

**2022**

# Annual Review

Celebrating **38 years** of changing lives





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# We are **Able Child Africa**

The leading UK charity working solely to improve the lives of children and young people with disabilities in Africa.

> For over 38 years, we've been making lasting change for children with disabilities in Africa, operating across Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi and Zambia.

We break down the barriers to inclusion for children with disabilities and empower them to fight for their rights. We create change on a national scale by influencing governments and other agencies.

We are a small charity making a big impact. We are uncompromising in our mission. We are experts in what we do and are passionate about the approach we take. We are bold and agile, with the courage to innovate and take disciplined risks.



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# Welcome from our Chair



**Jim Sellars**  
Chair

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to our 2022 Annual Report. We are very proud of the work we do through our partners to protect, educate and empower children with disabilities, so they are able to fulfil their potential. In the last year, our partners worked with over 700 children and supported over 1,000 parents across Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi and Zambia. Among the many highlights, we secured our first multi-year grant funding for our newest partner ZAPCD in Zambia and have become a leading figure in the UK and internationally on disability-inclusive child safeguarding, following the launch of the Disability-inclusive Child Safeguarding Guidelines.

Like many charities, we were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic both operationally and financially. In the last financial year, we saw a significant contraction in our funding. However, the team and our partners have worked tirelessly through these challenging times and we are delighted that funding and, most importantly, service delivery are returning to pre-pandemic levels.

As part of our five-year strategic cycle, we have launched a strategic review of Able Child Africa, in conjunction with our partners and wider stakeholders. The new strategy will aim to ensure that the organisation will continue to support the children we work with in the best possible way. Excitingly, we have recently received multi-year grant funding to support some of the proposed changes and we look forward to sharing more details of this new strategy, when it is finalised in the new year.

We work side-by-side with our six partners and their commitment, vision, and knowledge drive the success of Able Child Africa, without whom none of our work would be possible. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners for everything they have done this year and throughout our many years of successful partnership.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the entire Able Child Africa team. Karl, our CEO, and Lauren, our Head of Programmes and Advocacy, provide both inspirational leadership to the whole organisation and drive the long-term vision of Able Child Africa. We are also indebted to the Board of Trustees, whose diverse skillsets and experiences have been crucial in navigating the challenges of the last two years.

Despite the organisation's recovery following the pandemic, the external fundraising environment remains difficult. We do not underestimate the challenge ahead, and our final thanks are reserved for all our donors, whether individual, corporate or institutional, small and large. Your generosity is the organisation's lifeblood, and we remain indebted to your continued support. This has enabled Able Child Africa to deliver all the work described in the following pages and to continue our vital mission to improve the lives of children with disabilities.

While this has been a challenging period, the organisation remains well-placed to flourish and ultimately support many more children who need our support. We are really excited about the future and sincerely hope you will continue to feel moved to support us in our vital work.

Best wishes,  
**Jim Sellars**



### Fighting for rights & change for children in Africa.

Children and young people with disabilities are among the most marginalised in the world. Those living in poverty are disproportionately affected. Many continue to spend much or all of their lives in institutions, away from their families and are vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse. They are forgotten, hidden and have been systematically excluded.

# 60 million

people with disabilities live in Africa, the vast majority of which are children.

# Only 1 in 10 attend school



This impact is worsened for girls with disabilities.

Children with disabilities are **4 times** more likely to suffer abuse or violence



# Why we exist

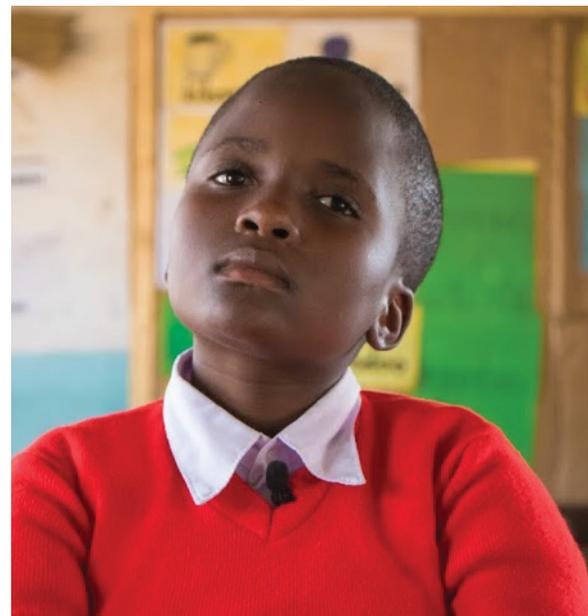
Up to **80%** of children with disabilities from low-income countries will not live to be 5 years old. The children that do are four times more likely to suffer abuse and eight times less likely to go to school.

**Our vision is a world in which all children with disabilities are fully included as equal members of society.**

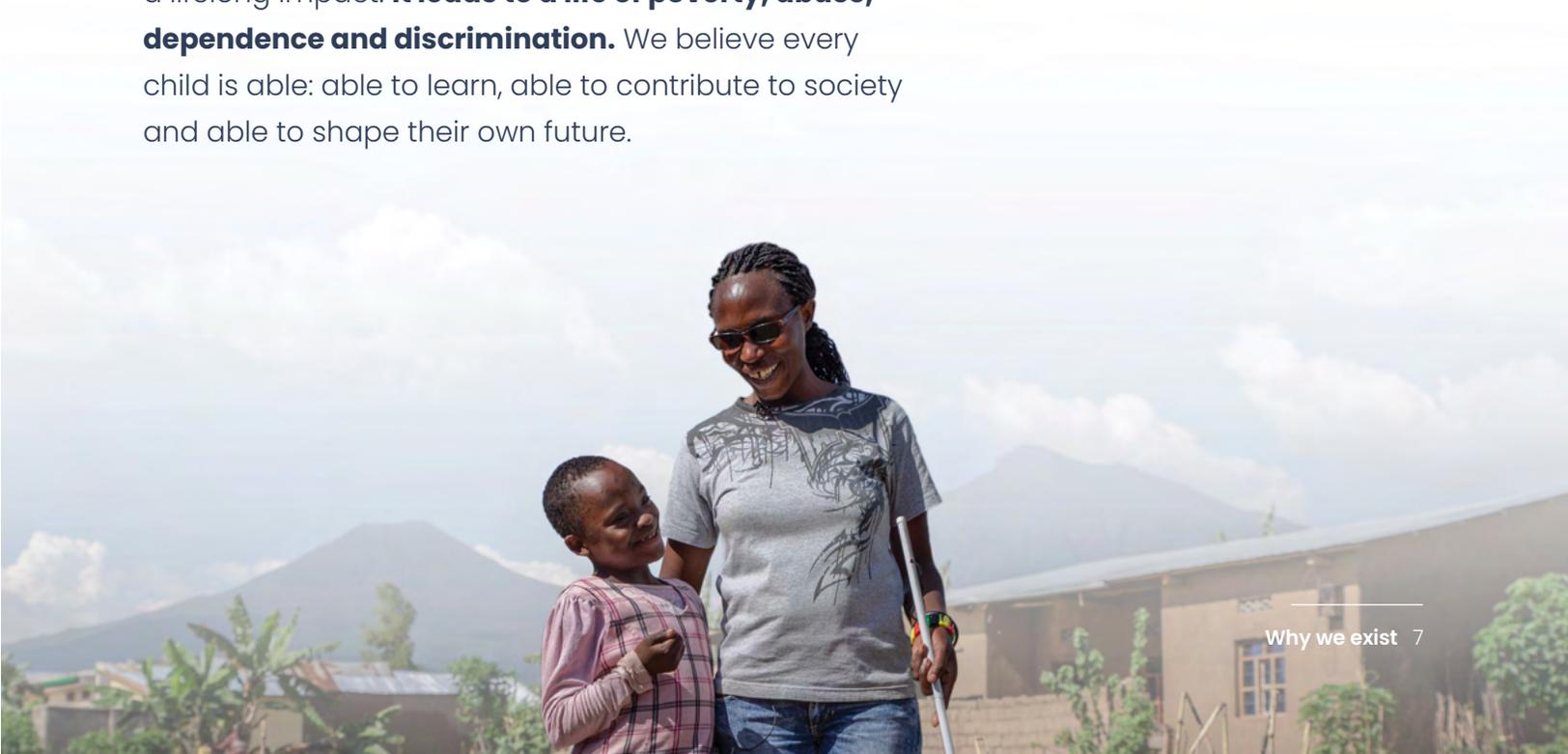
Only half of the children who begin go on to complete their primary education. Most drop out after a few months due to feelings of exclusion, isolation or stigma.

Every day, these children are facing barriers such as stigma and discrimination just for being who they are. They are some of the most vulnerable children in the world.

Local disability-focused organisations are severely underfunded and under-resourced, so Able Child Africa plays a key role in supporting local partners to protect, educate and empower children with disabilities so they are able to fulfil their potential.



Denying children with disabilities their equal rights has a lifelong impact. **It leads to a life of poverty, abuse, dependence and discrimination.** We believe every child is able: able to learn, able to contribute to society and able to shape their own future.



# What we do

We work with local partners to **protect, educate and empower** children with disabilities so they are able to fulfil their potential. We do this by...

## Delivering high quality programmes

We deliver high-quality programmes alongside local partners that break down the barriers to inclusion for children with disabilities.

## Strengthening local organisations

We strengthen local organisations on the ground which ensures they can deliver lasting change in the countries where we work.

## Fighting for rights & creating change

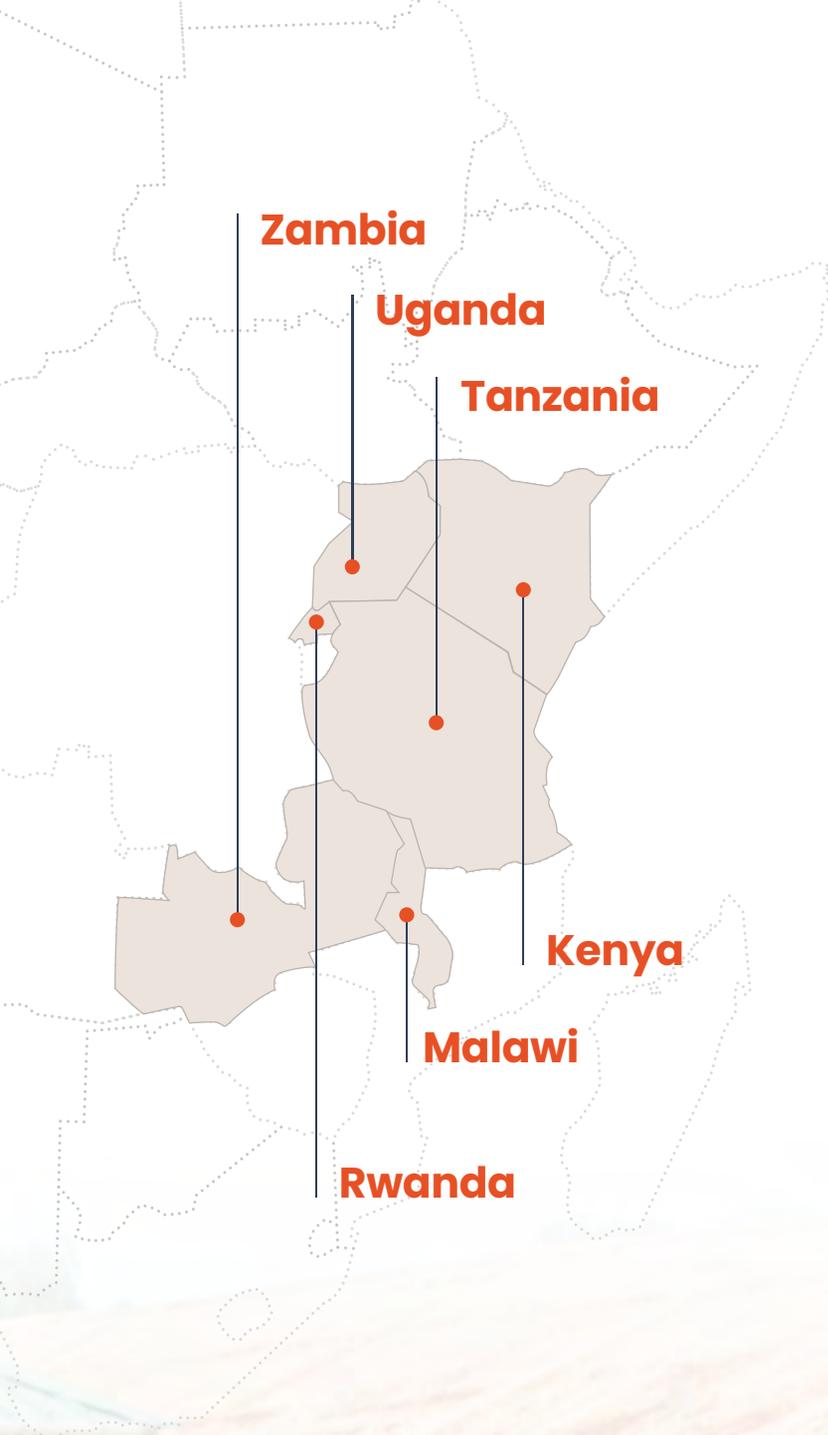
We fight for the rights of children with disabilities, creating change on a national scale by influencing governments and agencies.



**Able Child Africa has benefited our work in so many areas, providing us with a valuable network where we have been able to learn from other organisations doing similar work.**

**Beneficiary** of our work in Tanzania





We have over **38 years'** experience working with local organisations across Africa to improve the lives of children with disabilities.

Our **mission** is to promote the realisation of equal rights for children and young people with disabilities in Africa and to facilitate their meaningful inclusion in all aspects of life.



# Protect.



## Ensuring the **protection** of children with disabilities in Africa.

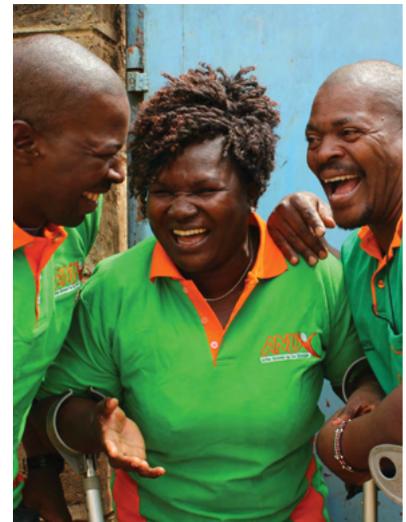
Children with disabilities are at a higher risk of violence, abuse or exploitation due to the multiple barriers that prevent them from protecting themselves or reporting incidents of abuse. We work with all our partners to improve and support local safeguarding practices and ensure the protection of children in the areas where we work.

By supporting local families and organisations to break down the stigma and discrimination around disability, we ensure the **protection** and inclusion of children with disabilities within their communities. We have been working to do this in Kenya...

### Improving Child Safeguarding in Kenya

We worked with our partner **Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY)** in Kenya to build their capacity to safeguard children with disabilities. Much of ANDY's early work had focused on supporting young people, however, they were increasingly looking for ways to work with younger children with disabilities, as they identified large numbers of children who were out of school. ANDY sought Able Child Africa's support to include children with disabilities in their five-year strategy, and together we developed a new child protection and safeguarding policy for the organisation.

The full involvement of both ANDY and Able Child Africa in this process ensured that both national and international standards were considered. Crucially, we have been able to apply our extensive experience and knowledge of the considerations needed for inclusive safeguarding, specifically for children with disabilities.



# Educate.



## Changing the lives of children with disabilities through **education**.

In low income countries, over 90% of children with disabilities do not attend formal school. To tackle this problem, we have developed inclusive **education** projects that support children with disabilities to access mainstream education alongside their peers, improving their educational outcomes and ensuring they are able to fulfil their potential.

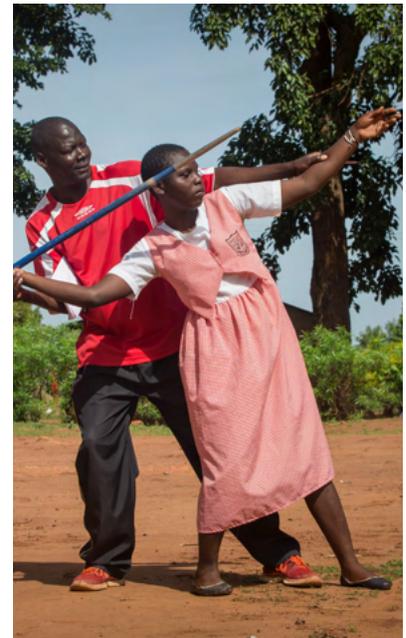
We have been working in Uganda to change the lives of children with disabilities through education...

### Child to Child Inclusive Education in Uganda

We teamed up with our partners **Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC)**, to implement an Inclusive Education Project using an innovative Child to Child approach. The project worked to support children to break down the environmental, institutional and attitudinal barriers faced by children with disabilities to accessing safe, inclusive education.

Using the Child to Child approach, children already attending school are encouraged to identify and engage with out-of-school children with disabilities in their communities. Together with teachers, they identify barriers to exclusion, and work with schools and communities to ensure that children with disabilities are in education, and importantly stay in school.

We worked with 27 schools across three districts (Lira, Adjumani and Nebbi) over 5 years, enabling us and USDC to get over 1,500 children with disabilities into school.



# Empower.



### Empowering children with disabilities in Africa to fight for their rights.

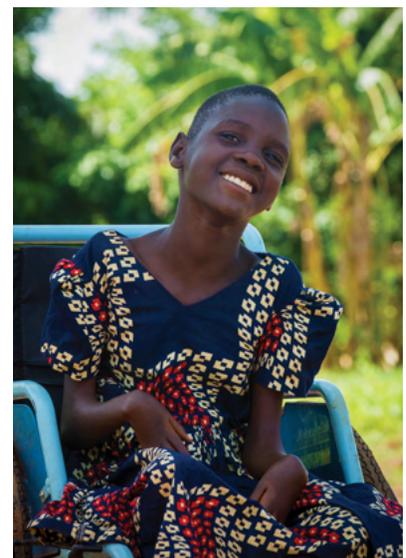
For too long children with disabilities have been forgotten, hidden and systematically excluded. A key reason is that the children and their parents have been unaware of their rights and are disempowered in the fight for justice. By **empowering** children and young people with disabilities with knowledge of their rights, they are able to break down the barriers to their inclusion for themselves and their peers.

### Raising Aspirations in Rwanda

With funding from the UK Government, we joined the fight to 'leave no one behind' in Rwanda, partnering with **Uwezo Youth Empowerment (UWEZO)** to empower children and young people with disabilities to demand inclusion within the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Alongside UWEZO, we developed and implemented a youth-led model, where we trained young people with disabilities to mentor and work with younger children with disabilities. Through this approach, we provided a platform to develop youth-led solutions for meaningful inclusion, where young people themselves become the key advocates for inclusion at the community and government level.

This has created new mechanisms and networks, where young people with disabilities are empowered to campaign for their inclusion across society.



# Our impact

**Objective 1:** Support African-led organisations to help children with disabilities and their families realise their full potential

We directly supported children and young people with disabilities through enrolling out-of-school children into schools, providing disability aids, making school premises more accessible, establishing mentoring networks and activities to break down damaging myths about disability.



In 2021/22, we have been working with **six partners** across **six countries** in Africa to improve the lives of children with disabilities.

## Children & young people with disabilities directly supported

- Uganda:** 243 children & young people supported
- Kenya:** 69 children & young people supported
- Rwanda:** 74 children & young people supported
- Tanzania:** 250 children & young people supported
- Malawi:** 68 children & young people supported
- Zambia:** no stats available as yet

Total **704**



**We trained teachers in inclusive teaching methods,** providing the necessary training and tools to help teachers support all children in the classroom and ensuring children with disabilities can participate in lessons alongside their peers.



### Teachers we trained

- Uganda:** 86 teachers trained
- Kenya:** 40 teachers trained
- Rwanda:** 0 teachers trained
- Tanzania:** 12 teachers trained
- Malawi:** 37 teachers trained
- Zambia:** no stats available as yet

Total **175**

**We supported parents of children with disabilities** through parent support groups or community events, giving parents the opportunity to discuss the challenges they face, support each other and work together to advocate for their children's inclusion.



### Parents we supported

- Uganda:** 566 parents supported
- Kenya:** 208 parents supported
- Rwanda:** 50 parents supported
- Tanzania:** 90 parents supported
- Malawi:** 150 parents supported
- Zambia:** no stats available as yet

Total **1,064**

**We worked with government officials and ministers** advocating for improvements in disability inclusion at a local and national level in key government services in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Malawi.



### Government officials we worked with

- Uganda:** 65 government officials we worked with
- Kenya:** 20 government officials we worked with
- Rwanda:** 12 government officials we worked with
- Tanzania:** 2 government officials we worked with
- Malawi:** 29 government officials we worked with
- Zambia:** no stats available as yet

Total **128**

# Uganda

We have been working in Uganda **since 1984** alongside our partner **USDC**, supporting children with disabilities and their families to break down the barriers to inclusion.

Many people living with disabilities in Uganda continue to face **stigma** and **discrimination**. In northern Uganda, where we work, 80% of people with disabilities have been identified as living in chronic poverty. Despite significant progress at a policy level in Uganda, there is an implementation gap. With a policy of Universal Primary Education, school enrolment has reached 90%. However, this is not the case for children with disabilities, where only 2% are graduating to secondary level.

## What we're proud of

As part of our Comic Relief funded project, we are proud to have **successfully opened all 18 of our Community Learning Centres** (inclusive community-based pre-primary schools) across the districts of Nebbi and Adjumani in northern Uganda. Government restrictions due to COVID-19 had prevented them being opened as planned in the previous year, however they are all now fully operational with children both with and without disabilities playing and learning together through our inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum. The children are being taught by a dedicated group of 54 parents and caregivers who have been trained in inclusive early childhood education practices (IECE) and inclusive safeguarding and we are now looking forward to seeing how these children grow and develop through IECE before they successfully transition into primary schools.

**Able Child Africa's support to my team and ongoing sharing of ideas has helped us come up with new ideas we would not have thought possible.**

**Dolorence Were, Director USDC**



### Supporting children with disabilities through individualised education plans

This year we completed our new project with USDC, funded by The Marr Munning Trust, which seeks to widen access to individualised learning plans (ILPs) for children across Uganda's public school system. We are supporting 60 children with disabilities across six primary schools in Lira to build the evidence base on why ILPs are so effective at helping children with disabilities reach their full potential in school. At the same time, we are working closely with the government's District Inspector of Schools to help advocate to policymakers on why and how ILPs should be rolled out to other primary schools in Lira and across the country, enabling us to reach even more children with disabilities.



### Mr. Egea's Story

Mr. Egea is a 41-year-old man who has a physical disability and is a parent of a child who enrolled in one of our Community Learning Centres in northern Uganda. He saw that the learning centres could benefit from more resources and decided to **lead a campaign in his community that would ultimately strengthen his child's inclusive early childhood education**. Mr. Egea travelled across his village in his adapted wheelchair to lead a campaign to raise local materials for the construction of semi-permanent structures for the learners from the learning centre so they could have a better space to learn. He went from home-to-home requesting people to support the construction of the new classroom, with many members of the community donating. The parents of the centre were overjoyed at the role Mr. Egea played and how **his advocacy had given all the children a chance to keep learning** and so they elected Mr. Egea to become a member of the management committee of the centre to guide the development of the centre in the future.

**“**

**The parents of the centre were overjoyed** at the role Mr. Egea played and how his advocacy had given all the children **a chance to keep learning**

## Through our current projects



We trained **47** service providers and Village Health Teams

on early identification and early intervention for children with disabilities



We provided medical assessments for

**126** children with disabilities



We supported **506** parents

through Parent Support Group meetings

# Kenya

We have worked in Kenya **since 2009** with our partners **ANDY** supporting children and young people with disabilities to be included in all aspects of their lives.

While Kenya has a system of free primary education, the curriculum requires basic skills that most children with disabilities do not have. Very few have accessed early education, meaning young people with disabilities are less likely to be employed, and more likely to be living in poverty. With limited access to education or health care, these young people continue to face injustice, stigma and sometimes abuse and violence. This is magnified in Kibera, Africa's largest slum where ANDY is based, and home to an estimated **100,000** people with disabilities.

## What we're proud of

As part of our Comic Relief funded inclusive Early Childhood Development programme with ANDY in Kenya, we have had real **success with the adopted Parent Champion model and the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) meetings**. The Community Based Rehabilitation groups bring together government officials, education, health and community professionals, parents of children with disabilities and other individuals that have a responsibility to uphold the rights of children with disabilities. The groups were able to work with the Ministry of Education to highlight the key challenges faced by children with disabilities in educational inclusion, such as a lack of officials responsible for formally assessing children. Through these meetings and their engagement with officials within communities, Parent Champions have also secured access to school bursaries, disability cash transfers, additional trainings and free services including physiotherapy assessments.

**I love being in school because I am learning to depend on myself. I am no longer isolated.**

**Beneficiary** of our work in Kenya



### Improving the quality of early years education for children with disabilities

Despite children being eligible to enrol in pre-primary education from the age of three, assessments in Kenya are only conducted with children from the age of five. There is also a significant gap of officials responsible for assessing and identifying children with disabilities. This means that children who need additional support in their early years are excluded at this crucial stage in their life, resulting in lower enrolment and lower retention of children with disabilities. With the development of our 'Early Years Child Functioning Assessment Tools', we are now seeing increasing numbers of children with disabilities identified within the schools we are working in. The tools assess different functions of individual children such as vision, hearing, mobility, learning, communication, dexterity and playing, and emotions. Through their implementation along with the required teacher training, children with disabilities are not only being enrolled into school who would not have been earlier identified, they are also staying there.



## The impact of a Parent Support Group for Mama Baraka

Mama Baraka is a member of one of our Parent Support Groups in Kasarani, Kenya. She is a single mother with two children, one of whom is a child with Down syndrome called Baraka. Mama Baraka joined the local Parent Support Group and it has been a huge help, supporting her to cope with the challenges she faces in her everyday life.



“The Parent Support Group has been my second home for me. I am able to talk to other members, where we **share the same challenges which helps me to be strong each day.**”

With the **support from the Parent Support Group**, she has been able to **start her own business**. Mama Baraka secured a loan as part of a Village Savings and Loan Association Scheme. This provided her with the capital to start a catering business where she now sells potatoes and chicken in her community.



“The loan I got helped me to start my own business so **I am able to support my children**, especially the transport for Baraka to go to school. This was my biggest challenge, at one time, I had contemplated withdrawing him from that school.”

The income generated from her business has been instrumental in **ensuring she has the money to support both her children to attend school**. Through the Parent Support Group, **Baraka’s teachers have also received training** to ensure Baraka experiences an inclusive environment at school where he can learn and play together with his peers. **Through our support, Baraka has a brighter future ahead of him.**

### Through our current projects



We trained **40** teachers

on inclusive teaching practices and disability rights



We trained **199** parents

to better equip them to support the early childhood development of their children with disabilities



We advocated for the rights of children with disabilities with

**18** government officials

# Tanzania

We have been working in Tanzania **since 2007** alongside our partners **Child Support Tanzania** (CST) to change the lives of children and young people with disabilities through inclusive education.

Many children and families in Mbeya are living in poverty, often exacerbated by **disability**, HIV/AIDS and **high mortality rates**. Here, services for children with disabilities are severely lacking and poorly resourced. Although primary education is free in Tanzania, children with disabilities often do not develop the basic early learning skills needed to succeed in this environment and are continually left behind when it comes to accessing primary education.

## What we're proud of

Following the legacy of Irma Skeeles, we have realised the construction of a new block at Child Support Tanzania's (CST) inclusive school in Mbeya. Consisting of a new physiotherapy room and classroom, CST have been able to enrol more children with disabilities who can now benefit from the inclusive education services that CST provide. With funding from Rangoonwala Foundation, we will soon begin delivery of a new project that aims to improve the health and education of CST's students with disabilities through the establishment of their Therapy and Rehabilitation Centre in the new physiotherapy room. In addition to purchasing brand new physiotherapy and occupational therapy equipment, CST's teachers will be trained and continually mentored to ensure students receive the rehabilitative support they require to develop and reach their full potential. Parents will also receive guidance on how to support the therapeutic needs of their children at home, further helping to prevent children with disabilities from missing school and therefore reducing the inequalities that exist between children with and without disabilities.



### Quality School Libraries for All

This year we worked with Child Support Tanzania to open inclusive libraries in three primary schools in Mbeya, Tanzania. With funding and books provided by Book Aid International, these libraries will provide nearly 3,000 children with and without disabilities with access to a range of books, including textbooks, storybooks, novels, and sensory books. Together with Book Aid International, we trained a cohort of teachers to act as librarians in each school, with the equipment, knowledge and understanding to successfully run inclusive libraries in their schools. The passion and skill they brought to the training has been central to the success of the project. Accessibility audits of the library spaces were undertaken by children with disabilities to identify barriers to inclusion, with custom made shelves designed to enable the library space to be fully accessible to all children. The libraries are now open, with teachers using the books encouraging an even greater passion for reading and learning.



**Individual Case Study: Grace's love of reading**

Grace, who is six years old and full of enthusiasm for learning, has a physical disability. As a student at Child Support Tanzania's (CST) inclusive school, Grace has benefited from the new inclusive school library that opened at her school, with **over 3,000 books to choose from**. Grace is too young to read on her own, but by using the new facilities, Grace has improved her basic reading and writing skills. She is now beginning to read some sentences in books and speak the sounds. This has given her **increased confidence and she is improving all the time**. She is also starting to show improvements in her daily activities within the school environment. It has helped her play with other children, and make new friends by being part of the reading groups.



My daughter has brought **great changes in her community**. She has taught us to see that **children with disabilities can achieve great things**.

**Mother** of a beneficiary of our work

**Through our current projects**



We supported **90** parents of children with disabilities through Parent Support Groups



We supported **2,800** children with and without disabilities to access school books through our inclusive school libraries.



We have opened **3** inclusive school libraries to enable children with and without disabilities to access a wide range of schoolbooks, literature, and inclusive learning resources.

# Rwanda

We have been working in Rwanda **since 2016** alongside our partners **Uwezo** Youth Empowerment (UWEZO), empowering children and young people with disabilities to fight for their rights and access inclusive education.

Nearly half of all people with disabilities in Rwanda are under 35. Two-thirds are not in education or employment and over **90%** fall below the national poverty line. Children with disabilities comprise less than 1% of all primary school students, and this rate drops further at secondary level. As they grow older, these inequities remain; Rwandan youth with disabilities are far less likely to participate in the workforce, with only a small number in employment. While Rwanda has a good track record of inclusive policies and has taken many strides towards better inclusion of its population, many children with disabilities are still unable to access basic services and face stigma and discrimination.

## What we're proud of

This year we were proud to strengthen Able Child Africa and UWEZO's ability to design and deliver effective disability-inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) projects. We held a two-day workshop for young people with disabilities, allowing them to reflect on their experiences of disability-inclusive WASH from our completed Jersey Overseas Aid funded project, and to suggest strategies for best practice in health-focused programming in the future. The evidence gathered during these workshops has enabled us to work with UWEZO to co-create disability-inclusive data collection tools, which can capture data from the experiences of people with disabilities face, relating to WASH and other health-related projects.



### Making Rwandan child protection systems disability-inclusive for children with disabilities

This year we started an exciting new project in Rwanda with our partner UWEZO, with funding from Euromoney Institutional Investor. The project is focussed on making Rwandan child protection systems more disability-inclusive for children with disabilities. Children and young people with disabilities are often at much higher risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Compounding these risks, is the lack of appropriate mechanisms to prevent, report and respond to child protection cases for children with disabilities. Where services do exist, they are often not disability inclusive or accessible, meaning that many issues are not dealt with appropriately.

The project is tackling these issues by supporting child protection systems in Rwanda to be more disability inclusive and sensitive to the needs of children with disabilities, particularly girls. The project is supporting the parents of children with disabilities to prevent and report abuse to ensure their children do not continue to fall through the net. Youth advocates with disabilities have been identified to become mentors for the younger children with disabilities and tasked with mapping current child protection services to assess their accessibility, which will inform the changes needed to make them more inclusive for children with disabilities. The project will then form an evidence base to promote inclusive child protection systems across Rwanda and more widely.



## Individual Case Study: Liana's journey as a youth advocate in Rwanda

Liana has had a physical disability since childhood. **In 2018, her potential to positively impact on the lives of other children and young people with disabilities was recognised when UWEZO selected her as one of the twenty 'Youth Disability Advocates' in a now completed youth-led project.** In her role as a youth advocate, Liana received training in multiple areas of advocacy, disability and inclusion. Using these skills and her own experiences as a person with a disability, Liana mentored children with disabilities in their homes, working closely with the children's families, surrounding communities and schools and regularly meeting with government officials to discuss effective ways of ensuring disability inclusion in policy development and implementation.

During her time as a youth advocate, Liana's confidence grew significantly, and she discovered a real passion for advocacy. She also discovered her talent for acting and would regularly take part in radio shows and plays, which covered different elements of disability inclusion. She found that her own experiences as a person with a disability enabled her to easily step into the stories and tell them in an authentic way, and in turn these shows were positively received by listeners.

This year, when Able Child Africa and UWEZO launched our new disability-inclusive child protection project, **Liana was selected to be one of the new project mentors** due to her continued enthusiasm. Her experiences of having a disability and of being an experienced project mentor and disability advocate has meant that she is confident to take on the new role. Liana is continuing her passion for performance and activism by writing and acting in radio plays that focus on child protection and safeguarding for children with disabilities, and which invite listeners to think about how to keep children with disabilities in their communities safe. **The difference in Liana's confidence from the beginning of the advocacy project in 2018 to her now is clear to see.** She hopes to pass on her passion for acting to other children with disabilities so they can continue to tell their own stories.

### Through our current projects



We have trained **12** young people with disabilities

in mentoring, inclusive child protection and safeguarding



We provided **60** children with disabilities

with one-to-one mentoring from older young people with disabilities



We facilitated **50** parents

of children with disabilities to attend training workshops on positive parenting and child protection.

# Malawi

We began working in Malawi in 2020 with the **Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi** (FEDOMA), and in two years we already achieved notable successes.

## What we're proud of

Feedback collected during our projects directly from children with disabilities themselves and their families identified that one of the biggest barriers to children with disabilities attending education at a crucial early age is the lack of access to medical care, correct diagnosis of their disability and subsequent provision of assistive devices which could support their equitable inclusion. We are therefore proud to have facilitated mass medical and disability screening events for children with disabilities in Malawi, with identified children then referred to formal medical services. After medical assessments and referrals were completed, assistive devices were procured for those children who could benefit, and follow-up visits were arranged with these children to monitor their progress and improve rehabilitation outcomes. This whole process ensures that these children are adequately supported to equitably access education.

**We value the partnership with Able Child Africa as it goes beyond project implementation, to support organisational development and build our capacity**

**Chris, FEDOMA Project Manager**



### Improving the accessibility of Community-Based Childhood Centres (CBCCs)

As part of our Early Childhood Education (ECE) project in Malawi, we have supported accessibility audits and modifications of Community Childhood Centres to ensure they are fully accessible and inclusive for all children to attend safely. At the start of the project, a total of 10 Community Childhood Centres were audited across different project districts, and all were found to be inaccessible in one way or another. Two Community Childhood Centres did not have any structure at all, with children instead learning under a tree. Other inaccessible features included a lack of ramps or handrails, doors that were too narrow for wheelchair users, uneven floors, poor lighting, broken roofs/doors/walls, inaccessible tables or chairs, inaccessible toilet facilities, and a lack of any play items, toys or educational equipment. Following the accessibility audits, led by people with disabilities, we have supported the modification of these Community Childhood Centres including building ramps, widening doorways and installing handrails and more accessible latrines. We have also equipped the centres with inclusive play equipment such as toys, swings, balls and learning materials to encourage children with disabilities to be able to play and develop key skills in a more fun and inclusive way, preparing them for further learning.



### Jasmine's Educational Journey

As part of our three-year project to improve access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) for young children with disabilities (aged three to five years old), a key element has been improving awareness in the community that help to identify and support children with disabilities. One such child has been Jasmine, a six year old girl who lives in a rural area of Malawi. Her family had previously kept her at home simply due to a lack of knowledge on how to support her and what services were available. After the project's training of Community Childhood Centre staff and community awareness raising events, several people from the community identified Jasmine, who was previously unknown to staff. Utilising their training, **the staff were able to visit the girl and her family, informing them of her right to an education and what the project could do to support them.** They were able to bring her to the Community Childhood Centre to join in with her peers and were also able to offer basic physical therapy and nutritional advice to her family. She is also being fitted with two assistive devices as part of the project, enabling her to sit up and to move around more independently.

This example **shows the project's value in bringing together different project actors to take ownership of outcomes.** In this instance, a combination of informed community members and trained Community Childhood Centre staff have collectively led to the empowerment of this child and this is being replicated throughout the project, at multiple other sites.

## Through our current projects



We enrolled **68** young children with disabilities

into early childhood education



We enrolled **150** parents

of children with disabilities into parent support groups



We trained **37** teachers

(Community Childhood Centre workers) in disability inclusive teaching methods

# Zambia

As one of our newest partners, we began working in Zambia with **Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities** (ZAPCD) last year, with ZAPCD chosen as a partner organisation who can help us further our collective mission and add value to each other's work.

In Zambia, it is estimated that there are just over 1 million people with disabilities, which equates to 7.2% of the population. Lack of access to services are cited as one of the main barriers people with disabilities face. For children with disabilities, no inclusive education policy or statements that outline the need for inclusive education at any level exists in Zambia. As few as 22% of children with disabilities are in Early Childhood Education (ECE), 52% in primary education and only 12% are recorded as having completed secondary education. The needs of children with disabilities are not fully considered in government plans, with national data and evidence desperately needed to inform and influence the government to address the ECE needs of children with disabilities in Zambia. Recognising that education starts at pre-primary level, focusing on efforts to improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of ECE for children with disabilities offers a real opportunity to give children the best start possible to progress through their educational journey.

**With Able Child Africa's support we have been able to begin our national review of Early Childhood Education, with input from different stakeholders across the country.**  
Charity, ZAPCD



## What we're proud of

In 2021, we concluded our very first project with ZAPCD in Zambia, following funding from Vitol Foundation. The funding was to conduct a national review of the availability and accessibility of Early Childhood Education (ECE) services for children with disabilities in Zambia. The review examined the barriers children with disabilities face and identified some successful approaches for inclusive early childhood education that already existed. This allowed an analysis of recommendations on what would be the most sustainable solutions for furthering inclusive early childhood education in the country. This project was completed through consultations with children with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, community leaders, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), government officials, teachers, and other education professionals. The evidence of this comprehensive review produced a detailed evidence paper and has since informed the development of a multi-year inclusive ECE programme, funded again by Vitol Foundation, which is due to start in September 2022.



## The Zambia Inclusive Early Learning Programme

We are delighted to announce that starting in September 2022, we have **funding secured for our first new multi-year programme with ZAPCD**, 'The Zambia Inclusive Early Learning Programme' funded by Vitol Foundation.

The new programme has a **primary aim of ensuring young children with disabilities equitably access inclusive Early Childhood Education**. Working across six Early Childhood Education Centres (pre-primary schools) in the Eastern Province of Zambia, the project will tackle the complex barriers children with disabilities face. Activities will target individuals that have a duty of care, such as parents, teachers, government officials and community leaders, while child-centred activities will encourage children with and without disabilities to better support each other.

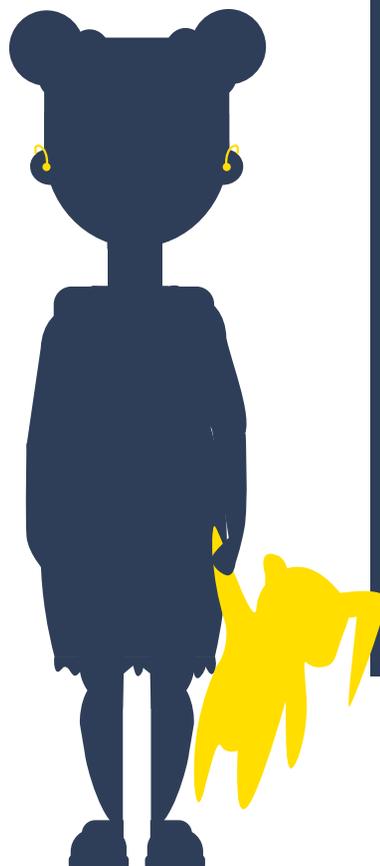
Newly formed Parent Support Groups will ensure parents are equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide Early Childhood Education support in the home, with grants for business enterprises helping to tackle financial barriers. The six centres across the region we identify will become 'centres of excellence' for inclusive Early Childhood Education provision through teacher trainings, the incorporation of inclusive play and the use of Individualised Education Plans for children.

Collectively, this will **ensure the region is better equipped** to support children with disabilities and demand the inclusion of children with disabilities in Early Childhood Education.



### We consulted with **241** people

to inform the design of our funded multi-year inclusive Early Childhood Education programme, including 56 children with disabilities.



# Building Local Capacity



Building the capacity of our local partners is a core part of the work we deliver and **central to our impact strategy.**

It is a distinct objective in our strategy and outlines a commitment to provide focused and measured organisational development support to each of the organisations we work with. We only work with organisations where both parties feel they can add value to each other, and we ensure that a willingness to take part in this reciprocal capacity building is considered in the selection of new partners.

## **Objective 2: Build the capacity of a network of African-led disability organisations, both individually and collectively, to maximise the impact and sustainability of their work**

This year, we worked with our partners on their defined organisational development priorities and determined how we can provide the identified support. We met with our partners to develop workplans for their organisational development priorities and created a set of defined 'mini projects' that will target thematic areas of improvement in their systems, policies, processes or staff practices. This covers areas such as finance, safeguarding, programme management, fundraising and monitoring and evaluation.

In **Uganda**, we supported USDC to prioritise their organisational development needs into three projects covering inclusive safeguarding, financial processes and monitoring and evaluation systems. USDC led the process for prioritisation and chose inclusive safeguarding as their first priority area of focus. We supported them to conduct an audit of their safeguarding policy using our new policy audit tool and to develop activity-level risk assessments in our current projects. All staff were then trained, equipping them to redraft their safeguarding policy to address gaps identified in the audit. We are now working with USDC to implement these best practices into their wider team to create a leading safeguarding culture across the organisation.

In **Kenya**, we began working with ANDY to improve the organisation's ability to diversify its income through the development of an unrestricted fundraising strategy. A key part of this has involved sharing Able Child Africa's own fundraising plan and working with the team to identify opportunities in Kenya, such as hosting a gala dinner, asking marathon runners to raise funds or identify and develop relationships with high-net-worth individuals. ANDY have successfully delivered campaigns to raise funds previously, and together we will look to build on this momentum to support ANDY's sustainability as an organisation.

In **Tanzania**, we continued to support Child Support Tanzania (CST) to improve their financial management and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) capacity through a visit to their offices in April. We worked

with CST to review the progress made and redefine their development priorities in this next phase of partnership. We also worked with CST to begin the development of workplans for the new mini projects they want support with, targeting areas of their organisational development. These are now being implemented through a project to improve their evaluation and finance systems.

In **Rwanda**, we supported UWEZO to build their capacity in designing and delivering inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programmes. We facilitated a specialised training for their staff, which covered multiple elements of technical programming, empowering UWEZO to deliver more specialised programmes in the future. We also facilitated workshops with their staff and young people with disabilities to gather their experiences of WASH projects and to co-create specialised WASH data collection tools, which we will continue to incorporate in future programmes.

In **Malawi**, we worked with our partner FEDOMA to strengthen their capacity in monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL), working together to map their existing data collection tools, policies and processes. We visited the FEDOMA offices in March, where we held a workshop with project staff to plan and co-create new data collection tools, which will allow them to collect specific disaggregated disability data in their projects.

In **Zambia**, we worked with ZAPCD to identify the learnings from our national scoping study, which looked at the accessibility of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Zambia. This was used to develop a multi-year inclusive ECE application to the Vitol Foundation, which was successful. The project, which is due to start in late 2022 will assess the types of changes needed among different groups, such as parents of children with disabilities, government, schools and communities, to ensure they have maximum impact for children themselves. The current focus now is on developing ZAPCD's safeguarding and monitoring systems to strengthen project delivery and management for this next phase.

## Grace's story

Grace was born with a physical disability which meant her limbs didn't develop, yet she **didn't have access** to the **vital equipment** she desperately needed.

> While she should have been learning to walk, Grace was left completely dependent and vulnerable. Her parents struggled to look after her, so she went to live with her grandfather. Despite trying many times, he found it impossible to enrol her in any school, so she ended up staying at home.



**This is where  
Able Child Africa  
came in.**

It was through our **'Child-to-Child' Inclusive Education Project** in Uganda that Grace was finally able to be assessed. It was clear that Grace was being held back by not having access to a wheelchair, which could give her a vital level of independence.

With our support, **Grace received her modified wheelchair**, which included an attached table, meaning she could practice her reading and writing whenever she wanted. **Grace was finally able to go outside independently, make new friends and go to school.**

“

I love that the friends I have made can take me to school. It means I now feel **included** and think **I will be able to do great things.**

– Grace

# Advocating for **Change**

We are committed to raise awareness of the unique barriers that children with disabilities face and **actively advocate for recognition of their rights** and the **funding associated with their inclusion.**



We believe our partners are best placed to advocate locally and seek to strengthen their capacity to influence change. As such we work primarily through our partners to advocate for the inclusion of children with disabilities in local policies, procedures and budgets. We stand alongside them to hold their Governments to account for their stated obligations and commitments as outlined in national charters, constitutions and international frameworks and ensure it is them, not Able Child Africa who are recognised for projects that deliver local advocacy. We also work with partners to deliver local community level campaigns and awareness raising strategies to ensure children with disabilities grow up in supportive unprejudiced environments.

**Objective 3: Effect positive changes in the realisation of the rights of children with disabilities through strengthened policies, improved budgeting and expanded opportunities for child and youth participation.**

## This year

This year, our partners have we have had some significant success in influencing and strengthening national level policies.

In **Uganda**, USDC have been able to gain the support of the District Inspector of Schools in Lira to support our project that focuses on improving access to Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs) for children with disabilities in primary schools. USDC have raised awareness of this project through their leadership in educational government working groups, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) meetings and individual advocacy meetings with senior civil servants.

In **Kenya**, as a result of continued lobbying activities and the establishment of two Community Based Rehabilitation groups, which bring together government officials, education and other professionals, parents and community members, there have been several successes. Several children have received additional support, such as bursaries and assistive devices. Parents have also received additional training and grants to strengthen their businesses, with this income in turn supporting the inclusion of their children with disabilities in schools.

In **Tanzania**, Child Support Tanzania (CST) have continued to be a leading voice in Tanzanian civil society for the inclusive education of children with disabilities. CST were invited by the government to review the previous National Strategy for Inclusive Education (NSIE) 2017-2021, giving them an influential voice. This position was

capitalised on when they were able to become a policy influencer for the development of the new strategy for the 2022-26 period this year. CST has since used this access to develop pieces of guidance on the strategy implementation, helping to share their learnings on quality inclusive education through guidance for teachers on child-to-child approaches.

In **Rwanda**, through project inception meetings for our inclusive child protection programme, UWEZO have continually engaged with local government officials. As a result, the officials have helped to facilitate the identification of children and young people with disabilities in their communities and have attended community meetings to talk about the importance of protecting and empowering children with disabilities. UWEZO continue to work with these officials to secure their buy-in, and to ensure ongoing support in improving the accessibility of child protection services in communities.



In **Malawi**, our project has continued to ensure sustained engagement with both local and national government actors to embed support for disability-inclusive Early Childhood Education. This includes successfully lobbying the Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare to support the recognition of a link between disability and poverty, something that is crucial in addressing some of the most entrenched barriers that children with disabilities face. As a result of this advocacy, the Minister agreed to engage the Ministry of Health to deliver this message during the World Health Assembly, including writing a letter to the World Health Organisation Regional Director and Malawi's UN representative.

In **Zambia**, we have been able to capitalise on consultations with government officials as part of our national review, to secure buy-in for the multi-year inclusive Early Childhood Education programme for children with disabilities in Zambia. Our partner ZAPCD has continued to engage with officials to build momentum, working closely with them to identify children with disabilities and select the six target schools, which is an approach that has successfully supported the sustainability of our programmes elsewhere.

## In the UK

In the UK, we work to advocate for children with disabilities by providing training and facilitating workshops for mainstream organisations and donors on child-led disability inclusion. We believe that by influencing larger mainstream organisations with a wider reach across their projects, we create a cost-effective and efficient way of reaching larger numbers of children and their families.



We have continued in our leadership roles as a Co-Chair of the UK Bond Disability and Development Group and the Bond Child Rights Working Group Steering Group. This year we have also taken on a leading role on the International Development and Disability Consortium (IDDC) Inclusive Safeguarding Task Group.

**Disability-inclusive Child Safeguarding** - Our work on the Disability-inclusive child safeguarding guidelines has continued to have widespread impact. Able Child Africa was specifically referenced in the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) new disability strategy. Following publication of this strategy, we have focused on ensuring the FCDO's strategy becomes an outward facing and accountable document, as opposed to a set of internal performance indicators. We also took our expertise to the Global Disability Summit in February 2022, running a side event on safeguarding and contributing to wider advocacy goals to make sure that the commitments made are realised globally.

**Momentum Panel Series** - This year we continued to grow our series of knowledge sharing events around important issues affecting children with disabilities, bringing people from across the world to learn and share their experiences. The first event discussed the benefits and challenges of the child-to-child approach to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Another looked at how investing in disability inclusion offers real

value for money gains both in the short and long-term for societies, and why supporting children with disabilities is worth every penny. These events have continued to be a useful forum for raising awareness of these important issues concerning disability inclusion and we look forward to expanding the series this year with talks on individualised learning plans and psychosocial disabilities.

**Training and Knowledge Sharing** - This year we have continued to deliver trainings and webinars for organisations across the sector on several topics relating to disability or inclusion. Working with organisations such as Jersey Overseas Aid and Liliane Fonds, we have developed a specialised series of training packages and consultancies, which draw on our extensive organisational experience of disability inclusion. These training packages are suitable for different types of organisations, whether they have needed help with the basics of disability inclusion, or have been looking for specialised disability-focused training. Recognising that the cost of trainings can often be prohibitive for smaller or grassroots organisations, the training packages include a price structure that is based on the size and income of organisations. We are also continuing to periodically host free webinars and trainings for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to ensure they have access to our resources.

# Financial Report

## Overview

**Able Child Africa's total income this year was £688,771 which represents a reduction of 28% from the previous financial year.** This is comprised of £436,832 in restricted funding (including grants) and £251,939 in unrestricted flexible funding.

Total expenditure this year was £737,645, which is a 19% reduction from the previous financial year.

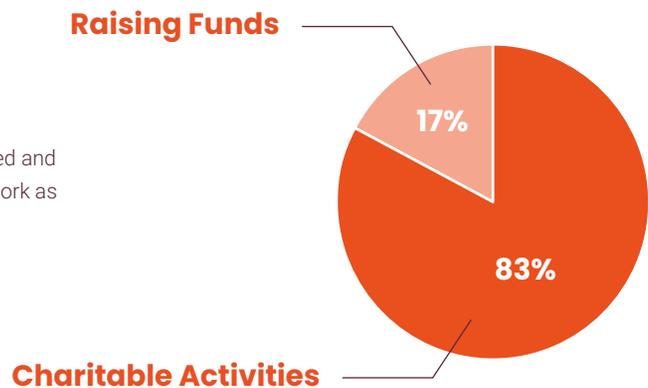
## Income and Expenditure

Income and Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
Income	£251,939	£436,832	£688,771
Expenditure	£360,896	£376,749	£737,645
Net Income (Expenditure)	<b>-£108,957</b>	£60,083	<b>-£48,874</b>

## Spending on Charitable Activities

Expenditure Split	Charitable Activities	Raising Funds	Total Expenditure
Total	£612,430	£125,215	£737,645

Expenditure on charitable activities amounts to **83p for every pound** raised and comprises costs of our projects in Africa, our advocacy and influencing work as well as related support and governance costs.



## Reserves

**We ended March 2022 with £199,382 of unrestricted reserves.** This included £17,764 of designated funds, resulting in a net unrestricted reserves figure of £181,618, well above our 6-months reserves target. We have continued to maintain a strong unrestricted reserves position throughout this unstable period and predict a growth in our unrestricted income levels over the next year.

*Our full report and accounts are available on request or on the Charity Commission website.*

# Celebrating You

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Nothing we do would be possible without the many people who support or fund us, complete challenges for us or provide in-kind support. So, to all of you, a massive thank you!

## Our Patrons

We are lucky to have some amazing patrons who continue to support our work and raise the profile of what we do. We want to thank Anne Wafula-Strike, Ellie Robinson, Keith Nethercot and Emeli Sandé for all their support over the last year and we look forward to an exciting year ahead.

## Our Ambassadors

There are a small group of people who go above and beyond in their support of our work. Our Ambassadors are incredibly dedicated individuals who understand the importance of our work and are willing to back us on a personal basis and over a long period of time. We want to say a huge thank you to Azad Ayub, to Clare Persey, to Vijay Parikh and to Baz Mehta for your unwavering support and personal connection to what we do. Your support is not taken for granted and we are proud to call you part of the Able Child Africa family.

## Our Corporate Supporters

We are very fortunate to have some amazing corporate partners, whose continued support through a challenging environment over the last few years has been vital.

To The Exile Group, to Dan Sheriff, Dom Kloiber, Katy Rose and Hesham Zakai and all the team, a huge thank you not only for your continued generosity of support, but your willingness to make us part of your family. The Exile Group currently provide us with an office space free of charge, which means a significant saving to the charity and means more money can get to where it is needed most.

To PenCarrie and to Clare Persey, thank you for once again not only continuing your support but for increasing your support and commitment to the work we do. It means a lot.

To Hassell Inclusion, to Rosnah and Jonathan Hassell for quietly providing an incredibly generous and long-term commitment to the charity and buying in to what we do. Your support is valuable, and it is great to have you with us on this journey.

To American Century and Paul Harrison, who have now provided five years of support through their grant donation and matching scheme, allowing us to build a base on which we hope to be able to grow our support in the US.

To Cargill and Juwon Sofola for your significant and continued annual donation towards our work.

We would also like to thank everyone that donates their services free of charge or at reduced rates to help us keep our costs down and ensure as much money as possible goes to where it is needed most. A big thank in particular to Raihan Islam, Bakhtiyar Islam and everyone at lirth for their brand and website support. To Michèle Renée Creative for your design support. And to Peter Weiss at Simon Muirhead Burton for pro-bono legal advice a huge thank you.

## Our Marathon Runners

Every year we are so lucky to have an amazing group of fundraisers who take on the challenge of the London Marathon and raise funds for our work. This year, we had our biggest ever team with nearly 40 runners. We want to thank each and every one of you that ran and raised money for us this year. We know how difficult both parts of that challenge can be and it was great to be able to cheer you all on, on the day.

We also want to say a special thank you to a few of you who went the extra step this year. To Peter Slot, who for the second year in a row donned his cheese outfit and raised over £7,000 for Able Child Africa - an incredible achievement. To Sarah Abrams, who flew over from the USA for the race and raised nearly £5,000 for our work. And to Danny Harty, Rory Nixon and Roddy Pimentel who all raised over £3,500 and helped raise awareness of our work.

## Our Individual Supporters

There are so many of you that support our work. From regular monthly donations to spreading the news of our work. Each and every one of you is an inspiration and we thank you for the role you play in changing the lives of children with disabilities. A special thank you goes out to Cath Ford and Tony Shubrook, Steve Smith and Tunji Akintokun, for supporting us for so long and for your unwavering support to help us achieve our mission.

# Celebrating You

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Nothing we do would be possible without the many people who support or fund us, complete challenges for us or provide in-kind support. So, to all of you, a massive thank you!

## Our Trustees

None of what we do would be possible without the support of an incredibly passionate Board of Trustees, who all give up their time to make us a better organisation. The last two and a half years have been particularly challenging for everyone, but the Trustees have remained compassionate, strategic and committed to the staff team, which helps create a positive atmosphere throughout the organisation.

So, to our UK Board - to Jim Sellars who has put in an incredible shift as Chair since taking over the role in 2020. To Kate Oldridge Turner who stepped down as Vice Chair after completing her six-year term and who has been a powerhouse of support over this period. To Heather Barr who has been an invaluable support over her time as Trustee, to Martin Hill, Emily Bueno, Cat Carter, Mitul Shah and to our two newest Trustees, Maria Omare and Miiro Michael, we want to say a massive thank you for everything that you do, we couldn't do it without you.

We also want to thank our US Board of Trustees, who are working very hard to help us establish our base in the US. To Paul Harrison, Liz Macfadyen, Rachelle Gregory and Neil Hankinson, a huge thank you for the time, energy and commitment to help us build something new, and we look forward to an exciting year ahead.

## Our Staff

And finally, a huge thank you to the whole staff team, who work tirelessly to bring to life the vision of the charity. We are very lucky to have such a passionate, hard working and skilled team, who help drive forward the organisation to make it what it is. We think they are all great and would like to thank them for making Able Child Africa feel like a family and a really positive place to work.

## We would like to thank the following donors for their support in the last year

American Century Investments

Azad Ayub Ltd.

Book Aid International

Cargill

Comic Relief

Euromoney Institutional Investors

Exile Group

Hassell Inclusion

Network for Social Change

PenCarrie

The Allan & Nesta Ferguson Trust

The British and Foreign School Society

The Commonwealth Foundation

The Marr Munning Trust

Vitol Foundation



# Looking Forward



**Karl Hankinson**  
Chief Executive Officer

As we emerge out of the last two and a half years, we do so into a very unstable world. We are currently facing one of the most challenging environments for charities in the last thirty years. With the decline of aid funding, the cost of living crisis and the current geopolitical instability, we are having to work as hard as ever to raise money and more importantly raise awareness of the challenges faced by children with disabilities in Africa.

That being said, Able Child Africa is emerging in a strong position. While we saw a 28% decline in our income in the last year due to a significant decline in aid funding, we are predicting to be back to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year and in a strong position to build for the future. This is down to the generosity of many supporters who have continued to stand by the organisation through the last few years. This support has been and continues to be humbling and I would like to thank everyone that has supported us over the last year. Whether you donate monthly, ran the London Marathon, or attended our Annual Gala, your support means a great deal.

We are now looking forward into what will be an exciting stage for the organisation. While our current partnership model has been extremely effective, we have realised there is a need to refine our current approach so that we are able to future proof the organisation and most importantly, provide more effective support to the organisations we work with in Africa. We also want to make Able Child Africa more representative of the organisations we work with, with more power concentrated in Africa.

To do this, we are embarking on an ambitious but achievable new strategy. We have spent the last twelve months conducting a strategic review, looking at what we do and where we make the most impact with the goal of setting a new course for the organisation to best support children with disabilities. This has been an inspiring and energising process that has engaged the whole team, our partners, parents and most importantly children and young people with disabilities.

Out of this process, we have developed a new direction, which will be developed into a full strategy for launch in April 2023. This change will be a three-year journey, which will result in a growth of the number of partners we work with and an expansion in the number of countries where we work. But ultimately, it will ensure we are able to support more children with disabilities and their families.

Many thanks

**Karl Hankinson**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Strategic Priorities

We are developing our next **five-year strategy**, marking a step change for the organisation.

The **three key components** of the new strategy are as follows.

## 1. Adaptation of our current partnership model

We believe there is a need to build a wider network of organisations that work with and for children with disabilities across Africa. We want to use our tried and tested partner approach to support more organisations, to share best practice between countries and ultimately reach more children with disabilities.

Our focus will remain on strengthening civil society organisations, prioritising Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, but working with other organisations as well. We will continue to provide direct support, trainings and materials to these organisations but in a different way, creating resources for the whole network rather than individual partners. We will become specialists in what we do, facilitating knowledge sharing and best practice, and facilitating a more robust collection of data on children with disabilities to ensure those currently hidden away are identified and then supported.

Through this new approach, we will look to self-fund and secure funding for new innovative projects, testing models and coordinating larger consortium projects across the network. And we will play a leading role as an international advocacy agency for children with disabilities, bringing together the voices and skill sets of a larger network of experts in the field to campaign for change.

## 2. Transition to an international organisation, with a new representative governance structure

We believe there is an opportunity to grow into more of an international organisation, rather than one solely based in the UK. This is in terms of being able to bring the right people into the organisation with the right experience, but also with the aim of becoming a more representative organisation of the people we work with.

We will begin by recruiting our first role in Africa, to develop our new Network model. This Network Manager will ensure the network we build is effective and fit for purpose, using the experience of our current partners and other stakeholders to build a model that works. We will also grow a new small team in the US, capitalising on the opportunities we have there to grow awareness of what we do and build further support. And finally, we will work to create a governance structure above the current Boards, which places more power in the hands of the people we work with and for. We are passionate about this approach but want to find a structure that works, so will be consulting with various stakeholders to achieve this.

## 3. We restructure and invest in our fundraising team to deliver this

The fundraising landscape has changed significantly over the last three years, with an unstable external environment significantly affecting our ability to bring in funds. While some of these changes are expected to return to pre-pandemic levels, some of the shifts will remain, meaning it will be harder than it was before to bring in funds to support our work.

Because of this, we will need to invest in, and restructure our fundraising team to remain fit for purpose. Our plans are ambitious but very achievable, and the additional staff resource we have identified will ensure we are able to secure the necessary funds to support this shift. While this investment will increase costs at the outset, we believe this investment is necessary and will ultimately allow us to grow and have a greater impact on more children with disabilities, while ensuring we remain a strong and stable organisation to navigate the uncertain landscape.





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