

FY21 GHANA ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Children Believe Ghana, 2021

Front cover image: A young learner in Ghana smiles brightly as he holds his school exercise book. Photo by Philip Maher.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| BECE | Basic Education Certificate Examination |
| BREDA | Baptist Relief and Development Agency |
| CBO | Community-Based Organization |
| CFAM | Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology |
| CFK | ChildFund Korea |
| CIS | Community Information System |
| CLCD | Centre for Learning and Childhood Development |
| COE | Centre of Excellence |
| ECD | Early Childhood Development |
| FY21 | Fiscal Year 2020-2021 |
| GNACT | Ghana NGOs Against Child Trafficking |
| GNECC | Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| JHS | Junior High School |
| KOICA | Korean International Cooperation Agency |
| LTP | Learning Through Play |
| MMDAs | Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies |
| MNCH | Maternal, Newborn and Child Health |
| MoGCSP | Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection |
| NADMO | National Disaster Management Organization |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NHIS | National Health Insurance Scheme |
| PARDA | Participatory Action for Rural Development Alternatives |
| PC | Parent Committee |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment |
| PTA | Parent Teacher Association |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SMC | School Management Committee |
| TLMs | Teaching and Learning Materials |
| VSLA | Village Savings and Loans Associations |
| WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |
| YSLA | Youth Savings and Loans Associations |

FOREWORD

Children Believe Ghana began implementing our current three-year strategic plan in the fiscal year ending March 2020. In fiscal year 2020-2021 (FY21), the organization's focus remained on supporting children, families and communities by deepening our impact, increasing influence, growing income and maximizing improvement and innovation in pursuit of achieving our vision of giving every child a voice and the ability to achieve their full potential.

Children Believe Ghana is fortifying our efforts to improve inclusive, quality education and thereby reduce poverty, particularly in rural areas. We have continued on the path of making an impact in breaking systemic barriers that prevent children from achieving their dreams and aspirations.

As part of our work to increase our influence in fostering positive change for children, Children Believe has implemented a vigorous program to prioritize early childhood development (ECD). This past year we worked towards launching an ECD Centre of Excellence (COE).

ECD and the Learning Through Play (LTP) method, which Children Believe employs, aims to support the holistic development of children: health and physical well-being, social skills, emotional maturity, cognitive development, communication and general knowledge. In Ghana, we launched LTP with the firm belief that introducing it into the curriculum of ECD will help children ages five and younger get the best start in their development and on their journey to acquire education.

In FY21, our plan of action was thwarted by COVID-19. The pandemic posed a serious challenge to our work in communities, which led to a repurposing of our efforts in order to mitigate the virus' effects.

Thankfully, we were able to reach our supported communities with public education on the prevention of COVID-19, reduce stigmatization of people suspected of being infected and promote child protection and violence prevention when schools were closed. We were able to reach people through radio, community information centres and mobile vans at a time when contact with children and communities was restricted. In spite of the challenges, Children Believe Ghana achieved some remarkable successes.

In this report, you will read about the progress made in improving education, with an emphasis on inclusive, quality education – ensuring marginalized and vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, were not left out of formal education. When COVID-19 cases diminished and children returned to classrooms, Children Believe incorporated the Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology (CFAM) to ensure the voices of children were heard in decision-making processes and that duty-bearers were held accountable for their actions. This is how we have been breaking some of the barriers to education.

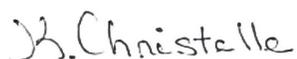
Additionally, the report covers our work supporting women in communities who are pushing for gender equality and our efforts to facilitate behaviour change towards women's participation in decision making in the traditionally patriarchal society of Northern Ghana.

Since the completion of our maternal, newborn and child health project called PROMISE, Children Believe continued to have a keen interest in maternal, newborn and child health. We worked closely with various institutions to carry out initiatives that ensured children could thrive and grow in supportive environments that foster their development.

FOREWORD cont.

We continue to collaborate with various stakeholders to promote the interests of children and work to ensure the capacities of key stakeholders are developed to support this important objective. Together, we are a force that can achieve great things in our mission to create a future of hope for children, families and communities.

Sincerely,



Mavalow Christelle Kalhoule
Director - West Africa, Children Believe



Esenam Kavi De Souza
Country Manager - Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towards our vision of creating a world where every child has a voice and the ability to achieve their full potential, Children Believe implemented a three-year strategy ending in 2022. Through this strategy, we have demonstrated our sustained commitment to breaking barriers to education affecting children, youth, families and communities in rural areas.

In fiscal year 2020-2021 (FY21), the second year of the strategy, we focused our work on education, particularly early childhood development (ECD), and formed a Centre of Excellence (COE).

Our work helped ensure children had access to quality education, which has the potential of reducing poverty and contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in education; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); health and other key areas of development by the 2030 target year.

For much of FY21, the COVID-19 pandemic had a serious impact on program delivery due to lockdowns and the fear of infection. Children Believe had to repurpose planned activities to ensure communities were sensitized and protected, which was aided by donations of personal protective equipment (PPE) that were distributed to the Ghana Health Service, health facilities and all schools in Children Believe operational areas.



To help keep our program communities safe, Children Believe Ghana distributed personal protective equipment to health facilities and schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towards program implementation and effectiveness, we added a new partner from the Upper East region, bringing the total number of partners to four, who delivered seven programs combined. One program directly implemented by the Children Believe Ghana office, graduated and the process of graduating a second program was advanced. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 and the direct implementation of programs, Children Believe recorded significant successes in the fulfilment of our FY21 plans.

In tandem with the three-year strategy, Children Believe Ghana continued providing inclusive, quality basic education through helping build school infrastructures, supplying materials and promoting Learning Through Play (LTP) in ECD centres and at the community level.

This resulted in 12,213 children gaining direct access to safe, equitable and inclusive learning environments, while young adults in Youth Savings and Loans Associations (YSLAs) received various vocational and skills training, enabling them to face life with hope.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in communities, Children Believe provided 456 handwashing facilities to 83 schools and 38 health facilities, serving a total of 178,000 community members. In Namongbani, access to sanitation facilities was improved for 797 in-school children, teachers and community members. Additionally, we provided thousands of PPE items across our operating communities, such as masks, hand sanitizer, tissue, cleaning detergents, etc. To ensure handwashing and other hygienic practices were adhered to, we furnished clean water systems for communities and schools, helping a total of 4,163 beneficiaries. Children Believe also supported the registration of 964 people on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) list.

Children Believe continues to champion child rights, protection and participation in decision-making processes. In the past year, 29,016 children in Ghana took part in various child-focused interventions geared towards their empowerment and creating positive change.

Gender equality work carried out by Children Believe Ghana in FY21 included training program staff on gender transformative approaches and creating equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making.

Additionally, we ran community campaigns to address gender inequality and harmful cultural practices with an aim to empower girls and encourage women's effective participation and economic independence.

The Ghana program continued to strengthen strategic collaborations and partnerships by engaging International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) as well as government agencies on advocacy issues and prioritizing ECD. As part of Children Believe's influencing work, an assessment of ECD centres in five regions was conducted and the findings disseminated. We brought together key stakeholders and collaborators in early development and helped them align with our work. Children Believe continued our membership with the INGO Forum and renewed our membership with the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) and several additional forums/groups to deepen our impact and raise issues that children face.



An early childhood development (ECD) centre in Cheyohé supported by Children Believe.

In FY21, Children Believe committed to providing equitable and quality education, establishing a COE focused on ECD/LTP and improving partnerships with children and youth for change. Sourcing funding to improve our work in communities has been difficult, but we will continue to pursue this until we are successful.

Ghana program impact and influence

For 25 years, Children Believe Ghana has been working to create a future of hope for children, families and communities by helping them develop the skills and resources to overcome poverty and pursue justice. We recognize education extends beyond the walls of classrooms and is the most powerful tool children can have to change their world. Therefore, we focus on breaking barriers to education and promoting inclusive, quality education for all, especially girls.

Children Believe Ghana's programs are implemented in three northern regions of the country: Savanna, Northern and Upper-East, covering 13 districts and 88 communities.

A total of 6,735 individual children are sponsored in the country and our program reaches a total of 144,619 community members (71,254 females and 73,365 males).

To continuously improve our work and ensure our programs have the desired impact, we consistently capture lessons learned and best practices. Key lessons learned include:

1. Effective collaboration with communities, state agencies and other development partners prevents duplication of efforts and improves program effectiveness and influence.
2. The prompt adaptation of Children Believe's programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic sustained the relevance of our program operations in serving the needs of beneficiary communities.
3. Lessons from the COVID-19 outbreak indicate that Children Believe needs to develop our internal capacity (systems and structures) on emergency response.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The best practices identified are:

Operational level

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities promotes accountability and effectiveness among team members, and this has a positive impact on program results.
- Regular supportive supervision of partner operations and providing feedback strengthens their capacity for improvement.
- Continuous innovation is required for program improvement and impact.

Program level

- Active participation of communities in the design, implementation and monitoring of program activities ensures interventions reach the intended beneficiaries. This must be encouraged at all times.
- Children Believe Ghana's effective collaboration with key government agencies, such as the district offices of the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and district assemblies, helped avoid duplication of efforts, promoted transparency and expanded Children Believe's visibility and influence.



Women work together to make Village Savings and Loans Associations a success in Ghana.

I – TOWARDS DISMANTLING BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

Increased access to early childhood development

Supporting quality education entails ensuring appropriate skills development; gender parity; the provision of relevant school infrastructure, equipment and educational materials; and the continuous sharpening of skills for the teaching force, including parents and caregivers in our program communities.

Education is at the root of SDG 4, which aims to secure education for all, starting from basic education. Children Believe Ghana and our partners contributed to achieving SDG 4 through our strategic objective of supporting the provision of inclusive, quality basic education.

In FY21, Children Believe Ghana, together with our partner Participatory Action for Rural Development Alternatives (PARDA), built a fully furnished ECD centre in Saboro in the Kassena-Nakana West District of the Upper East Region. Similarly, through the programs Children Believe directly implemented, we built two new ECD centres in Wambung in the Saboba District and Daboagshie in the North-East Gonja District. The three facilities were equipped with age-appropriate furniture, play equipment and Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) conducive to stimulating early learning. Through the LTP methodology, the learners' potential in creative expression, drawing, painting, role play or modelling are unleashed and lead to developmental advancements.



Children engaged in play at an ECD centre supported by Children Believe. Learning Through Play (LTP) is an effective method to encourage early development in young people.

In total, 254 age-appropriate chairs and 51 round tables were supplied to five ECD centres in Wambung, Saboro, Gbenia and Gushegu.¹ Teachers' tables (11) and chairs (17) were also supplied as part of the furnishing for the centres.

To facilitate the LTP sessions, three sets of outdoor play equipment, comprised of a slide, merry-go-round, swing and seesaw, were also provided. In addition, 1,700 LTP materials were given to healthcare professionals as part of our efforts to mainstream LTP into the delivery of key health services, including antenatal, postnatal and child healthcare. By increasing access to safer ECD centres, improving the supply of TLMs and training teachers, parents/caregivers and health workers, Children Believe and our partners contributed significantly to early childhood development in our program areas.

A total of 3,600 children (1,812 females and 1,788 males) aged three to five years were reached through 17 ECD facilities.

As part of our contribution towards inclusive, quality education, Children Believe Ghana and our partners invested in training teachers and caregivers on child-centred teaching and learning methodologies, in particular, LTP. The training targeted lower primary school (Grades 1 to 3) teachers and caregivers at the ECD centres. In FY21, 95 teachers (47 females, 48 males) were trained on the LTP methodology and improvisation of TLMs. One hundred and ninety-two parents/caregivers (72 females, 120 males) were trained on positive parenting for better child development.

Additionally, 770 parents/caregivers (301 females, 469 males) were taught about the barriers to education and their consequences, particularly for girls, such as boy-child preference, sexual abuse of girls and teenage pregnancies, early and forced marriages, and domestic chores affecting a girl's ability to attend or focus on school.

Increased access to equitable, quality primary and secondary education

While Children Believe Ghana prioritizes early development and learning in recognition of the importance of laying a solid foundation for adult life, support for other levels of education also received significant attention.

During the reporting period, Children Believe's partner, Baptist Relief and Development Agency (BREDA), constructed a three-unit primary school block in Bognaayili. Prior to the provision of the school block, Grade 1 and 2 students shared a classroom, making teaching and learning difficult as only one grade could be taught at a time. The additional three-unit classroom allowed a separation of the grades into individual classes, thereby creating a more conducive learning environment for all.

Children Believe also rehabilitated a three-unit classroom block for the Daboagshie primary school, which was previously in a deplorable state. Children Believe collaborated with the District Assembly to furnish the school. Additionally, one

¹ The Gbenia and Gushegu ECD centres are existing facilities that were only furnished in FY21.

three-unit junior high school (JHS) block was built for Gbanyamni in the Sagnarigu Municipality. Prior to the construction of the school block by Children Believe and our partner, Markaz Al-Bishara, classes were held under trees and in makeshift sheds provided by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

These primary and JHS blocks were furnished and supplied with textbooks and other learning materials. Providing decent infrastructure, age-appropriate furniture and TLMs have raised the quality of teaching and learning in the beneficiary schools. The total number of children between the ages of six and 14 who received direct support was 6,588 (2,959 females, 3,629 males) and the total was 1,845 (814 females, 1,031 males) for young people between 15 and 24 years.

In all, 48 schools (27 primary, 21 JHS) benefited from Children Believe Ghana's program initiatives in FY21.

Ghanaian schools accept all children, except those with disabilities requiring special educational support, such as brail learning or sign language. These children can attend special schools, although access is difficult. One girl from Children Believe Ghana's program, who is deaf, was attending a regular school. We identified this child's special needs during a monitoring visit to the community/school. The family is now being assisted by our partner staff to register the girl with the District Assembly Disability Unit so that she can enrol at the Savelugu School for the Deaf and achieve better educational outcomes.

Children Believe Ghana and our partners also strengthened our engagement with parents/caregivers on the need to protect children from all forms of abuse, violence and exploitation. During the pandemic school closures, 16 girls in our supported communities became pregnant. However, none were forced into a child marriage by their families, as would have likely been the case in the past. Thanks to the efforts of Children Believe Ghana and our partners, one of the girls returned to school and there is ongoing dialogue with the remaining girls and their families about the importance of education. The aim is to have all the girls return to school after giving birth.

Box 1: Success story - Dismantling barriers to education for vulnerable children

Girls living in rural communities in the Northern Ghana Region face a number of challenges accessing formal education. First, there is the traditional thinking that girls have no need of acquiring an education because they will ultimately end up consigned to the family kitchen. Second, the great distances children must travel to school on foot by themselves put girls at risk of violence or abuse. Third, issues like the lack of access to sanitary material or gender-appropriate sanitary facilities in schools, impedes girls' ability to attend.

Rachiya, a 15-year-old girl from Kpinchila faced all of these obstacles. Each day after spending time in the morning fetching water for the household, Rachiya would have to walk about three and half kilometres to Sakpelua to attend school – often arriving to class late and tired. In addition, her father always threatened to remove her from school. Then there were days that she would not go to school because of a lack of sanitary pads. "I always dreaded that time of the month," Rachiya says.

Fortunately, Children Believe’s local partner went to the school and engaged with the students about the challenges they faced. Rachiya recounts how we helped her overcome the barriers to her education by providing her and her friends with bicycles and Adolescent Reproductive Health kits. She said, “These items made me very confident that I can complete my basic education. Now I can reach the school in minutes and I don’t have to look at the back of my uniform, even during the week of my menses.” Through the work of Children Believe Ghana and our partners, many girls in Rachiya’s village are progressing steadily up the education ladder.

The girls and some of the local boys, who each received a bicycle, said their grades improved. With these interventions, many children are now taking more seriously the encouragement from Children Believe Ghana staff to dream bigger. The stories of Rachiya and other students are corroborated by the Sakpelua school Head Teacher, Mr. Alidu. He said:



Rachiya and the other students from Kpinchila improved their grades tremendously and I am hopeful they will do well in their examinations, too.”

The children, families and teachers all expressed much gratitude to Children Believe and our donors for the valuable support.

Increased access to technical, vocational and higher education

Vocational and livelihood skills development are a vital part of Children Believe interventions geared towards building self-reliance and alternative livelihood options, especially among youth. Skills development in the Ghana country program is provided in two ways: short term (mostly less than a month), such as soap making and baking; and long term (for up to three years), such as dressmaking, carpentry, weaving, hairdressing and welding. The long-term options particularly focus on supporting out-of-school youth.

Children Believe Ghana and our partners successfully supported 39 youths in FY21 with skills training, leading to self-employment and greater independence. Six female youths were engaged in sewing apprenticeships under PARDA in Chiana, 30 female youths were enrolled in the AG Care skills training centre in Bimbilla, two female youths were enrolled by Markaz Al-Bishara and one male youth was enrolled in carpentry. Additionally, ten girls who successfully completed the AG Care skills training course in Bimbilla received their start-up business packs in FY21 and are currently in various locations working on their trade.

TABLE 1: REACH OF CHILDREN BELIEVE GHANA'S EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

| Children Believe's education and vocational programs have supported young people and women living in fragile, vulnerable and marginalized communities to dismantle barriers and access inclusive, quality education and training | FY21 Country Target | FY21 Country Actual |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| # of boys, girls and young women and men who benefited from increased and sustained access to inclusive, quality education/vocational skills development | 10,306 | 12,213 |

Helping children continue their learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

Following the COVID-19 outbreak in Ghana, the government ordered the closure of most public institutions, including schools, as a containment measure. The 11-month closure disrupted the academic year. While schools were closed, Grade 9 students due to take their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) were required to return to school for a period of six weeks under very strict measures to prepare for the exam. Grade 8 students also returned to school for the same duration to complete their syllabus and write their promotional exams.

To help keep students and school staff safe, Children Believe Ghana and our partners supplied PPE and hygiene materials during that period. A total of 2,541 BECE candidates, Grade 8 students and teachers (1,015 females, 1,526 males) across all of our program schools were each given two washable masks and two 250ml bottles of hand sanitizer. Each school was also provided with two handwashing facilities, tissue paper and two gallons of liquid soap. For children living in remote places where radio/FM coverage was scarce, two of our programs established Community Information Systems (CIS) to help deliver instructions on the use of the protective supplies they received.

To help Grade 9 students from our supported schools catch up on lost time and ready themselves for their exam, Children Believe Ghana and our partners payed allowances to teachers to hold extra two-hour classes every school day.

Apart from the above, our partners AG Care, Markaz Al-Bishara and BREDA acquired and distributed 42,660 educational materials to 7,309 students (3,658 girls, 3,651 boys) in ECD centres and lower primary schools in our program communities.

The objective was to involve children in some form of learning and maintain their interest in school during the pandemic lockdown.

With schools closed, this was important as children had too much idle time on their hands, while others moved away to bigger towns and cities to engage in work to support their families financially. The introduction of community learning sessions helped children to stay in their home communities and continue engaging in learning until schools reopened. Community animators facilitated the learning sessions within their respective locations.

II – ENSURING CHILDREN LIVE IN HEALTHY AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

Increased access and use of newborn and maternal health services, and improved nutritional intake

The COVID-19 pandemic created fear about the safety of health facilities in Ghana as the number of health workers becoming infected with the virus began to rise. As a result, there was a significant drop in people seeking essential health services, including maternal, newborn and child services like skilled delivery and antenatal, postnatal and child healthcare.

To help protect health workers and rebuild trust in the safety of accessing essential services like Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH), Children Believe Ghana and our partners supported 35 health facilities in our program communities with the provision of PPE.

Items included disposable masks, examination gloves, doctor's scrubs and overalls/coveralls, as well as other critical supplies, such as infrared thermometers, liquid soap, sanitizers and handwashing facilities. An additional three health facilities were supported with PPE and hygiene materials in the Greater Accra Region through a COVID-19-response project funded by ChildFund Korea (CFK). Also, through the support of CFK, 964 vulnerable individuals' (including children, pregnant and lactating mothers) health insurance premiums were paid, enabling them to access healthcare under the Ghana National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).



A supply of personal protective equipment and other health resources donated to a local health facility. Children Believe and our local partners ensured health facilities received the necessary resources and training needed to continue providing essential health services.

One group of 964 vulnerable individuals (children, pregnant women and lactating mothers) in the Greater Accra Region was identified and supported to access healthcare through the payment of their insurance premiums under the Ghana National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Of the total number supported, 419 were newly registered, 517 people were able to renew their NHIS cards and 28 had their lost/expired NHIS cards replaced.

In FY21, under Children Believe Ghana’s core program, 3,428 vulnerable households with a total of 17,140 members were provided with food aid. Through the CFK-supported COVID-19-response project implemented in Accra in collaboration with AG Care, 400 households with 2,000 individuals received food rations and cash transfers for three months to boost their nutritional intake. Rice, canned fish, peas and cooking oil were supplied.

Beneficiaries were selected with the government’s Department of Social Welfare, Parent Committees (PCs), community animators and district assembly members in selected communities. Households receiving help included single/female-headed households, grandparent-led households, persons with disabilities and seniors. In total 19,140 individuals were nutritionally supported over FY21.

TABLE 2: REACH OF CHILDREN BELIEVE GHANA’S MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH INITIATIVES

| Children Believe improved maternal, newborn and child health and nutritional intake through the increased use of maternal/child health services and reduction of harmful practices in target communities | FY21 Country Target | FY21 Country Actual |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| # of children, young women and mothers who improved their use of maternal and newborn professional healthcare services and their nutritional intake | 16,540 | 19,140 |

COVID-19 protection and increased access to clean water and sanitation facilities in health and education institutions

Prior to the pandemic, Children Believe and our partners used durbars² and other forms of in-person gatherings to engage communities, including children in schools. However, the pandemic restricted the use of these traditional methods for engagement. Facing a quick spreading virus and a poorly resourced government that concentrated their education and awareness efforts in urban communities, Children Believe and our partners moved quickly to employ strategies to disseminate critical prevention information. Information included explaining the symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if someone is suspected to have been exposed to the virus.

Tactics involved deploying information vans/mobile speaker systems and praise singers to program communities, which are largely rural, and radio/FM broadcasts, where possible.

We conducted 107 radio sessions/programs on COVID-19 campaigns targeting program communities and 56 engagement sessions with information vans and/or praise singers to inform, educate and empower people with the needed information to contain the spread of the virus.

² Durbars are gatherings of Chiefs and people of a community.

Six Community Information Systems (CISs) were established in areas where radio broadcast was limited. The praise singer's live education events were recorded and replayed over the CISs and targeted messages on child protection, gender-based violence and health-seeking behaviours under COVID-19 protocols were also shared.

The CISs were so effective that they were adopted by the Ghana Health Service for information sharing and by sponsorship animators to make important announcements to communities. In a meeting, the health professional in-charge of the facility in Pusuga said, "Although the CIS was meant for COVID-19 education, it has become helpful in passing on information especially on antenatal care, postnatal care, family planning and child welfare/immunization services within our catchment area." He went on to say that, "Now information spreads quickly and saves time." He lauded the initiative, stating that it is very useful and encourages others to adopt it.

With our partners, Children Believe also trained 528 community leaders and health volunteers (134 females, 394 males) to support house-to-house education, the tracking of travelers and visitors going in and out of communities, and reporting suspected cases of COVID-19 to health professionals for follow-up actions.

Front-line health professionals in Ghana were among the groups at highest risk of COVID-19 infection as they often worked with limited PPE due to inadequate supplies. While the national government announced plans to provide the needed supplies for health workers, it prioritized isolation centres, resulting in slow and inadequate support to rural areas.

Children Believe Ghana and our partners responded by securing and distributing 25,862 pieces of reusable face masks, disposable surgical masks, disposable surgical gloves, doctor's scrubs, overalls and face shields to 38 health facilities to ensure their health professionals were protected and reduce the risk of spreading the virus. In addition, 27 infrared thermometers were provided to facilitate physical distancing during examinations. Further, we organized and trained 77 health workers (29 females, 48 males) to continue providing essential health services, such as those related to MNCH, during the pandemic.

Apart from PPE, Children Believe Ghana and our partners procured and distributed 318 handwashing facilities to institutions across all of our program communities.

Handwashing facilities were furnished with soap, tissue paper and hand sanitizer. Sixty-four schools and 38 health facilities serving more than 178,000 people were supported. As well, the five new schools constructed in FY21 came with newly built sanitary facilities (toilets and urinals) for boys and girls, separately. This will go a long way to increasing the hygiene and sanitation at schools and in the broader community.

Access to clean water remains a critical development gap in rural communities in Ghana and was a major concern in relation to COVID-19 prevention. In response to the challenge, Children Believe Ghana constructed three new boreholes and fitted them with pumps. They provided access to clean drinking water for 4,163 people in the Bongnaayili, Sanga and Zanzugu-Yepala communities. But while these facilities improved the water situation, more needs to be done as the number of people accessing the facility in each of the three communities is very large. Nonetheless, the boreholes led to a reduction in time spent fetching water from around one hour to 20 minutes. Most importantly, there is now clean drinking water for communities.



Children Believe supported the construction of boreholes in our operational areas to ensure communities had access to clean water.

Through the collaborative effort of Children Believe Ghana, our partners and the government, no cases of COVID-19 infection were recorded in our supported communities. We attribute this to the vigorous educational campaigns and the targeted supply of PPE and hygiene materials to the most vulnerable groups and health facilities, enabling the safe delivery of essential health services like MNCH in the Northern, Savannah, Upper-East and Greater Accra Regions.

Children Believe Ghana's COVID-19-response initiatives reached 179,468 direct and indirect beneficiaries. This includes 85,838 children (42,814 girls, 43,024 boys) and 93,630 adults (46,815 females, 46,815 males).

III – ADVANCING CHILD RIGHTS, PARTICIPATION AND PROTECTION

Sustained community actions and proactive engagement of community-based organizations to end violence against children

In Ghana, schoolteachers play a major role in children's development and are relied on by most parents for the time, training and protection they invest in children. The 11-month pandemic school closure was the longest period of time children had to stay at home and in the absence of formal guidance from teachers. Parents and communities needed support to cope with this challenging situation. To mitigate the problem of kids being completely cut off from learning, Children Believe Ghana and our partners engaged children, parents and caregivers through education over radio and the CISs. In addition to school lessons, we educated children and families on stopping and preventing child abuse, exploitation, trafficking, child marriage and other forms of violence.

Over the past year, 243 PC members, child protection volunteers and animators (109 females, 134 males) received education on child protection (in relation to COVID-19).

Another 291 adults (140 females, 151 males) were trained on parenting skills including supporting and providing for the basic needs of children, with a particular focus on girls.

Participants primarily included leaders of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), such as those from PTAs, YSLAs and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) who were engaged in child protection by supporting the education of other parents and caregivers in their communities.

Parents and caregivers who received training and education were aware of pregnant teenaged girls in their communities. Twelve of the girls were made to marry by their families as a result of becoming pregnant, however, the trained parents/caregivers prevented the child marriage of 38 pregnant girls by effectively engaging with the girls' parents. Further, the efforts led to one girl in Zayuri returning to school after giving birth. Through such engagement initiatives in Children Believe-supported communities in Ghana, parents are becoming more aware of the health, education and future life consequences of forcing their underage daughters to marry when becoming pregnant.

Box 2: Success story - Protecting and nurturing children

Through our continuous engagement with parents, caregivers and children on barriers to education, 15-year old Adamu Mohammed from Zayuri, now a mother of a baby girl, is back to school after giving birth. While schools were closed because of COVID-19, she became pregnant and gave birth. Unlike girls from other local families, Adamu was not forced to marry early, nor was she punished for becoming pregnant and having a child. Rather, she was encouraged and supported by her family in taking care of her baby while

Adamu continued to her education. Mr. Mohammed, Adamu’s father, is clear about why he supports his daughter, saying:



We all make mistakes, and if God were to punish all sinners, by now the world would have been emptied. She is young and intelligent. I don’t want this issue to destroy her future.”

Adamu is back in the classroom with her fellow Grade 7 students at Zayuri Anglican Junior High School. Mohammed indicated that Adamu is now more serious about her education than ever before to ensure she can support her child, and because of the encouragement Children Believe and our partner gave her to stay in school.

Following Adamu’s case of teenage pregnancy and several others, the program community of Gbanyamni instituted a bylaw to contribute to the safety of children in the community. It was endorsed by the community chief and youth leader, and prohibits children from being out late at night. A task force patrols the community after 10:30 p.m. to enforce the bylaw.

The initiative is a step in the right direction for this community because it demonstrates that lessons have been learned by parents and community members about taking the duties of protecting and nurturing children to heart. It serves as motivation for Children Believe and our partners to continue engaging with community leaders about child protection issues.

Children Believe Ghana and our partners engaged community groups, such as child protection committees, animators, YSLAs, VSLAs, PTAs, School Management Committees (SMCs) and traditional leaders, to watch for and promptly identify, respond to and refer cases of abuse, neglect, violence and/or exploitation of children. This combined effort from 534 parents and caregivers who were trained on child protection and parenting resulted in the safeguarding 8,313 children (4,656 girls, 3,657 boys) from abuse and exploitation.

Recognizing the higher risk of abuse during a very challenging year, Children Believe Ghana incorporated the Child-Friendly Accountability Methodology (CFAM) in two program areas, seeking the participation of children in addressing and mitigating issues that affect them. When the ban on gatherings was eased, children engaged in activities such as child-friendly accountability club orientation sessions, group meetings and the organization of a Regional Children’s Forum.

Regional Children’s Forum

As part of engaging and empowering children and youth to demand their rights, 1,180 children and youth (450 females, 730 males) from seven child-friendly accountability groups and five YSLAs participated in the inaugural Regional Children’s Forum dubbed “Election 2020: A win for Children” held in Tamale on November 25, 2020.

The forum was a platform for children and youth to highlight key issues affecting their development that were missing from the manifestos of political parties and to demand accountability from duty-bearers in relation to their rights and protection. In attendance were the heads of government department agencies responsible for child protection; political party representatives; the representative of the Northern Regional Minister; the representative of the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP); traditional leaders; UNICEF and other like-minded organizations, such as Right to Play and Lively Minds.

Children used the forum to call for peace during the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections, and appealed to political leaders to prioritize child protection and participation in their policies and programs. The young people presented a communique to the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, and were received by her representative, the Northern Regional Director of the Department of Children.



A young person at the Regional Children's Forum presents a communique for stronger child protection to the government.

As part of the CFAM initiative in FY21, 13 child-friendly accountability groups consisting of 570 members in total (285 females, 285 males) were formed. We engaged them on the model, relevant child protection policies, processes, structures, as well as the roles and responsibilities of members and stakeholders. At the community level, 130 stakeholders (13 females, 117 males), mainly community leaders and child protection committee members, and 32 CFAM facilitators (9 females, 23 males), patrons and community animators, were supported in improving their ability to end child abuse and exploitation. Supports included training on national child protection policies and being linked to agencies of state- and district-level child protection committees. Directly, 12 staff from government agencies (5 females, 7 males) were trained on the CFAM and processes to gain buy-in and support for needed changes to improve protection. The training activities contributed to the passing of a bylaw in Zayuri against child neglect in the community.

Children Believe recognizes the need to strengthen the capacity of our staff and partners to effectively prevent and stand against all forms of child abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence. To this end, we held a two-day training session for 60 Ghana office and partner staff (7 females, 53 males), who received instruction on the country's laws, policies, structures, systems and the functioning of key government agencies in promoting child protection. The participants were also trained on Children Believe's child protection/safeguarding and Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policies as well as the CFAM model.

Through the knowledge and skills acquired from the trainings, staff became more vigilant towards child rights/protection violations and helped engage the appropriate authorities in addressing suspected and identified issues.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF PEOPLE CHILDREN BELIEVE GHANA ENGAGED IN CHILD PROTECTION

| Child rights and protection are a central focus of Children Believe’s work. We work with local communities to provide education and develop strong protection systems | FY21 Country Target | FY21 Country Actual |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| # of children/youth, parents, caregivers or duty-bearers who promoted child rights and mitigated/prevented all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse against children | 4,513 | 5,228 |

Improved sexual reproductive health, personal and menstrual hygiene education

With schools closed and a lack of access to hygiene and health materials, our program partners secured and distributed personal hygiene items to 3,513 adolescents (2,087 females, 1,426 males). These items included sanitary pads, face masks, toothbrushes, toothpaste and shaving sticks.

The distribution of sanitary items was preceded by educational talks on sexual and reproductive health. Topics included adolescent development, pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted infections and menstrual hygiene. The sessions helped to meaningfully engage adolescents and provided an opportunity to link them to health professionals for further support and services.



Personal hygiene items were distributed by Children Believe to adolescents, supporting their ability to maintain good health.

IV – PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN

To create more opportunities in Children Believe-supported communities for women to lead at all levels of decision making in social, economic and public life, our CBOs were asked to ensure gender balance in their executive positions. For community organizations like VSLAs, almost all executive positions are now held by women. There is also 5:4 male to female ratio in PCs, among PTA executives and WASH committee executives across all of our program committees.

To support this direction in FY21, 445 gender champions (223 females, 222 males) were trained on women’s leadership and girl empowerment.

Champions were selected from all operational communities to ensure broad understanding and grassroots action to address the gender gap and discrimination towards females. The election of female chiefs in some parts of our areas of operation was a key action our programs leveraged to ensure gender equality, especially in decision making.

Contributing to the enforcement of gender-sensitive policies, legislation or strategies that help women realize their equal right to economic resources, financial services, inheritance and natural resources in communities, Children Believe Ghana held a three-day workshop on gender transformative programming. All 16 country office and partner program staff (2 females, 14 males) participated and improved their knowledge and understanding about the topic, including relevant actions, policies, tools and approaches to deal with the root causes and challenges of development in our communities. The training strengthened the capacity of the Children Believe Ghana office and partners to identify, analyze, design and implement interventions that help dismantle gender inequality and discrimination in our communities.

TABLE 4: NUMBER OF PEOPLE CHILDREN BELIEVE GHANA ENGAGED IN GENDER EQUALITY EFFORTS

| Children Believe’s programs facilitate the creation of spaces and opportunities for young women and mothers, ensuring their voices are heard in societal decision-making processes that affect their lives | FY21 Country Target | FY21 Country Actual |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| # of girls, women and other community members who promoted the collective rights of girls and women, and prevented child marriage and other forms of gender-discriminatory norms and practices | 300 | 445 |

In addition, our partners held community dialogues to promote girls’ and women’s rights, particularly on economic empowerment and access to resources, such as land for farming. Communities were sensitized on the government’s education strategy, which encourages teenaged mothers to return to school and urges families to allow their pregnant daughters to return to school after giving birth instead of forcing them to marry while still a child. The dialogues were held in 58 program communities. Children Believe Ghana and our partners have been providing livelihood support for families and individuals over the years through skills training and seed funding. To empower women, economic power was promoted as a key factor for inclusion in decision making at the community level. In collaboration with AG Care Ghana, under the Nanumba Child Development Program, 10 women selected from VSLA groups were trained and given start-up capital for their baking and pastry making ventures.

Box 3: Success story - Empowering women through secured livelihoods

Madam Laabe Shahadu is a wife and mother of four from Binda in the Nanumba South District. Today, she has a prosperous business. “I serve my community at shops in Yendi, Bimbilla and Nakpayili with pastries and other fried offerings like breadfruit and groundnut,” she says.

Prior to participating in Children Believe’s livelihood-support initiatives, Madam Laabe was a petty trader selling yams and earning an average of c30 GH a week (about \$6 CAD). She now uses a 5 kg bag of flour every week to make and sell her savoury pastries from her retail shops. For each bag of flour used, she says, “I make a profit of between c90-100 GH (about \$18-20 CAD) a week.”

“From the day I received my start-up kit after the training, it has been a blessing to me and my family. I can now support my husband and children both at school and at home. It used to be very difficult for me as a mother of four children and second wife of a husband who is a farmer to support all my children in school, but now all of them have the basic essentials to receive an education. I got them new sandals, good school bags, books, and they also carry some pastries to school to eat when they are hungry,” Madam Laabe says.

To grow her business, Madam Laabe stated, “I am involving others. Two of my daughters are able to mix and fry the pastries in addition to a lady who is helping me, so I am training others to help me expand production because there is demand. This gives my co-workers income, too. In my community,

the only apprenticeship programs are in dressmaking and the yam trade, but now girls want to learn about the pastry business. I would also like to learn more baking recipes to expand my offerings.”

In talking about how this has affected her savings, she stated, “I used to save a maximum of c5 GH a week from my yam business and now I save up to c20 GH a week from my pastry business. I was previously afraid to take a loan, but now I have received loans twice and paid them before the required time, and that has helped me buy and stock at least five bags of flour and four gallons of frying oil for my business.” Madam Laabe explained further, “Due to changing my business venture from yams to pastries, my income has increased, the family is comfortable and I’ve gained more respect.” She expressed, “The training was a blessing to me and my children. God bless AG Care, Children Believe and everyone involved in making this possible.”



Madam Laabe at her home in Binda rolling out dough for her successful pastry business. To help empower women, Children Believe Ghana and our partners provide training and create opportunities for women to build secure livelihoods.

V – PARTNERING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR CHANGE

As part of the kick-off for the CFAM in Ghana, stakeholders were trained on child- and youth-friendly legislations and policies. This included:

- 1. Training program staff on child protection laws and policies:** A two-day training workshop that covered national child protection laws and policies, Children Believe's child safeguarding and protection policy, PSEA policy and the CFAM. The workshop, partly facilitated by the regional director of the Department of Children, offered insight on local laws and policies relevant to Children Believe's operations and how the CFAM protects children and youth through their active engagement. In all, the knowledge of 60 staff (7 females, 53 males) on relevant child/youth-friendly legislation was enhanced through the training, and the capacity of Children Believe staff to advance child rights and participation was improved.
- 2. Training stakeholders:** To strengthen the capacity of key players on child protection, 130 stakeholders (13 females, 117 males) were engaged on how the community could actively support and promote child protection through child participation using the CFAM. Additionally, 12 staff from government agencies (5 females, 7 males) were educated on the CFAM model. This strengthened their collaboration with Children Believe and our partners to enhance child protection in our program communities.

Regional level

Campaigns offer positive and effective ways of informing the general public about various topics. In order to educate the public on the need to have children actively participate in addressing issues that affect them, a Regional Children's Forum on child protection was held. The event, led by the child-friendly accountability groups, highlighted key issues affecting the rights of children in relation to their participation, education, health and nutrition.



Young members from a child-friendly accountability club supported by Children Believe attend a forum to raise issues affecting their development.

In total, 120 child-friendly accountability group members (60 females, 60 males) and 80 duty-bearers (39 females, 41 males), including regional and district child protection officers, political leaders and staff from like-minded international and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), were engaged in political manifestos from the lens of children.

In a statement read by one child, children demanded that their views and issues be prioritized by the next government to create a better future for Ghana.

Community level

In the past year, Children Believe Ghana and our partners conducted campaigns in 84 program communities about child rights and protection, and the roles and responsibilities of parents and caregivers. The intention was to discourage harmful cultural norms and behaviours related to violence against children, which are perpetuated by religion, traditions and cultural practices. The campaigns focused on local issues and directly engaged affected populations. Among the issues discussed were vagrancy, kayayees,³ neglect, domestic violence, poor supervision and the practice of sending children away to serve as babysitters in cities and towns with relatives. Content on sex education, teenage pregnancy, early and forced marriages, and educating girls was also included.

In FY21, Children Believe and our partners formed and provided orientations for child-friendly accountability groups as a strategy to build the agency of children to demand accountability from duty-bearers. Thirteen groups were established in two pilot districts and had a total of 390 members (195 females, 195 males). They further disseminated information on selected laws, policies and structures to other children in their communities. At the end of FY21, 3,215 children (1,672 girls, 1,543 boys) were reached.

TABLE 5: NUMBER OF YOUTH EMPOWERED THROUGH CHILDREN BELIEVE GHANA’S CHILD/YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES

| Children Believe’s programs have helped establish new networks, promoted collaboration and supported the work of child/youth agencies | FY21 Country Target | FY21 Country Actual |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| # of adolescent boys and girls who meaningfully participated in and led child/youth agencies to promote their rights, amplify their voices and increase their influence in policy or actions that affect their future | 390 | 120 |

³ Kayaye is Ghanaian term referring to a girl or woman who works as a head potter in market places of large cities. They carry the loads of shoppers for a fee.

VI – CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

In FY21, Children Believe Ghana completed two major activities in connection with the ECD Centre of Excellence (COE): the completion of an ECD situational assessment and sharing our findings at an ECD stakeholders forum (dissemination workshop) organized by our office.

Situational assessment of ECD in five regions of Northern Ghana

The situational assessment was commissioned in January 2021 and completed in March of the same year. We sought to review and analyze ECD initiatives at the family, community, district, regional and national levels. The objectives were to: evaluate the relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability of Children Believe's initiatives in ECD/LTP; map out/identify ECD initiatives by other stakeholders; and identify gaps and opportunities for our ECD program's improvement and policy influencing in Ghana. All three objectives were met.

The results affirm the relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability of our ECD program in our areas of operation in Ghana.

They also highlight the need to strengthen the health component of our program and extend it to the North-East and Upper-West Regions, where Children Believe currently does not have a presence. The intention is to firmly establish Children Believe as a leading organization in ECD in Northern Ghana.

The organizational mapping conducted in the assessment was a key step in helping to realize the ECD networks/committees we plan to establish in FY22, and the gaps and areas of improvement identified will influence Ghana's ECD programming in the coming years. The assessment report also serves as a resource to develop a West Africa case study to be completed in the new fiscal year.

Dissemination workshop

Children Believe Ghana organized and hosted a forum/dissemination workshop for ECD stakeholders on March 26, 2021. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Share the key findings of the ECD assessment with partners and stakeholders;
- Receive input to enrich Children Believe's ECD programming; and
- Set the stage for the creation of a platform for inter-sectoral collaboration on ECD in the five regions of Northern Ghana.

In total, 91 participants (46 females, 45 males) attended the workshop, the majority of whom were heads of government institutions from the Ghana Education Service, Ghana Health Service, Department of Children and Department of Social Welfare. Selected heads of Colleges of Education, the Faculty of Education from the University for Development and other NGO representatives working in the area of ECD, also took part.

An important outcome of the workshop was the heightened interest achieved in the LTP methodology among participating stakeholders, and their recognition of the need for inter-sectoral collaboration on ECD.

The workshop was a significant opportunity for Children Believe Ghana to showcase our ECD initiatives and share results, lessons and plans for the coming fiscal year where we will implement our FY22 COE plan.



Participants of Children Believe Ghana's ECD dissemination workshop. The workshop was an important opportunity to share key learnings, improve ECD activities and promote inter-sectoral collaboration.

VII – STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

In FY21, Children Believe Ghana and our partners continued to work diligently to empower children and advocate for their rights, protection and participation in networks and various stakeholder engagements at national, regional and district levels.

Over the course of the reporting period, Children Believe launched its new brand in Ghana. This provided an opportunity to have the Northern Regional Minister; the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection; the Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana and the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana to participate (virtually) in our programs. The brand launch also opened opportunities for further engagement with the respective offices of participating dignitaries.

Children Believe Ghana participated in a review of the first draft of the National Early Childhood Care and Development policy through our membership in the Technical Review Committee established by Ghana's Department of Children.

We reactivated our membership in the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) and actively participated in the activities of the Ghana International Non-Governmental Organization Forum, which is made up of major INGOs operating in the country. The forum provided a platform to share, learn and collaborate on national efforts.

This year, the INGOs supported government efforts to develop the Not-For-Profit Policy in Ghana, and Children Believe Ghana was involved in the review of the draft. Through this platform, we worked with other INGOs to continue to advocate for children and women, contributing towards Ghana's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To share learnings from the implementation of ECDs at the regional level, Children Believe brought together key stakeholders in ECD for the first time, including the Ghana Health Service, Department of Community Development, Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Children, among others. The initiative was a platform for finding ways of improving ECD, highlighting the need for inter-sectoral collaboration, and helped position Children Believe as a lead organization and COE in ECD.

In the Northern Region, we remained a key member of the collective for child protection and worked closely with INGOs like World Vision, ActionAid, Camfed and Right to Play to avoid the duplication of efforts.

At the district level, we continued to work with government agencies, namely the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to improve life for people in our supported communities. Children Believe Ghana and these government agencies formed and launched seven child protection committees to ensure key structures are in place to further national goals on child protection.

Children Believe is a founding member of Ghana NGOs Against Child Trafficking (GNACT). This group raises issues around child abuse, particularly child trafficking, at the national level and engages with government actors, especially executives, legislature and judiciaries. As a GNACT member, there is an agreement to partner with member NGOs for fundraising/joint submissions on child protection when an opportunity presents itself.

Through our various attempts at using a consortium approach to win grants, we have made connections and engaged with a number of organizations, creating prospects for future collaborations to benefit children.

Some of these organizations include the Coalition of Child Rights, Child Rights International and Mission of Hope. In FY21, Children Believe Ghana collaborated with ChildFund Korea to engage the country office of the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in Accra on possible funding opportunities. Follow-up discussions will continue in FY22.

With Children Believe Ghana's active participation in the activities of child-focused networks, we enhanced our status and facilitated engagement with the Centre for Learning and Childhood Development (CLCD). As a result, we developed a partnership with CLCD for an Education Out Loud initiative.

Strengthening our collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders is an essential strategy in our mission to build a better future for children. Despite the impact of COVID-19 and our need to readjust our efforts, we continued to effectively develop our connections and relationships. Our achievements in FY21 has put Children Believe Ghana in a strong position to advance our work, visibility and impact in FY22.

ANNEX I

Annex I: Children Believe Ghana's implementing partners

| Partner | Operation |
|--|---|
| AG Care Ghana | AG Care, the development wing of the Assemblies of God church in Ghana, has been a partner of Children Believe since 1998. Their program priority is to promote the holistic development of children and women by providing and influencing access to education, recreation, healthcare, good nutrition, safe drinking water, sanitation, improved life skills, and participation in governance and peace building services in partnership with families, communities, and local, national and international organizations. AG Care manages two of the seven country programs: Nanumba Child Development Program 0505, which operates in the Nanumba North Municipality and Nanumba South District, and the Yendi Area Child Development Program 0507 in the Yendi Municipality of the Northern Region of Ghana. They have eight staff members and an annual program budget of \$271,920 CAD. |
| Baptist Relief and Development Agency (BREDA) | BREDA, the development arm of the Ghana Baptist Convention (GBC), has been a partner of Children Believe since 2000. Their program priority is to improve the standard of living of communities through the social, economic and spiritual empowerment of vulnerable families, and they work in the areas of education, water and sanitation, hygiene, health promotion and behaviour change advocacy, alternative livelihood enhancement, child protection, and gender and development. BREDA currently operates two programs: BREDA/Baptist Child Development Project 0504 in the Kumbungu Municipality of the Northern Region and the Central Gonja District of the Savanna Region, as well as the Tahima Baptist Relief and Development Program 0509 in the Tolon District and Sagnerigu Municipality of the Northern Region. They have nine staff members and an annual budget of \$331,980 CAD. |
| Markaz Al-Bishara (MAB) | MAB has been a partner of Children Believe since 1997. Their program priority is to mobilize human, material and financial resources with communities to fight poverty, hunger, disease and exploitation in underserved communities, and work towards a just and equitable society where children, women and youth can realize their full potential for national development. MAB works in the area of education, recreation, healthcare, good nutrition, safe drinking water, sanitation, life skills development and participation in governance. They operate two programs: Markaz Al Bishara Child Development Program 0501 in the Sagnerigu Municipality and Gushegu Child Development Program 0508 in the Gushegu District in the Northern Region. Currently, they have 10 staff members and an annual budget of \$251,130 CAD. |
| Participatory Action for Rural Development Alternatives (PARDA) | Children Believe entered into a partnership with PARDA in 2020. Their program priority is to promote quality of life through sustainable development alternatives and they work in the areas of community well-being and social services, community agriculture intensification and food security, community management of extractives and energy saving initiatives, and child sponsorship. PARDA manages the Chuchuliga Chiana Area Child Development Program 0512 in the Upper East Region. They have five staff members and an annual budget of \$241,727 CAD. |



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

A member of ChildFund Alliance, Children Believe is part of a global network of 12 child-focused development organizations working to create opportunities for children and youth, their families and communities. ChildFund helps nearly 23-million children and their families in more than 70 countries overcome poverty and underlying conditions that prevent children from achieving their full potential. We work to end violence against children; provide expertise in emergencies and disasters to ease the harmful impact on children and their communities; and engage children and youth to create lasting change and elevate their voices in decisions that affect their lives.

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