



YOUR IMPACT

IN 2024 SO FAR

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Registered NGO in Ghana: DSW/3024
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A LETTER FROM OUR CEO CHARLIE HAY

As we reflected on the year so far, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride in the progress we've made and the unwavering commitment of the AfriKids community. Thank you for being part of the journey with us.

This year our life-changing programmes across three new districts in northern Ghana went from strength to strength. These are communities ranked among the most challenging in the country. Our locally-led model, co-designed with local communities to address their specific priorities is enables communities to make deep and long-lasting changes themselves – securing a brighter future for their children.

Our project teams have demonstrated remarkable resilience, overcoming immense challenges to deliver holistic interventions that keep children healthy, safe, and in school. From crossing waterlogged areas in makeshift canoes to championing girls' education and empowering women to build climate-resilient livelihoods, their dedication embodies the spirit of AfriKids.

Meanwhile, our fundraisers in the UK have worked tirelessly to secure support in a tough economic climate, spreading awareness of the transformative power of education and the vital role of our work in building a sustainable future. We are thrilled to have been joined by several new partners who share our commitment to local-led change.



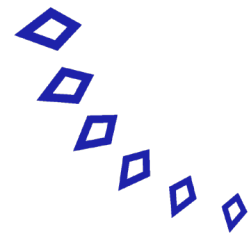
This year also saw the launch of the new AfriKids brand. We were thrilled to unveil this new identity that celebrates our values and amplifies our story, ensuring it resonates with the growing community of changemakers standing with us. It reflects our commitment to putting the voices and aspirations of the people we work with at the heart of everything we do.

Looking ahead, we're so excited to be building on all our learning from our current One Million Smiles strategy and the last 20+ years to develop our new Rise Up model.

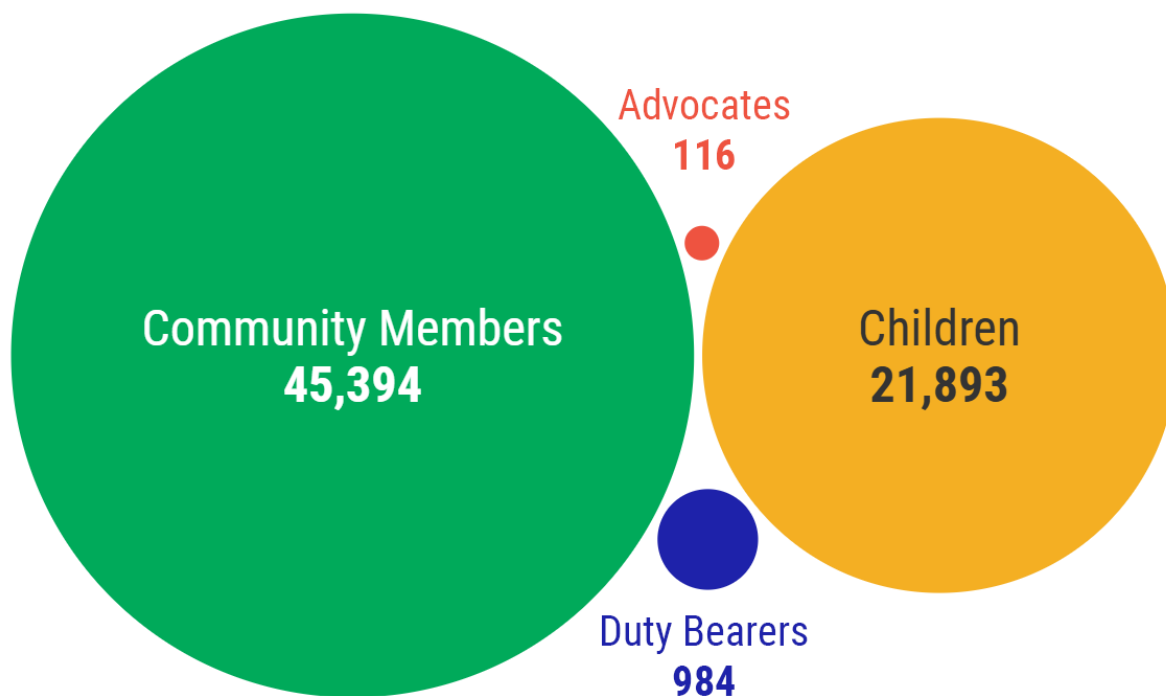
While challenges remain, I am constantly inspired by the resilience of our staff, supporters, and, above all, the communities we serve. Their determination reminds us why we must—and will—always find a way to unlock opportunities for the next generation.

Thank you for standing with us.

Charlie



THE PEOPLE YOU SUPPORTED



COMMUNITY MEMBERS

These are the adults we interact with, parents, folks attending durbars, women receiving microfinance etc.



39,176
people reached with campaign messaging



3,361
parents participated in school activities



393
new women received microfinance

DUTY BEARERS

These are adults with direct responsibilities towards children. They are teachers, various government departmental staff, police etc.



589
teachers received training



395
government agencies' staff mobilised

CHILDREN

At the core of everything we do, these are school children, children with cerebral palsy, victims of abuse etc.



14,908
children are receiving an improved education



4,068
focus children supported to stay in school



1,002
girls are in after-school STEM Clubs

ADVOCATES

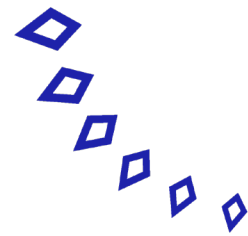
These are adults that have the ability to influence policy and practice. Assembly persons, Academics, Media persons etc.



27
elected Assembly Persons



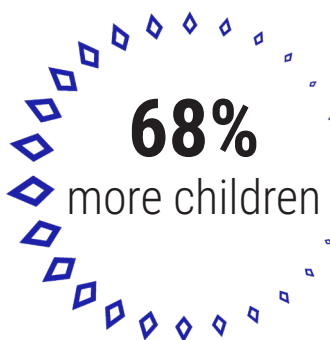
81
STEM industry professionals



THE IMPACT WE MADE

Literacy in primary school

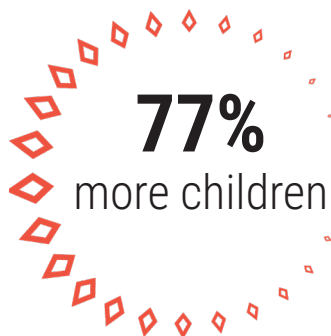
The percentage of pupils achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in Literacy in Primary school.



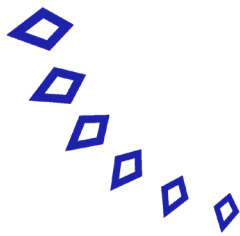
2,035
more children are
literate

Numeracy in primary school

The percentage of pupils achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in Numeracy in Primary school.



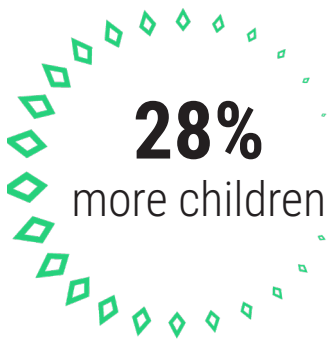
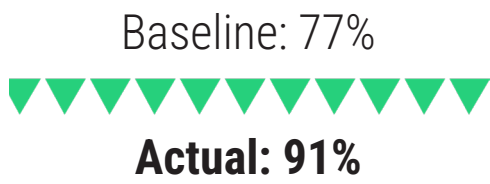
2,318
more children are
literate



CONTINUED...

Completion Rate in primary and junior high school

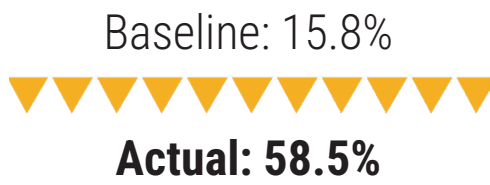
The combined completion rate for Primary and Junior High School (JHS) levels, indicating the percentage of students who successfully complete their primary and junior high school education within a specified timeframe.



2,329
more children are
literate

Teachers' Skills in kindergartern, primary school, and junior high school

A teacher is demonstrating equitable and inclusive quality teaching practises if he/she scores a total average of 90% in the teacher assessment test at various levels(KG, Primary, JHS).
Demonstrating = meeting minimum criteria in assessments



241
more teachers

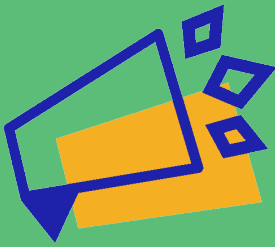


THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS



A FRESH NEW LOOK

This year with your incredible support, AfriKids became **bigger, brighter** and **bolder** in our fight for African-led change. **Just look what we achieved together...**



842k

people exposed to our new brand message that local communities are powerful and have agency to make deep and lasting change.



I think it's fantastic. Very vibrant and full of energy and life. A true reflection of the amazing people in Ghana.

- AfriKids Supporter



Almost **100x**

more views of our channels than the two weeks prior



21k

Likes on socials



The themes of "people power" and "say no to pity" are what drew me to AfriKids in the first place... I am looking forward to many more years of success for the AfriKids family.

- AfriKids Supporter





PHOTO: B2S ENGAGEMENT IN MARKET

BACK TO SCHOOL CAMPAIGN

WHAT WAS THE SITUATION?

The start of a new school year often sees three major barriers for children's education – children engaged in labour, children not being enrolled into Kindergarten & early learning, and inadequate communication between parents & schools.

Our project staff estimate that an average of 53% of children will be absent due to agricultural and pastoral labour during the first term of school, for at least one week and up to one month.

One of the main reasons that parents cite for why they delay their children starting school is a lack of safe travel to and from school. At four years old their child cannot travel safely on their own to school. Then a lack of value placed on early years education and the weight of economic pressures, often mean parents are unwilling or unable to accompany the child themselves to school.

Across the communities we are running our Back to School campaign in, our project staff estimate that 80% - 85% of the parents they spoke to, did not know the start date of the new school year. During our conversations with community members, the key issues that were barriers to parents were a lack of access to information channels from school to parent and where channels do exist, they exclude illiterate parents.

WHAT DID AFRIKIDS DO?

AfriKids hit the road and launched a Back to School campaign across the 60 communities we work in. With our trucks loaded with speakers and PA equipment, we went into the heart of communities to speak to parents about the upcoming school year and the importance of education.

We rallied the engaged community advocates, who form our 'Community Child Protection Committees' (CCPCs), who in turn visited households to register 4-5 year olds who were not in school and to identify those older children who had dropped out of primary and senior school.

During our Roadshow we were also accompanied by members of the District Assembly, staff from Ghana Education Service, and members of the CCPCs. Using megaphones, the teams communicated with market-goers in three local languages.

We also leveraged radio stations to raise awareness, joining programmes to remind parents about the reopening of schools in the area and how they can prepare children for the new term. Hosting a call-in too, we were able to answer many questions from listeners on school supplies, enrolment procedures, and the benefits of early childhood education. The panels addressed concerns and reassured parents that support was available to ensure a smooth re-entry process.

WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

We have seen some amazing results from our Back to School campaign, to the amazement and delight of many senior Ghana Education Service staff – who are kicking themselves that nothing like this had been organised in previous years! In Builsa South for instance, last year in Kindergarten, the first week enrolment saw 410 pupils. This year, as a result of the campaign, 695 pupils were present in the first week for their first start in education - a rise of 70%!

In Binduri, at Primary School level, 900 pupils were present on the first day of school last year, whereas this year, there were 2,472 pupils – a rise of 174%!

Following sustain interaction with the semi-nomadic Fulani/Fulbe community, we've seen a relatively large increase in the enrolment of their children into local schools – from 4 children last year to 15 this year – an increase of 275%. We have been working with schools and the CCPCs to promote a non-discriminatory environment in schools, as the Fulani are often discriminated against – reminiscent of the UK's treatment of Traveller, Gypsy, and Roma peoples.

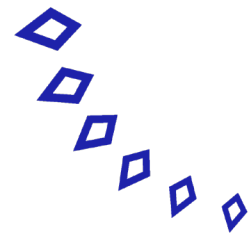


PHOTO TAKEN FROM BBC COVERAGE

Due to the sensitive nature of our visit to Galamsey sites, we did not take any pictures

GALAMSEY MINING

WHAT IS GALAMSEY MINING?

'Galamsey' is a term for small-scale, illegal, artisanal mining in Ghana, the world's sixth largest gold exporter. Many children are lured out of school and into these unregulated, and often dangerous, mines with the promise of quick cash - a promise which is not at all untrue and an entirely understandable choice when your family might be struggling. However, not only are children putting themselves in immediate danger, they also forsake their education, harming their prospects in the long run.

Traditionally, Galamsey miners would use picks, shovels, and often makeshift-tools to dig tunnels searching for gold, before panning the sediment in a river. However more recently, the process is industrialising as excavators are being used, destroying trees in their wake. Large gold washing stations in rivers are using chemicals, like mercury and cyanide, to help extract the gold which are then washed away into the river. The polluted river water is rendered undrinkable, the chemicals accumulate in fish and in crops irrigated with the water.

WHY HAS IT BEEN IN THE NEWS?

Widespread scenes of environmental destruction in areas with active Galamsey sites spread across social media. According to the Ghana Forestry Commission, 4,726 hectares of land have been scarred by sites, across seven regions of Ghana, including 34 forest reserves. The amount of sites has increased as the global price of gold has risen to new heights and is expected to continue to do so.

The destruction ignited a wave of protests in Ghana, which demanded that the government take action against the practice. The protests only intensified when police took a heavy-handed approach to the march, arresting dozens of protesters - who have since been released due to public pressure.

There is public mistrust in the effectiveness of government intervention against Galamsey mining, as because it is so lucrative for those running the illegal operations, government corruption is a charge easily levelled. The rumoured apathy of the government is further scrutinised because of the election in December and candidates, supposedly, do not want to upset a vital source of their campaign donations.

WHAT IS AFRIKIDS DOING?

Galamsey mining, had become an enormous issue in two particular communities we work with, with new sites appearing. Tackling the issue is a delicate one, as in order to build sustainable change, we must approach people's choices with empathy. Lessons we found from 2006 - 2012, when AfriKids had a successful, sustainable intervention supporting children to re-enter education and leave Galamsey mining behind.

Toward the end of the year we were able to take the first steps in supporting children swept up in Galamsey mining. We were led by one of the communities' Child Protection Champions, themselves very passionate about the issue. With their local knowledge and connections we were able to visit three different mining sites and they were able to facilitate smooth engagement with the workers at the illegal site.

One of the schools in the area had said of the 74 boys in upper primary, 56 of them had indicated that they had participated in the mining to some degree. Working with the community, parents, and children themselves we are impressing upon everyone the long-term value of education, and whilst it is slow-going, we are helping to dull the glamour of galamsey - with one boy in primary school remarking: *"if it was in the past, this class will still be empty now"*.

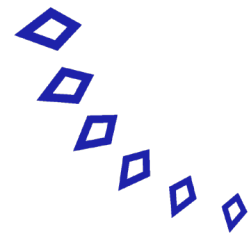


PHOTO: MOBILE LIBRARY

FOCUS CHILDREN

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

The start of a new school year is a critical time for the children we work with, especially to those who are most at risk of dropping out of school. Without the habit of turning up to school each day and the presence of teacher mentors to guide them, the pushes & pulls they experience become all the easier to succumb to.

In one of our districts, 90% of the focus children we had supported reported back to school on the correct date. In another district, just 13 of the Focus Children had not reported to school. Following up with the children who did not, we found that all were still working on their parents farms and did, in fact, intend to return to school in the coming months, once the height of the farming season cools. Our Community Child Protection Champions have accompanied us on these visits and have taken a really active role throughout the campaign.

Checking in on each of the Focus Children upon their return to school also heartened us, as we were able to see 10 children who, as a result of our medical screenings, had been diagnosed with a variety of eye and ear conditions. They were now enjoying much better health and taking to the treatments well.

IMPROVING PARENTS' LIVELIHOODS

This year we have made a concerted effort to enrol as many parents of the Focus Children, as suitable, into our Family Livelihoods Support Programme (FLiSP). Women enrolled in the programme either form collectives and receive training on a new commercial skill and begin to receive microfinance to start their new businesses or women who are already involved in entrepreneurial activities, are supported to develop a business case for their trade and microfinance. All women then also receive skills training in business management, basic accounting, etc.

Parents of the Focus Children are also being taught the skills to form Savings and Loans Groups, based around the school community. These groups, work similarly to the tried-and-true VSLA model and

promote a culture of savings and mutual support. These groups allow women to pool resources, create a safety net for themselves, and enhance their financial independence.

New to the FLiSP programme for One Million Smiles is skills training in Climate-Smart Agriculture, in collaboration with the government's District Agriculture Extension Service Unit. Here, women learn how to prepare the land effectively and plant and cultivate climate resilient seeds. These cultivars of rice and maize have different propagation times and so can dodge the worst of droughts. Women are also taught about the best fertilisers to use and how many days after planting fertiliser should be administered, as well as to employ lines in planting, tape measures and dibbling sticks.

In Builsa South, we took the opportunity to pull up one of our mobile libraries to engage the Focus Children whilst their parents were undertaking their livelihoods training. The sessions were vibrant and engaging, with learners showing great enthusiasm and eagerness to explore the variety of books available. At Kanjarga, the learners' response was particularly heartening - many of the children formed a discussion group, eagerly sharing ideas and insights from their readings, while others chose to delve into independent learning. This variety of learning styles was accommodated by the mobile library setup, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all participants.

The involvement of some parents in these sessions contributed significantly to the overall success. Their presence not only encouraged the children but also provided a strong sense of community support for the initiative. The mothers expressed deep satisfaction with the session, appreciating the positive impact it had on their children's interest in reading and learning. Motivated by the lively atmosphere and the meaningful interactions with books, the learners themselves requested that more sessions be organized before school's resumption. This enthusiasm reflects the growing appreciation for literacy and the role of the mobile library in making educational resources accessible to these rural communities.