



Strategic Plan FY22 – FY25

United to End Violence against Children

(working title)

Board Meeting / June 2021

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Introduction

ChildFund Alliance launched its strategy development process in May 2019 with an explicit criteria for success: to develop a strategic plan that will create clear positive impact for children and value for all members. We also endeavored to reinvigorate our sense of unity and pride as members of the Alliance, pledging to create a plan to which all members felt a sense of ownership and commitment.

“Being part of [the Alliance] can allow you to have a more authoritative voice before multinational organizations, access more resources, and have a better reputation. However, this has not been visible in all countries and in all member organizations. The new strategy... must ensure that it reaches all levels and with all members.”

Although unforeseen when we started this process, the global experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has only reinforced our belief in the importance of unity in our endeavors. Throughout the past 15 months, we witnessed extraordinary and seemingly impossible advances throughout the world as people joined together to combat this deadly virus. Competitors collaborated to develop, manufacture and distribute vaccines with unprecedented speed. Communities banded together to provide supplies and medical care for one another. Alliance members joined together in our first ever joint fundraising appeal directed at marshalling our collective resources to address the impacts of the pandemic in countries where we operate.

For this reason, we feel confident the commitment we made at the start of this process—to create a strategy that creates measurable and specific impact for children through unified action across the Alliance—is as relevant for our new global reality as when we started this journey two years ago. Our new plan for fiscal years 2022-2025 focuses on three strategic priorities: Addressing Emerging Threats to Children’s Safety; Working Together as One; and Building Partnerships for Sustainable Impact and Growth.

With the first priority, the Alliance reasserts our long-standing commitment to ending violence against children (EVAC). We aim to draw on our past successes in advocacy directed towards child protection and empowering children to make their voices heard on issues that matter most to them. In particular, we seek to build on investments made in the last strategy period FY16- FY21. These include enhancing the ability of children to effectively participate in decision-making (e.g., through our Child-friendly Accountability initiative), and for all ChildFund members to undertake advocacy that contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16.2 (end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children).

In our strategic priority **Addressing Emerging Threats to Children’s Safety**, we outline our ambitions to positively impact children’s lives by tackling risks that are currently affecting millions of children and are projected to impact exponentially more children in the future. Our first EVAC related campaign, anticipated to be a two-year or more effort, will focus on Online Safety. This campaign will endeavor to support and empower children to access and benefit from the opportunities offered in an online environment, while mitigating the mounting dangers children and young people face in an increasingly connected world.

Given the Alliance’s commitment to leveraging our collective resources, it is not surprising then, that members have identified **Working Together as One** as our second strategic priority. In adopting a theme of unified action, we outline eight principles that guide our collective efforts with and for children, and how we aim to keep these principles alive in our interactions and endeavors. This commitment to work together, and the values behind our principles, deeply informed the work outlined throughout this plan.

By building on past investments in partnership and grant development, we will be expanding efforts to support all members to positively impact more children through our third strategic priority, **Building Partnerships for Sustainable Impact and Growth**. We aim to develop cooperative efforts across the Alliance to create new, long-term partnerships with donors who share our determination to create a safer future for children. This priority reflects our conviction that securing the financial health of all Alliance members is essential in order to strengthen our efforts to ensure children enjoy their rights and achieve their full potential.

Looking forward to implementation

When developing this strategic plan, ChildFund Alliance engaged broadly to capture the input of staff from all members at a variety of organizational levels. Representatives from across the Alliance, in addition to outside experts, contributed to strategy development through working groups, surveys, decision-meetings, and standing committees. For that reason, we feel confident that the strategic plan reflects the ideas and insights of all members. To that end, throughout this document we share quotes from staff, CEOs, and Board members, captured through various surveys,¹ to highlight the perspectives shared during the strategy development process.

As we prepare to move from strategy development to implementation, the Secretariat, in collaboration with Alliance committees, will lead our efforts to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in this document. For our first EVAC campaign, Alliance committees stand ready to begin implementation planning in earnest on approval of this strategy. In addition, members have committed to making specific contributions to the achievement of our ambitions for this campaign. For aspects of the strategy approved in June 2020, committees have been actively involved in implementation work throughout FY21 and will continue these efforts for the duration of the strategic plan.

A note on the transition of our COVID response efforts

In April 2020, the Alliance delayed the start of this new strategy in order to direct our collective energies to respond to the global crises created by the pandemic. The anticipated long-term impacts of COVID on children informed the direction of our new strategic priorities. In addition, direct response to COVID will continue as part of the work on Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. Details of these efforts are outlined in the Secretariat's FY22 Work Plan.

¹ Survey responses were anonymous; as such, the quotes are not attributed.

Priority 1: Addressing Emerging Threats to Children’s Safety

The Opportunity

Committed to ending violence against children

In May 2019, leaders across the Alliance set an explicit requirement for this strategic plan: to articulate a clear goal for the impact we will create for children. Over the past two years, we explored more than 15 options to focus our unified efforts to create measurable change for children over the course of the next four years. In November 2019, the Board and CEO Forum reaffirmed the long-standing commitment of our organization to Ending Violence against Children (EVAC), choosing this as the overarching focus of our efforts in this new strategic plan. Further, leadership clarified that we would create this impact through joint campaigns — with a primary focus on policy change. In both of these decisions, we draw on the core strengths that enabled the landmark accomplishment of our Alliance — the successful inclusion of ending violence against children in the Sustainable Development Goals that guide global work in our sector.

“[The EVAC campaign] builds upon our collective expertise, provides mission continuity and positions the Alliance to target major funding opportunities from diverse sources aimed at global impact.”

Reducing emerging threats to online safety

The number of children participating in the online environment is increasing rapidly — more than 175,000 children go online for the first time each day across the globe, with the majority gaining access through mobile phones.² Children leverage digital technology to socialize, communicate, learn, and play, all of which are essential to their well-being and development. Yet, studies conducted in diverse geographies — from Rwanda, to India, to the Philippines — have all indicated that a mix of increased access, lack of safeguards, and low awareness of risks amongst children and their caregivers makes children particularly vulnerable to online threats.

The risks to children online are diverse — from discrimination and hate speech, to cyberbullying, and privacy invasions. Perhaps none is more alarming than the radical increase in online child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) in recent years. While available data on the prevalence of online CSEA has gaps, particularly in the Global South, it is clear that the danger to children is global. Consider that in Cameroon, The Gambia, Kenya, Togo and Uganda, more than fifty-percent of children report having seen someone their age in child sexual abuse material online.³

“Especially during COVID-19 when so many children are online, we see a complete lack of awareness on online safety, both from children, parents and teachers.”

Experts globally indicate child sexual abuse material has skyrocketed during the pandemic, with children even more vulnerable to such threats due to increased social isolation and unstructured time online. Currently, legislation to address the issue of child exploitation and abuse exists, but it is often fragmented or does not cover the online incidence of this troubling phenomenon. Further, enforcement of existing laws is uneven at best.

² Young and Resilient Research Centre, ChildFund commissioned Rapid Review of Online Safety Risks, April 2020.

³ WeProtect, [Global Threat Assessment](#), 2019.

Although such risks are real and increasing, so too are the opportunities presented to children through their engagement in the digital world. Children express a strong desire for affordable, accessible and reliable access to connectivity. They also stress the importance of accompanying efforts to ensure their safety and privacy in the online environment,⁴ which is becoming as much a part of children’s daily lives as their experiences at home, in school, and in their local communities. Helping children to become effective digital citizens by improving their ability to use technology responsibly presents a powerful opportunity for the Alliance to demonstrate its child protection expertise as well as help reduce the threat of online CSEA.

Distinguishing ChildFund in our sector

As we endeavor to address mounting threats to children’s safety online, ChildFund Alliance will leverage existing collaborations and aim to create new partnerships with those committed to ending violence against children, particularly those targeting protections in the digital domain. By focusing on this topic as an Alliance— in a consistent and committed way that has not yet been undertaken by our peers — we also aim to distinguish ourselves as a thought-leader and sought-after expert on this topic in the international development sector.

Our Four Year Ambition

Our ambition for the next four years is to contribute to a safer future for children by addressing emerging and increasing threats to children’s safety. We will base our efforts for the first campaign on a **Working Theory of Change**, which we anticipate may evolve during the first quarter of FY22:

If ChildFund Alliance empowers children to become effective digital citizens, mobilizes key stakeholders, and promotes legislative and policy reforms ensuring online child safety, then we can reduce the threat of online child sexual exploitation and abuse of children across the globe.

We seek to do this by creating EVAC-related policy change at multiple levels. We envision this will be accomplished through two, two-year campaign efforts. The overview of our strategy for the first campaign, focused on Online Safety, is detailed below. The second campaign will be developed based on learning and experience during the first campaign.

Online Safety Campaign

In our first campaign, which will be planned and executed over the course of approximately two years (FY22-FY23), ChildFund Alliance will advocate for Online Safety, defined as ensuring children are empowered to use digital technology safely and responsibly as part of their healthy development.

More specifically, ChildFund Alliance aims to reduce the threat of online child sexual exploitation and abuse by supporting worldwide action to empower and protect children and by mobilizing key stakeholders to help children reach their full potential. The Alliance will do this by promoting legislative and policy reform, empowering children to become effective digital citizens, and ensuring that online safety efforts reach children in the most vulnerable situations.

Outcomes

Through this campaign, we aim to achieve two interrelated outcomes by leveraging the full power of our Alliance at the global, national and regional levels through a targeted and achievable set of activities.

⁴ 5RightsFoundation, [Our Rights in a Digital World](#), 2021.

- Outcome 1: Laws and policies to protect children from online child sexual exploitation and abuse are strengthened.**

We seek to address the gaps in international and regional legislation and policymaking to increase children’s online safety, by building on recent advances such as the *UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment 25* on children’s rights in relation to the digital environment and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) updated *Guidelines on Child Online Protection COP*. Where laws do exist, we will seek to address weaknesses in implementation and enforcement.
- Outcome 2: Children are effective digital citizens and are equipped to participate in online civic engagement safely, ethically, and responsibly as part of their healthy development.**

We recognize that empowering children’s participation in society cannot be achieved without empowering children and young people to become active digital citizens. Ensuring affordable and reliable access for all children and young people and equipping them with a full portfolio of skills and knowledge to help them avoid online risks, maximize online opportunities, and exercise their rights in the online world, are essential to active citizenship (both on and offline).

Goals

Goal: Measurably contribute to the reduction of emerging threats to children’s safety
Objective 1: Achieve the two desired outcomes of our Online Safety campaign
<p>Measures FY22-FY23 Online Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: Laws and policies to protect children from online child sexual exploitation and abuse are strengthened. Outcome 2: Children are more effective digital citizens and are equipped to participate in online civic engagement safely, ethically and responsibly as part of their healthy development. (Final measures and progress tracking mechanisms will be defined during campaign planning.)
Objective 2: Active contribution of all members to the campaigns
<p>Measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Alliance members contribute to at least one campaign activity of their choosing.

Unified action

In line with our theme of drawing upon our collective strength, the Alliance is committed to creating a campaign driven by the contributions of all members. In doing so, we are responding to voices of country office staff received during engagement efforts in the development of this strategic plan — with more than 80% of those participating in related surveys indicating a strong interest in advocating on this issue.

At the same time, we recognize that members have varying levels of previous expertise in this topic. As such, we will design a range of activities in which members can engage, from light-touch efforts accessible to all members, to those requiring more robust effort and technical understanding. As of this writing, a preliminary menu of tiered activities has been developed, which will be further sharpened in consultation with Alliance committees and members during the next stage of campaign planning. Working definitions of the tiers are below and an example of tiered activities is provided in the Appendix.

- *Tier One* Broad, general policy asks that require little technical expertise or policy analysis.
- *Tier Two* More specific policy asks that require some technical expertise but not in-depth policy analysis or provision of technical assistance.
- *Tier Three* Policy asks that require an in-depth policy analysis, high-level technical expertise and an understanding of existing systems and policy gaps.

A Secretariat-led group, collaborating with Alliance committees, will finalize plans for the Online Safety campaign, currently projected to launch between January to March 2022. Initial milestones for the first six months of the campaign are provided in the Appendix. Information on the fundraising strategy to support this campaign is outlined in strategic priority Building Partnerships for Sustainable Impact and Growth.

Priority 2: Working Together as One

The Opportunity

Whether advocating for children or delivering services and programmatic activities our voice and actions are amplified exponentially when we are strongly aligned.

“It is so important to be part of a global group acting in a unified way for children. We achieve much more together than we could as individual organizations.”

The updated Value Proposition, approved by the CEO Forum and Board in June 2020, is designed to reflect the identity and value of ChildFund Alliance and provide a sense of pride and unity for all members. Although these statements may not be unique to ChildFund, when combined, these statements aim to improve what a member could derive from acting alone, or by belonging to another coalition. These statements reflect mutual benefit, over and above what could be achieved by the mere outputs from joint action. They aim to be useful to both current and prospective members of the Alliance.

The Principles of Working Together as One
Members of ChildFund Alliance operate according to eight principles that inspire us, keep us aligned, and guide our collective decision making so we can increase our impact by working together as one. As members of ChildFund Alliance:
1. We focus on the rights and safety of children first – we partner with children, and prioritize their protection from all forms of violence, while elevating their voices and promoting their development, well-being and participation; as evidenced by our collective missions that emphasize inclusivity of all children, their families and their communities.
2. We commit to transparency and responsiveness in our work with each other, and with others; as evidenced by all members conforming with independently audited shared standards, policies and codes of conduct, and accountability to those we serve, our donors, and stakeholders.
3. We leverage our global network to tackle the challenges facing children today; as evidenced by advocating for and with children at family, local, national, and global levels, and we work towards building a world that is safe for children.
4. We respect and listen to our staff and implementing partners, embracing the knowledge gained through diversity; as evidenced by empowering people to make and own decisions so they can more effectively and efficiently deliver impact to children.
5. We grow through experimentation and learning, as evidenced by sharing our best practices, lessons learned, and insights from evidenced-based programs through inter-member working groups.
6. We respect individual identity, and over and above this, we see our combined greater strength when working together as one, as evidenced by honoring consistent messaging and brand guidelines for ChildFund.
7. We care deeply for the earth and how its health impacts children and future generations, as evidenced by programs and shared standards that care for the environment and mitigate against harm.
8. We drive collaboration over purely independent operating models, as evidenced by increasing bilateral and multilateral initiatives amongst members.

Value Proposition — Approved June 2020

Our Four Year Ambition

During the next four years, our ambition is to continuously deepen our shared sense of identity to ensure our collective efforts are robust and clear. This is particularly essential to successfully implement the other priorities outlined in this strategic plan.

“I think the trust among members should not be based only in standards, policies, [but also] values in actions and relationships.”

Our experience indicates that approval and documentation of these Principles will not fulfill this ambition. Instead, to ensure these eight principles provide their full value, we must actively reflect them in our work. For the most part, we will rely on self-regulation aligned with the Alliance’s history of high trust. However, we also acknowledge that as Alliance members, we can respectfully address with each other when our collective or individual behavior is not aligned with these principles.

To further support alignment to these Principles, ChildFund Alliance uses a set of shared standards. Two were created or updated during our strategy development process to confirm their alignment with these Principles: Brand Guidelines (supporting Principle 6) and Sustainability Standards (supporting Principle 7).

As outlined below, our goal for the next four years is that the principles support an identity that is a source of pride and unity for all members of the Alliance.

Goal: The identity of ChildFund is straightforward and a source of pride and unity for all members
Objective: <i>All members commit and live according to the Principles of Working Together as One</i>
Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active use of the Principles at the start of major meetings; annual review to ensure continued relevance.• Awareness and alignment to standards/guidelines that support the principles, as evidenced by the number of times compliance mechanisms are engaged.

Priority 3: Building partnerships for sustainable impact and growth

The Opportunity

ChildFund Alliance members wish to foster cooperation between the members of the Alliance and to sustainably grow the resources available to jointly implement programs aiming to create a safer future for children. We recognize the need to embark on new strategic partnerships and diversify our funding stream to advance our efforts with and for children.

In particular, we recognize opportunities to advance our efforts with both public and private sector entities that share our values and goals. First, grant funding makes up a significantly lower proportion of the overall funding mix for Alliance members than peer organizations.⁵ Second, recent experience at our European Union Office has shown that a unified grant acquisition mechanism ensures a higher return on investment and serves the interest of both smaller and larger members.

Our Four-Year Ambition

Through this effort, which the Board and CEO Forum approved in June 2020, we will address limiting factors that have challenged some of our business development efforts in the past while also building on learning from recent successes. Specifically, we will expand efforts to secure multi-member grant opportunities that increase resources for jointly implemented programs focused on ending violence against children. A particular focus will be given to fundraising for programs and projects aligned with campaigns outlined in the first strategic priority in this plan.

To support our success in this work, we will create a centralized, multi-member engagement strategy to both seek and react to new opportunities with a variety of public and private sector donors. A priority will be placed on donors that have not previously been approached by Alliance members. We will also solidify existing mechanisms for member coordination and cooperation to support a clear, efficient, and effective process for all involved.

To support our strategic priority **Addressing Emerging Threats to Children's Safety**, we will target part of our donor cultivation efforts with prospective partners that have an interest in online sexual exploitation or digital citizenship. We also will increase our capacity to understand donors' digital agendas and how our work aligns with them, and disaggregate all of our KPIs to specifically track progress of efforts directly related to our campaign efforts.

More detail on focused activities that will be undertaken to support achievement of this effort are outlined in the implementation plan for this priority (located in the CEO Forum section of the Member Only site).

⁵ A comparative review of ChildFund Alliance and five peer organizations undertaken in Fall 2019, using 2017/2018 figures indicate that grants made up about 14% of Alliance funding (average of all members), while it was 40-60% of the total income of peer organization (Plan, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, Terre des Homes International Federation, World Vision International.)

Goal: Grow our joint efforts to end violence against children

Objective 1: Build long-term partnerships with institutions and private sector entities that share our goals for more significant impact on children's lives.

Measures

- Donor retention rate
- Years of continued collaboration per donor
- Innovations developed via partnerships

Objective 2: Diversify joint funding streams and increase resources available for programming with and for children

Measures:

- Number of new grants secured
- Number of beneficiaries and children reach through joint grant implementation
- Quality contributions to campaign-related topics

Appendix

Additional Information on the strategic priority: Addressing Emerging Threats to Children’s Safety

Example — Tiered Menu of Campaign Activities

Below is an example of the type of activities that would fall under each tier. This is not a complete list of all planned activities.

	Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
Outcome 1: Laws and policies to protect children from online CSEA are strengthened	Encourage national governments to join WePROTECT Global Alliance and develop national strategies to tackle online CSEA aligned with WePROTECT’s Model National Response	Ensure that children’s online safety is adopted across relevant, existing frameworks, standards and regulations (e.g., Children’s Convention & associated Protocols; Trafficking Protocols; Child Rights and Business Principles.)	Alliance supports national governments to reinforce and/or establish multi-sectoral, child-friendly protection systems and services for vulnerable children and child survivors of online (and off-line) abuse, within existing guidelines.
Outcome 2: Children are effective digital citizens and are equipped to participate in online civic engagement safely, ethically and responsibly as part of their healthy development.	The Alliance mobilizes a high-level commitment amongst UN Member States through a global pledge to end the digital divide (equity) and unleash the potential of technology to empower, educate, protect and connect children and young people.	Develop a curriculum, building on existing tools/efforts (e.g., Swipe Safe), that supports children to develop self-protective behaviors online and encourages positive digital citizenship; including encouraging safe help seeking behaviors.	Alliance members leverage off peer networks and existing networks of vulnerable and out of school children to deliver a range of low tech and offline learning tools regarding children’s safety (e.g., groups outside of formal education environments including specialize clubs, children’s unions etc.)

Online Safety Campaign Development Milestones FY22 Q1-Q3

Below is a preliminary outline of key milestones and illustration of the types of activities that will be undertaken to further develop the campaign. This work will be led by the Secretariat and executed through the campaign implementation infrastructure.

Develop campaign implementation infrastructure— Q1

- Establish a Secretariat-led core team with direct linkages to all committees for contributions to campaign milestones
- Identify means to leverage periodic external expertise to provide advice and input
- Develop a schedule and expectations for periodic CEO Forum check-ins on campaign progress

Review existing assets to identify gaps to be filled through targeted efforts —Q1

- **Policy landscape:** Leverage mapping done by existing groups to create an initial view of the policy landscape and potential regional/national opportunities. Identify gaps.
- **Children's Voices:** Review outputs of ChildFund's recent child engagement efforts to identify children's perspectives related to this topic. Review available information from [others](#) who have undertaken broad engagement with children on this issue. Identify gaps that could be addressed by additional efforts by ChildFund as part of this campaign.
- **Global Pledge:** Review existing assets ([General Comment 25](#)) to identify options for focusing the Global Pledge associated with Outcome 2. Reviewing existing legislation to identify opportunities to augment with protections in the digital environment.

High-level Assessment of Potential Member Engagement — Q1-Q2

Engage with Alliance members, including country offices, to understand the best opportunities for campaign engagement. Gather information related to:

- Existing experience/degree of alignment of these issues with the Country Office strategy
- Current policy landscape in the country (see also below). High-level needs assessment on this issue (Vietnam offers a methodology)
- Existing networks with children (to support child participation effort or other partners/allies)
- Demand for contextualized supports (e.g., informed by Swipe Safe curriculum developed by ChildFund Australia)

Clarify/develop a fundraising strategy to support and align with the campaign — Q1-Q2

- **Multi-member Grants:** Informed by high-level mapping (above), identify potential donor opportunities and related capacity building needs (as outlined in the Multi-member grants implementation plan.)
- **Individual/Sponsorship:** Led by the Communications and Marketing Committee, identify individual member or joint individual fundraising and marketing efforts that may be undertaken associated with the campaign.

Finalize campaign activities and related supports — Q2 -Q3

- Prepare for and undertake targeted child participation efforts, as required
- Sharpen the ask and plan for the Global Pledge
- Finalize measures to be used to evaluate campaign success ; and tracking mechanisms
- Develop targeted campaign supports and collateral (contextualized curriculum, education materials (for a digital campaign)
- Develop the digital awareness-building approach, if required

Develop an integrated roll-out plan for the campaign —Q3

Campaign launch FY22 Q3 (Jan – March 2022)