early stimulation activities with their children.

4 ChildFund International (2024). Playful parenting during COVID-19: Expanding playful learning strategies in Brazil, Ethiopia, Honduras, and Uganda. Richmond, VA: Author.

5 ChildFund International. (2024). Evidence Review of ChildFund's Program Models in the Americas: 2019 to 2024. Richmond: Author.

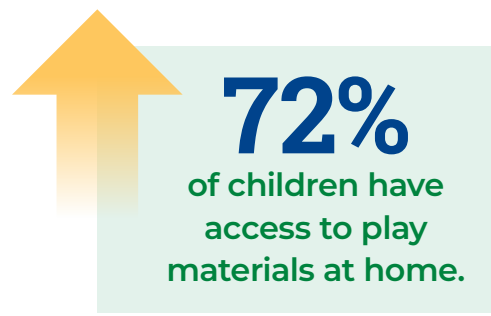
6 ChildFund International. (2024). Evidence review of ChildFund's program models in the Americas: 2019 to 2024. Richmond: Author.



A mother and her 3-year-old daughter, participants in *Juega Conmigo*, Guatemala's *Come Play with Me* program, enjoy reading a book together.

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund's **Growing with You program model**⁶ delivered in the **Americas** is a comprehensive program that supports the growth and development of infants and children under age 6 in their home environments. The program model curriculum strengthens the knowledge and positive practices of parents and primary caregivers as well as the protective environments that facilitate and advocate for the well-being of infants and children, their caregivers and their families' communities. Results from the delivery of the program in **Bolivia** from 2019 to 2024 show a significant increase in regular engagement in playful interactions between caregivers and their children.

PRELIMINARY — A Strengthened Partnership for Nurturing Care (Phase II of the Hilton Foundation-funded parenting program) in **Zambia**⁷ aimed to ensure that children aged 0–5 years old affected by HIV or AIDS would meet developmental milestones supported by responsive caregivers and strengthen multisectoral collaboration for nurturing care. The program reached 3,185 caregivers and 3,961 infants and young children between August 2018 and October 2021 and contributed to a 38.5pp increase (from 33.9% to 72.4%) in the proportion of caregivers who reported that children under 3 years of age in their household had access to play materials, and a 13pp increase (from 14% to 27%) in caregivers who reported their children playing with toys made by an adult. Additionally, the program contributed to a 22.2pp increase (from 9.8% to 32%) in the proportion of caregivers who reported that they read to the child, a 10.9pp increase (from 81.6% to 92.5%) in caregivers who said they sang to their child and an 8.1pp increase (from 87% to 95.1%) in caregivers who said they played with their child.



PRELIMINARY — The Responsive and Protective Parenting (RPP) Program Model⁸ delivered in **Kenya** has a long-term goal of infants and young children (0–5) having improved age-appropriate development and early learning outcomes, and focuses on enhancing parents' and caregivers' knowledge, attitudes and practices across the components of nurturing care, caregiver well-being and community-based child protection through group parenting sessions. During the January 2021 to December 2022 delivery period of RPP, the program contributed to a 29pp increase (from 19% to 48%) in the proportion of children 0–5 with three or more books in the home and a 13pp decrease (from 38% to 25%) in the proportion of primary caregivers who report leaving children in the care of another child aged 10 or younger for more than one hour during the past week.

Early Learning Outside of the Home – Access to Center-Based Early Childhood Education

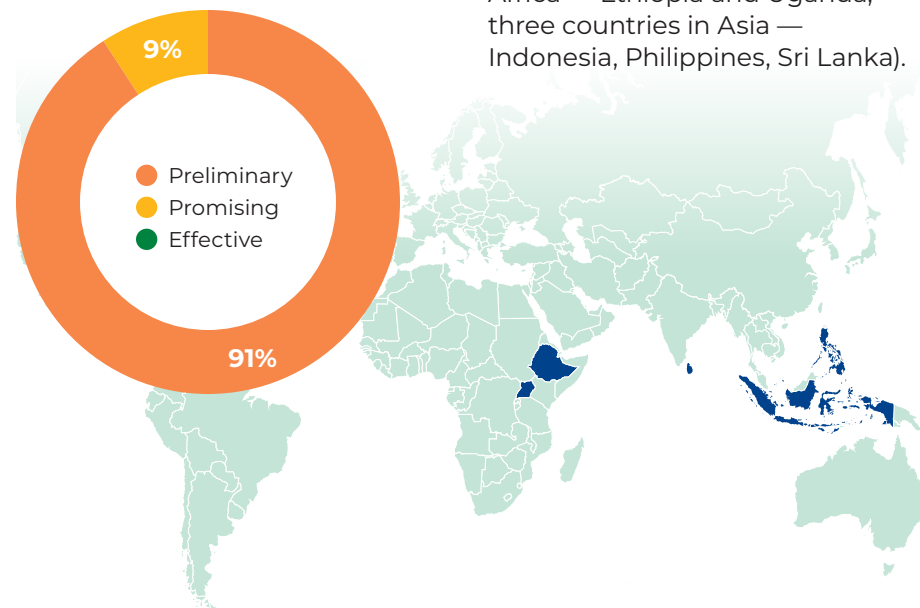
ChildFund's programs are designed to provide children with center-based early childhood care and education (ECCE) opportunities focused on the delivery of quality ECCE. These programs often include the construction of early childhood education centers or the refurbishment of existing centers, along with the provision of quality teaching. Children attending the centers are prepared for transition to primary school.

Our Programming Evidence for Early Learning Outside the Home

11 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in Early Learning Outside of the Home through child attendance at an early childhood education program.

As shown in **Figure 3-4**, one (9%) of the evaluated programs has generated promising evidence and another 10 (91%) have generated preliminary evidence for opportunities for early learning outside of the home.

FIGURE 3-4
Our Evidence for Positive Change for Early Learning Outside of the Home Outcomes



Examples of the Positive Change We See for Early Learning Outside the Home Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PRELIMINARY — The Ensuring Nutrition, Health and Children's Education (ENHANCE) project (Phases 2 and 3) in **Sri Lanka**⁹ was implemented between August 2013 and September 2015 and benefited 1,072 boys, 1,097 girls and 1,500 parents/family caregivers and ECD service providers through the renovation of nine ECD centers, provision of age-appropriate learning and play materials, and delivery of training for ECD teachers and parents on proper child care and development. The project contributed to a 24.3pp increase (from 62.1% to 86.4%) in the proportion of children aged 3–5 years old attending ECD centers and an 11.1pp increase (from 88.1% to 99.2%) in the proportion of children who had met development milestones.

PRELIMINARY — The Early Childhood Care and Education Improvement (ECCE) Project¹⁰ in **Uganda**, with support from ChildFund Korea, implemented from May 2021 to May 2024, targeted children aged 0 to 8 years in the Busia district to achieve age-appropriate growth and development milestones. Intervention strategies included helping community facilitators build skills to deliver responsive and protective parenting sessions to caregivers of children 0 to 5 years, and supporting ECD centers to meet quality standards for child-friendly learning environments. The project contributed to a 75.2pp increase (from 23.4% to 98.6%) in the proportion of ECD children who transition to primary school and a 53.1pp increase (from 43.2% to 96.3%) in the proportion of children 3–5 years attending pre-school/center-based learning.

PRELIMINARY — The Communities Caring for Children Program¹¹ in **Ethiopia**, implemented between 2012 and 2016, focused on addressing early childhood development needs for children under 5 through home-based early childhood care, center-based early childhood care and advocacy based on linkages, knowledge management and learning. The program contributed to a 10pp increase (from 84% to 94%) in the proportion of children attending ECD centers and an 87pp increase in the



Two 4-year-old boys play on a playground at a ChildFund-supported ECD center after receiving a meal at ChildFund's Community Kitchen in Monaragala District, Sri Lanka.

7 Vu, J.A. (2021). A strengthened partnership for nurturing care: Outcome study endline evaluation for Zambia. Gaithersburg: Author.

8 ChildFund Kenya. (2023). Endline evaluation: Responsive and protective parenting program model – Kenya. Nairobi: Author.

9 TK Research & Solutions (Pvt) Ltd. (2016). Endline survey of project ENHANCE – phase II and III. Colombo: Author.

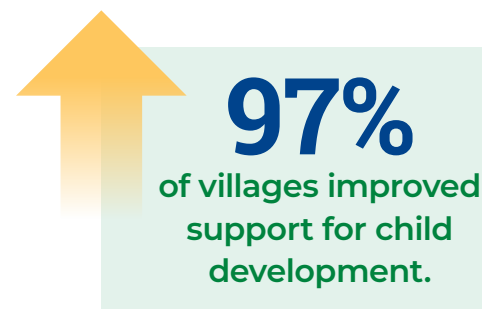
10 Mayende, S., Ronald, T., & Martin, E. (2024). "Early childhood care and education improvement (ECCE) project" in Busia district: Final report. Kampala: ChildFund Uganda.

11 ChildFund Ethiopia. (2017). Communities caring for children program (CCCP): Learning brief. Addis Ababa: Author.

proportion of ECD centers meeting ChildFund standards of quality. The program also saw a 62pp (from 33% to 95%) increase in the proportion of children transitioning from ECD centers to lower primary school.

PRELIMINARY — The **Early Childhood Learning and Development Project (ECD)**¹² in Busia, **Uganda**, sought to increase parents' awareness of early childhood development and child protection and to improve the quality of center-based ECD services, with the goal that children aged 3-8 years would achieve age-appropriate milestones. The program reached 6,000 parents, 170 health volunteers and child protection committee members, 45 caregivers in 15 ECD centers, and 25 ECD committees between September 2017 and August 2020. It contributed to an 11.8pp increase (from 64.7% at to 76.5%) in the proportion of parents sending at least one or more of their age-eligible children to an early learning center, nursery school, kindergarten or community ECD center, and a 17pp increase (from 33% to 50%) in the proportion of ECD centers meeting minimum standards according to Uganda's Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy.

PRELIMINARY — The **Strengthening Civil Society and Social Accountability for Improved Access to Quality, Inclusive ECD Services project**, in **Indonesia**, implemented over a two-year period (March 2018 to February 2020), benefited 2,552 children aged 3–6 years old and 4,222 parents. The project contributed to a 61% increase in children's access to inclusive and child-friendly ECD centers. Key to this positive change was empowerment of community-based organizations to drive supportive community-led initiatives and local systems change. The project contributed to 96.7% (29 out of 30) of targeted villages having improved governance processes and plans supporting child development and an increase in the budget allocation to support ECD programming from 1.17% (start of Year 1) to 4.54% (end of Year 2).



¹² Promise Consult International Ltd. (2020). Endline evaluation of early childhood learning and development project (ECD) in Busia, Uganda: Final evaluation report. Kampala: Author.

Our Impact Footprint

In summary, we see impact progress in our contributions to improving the physical health and well-being of children and their families, and to giving children a healthy start to life.

Providing a foundation for lifelong learning and development is a major focus of our ECD programming, and we see expanded impact in building nurturing environments — in and outside of the home — to support learning for very young children.



IMPACT CASE STUDY

Children Growing through Play

Come Play with Me

Play is ... joyful, meaningful, actively engaging, iterative, socially interactive¹.



“I’ve realized that playing is important for kids. If I see one of my grandchildren playing, I should just let them play. I shouldn’t always make them do chores. Even if it’s dark outside, I let them play in the moonlight.”

Grandmother (age 69),
Come Play with Me participant
in Uganda, playing with her
grandchildren

¹ Five key characteristics of child play as defined by the LEGO Foundation.

ChildFund’s Come Play with Me program, designed and delivered with support from the LEGO Foundation, is an innovative, evidence-based program designed to deepen and bring to scale playful parenting practices to promote growth and learning in children aged 0–4. The program seeks to strengthen playful interactions between caregivers and their young children to help them meet their developmental milestones and become creative, lifelong learners.

A core component of Come Play with Me is its radio theater delivery of a set of 26 short audio skits in which three families advise each other on how to take care of their young children and include play in their daily activities and household chores. The original skits, designed for *and* delivered in Guatemala’s remote western highland communities, have been successfully adapted for in-person and hybrid (remote and in-person) delivery. The program has since been scaled to Brazil, Honduras and Mexico, Ethiopia and Uganda, and the program content is available in Spanish, Portuguese and 26 local languages.

Completed evaluation studies (quantitative and qualitative) in Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Ethiopia, and Uganda show the promise of Come Play with Me in creating more nurturing learning environments for young children (and the overall family). Intentionally designed to operate across multiple levels, from communities to national institutions, government partnerships are central to program delivery and systemic change — and have led to government and policy action supporting child development.

Impact Statement

“The Change Started with Me”

– Retired father of one, Ethiopia

“Before the project, I used to think that my only responsibility was to buy food. Now, I take good care of my son, accompany him on walks and discuss the radio messages with my family.

“The change started with me, as I used to spend my nights in bad places. I have now changed my behavior and spend most of my time with my family, especially with my son.

“I am grateful for the positive changes that the project has brought to my life and my family.”

In five years (from 2020 to 2025), **Come Play with Me** has helped build stimulating home learning environments for young children in over 300 rural and urban communities in six countries across the Americas and Africa. **ChildFund continues to adapt and scale the program for positive impact in humanitarian settings, like the Palorinya Refugee Settlement in Uganda.**



A 3-year-old girl plays at a Come Play with Me session in Tonicapan Department, Guatemala.

Policy Impact

- Passage of Brazil’s Playful Parenting Law No. 14.826 (March 2023)
- Memorandum of understanding signed with the Honduran government to expand Come Play with Me
- Formed local government alliances in Mexico to broaden the program
- Ugandan Ministry of Education and National Curriculum Development Centre developed play and learning materials

Leading with Impact in EDUCATION



Second-grader at a ChildFund-supported primary school in Inhambane Province, Mozambique.

Our Focus

All children have the right to learn. To have equitable opportunities to access education, succeed academically and complete school. The quality of education is just as important as access itself, and this depends on so many factors — including a child's home environment, their school's infrastructure and resources, and the greater community and national education systems — and these factors must work together for children to thrive in the learning environment.

ChildFund's programming touches all these levels, with special focus on social-emotional learning (SEL), protection and basic education access. Working through local organizations and ministries of education in all our program countries, we help to strengthen national and regional education systems and engage families in establishing community leadership for learning. Our education programming also meaningfully engages teachers, parents and local community members to foster a sense of ownership and support program sustainability.

We support teachers, parents and students to build safe learning environments free from violence in and around schools and at home, partnering with local and national governments to make this a reality for all children.

In partnership with ministries of education, we work to strengthen education systems

and ensure that interventions align with national education plans and are sustainable and culturally appropriate. In line with our holistic approach, our education programs may also work with ministries of education, gender and social welfare in tandem. We also work directly with local partner organizations that have long-term relationships with local officials, schools and the wider community. In addition to working with government and local civil society, our education initiatives ensure meaningful participation of community members to engender greater ownership.

ChildFund's education programs take a holistic approach to supporting children's academic and social-emotional development *and* their physical and emotional safety. We bring teachers, parents and caregivers together to learn how children's protection and education are interlinked and form common expectations for their children's academic learning and supportive school communities. Using evidence-based principles, we support parents and caregivers to engage more deeply with their children's academics, navigate the education system, and practice positive parenting (i.e., refraining from corporal punishment and increasing child supervision). We also train teachers on child-centered teaching approaches and alternatives to corporal punishment, and leverage technology



Children participate in fun learning games introduced by ChildFund's Literacy and Numeracy project in Monaragala District, Sri Lanka.

to complement training, reinforce classroom instruction and reach children during crises like natural disasters or conflict.

This impact chapter shares the progress we see in our global M&E data and our evidence related to our program focus on improving education outcomes for children and youth ages 6 to 14, including safer school environments, caregiver support for learning in school, and social-emotional skills development. It also shares an Impact Case Study on the emerging impact from our Education for Protection and Well-being (EPW) program model to promote student development, currently being delivered in Africa and Asia.

Teachers used to teach us just by the book. Now teachers teach us by engaging in activities and teaching in a way that we like ... like math games or musical chairs.

Ninth-grade student, from a ChildFund-supported school in Monaragala District, Sri Lanka

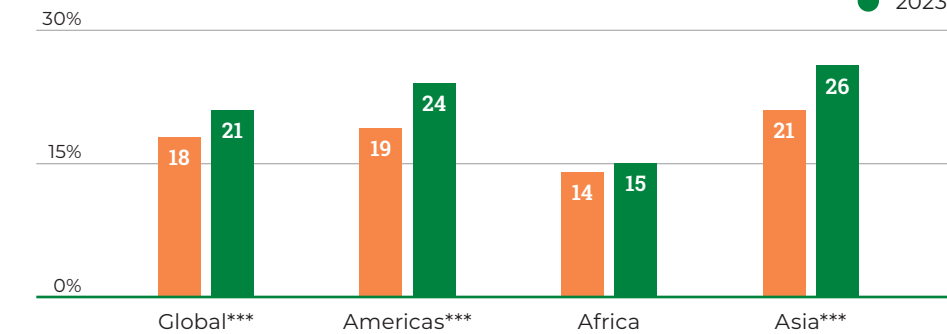
Our Global Progress

From 2022 to 2023, through our annual global monitoring of early learning outcomes, we observed significant positive increases in student school achievement (foundational numeracy and literacy skills), caregiver support for learning, and social-emotional skills (relationship building).

Students with Foundational Literacy Skills

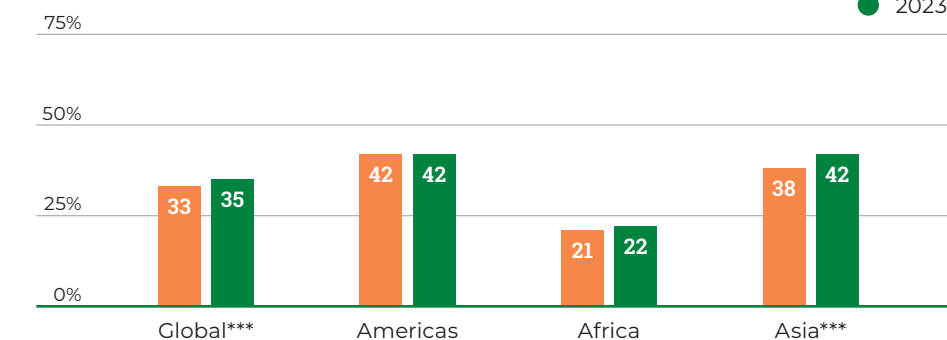
Globally, we see just over **1/3** of students ages 9 to 14 who can read with sufficient fluency and comprehension, a significant increase from 2022, with significant change seen in Asia and the highest literacy achievement rate (42%) in the Americas and Asia (Figure 4-2).

FIGURE 4-1
Percentage of Students (Ages 9 to 14) Who Can Do Division-level Math Tasks



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

FIGURE 4-2
Percentage of Students (Ages 9 to 14) Who Can Read with Fluency and Comprehension



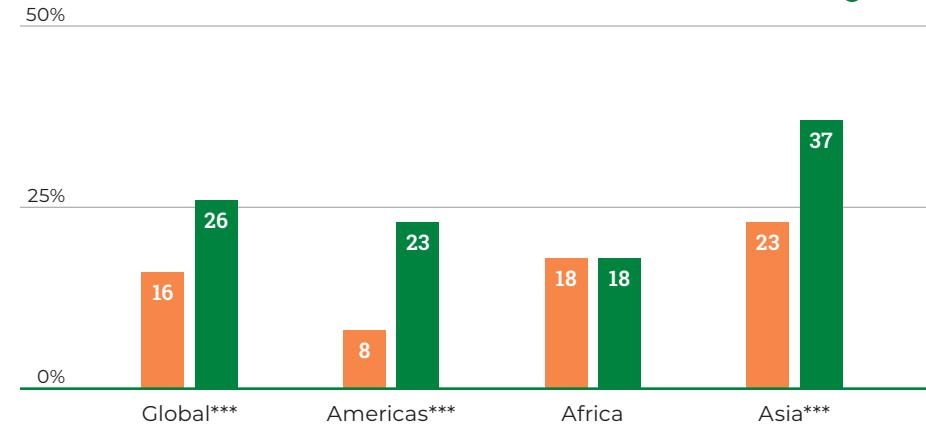
Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Students with Foundational Numeracy Skills

Globally, we see close to **1/4** of students ages 9 to 14 who can perform division-level math tasks, a significant increase from 2022, with significant change seen in the Americas (24%) and Asia (26%) (Figure 4-1).

FIGURE 4-3a

Percentage of Students (Ages 6 to 14) with Caregivers Attending a School Event



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

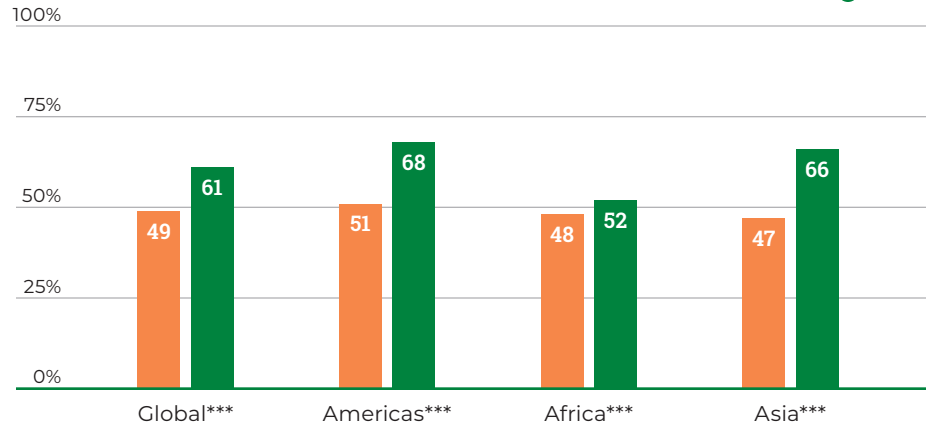
Caregiver Support for Learning for Students Ages 6 to 14

Globally, from 2022 to 2023, we see a significant **10 percentage point (pp)*** or more increase in students with caregivers who are engaged in their school activities: Just over **1/4** have caregivers who attend school events, and close to **2/3** have caregivers attending school meetings (Figures 4-3a and 4-3b).

*Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and help us measure change over time.

FIGURE 4-3b

Percentage of Students (Ages 6 to 14) with Caregivers Participating in a School Meeting



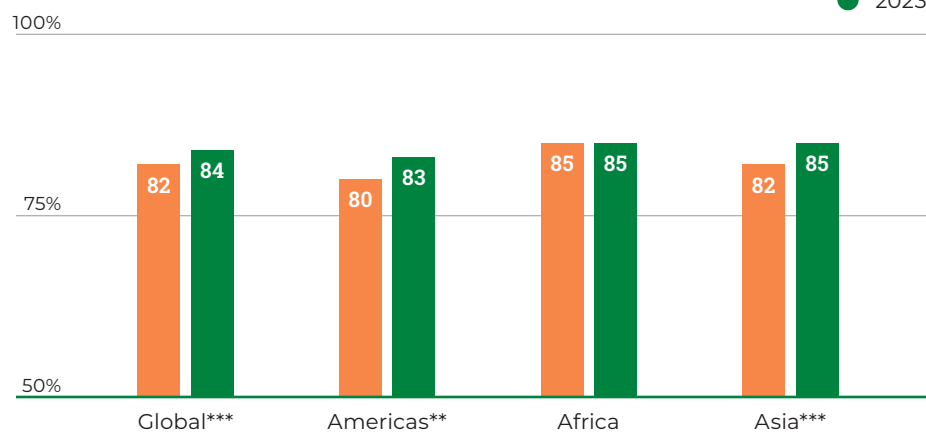
Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Social-Emotional Skills for Students Ages 6 to 14

Globally, we see a significant increase in the percentage of students with friends who they can talk to and trust. Close to **85%** of students globally and within each region report positive peer relations (Figure 4-4).

FIGURE 4-4

Percentage of Students (Ages 6 to 14) with Friends They Trust and Talk to About Things That Are Important



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Our Education Programs Evidence Spotlight

Learning in School, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Life Skills

Learning in School: Enhancing School Safety and Caregiver Support

In our education programming, we recognize the importance of supporting both physical and emotional safety. When teachers, parents and caregivers know how children's protection and education are connected, they are able to support children both at home and at school with a common approach and common goals. This can include supporting parents and caregivers to engage more deeply with their children's experiences at school both academically and behaviorally, to learn how to navigate the local education system and to engage in positive parenting practices that avoid corporal punishment. Teachers learn similar positive, child-centered approaches to teaching and how to incorporate available technology like digital modalities that can connect children even during times of crisis.

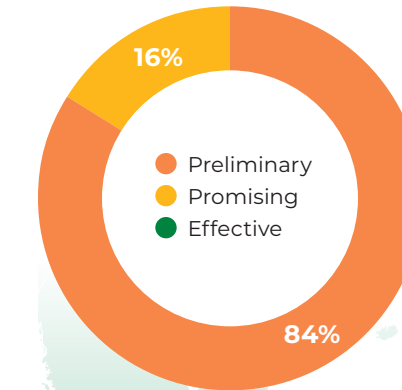
Our Programming Evidence for Learning in School

19 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in outcomes related to learning achievement in school, specifically for safer school environments to support learning, caregiver engagement in school learning, school attendance and academic achievement.

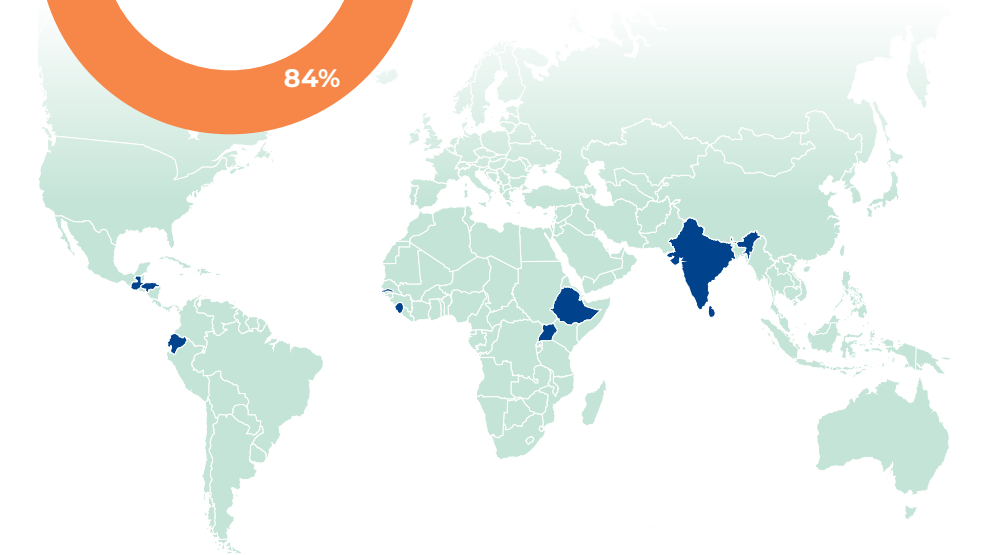
As shown in **Figure 4-5**, three (16%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence, and another 16 (84%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to learning in school outcomes for children ages 6 to 14.

FIGURE 4-5

Our Evidence for Positive Change for Learning in School Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **nine countries** (four countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Uganda; three countries in the Americas — Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras; two countries in Asia — India, Sri Lanka).



Examples of the Positive Change We See for School Learning Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — The community-based **Lifelong Learning Project (Read and Learn)**¹, supported by USAID and delivered in the Western Highlands region of **Guatemala**, provided early grade reading instruction approaches and materials in bilingual contexts and technical assistance to the Ministry of Education to enhance teacher effectiveness and language literacy acquisition, and also promoted parental and community participation in children's education. The project contributed to the following academic achievement outcomes: First-grade students in the intervention municipalities acquired higher abilities in reading K'iche' and Mam (local languages) compared with students in the control municipalities; second-grade students in the intervention municipalities acquired higher abilities in reading K'iche' compared with students in the control municipalities; and 58% of students overall in the intervention municipalities showed growth in K'iche' language compared to 43% in the control municipalities.



Nine-year-old girl attends school in Imbabura Province, Ecuador, where she participates in the Safe and Protected Children program.

PRELIMINARY — The **Community Integrated Response to Child Labor in Ethiopia (CIRCLE) project**², delivered in seven kebele administrations in **Ethiopia** from 2021 to 2023, focused on providing key, community-driven support to children and youth exposed to exploitative labor conditions to provide them with improved access to education and/or decent work opportunities, safer home and community environments, and active participation in decisions that affect their lives. Project reach included close to 30,000 people, including 12,000 children and youth and 4,300 parents, teachers and other stakeholders. After two years of project implementation, CIRCLE contributed to a 19pp increase (from 77% to 96%) in the proportion of children enrolled in regular or alternative education and a 79pp increase (from 20% to 99%) in the proportion of parents demonstrating improved parenting skills.

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund's **Safe and Protected Children program model**³ delivered in the **Americas** from 2019–2024 by local partners had the goal of ensuring that children and youth aged 6 to 14 grow up in safe and protective families, schools and communities. The program model also provided children with the necessary skills to be self-confident, resilient, and to maintain positive relationships free from violence. Results from the delivery of the program in **Bolivia** and **Ecuador** show a significant program contribution in both countries in increasing teachers' understanding and use of positive discipline in

the classroom. In **Honduras**, the program contributed to an increase in children's self-confidence.

PRELIMINARY — The **Early Childhood Care and Education, Integrated Services in ECCD Centers, and School-Based Violence Prevention Program** implemented from 2019 to 2023 in **Zambia** (Mumbwa, Rufunsa and Shibuyunji districts) had the goal of creating supportive and safe environments for learning in the home and school for two age groups — children ages 0–5 years and children ages 6–14 years — through quality ECCD center-based programming and school-based violence prevention in primary schools. The program also addressed existing policy gaps and systems change needs by enhancing the infrastructure supporting safe learning in the home and at school. The three-year program contributed to: a) a 12pp increase (from 85% to 97%) in the proportion of learners with caregivers who show them affection, praise them or comfort them; b) a 15pp

1 DevTech Systems, Inc. (2016). Lifelong learning project midterm performance evaluation report.
2 Hailu, Z., & Girma, T. (2023). Final evaluation of CIRCLE project. Addis Ababa: Econ M. Consultants.
3 ChildFund International. (2024). Evidence Review of ChildFund's Program Models in the Americas: 2019 to 2024. Richmond: Author.

decrease (from 31% to 16%) in the proportion of learners who feel afraid when going to school; and c) a 10pp decline (from 23% to 13%) in the proportion of learners who felt afraid in school, with girls (20%) over three times more likely than boys (6%) to report feeling afraid in school.

PRELIMINARY — The **Improving Child-Centered Education Through Active Teaching and Learning Approaches in School (ATLAS) program**⁴ in **Sri Lanka**, with support from ChildFund New Zealand, scaled to seven districts in five provinces (Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Matale, Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Hambantota and Batticaloa districts) from 2016 to 2018, benefitting 183 schools, 859 teachers and 25,000 children ages 6 to 14. Seeking to improve the learning outcomes of primary-grade children through child-centered teaching and learning, the program contributed to a) a 24pp increase (from 60% to 84%) in children's engagement in classroom learning activities; and b) a 14pp

100%
of children said
they liked coming
to school.

increase (from 40% to 54%) in children's overall grade-level academic competencies, which include increases of 30pp in reading (from 51% to 81%) and 31pp in math (from 39% to 70%). In addition, 100% of the children said that they liked coming to school because of the teaching methods.

PRELIMINARY — In **India**, where the **Promoting Access and Continuity in Education (PACE) project**⁵ was delivered in five villages of Kotra Block, Udaipur, just under 1,000 children (ages 6 to 14) and 1,870 caregivers from tribal communities received support through a mix of intervention strategies to address barriers to children's education. Strategies included establishing community-based learning centers (CBLCs) as well as community volunteer groups (CBLC committees) to improve parents' awareness of the importance of children's education. The project increased the proportion of children enrolled in school or a community-based learning center by 65pp (from 26% to 91%), reduced the proportion of children never enrolled in school/CBLC by 46.5pp, and reduced the proportion of children dropping out before grade 5 and not going to CBLC by 19.5pp (from 24% to 4.5%). The average daily attendance of children in school also increased by 50pp (from 35% to 85%).

PRELIMINARY — The **Protection and Education in Emergency and Recovery (PEER) project**⁶ was delivered in **Ethiopia** in the conflict- and disaster-affected community Raya Kobo Woreda, North Wollo, Amhara Region from July 2023 through December 2024. The 18-month program's objective was to ensure that children affected by conflict could access education in safe and inclusive learning environments and be prepared for environmental risks and stressors. The program also aimed to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms in target kebeles to promote and support educational opportunities for children, especially those from displaced or vulnerable communities. The project benefited 8,074 pre- and primary school students (4,070 boys and 4,004 girls), 244 children with disabilities, 919 adults (teachers, parents and government staff), 200 female-headed households and over 10,000 caregivers. Program outcome contributions included a 10pp increase in school attendance (from 80% to 90%). Students were also more likely to report they enjoyed school (a 41pp increase, from 45% at baseline to 86% at endline). The proportion of teachers who reported their schools to be safe and inclusive for all children in Raya Kobo Woreda increased by 50pp.



Grade 6 students outside one of the classrooms of their school in Amhara Region, Ethiopia. The school was closed as it had been used by warring parties on both sides of the conflict there. Through ChildFund's support, the school is being restored and children are going back to class. Photo credit: Genaye Eshetu

4 Atukorala, K. (2018). ATLAS project and evaluation report.
5 ChildFund India. (2020). Promoting access and continuity in education, Kotra Block, Udaipur: Endline evaluation report.
6 ChildFund Ethiopia. (2025). PEER: Protection and education in emergency and recovery project: Final evaluation and endline survey report. Addis Ababa: Author.



A teacher in Mayuge District, Uganda, leads her students in a social-emotional learning group exercise.

Promoting Critical Social-Emotional Learning and Soft Skills for Students, Teachers, and Caregivers

ChildFund prioritizes social-emotional learning (SEL) for children and youth, caregivers and teachers within our programs across different sectors. Social-emotional skills (which include soft skills) such as communication, emotional regulation, self-awareness, conflict resolution, relationship skills and decision-making are critical to support child and youth learning and well-being. Research confirms that SEL skills are fundamental to achieving positive academic, behavioral and mental health outcomes. In addition, SEL skills are crucial for employability.

Since 2019, ChildFund has been advancing and scaling a program area focused on SEL. ChildFund's innovative Social-Emotional Learning at Scale (SELAS) initiative involves influencing policy and program delivery (with a focus on teachers) in low- and middle-income countries — and ensuring sustainability through strengthening ministry of education capacity on SEL. Current programming in Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone aims to integrate SEL into the national education system through community-based SEL research and co-creation of a culturally relevant framework. The long-term objective is to mainstream SEL

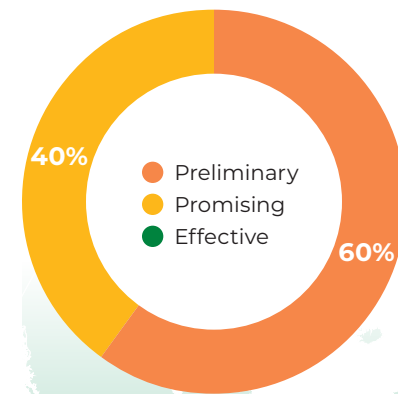
through supporting the ministries of education to develop teacher training within the two countries to improve children's academic and psychological well-being.

Our Programming Evidence for SEL and Soft Skills

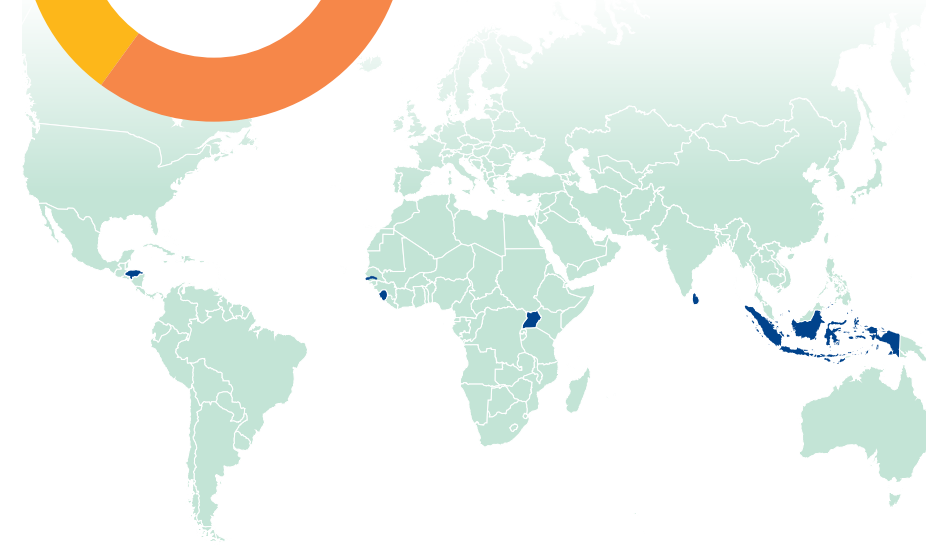
5 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in SEL skills and soft skills (including life skills).

As shown in **Figure 4-6**, two (40%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence and the remaining three programs (60%) have generated preliminary evidence for social-emotional skills.

FIGURE 4-6
Our Evidence for Positive Change for SEL Skill Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **six countries** (three countries in Africa — The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Uganda; one country in the Americas — Honduras; two countries in Asia — Indonesia and Sri Lanka).



Examples of the Positive Change We See for SEL Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — In **Indonesia**, the **Life Skills and Financial Literacy Education (PKHLK)** program⁷ was designed to help children and youth become confident people who appreciate life and are empowered for the future. Delivered to children ages 8 to 14 from July 2017 to June 2021 in Jakarta, Banten, Central Java and East Nusa Tenggara, the 36-month PKHLK program yielded positive effects (intervention vs. comparison group) for overall life skills. Specific skills with positive effects included positive self-concept, self-control, higher-order thinking skills, communication skills and social skills.

Boys play a game outside their classroom with their teacher as part of the Education for Protection and Well-being program at their school in Mayuge District, Uganda.



PROMISING (see *Impact Case Study*) — The **Education for Protection and Well-being (EPW) Program Model** targets children ages 6–12, their teachers and their caregivers over a two-year period in schools. EPW places a strong emphasis on improving supportive relationships for children in the home and school settings to support their learning and overall well-being. The program includes a focus on SEL for the children, their teachers and caregivers. Delivery of EPW in **Northern Sierra Leone**⁸ from March 2022 to July 2023 led to improvements in student's SEL skills — a 35.8pp improvement in conflict resolution and a 26.8pp improvement in self-concept with higher overall SEL scores for the EPW students compared to the control group. EPW teachers also demonstrated significantly higher SEL skill scores (for emotional regulation and problem-solving) than control group teachers.

PRELIMINARY (see *Impact Case Study*) — Delivery of **EPW in The Gambia**⁹ was launched in February 2023 in two schools located in the Western Region, engaging 398 students and 384 caregivers. The program contributed to significant improvements in students' SEL, where positive changes were observed in empathy, perseverance and conflict resolution skills. Caregiver SEL skills also significantly improved with overall improvement observed in their ability to communicate and problem solve. Positive change was also seen for teachers, who: a) demonstrated significant progress in classroom management, with the most substantial gains related to setting clear expectations and establishing limits and consequences; and b) showed improvement (54pp) in their scores on the Teacher Emotion Regulation Scale (TERS), showing positive trends in their ability to manage emotions effectively.

⁷ ChildFund Sri Lanka. (2021). Action research report 2021-PKHLK Program. Colombo: Author.

⁸ ChildFund International (2024). Driving children's protection and well-being through education: Findings from the EPW pilot program in Sierra Leone. Richmond, VA: Author.

⁹ ChildFund International (2024). EPW endline report: The Gambia. Richmond: Author.

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund’s **Safe and Protected Children Program Model**¹⁰ helps children and youth ages 6–14 build the necessary skills to be self-confident and resilient to maintain positive relationships free from violence and to grow up in safe and protective families, schools and communities. Results from the delivery of the program in **Honduras** from 2019 to 2024 for children ages 10 to 14 show a significant contribution of the program in increasing children’s self-confidence, with a stronger positive effect for girls compared to boys.

PRELIMINARY — The **Child Protection and Education Project**¹¹ was delivered in Mullaitivu, **Sri Lanka**, with support from ChildFund Korea, from July 2018 – November 2021 in 25 schools to create, develop and sustain a conducive environment for children through education and training. The project aimed to support teachers in applying knowledge and skills to promote conditions that ensure a peaceful school environment, with children using improved knowledge and skills to protect themselves, reduce aggressive behavior, and improve how they respond to violence. It also engaged caregivers and community members, helping them build knowledge and skills to create safer environments for children. Teachers who participated in the training program were highly satisfied with the content delivered and expressed 100% satisfaction. Based on students’ reports, the

proportion of teachers using positive discipline increased by 50pp (from 7% to 57%). Teachers reported a 46pp improvement (from 48% to 94%) in student impulse control and self-discipline. At the project’s end, 84% of children confirmed that they feel safe at school, a 14pp increase (from 70% to 84%).



Children in Honduras play a game as participants in the Safe and Protected Children program.

Our Impact Footprint

In summary, we see impact progress through our contributions to improving school-age children’s foundations for lifelong learning and development: safer school and home environments that support learning and social-emotional skills.



¹⁰ ChildFund International. (2024). Evidence review of ChildFund’s program models in the Americas: 2019 to 2024. Richmond: Author.

¹¹ Muttiah, M. (2022). Endline evaluation final report: School-based violence prevention project. Colombo: Author.

IMPACT CASE STUDY

Building Protective Learning Environments for Children

Education for Protection and Well-being

Transforming Children’s Relationships with Adults to Improve Learning and Well-being while Reducing Violence



Two friends read the comic book “Protecting Yourself and Your Friends,” created by ChildFund for the EPW program.

“One of the things I learned is how to manage emotions. I am somebody who likes shouting, yelling at children. And that wasn’t helpful at all. But since [EPW], I’ve learned it is very important to talk to the child in a positive and calm manner Now I no longer shout at them.”

Female caregiver (~45), participating in EPW

Education for Protection and Well-being (EPW) is a holistic, evidence-informed program that aims to improve children’s protection, learning and well-being through strengthening child-adult relationships, enhancing social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, reducing violence against children and creating conducive and nurturing school and home environments. Implemented over two academic years, EPW targets children aged 6 to 12 in primary schools. The program’s four interconnected components — Child, Caregiver/Family, Educator/School and School/Community (Bridge) — are designed to break the cycle of violence through direct engagement with children, caregivers and educators.

ChildFund has implemented EPW since 2021 with 13 local partner organizations in a total of 37 schools in The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, The Philippines, and Sri Lanka. Completed evaluation studies (quantitative and qualitative) in Sierra Leone (10 schools), The Gambia (2 schools), and Uganda (8 schools) show the promise of EPW in creating safer, more nurturing learning environments for children.

ChildFund is harnessing its SEL evidence in Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone as it works in partnership with government ministries to integrate SEL into the national education systems and to co-create a culturally relevant framework.

EPW has been scaled in Africa and Asia in **five** countries, positively impacting over **11,000** caregivers, children and teachers. ChildFund plans to expand EPW to Indonesia and Zambia in 2026.



A mother in Uganda helps her daughter, enrolled in the EPW program there, with her homework.

EPW Positive Impacts	In Sierra Leone*	In The Gambia**	In Uganda***
Student Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills (relationships, empathy, perseverance, conflict resolution)	+	+	+
Student Attendance	Not Studied	+	+
Student Self-Protection Skills	+	+	Not Studied
Caregiver SEL Skills (emotional regulation, communication, problem solving)	+	+	+
Caregiver Positive Parenting Practices	+	+	+
Teacher SEL Skills (communication, emotional regulation, problem solving)	+	+	Not Studied
School Safety****	+	+	+

Note. + sign = positive effect; * = Outcomes based on quasi-experimental study (EPW versus No EPW); ** = Outcomes based on pre-test/post-test study; *** = Outcomes based on qualitative study of perceived impact. ****School Safety = declines in children witnessing fights among peers and adult verbal or physical abuse of children — and observed reduced corporal punishment.

Leading with Impact in

LIVELIHOOD STRENGTHENING

Our Focus

No matter where they live, young people need decent employment, financial inclusion and the agency to participate within their communities. Yet the world is changing fast, and rapid technological advancements, digitalization and global economic shocks are reshaping job markets. Many young people lack the skills needed for the modern workforce due to gaps in education and training. And without enabling environments, mentorship and opportunities for personal growth, it can be even more challenging for them to navigate life's complexities and reach their full potential.

ChildFund's programs focus on essential technical and soft skills, youth employability, entrepreneurship and digital literacy — all of which are vital for equipping young people with what they need to thrive in evolving economies. Our programs are connected with local organizations to build on established community frameworks, which leads to greater sustainability.

By conducting job market surveys, partnering with employers and providing vocational and entrepreneurial training, we create safe, sustainable employment opportunities. Our growing focus on social and green entrepreneurship, particularly in building sustainability and digital spaces, also uniquely positions us to help youth create sustainable livelihoods.

Often youth participation is also integrated into programming to support young people through helping them prepare not only for

work, but for staying employed, continuing their education and living safe, healthy lives. Young people have also achieved notable successes through actively participating in advocacy and policy making, impacting local and national policies, and enhancing their personal, social and political skills. ChildFund actively works to partner with youth in our global advocacy work. Initiatives like the Youth Network in Defense of Social Rights (REJUDES) in Brazil demonstrate how youth voices can drive significant change. ChildFund's Voice Now! and Youth Advisory Councils also apply youth feedback to refine and innovate community-based solutions. These platforms gather insights directly from young people, allowing for effective and responsive program development.

Finally, we promote sustainable livelihoods by ensuring food security for households and by enabling women and youth to engage in sustainable business or employment. Through financial inclusion initiatives like soft loans, financial literacy, and Village Savings and Loan Associations — VSLAs — we connect youth and households with long-term financial opportunities.

This impact chapter shares the progress we see in our global M&E data and our evidence related to our program focus for improving livelihood outcomes for youth, their families and the wider community, including women. It also shares an Impact Case Study on the impacts of the innovative Tunawiri Kwa Taka (Thriving Through Waste) program to improve the livelihoods of women and youth by turning waste collection into income generation.

A 20-year-old from Sri Lanka performs delicate repairs on a mobile phone motherboard with the aid of a microscope and other electronic equipment provided by ChildFund, as part of programming to support vocational training for youth with disabilities.



This young person from Makueni County, Kenya, received support from ChildFund so she could learn tailoring.

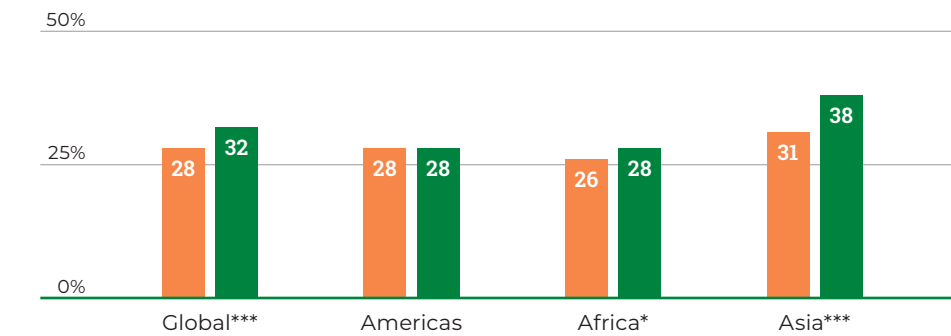
Our Global Progress

ChildFund’s global monitoring of livelihood outcomes, including youth agency, show positive impact trends from 2022 to 2023 for youth engagement in employability, entrepreneurship training and youth agency — and the reduction of household hunger.

Household Hunger

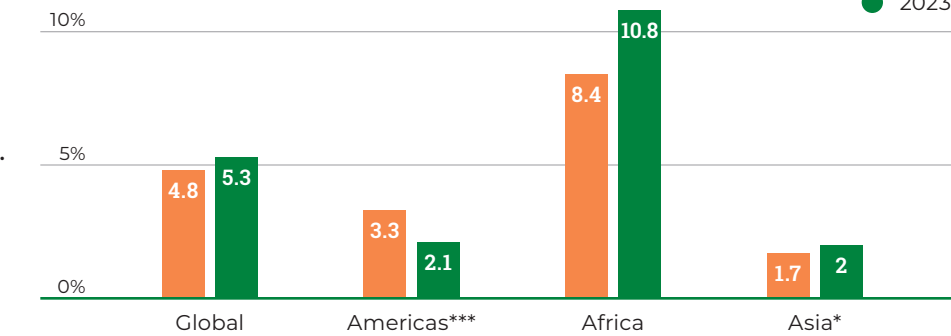
Globally, less than **5.5%** of households reported experiencing hunger, with a significant decrease from 2022 in the Americas (Figure 5-2).

FIGURE 5-1
Percentage of Youth (Ages 15-29) Who Participated in a Training Program Designed to Help Find a Job or Start a Business



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

FIGURE 5-2
Percentage of Households Experiencing Hunger



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship Training

Globally, close to **1/3** of youth engaged in training to support finding a job or starting a business — a significant increase from 2022, led by Asia’s 7 percentage points [pp]* increase and a 2pp increase in Africa (Figure 5-1).

*Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and helps us measure change over time.

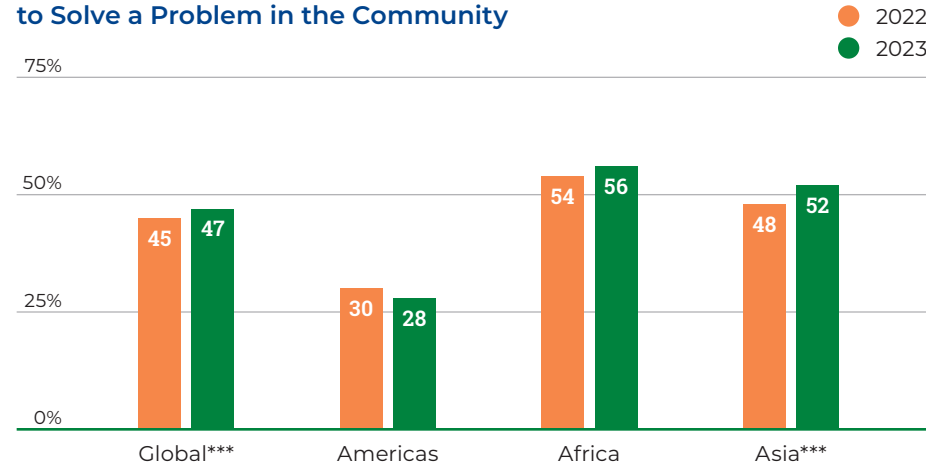


Youth Agency

Globally, we see close to **50%** of youth working with peers to solve community problems and just over **20%** working collectively with peers to engage with a public official to share a public concern, both significant increases from 2022 — and led by the positive change for youth in Asia (Figures 5-3a and 5-3b).

FIGURE 5-3a

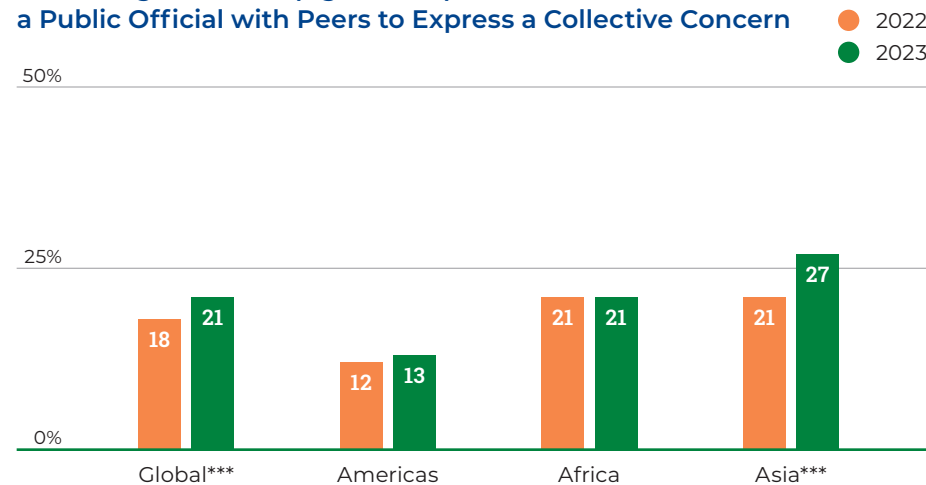
Percentage of Youth (Ages 15–29) Who Worked Together to Solve a Problem in the Community



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

FIGURE 5-3b

Percentage of Youth (Ages 15–29) Who Have Contacted or Visited a Public Official with Peers to Express a Collective Concern



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Our Livelihood Strengthening Programs Evidence Spotlight

Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship, Financial Inclusion and Food Security

Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship: Fostering Youth Opportunities for Income Generation

ChildFund helps youth empower themselves through income-generating activities and microenterprises, complemented by demand-driven life and entrepreneurial skills training. With youth populations outpacing job opportunities in many regions, expanding entrepreneurship for young people is increasingly vital. We support youth in local communities in launch businesses, providing coaching and mentorship, startup capital and business kits to boost their incomes through self-employment.

Our programs harness community-based approaches to promote youth-led social innovations. We encourage investment in young entrepreneurs who tackle complex challenges like environmental sustainability, education and health. Facilitating networks of entrepreneurs, fostering mentoring relationships and forming partnerships at local and international levels are essential steps, which have led to the creation of social and green entrepreneurship curricula and Social Innovation Bootcamps with organizations such as Ashoka. These efforts will enable youth-led innovations while advancing locally led youth development.

Additionally, we emphasize youth agency, engaging young people in civic activities to promote self-efficacy and community development. Our youth agency programs focus on stimulating discussions with government and community leaders, civil society, the media and academics on matters that affect children including their health, education, protection and well-being. Programs are designed to influence civic and social systems for child and youth agency, thereby enhancing their role in community and policy discussions, as well as



In Indonesia, a youth (R), with his instructor (L), recently graduated from a ChildFund-supported woodworking class where ChildFund provided the instruction, tools and equipment for him to learn to make furniture.

outcomes that affect their lives and livelihoods. Emerging demands from youth have placed focus on issues such as access to quality education, employment and sustainability.

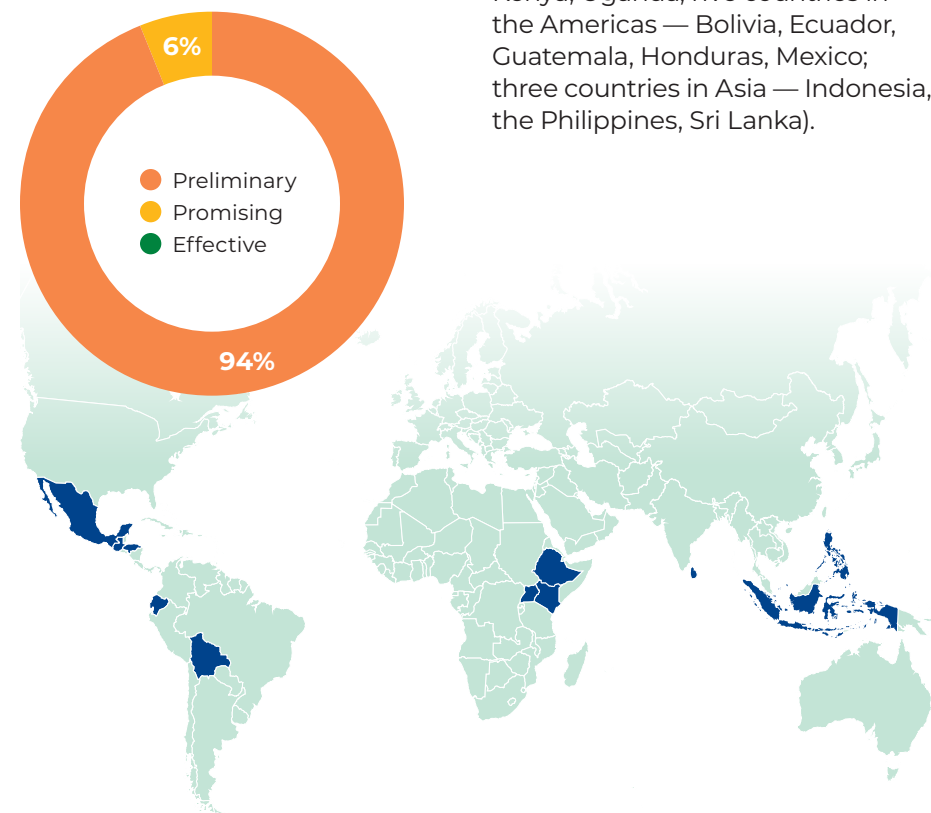
Our Programming Evidence for Youth Employability, Entrepreneurship and Agency Outcomes

18 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in employability, entrepreneurship and youth agency-related outcomes, specifically for being skilled and work ready, employed and engaged in entrepreneurship, and participating in civic engagement.

As shown in **Figure 5-4**, one (6%) of the evaluated programs has generated promising evidence, and another 17 (94%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to youth employability and entrepreneurship outcomes.

FIGURE 5-4

Our Evidence for Positive Change in Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship Outcomes



These programs have benefited youth and other family members across **11 countries** (three countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda; five countries in the Americas — Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico; three countries in Asia — Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka).

Examples of the Positive Change We See for Employability and Entrepreneurship Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund's **Youth Economic Empowerment Project II (YEPP II)**¹ in **Ethiopia** sought to improve the socio-economic well-being of youth (15–24 years) in six kebeles of Dugda Woreda, through safe, supportive and responsive environments with a focus on youth skill development and enhancing access to finance. The 36-month project (2021 to 2023) contributed to youth engagement in an income-generating enterprise of their own, growing by 46pp for male youth (from 10% to 56%) and by 37pp for female youth (from 7% to 44%). In addition, the project promoted youth agency, with the proportion of youth participating in community development activities increasing by 23pp (from 39% to 62%) and community support for youth engagement in community development activities increasing by 31pp (from 42% to 73%).

PRELIMINARY — (see *Impact Case Study*) The **Tunawiri Kwa Taka (Thriving Through Waste) project**², delivered with support from the Coca-Cola Foundation in the informal settlement of Mukuru, Nairobi County, **Kenya**, promoted an improved, safe, clean and healthy living environment while simultaneously improving the livelihoods of women and youth aged 18 to 35 as they turned waste collection into income generation. The project contributed to a) a 28pp increase (from 9% to 37%) in the proportion of participants who sold their waste to medium-scale buyers — and those who sold to large-scale buyers increased by 11pp (from 4% to 15%); b) a 52pp increase (from 20% to 72%) in the proportion of women and youth who reported increased monthly income from waste collection; and c) a 78pp increase (from 22% to 100%) in the proportion of waste collector groups who have a functioning financial system in place to manage their incomes.

PRELIMINARY — In **Kenya**, the **Innovative Support for Young People as Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Livelihoods project (Nanny III)**³, was designed to strengthen government support systems for youth employability programs through market-driven livelihood opportunities and technical skills training, while also enhancing the economic coping

1 Excel Consulting Service PLC. (2021). Endline evaluation of the project entitled 'youth economic empowerment project II (YEPP II)' in Dugda district of Oromia regional state. Addis Ababa: Author.

2 Nordicy Limited. (2024). Endline evaluation report: Tunawiri Kwa Taka (Thriving through Waste) project. Nairobi: Author.

3 ChildFund Kenya. (2022). Endline evaluation report on support for young people as entrepreneurs and sustainable livelihoods project (Nanny III) in Rongo and Rachuonyo north sub-counties of Nyanza province, Kenya. Nairobi: Author.

capacity of grandmother households. The grandmothers (called nannies) were supported to have sustainable economic activities that enabled them to meet their and their families' basic needs — and to in turn support youth in developing and operationalizing business models. Nanny III reached 637 grandmothers and 687 youth, with the average monthly income for grandmothers in the intervention group increasing from \$16.34 per month at baseline to \$26.36 per month at endline (62% change) — and their households' wealth index growing from 0.3196 to 0.6552 (105% change). Additional positive outcomes were an 18pp increase (from 22% to 40%) in the proportion of grandmothers with savings and a 30pp increase (from 62% to 92%) in the proportion of grandmothers who were members of village savings and loan associations (VSLAs)/saving groups. For youth, the project contributed to a 47pp increase (from 13% to 60%) in self-employment rates and a 33pp decrease (from 61% to 28%) in unemployment rates. Average savings for youth (in USD) increased from \$5.25 per year to \$69.79 per year, a 1,229% change.

PRELIMINARY — The **Adolescent Confident in Thinking, Valued in Life and Empowered (ACTIVE) Project**⁴ delivered in **Indonesia** focused on helping young adolescents aged 12 to 15 years build the necessary life and economic empowerment skills to be confident and actively participate in their environment. The project contributed to a 90pp increase (from 0% to 90%) in the proportion of adolescents engaging in saving and understanding the concept of saving through planning and budgeting, and a 56pp increase in the proportion of adolescents accessing the services provided by financial service providers.

PRELIMINARY — The **Women and Youth Economic Empowerment (WYEE) project**⁵ delivered in **Uganda** was designed to improve the well-being of women and youth through sustainable livelihood opportunities for wealth creation. Objectives included supporting 100 teenage mothers and youth to increase their annual income through vocational skills and helping 100 youth to build microenterprise development skills. The 15-month project contributed to significant improvements in annual income: a) for youth — a 795% change (from \$42 to \$376); b) for women a 666% change (from \$50.5 to \$387); and c) for teen mothers a 3,178% change (from \$18 to \$590).



Youth from the PACTO program in Brazil discuss important issues that affect young people in their community.

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund's **Civic Participation, Transformation and Opportunities program model** (known as **PACT** in English, from its acronym **PACTO** in Spanish), implemented in **Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras** and **Sri Lanka**, works with youth aged 15 to 24 to build the skills and capacities they need to create safe and inclusive communities through leadership and advocacy. This program model also fosters youth entrepreneurship and employability skills so they may improve their living conditions and gain economic independence. In the Americas, program implementation from 2019 to 2024⁶ contributed significantly to young people's understanding of business practices and planning.

4 Hukom, G. (2019). 3rd year final report: Adolescent confident in thinking, valued in life and empowered (ACTIVE) project. ChildFund Indonesia.

5 ChildFund Uganda. (2023). Women & Youth Economic Empowerment-WYEE Project Endline Evaluation Report. Kampala: Author.

6 ChildFund International. (2024). Evidence Review of ChildFund's Program Models in the Americas: 2019 to 2024. Richmond: Author.

Financial Inclusion: Advancing Access and Use of Financing Services and Products

ChildFund’s livelihood programs help youth and women empower themselves to meet their basic needs by generating income through agricultural and non-farm activities. We collaborate with local partners to establish support networks, provide financial education, and facilitate access to savings, finance and assets, including village savings and loan groups (VSLAs) and microfinance institutions. Youth can also leverage VSLAs to attract investment for business expansion — including opportunities to engage in environmentally sustainable livelihoods.

Our approach to supporting financial inclusion includes a special focus on youth from marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, refugees and rural youth, who often face significant challenges like poverty and limited access to quality education or skills training. Targeted programs in skills development, livelihood strengthening and financial inclusion are crucial for helping them overcome these barriers. They provide essential tools and opportunities for all young people to improve their circumstances and contribute positively to



This mother in Senegal says that joining the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) through ChildFund has helped her provide nutritious food for her family, even as inflation has soared and the cost of living remains high.

their communities. We also place a strong emphasis on supporting women, particularly those who are heads of households, to engage in sustainable livelihood opportunities including savings groups, training, entrepreneurship and more.

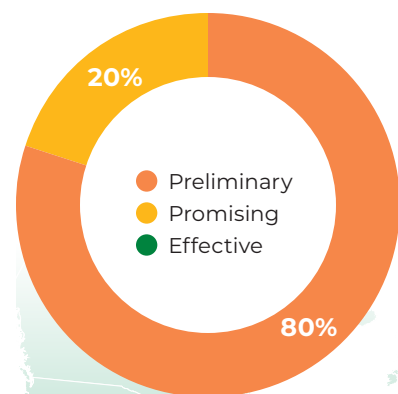
Our Programming Evidence for Financial Inclusion

10 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in financial inclusion outcomes for youth and households, including rates of active participation in group-based financing programs and the proportion of youth, women or other household members with a bank account or mobile-money service provider.

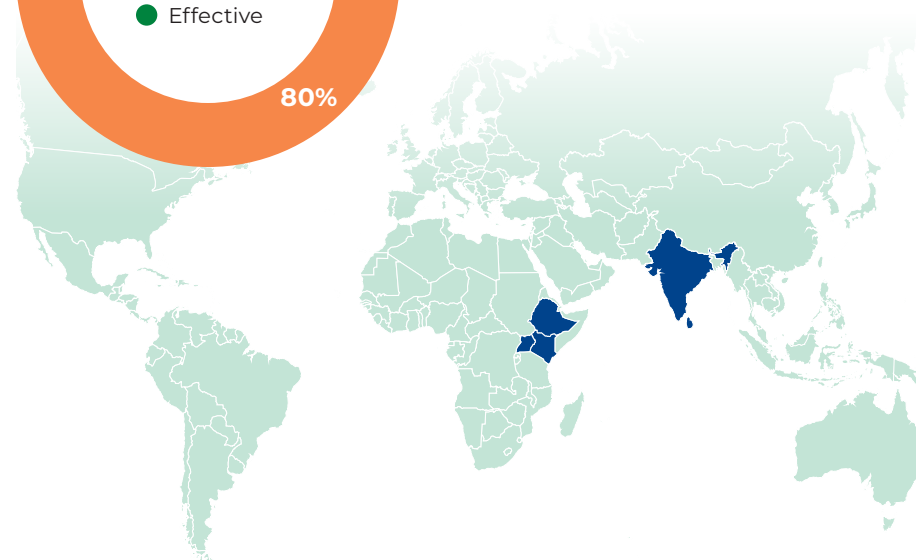
As shown in **Figure 5-5**, two (20%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence with the remaining eight (80%) generating preliminary evidence for contributions to financial inclusion outcomes, with no programs generating effective evidence.

FIGURE 5-5

Our Evidence for Positive Change in Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **five countries** (three countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda; two countries in Asia — India, Sri Lanka).



Examples of the Positive Change We See for Financial Inclusion Outcomes, by Evidence Level:

PROMISING — ChildFund’s **Strengthening of Vulnerable Women in Food Security, IGAs and Savings and Credit Associations, as Well as Increased Environmental Protection in Rural Areas of Ethiopia Project**⁷ sought to improve the economic livelihoods of 1,200 rural women and their families living in poverty. The program also targeted 660 students (varied grades) and 110 teachers from 22 schools. At the end of the project, 60 VSLA groups in 15 villages were government approved and sustainably functional, and the 1,200 families had been trained in effective agricultural production methods. There were multiple positive project impacts for women, including: a) significantly higher access to business skill development trainings for the women and youth engaged in the project — 100%, compared to the control group at 12%; b) a 100pp (from 0% to 100%) increase in the proportion of women who have access to loans through their VSLA groups; c) a 61pp increase (from 20% to 81%) in the proportion of women earning income from non-agricultural activities through income-generating measures; d) a 62pp increase (from 25% to 87%) in the proportion of women who own and use at least three to four small animals to improve income and nutrition; and e) an increase in the average annual income of the project group (\$870.29), which was significantly greater than that of the control group (\$738.33).

PRELIMINARY — The **Strengthening Civil Society Organizations Toward Fostering Women’s Empowerment** program⁸ was delivered in **India** from September 2020 to June 2023. The program focused on women farmer groups (WFGs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in eastern Uttar Pradesh, establishing and engaging them in an environmentally friendly business. The project contributed to 1,562 women farmers becoming financially independent through business activities and a 30pp increase in women making decisions for themselves. Overall, the percentage of women accessing formal credit and loan services rose by 67pp (from 8% to 75%). Additional positive change includes: a) a 99pp increase (from 1% to 100%) in the proportion of women farmers who used one or more of the available government

7 Dhuga, K. (2024). Endline evaluation of strengthening of vulnerable women in food security, IGAs and savings and credit associations, as well as increased environmental protection in rural areas of Ethiopia project: Final report. Addis Ababa: Keam Business & Development Consultants PLC (Keam-Consult).

8 Global AgriSystem Pvt. Ltd. (2023). EU endline evaluation report. Gugugram: Author.

9 DEEK Solutions. (2025). Endline evaluation report: Project on social inclusion of persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka through community-based rehabilitation - phase III. Vavuniya Town: Author.



scheme benefits; b) a 21% change in the average annual income (from \$1,197.13 to \$1,447.98) of women farmer households across all participating districts; and c) an 82pp reduction (from 83% to 1%) in the proportion of participants who reported an annual household income of less than \$1 per day (USD). The percentage of WFG members becoming shareholders in the farmer producer company increased by 31pp (from 27% to 58%).

PRELIMINARY — The **Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Sri Lanka Through Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Project – Phase III**⁹ continued to scale ChildFund’s programmatic work to empower persons with disabilities in the Mullaitivu District by improving their access to inclusive health, education and employment services provided through established Disabled People Organizations (DPOs). The three-year project was implemented through a consortium including ChildFund Sri Lanka and local partner Organization for Rehabilitation of the Handicapped (ORHAN), which collaborated with seven DPOs to provide support in administration, financial management, project implementation, planning, coordination, monitoring and fundraising to strengthen DPOs’ capacity for sustainable service provision. The project also introduced an innovative information and communication technology platform to enhance access to essential resources for DPOs and participants, providing a comprehensive directory of 200 service providers covering a range of services such as health care, education, vocational training, legal support and others. Training programs reached 600 youth with disabilities to help them secure jobs or start small businesses. Project outcome contributions include: a) preparation and execution of 180 business development plans (121 male-led and 59 female-led) and 420 income generation plans (253 male-led and 167 female-led); b) 57% (339) of youth fully repaying their loans; and c) 21% (231) of youth securing livelihoods through income generating activities.

Sustainable Livelihoods: Enhancing Food Security for Youth and their Families

Our sustainable livelihood initiatives ensure that development efforts are long-lasting and environmentally responsible. Our programming approach targets both youth and families and focuses on alleviating hunger and improving economic stability in vulnerable communities.

Programs address the root causes of food insecurity through sustainable agricultural practices, market access improvement and enhanced household resilience to environmental shocks. Key initiatives include providing lifesaving food aid during crises to ensure that children and families receive essential nutrients, promoting environmentally friendly farming techniques to increase productivity and emphasizing the importance of nutrition — particularly for children and pregnant women — to combat malnutrition.



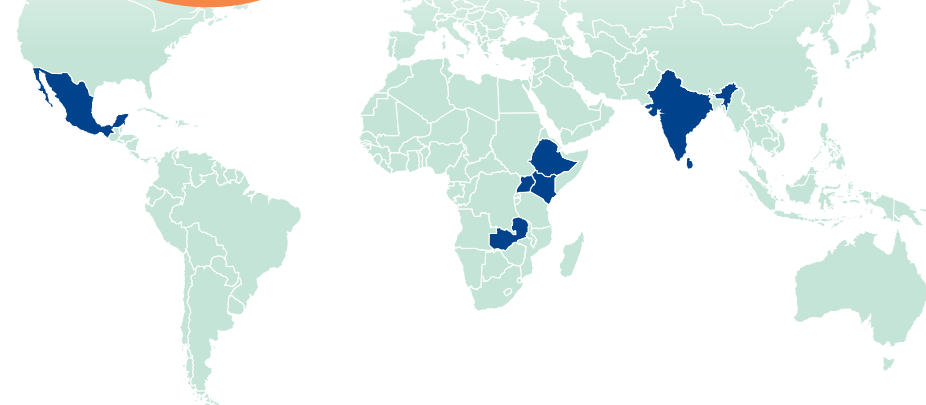
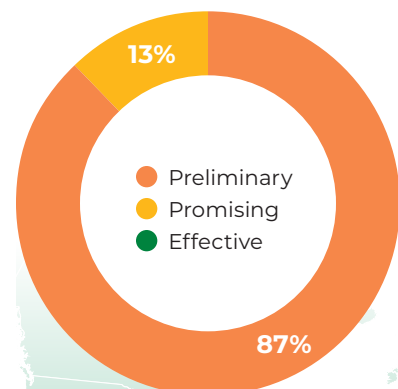
In Uganda, mother and daughter harvest passion fruits. ChildFund also supported the family with capital to invest into a hairdressing business and training in commercial farming.

Our Programming Evidence for Sustainable Livelihood Outcomes

16 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in sustainable livelihood-related outcomes, specifically for food security (including household hunger status) and sustained livelihoods for youth, family members, and overall households.

As shown in **Figure 5-6**, two (13%) of the evaluated programs have generated promising evidence and another 14 (87%) have generated preliminary evidence for contributions to sustainable livelihood outcomes, with no programs generating effective evidence.

FIGURE 5-6
Our Evidence for Sustainable Livelihood Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **seven countries** (two countries in Asia — India, Sri Lanka; four countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia; and one country in the Americas — Mexico).

Examples of the Positive Change We See for Sustainable Livelihood Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — The **Integrated Family-Based Economic Strengthening and Environmental Protection Project**¹⁰ delivered in **Ethiopia** aimed to contribute to sustainable use of natural resources, improved food security and nutritional status, and enhanced income from on-farm and off-farm activities through natural resource management and diversified livelihood activities. Support for vulnerable women in establishing an alternative livelihood was a special focus of the project. The 46-month project reached 600 vulnerable women, 16,396 students and 3,910 community members. The project led to a significantly higher rate of project group women (100%) engaged in starting a new business (i.e., making and selling of fuel-efficient stoves and production and selling of seedlings) compared to the control group (13.1%). The project also contributed to a 36.3pp (80.6% to 44.3%) reduction in the proportion of project participants who experienced food insecurity.



In Emali town, Makueni County, Kenya, the Emuka Moringa storefront sells moringa products including seeds, powder, essential oils and honey. Local farmers cultivate the nutrient-dense moringa leaves, which are purchased by local partner Emali Dedicated Children's Agency (EDCA) and added as a supplement to porridge in ChildFund-supported ECD centers throughout the area.

PRELIMINARY — Designed to improve food security and incomes, the **Agriculture, Dairy and Economic Development Project (ADED)**¹¹ was delivered in eight implementation zones in Makueni and Kajiado counties in **Kenya**. The project sought to improve agriculture, diversify livelihoods and create reliable and beneficial market pathways for farming households — accomplished through introducing farmers to moringa crops and supporting households with adaptation techniques and inputs for improved livestock and diversified livelihoods as well as training on income generation through innovative agri-business. The project contributed to a 35pp increase (from 6% to 41%) in the proportion of households growing moringa, and of those trained, 87% (161) of farmers had diversified their livelihoods with more than one source of income. Positive change was observed for food security outcomes: a) a 31pp increase (from 58% to 89%) in the proportion of households reporting consumption of three meals a day and b) a 44pp decrease (from 58% to 14%) in households experiencing food deficits.

PRELIMINARY — In **Ethiopia**, the **Securing Environmental and Child-friendly Understandings by Strengthening Rights-based Empowerment (SECURE)** project¹², delivered in five kebeles (Woyo Gebriel, Tepo Choroke, Korke Adi, Bekele Girisa, and Shubi Gamo) of Dugda Woreda, sought to increase food security in vulnerable households through improved and diversified income opportunities among female caregivers and to strengthen household resilience to prepare for and cope with disasters by improved and diversified agricultural production. The project targeted 800 households, five schools, community members, local government, local leaders, and community committees, directly reaching 6,500 adults and 2,000 children. The project contributed to a 30pp reduction (from 91% to 61%) in households experiencing food deficits, a 62pp reduction (from 86% to 24%) in households experiencing no food to eat, and a 54pp reduction (from 72% to 18%) in household members going to sleep at night hungry.

10 Abidan Development Consulting Group. (2019). Final evaluation of family-based economic strengthening and environmental protection project in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa: Author.

11 Michael, P.M. (2021). End of project evaluation for agriculture, dairy and economic development project (ADED). Nairobi: Author.

12 ChildFund Ethiopia. (2024). Final evaluation of SECURE project. Addis Ababa: Author.



ChildFund's Backyard Poultry to Improve Nutrition program in Mexico provided this youth and his family with chickens to help with nutrition as well as income.

PRELIMINARY — The **Sustainable Production and Consumption of Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) Project**¹³ delivered in the Turkana and Samburu counties of **Kenya** aimed to enhance resilience and livelihoods of women and children from vulnerable farming households through adoption of OFSP innovative technologies. Project outputs include sustainable adoption of appropriate OFSP production technologies by 600 farmers and the acceptance of OFSP products in household diets by target communities. The project contributed to an 80pp increase (from 6% to 86%) in the proportion of target households reporting a 50% or greater increase in monthly income and a 68pp increase (from 12% to 80%) households selling OFSP for income.

¹³ Otieno, A. (2024). Endline evaluation report: Sustainable production and consumption of orange fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP) project in Turkana and Samburu counties. Kismu: Fayol Solutions Ltd.

¹⁴ ChildFund Uganda (2024). Resilient livelihoods in Northeastern Uganda. Kampala: Author.

PRELIMINARY — The **Resilient Livelihoods in Northeastern Uganda** project¹⁴ sought to promote sustainable livelihoods through improved agricultural practices (including sustainable agriculture), support for young people in vocational skill-building and microenterprise development, and disaster risk reduction in the community. Areas of training for youth included farming (poultry and pigs), mechanics (motorcycle and motor vehicles), tailoring and fashion designing, hairdressing and salon management, plumbing, welding and metal fabrication, electrical installation, carpentry, and catering and hotel management. The project contributed to: a) a 59pp (from 2% to 61%) increase in the proportion of trained and skilled household farmers applying sustainable farming methods to strengthen their livelihood income generation activity and b) a 34pp increase (from 29% to 63%) in the proportion of trained/skilled youths gainfully employed or self-employed in formal or informal livelihood activity.

Our Impact Footprint

In summary, we see impact progress in our contributions to improving the employability, food security, and financial inclusion of youth and their family members, strengthening livelihoods at the individual, family, and community levels.



IMPACT CASE STUDY

Women and Youth Turn Waste into Income

Thriving Through Waste Project

Promoting Livelihoods for Women and Youth — Building Sustainable Cities and Communities



“ I now earn **KES 6,500 [USD \$50] from waste management — something I never used to earn. I am grateful that I can turn waste into an income source.** ”

Project participant

In Nairobi's Mukuru settlement, ChildFund — with support from the Coca-Cola Foundation — implemented the **Thriving Through Waste project** to improve livelihoods and environmental outcomes by strengthening community-based waste management and using it as an entrepreneurship opportunity for women and youth. The project equipped 400 women and youth (aged 18–35) with training, protective gear and waste collection tools, while building their skills in income generation and solid waste handling. Recognizing that children — with an average age of 9 — are often involved in waste collection, ChildFund and its partners also integrated child protection and child labor prevention into project activities.

ChildFund and its partner Nairobi Metropolitan Program, implemented the project from November 2022 to October 2023 in collaboration with national and county government agencies, private-sector waste recyclers, Kenyan financial institutions and 20 community-based waste collection groups.

Results from a pre- and post-test quantitative assessment of outcomes coupled with qualitative analysis through focus group discussion and key informant interviews indicate that the project has helped the community become a cleaner and healthier environment — while providing an innovative and inclusive livelihood generation opportunity for youth and women.

Program Impact

Livelihood and Protection

Improved market access: 19pp more participants sold to medium-scale buyers (9% to 28%), and 11pp more sold to large-scale buyers (4% to 15%).

Higher incomes: 52pp increase in women and youth reporting improved earnings (20% to 72%).

Reduced child labor incidence: Reports of children involved in waste collection fell from 51% to 28%.

Systems Strengthening

Stronger governance: 78pp increase in collector groups with functioning financial systems (22% to 100%), and 20 waste collector groups registered as legal business entities.

In Mukuru, waste was reduced by over **1,300 metric tons**, while youth and women **gained new income from selling waste**, and waste collectors **improved their financial systems to support the entrepreneurship.**



Waste Operation

Waste sorting behavior improved: Participants' waste sorting rose from 53% to 92%.

Waste collection efficiency increased: Percentage of participants spending 10+ hours collecting waste dropped from 32% to 1.4%.

Environmental

Urban sanitation improved: 83% reported reduced dumping in streets and open areas.

Waste reduction: 11,361 metric tons/day less unmanaged waste — about the weight of 10 fully loaded commercial airplanes.

Leading with Impact in

PROTECTION

Our Focus

Keeping children safe from harm is a fundamental priority at ChildFund. Children who experience violence face a wide range of adverse outcomes — their brain development suffers, they may turn to violence themselves, their mental health and well-being are impacted, and, of course, they may be harmed physically. Any of these can derail a child's positive development in an instant.

Our child protection-focused programs address children's protection needs as they grow from infancy through young adulthood. Parents, caregivers, teachers and children themselves learn to question and speak out against cultural norms that perpetuate, justify and normalize violence. And communities are supported to build safe places where children can learn and play — at home, at school, online, in the community and during humanitarian emergencies.

Violence against children is completely preventable, and our approach to protecting children focuses on just that — prevention. Our interventions involve working with parents, teachers, community members and children themselves to better prevent and respond to harm. We also focus on strengthening local and national support systems and response mechanisms so that children are protected in a sustainable and comprehensive way, complementing already-existing child protection system, and addressing gaps in the systems where they exist.

Child protection systems function best when their individual components strengthen

and reinforce each other — for example, social services, child protection services, public information, policy and more. Our interventions focus on how and where we can complement work already underway by government, our local partners and others to strengthen those systems.

By supporting local partner organizations to build on and strengthen existing community mechanisms, such as women's groups and youth groups, children and community members are able to drive their own protection. We also link them with government systems and services as well as other parts of the child protection system so that they don't operate in isolation but instead coordinate and work effectively together to protect children.

Child protection is a broad sector and is interwoven into all of the work we do at ChildFund. Children must be safe to learn, play and thrive. We also have specific focus areas within our protection work, including amplifying youth voices, supporting mental health, keeping girls safe from harm, protecting children in crisis situations, and keeping kids safe online (see the Emerging Areas chapter for more detail on our work focused on children in crisis and on online protection).

When children are exposed to violence, their mental health can suffer. And for children, poor mental health disrupts their ability to learn, self-regulate and build healthy relationships. Our strategy is designed to respond consistently to children's mental health needs, as well as the needs of caregivers and community members.

A group of adolescent girls attend a primary school in Kajiado County, Kenya, that has been supported by ChildFund through its local partner, Mount Kilimanjaro Child Development Programme. The school functions as a safe space for girls from the surrounding area who might otherwise be subjected to female genital cutting or early marriage.

We recognize that for children to be nurtured and cared for, their caregivers must also be equipped to manage their own mental health.

Our approach to violence prevention also focuses on addressing harmful practices that can disproportionately affect girls and young women, like early marriage, intimate partner violence and female genital mutilation (FGM). Intervention strategies include prioritizing youth participation and improving child protection mechanisms within communities.

Our child protection and inclusive development work supports children and young people to learn to use their voices to enhance their own protection. When children, youth and community members come together to address protection issues like trafficking as well as early marriage, drug abuse, child labor and all other forms of exploitation and violence, meaningful change and sustainable impact are possible.

This impact chapter shares the progress we see in our global M&E data and our evidence related to our program focus on improving protection outcomes for children, youth, families and communities. It also shares a case study on our impacts from a program focused on building resilience and protection systems for children's well-being in the Palorinya Refugee Settlement of Uganda.

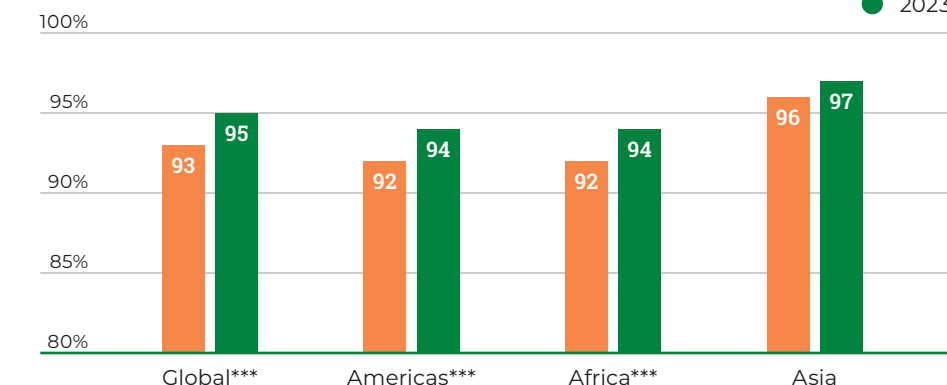
Advocacy

ChildFund advocates for change of laws and policies that allow violence to occur. In the U.S. in 2017, we co-created the Ending Violence Against Children Taskforce, a group of international development organizations, to advocate with the U.S. government to prioritize ending violence against children. As a direct result, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Ending Violence Against Children Resolution in 2020, demonstrating Congress' acknowledgment of the importance of preventing, addressing and ending violence against children worldwide.

Our Global Progress

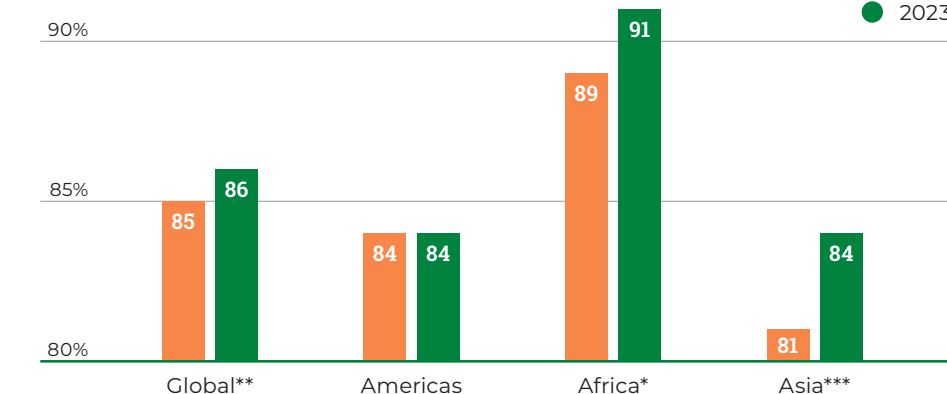
ChildFund's global monitoring of protection outcomes shows positive impact trends from 2022 to 2023 for child, youth and caregiver perceptions of community safety.

FIGURE 6-1
Percentage of Caregivers Who Report Their Community as Safe for Children



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance:
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

FIGURE 6-2
Percentage of Children (ages 6–14) Who Report Their Community as Safe for Children



Note. For statistical significance, more stars indicate greater significance:
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Perceived Safety for Children by Caregivers

Globally, **94%** of caregivers see their community as safe for children — a significant increase from 2022, led by increases in the Americas and Africa. In Asia, **97%** of caregivers report their community as safe (Figure 6-1).

Perceived Safety for Children by Children

Globally, **86%** of children (ages 6 to 14) see their community as safe for children — a significant increase from 2022, led by significant increases in Asia (Figure 6-2).

The biggest challenge for children and youth in the community is the struggle against early marriage. Because when a child marries, their future is halted ... you can't study or do what you want, and you can't achieve your best future.

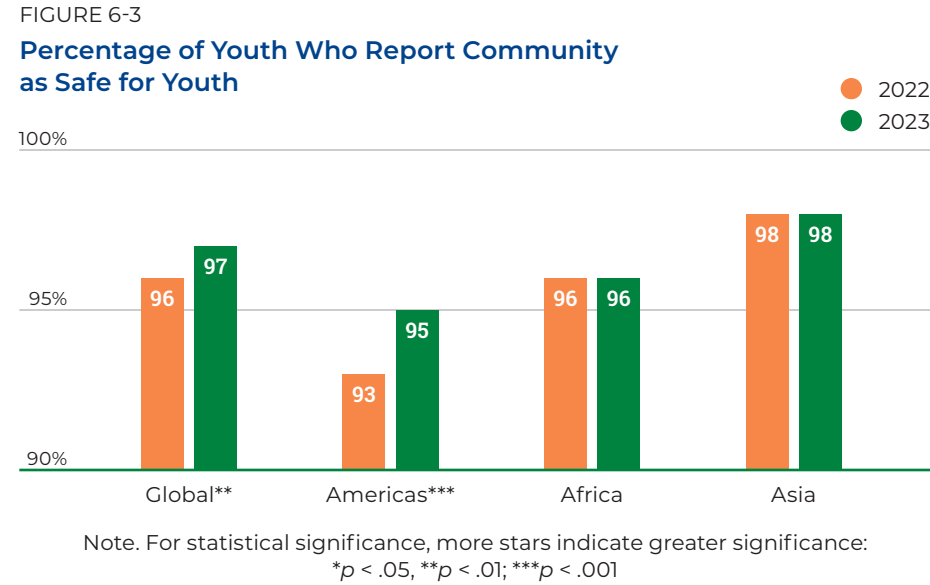
Twelve-year-old girl who is a ChildFund Youth Club participant and an elected representative to the Children's Parliament of Zavala District, Mozambique.





Perceived Safety for Youth by Youth

Globally, **97%** of youth (ages 15 to 29) see their community as safe for youth — a significant increase from 2022, led by a significant increase in the Americas, with **95%** or more of youth from each region reporting their community to be safe (Figure 6-3).



Children and youth attend a ChildFund-supported Child Resource Center in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka. Many of their parents are laborers who work late or far from home, and the center provides a safe space for supervised homework sessions and time to play with friends.



Our Protection Programs Evidence Spotlight

Supporting Safety at Home and in the Community

Safety at Home: Creating Nurturing Home Environments

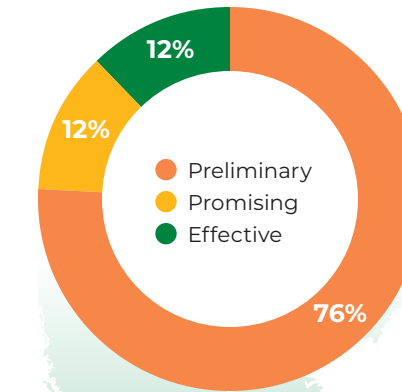
ChildFund’s child protection programs address children’s safety needs in the home setting from infancy through young adulthood. These programs raise awareness and seek to enhance positive parenting practices. They educate parents and caregivers, children and youth about the importance of questioning and challenging harmful cultural norms that perpetuate violence — and they help build responsive, caring home environments. We also directly target caregivers’ well-being by raising their awareness about and offering strategies for addressing stressors, taking care of themselves and building their own resilience.

Our Programming Evidence for Safety-at-Home Outcomes

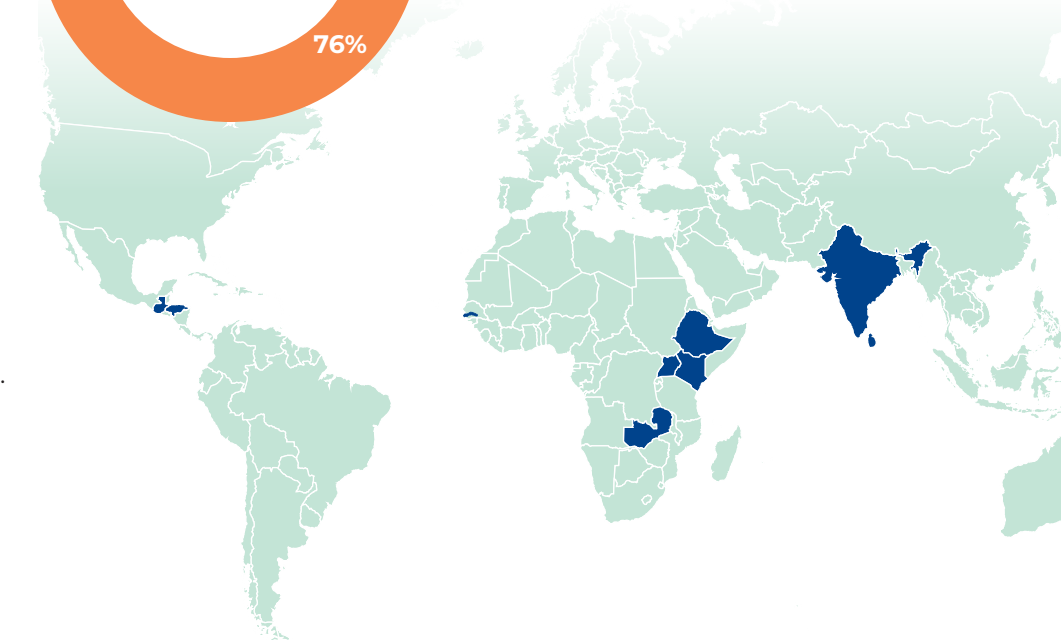
17 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in outcomes that include caregiver-child discipline practices and the proportion of children who experience physical punishment and/or emotional aggression in the home setting.

As shown in **Figure 6-4**, preliminary evidence was generated for 13 (76%) of the evaluated programs and promising evidence for two (12%), with two programs (12%), evaluated with randomized control trials (RCTs), yielding effective evidence for contributions to safety-at-home outcomes.

FIGURE 6-4
Our Evidence for Positive Change in Safety-at-Home Outcomes



These programs have benefited children and other family members across **nine countries** (five countries in Africa — Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia; two countries in the Americas — Guatemala, Honduras; two countries in Asia — India, Sri Lanka).





Examples of the Positive Change We See for Safety at Home Outcomes, by Evidence Level

EFFECTIVE — Kenya’s community-based **Strengthening Nurturing Care Program**,¹ supporting caregivers of children aged 0–3 in villages in Homabay and Busia counties, led to positive effects on primary caregiver discipline practices and birth registration, including significant reductions in primary caregivers’ use of harsh discipline. While use of any violent discipline (i.e., physical punishment or psychological aggression) increased in the control group from 75% to 92%, it decreased in the intervention group from 72% to 66%. Protective effects were also found for: a) physical punishment, which increased in the control group (from 66% to 88%) and decreased in the intervention group (63% to 55%); and b) psychological aggression, which increased in the control group (59% to 74%) but decreased in the intervention group (56% to 50%). Finally, there was a significant improvement in the proportion of children whose births were registered, with a greater increase in the intervention group (11% to 47%) than in the control group (22% to 35%).

PROMISING — (see *Impact Case Study*) The remote delivery of **ChildFund’s Come Play with Me** program was tested from 2021 to 2023 in **Guatemala**.² The program content involved radio theater skits educating listeners about playful parenting and nurturing care to promote child development and was broadcast through community radio stations. The program’s focus on responsive caregiving led to

“ **Before the program, I was harsh and would beat children for minor mistakes After the group parenting sessions, I learned that children can be corrected through conversations, and I have become more attentive to their needs.** ”

Female caregiver, Homa Bay County, Kenya

1 Jeong, J. & Mcann, J. (2025). Endline evaluation of a community-based peer group parenting program to promote nurturing care and early childhood development in Western Kenya: Evidence from a cluster-randomized controlled trial and qualitative process evaluation.
 2 ChildFund International (2025). Playful parenting in Guatemala-Phase 2: Evidence Summary. Richmond, VA: Author.

A mother holds her 3-month-old son during a group responsive caregiving meeting led by ChildFund in Siaya County, Kenya.



A Guide Mother conducts a Come Play with Me group session with other mothers and their children in Tonicapán Department, Guatemala.

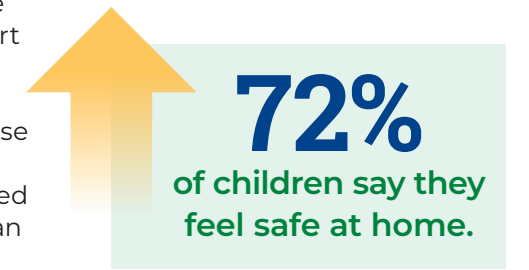
protective effects in the home whereby listening to one additional radio program was significantly associated with caregiver use of nonviolent discipline methods (i.e., withholding a privilege, keeping the child home, explaining why certain behavior is wrong, and/or redirecting behavior).

PROMISING — The **Enhance Child Welfare Through Better Community Awareness, Strengthen the Capacity of Government Structures, and Economic Opportunities Toward Overall Child Development** project was delivered in **Ethiopia**³ across five kebeles (Gola, Alge, Haroadi, Metehara and Gelcha), reaching 26,230 people. Focusing on schools and girls’ clubs, households and communities, it aimed to address child abuse and to protect children from harmful practices. At the end of the project, the prevalence of emotional abuse among children was significantly lower in the intervention areas, with 36% of the children aged 5 to 17 encountering at least one form of emotional abuse from their parents/guardians compared to 77% of the children in the control sites. Almost none (2%) of the children in the intervention areas encountered physical abuse, compared to 11% in the control areas. Child labor for children aged 5 to 11 was also less prevalent in the intervention areas — 58% compared to 80% in the control areas.

PRELIMINARY — The **Parenting Practices for Early Childhood Development** project⁴ delivered in **The Gambia’s** Central River Region, the North Bank Region and Lower River communities sought to promote positive childhood experiences and support to parents to enable children to fully develop their cognitive skills, especially during their first three years of life. In total, 200 couples were trained in nurturing care and positive parenting practices. The project contributed to: a) a 29.1 percentage-point (pp)* reduction (from 53.1% to 24%) in caregivers reporting that they beat, spank, hit or slap their child; a 47.3pp increase

(from 27.7% to 77%) in the positive discipline practice of explaining things to the child in a calm way; and c) a 45.7pp decrease (from 61.5% to 15.8%) in caregivers’ practice of leaving their child under 5 unattended.

PRELIMINARY — The **Child Protection and Education Project**⁵ in Mullaitivu, **Sri Lanka**, with support from ChildFund Korea, focused on supporting caregivers and community members with the knowledge and skills to create safer environments for children, and on reducing parent and child behaviors that lead to violence and insecurity in the home, school and community. The project raised parents’ awareness on social-emotional learning. The project contributed to: a) a 60pp increase (from 12% to 72%) in the proportion of children who report feeling safe at home and have a mechanism at home to support their safety and b) a 50pp increase (from 29% to 79%) in children reporting they are well-connected with their caregivers (i.e., they can talk freely with them).



PRELIMINARY — The **Responsive and Protective Parenting (RPP) Program Model**⁶ delivered in **Kenya**, with its goal of supporting the development and well-being of infants and young children ages 0–5, includes a focus on home- and community-based child protection. From January 2021 to December 2022, the program contributed to a 30pp reduction (from 31% to 1%) in the proportion of children experiencing physical aggression, a 58pp increase (from 23% to 81%) in the proportion of caregivers who use nonviolent discipline methods (i.e., withholding a privilege, keeping the child home, explaining why certain behavior is wrong, and/or redirecting behavior).

3 Girma, T. (2016). End-term evaluation survey of “Enhance Child Welfare Through Better Community Awareness, Strengthen the Capacity of Government Structures, and Economic Opportunities Toward Overall Child Development” Project in Fentale District. Abamela Business Plc.
 4 ChildFund The Gambia. (2022). Parenting practices for early childhood development in The Gambia: Final evaluation report. Serrekunda: Author.
 5 Muttiah, M. (2022). Endline evaluation final report: School-based violence prevention project. Colombo: Author.
 6 ChildFund Kenya. (2023). Endline evaluation: Responsive and protective parenting program model – Kenya. Nairobi: Author.

* Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and help us measure change over time.

Community Safety: Strengthening Protection Support and Response

Systems strengthening is central to our approach to enhancing community-level safety for children and youth. Our programs support communities in their collaboration with local governments and organizations to enhance child protection systems, including social services and informal child protection mechanisms, to develop public awareness campaigns and to advocate for improved public policy. We also support communities to build safe spaces where children can learn and play, both physically and online.

Our Programming Evidence for Community Safety

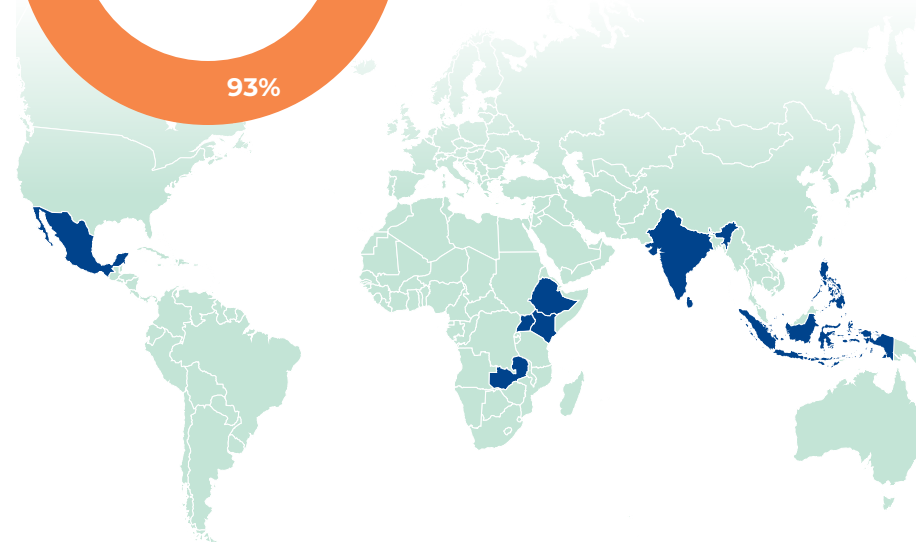
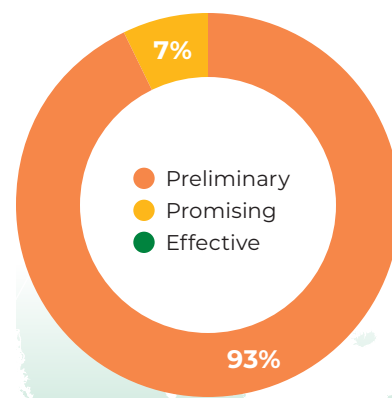
15 OF OUR EVALUATED PROGRAMS contributed to positive change in three key areas: (1) the proportion of community members reporting that their community is safe for children and youth; (2) the community-led development of informal systems for child prevention, protection, and response; and (3) the level of community involvement in shaping and implementing child protection policies.



Three young women (aged 17, 18 and 19) from Ethiopia hold posters saying “Stop child trafficking!” “End child marriage!” and “Stop child labor!” (in Amharic).

As shown in **Figure 6-5**, one (7%) of the evaluated programs has generated promising evidence, with the remaining 14 (93%) generating preliminary evidence for contributions to community safety outcomes.

FIGURE 6-5
Our Evidence for Positive Change in Community Safety Outcomes



These programs have benefited children, their caregivers and other family members across **eight countries** (four countries in Africa — Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia; four countries in Asia — India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka); and one country in the Americas — Mexico).

Examples of the Positive Change We See for Community Safety Outcomes, by Evidence Level

PROMISING — In **Ethiopia**, the **Enhance Child Welfare through Better Community Awareness, Strengthen the Capacity of Government Structure, and Economic Opportunities towards Overall Child Development** project used community dialogue, the formation and support of girls' clubs at school, and a marketplace campaign to mobilize the community to respond to harmful traditional practices (HTPs). The project helped to protect children by engaging and influencing community duty bearers and local social actors, significantly

reducing the prevalence of emotional abuse among children ages 5 to 17 to 36% (compared to 77% at control sites) and physical abuse to 2% (compared to 11% at control sites). The prevalence of female genital cutting (FGC) was also reduced — to 9% among intervention households (compared to 81% in control households). At a systems level, program results were used to help implement national and local laws, policies and action plans that address child protection problems.

PRELIMINARY — The **Community-Based Fight Against Harmful Traditional Practices, Gender-Based Violence and Child Abuse** project⁷, with support from Barnfonden (ChildFund Sweden), was delivered in 32 kebeles in Siraro Woreda, **Ethiopia**, in community, household and school settings. It aimed to address the prevalence of HTP, violence against girls and women, child marriage, abduction, rape and FGC through improving survivors' access to justice and medical assistance. The project contributed to: a) an 84pp increase (from 16% to 100%) in the number of kebeles with established comprehensive standard operating procedure referral networks for community-based child protection structures; b) a 30pp decrease (from 73% to 43%) in the proportion of children aged 8 to 18 in the project area who self-report psychological aggression by caregivers; and c) a 32pp decrease (from 37% to 5%) in the proportion of girls and women aged 14 to 49 who support the practice of FGC. Community-level systems change outcomes include: a) a 23pp increase (from 42% to 65%) in the proportion of law enforcement bodies and social and health sectors actively engaged in the fight against HTP, violence and child abuse; and b) an 84pp increase (from 16% to 100%) in the proportion of child protection committees and anti-HTP clubs established and strengthened in the community.

PRELIMINARY (see also the *Impact Case Study*) — The **Building Resilience and Protection Systems for the Well-being of Children in Palorinya Refugee Settlement and Host Communities in Obongi District (BRePS) — Phase I** project,⁸ from March 2019 to December 2021, was designed to address key child protection concerns and risks that children in Palorinya refugee settlement face from their parents, caregivers and household members, including physical, emotional, social and other forms of violence in addition to trauma-related mental health issues. The project contributed to child protection outcomes that include a 20pp increase (from 80% to 100%) in the proportion of households with functional community mechanisms for preventing and responding to child rights violations and a 21pp increase (from 78% to 99%) in the proportion of households that know where to report child rights violations or suspected cases of violence.



An 8-year-old girl plays jump rope at one of three ChildFund-supported Child-Friendly Spaces in Uganda's Palorinya Refugee Settlement.

PRELIMINARY (see also the *Impact Case Study*) — The **Building Resilience and Protection Systems for the Well-being of Children in Palorinya Refugee Settlement and Host Communities in Obongi District (BRePS) – Phase II** project⁹ in **Uganda** extended the Phase I project from March 2022 to June 2023. The project continued to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms for preventing and responding to child protection risks and sought to improve the psychosocial well-being of children through group-based activities. Three fenced Child-Friendly Spaces were constructed, providing play materials and facilitators to work with the children. For community members, the Phase II project contributed to a 30pp increase (from 10% to 40%) in the proportion of community members with the ability to identify child protection risks and a 32pp increase (from 46% to 78%) in the proportion of community members with improved ability to prevent and respond to child protection risks. For children participating in the Child-Friendly Space activities, the project contributed to a 22pp increase (from 16% to 38%) in reported psychosocial stability — and a 17pp increase (from 7% to 24%) in children feeling safe in their community “all the time.”

7 Abamela Consulting. (2020). Community-based fight against harmful traditional practices, gender-based violence and child abuse in Siraro Woreda, Oromia regional government, Ethiopia: Project final evaluation.

8 Promise Consult International Ltd. (2021). BRePS project evaluation report. Kampala: ChildFund Uganda.

9 Promise Consult International Ltd. (2023). Final report: BRePS endline evaluation in Palorinya refugee settlement-Obongi. Kampala: ChildFund Uganda.

PRELIMINARY — The **Support During Displacement of Children and Youth** program¹⁰, supported by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), was delivered in shelters in eight cities in **Mexico** (Tapachula, Tuxtla, San Cristóbal, Comitán, Palenque, Villahermosa, Tenosique and Frontera) to promote the physical and emotional health of 60,000 people who crossed the Mexican border, coming from Latin America and the Caribbean. The program sought to decrease a critical gap in assistance by providing access to basic services, reliable information and referrals to specialized services, especially for children and women who are most likely to experience vulnerability. For children and adolescents, psychosocial support and social-emotional learning activities were provided to promote their well-being. The program contributed to: a) a 37pp increase (from 46% to 83%) in the proportion of participants reporting a better sense of safety and well-being (in shelters, service offices, communities and neighborhoods); b) a 35pp reduction (from 59% to 24%) in the proportion of children and adolescents with symptoms of mental and psychosocial distress; and c) a 12pp increase (from 60% to 72%) in the proportion of violence survivors who know where to go to receive support or services.

PRELIMINARY — In **Indonesia**, the **Every Child's Birth Right Project**¹¹ sought to strengthen the child protection system in East Nusa Tenggara with a focus on increasing birth certificate ownership and related community awareness and support. The project raised awareness among religious leaders, teachers and community members on the importance of birth registration. Intervention strategies included: a) cross-sector collaboration, b) improved service coverage and service access to birth registration through an online registration system that helps parents reduce time and travel costs to the capital, and c) community-based child protection committees and community empowerment. The project contributed to a 77pp increase (from 8% to 85%) in the proportion of children with birth certificate ownership.

PRELIMINARY — **Kenya's Integrated Community-Based Child Protection and Youth Project in Kajiado County**¹² was designed to promote functional child protection systems and to engage children to empower themselves in their own protection. The project reached 432 school children, 12 public primary/secondary schools and 1,146 participants. Project contributions include: a) a 17pp increase (from 5% to 22%) in the proportion of children referred to social services in the past year by the child protection committee (social welfare/police/health services); b) a 30pp increase (from 41% to 71%) in the proportion of children who engage in self-protection efforts; and c) a 24pp increase (from 49% to 73%) in the proportion of children reporting child abuse cases.

Our Impact Footprint

In summary, we continue to see impact from our contributions to improving the safety of children in the home and community through tailored awareness building and education with caregivers, children and youth themselves, and other family members — and through critical, locally driven child protection system enhancement.



¹⁰ ChildFund Mexico (2022). Endline report: Program for the prevention, preparation, and response to COVID-19 in Mexico. Mexico City: Author.

¹¹ Bere, S. (2020). The participatory evaluation: Identification of changes to the impact of every child's birth right project in Belu District. Jakarta: ChildFund Indonesia.

¹² ChildFund Kenya. (2020). Endline evaluation report: Integrated community based child protection and youth project in Kajiado County. Nairobi: Author

IMPACT CASE STUDY

Strengthening the Protection System in a Refugee Setting

Building Resilience and Protection Systems for the Well-being of Children

Child-Friendly Spaces, Community Awareness, Government Engagement



Children play a game with facilitators at one of three Child-Friendly Spaces in the refugee settlement.

“The project has improved the well-being of children in the community Before the project, children were loitering without anywhere to go, but now they have a safe place. They were also taught how to relate with each other — they now work like children of one family.”

Child-Friendly Space Monitor

Since 2019, ChildFund and its local partners, with support from ChildFund Korea and the Korea International Cooperation Agency, have implemented two phases of the Building Resilience and Protection Systems for the Well-being of Children (BRePS) project to strengthen the psychosocial well-being of children and youth aged 8 to 17 in Uganda's Palorinya Refugee Settlement and surrounding host communities.

The project aligned with the Government of Uganda's (GoU) priorities by working with district line ministries and other international and community stakeholders to strengthen community resilience and promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. ChildFund and its local partners trained and mobilized existing community-based structures, like Male Action Groups and Refugee Welfare Committees, to identify, refer, and follow up on child protection cases, coordinating referrals with the GoU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

BRePS also established three child-friendly spaces (CFS), filling a critical gap after the district's closure of ECD centers. These CFS serve as safe environments for structured group activities supporting children's emotional well-being, learning, and social connection.

Results from program evaluations show strengthened community safety and child protection response in the refugee settlement along with improved child and youth well-being.

Program Impact

On Children and Youth

- 4/5 report improved psychosocial well-being (Phase 1).
- Over 1/3 feel a sense of well-being “quite a lot or all of the time” (Phase 2).
- Close to 1/5 more children feel safe “all the time” (Phase 2).

On Households

- 99% know where to report harms (Phase 1).
- 100% have protection response mechanisms to use when needed (Phase 1).

On Communities

- 97% of communities have mechanisms to respond to violence against women and girls (Phase 1).
- Over 1/3 more community members can identify child protection risks (Phase 2).
- 1/4 more community members can respond to child protection risks (Phase 2).

The BRePS project has directly benefited **3,400 individuals** and indirectly impacted **2,640 more** through individual child and household-level benefits, widespread awareness-raising and government engagement on child protection in support of sustained systems change to help children thrive.

This Male Action Group member, a former radio DJ back in South Sudan, broadcasts messages about child protection and violence against women and girls for the Palorinya Refugee Settlement.



Emerging Areas of Impact

गाँव

Our Focus

During the past five years, ChildFund has been evolving an impact footprint in three newer key areas of focus with locally driven action, programmatic innovation and a vision to scale our impact. These special areas of focus are:

Children in Crisis, Building Sustainability, and Online Protection

We are in the first phase of testing innovative intervention approaches and building a program and/or policy impact base in these areas. This chapter outlines some of our preliminary impact evidence, as well as a sampling of programmatic and advocacy wins in each sector.

This 16-year-old's drawing depicts a tale of two Indias. There is the reality she sees all around her, in which heavy urban pollution traps greenhouse gases, taints water sources and negatively impacts agriculture. Then there is the reality she hopes for, in which sustainable living allows natural resources to flow.

Children in Crisis

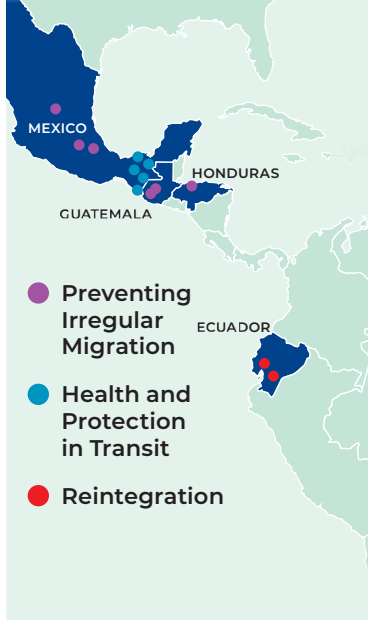
Keeping Children Safe and Nurtured Amid Global Conflicts and Environmental Disasters

Children living in communities with sustained violence, conflict or other protracted disasters can face long-term challenges including displacement, economic instability and psychological distress. From one region or country to the next, the contexts can vary significantly and require tailored, holistic approaches to programming and support. Regardless of the circumstances, children need to be safe, have a place to play and learn, and have their physical, nutritional and health needs met.

As global conflicts and environmental disasters continue to shift and, in some regions, worsen, ChildFund is committed to expanding our humanitarian response to support the children and families who find themselves in the chaos. We currently respond in Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, and Ethiopia, Mozambique, Senegal, Uganda and Zambia, and we are expanding our response to large-scale and other crises beyond these areas through partnerships.

We also recognize the highly complex and unique contexts from region to region and approach our programming depending on what the population needs. Whenever possible, we prioritize preventing irregular migration — helping to build local resiliency to crisis, bolstering economic stability and family livelihoods, and addressing community violence and other issues that force families and children to leave in the first place.

Highlights of Our Children in Crisis Program Impacts in the Americas 2017 to 2024

Reach	Key Program Outcomes	Cross-Cutting Best Practices
<p>4 COUNTRIES: Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and Ecuador</p> <p>90 TOTAL COMMUNITIES</p> <p>11 SHELTERS</p> 	<p>YOUTH AGENCY 24pp increase in civic engagement</p> <p>LIVELIHOOD STRENGTHENING 40% of youth employed; provided 3,500 displacement-affected people with livelihood support</p> <p>SAFETY AND SECURITY 16pp increase in people who felt very safe in their community; 37pp increase in people who felt safe in shelters</p> <p>VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS 37pp increase in violence survivors receiving referrals and information</p> <p>ANTI-TRAFFICKING AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION 2/3 of youth reported higher knowledge of risks; 24pp fewer youth report intention to migrate</p> <p>MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING 25pp decrease in children reporting psychosocial distress; 96% of teachers reporting gains in mental health-related skills and knowledge</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening local systems and enhancing community capabilities 2. Mainstreaming equity and social inclusion 3. Directly engaging with people we assist in the program cycle

Together the interventions directly impacted 133,026 individuals, of which approximately 61,126 were children and young people (ages 6-24) from the most vulnerable populations in high-risk areas, addressing their diverse needs and providing critical support.



ChildFund Mexico's Yil Felipe Wood (in green) and ChildFund Director for Children in Crisis Radwa el Manssy talk with children at a shelter at the Mexico-Guatemala border. "None of them speak the same language," says el Manssy. "And they have been best friends for months. This has kept them sane."

Growing Our Impact

In 2024, ChildFund completed an evidence review of three Children in Crisis programs delivered in the Americas from 2017 to 2024 — Prevention of Irregular Migration, Lifesaving Support and Protection During Displacement, and Reintegration of Populations after Displacement or Return. These programs operated in Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, and addressed children's and youth's protection at crucial stages of the migration cycle — pre-migration, transit and return — ensuring that support is provided at every critical point. By documenting successful program practice and identifying global evidence, the results of the evidence review provide the foundation for ChildFund to successfully scale these strategies. ChildFund aims to expand its Children in Crisis programming to 10 countries by 2030, ensuring comprehensive protection and support for vulnerable children and helping them reach their full potential.

Impact Story: Starting Small, Flying High

José (not his real name) participated in **ChildFund's Preventing Irregular Migration of Children and Youth program** through which he accessed training in entrepreneurship and seed funding. He shared his experience before and after the program.

For José, storytelling has always been at the heart of what he does. Growing up in Oaxaca, Mexico, he was always interested in technology and filmmaking, but he didn't always see it as a viable career path. In his community, traditional jobs or migration to bigger cities were usually the main options.

When he joined the Preventing Irregular Migration of Children and Youth entrepreneurship activities, he initially pitched an idea focused on 3D printing to create protective face shields during the COVID-19 pandemic. But through the workshops and mentorship, he realized he had been overlooking a skill he had already developed: drone videography. His mentor during the program helped him see the potential in shifting his focus. "He told me, 'You already have something that makes you stand out — why not build on it?'" José recalls.

With this new perspective, he completely changed his business plan overnight.

The program didn't just give José a new direction — it also provided him with the seed funding and resources he needed to grow his business. Through the program's entrepreneurship workshops, he learned how to price his services, identify potential clients, and market himself effectively. The funding helped him buy the equipment he needed to get started.

But even with funding, the launch wasn't easy. "The doors were constantly closing,"

he remembers. "Nobody was willing to pay for drone footage at first. It was frustrating, but I kept going." To prove the value of his work, he offered free videos to local businesses. Slowly, word spread. "I started getting small gigs — weddings, quinceañera, local events — and little by little, it grew." He refined his skills in video editing, cinematography, and drone operation, and over time, his work began taking him beyond his community. He traveled to different parts of Mexico, filming for businesses, festivals, and cultural events.

Beyond financial barriers, José also had to change the way people in his community saw his work. "In a small town, people don't always understand why they should invest in high-quality video," he explains. "I had to keep showing them the value until they started seeing the difference."

Now, José has established himself as a drone videographer, working on bigger projects and expanding his network. While he continues to refine his skills, he credits the program for helping him take that first big step. "Without it, I might have never realized I could turn this into a career," he says.

His next big goal? Expanding his portfolio into cinematography and film production.

"I want to make my first movie," he says. "I already have ideas, and I'm working on my scripts. I just need to keep growing and improving my skills."

For those thinking of starting their own business, Jose says, "A business doesn't grow overnight. You have to dream big, visualize your goals, but also stay grounded. And most importantly — don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone and see what's out there."

Building Sustainability

Sustainable Solutions to Development Challenges

Building sustainable resilience requires holistic approaches at all levels of society, centering not only the needs of children and youth but also their meaningful and active participation in actions at the community, national and international levels. Our approach to fostering this resilience in communities is focused on ensuring the safe, clean, biodiverse and abundant environments children and youth need to grow up healthy, educated, skilled and safe.

To help communities build their resilience to environmental shocks, we collaborate with local partner organizations to take proactive, child-focused action as relevant to the local context. This includes adaptive agriculture initiatives like drought-resilient crops and planting techniques, water management like drip irrigation, water conservation methods and rainwater harvesting, and diversifying livelihoods to reduce reliance on weather-sensitive income. Disaster risk reduction activities and enhanced early warning systems for disasters are prioritized in areas where flooding or other extreme weather events are common. We also support communities to build sustainable and resilient water and food supplies, and critical infrastructure to keep children safe at home and in school. Throughout, we leveraging local experience and traditional wisdom to keep efforts relevant and sustainable.

Children and youth need information about how and why it is important to care about the environment, and what they can do as young people to support sustainable action in their communities and advocate for better policies to ensure that the environment is preserved for the future. Children and youth can and do play a large role in educating their own communities about environmental care, and they work to see change happen.

Children in Zambia present their paintings for the Regreening Africa project, showing their perspectives on environmental damage they have experienced.



Growing Our Impact

Engaging children and youth to meaningfully participate is a central focus of our work in helping communities build sustainability. We support young people sharing their experiences with the natural environment both in words and other creative outputs — and we are designing and implementing programs with their direct input. For example, we are currently delivering Project Greenlight (Generating Resilience, Empowering Eco-Leaders, Nurturing Tomorrow) in the Philippines, with its innovative, youth-led Eco-scouts program. Launched in June 2024, Project Greenlight, implemented in collaboration with local governments and grounded in local action and inclusive participation, is cultivating a new generation of environmental leaders through focusing on education, innovation and community leadership.

ChildFund and its local partners, like Reina Federation of Parents Association Incorporated, drive a holistic approach to climate resilience — combining environmental restoration, sustainable livelihood development and youth empowerment to help communities adapt to environmental stressors. Some of the project's accomplishments in the coastal municipality of Infanta, Quezon Province, where the Federation is located, include restoring ecosystems and reviving watersheds through efforts that are part of a five-year plan to increase forest cover, reduce erosion, support biodiversity and help communities transition to cleaner energy and more sustainable consumption practices. The program has generated important community-level results that include 1,280 trees planted through youth-led and broader community activities and the establishment of two community-run zero-waste stores, one led by youth, with over 70 kg of carbon avoided.



A 16-year-old participant in ChildFund's programs illustrated her own vision of a healthy planet — one built on sustainability. In her new world, humans cooperate to reduce their carbon footprint, and all living beings reap the benefits.

Impact Story: Eco Scouts

Children and Youth as Environmental Resilience Leaders in the Philippines

Across nine local partner organizations, ChildFund's Eco-scout initiative has engaged over 14,500 children and 9,300 youth as Eco-scouts in environmental action efforts throughout the Philippines. These Eco-scouts lead activities such as tree planting, coastal cleanups, disaster preparedness training, environmental education, and community awareness campaigns. Many also help facilitate sessions, co-develop local action plans, and mobilize peers and families.

"Knowledge and skills — that's what we gain from continuously participating in activities that promote and protect our Mother Nature," says one Eco-scout participant from Roxas City, Capiz Province.

From the mountains of Apayao Province in northern Luzon to the southern shores of Basilan Province in Mindanao, Eco-scouts work alongside parents, teachers, and local officials. In several areas, they have even successfully lobbied for support from barangay (local village) councils and municipal offices, while others have led awareness drives and cleanup efforts that brought together entire neighborhoods.

Through these actions, Eco-scouts foster intergenerational collaboration and encourage stronger ties between communities and local institutions in addressing environmental challenges.

Online Safety and Protection

In 2018, one of our routine community mapping exercises in the Philippines revealed a concerning trend among the children and families in our local partner communities: Children were speaking up about their experiences with online sexual exploitation and abuse. We would soon learn that the online sexual exploitation and abuse of children (OSEAC) was becoming one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world.

OSEAC was not on ChildFund’s radar at that time, but it was something that our local partners had flagged as an emerging problem we needed to tackle. And tackle it we did. ChildFund Philippines quickly led the way with a national campaign to stop online sexual exploitation of children (#ShutDownOSEC), which led to the passage of national legislation to help better protect children online. Meanwhile, it became evident that this issue was global — and growing, fast. From 2022-2023, reports of suspected child sexual abuse materials (CSAM) submitted to the U.S.-based National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), which tracks global data, rose to over 36 million,



A project officer at ChildFund’s partner Lifeskills Promoters talks to primary school students at an online safety awareness class in Kilifi County, Kenya, as part of the Safe CLICS project.

including over 105 million distinct images, videos and other files. As of 2024, more than 300 million children worldwide had experienced OSEAC — a number that is almost certainly underreported.

ChildFund has taken up the cause in force, becoming not just an international leader in the fight against OSEAC, but also a convenor and connector — forming coalitions, building trust at national and global levels, and building innovative campaigns, strategies and partnerships to raise awareness and pass meaningful laws to hold tech companies accountable for crimes committed on their platforms. Victims and survivors have shaped our policy and programming work from the beginning and will continue leading the way.

As the tech landscape continues to evolve, particularly with artificial intelligence and other new technologies quickly becoming mainstream, there is still much work to do. However, the impact ChildFund has made in the past five years is remarkable.

Growing Our Impact

The #TakeItDown Campaign

ChildFund’s campaign against child sexual abuse imagery in the U.S. launched in 2023 and also positioned ChildFund as a global player in online protection. Through an award-winning short film called *Monster*, #TakeItDown raised awareness on online sexual abuse and encouraged the public to contact their representatives in Congress to pass online safety legislation. The attention brought by the campaign directly led to the January 2024 U.S. Senate hearing where five CEOs of “big tech” companies Meta, X, TikTok, Snap, Inc., and Discord were called to testify on online safety issues. Further movement from the hearing led to several important pieces of legislation gaining traction and ultimately being signed into law — The REPORT Act in 2024 and The TAKE IT DOWN Act in 2025.

“If the TAKE IT DOWN Act had been in place when we [survivors] were being abused, we would have been spared the near-limitless and humiliating spread of our intimate images. Signing this act brings dignity to those who survived their abuse and justice for those who have not.”

— Online abuse survivor and member of the EndOSEAC Coalition’s Survivor’s Council

Central to our U.S. legislative efforts has been the End OSEAC Coalition, which ChildFund both convened and leads. The Coalition, a group of 30+ nonprofit and civil society organizations, has the common goal of



ChildFund’s *Monster* video was the centerpiece of the #TakeItDown campaign to stop child sexual abuse imagery online.





improving U.S. government policies and programs to better prevent and address OSEAC and provide support to survivors. The Coalition’s Survivor’s Council is also a key part of our advocacy efforts, prioritizing survivors’ experiences in our work.

Programing Evidence Highlight:

PRELIMINARY — ChildFund Kenya’s **Tuchanuke (Let’s Wise Up) Online Child Protection project**, supported by Google Foundation and Africa Online Safety Fund’s Impact Amplifier, was implemented in Nairobi and Kiambu counties from April 2021 to May 2022. The project aimed to increase caregivers’ and young people’s understanding of online child protection risks and mitigation measures, improve stakeholders’ commitment to combating online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OSEAC), and improve implementation of relevant OSEAC policies and legislation in target sub-counties.

Intervention strategies included community outreach, life skills development, peer-to-peer education training, information education communication materials, media programs, government and key stakeholder workshops and the use of research and short studies to inform strategies on OSEAC prevention and control. Caregiver training focused on how to support their children to navigate online platforms safely, and encouraged dialogue between youth and their parents.

ChildFund has made a global impact on online safety through a wide range of policy and programmatic wins. We have shared our expertise at key global forums including The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), the U.N. General Assembly, ADWEEK, South by Southwest and the ASEAN ICT Forum. We have also contributed to numerous initiatives including To Zero, WeProtect’s 2023 Global Threat Assessment and Safe Online’s event at the Global Ministerial Conference to End Violence Against Children. Other advocacy wins include:

-  **African Union:** ChildFund signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the A.U. to develop a model law on online safety, which would set the standard for all member states to consider.
-  **Ecuador:** Through the **Naveguemos Seguros** (“Let’s Browse Safely”) campaign, ChildFund worked with the Ministry of Education to raise online risk awareness among school professionals to better detect suspected cases.
-  **Guatemala:** Passed the **DECRETO NÚMERO 11-2022**, which reforms the penal code regarding crimes committed against children and adolescents online.
-  **Kenya:** Passed **The Children Act 2022** — an act of Parliament protecting children’s rights, including those online.

Through the project, 800 youth learned about OSEAC through various interactive methods, including peer forums and working with trained counselors. The project’s outcome contributions include:

- 100 percentage point (pp)* increase (from 0% to 100%) in community volunteers knowledgeable on OSEAC prevention strategies.
- 58pp increase (from 0% to 58%) in caregivers’ knowledge and practice of safe online child protection strategies.
- 68pp increase (from 0 to 68%) in youth knowledge and practice of safe online child protection strategies.
- 38pp (from 54% to 92%) increase in caregiver awareness of where their children browsed and the importance of encouraging them to browse in open places.
- 21pp (35% to 56%) increase in youth reporting that they talk to their parents about OSEAC.
- One documented OSEAC Agenda and Action Plan.

* Percentage points (pp) indicate the difference between two percentages and help us measure change over time.

Looking Forward

Introduction

ChildFund's programs not only reach millions of children and their family members but are making a positive impact on their lives. As we find ourselves in the middle of the Growing Connections strategy period, it is necessary to take a careful look at where we have been, but also — crucially — where we are going. We intend to accelerate our impact and not just our reach, to strengthen our efforts on localization and systems change, to streamline the ways we implement programs, and to expand our global impact around children's needs. This chapter shares some of our early steps in that direction.

Our Progress

Our global M&E data during the past four years highlight the positive changes from the programs delivered by our partners and us to create safer, more nurturing environments for children and youth. This progress includes improvement in:

- Growth monitoring for children aged 0 to 5.
- Literacy and numeracy skill levels for children aged 9 to 14.
- Youth participation in training to help them find a job or start a business.
- Perceptions of community safety by caregivers, children and youth.

Our programming evidence also shows important positive impacts on key outcomes within and across sectors.

Children participate in a learning game introduced by ChildFund's Literacy and Numeracy project at one of our after-school Child Resource Centers (CRCs) in Monaragala District, Sri Lanka.



It is so gratifying to see children and young people generating sustainable change. These are youth who came through our programs, where their mothers brought them along — and now, they are leading other youth to fight for their rights. And when we feel we can step aside because they are flying alone, that's how I see impact.

Cristina Barrera,
Regional Director, Americas



A ChildFund Sri Lanka staff member meets with a mother and her 9-month-old daughter at ChildFund's Child Resource Center in Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka

Health

In all three regions, we see our programs ensuring that more families have clean drinking water, access to sanitation and better hygiene practices. We also find programs contributing to increased rates of children ages 0 to 5 reaching appropriate age weight, caregivers engaging in healthy and age-appropriate infant feeding practices, and pregnant women receiving adequate prenatal and postnatal care.

Early Childhood Development

Our programs focused on early education and supportive environments for learning — both in and out of the home — continue to show positive and promising results. In the home setting, we see more caregivers engaging in enriching play and learning activities and less punitive parenting techniques, and more young children developmentally on track. Outside the home, we see early childhood education centers providing enhanced learning environments and more children who are prepared for transition to primary school.

Education

In the education sector, we see the benefits of enhanced school safety and caregiver engagement in their children's school activities, such as improved child well-being and learning outcomes, including keeping children and adolescents in school. These programs show the promise of

helping children, adolescents and youth build social and emotional skills so they can create healthy relationships and thrive in all areas of their lives. To accelerate and grow this impact, we will continue scaling programs like our Education for Protection and Well-being (EPW) program.

Livelihood Strengthening

Across sectors, we have seen some of the greatest growth in livelihood strengthening programmatic impact, particularly for youth. These programs are succeeding across all three regions, providing job training and entrepreneurship opportunities to adolescents and youth, as well as increasing numbers of skilled, work-ready youth who are employed or engaged in entrepreneurship and participating in civic engagement. We also observe increased impacts of financial inclusion programs as youth and women empower themselves to generate income through agricultural and non-farm activities. Our innovative approaches for promoting social inclusion of people with disabilities, like Sri Lanka's Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Through Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) project, are seeing strong results in increasing income and employability.



A group of Electricidad de Mozambique interns (in blue) follow a company supervisor (in orange) as they read electrical meters and verify connections in Inhambane Province.

Child Protection

Our work with our local partners in strengthening child protection systems at the community level continues to be effective in keeping children safe online and offline. We also see the positive impacts of delivering public awareness campaigns and advocating for improved public policy. The child-friendly spaces we help communities create are critical safe spaces where children can learn and play, even during times of crisis. We also see positive impacts in the safety at home, with more parents and caregivers practicing positive parenting and discipline and fewer children experiencing physical punishment and/or emotional aggression.

Charting New Directions

Moving forward, using lessons learned from these programs, we will:

Accelerate Our Reach and Deepen Our Impact

Meaningful change requires more than numbers — it demands evidence that our programs are improving lives in lasting ways. That's why our investment in monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning is more critical than ever. These efforts ensure that our work is not only effective but sustainable. By continuing to refine and implement our Global Results Framework and Program Portfolio, we're streamlining how we work — ensuring that our programs are locally led, contextually and culturally grounded, and proven to deliver positive outcomes for children and families.

Keep It Local

Our commitment to localization is stronger than ever. Localization is not a goal — it's how we work. For decades, ChildFund has operated through locally led partnerships, where community-based organizations drive program design and implementation — and our impacts show the benefits of these local partnerships. We support our local partners on their journeys toward self-reliance, supporting them to attract their own funding, manage their own budgets, and create, measure, and scale their impact.



Students are served a meal at an ECD center supported by ChildFund's local partner Partners for Children Worldwide, in Kapelebyong, Uganda.

Take the Global Stage

Through a multi-pronged approach, we are implementing our online protection strategy across programming areas, scaling our advocacy and awareness campaigns beyond the U.S. to influence policy and empower young people and caregivers, and, ultimately, establishing a global center of excellence on online safety. This center will position ChildFund as a convener of governments, donors, and like-minded partners — driving coordinated action to end online sexual exploitation and abuse of children once and for all.

Change Systems for Lasting Impact

We will enhance the capacity, effectiveness and sustainability of the systems that positively impact children's lives. To drive change holistically, we consider the entire system: economic, social, political, and environmental factors. We engage with local, regional, and national governments and focus on the root causes of issues like inequality, power imbalances, and lack of access to resources, not just the symptoms. We also rely on advocacy as a tool for deep, sustainable, high-level systems change, working with children, youth, governments, organizations, and communities to develop and implement solutions that last.

Our Next Steps

Key programmatic strategies to support our ongoing help for children to grow up healthy, educated, skilled, and safe include:

- Applying institutional learning and scaling our most innovative, impactful, and sustainable programs.
- Building and strengthening our collective, global evidence base for all outcome areas, including measuring our child protection advocacy results.
- Expanding our three emerging areas of focus: Children in Crisis, Online Protection and Building Sustainability.
- Expanding our U.S. program work, such as our No Pressure Zone safe spaces currently implemented in schools in Texas and Virginia.
- Replicating successful environmental sustainability models — including tree-growing, zero-waste initiatives, and environmental education, as well as advocacy campaigns, community-based restoration efforts, and partnerships with youth councils and local governments to sustain momentum and ensure that children and youth play a central role in shaping sustainable communities.

Annex A

This Annex provides details on the methods used for our 2022 and 2023 global Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) data collection and program evidence assessment using ChildFund’s Evidence Repository.

Global Progress – ChildFund’s Global M&E Data Collection

For this Impact Report, we included Global M&E data collected at two time points (between 2021 and 2022, and between 2022 and 2023), using both the core survey module and the life stage survey modules. Our core survey module captured a set of indicators that assess whether the child is present in the community, as well as their child protection, education, nutrition, health status and needs. Our age group-specific modules collected data on a set of core program indicators aligned with ChildFund’s Life Stage theories of change for a sample of enrolled children, to monitor the progress and contributions of our programs globally. The sample design was probability sampling with a size of 300 enrolled participants per local partner per country — distribution of the samples by life stage was disproportionately determined (100 per life stage) while gender or sex distribution was proportionate to size. Response rates ranged between 96% and 97% for both time points. For children in Life Stage 1 (age 0–5), the survey was administered to their caregivers, and for Life Stages 2 (6–14) and 3 (15–21), the surveys were administered to children, adolescents and youth.

Between 2021 and 2022, we collected monitoring data on 14,436 caregivers of Life Stage 1 (ages 0–5) children, 15,826 Life Stage 2 children (ages 6–14), and 14,510 Life Stage 3 adolescents and youth (ages 15–24). Between 2022 and 2023, we collected monitoring data on 13,807 caregivers of Life Stage 1 (ages 0–5) children, 16,132 Life Stage 2 children (ages 6–14), and 15,004 Life Stage 3 adolescents and youth (ages 15–24). For ease of presentation, the data collection period between 2021 and 2022 is referred to as 2022 and the data collection period between 2022 and 2023 is referred to as 2023.

Survey data were collected via mobile data collection platforms. Data analysis was conducted using Stata version 19 software. Given that ChildFund’s target populations are the most vulnerable children and communities, results should not be taken as nationally representative.

TABLE A-1
ChildFund’s 2022 and 2023 Global M&E Data Collection Samples by Region and Country

AFRICA			
Country	Life Stage	2022	2023
Ethiopia	1	1,309	1,300
	2	1,311	1,290
	3	1,316	1,295
The Gambia	1	306	300
	2	304	301
	3	311	297
Guinea	1	201	203
	2	204	204
	3	201	197
Kenya	1	1,291	1,320
	2	1,294	1,308
	3	1,290	1,304
Mozambique	1	198	200
	2	200	199
	3	197	199
Senegal	1	699	596
	2	706	603
	3	497	503
Sierra Leone	1	300	301
	2	301	302
	3	299	300
Uganda	1	887	893
	2	890	881
	3	889	879
Zambia	1	613	606
	2	606	602
	3	608	596
Total		13,353	13,047

ASIA			
Country	Life Stage	2022	2023
India	1	1,181	1,104
	2	2,021	1,839
	3	1,999	1,801
Indonesia	1	1,193	1,125
	2	1,344	1,399
	3	1,155	1,399
Philippines	1	1,074	980
	2	1,204	1,863
	3	982	1,649
Sri Lanka	1	340	366
	2	509	694
	3	491	664
Total		13,493	14,883

AMERICAS			
Country	Life Stage	2022	2023
Bolivia	1	601	396
	2	591	393
	3	589	378
Brazil	1	2,032	1,908
	2	2,024	1,929
	3	1,556	1,414
Ecuador	1	412	403
	2	495	486
	3	472	475
Guatemala	1	411	397
	2	397	394
	3	388	385
Honduras	1	298	298
	2	294	295
	3	290	284
Mexico	1	1,055	1,071
	2	1,056	1,080
	3	923	934
USA	1	35	40
	2	75	70
	3	57	51
Total		14,051	13,081

Programming Evidence – ChildFund’s Evidence Repository

ChildFund conducts focused outcome and impact evaluation studies of our programs to assess their contributions to our core programmatic outcomes within and across contexts. Since 2018, we have been developing an Evidence Repository, a centralized, curated collection of completed evaluations of ChildFund implemented programs/interventions from 2012 onward.

The Evidence Repository is an internal, centralized and curated collection of completed evaluations of ChildFund-implemented programs/interventions. As of December 30, 2024, the Repository contained reports for 156 evaluated programs. Reports were systematically coded by trained behavioral researchers using a standardized codebook that includes fields to capture basic descriptive information (e.g., program/intervention name, country, region, ChildFund Global Results Framework Outcomes, etc.), as well as information on the intervention, the program evaluation study design, and evaluation outcomes (see Table A-2 for key sample data fields).

Evaluated programs range from early child development interventions to emergency response interventions, across all three regions. Evaluations have been internal or external (i.e., conducted by a third-party research organization). Funding sources for the evaluations include U.S. federal donors, foundations, ChildFund Alliance organizations and ChildFund’s individual donors.

Organizing by sectors and result areas (based on our Global Results Framework), we use the Repository to synthesize and profile our organizational program evidence within and across sectors, region/country, and outcomes. We use a tiered evidence model, informed by the INSPIRE package evidence levels¹ and evidence-based programming in general² to assess the level of evidence (preliminary, promising, effective) for specific outcomes targeted by the programs — as well as where and how we are contributing to global SDGs.

TABLE A-2

Sample Evidence Repository Fields

Field	Definition
Intervention Context	What the implementation area/location is like
Intervention Delivery Setting	Where the intervention is taking place (e.g., site, like school, or level, like family)
Intervention Focus	What this intervention/project aims to achieve (its goal or main objective)
Study Design Category	Design category is: 1) Experimental 2) Quasi-experimental 3) Pre-experimental
Study Design Type	Design type used: 1) Randomized control trial 2) Between-groups pre- and post-test design with systematic assignment (matching) 3) Regression discontinuity 4) Interrupted time series 5) Case study/single subject 6) Post-test only with matching 7) Pre- and post-test design with one group 8) Pre- and post-test design that contains two groups without matching 9) Post-test design that contains two groups without matching 10) Post-test only with one group
Type of Data Collection	Methodological approach(es) used: 1) Quantitative 2) Qualitative 3) Mixed
Global Results Framework Result Area(s), Sub-Result Areas	Health, Learning, Protection, Livelihood Strengthening, Building Sustainability
Lessons Learned	Lessons learned and recommendations related to implementation, project design, evaluation process, scalability, sustainability, feasibility

¹ World Health Organization (2016). INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children. Geneva: Author. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/207717>

² Strouse, D. L., & Moore, K. (2019). Commentary: Contextualizing Alternatives to RCTs: Measuring the Impact of a Non-Governmental Sponsorship Organization’s Projects to Strengthen Children’s Supportive Environments. *New for child and adolescent development*, 2019(167), 141–158. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cad.20315>

Tiered Evidence Level Classification (see Table A-3). Using ChildFund’s tiered evidence levels across ChildFund’s Global Results Framework result areas (Health, Learning, Protection, Livelihood Strengthening, Building Sustainability), **programming evidence level (PRELIMINARY, PROMISING, EFFECTIVE)** was determined for each evaluation based on the program/intervention’s evaluation study design and related outcome findings (i.e., level of positive change). Within result areas and sub-result areas, data from coded reports were synthesized within and across region/country and time periods.

TABLE A-3

ChildFund’s Tiered Evidence Levels

As a continuation of our 2020 impact report, we base our results on level of rigor; evidence for specific outcomes is categorized as either preliminary, promising or effective.

PRELIMINARY

Qualitative or observational studies show positive change in enhancing an outcome related to ChildFund’s Global Results Framework.

PROMISING

A high- or moderate-quality impact study using a high-quality quasi-experimental design has found favorable, statistically significant impacts in an outcome related to ChildFund’s Global Results Framework.

EFFECTIVE

A study using an experimental study design (i.e., with random assignment to intervention and comparison/control groups) has found favorable, statistically significant impacts for an outcome related to ChildFund’s Global Results Framework.

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We thank the many thousands of colleagues, partners, supporters, children and families whom we honor and celebrate with the release of this impact report. Through this report we show our continued commitment to our core values: promoting positive outcomes for children; demonstrating integrity, openness, and honesty; upholding respect and value of the individual; championing diversity of thought and experience; fostering innovation and challenge; and proactively connecting and collaborating. We would like to especially thank the following:

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In Ecuador, a 4-year-old boy, who recovered from malnutrition through participating in the Growing with You program, waves to the camera.

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