



Annual Report 2025

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Our Vision

“A world where every child realizes their rights and achieves their potential.”

We deliver impact that lasts — by mobilizing children, youth, and community leaders, partners and governments to solve problems no single actor can take on alone. Together, we measure success in shifted systems, not just outputs ticked. And we scale strategies that reach children with our partners across the whole of The Gambia



From The Country Director

Here for children for over 40 years!

For more than four decades, ChildFund The Gambia has been driven by a clear and unwavering purpose: to ensure that every child grows up healthy, educated, skilled, and safe. This purpose continues to guide our decisions, shape our programmes, and strengthen our resolve to place children at the heart of everything we do.

In the Financial Year 2025 (FY25), we renewed this commitment by delivering integrated and child-centred programmes that created meaningful and sustainable change for children, families, and communities across the country. Child sponsorship remained the cornerstone of our work, strengthened by targeted investments in education, health and nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and livelihood strengthening. These interconnected interventions not only addressed immediate needs but also supported families in building resilience and creating enabling environments where children can thrive.

Working closely with government partners, civil society organizations, donors, and community leaders, ChildFund The Gambia reached more than 580,000 children, family members, and community members during the year. This level of impact is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of our staff and the strength of our partnerships, which ensured quality in programme design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

Strategic partnerships played a pivotal role in extending our reach. In collaboration with Books For Africa and MAP International, we facilitated the delivery of essential

educational and medical supplies valued at several million US dollars to the Government of The Gambia, contributing to stronger national education and health systems. Through our local partner federations, thousands of sponsored children received learning materials at the start of the academic year, while bicycles were provided to children traveling long distances to school, improving attendance and supporting better learning outcomes.

“Working closely with government partners, civil society organizations, donors, and community leaders, ChildFund The Gambia reached more than 580,000 children, family members, and community members during the year.”



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Beyond education, our programmes expanded access to safe drinking water, strengthened child protection systems, provided quality healthcare services, ensured safe play and learning spaces, established family gardens, and created livelihood opportunities, particularly in underserved communities. These investments strengthened household food security, income generation, and child well-being, while reinforcing community ownership and sustainability.

As we look ahead, we recognize that the needs of children and families are continually evolving, shaped by economic pressures, climate change, and social transformation. In response, ChildFund The Gambia remains committed to adapting our approaches, deepening partnerships, and scaling impact. We will continue to invest in child-focused systems and community-led solutions that deliver lasting, equitable, and transformative change.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of The Gambia, our donors, partners, community leaders, sponsors, and dedicated staff for their continued trust, collaboration, and commitment. Together, we are building a future in which every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential. On behalf of the children and communities we serve, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and invite you to continue this journey with us, ensuring that more children in The Gambia are protected, empowered, and given the opportunity to realize their full potential.

Thank you for standing with us.

Musukuta Komma-Bah
Country Director

About ChildFund

- ✓ ChildFund International is a child-focused international development organization that works throughout Asia, Africa, and the Americas to connect children with what they need to grow up **healthy, educated, skilled** and **safe**, no matter where they are.
- ✓ Last year, we reached **24 million** children and family members in **23 countries**.
- ✓ ChildFund International is a member of ChildFund Alliance; a global network of **11 organizations** helping nearly **60 million** children and their families in **70** countries around the world.
- ✓ With funding from **sponsors** and **governments, corporate** and **individual donors**, we work long-term in communities to help them transform themselves into places where children have what they need to live at their potential throughout their lives.
- ✓ ChildFund operates in **10 countries** in Africa – Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Zambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Guinea, Mozambique and Mali.

About ChildFund The Gambia

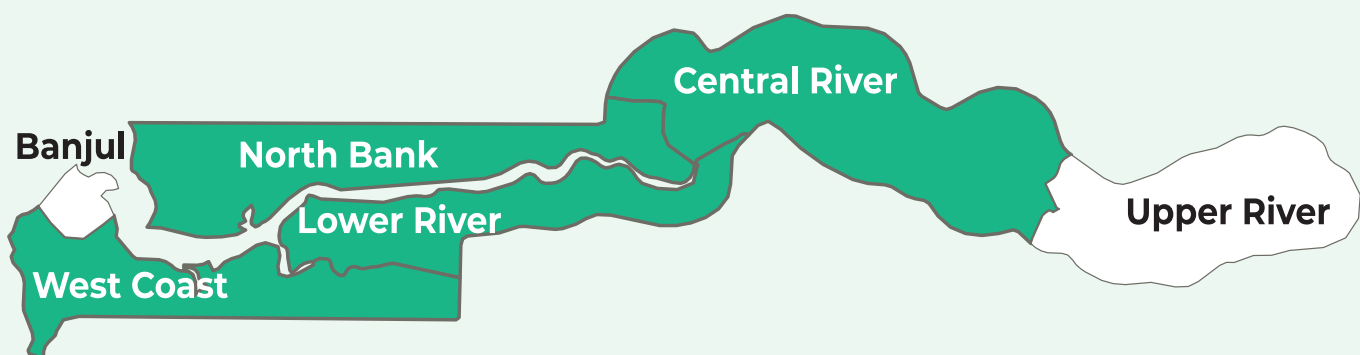
ChildFund has been operating in The Gambia since 1984, and receives funding through subsidy, Non-Sponsorship Funds (NSP), Grants and Gifts-In-Kind (GIK). In FY25, we enrolled 14,169 children in our child sponsorship program, with a sponsor count of 9,046

In The Gambia, ChildFund works mainly through 3 local partners in 11 districts, where we have total of 32 community associations. We also implement GIK and grant-funded projects countrywide.

Our sponsorship program focuses on 13 districts in the Western and Lower River Region, but our programs in general reached over 1.1 million people in FY25.

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Areas of Operation



FY25 Highlights

Over

1M

children, families, and community members participated in ChildFund programs.

2

40-foot containers of educational materials were handed over to the Government of The Gambia for school children.

2

40-foot containers of medical items and pharmaceuticals were handed over to the Ministry of Health to support public health facilities.

Over

50,000

children received learning materials (bags, exercise books, pens, colors, and pencils) at the start of the 2025/2026 academic year.

5

major district hospitals received direct healthcare support through the purchase of essential drugs.

3

safe and secure playgrounds were constructed for children.

1,050

children in 9 districts had their medical bills paid through 32 community associations.

Over

20,000

children and adults were sensitized through Community Child Protection Committees (CCPC) on harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

USD 1M

in grants was raised to fund programs promoting the welfare of children and their caregivers.

3,040

bicycles were distributed to school children who travel long distances in rural communities.



Program Priorities



Child Protection



Early Childhood Development



Education



Health and Nutrition



WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene)



Food Security



Livelihoods



Environmental sustainability



Emergency Response



Advocacy



Program Achievements



ChildFund implements programs for children and youth by working with the structures that make up their environment – their families, schools and communities. We implement various programs ranging from child protection, health care and nutrition, education, household economic strengthening, food security and early childhood development among others. Our programs are designed such that they look different around the world because they are always tailored to the unique needs and context of the community where we work, and places huge emphasis on sustainability.

“Our programs are designed such that they look different around the world because they are always tailored to the unique needs and context of the community where we work, and places huge emphasis on sustainability.”

Education



Building Strong Foundations for Early Learning

Early Childhood Development is the foundation for lifelong learning, yet many centers in The Gambia face challenges in providing adequate resources for young learners. In FY25, ChildFund prioritized addressing this gap by ensuring that all supported ECD centers received essential teaching and learning materials along with play resources. These materials are critical for stimulating curiosity, improving cognitive skills, and making learning interactive and enjoyable for children.

At one of the ChildFund-supported nursery schools in Banjul, the impact has been transformative. With new teaching aids and play materials, lessons have become more engaging and practical.



“Before, we had very few materials, and teaching was mostly theoretical. Now, children learn through play and interaction, which makes them more active and eager to come to school. The new materials have changed the way we teach—lessons are more practical, and children can explore and understand better. Parents also notice the difference because their children talk about what they learn and are excited to come back the next day. This support has truly improved the quality of education in our school.” **Fatou, Headteacher**

Promoting School Enrolment and Retention

Education is the foundation for a brighter future, yet thousands of children in The Gambia especially girls, still face barriers to enrolling and staying in school. Cultural norms and lack of awareness often keep them out of classrooms, limiting their opportunities. As part of the Zero Out Of School Children (ZOOSC) Project, funded by Educate A Child and jointly implemented with UNICEF, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, and Efanet Gambia, significant progress was made in FY25.

A total of 116 teacher coordinators were trained in advocacy and child protection. These coordinators now lead community engagement sessions alongside child advocates, encouraging parents to enrol their children and keep them in school. They have also strengthened their skills in safeguarding children’s skills they demonstrated during a vibrant community caravan that reached 4,554 people across the Greater Banjul Area, including 1,276 men and 3,278 women.



The Gambia's push to bring out-of-school children back to class

In March 2023, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, the Office of the First Lady of The Gambia, UNICEF, and the Education Above All (EAA) Foundation launched a major initiative to ensure that every primary school-age child in The Gambia is in school. The project set out to reach 66,765 out-of-school children (OOSC) and adolescents with access to quality primary education.

This three-year program was implemented nationwide by the Ministry of Basic and

Secondary Education, ChildFund, and the Education for All Campaign Network, in close coordination with UNICEF and EAA's Educate A Child programme, with financial support from the Qatar Fund for Development.

Since its launch, the program has made remarkable progress in expanding access, improving quality, and strengthening education systems. The following impact highlights capture key achievements to date:



74,898
children enrolled
in school

74,898 out-of-school children were enrolled from September 2022 to June 2025 – 121% of target (girls: 51%; boys: 49%).

Enrolments included **68,729** in formal schools, **4,074** in **Majalis** (Quranic schools), and **2,095** in **Gambia Classes for Open Learning (GCOL)**.

The project exceeded targets for both formal schools (**111%**) and **Alternative Learning Programs (ALPs)** (**123%**).

Outcome 1: Parents and communities support children's enrolment



39,128 parents (16,770 women; 22,358 men) sensitized on children's right to education in 366 low-enrolment communities through awareness campaigns, boosting enrolment and retention.



Disability inclusion: Parents of children with disabilities oriented on the right to education and empowered as community champions to advocate for enrolment and monitor retention.



7,500 children supported through conditional cash transfers (CCTs), covering indirect school costs such as uniforms, shoes, and learning materials. Beneficiaries included children with disabilities, orphans, and newly enrolled learners.



3,000 bicycles with helmets and reflectors distributed to children in remote communities, improving safe access to school and reducing dropout risk.

Outcome 2: Quality of education strengthened through improved learning environment and staff capacity



106 new classrooms and **108 toilets** constructed, raising the share of primary schools with adequate separate toilets to **89%**.



698 headteachers and teachers trained in school management and pedagogy; **614 new teachers** recruited and posted.



109 schools received annual teaching and learning materials; **19,424 children** received individual learning materials, with evidence of improved grades.



300 children with disabilities received learning materials and assistive devices.

Outcome 3: National and sub-national education management and planning systems strengthened



2 national policies/strategies developed to strengthen OOSC data systems within the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE).



310 education managers and practitioners trained on OOSC data analysis and interpretation.



Development of a comprehensive **enrolment database** with links to EMIS and collaboration with the Ministry of Health to integrate birth registration data, enabling early identification of at-risk children and targeted interventions.

Outcome 4: Alternative Learning Programs (ALPs) expanded to offer options for out-of-school and over-age children



88.6% of enrolled children attained minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy.



2,543 children (1,297 girls; 1,246 boys) accessed second-chance education through ALPs.



Alternative Learning Programs (ALP) centres established in schools and community spaces, with validated accelerated curriculum and syllabi.



6,169 children (2,169 girls; 4,014 boys) in **32 Majalis centres** nationwide benefitted from literacy and numeracy classes and targeted cash transfers that improved school attendance by covering essential needs (boarding, hygiene, food, and learning materials) while reducing child labour.



Back to School Package for Children

For a child, having access to learning materials can mean the difference between struggling and thriving in school. In many communities across The Gambia, families face financial challenges that make it difficult to provide these essential resources. Access to learning materials remains a significant challenge, causing many children to miss out on school. The cost of uniforms, books, school bags, pencils, and other basic necessities for attending school is out of reach for many Gambian parents and caregivers.

To address this challenge, ChildFund, in collaboration with three local partners, initiated the annual 'Back to School' package for children. This package contains essential items to enable children to attend school. The school materials are distributed to children at the start of each school year in September. In FY25, over 10,000 children received the package, allowing them to continue their education without the barrier of missing basic learning materials.

"I no longer feel anxious when the school term approaches. In the past, I worried about how I would afford books and supplies for my children, but now that burden is gone. Every year, I know Ding-Ding Yiriwa Federation will provide a back-to-school package that gives my children everything they need to start learning with confidence. It's a relief and a blessing for our family—because education is the key to their future, and these books make that future possible." — Elizabeth, Parent.

Improving Children's Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Children's ability to apply reading, writing, and listening skills across subjects has significantly decreased. Their ability to understand and apply mathematical concepts, processes, and skills to solve problems and make decisions in real-life situations is also lacking, according to The Gambia Education Facts Sheet 2020. The survey reveals that among children aged 7 to 14 years old, only 12 percent demonstrate minimal learning outcomes for reading, and 9 percent demonstrate the same for numeracy. Only 9 percent of children in Grade 3 have the expected level of reading skills for that grade, and just 6 percent possess the expected numeracy skills.

In response, ChildFund established reading clubs that mobilize students to the seven well-equipped community libraries ChildFund set up in previous years. This initiative aims to enhance children's literacy and numeracy skills. In total, 140 students formed four reading clubs across four community associations. Additionally, ChildFund trained 46 teachers on pedagogy to improve their teaching skills.



 **140**

Students formed four reading clubs across four community associations.

 **46**

Teachers trained on pedagogy to improve their teaching skills



Bikes for Children Trekking Long Distances to School

Long distances to school remain one of the biggest barriers to education for children in rural Gambia. Many children walk for hours each day, which often leads to absenteeism and dropouts. To address this challenge, ChildFund, under the Zero Out Of School Children (ZOOSC) Project funded by Education Above All Foundation and jointly implemented with UNICEF, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, and EFANET Gambia, pledged to provide 3,000 bicycles to the most disadvantaged out-of-school children.

In FY25, ChildFund distributed 1,218 bicycles to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education for onward delivery to children who trek long distances to school. By the end of the fiscal year, 2,500 bicycles had been delivered out of the pledged 3,000. These bicycles serve as a lifeline for education, ensuring children can attend school regularly and safely. Through this initiative, thousands of children now have a safe and reliable way to reach school, reducing dropout rates and giving them the opportunity to learn and thrive.

“Jeremiah is still coming to school thanks to the bicycle. Without it, he would have stopped attending because the distance from his home to the school is more than 3 kilometers. His father, who used to bring him to school, is no longer around. Honestly,

I wonder how possible it would have been for him to continue without this support. The bike has made all the difference.” Says Binta, Jeremiah’s teacher.



“Before this project arrived in my school, our enrollment stood at 255 students, but now we have about 354 enrollments. This increase is a direct result of our proactive efforts to promote the value of education, coupled with the ongoing cash transfers implemented by ChildFund and its partners,” says Abdoulie Jallow, the head teacher at Kumbija Lower Basic School, Upper River Region.

Championing Girls’ Education

In FY25, ChildFund continued its commitment to ensuring that every child, especially girls, has access to education and a safe learning environment. Through the Education for Protection and Wellbeing (EPW) project, piloted in two schools, we introduced an all-encompassing approach that encourages educators and caregivers to interact positively with children and practice “serve and return” in daily interactions. This method strengthens harmony at home, improves teaching quality, and empowers caregivers to actively support their children’s education and wellbeing. Children were also taught self-protection skills, boosting

their confidence and enabling them to know their rights, seek help, and prevent violence.

Alongside this, ChildFund conducted awareness sessions on the importance of girls' education and safe bicycle usage in the Lower and Upper River regions. These sessions targeted communities with high numbers of out-of-school girls and schools identified for bicycle distribution. We reached 160 participants, including 80 school-going children, parents, opinion leaders, teachers, and regional education officers—70 males and 90 females. This initiative is raising awareness among stakeholders to send girls to school and keep them there, while ensuring that bicycles provided for access to education are used safely and responsibly.

Randomized Control Trials (RCT) Project: Promoting Social and Financial Education

This Social Financial Education program, funded by Aflatoun International, assessed the effectiveness and sustainability of social and financial education in The Gambia's school system. Conducted from October 2024 to December 2025, the study involved 90 schools—60 intervention schools and 30 control schools—and engaged 2146 students.

The intervention, delivered in partnership with the University of The Gambia research unit, included a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised curriculum (Competency Based Curriculum - CBC) for basic education, along with teacher training focused on Active Learning Method (ALM) and a community of practice CoP for Teacher professional development. Pre- and post-assessments measured students' financial literacy, social skills, and behavioral outcomes. Findings will inform recommendations for scaling the program and integrating social and financial education into The Gambia's national curriculum.

Commemoration of Aflatoun Day

ChildFund joins Aflatoun International in building stronger foundations for young children's futures through financial literacy and essential life skills. On May 30, 2025 we joined children, our partners and teachers around worldwide to celebrate Aflatoun Day commemorated. The annual event marks the strong international network delivering social and financial education to millions of children and youth around the world.



Responsive & Protective Parenting

ChildFund's Responsive and Protective Parenting (RPP) model is a childcare program active in four regions. The program improves parents' and caregivers' Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) regarding the nurturing care framework and positive parenting education. While the program targets both male and female caregivers, it places greater emphasis on engaging men, who are often less involved in the nurturing and care of infants at home. The RPP trains facilitators to lead caregiver sessions and equip them with knowledge on all aspects of child protection.

In FY25, the RPP sessions enhanced the knowledge, attitudes, and practice of 1,620 parents and caregivers on the nurturing care framework and positive parenting skills. Through these engagements, parents who attended the

sessions dedicated more time and resources to stimulating play activities for their children. They also learned to make toys using locally available, child-friendly materials, and to prepare nutritious meals for their children using local cereals.



Health & Nutrition

Proper nutrition during pregnancy and early childhood is the foundation for a healthy life. For many mothers in The Gambia, ensuring that their infants receive the right nutrients is a daily challenge one that can shape a child's future. This was the focus of the second phase of ChildFund's ongoing nutrition education program, which specifically targeted pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, as well as other women who are primary caregivers to infants. During the nutrition education session, mothers learned about the essential nutrients necessary for infant growth and development, the importance of breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and food diversity. In FY25 we have reached 15,000 mothers and caregivers, equipping them with knowledge and skills to ensure better nutrition and health outcomes for thousands of children.

“Before this program, I often worried about whether I was feeding my baby the right foods. Today, I feel confident and empowered. I now know how to prepare nutritious meals that will help my child grow healthy and strong. This knowledge is a gift I will share with other mothers in my community.” - **Fatou, mother of four.**

Provision of Hygiene kits

Good health begins with simple habits, and hygiene is at the heart of it. For many families, access to basic hygiene items can be the difference between a healthy child and one vulnerable to illness. Clean teeth, washed hair, and proper skin care may seem small, but they play a big role in preventing disease and promoting confidence and well-being.

As part of our efforts to reinforce the importance of hygiene education and community engagement, we provided families in Kombo Central and East with health kits. Each kit contained essential items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, baby cream, shampoo, and combs packed in a sturdy backpack. A total of 2,050 individuals received these hygiene kits in 2025.

“This support has changed so much for us. Before, it was hard to afford these items, and I worried about my child’s health. Now, I feel confident that I can keep my family clean and safe.”

2,050

Individuals in Kombo Central and East who received hygiene kits in 2025



Food Security & Livelihoods



Cash Transfer Assistance

In FY25, ChildFund expanded its efforts to strengthen family livelihoods and reduce barriers to education. Through our targeted cash-transfer initiative, 7,500 children from vulnerable households received quarterly transfers of 527 dalasis (approx. USD 9.50), directly supporting their families in meeting essential educational and household needs. This financial support enabled parents and caregivers to purchase school uniforms, textbooks, exercise books, pens, pencils, and bags, ensuring children stayed in school, remained engaged in learning, and had the tools necessary for academic success. Beyond school-related expenses, families also used the transfers to cover other basic needs, contributing to improved household stability and resilience. Linking cash support with broader child-focused programs reinforced both educational outcomes and family well-being.

“The cash transfer has been a big relief for my family. Before, I struggled to buy school items for my children, and sometimes they missed classes because we couldn’t afford what they needed. Now, I can buy their uniforms, books, and even a school bag. This support means my children can stay in school and focus on learning.” Awa Jallow, mother of three, Lower River Region

7,500

Children from vulnerable households received quarterly transfers of 527 dalasis (approx. USD 9.50).

Community Gardens

In The Gambia, where agriculture remains a lifeline for many families, access to resources can make the difference between subsistence and progress. For women in Kombo North and South districts, gardening has been a pathway to food security, income generation, and improved well-being for their children. Yet limited access to essential tools and inputs has long hindered their productivity. Recognizing this challenge, in FY25 through our local partners, 15 families were handed over vital gardening materials to communities across districts, marking a significant step toward enhancing horticultural production and strengthening women’s economic empowerment.

The materials were meant to enable families to expand backyard gardens, grow a variety of vegetables, and ensure children have access to nutritious meals. Beyond meeting household needs, surplus produce will be sold in local markets, creating an additional source of income for women and contributing to socioeconomic development in the region.



Backyard gardening

For Fatoumatta and her family of nine, life was a daily battle for survival. With no steady income, they relied solely on their backyard garden to feed the family and pay school fees. But even that lifeline was fragile. Without proper fencing, stray animals often destroyed their crops. Water was another challenge, every drop had to be fetched from a distant source, making irrigation exhausting and inconsistent.

Despite their hard work, the family's dreams seemed out of reach. Education for the children was uncertain, and the future felt bleak. Everything changed when Fatoumatta became a sponsored child through ChildFund. The support brought not only financial relief but hope. With resources to improve their garden, the family could finally install fencing and access water more easily. Their harvests grew, and so did their confidence. Today, Fatoumatta's family not only sustains itself but also earns enough to cover school fees, ensuring the children can learn and thrive.

What was once a story of struggle is now a story of transformation, proof that a little help can change everything. Fatoumatta's family is part of 15 families supported with backyard gardening tools in 2025.

“After feeding my family, I sell the surplus from our farm at the market and earn up to 8,000 dalasis in profit, though it varies with market conditions, it's still a lot for us. This income allows me to take care of Fatoumatta and her siblings. The support has truly changed everything for our family.” — Amie, Fatoumatta's mother



Small Ruminants

In rural Gambia, most families depend on farming and animal rearing for survival. It's the backbone of family sustenance, education, and dignity. Yet, for many, this livelihood is fragile. Unpredictable weather, limited resources, and market fluctuations often leave families struggling to make ends meet. ChildFund steps in to change that narrative. Through its child sponsorship program, sponsored children based on needs receive small ruminants such as goats or sheep that multiply over time, creating a sustainable source of income and food security. What begins as two animals can grow into a small herd, offering families a lifeline when crops fail or expenses rise. For Bintou's family, this support was nothing short of transformation. After Bintou's father passed away, her mother faced the daunting task of raising her children alone.

“Aside from what I earn from selling at the market, I now rely on the ruminants ChildFund provided for our upkeep,” she explains. “We started with two, and now we have six. Some will help feed the family, and others will be sold to cover school fees and other needs. This support has given us hope.”



Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)

For years, the people of Tendaba, a small community in The Gambia's Lower River Region faced a daily struggle for clean water. With a population of over 469, Tendaba relied on a single borehole as its only source of safe drinking water. When the borehole broke down, life became even harder. Children walked long distances to fetch water, families risked waterborne diseases, and the community's well-being was under threat. Tendaba is known for hosting one of The Gambia's earliest safari-style rural tourism camps in Kiang District, about 160 kilometers from Banjul. Yet behind its tourism appeal, the community was grappling with a basic need of access to clean water. This changed when ChildFund, working through its local partner Foni Ding Ding Federation, stepped in to maintain and restore the borehole. The impact was immediate and profound. This community now forms part of three communities in the Lower River region supported through our local partner.

"This borehole funded by ChildFund has benefited my community so much. We had a borehole, but it was not serving enough water to the community. In fact, from morning till late in the afternoon around 2 pm, we couldn't have access to water at all. That was when ChildFund intervened. They brought water tanks and pipes, as well as taps, and connected the whole

community to the water system. As I am speaking now, water is available to the community 24 hours a day. We are very happy and would like to thank ChildFund for the timely intervention. Taps are spread across the village. We have a nursery school where water is now continuously available for children's use. Thank you ChildFund." Manneh Sanyang, one of the women leaders in the community.

“Water is available to the community 24 hours a day. We are very happy and would like to thank ChildFund for the timely intervention.”



Child Protection & Advocacy

Protecting children from conditions that hinder their growth and development remains central to our work in The Gambia. In FY25, ChildFund implemented the Ending Violence Against Children project in collaboration with UNICEF to address challenges such as harmful traditional practices, poverty-related risks, and limited access to education. Through this initiative, we strengthened regional child protection and well-being coordination, engaging 129 stakeholders. We built capacity for key actors by training 78 participants on systemic approaches to child protection and supported 150 Child Protection Committee members on case management and referral pathways.

Our advocacy and social behavior change efforts focused on ending harmful practices like FGM and child marriage, reaching 85 participants, while intergenerational dialogues and movement-

building activities engaged 299 individuals. Community empowerment sessions advocating for gender equity and the elimination of FGM reached 292 participants. Life skills training equipped 287 young people and an additional 300 adolescents with tools for a brighter future. We also engaged religious and traditional leaders, mothers, and girls in awareness sessions, and organized health impact discussions with circumcisers and survivors of FGM.

We conducted monitoring and assessments at baseline and endline, alongside pre- and post-training evaluations to measure progress. In total, the VAC project reached 2,498 participants, contributing to an overall Child Protection reach of 13,489 individuals in FY25. These efforts have strengthened child protection systems and created safer environments for children to thrive.

SUCCESS STORY

ChildFund Education for Protection and Wellbeing (EPW) Program Addressing Violence Against Children

ChildFund's comprehensive Education for Protection and Wellbeing (EPW) program, formerly known as the School-Based Violence Prevention (SBVP) Global Program Model, aims to enhance the ability of children (ages 6–12), caregivers, and educators to prevent, mitigate, and respond to violence against children.

The model includes four key components designed to reduce various forms of violence that children face at home, school, and in the community. Using the school as the entry point, the model fosters healthy social and academic development, as well as positive behavioral patterns and attitudes toward gender and violence.

Many children go outside without their parents or caregivers knowing their whereabouts or who they are with. As a result, they can face threats and abuse because they cannot distinguish between safe and unsafe environments. Additionally, many children are unaware of what constitutes appropriate or inappropriate touch.

To protect themselves and others, children need to understand what safe environments look like and the basic safety precautions they should follow.

A recent baseline study for the ChildFund EPW program surveyed 403 children. The results revealed that 37.2% (149 children) believe that touching, hitting, or pinching their genitals is not abuse. Moreover, 84% (336 children) believe that teachers would hit a student for misbehaving.

Since its pilot in two schools in the West Coast region, the EPW program has focused on children aged 6 to 12, their educators, and caregivers. Enhancing interactions among children, caregivers, and educators within and between the levels of the ecological model is a key component of EPW.

To improve educational outcomes and break the cycle of violence, the program emphasizes collaboration among four key components: children, caregivers, teachers, and the school/family partnership. Together, they work to strengthen social cohesion, improve teaching techniques, promote positive parenting, and increase parental involvement in the educational process.

EPW adopted a cognitive-behavioral skills training for teachers and caregivers called “Thousands of Hands” (ToH), also known as Miles de Manos. ToH is based on evidence-based teacher training, positive parenting, and violence prevention interventions. It reinforces Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in adults, while children participate in SEL and self-protection (SP) activities through lessons and comic books provided by ChildFund International.

Through monthly sessions, the program trained teachers in positive discipline, which helps establish classroom expectations and create a harmonious environment. It also introduced SEL for the first time in The Gambia.

Weekly activities with children focus on understanding the characteristics of safe places, using hands-on activities in the classroom and school environment. These activities teach six core competencies from our self-protection model:

1. **Types of touch:** Differentiating between safe, unsafe, and confusing touches.
2. **Assertiveness:** Learning how and when to say “no” and seek help.
3. **Unsafe situations:** Identifying safe and unsafe situations and ways to stay safe.
4. **Network of adults:** Identifying trusted adults.
5. **Recognizing, reporting, and protecting:** Knowing when and how to ask for help.
6. **Safety within the community:** Identifying safe places in the community.

The EPW model enables children, teachers, families, and community members to learn and understand protection issues in an effective way, providing maximum protection for children at home, school, and in their communities.

The success of the program has led to its expansion to 8 other schools in the Foni part of the West Coast, funded by BMZ.

Advocacy

In FY25, we strengthened our advocacy efforts to protect children from harmful practices such as child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). A key component of this work was supporting the Girls’ Platform, an association of young advocates committed to promoting the wellbeing of girls and ending violence against them.

The Girls’ Platform exceeded its membership target of 720, reaching **1,037 members** across three local partners: FDDF (322 members), DDYF (300 members), and SKF (415 members). These platforms have become a space for girls to build confidence, acquire leadership skills, and lead community sensitization campaigns on issues like teenage pregnancy and FGM.

We also facilitated quarterly meetings of the Child Rights Advocacy Group (CRAG), trained child advocates, and worked closely with partners to ensure impactful advocacy. Major child rights events were successfully organized, including the International Day of the Girl Child, the Day of the African Child, and the International Children’s Day of Broadcasting,

 **The Girls’ Platform exceeded its membership target of 720, reaching 1,037 members across three local partners: FDDF (322 members), DDYF (300 members), and SKF (415 members).**

in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Welfare and other stakeholders. Additionally, we supported the establishment of a Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Committee in Foni, reinforcing our commitment to safeguarding children.

The Girl's platform, an all-girls advocacy group established by ChildFund in all 3 of the Local Partner Federations we work with, have made significant strides in empowering girls by providing them with a collective voice to address critical issues that directly impact their lives. They mobilized their peers, came together and shared their experiences, and gained knowledge on key topics such as reproductive health, the importance of education, and protection from violence and exploitation. The Girls' Platform also holds community meetings with their own caregivers and other members of their community to sensitize them on issues affecting girls, including harmful traditional practices and myths. This approach of community members' own girl children speaking to them directly about issues affecting them has had and continues to have a significant positive impact by changing their attitudes towards decisions taken about girls.

Promoting Gender Equality

Together with UNFPA The Gambia, we have made significant strides in promoting gender equality and protecting the rights of women and girls. Through a strong collaboration with 12 partner Civil Society Organizations, the initiative successfully reached over 20,000 children, youth and adults across communities nationwide.

The program focused on advocating against harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting, while addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG).

A key highlight of this success was the promotion of positive social norms, particularly encouraging male involvement in family care and child upbringing. Fathers and male caregivers were engaged as champions of change, reinforcing shared responsibilities and

nurturing environments for children. These achievements have demonstrated the importance of collaboration and community-driven advocacy in challenging entrenched norms and creating safer, more equitable societies. ChildFund The Gambia and UNFPA The Gambia, together with local CSOs, have laid a strong foundation for sustainable change, ensuring that women and girls can live free from violence and discrimination while families thrive in harmony.

Fatoumata's Journey to Independence

Fatoumata, a young woman living with a disability, once relied on the streets to survive, asking for help to meet her daily needs. Her life took a transformative turn when she joined a livelihood skills training program in 2025, funded by UNFPA The Gambia and implemented by ChildFund in collaboration with The Gambia Federation of the Disabled (GFD). Through this initiative, Fatoumata learned the art of Batik and Tie-dye, gaining practical skills that opened doors to economic independence.

Today, Fatoumata no longer depends on handouts. She creates good that reflect her creativity and resilience, selling them to earn a sustainable income. This opportunity has restored her dignity and confidence, proving that with the right support, disability is not inability.

Her success inspires others to believe in their potential and embrace self-reliance.



ChildFund Country Director Musu Komma presents a certificate to a participant at the end of the training.

Environmental Sustainability

The Gambia remains highly vulnerable to the impacts of environmental changes rising temperatures, decreased rainfall, and rising sea levels threaten livelihoods and key economic sectors, particularly agriculture, which depends heavily on rain-fed farming. Human activities such as bush fires and charcoal burning for economic purposes continue to worsen these effects.

ChildFund is committed to reducing carbon emissions and promoting environmental sustainability. In FY25, we are working closely with local partners to implement programs that protect the environment and build climate resilience. Our initiatives include youth-led nature conservation campaigns, tree planting, and community cleaning exercises aimed at fostering awareness and action.

Waste Management Project in Brikama

One of our flagship climate and environmental interventions during the reporting period was the Plastic Waste Management Project implemented in Brikama, the municipal headquarters of The Gambia's largest local government area. The project was funded by Dow and implemented in partnership with Saama Kairo Federation and the Brikama Area Council (BAC), with the objective of improving waste management practices while creating livelihood opportunities for young people.

The project focused on strengthening waste segregation, collection, and recycling systems in four schools, Brikama Market, and Brikama District Hospital, while supporting youth-led waste collection services within surrounding communities. Trained youth groups were equipped with tricycles and personal protective equipment to collect and transport waste from collection points to a designated depot for sorting. Priority was given to plastic waste, one of the most prevalent contributors to urban pollution, alongside paper and metal waste streams.

Through structured sensitisation campaigns, teachers, students, market vendors, hospital staff, patients, and surrounding community members were trained on proper waste sorting, disposal, and the environmental and health implications of poor waste management. Clearly labelled waste bins were distributed to participating institutions to promote behavioral change and sustain improved waste management practices.

Key achievements:

- Trained and supported 17 youth in waste collection, sorting, and safe handling practices, providing them with income-generating opportunities through the sale of recyclable materials.
- More than 28,000 people, including over 9,000 children, reached through direct and indirect awareness-raising activities in schools, markets, healthcare facilities, and communities.
- Facilitated the collection of large volumes of plastic and other recyclable waste, including 7 tonnes collected during a major waste management campaign at Brikama Market and Hospital.
- Improved waste segregation and disposal practices for an estimated 10,600 users across schools, health facilities, and market spaces through the provision of labelled waste bins.
- Supported the formal registration of the youth group, enabling legal recognition, access to banking services, and stronger collaboration with government and private-sector partners.
- Established partnerships with local and cross-border recycling firms, including The Solution Hub, Fangdema Mbolo, and Kerr Hadim Company (Senegal), contributing to the development of a circular economy model.
- Introduced complementary environmental initiatives such as seedling nursery, promoting tree planting and additional income-generation opportunities for youth.



Gift-In-Kind Support Education and Health Across The Gambia

ChildFund's programs reach children and families across every corner of the country, ensuring no child is left behind. Through our Gift-In-Kind program, essential items—including medicines, school materials, household goods, and hygiene kits—are provided to children experiencing deprivation, exclusion, and vulnerability, helping to level the playing field and support their growth and well-being.

In FY25, ChildFund handed over four 40-foot containers of books and learning materials, valued at over USD 2.1 million, to the Gambia's Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MOBSE). These resources are being distributed to schools and colleges nationwide, covering Sciences, Mathematics, and English Language, and directly addressing low literacy and numeracy levels among school children. Children in communities without electricity also received solar-powered torches, giving them the tools to study safely at night.

The Ministry of Health received pharmaceuticals and medical supplies worth over **USD 7 million**, strengthening public health facilities and complementing government efforts to provide essential health services to vulnerable communities.

“ChildFund's programs reach children and families across every corner of the country, ensuring no child is left behind.”

USD 7M

Worth of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies were received by the Ministry of Health, strengthening public health facilities and supporting essential services for vulnerable communities.



Child Sponsorship

14,169

Children enrolled in sponsorship program.

19,400

Enrollment quota.



What sponsored children say:

“ At the age of 9, I was chosen by a Danish sponsor called Henrik Oghell Valeur. Even as a young girl then, images of that moment still appear fresh in my mind. The ChildFund sponsorship served as assurance for my education, in which I also had the chance to participate in big events like the International Children’s Day of Broadcasting. The life skills training I participated in boosted my confidence in a way I never imagined. I am not just comfortable at public speaking but also, I have carved a career for myself. Today, I have graduated with a diploma in catering at the

prestigious Gaye Njoro Skills Training Centre. I also serve as the president of the Girls’ Platform, a ChildFund-supported girl-led advocacy platform that is championing girls’ rights at the community level.” **Ma-Rohey Jarjue, Girls Rights Advocate and Caterer**





“ My journey with ChildFund The Gambia, formerly CCF, began in 1990 when I was a nursery school child and continued until I completed Senior Secondary School in 2002. During this period, I was sponsored by Ms. Tina Hammett from the USA. As a sponsored child, I benefited from school fee payments, periodic DFCs, medical assistance, and agricultural support, relieving my parents of significant financial burdens and enabling me to focus on my education.

Now i serve as the Climate Change and Natural Resources Management Officer for the Resilience of Organizations for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project (ROOTS).

I am deeply grateful to my husband, Mr. Buba Jatta at Dinding Yiriwa Federation, and to the management and staff of ChildFund for their dedication and commitment to supporting vulnerable children and ensuring they have access to opportunities that transform lives.”

Dr. Fatou Bojang, Climate Change & Natural Resources Management Officer, ROOTS

“ I vividly recall the joy when a small paper called DFC was delivered to my mother’s home, authorizing her to collect cash on my behalf. Those funds, though modest, were powerful they sustained my daily school lunches and gave me the strength to focus on my studies.

I remain forever grateful for these interventions that shaped my upbringing and laid the foundation for my future. Today, I stand proud as a graduate, giving back to my community and nation. I now serve as a Research and Training Officer with an NGO, channelling my experiences into service and development for The Gambia.

ChildFund’s support was not just assistance it was an investment in my life, one that continues to bear fruit as I contribute to society.”

Omar Kanteh, Research and Training Officer, Wassu Kafo-Gambia



Strengthening Partnerships

ChildFund prioritizes partnership in our operations because it helps us bridge the potential gaps that exist in solo operation approach. We leverage the knowledge and expertise that each partner brings to the table.

In FY25, the ChildFund continue to collaboratively work with UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNFPA to implement child focused activities that promote enrolment and retention of out-of-school children in The Gambia as well as promoting child protection, gender inclusion, positive social norms.

On quarterly basis, ChildFund and its affiliate partners

held quarterly partnership reflection meetings during which partners reflect, learnt, realigned their planned activities and budget for the FY to ensure efficient, effective, and quality program delivery.

Human Resource and Administration

Human Resources plays a key role in developing, reinforcing and changing the culture of an organization. They also play an important role in motivating the employees by giving them a purpose to make them understand the organization's vision and mission. In FY25, the HR department organized a team building session for all staff in the CO aimed at allowing

them to bond, which increases employee engagement levels. The activity also encouraged staff to work together and allow for collaboration rather than competition. The Staff were given the opportunity to voice their concerns during departmental, as well as general staff meetings, and discuss ways to move the organization forward.

Quality Assurance

At ChildFund, quality assurance means strong and effective internal control systems with checks and balances, and protection of the corporate image of the organization. Having been in operations for nearly 40 years in The Gambia,

“ On quarterly basis, ChildFund and its affiliate partners held partnership reflection meetings during which partners reflect, learnt, realigned their planned activities and budget for the FY to ensure efficient, effective, and quality program delivery.



ChildFund remains a strong household name in the country in complimenting government development efforts.

We work under strict internal control of resources entrusted to our organization. The vetting and continuous update of our vendor list in the system provides us with safe and reliable partners to work with. We also operate an e-procurement system which ensures that all procurement activities are done in accordance with the procurement policy.

These controls and efforts are amplified by our programs department's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist who conducts rigorous monitoring and evaluation of our implemented

projects and programs.

All implemented programs are successful, and this has resulted in the CO winning new grants in FY25. We are also expecting more grant funding in FY26 because of the trust and confidence donors and potential donors have in ChildFund.

Communications

ChildFund The Gambia prioritizes communication in the work that we do. The Office of the Communication Specialist works with the CO team to tell the success stories of the organization through different means and channels.

The Gambia Press Union, the umbrella body of journalists

in The Gambia works with ChildFund to promote children welfare and wellbeing through their annual Media Awards. The children reporting category, in which reporters reporting stories about children are awarded, is directly associated with ChildFund because of our impact on children.

Through our Communications office, we work with other media partners to share our successes and challenges, and to call people to action to address challenges facing children and their families. We also use social media to reach a wider audience and our donors, where we share programs and projects that we implement for children with them.

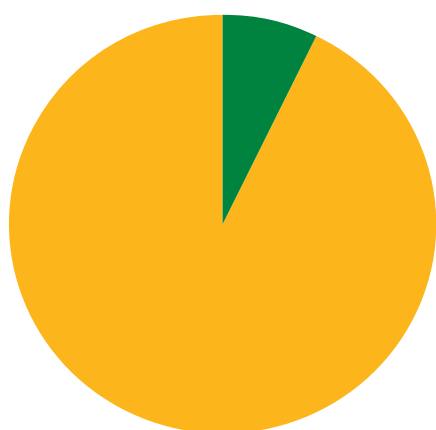


“ Having been in operations for nearly 40 years in The Gambia, ChildFund remains a strong household name in the country in complimenting government development efforts.

Financials

Source of Funds	Expenses (USD)
Gifts-In-Kind	\$3,781,106
Partnership Effectiveness Fund	\$265,052
Non-Sponsorship Funds	\$408,655
International Subsidy	\$1,271,494
Working Fund	\$236,546
Grants	\$974,964
Designated Funds for Children	\$196,437
TOTAL	\$7,134,254

Programs versus Administration Costs



Administration
(463,104.59)

7.41%

Programs
(5,786,217.41)

92.59%

Investment by Local Partner

Local Partner	Local Partner Expenses (USD)
Foni Ding Ding	\$436,469
Sama Kairo	\$533,856
Ding Ding Yiriwaa	\$301,168
TOTAL INVESTMENT	\$1,271,494.00

Investment by Life Stage (USD)

Life Stage	Foni Ding Ding Federation	Saama Kairo Federation	Ding Ding Yiriwa Federation	Total
0 – 5 years	51,801.57	112,965.25	54,587.67	219,354.49
6 – 14 years	192,752.75	71,151.20	48,747.36	312,651.31
15 – 24 years	85,940.71	128,219.27	63,049.94	277,209.92
Cross Cutting Programs	125,048.72	212,199.79	172,936.01	510,184.52
TOTAL	455,543.75	524,535.51	339,320.98	1,319,400.24

Our Team





Musukuta Komma-Bah
Country Director



Nfamara Dabo
Program and
Sponsorship Director



Ndeye Bah
Director of Finance,
West Africa



Madelene Ashcroft
HR Manager, Sierra
Leone and The Gambia

ChildFund's Senior Management Team (SMT) and all other staff members continuously strive for the success of the organization and the children and communities that we work with. Our staff's individual contribution, hard work, and dedication have been pivotal to every milestone we achieved in FY24 and will continue to achieve in the future.

Alagie Yaya Mbye	Admin & Human Resources Specialist
Samba Keita	Business Development Specialist
Gallo Demba Bah	Partnership Portfolio Specialist
Sunkung Danso	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist
Awa A Gibba	Early Childhood Development Specialist
Isatou Keita	Communication Specialist
Musa Fadera	Snr Finance and Accounting Specialist
Mambanick Njie	IT Support Analyst
Bubacarr Jammeh	Sponsorship Specialist
Haddy Thomas	Accountant
Kabba Bojang	Child Protection and Advocacy Specialist
Onisima Boissy Gomez	Sponsorship Officer
Lamin Jallow	Sponsorship Officer
Bakary Seedy Dampha	Program Specialist
Fatou Jassey	Education Specialist
Awa Gibba	Housekeeper
Fanding Singhateh	Senior Driver
Sainey Jawara	Housekeeper/Guard
Fatou Cham	Housekeeper
Ebrima AB Cham	Housekeeper/Guard
Alagie Ansu Loum	Housekeeper/Guard
Ismaila Hydara	Housekeeper/Guard
Sait Ceesay	Driver
Musa Ndow	Driver/Mechanic

Our Donors and Partners



Implementing Partners



Local Partners





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