



Clearer Focus, Wider Reach

Our Strategy for 2017-2020



Sirigu is a village in northern Ghana where until recently, an age-old belief in “spirit children” persisted - children with misunderstood disabilities or extra needs were feared as supernatural spirits that would bring harm to their communities.

Led by a trusted local team, AfriKids is the first organisation to successfully and permanently eradicate the “spirit child phenomenon” from Sirigu and surrounding communities. This quote comes from a former “concoction man”, who was previously responsible for diagnosing and killing “spirits” to save his community. Today he is revered as a child rights ambassador for Sirigu and is one of many local people helping us make changes to protect and promote the rights of all children in northern Ghana.

“There is no spirit child,
all children are children”



Our Vision

A prosperous and thriving world without poverty, where the rights of every child are valued, protected and met by all

Our Mission

To ensure that every child in Ghana is afforded his/her rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to do this by building the capacity and resources of local people, organisations and initiatives in such a way that they will be able to continue their efforts independently and sustainably in the future.

Our strategic priorities under this mission are:

- *Education*
- *Child Protection*
- *Health*

In working towards this mission, we are upholding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and contributing to Ghanaian and global development strategies including the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, Education for All Goals and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Who we are and what we do

We believe in the rights¹ of all children, everywhere, and that they should be valued, protected and met by all.

Brief history

The origins of AfriKids reach back to 1997, when a British traveller met passionate and committed local people in northern Ghana, doing what they could to help children at risk in their communities. In 2002, a fundraising charity was registered in the UK to help fund this work and by 2005 it was formally established as a non-governmental organisation in Ghana.

Today AfriKids is working with everyone it takes to change attitudes and improve services to protect at-risk children² across northern Ghana³ and give all children the opportunity for a secure and happy future, whatever their start in life. Specifically, we promote the importance of education, protection and health for children, and work with all levels of society from parents and community groups to the government and private sector to improve the systems and services needed to provide these for all children, particularly those at risk.

The need

Northern Ghana is an area where around half of all families live in poverty, and basic services like quality education and healthcare are limited. Few people have jobs and most families survive by growing whatever food they can to provide for themselves. These pressures can soon put children at risk – of life on the streets or needing to work to support their families at the cost of the education which could help them secure their own futures. Even the nominal registration fee can be too much for some families to afford to enrol on the National Health Insurance Scheme for free healthcare, and for children living this fragile existence, dropping out of school is all too common.

Ghana was the first country to ratify the UNCRC (the world's first international child rights treaty) and are heavily invested in reducing poverty for the next generation – 20-40% of government expenditure is invested in education and despite being severely under-resourced, the national health scheme launched in 2007 has been fiercely

1 As defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
 2 For the purposes of AfriKids' work, at-risk children are defined as: children affected by harmful traditional practices (child marriage, 'spirit' children); children at risk of dropping out of school; children without family support: motherless children, street and working children, children in worst forms of child labour, trafficked children, children migrating to the south to engage in menial jobs; children with disabilities; children living in abject poverty
 3 Defined as the three northern regions of Ghana – Upper East Region, Upper West Region and Northern Region



1. Visiting Ghana, AfriKids Founder, Georgie Fienberg (centre), met local heroes like Sister Jane (left), working hard to give children in their communities a better start in life. They joined forces to do more and AfriKids was born, growing to help more projects protecting children in danger.
 2. AfriKids helped Nich, Rex, Moses (from left) and friends realise their dream of providing a safe home for children living on their streets of their town, Bolgatanga. The Next Generation Home, under construction here, opened its doors in 2005 and has since helped thousands of children secure a better life off the streets. Today, Nich is Director of AfriKids Ghana, overseeing 100+ local staff and volunteers, delivering our life-changing programmes across northern Ghana.

Keeping children happy, healthy, safe and in school gives them the chance to break the cycle of poverty, secure their own futures and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities – towards a future that doesn't rely on aid.

protected. Through strategic partnerships with other governments and international organisations, they are steadily improving access to and quality of education and healthcare. However, government resources and international support is heavily concentrated in the more populous and "developed" southern regions, and for the many families in the rural north who still live a hand-to-mouth existence, AfriKids provides the extra help needed to turn national policy into their reality.

How we help

Without education, the next generation are more likely to live in poverty, suffer ill health and see their children repeat the same pattern. Keeping children happy, healthy, safe and in school gives them the chance to break this cycle of poverty, secure their own futures and contribute to the sustainable development of their communities – towards a future that doesn't rely on aid.

This is why AfriKids doesn't just help children get in to school, but looks at all of the push and pull factors that cause them to drop out, so that more children complete a Basic Education⁴.

Often the support needed is small, simple and temporary - microloans for parents to grow their household income with a small family business or "catch up" classes in local languages for children who have never been to school or have fallen behind since dropping out.

We combine direct support like this with systemic change programmes – working with communities, local partners and the government to make and embed permanent changes. This approach protects children at risk now while making the important changes needed to tackle issues preventing children's rights being met at the root.

4. Completion of the Basic Education Certificate exam at the end of Junior High School



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3. Most families in northern Ghana live in poverty and ensuring the protection, education and health of their children can be an impossible challenge. With the right support, they can secure their own livelihoods and lead the changes needed in their communities to provide these basic rights for all children, giving the next generation the chance to break the cycle of poverty for good.
 4. Systemic change programmes like our Child Rights Clubs in schools are changing attitudes and empowering children and their communities to demand more of each other and their government, to meet the rights of every child.

The opportunities for change

	IMPACT	OPPORTUNITIES	IMPACT	OPPORTUNITIES	IMPACT	OPPORTUNITIES	IMPACT	
	<p>Universal primary healthcare will reduce disability, sickness and the preventable deaths of mothers and their children</p> <p>Quality early years' education increases the chances children will stay in school and improves pass rates and grades</p> <p>Researchers estimate that if every child learned to read, around 170 million fewer people would live in poverty</p>	<p>Ensure all children attend quality early years education</p> <p>Ensure all children are safe and protected at home</p>	<p>Children of mothers with a full primary education are 40 per cent more likely to survive to age 5, and 50 per cent more likely to receive life-saving immunizations. These mothers are also far more likely to survive childbirth</p> <p>If all women had a primary education, there would be 1.7 million fewer malnourished children in the world</p>		<p>Reduce child marriage and increase the number of girls who continue education</p> <p>Ensure all children complete a Basic Education (to the end of Junior High School), with particular support for girls and children with disabilities who are less likely to</p>	<p>Junior (12-15 yrs)</p>	<p>Evidence shows that, on average, each additional year of education boosts a person's income by 10 per cent and increases a country's GDP by 18 per cent</p> <p>Almost 60% fewer girls would fall pregnant under 17 years in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia if they all had a secondary education</p>	<p>Support talented and aspiring young adults without the means to continue their education and training</p>
	<p>Improve access to and quality of healthcare for mothers and babies</p> <p>Eliminate traditional beliefs that are harmful to mothers and babies</p>		<p>Help families survive without needing to deprive or put their children at risk</p> <p>Ensure all children complete primary education</p>		<p>Reduce child marriage and increase the number of girls who continue education</p> <p>Ensure all children complete a Basic Education (to the end of Junior High School), with particular support for girls and children with disabilities who are less likely to</p>	<p>Senior (15-18 yrs)</p>	<p>If all women had a secondary education, child deaths would be halved, saving 3 million lives</p> <p>People with a secondary education express more concern for the environment, support for democracy and social equality and are more likely to vote</p>	<p>Support talented and aspiring young adults without the means to continue their education and training</p>
	<p>Antenatal and babies (0-3 yrs)</p>	<p>Pre-school/ Kindergarten (3-6 yrs)</p>	<p>Primary (6-12 yrs)</p>	<p>Junior (12-15 yrs)</p>	<p>Senior (15-18 yrs)</p>	<p>Higher Education (18+ yrs)</p>	<p>Investing in higher education increases the skills and expertise in the region to improve services and fuel economic growth for all</p>	
	<p>Mothers do not access basic healthcare and advice for themselves and their children, increasing chances of poor health</p> <p>Disability and birth complications are misunderstood and misinterpreted</p>	<p>Children miss vital foundation learning and are less likely to complete Basic Education</p> <p>Children lack a home which is protective and conducive to their physical and psychological development</p>	<p>Children miss the opportunities to learn for a more secure future and are more likely to suffer child labour, living on the streets and being trafficked</p>	<p>Girls drop out of school to marry and have families, putting the health of them and their children at risk and perpetuating the poverty cycle</p> <p>Children with disabilities are ostracised and have few opportunities for independent and fulfilling lives and to contribute to society</p>	<p>Teens return to menial work and their opportunities for gainful and reliable employment are limited</p> <p>Girls dropping out are likely to marry and have children under the age of 18</p>	<p>Development is held back and poverty maintained due to a lack of skills and knowledge for change</p> <p>Dependence on foreign aid is more likely and requirements are higher and for longer than they could be</p>		
	<p>Babies identified as "spirits" face abuse, neglect and even death</p> <p>Mothers and babies suffer preventable illness and death</p>	<p>Children that never attend school are more likely to live in poverty and their children are more likely to die young</p> <p>Children without a safe home often end up living on the streets, in child labour and are at high risk of abuse</p>	<p>No country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education</p>	<p>Under-age mothers and their children are far more likely to suffer health complications and die young</p> <p>Around 150 million children in the world live with a disability - 80% of them are in developing countries and 9 out of 10 of these children do not attend school</p>	<p>Young people are unable to fulfil their potential, secure their futures and help their communities develop.</p> <p>The number of people living in poverty, and so forced migration and the need for foreign aid, continues to escalate</p>	<p>Limiting the number of people that complete higher education holds society back, limiting the skills and expertise needed for social and economic development, slowing the pace of poverty reduction and perpetuating the need for foreign aid</p>		

Universal child protection, education and health are the most effective ways to end poverty for good

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Clearer Focus, Wider Reach

When AfriKids started work, one in six children in the Upper East died before their fifth birthday, now it is one in ten.

There is still work to do, but with the right support, life can and does improve here, especially when change is led by local people who will sustain it.

More than a decade of work in Ghana's Upper East Region has honed AfriKids' highly effective model and improved life for thousands of children and families. Now we will focus on three key issues and expand across a wider area to reach more children in need.

Context

Over the years, AfriKids has witnessed great change and development in Ghana's Upper East Region, and one of the charity's greatest strengths is how it has continuously listened and adapted to this changing environment. What began as direct support to hundreds of children has today evolved into wide-reaching programmes making permanent, systemic changes for the improved education, protection and health of all children.

While maintaining a strong commitment to local consultation and leadership, engagement with large scale actors, from the Government of Ghana to international NGOs like UNICEF, has enabled AfriKids to influence national policy and programmes, expanding and replicating their work to great effect.

While there is still much work to be done, the Upper East Region has seen relatively strong progress for the north over the last decade. When AfriKids started work, one in six children in the Upper East died before their fifth birthday, now it is one in ten and where just 18% of women were literate, today 48% can read and write. With the right support, life can and does improve here, especially when change is led by local people who will sustain it.

Clearer Focus

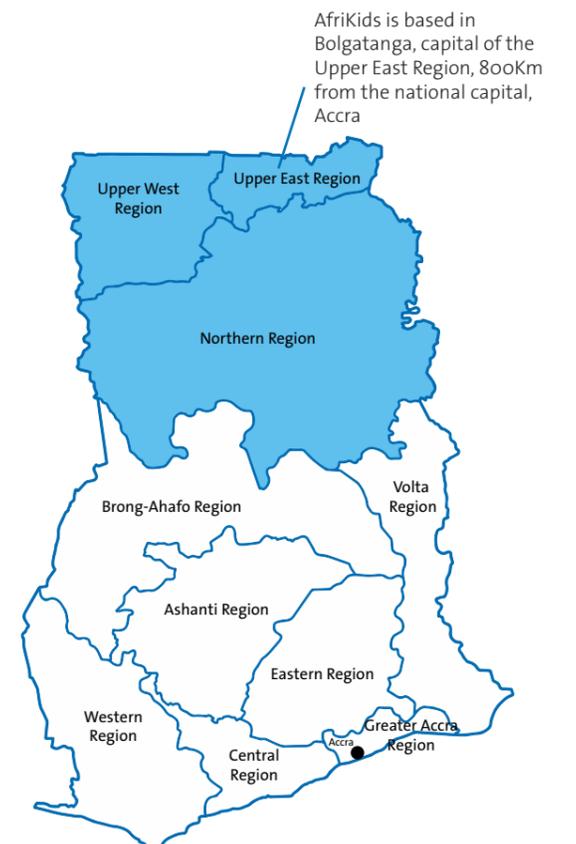
Looking forward, we are focusing our work on three of the child rights issues needing the most support and that we have had the most success in improving: education, child protection and health. Our projects will expand work under these three programmes to have a wider reach – both vertically and horizontally. Vertical expansion will deepen our involvement in different aspects of each of these programmes, for example in education as well as increasing enrolment in schools, we will work to improve the quality of education and the number of children who not only begin school, but complete their Basic Education. In child protection, we will replicate our highly successful work ending the belief and practice of the Spirit Child Phenomenon to also address child marriage. In health we will increase our work in communities to increase understanding of and access to healthcare affecting children. Our horizontal expansion of these programmes will extend them across a wider geographical area.

Wider Reach

Established by a handful of committed community members, AfriKids has to-date focused the majority of its work in three districts of the Upper East Region of Ghana. Its subsequent growth and the international credibility it holds today is testament to the impact of this work. The Upper East, however, comprises 13 districts and is just one of the three regions that comprise "northern Ghana" - persistently and by far the country's poorest area, with more than half of all people living on less than £1.18 per day.

The Upper West Region is the poorest in the country, with 7 in 10 people living below the national poverty line, and the expansive Northern Region has the highest rates of illiteracy and child marriage, with nearly 40% of girls marrying before the age of 18. AfriKids has seen that harmful traditional practices like the Spirit Child Phenomenon are consistently more prevalent in rural and remote areas where education and healthcare coverage is low, and this is evidenced again in the Upper West and Northern Regions. The reasonable proximity of these regions and similarities in culture and context mean AfriKids' model will be relevant and highly valuable

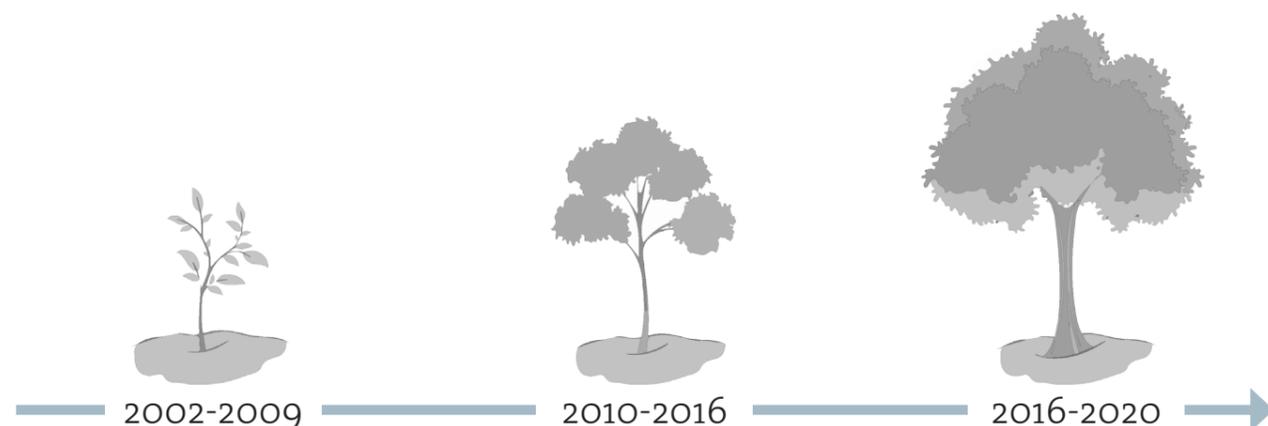
Our geographical expansion will cover all of the Upper East Region and introduce work to some districts in the Upper West and Northern Regions to reach more children and families in need than ever.



Regions of Ghana, with the collective northern regions shown in blue. AfriKids will now expand its work across the north to help more children and families at risk.

Moving in to our next phase of growth

Always building on what we have achieved and learned to go further



Research & development

A handful of community-specific projects and pilots, led by local heroes
A broad child rights mission deliberately delivered within a narrow geographical area to test and maximise impact

Refinement & growth

Number of projects increased and more stakeholders are engaged to strengthen sustainability
Six key "Service Areas" defined and "Area Programmes" teams established in three districts of the Upper East region to deliver them
Cases are developed and tested for local businesses, with a view to generating profits that can fund the charity's social projects

Clearer focus, wider reach

Service Areas honed further into three Programmes that focus on greatest need and proven success (Education; Child Protection; Health). These refined programmes will be expanded across northern Ghana, including all districts in the Upper East and some work in the Northern and Upper West Regions
Fundraising in the UK continues as the most cost-effective and risk-sensible income strategy, though ongoing efforts to reduce dependence on aid include:

- Establishing businesses that help fulfill our programmatic objectives whilst also generating funds (though not pursuing profit-only businesses)
- Programmes seeking ways to fund their objectives without aid. E.g. scaling the microfinance project to cover its running costs and providing student loans that can be recycled to help more students
- Continuous investment and innovation in alternative fundraising - social investment, payment by results, direct funding, etc.

Taking on the next opportunities

Because we have achieved this...	...we will now do this
Eradicated the Spirit Child Phenomenon from Sirigu village and six surrounding communities, and commenced work in 11 more to do the same	Move into 33 more communities to eradicate the Spirit Child Phenomenon, as they have asked us to Demand better support from the education and health systems for children with disabilities and extra needs Use our SCP model to change attitudes about girl's rights and end child marriage
Systems are now in place to keep kids off the streets and in school	Now we want those schools to offer a better quality education, particularly for early years, to increase the number of children that continue education and improve their results
Supported tens of thousands of out-of-school children to access education	Remove the main reasons they might drop out so all complete at least a basic education This includes ending child marriage, one of the main reasons girls drop out, and going the last, hardest mile to ensure the most marginalised children (including those with extra needs) receive an education too
Put an end to children working in deep-shaft mines and formed alliances with local people and the private sector to stop child labour and respond to children found living on the streets or travelling south for work	Support more young people progressing at all levels of education, and qualifying as professionals, for their livelihood security and to bring much needed skills to the region
Treated hundreds of thousands of cases at the AfriKids Medical Centre, increased services for cervical screening, diabetes, optometry and dental health and provided training – in some cases the first of its kind ever delivered in Ghana - for thousands of healthcare workers, improving the availability and quality of essential healthcare across the region	Continue improving services and standards of healthcare in the region through training and partnerships Continue providing direct service delivery of healthcare through the AfriKids Medical Centre Increase health outreach – educating people in the community on health including girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights and the importance of ante and post-natal care
Educated and empowered hundreds of thousands of people to understand and value child rights and take up a collective responsibility to ensure all children are safe, healthy and educated, including girls and children with disabilities	Give young people more of a voice – building knowledge, confidence and presence through our Child Rights Clubs, radio debates and even in helping design our programmes, so they can be more effective than ever at empowering a generation that will continue to drive and sustain change into the future
Supported more than 1,200 women to establish businesses through our microfinance programme so they can better provide for their children and remove the pressure on them to drop out of school to work	Scale up our microfinance programme to support more families to grow household income, an essential factor for ensuring they keep their children safe, healthy and in school

Our Principles

We are truly local

Our team of local staff in Ghana design and run all of our life-changing programmes from start to finish. Qualified, experienced professionals, they have a deep, personal commitment to improving life for children in their communities, and being known and trusted by the communities they work in is what makes them so effective, especially with some of our most complex work changing traditional beliefs. Fundraising and donor due diligence is led from the UK, but always with the aim of supporting local people delivering the right solutions in their own communities.

We are transparent and accountable

We are fiercely committed to 100% accountability for all of the money we receive and spend in the UK and Ghana. We maintain robust governance policies and procedures including regular internal and external audits to ensure this. We publish independently audited accounts annually and encourage donors to ask us anything, anytime.

We Say No to Pity

We will not trivialise the injustice of poverty or compromise the dignity of anyone we work with through pity advertising or by using inappropriate images or language when discussing sensitive issues. We hope sharing the positive stories of how our work is making a difference will inspire people to help us do more.

We listen

Our programmes are developed by listening to what local people tell us they really need. Our exceptional stakeholder consultation gives every level of society a say on what we do, and gives us a clear view on what the government and other actors are doing. This ensures our projects are always truly needed, wanted and bought into by everyone it takes to make them work.

We empower

Our approach is always to help children, families and communities help themselves. Our projects bring people together, equip them with knowledge and show them how to make and demand the changes needed for all children to have a better life in northern Ghana.

We sustain

If it's not sustainable, it's not development. For us, this means two things:

Addressing the root causes of issues as well as the symptoms

As well as providing direct support to children at risk now, we are also improving the education, child protection and healthcare systems of northern Ghana, to stop suffering in the first place, and improve every child's start in life.

Creating changes that are sustainable without ongoing aid

All of our projects create change by educating local people and empowering them to make changes themselves. This way the changes we help make with each new project become permanently embedded, and continue to benefit children long after our involvement ends. While there is a lot of work to be done and making permanent changes take time, our projects will evolve and move, and rather than create dependence on us, they enable change to be sustained.

This is how we are helping people secure better futures for children that ultimately don't rely on aid.

We respect people and planet

We work together with communities to end harmful traditional practices and protect children, while respecting local culture, heritage and environment.

We are conscious to minimise the impact of our operations on the environment and employ a reduce, reuse and recycle approach.

We always want to do better

An ethos of learning and improving is ingrained in everything we do, from supporting training for all of our staff to continuously developing our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning tools to measure our impact and inform our strategy. We welcome feedback from all of our stakeholders.

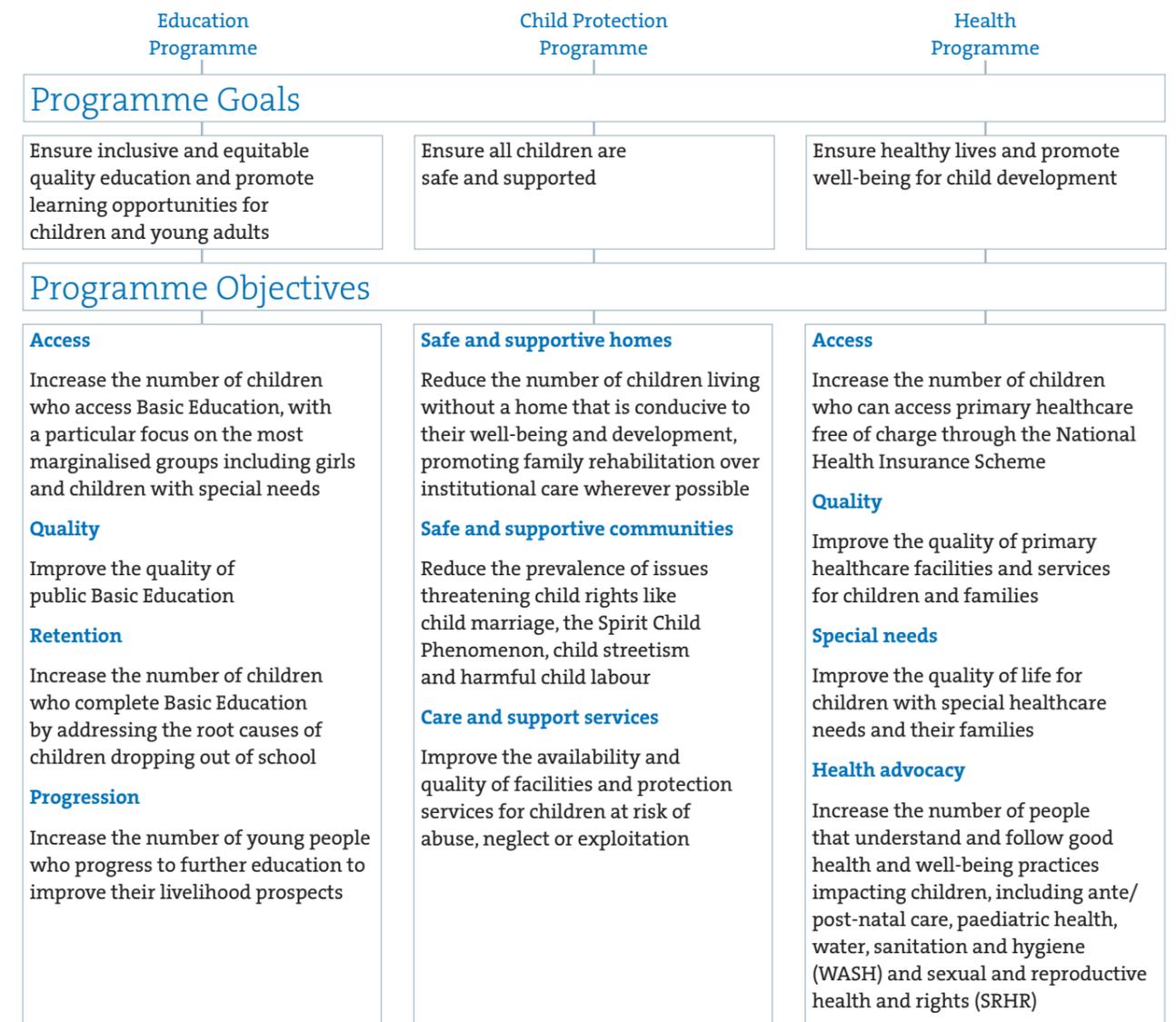
Our 2017-2020 Strategic Framework

Vision

A prosperous and thriving world without poverty, where the rights of every child are valued, protected and met by all

Mission

To ensure that every child in Ghana is afforded his/her rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to do this by building the capacity and resources of local people, organisations and initiatives in such a way that they will be able to continue their efforts independently and sustainably in the future.

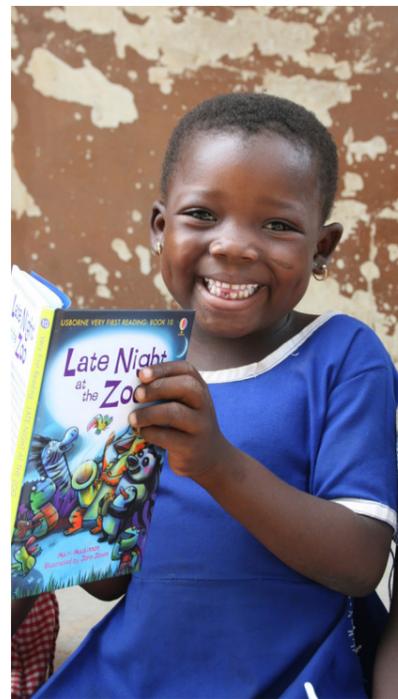


2017-2020: Education Programme

Projects 12
Regions 3
People 376,113

Key Targets

- 730 children off the streets and into school
- 320 young adults trained as teachers and nurses with a student loan that will be recycled to help others
- 5,000 active microloans to help families grow their income
- 45 schools made accessible to children with disabilities
- 60 schools improved with stronger governance and parent participation
- 1,944 teachers trained as early years specialists
- 23,040 children taught with specialist early years techniques
- 3,015 people given ICT training to improve school grades and employability
- 9,460 children's first days at school celebrated to encourage enrolment



Projects	Upper East Region	Upper West Region	Northern Region
AfriKids ICT Academy	✓		
Complementary Basic Education (CBE)	✓		✓
Education Fund	✓		
Family Livelihood Support Programme	✓		
Foundations for Life	✓	✓	✓
Futures Freedom	✓		
Go Solar!	✓		
Inclusive Education	✓	✓	✓
Opening Doors to Schools	✓		
Transforming Futures	✓		
School of Night Rabbits	✓		
Young Entrepreneurs Programme	✓		

2017-2020: Child Protection Programme

Projects 9
Regions 3
People 601,174

Key Targets

- 85 traditional healers set up as Right to Life Promoters - championing and protecting child rights including children they might previously have identified as "spirit children"
- 850 children and family members living with disabilities supported with specialist care and advice in their communities
- 32,034 children attending Child Rights Clubs to learn about their rights and how to demand and uphold them
- 840 young women who married as children educated on the importance of their children's sexual and reproductive health and rights and supported to grow their own businesses for independent livelihood security
- 153 children without a safe home provided residential care and resettled with their family whenever possible
- 730 children living on the streets given counselling and support to get into school and off the streets
- 14,250 youth and women's group members attend talks and workshops to end belief in the Spirit Child Phenomenon



Projects	Upper East Region	Upper West Region	Northern Region
AfriKids Medical Centre	✓		
Community Based Rehabilitation and Eradicating the Spirit Child Phenomenon	✓		✓
Family Livelihood Support Programme	✓	✓	✓
Futures Freedom	✓		
Inclusive Education	✓		
Operation Bolgatanga	✓		
Operation Mango Tree	✓		
Operation Smiles			✓
School of Night Rabbits	✓		

2017-2020: Health Programme

Projects 10
Regions 3
People 571,879

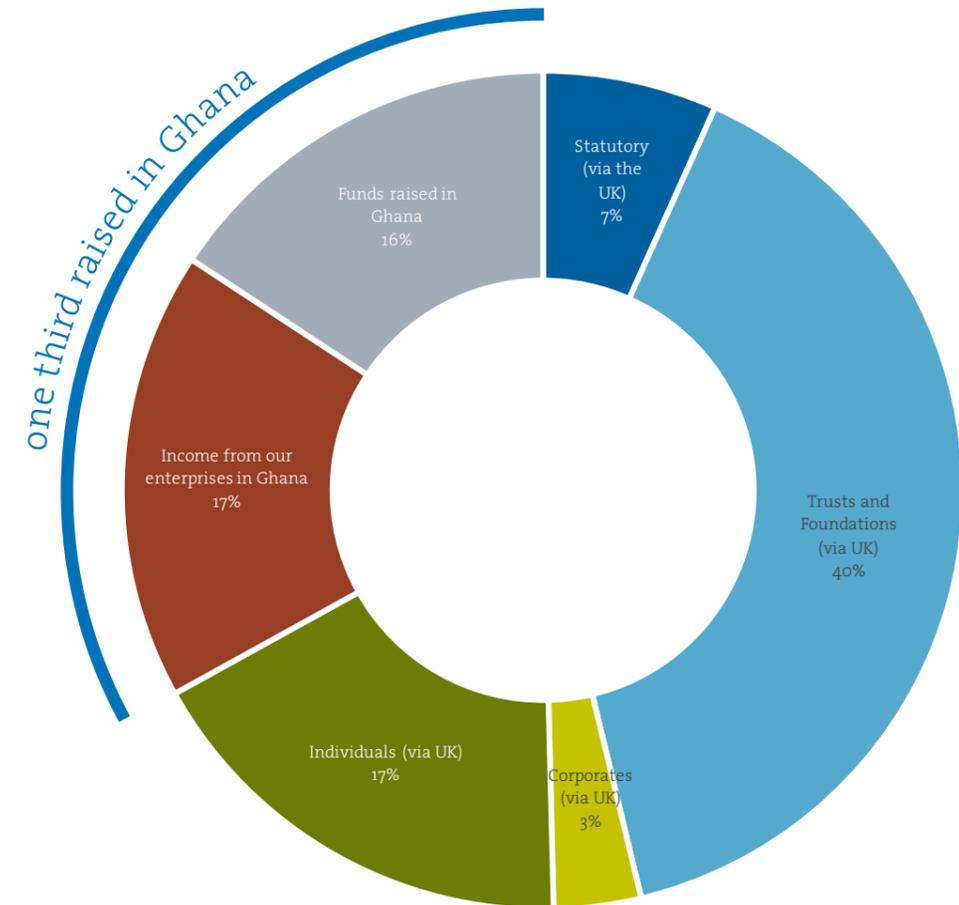
Key Targets

- 2,230 children health screened at school, including children living on the street attending AfriKids' School of Night Rabbits night school
- 200,000 cases seen at the Medical Centre
- 850 children and families living with disabilities attend support groups and receive specialist health advice
- 45 schools made accessible to children with disabilities
- 5,268 family planning and childcare advisory sessions for rural women
- 25,114 young people educated on their sexual and reproductive health and rights and how to exercise their voice, choice and control
- 40 life-threatening health conditions and emergencies supported for families that cannot afford treatment
- 3,320 healthcare workers attend training sessions to improve the quality of healthcare and patient service in the region



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Community Based Rehabilitation and eradicating the Spirit Child Phenomenon	✓		✓
Complementary Basic Education (CBE)	✓		✓
Family Livelihood Support Programme	✓	✓	✓
GAS Partnership for health	✓	✓	✓
Inclusive Education	✓		
Opening Doors to Schools	✓		
Operation Smiles			✓
School of Night Rabbits	✓		

How we will fund our plans



Funds raised via the UK

Based on fundraising targets set in 2017 for AfriKids UK, and assumes the split between types of fundraising is maintained, with 6% cumulative growth over the period.

Funds raised in Ghana

Based on projections in 2016 for grants that will be procured and managed by AfriKids Ghana directly.

Income from our enterprises in Ghana

Based on forecast revenue from the AfriKids Medical Centre; Family Livelihoods Support Project (microfinance); Go Solar! solar lighting business; Energy for Life Initiative (clean cook stove carbon credit revenue) and AfriKids ICT Academy revenue. All revenue from these initiatives help fund the running costs of these projects, or where profitable, help fund AfriKids' other work.

More Information

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