

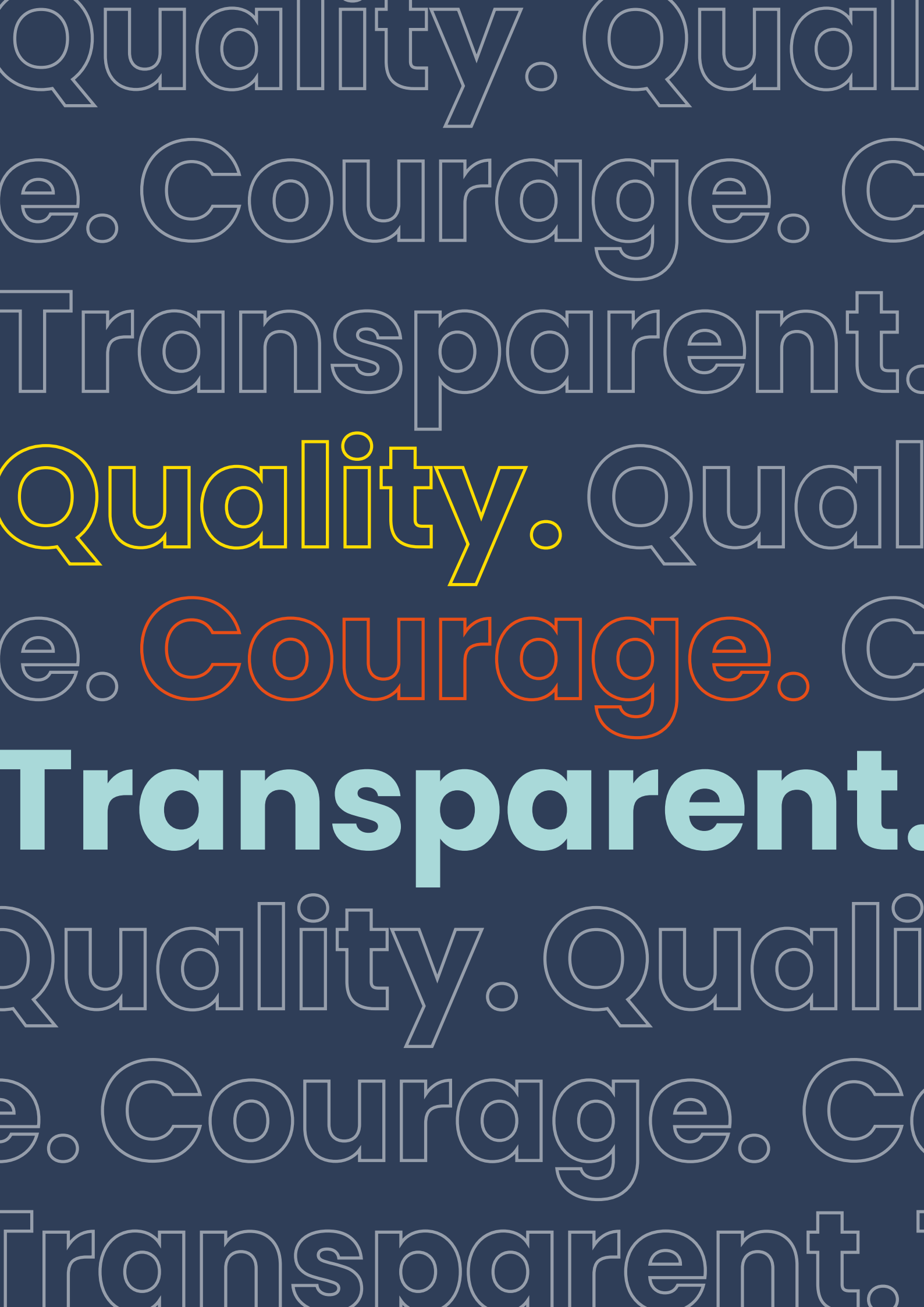
2024 Annual Review

Celebrating **40 years** of changing lives



CELEBRATING

4 **able
child**
YEARS



Quality. Quality.
e. Courage. C
Transparent.
Quality. Quality.
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Transparent.
Quality. Quality.
e. Courage. C
Transparent.

We are **Able Child**

We work towards a world in which no child with a disability is left behind.

We do this by supporting a network of organisations to **protect**, **educate** and **amplify** the voices of children and young people with disabilities.

Together, we work across Africa, breaking down barriers to inclusion so that children and young people with disabilities are able to thrive.

> This year we are **celebrating 40 years of making lasting change for children with disabilities in Africa.**

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, most importantly, we are accountable to the children we work with.

CELEBRATING

40 **able child**
YEARS



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Welcome from our Chair



Mitul Shah
Chair

As we celebrate Able Child's 40th anniversary, I'm honoured to assume the role of Chair.

This year holds special significance as we celebrate our 40th anniversary — a milestone that underscores the incredible journey we've embarked on over the past four decades. In the last 40 years, we have witnessed the transformative power of our work, directly supporting over 55,000 children and young people with disabilities, equipping over 20,000 parents to become disability rights advocates and training more than 7,500 teachers on inclusive education.

The past year has been significant for our organisation. We adopted a new name, **Able Child**, expanded our reach to seven countries across East and Southern Africa, strengthened our team with new hires in Africa and the US, and, most excitingly, launched our 2030 Strategy: Safe, Thriving, and Heard, along with the new **Able Child Africa Network**.

The **Able Child Africa Network** comprises of leading African organisations united by a shared vision of a world where **no child with a disability is left behind**. This network will determine its own priorities and objectives, but Able Child will provide support in the form of unrestricted funding, technical assistance, and a shared platform for advocacy.

At the heart of our new strategy is a commitment to locally led development. We believe that organisations founded and registered in Africa, with their understanding of the unique challenges faced by children with disabilities, are best equipped to drive change. By collaborating with this new network on their terms, we aim to challenge outdated approaches to development, amplify local voices and ultimately make space for this network to shape the future of disability-inclusive policy and programming for children with disabilities across Africa. We're thrilled to welcome three new organisations to the Network: The Action Foundation in Kenya, Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children Association, and Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi. We are particularly excited to begin working in Zimbabwe, a country where our efforts can have a real impact on improving the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

Able Child has continued to demonstrate resilience and exceed expectations, even in a funding environment of prolonged challenges. The organisation has maintained its income levels and kept unrestricted reserves at a healthy level. This stability is a testament to our fantastic team, dedicated Board of Trustees, and the unwavering support from our broad range of donors.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jim Sellars, who stepped down as Chair of the Board this year after providing exceptional leadership during a crucial period. Jim's passion and commitment have consistently gone above and beyond. I am honoured to succeed Jim in this role and look forward to working closely with my fellow Trustees to advance Able Child's objectives and drive meaningful impact.

As we embark on an exciting new chapter, our priority is on strengthening our global advocacy work, building unrestricted income to deliver our strategy, and ensuring we remain adaptable to the needs of the **Able Child Africa Network**. By investing in our people and fostering an inclusive workplace, we will remain well-positioned to overcome the fast-changing global context and create lasting impact for children with disabilities across Africa.

Our journey is far from over, and with your continued support, we will drive the change needed to ensure no child with a disability is left behind.

Best wishes,
Mitul Shah

Why we exist

Nearly 29 million children in East and Southern Africa are living with a disability.

A significant proportion of these children live in poverty without access to basic services including education and health care. They are disproportionately vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse, and many children continue to spend much or all of their lives in institutions, away from their families.

Children with disabilities are:

1 Twice as likely to **never attend school.**



2 Four times more likely to experience **physical violence.**

3 Three times more likely to be **sexually assaulted.**



4 17 times more likely to be **institutionalised.**



For girls with disabilities, the situation is even worse. They are 10 times more likely to experience gender-based violence than those without disabilities, and an estimated 70% of girls with intellectual disabilities will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. **They are being forgotten, hidden and left behind.**

Despite the decades of work since the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention of the Right of Persons with Disabilities, many of the 29 million children living with disabilities in East and Southern Africa continue to be excluded, discounted and discriminated against.





This continued exclusion is increasingly problematic in the face of the intensifying climate crisis.

Children with disabilities in Africa face severe climate risks, including reduced mobility, worsening poverty, and heightened health vulnerabilities. Despite being disproportionately at risk of climate change, they are often excluded from climate action, leaving their unique challenges unaddressed.

Organisations working for children with disabilities in Africa often lack the resources and visibility needed to influence change. These organisations are not always considered as 'representative' organisations and as such are excluded from key decision-making spaces, leading to the systematic exclusion of the voices of children with disabilities.

African organisations working for children with disabilities also struggle to compete for funding in the already under-funded disability sector, especially compared to adult-focused Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), meaning they lack the resources, networks, and partnerships needed to ensure their expertise is recognised and no child with a disability is left behind.



What we do

For **40 years** we have been working with African-registered organisations to improve the lives of children and young people with disabilities.

Our mission is to support a network of organisations in Africa to **protect**, **educate** and **amplify** the voices of children and young people with disabilities, so they are able to thrive.

We work across **six key thematic areas** of support:



Protecting

children with disabilities so they are safe.

1

Building inclusive child protection systems.

2

Demanding inclusive sexual and reproductive health and rights for girls and young women.



Educating

children with disabilities so they can thrive.

3

Strengthening inclusive Early Childhood Development.

4

Advancing inclusive education.



Amplifying

the voices of children and young people with disabilities so they are heard.

5

Promoting inclusive mental health and wellbeing.

6

Raising the voices of children and young people with disabilities.

Delivering on our 2030 Strategy

With a changing landscape comes a changing role for Able Child in how to **support children with disabilities** in Africa.

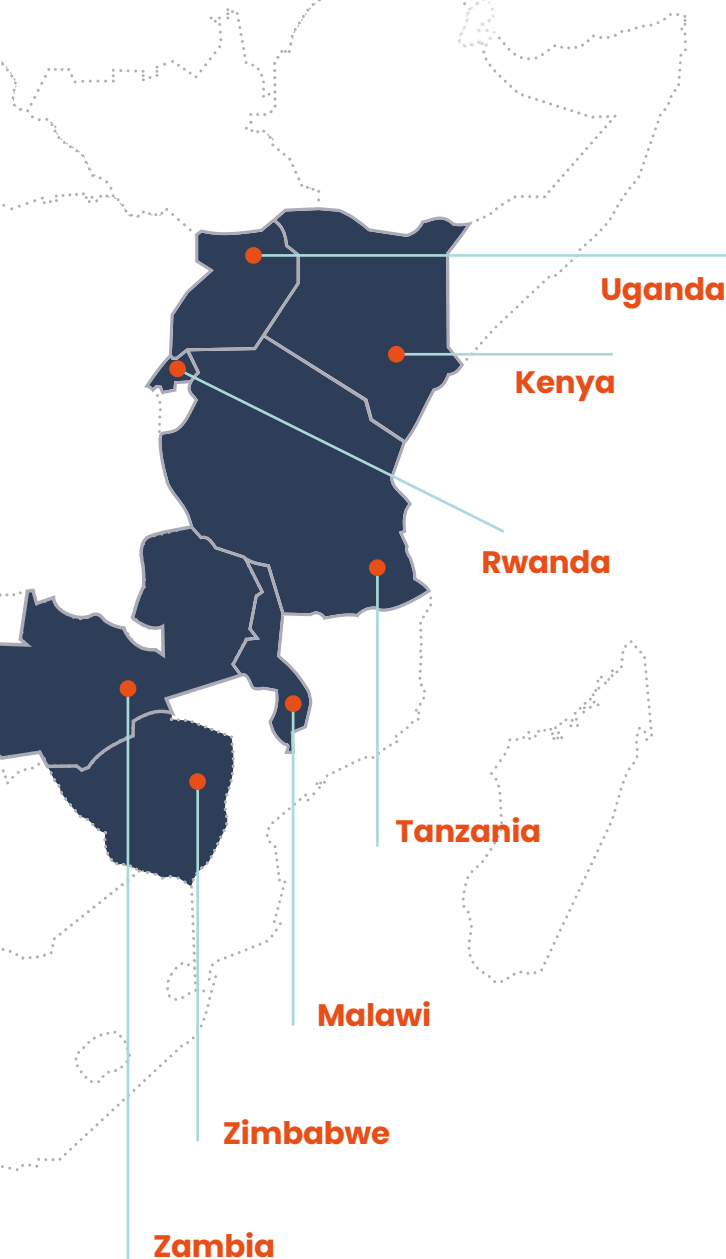
For the last 40 years Able Child has been part of a progressive change to support African organisations working to improve the lives of children with disabilities. As our reach has grown and we have partnered with more local organisations, we've taken the time to assess our role and the value we bring. Our new 2030 Strategy, launched in April 2024 sees the formation of a new network of the leading African organisations dedicated to support children with disabilities on the continent. This move ensures alignment with the interests of the organisations we work with, and positions us to achieve our vision of leaving no child with a disability behind.

Our new strategy comes on the back of an 18-month consultation with our partners, where we gained valuable insights into the needs of African civil society working for children with disabilities. We've learned that:

- Supporting civil society in Africa is the most effective way to improve the lives of children with disabilities.
- Local organisations working for children with disabilities need support beyond traditional funding models.
- There is a gap in the sector for an alliance of African-led organisations focused on disability and child rights.
- We can and should do more to put decision-making power in the hands of these organisations.

These insights have shaped our bold new 2030 Strategy, which includes launching a network of leading African organisations dedicated to children with disabilities. This approach ensures alignment with our partners' interests, and positions us to achieve our vision of leaving no child with a disability behind.

The Able Child **Africa Network**



'We share a common vision of a world in which no child with a disability is left behind.'

Over the past year, we have undergone an **operational shift**. We have always been committed to supporting locally led development through long-term, collaborative partnerships with African civil society. Our new approach takes this commitment to the next level by moving towards an organisation that is dedicated to support the new Able Child Africa Network, providing the resources, funding and knowledge that members themselves decide they need. We believe this model is the best way to ensure long-lasting impact for children with disabilities.

What the network does

The Able Child Africa Network brings together the leading African-founded and African-registered organisations working with and for children with disabilities across the continent. Currently formed of eight core members and one affiliate member across seven countries in East and Southern Africa, they bring together the combined expertise of its membership to shape the landscape of what works for children with disabilities in policy and practice.



Delivering high-quality programmes,

generating evidence of what works and building best practice in inclusive programming for children with disabilities.



Standing up for the rights of children with disabilities,

amplifying their voices and creating change by influencing governments and other international allies.

The core pillars of our **2030 Strategy: Safe, Thriving and Heard**, underscore our commitment to ensuring that every child receives the support, opportunities, and recognition they deserve.

Safe.



We stand up for the rights of children and young people with disabilities to ensure they are **protected and included in their communities.**

In the places we work, child protection systems often fail children with disabilities. Child protection and safeguarding services and workforces are poorly equipped and lack the expertise to deal with the specific risks that children with disabilities face, and these children are also less likely to seek justice for the abuse.

We work with our network members to improve safeguarding practices and ensure the protection of children in the areas where we work. By helping to break down stigma and discrimination around disability, we ensure the safety and inclusion of children with disabilities within their communities.

We have been working to do this in Rwanda...

Improving child safeguarding in Rwanda:

We are working with Uwezo Youth Empowerment (UWEZO) to create more inclusive child protection and safeguarding systems in Rwanda. As part of our project funded by Euromoney Institutional Investors, we have mapped out existing child protection services in Kigali, with the view to making these services more disability inclusive.

Young people with disabilities take the lead – they undertake advocacy with key child protection and safeguarding actors. They provide mentoring to children with disabilities to inform them of their right to be kept safe. And they have been delivering ‘positive parenting’ workshops to parents of children with disabilities to reduce the risk of abuse occurring and how to report concerns when they do. UWEZO and local government officials are working to create a system that can rapidly share information about safeguarding and child protection issues relating to children with disabilities, with officials drawing on UWEZO’s expertise to enable more disability-sensitive responses to children.

Thriving.

We ensure that children and young people with disabilities have **access to an education and the services they need to succeed.**

In low-income countries, over 90% of children with disabilities do not attend formal education. Early detection of children with disabilities is low, and children face significant barriers in accessing the services they need. Children with disabilities’ systematic exclusion in education hinders their participation and ability to transition to further education and into employment.

We work with our network members to improve the early identification of children with disabilities, upskill service providers, support children with disabilities to transition to further education and equip young people with disabilities with the tools they need to enter employment.

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

Supporting inclusive education through learner needs identification and individualised learning plan tool in Uganda:

Alongside Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC), we have combined two of our educational tools to ensure more children are assessed and supported in school. This project, funded by The Marr-Munning Trust, conducts formal health assessments to identify additional medical support required, and provides children with disabilities with assistive devices to facilitate their immediate access to the school environment. Teacher visits to their homes ensure children receive one-to-one individualised support, which helps to improve relations between schools and the families.

The result is that teachers are developing learning plans specific to the needs of 60 children with disabilities across six schools, significantly improving their performance and ensuring they successfully transition to the next school year.



Heard.

We work with children and young people with disabilities to be confident and resilient, **amplifying their voice to demand their own inclusion.**

For too long, children with disabilities have been forgotten, hidden and systematically excluded. One of the key reasons for this is that children and their parents have been unaware of their rights and are therefore disempowered. By championing mental health resilience, inspiring children with disabilities to become powerful self-advocates and equipping 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.

We have been working in Kenya to amplify the voices of young people with disabilities...



Amplifying the voices of young people with disabilities in Kenya:

With funding from Educational Opportunity Foundation, we have been working with Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY) to inform and upskill a group of young people with disabilities in Kenya to raise their profile as employable individuals. 20 young people with disabilities have been trained as mentors and are now sharing their knowledge with 180 peers through a peer-mentorship scheme. Supported by the project, these young people have enrolled in vocational centres, gained skills, and pursued employment and internships with the help of project grants.

Working with representatives from government, businesses and other sectors has been key to the project's success, with increasingly more employers recognising the value of the unique experiences that employing young people with disabilities can bring.

The role of **Able Child**

**We believe we are
stronger together.**

Able Child is committed to coordinating a shared pool of tools and resources from across the Network, increasing access to funding and creating systems for collaboration and a platform for joint action.

We aim to support the Network to collaborate and share learning, innovate and deliver programmes, generate and collate data, and raise awareness through advocacy – creating a strong, resilient and resourced civil society in Africa working together to support children with disabilities.

Together with the Network, we protect, educate and amplify the voices of children and young people with disabilities, so they are able to thrive.

We do this by:



Leveraging collective knowledge:

The Able Child Africa Network possesses a wealth of untapped evidence and data that can be harnessed to drive positive change. A key objective for the Network is to share this information not only among members themselves but also with the wider sector so we can identify best practices, inform policy decisions, and strengthen our collective impact for children with disabilities.



Member-driven decision-making:

Importantly, the Network is run by its members. Members determine the specific support they require and how it is delivered, with decisions on priorities and activities made by an Executive Council elected by the membership. However, our ultimate goal is for the Network to decide how our resources are allocated to support their work.

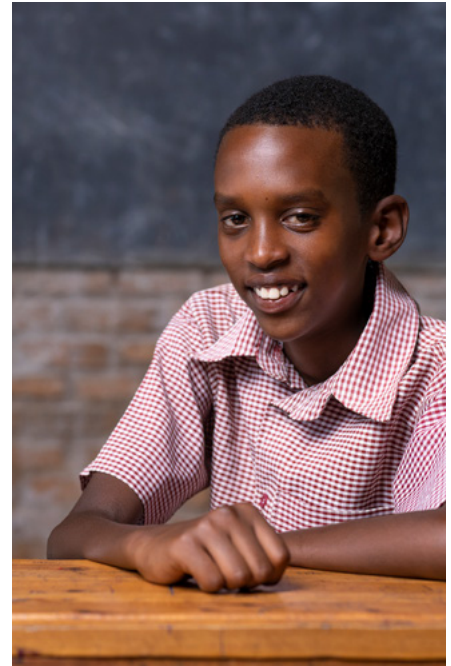
This is a gradual process, beginning within our current organisational structure.



Providing a roadmap for shifting power:

By 2030, we aim to transition decision-making over our organisation's governance and operations to network members. Network members will play a crucial role in determining the exact shape of this new governance setup, ensuring that it is both practical and sustainable while avoiding overburdening members and safeguarding the Network's stability.

To facilitate this transition, we have established a Steering Committee, composed of representatives from the Executive Council and the Able Child Board of Trustees. This committee convenes to collaboratively review Able Child's governance, operational plans and spending, with the ultimate aim of shifting power to network members.



What we have **achieved** so far



Since its launch, the Able Child Africa Network has achieved significant milestones.

Over the last year, the Network has...

Created a new platform and published reports

The Network has launched a new dedicated website platform providing access to resources for members, as well as open-source resources for the wider civil society community. The Network has already published a series of reports, position papers, and tools on the platform to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities across the sector.

Provided tailored support and funding

The Network has provided tailored support to members, and facilitated collaborative training among members. Able Child has also offered the first flexible unrestricted funding to members, and supported the Network's first consortium bid.

Collaborated

The first Able Child Africa Network General Assembly took place in Rwanda at the end of 2023, with all members meeting for the first time in Kigali. Since then, the Network has begun developing a data collection system to generate stronger evidence and identify gaps in service delivery for children with disabilities, and developed its first self-funded data project, which captures the survey results of over 1,000 children's voices. This is due to be published in late 2024.

Our impact

In 2023/24, we have been delivering projects with six network members across **six countries in Africa** to protect, educate and amplify the voices of children and young people with disabilities, so they are able to thrive.

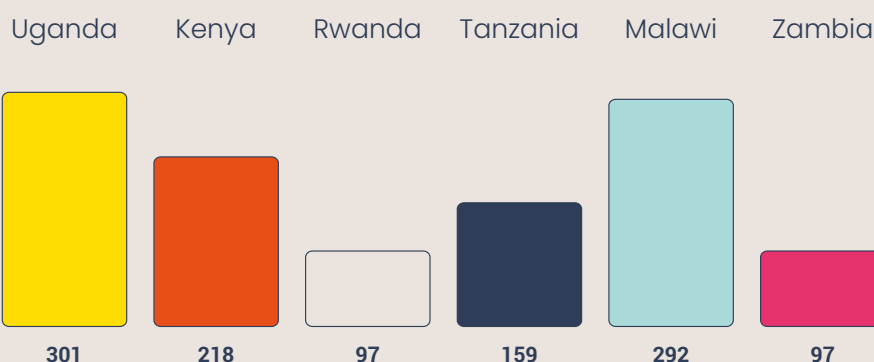
We have also been developing new projects with the three newest founding network members, who only recently joined the Network in late 2023.

In 2023/24

Children and young people with disabilities directly supported:

Total **1,164**

490 more than last year



Teachers trained:

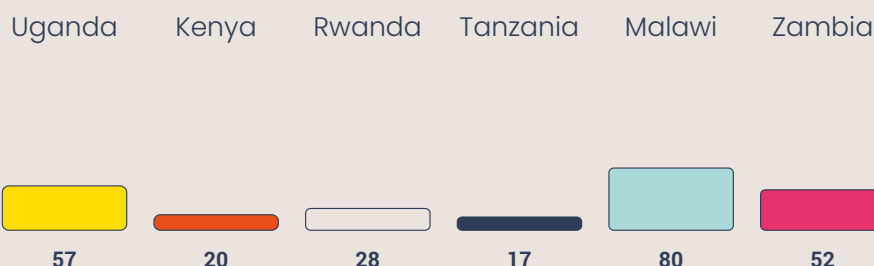
Total **246**

46 more than last year

Government officials worked with:

Total **254**

10 more than last year



In 2023/24

Parents worked with:

Total **968**

83 less than last year

Uganda

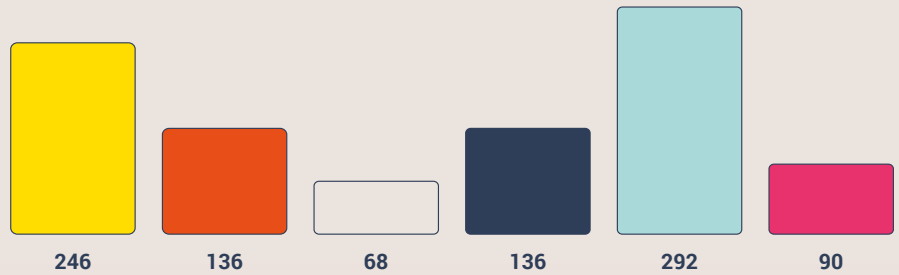
Kenya

Rwanda

Tanzania

Malawi

Zambia



We supported parents of children with disabilities

through the establishment of Parent Support Groups and the facilitation of 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.



We worked with government officials to

advocate for disability inclusion in the development and implementation of government policies and programmes, while evidencing effective methods to achieve this through our own work.



We directly supported children and young people with disabilities

by implementing early identification tools, enrolling out-of-school children into schools, making school environments more accessible, establishing peer-to-peer mentorship schemes and supporting young people with disabilities to access employment.



We trained teachers in inclusive teaching

methods, providing information and tools to help teachers support all children in the classroom, and ensuring children with disabilities can participate effectively in lessons and play activities alongside their peers.



Uganda

We have been working in Uganda **since 1984** alongside **Uganda Society for Disabled Children** (USDC). Our work supports children with disabilities and their families to break down the barriers to inclusion.

Many people living with disabilities in Uganda lack resources and access to services. Where we work in northern Uganda, 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 achieved this year

This year, as part of our project funded by The Marr-Munning Trust, we have successfully delivered a three-year project that supported six schools to adopt and improve access to learning for 60 children with disabilities through the combined use of Individualised Learning Plans and Early Screening tools. Children with disabilities are at increased risk of being left behind in school and in areas for development when their needs are not properly identified. Through this project, children's learning needs are identified and because of this, they are supported with learning plans that are tailored to their needs. This has resulted in increased class progression, which is a significant achievement given the compounding barriers children with disabilities face in accessing and remaining in education. We are proud to see the positive impact that can be achieved through investment in adapting and testing innovative new approaches to best support the learning of children with disabilities.



Improving displaced children with disabilities' access to education

The 'Restoring Hope' project, funded by the Educational Opportunity Foundation, supports children and young people with disabilities in northern Ugandan refugee settlements to access inclusive education and foundational skills. To achieve project outcomes that promote inclusive homes, schools and societies, the project has trained a group of community champions, who now advocate for disability inclusion and develop strategies for including children with disabilities in all aspects of society. Where community members would previously hide their children with disabilities, increasing numbers have now been identified and are accessing education and other services.

Among the community champions are two lead youth champions with disabilities, who were inspired to serve as role models to children with disabilities in their communities and have also gone back to school themselves as a result of the project. The project has inspired families, communities and other actors to ensure all children with disabilities are supported to realise their rights.



Through our current projects



We raised awareness to

1,502
community
members

on disability inclusion, early
identification and early intervention
for children with disabilities



We advocated to

73 government
officials

at a district and national level on
disability inclusive education
policy implementation.



We supported
155 parents

through Parent Support
Group meetings



The power of Child Rights Clubs

Brian is an 11-year-old boy with a physical disability that affects the mobility in his left arm and left leg. He is currently enrolled in one of the Restoring Hope project schools in a refugee camp in northern Uganda. Due to his disability, Brian and his family had faced stigma and exclusion, and this negatively impacted his confidence. When Brian first enrolled in his school, he was very reserved and rarely spoke in class or took part in any activities. However, this would soon change after being exposed to inclusive learning methods through the project.

The project introduced Child Rights Club (CRC) activities for children with and without disabilities. These activities are child-led, focus on helping children to understand their rights and encourages them to discuss and debate various issues that are affecting them. Through these clubs, Brian emerged as a lead debater and his confidence increased.

These extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for children with disabilities to express themselves and to gain confidence to be seen and heard among peers and teachers. Teachers have also noted that the CRCs have contributed positively towards debunking negative stereotypes that promote the narrative of children with disabilities as unable to perform like other children. Brian continues to thrive in this environment, which emphasises his abilities rather than any inability.

The CRCs have contributed positively towards **debunking negative stereotypes** that promote the narrative of children with disabilities

Kenya

We have worked in Kenya **since 2009** alongside **Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY)** and **The Action Foundation (TAF)** **since 2023**, where we support children and young people with disabilities to be included in all aspects of their lives.

Very few children with disabilities have access to early childhood education in Kenya, and their systematic exclusion often means that young people with disabilities are less likely to be employed and are more likely to be living in poverty. With limited access to education, healthcare and other services, these young people continue to face injustices, stigma and are at higher risk of abuse and violence.

What we achieved this year

This year we are proud to have successfully concluded a four-year Comic Relief funded project with ANDY to improve children with disabilities' access to Early Childhood Development (ECD). Initially, the project provided home-based care training to parents and caregivers of children with disabilities during the pandemic, who later benefited from attending meetings and trainings at newly established Parent Support Groups. Teachers were also trained and further supported through the development of a teacher's guide and tools related to education and inclusive play. Through a community-based rehabilitation model, the project brought together multiple stakeholders who are ultimately responsible for ensuring the inclusion of children with disabilities in ECD. This structure has contributed to creating long-lasting partnerships and linkages between different institutions so that the barriers children with disabilities face can continue to be addressed.



Realising employment for young people with disabilities

With ANDY, we have been delivering a youth empowerment and employability project in Nairobi, funded by the Educational Opportunity Foundation. Young people with and without disabilities have been trained in employability, entrepreneurship, and mentorship skills, with many securing internship opportunities or starting their own group enterprises using the project's business grants.

Some have received placements at the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), in addition to the local council, with one supervisor stating: "as a person with lived experience of blindness, his personal experience and knowledge has been instrumental in supporting the design of programmes for blind people in the community".

Before the project, many of the young people with disabilities had indicated they had been discouraged in pursuing certain careers due to the barriers they faced and the misinformation among employers surrounding disability. The project has provided them with the opportunity to gain useful skills and knowledge to enter the workforce and have their voices heard.



Through our current projects



We trained
34 teachers

on inclusive teaching
practices and disability rights



We worked with

255 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

16 government
officials

Christina's story of hope and positivity

Christina lives in an informal settlement in Nairobi and is a member of a Parent Support Group, which was set up as part of ANDY's Ready Steady Go project, funded by Comic Relief. She is a mother of four children, including her daughter Vicky, who is a child with cerebral palsy.

As a single mother, Christina regularly left her home to seek casual labour to support her children, leaving Vicky under her neighbour's care. This wasn't always easy as Christina's neighbour was not always available to provide this support.

After Vicky was identified by the project and Christina was introduced to the Parent Support Group, she was relieved to find other parents and caregivers facing similar situations. She gained a platform where she would **learn from others and received helpful information about caring for children with disabilities**, as well as information on other support services available to her. As part of the Parent Support Group's table banking scheme, Christina was also able to secure a loan to start her own business, providing her with additional income to support her family.

Through the project, Vicky was able to access a specialised wheelchair, which has enabled her to access therapy services at a local rehabilitation centre, where her mobility has improved significantly, and she has begun achieving other developmental milestones.

The project has transformed Christina and Vicky's life.



I never thought one day I could **see my child this happy**. In a short period of time, with access to better support, Vicky has improved and developed in many ways.

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.

85% of children with disabilities in Tanzania are outside the education system, with increasing numbers of children dropping out of school due to a lack of support, which is severely lacking and poorly resourced. Although primary education is free in Tanzania, children with disabilities are continually left behind when it comes to accessing the school system and fail to develop the basic early learning skills needed to succeed.

What we achieved this year

Improving access to education through physiotherapy

This year we continued to work with CST to implement a physiotherapy and occupational therapy project within CST's new rehabilitation centre, funded by Rangoonwala Foundation. Rehabilitative services can significantly improve children with disabilities access to education by supporting the functional independence of children that enables them to thrive.

In response, CST's rehabilitation centre has been equipped with an extensive range of equipment, with trained physiotherapists working alongside CST's teachers and the families of children with disabilities to provide tailored support for children. A series of trainings, meetings and events targeting parents, teachers and community members have provided crucial support while stressing the vital importance of these service to support children with disabilities' development.

Activities have realised several successes for the children with disabilities supported, with increasing numbers of children helped to access school more regularly, which in turn reduces educational inequalities that exist between children with and without disabilities.



CST's recognition as a trusted provider of rehabilitative support

Through CST's physiotherapy and occupational therapy project based at their inclusive school, CST's partnership with Mbeya Zonal Referral Hospital (MZRH) has resulted in several positive outcomes for the project, which is funded by Rangoonwala Foundation. The hospital has been instrumental in supplying physiotherapists, who have trained CST's teachers to a high standard and delivered direct physiotherapy services, with over 159 children with disabilities benefiting as a result. The hospital has witnessed the success of CST's rehabilitation centre, and this recognition has led to the hospital referring children directly to CST when they live more locally to the school. In turn, this has enabled CST to provide more support for more children with disabilities, many of whom struggle to afford the transport costs that they would usually need to travel to the main hospital. CST plans to continue this partnership beyond the completion of the project, with this success further strengthening CST's status as a model inclusive school in the region.

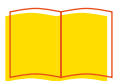


Through our current projects



We supported
43 parents

of children with disabilities
through Parent Support Groups
and physiotherapy training



We supported
159 children with
disabilities

through access to quality
physiotherapy and other
rehabilitative services



We trained
10 teachers

physiotherapy and other
rehabilitative support for
children with disabilities



A dedicated father

Kisa is a nine-year-old girl living in Mbeya, Tanzania and enrolled at CST's Inclusive School in January 2024. Soon after, Kisa was immediately supported by the physiotherapy and rehabilitation project we are delivering together with CST, where she received a formal assessment at a local hospital and was further assessed by a professional physiotherapist who is currently based at the school. With this information, CST's teachers were supported by the physiotherapist to provide tailored support for Kisa, aiming to improve her mobility and in turn support her increased access to education.

Since the beginning, Kisa's father, John has been extremely dedicated to his daughter's progression. John has been active in learning from Kisa's teachers, and in ensuring his daughter completes her exercises both at home and in school. To achieve this, **John has attended Parent Support Group and other school-based meetings to understand Kisa's rehabilitation schedule and what exercises she can do at home so that he is able to best support her.** At times, her father has adjusted his work schedule to ensure he accompanies Kisa to every physiotherapy session or will arrange for a family member to take her when he isn't available.

This level of dedication from a father is extremely encouraging, particularly in Tanzania where caregiving responsibilities are traditionally seen as a woman's role. As a result of receiving so much support, this has had a significant impact on Kisa's progress, and she is already beginning to move much more freely.

In recognition of her father's dedication, **John was nominated as the parent champion** earlier in the year, as part of CST's efforts to promote and encourage the engagement of fathers through various platforms, including Parent Support Groups. John's story exemplifies how fathers can play a pivotal role in the lives of children with disabilities - challenging stereotypes and fostering inclusive caregiving practices.

Rwanda

We have been working in Rwanda **since 2016** alongside **Uwezo Youth Empowerment** (UWEZO), empowering children and young people with disabilities to access inclusive services.

Children and young people account for half of all people with disabilities in Rwanda. Two thirds of these are not in education or employment, and over 90% fall below the national poverty line. While Rwanda has a good track record of inclusive policies, many children with disabilities are still unable to access basic services and face damaging stigma and discrimination.

What we achieved this year

This year we are proud to have delivered an innovative mental health-focused project in Rwanda with UWEZO, funded by Network for Social Change. Due to high levels of abuse, stigma and exclusion, many children with disabilities are at elevated risk of experiencing mental health issues and having psychosocial disabilities. Despite this, there is very little mental health provision for children and young people with disabilities.

In response, we have created and tested different approaches to supporting children with disabilities' mental health. We held participatory workshops with young people with disabilities to understand their experiences of mental health, psychosocial disabilities and their access to mental health services.

The project then facilitated tailored mentoring sessions, delivered by young people with disabilities to younger children with disabilities. These mentors led the co-creation and testing of disability-inclusive mental health tools, and proved their effectiveness in understanding and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people with disabilities in Rwanda.



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

We are addressing gaps in Rwandan child protection systems, funded by Euromoney Institutional Investor. Children and young people with disabilities are at a much higher risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, which is exacerbated by a lack of appropriate mechanisms to prevent, report and respond to child protection cases.

Following training and an extensive mapping exercise, young people with disabilities have been supported by UWEZO to make child protection systems more disability inclusive and accessible so children with disabilities are better supported. The mentors have addressed gaps and raised awareness with parents, communities and government officials to better prevent, recognise, report and respond to abuse, while ensuring the voices of children with disabilities are heard as part of key decision making.



Through our current projects



We have trained
12 young people
with disabilities

in mentoring, inclusive child
protection and safeguarding



We provided
97 children
with disabilities

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



We facilitated
68 parents

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



Naomi's Story

Naomi is a 15-year-old girl who has Down Syndrome. When she was younger, Naomi often faced stigma and discrimination due to her disability. She didn't understand why she was treated differently to other children, and this made her dread going to school. Naomi's confidence was low, and she was in danger of becoming isolated, drifting further away from her peer group.

Through our project with UWEZO, we are supporting child protection and mental health services in Rwanda to become more sensitive to the needs of children with disabilities, particularly for girls. We are working to ensure that parents of children with disabilities are better supported to prevent abuse through **'positive parenting' workshops** and are training young people with disabilities to **mentor children with disabilities to inform them of their rights and to better support their mental health.**

Through the mentorship programme, Naomi was given support and vital companionship from a young person with a disability who could relate and empathise with her in a more meaningful way. Her mentor had not only experienced similar challenges but had also received support as a mentee when they were Naomi's age. This provided a platform for Naomi to begin sharing everything she was experiencing with someone who had experienced similar barriers when they were the same age as Naomi. Now, Naomi is a different person. **She has gained more confidence and is thriving.**

Now, Naomi is a different person. She has gained more confidence and **is thriving.**

Malawi

We have worked in Malawi

since 2020 with **Federation**

of Disability Organisations

in Malawi (FEDOMA) and

since 2023 with **Parents of**

Disabled Children

Association of Malawi

(PODCAM) to improve children with disabilities' access to Early Childhood Education.

Children under 18 account for more than 50% of the total population in Malawi. Malawi has one of the highest pre-term birth rates globally, resulting in many children being born with a disability. 70% of children with disabilities are not in any form of education and their needs have not been prioritised.

What we achieved this year

This year we are proud to have welcomed PODCAM to the Able Child Africa Network. We are excited to have secured funding from the Vitol Foundation to launch our first project with PODCAM, funded by Vitol Foundation, to support more children to access inclusive Early Childhood Development (ECD).

FEDOMA will build PODCAM's capacity in implementing the project, including delivery of the bespoke inclusive play scheme and accessibility audits of ECD centres. Drawing on previous learnings and evidence, the project aims to further prove the replicability of the project to encourage the government to adopt the project's approaches nationally.

Through this collaborative approach, we are proud to continue our work in Malawi through the sharing of knowledge and best practice among key organisations.



Provision of medical assessments and assistive devices

Children with disabilities are often excluded from Early Childhood Development (ECD) opportunities, leading to educational and social inequalities that often persist throughout their lifetime. This exclusion is exacerbated by a lack of screening of children at a young age and a lack of available assistive devices that can support their access to education.

As part of our three-year programme with FEDOMA to improve access to ECD, funded by the Vitol Foundation, we facilitated annual medical and functional assessments to identify children who could benefit from access to an assistive device. Children then attended hospital appointments for fittings, where their parents also received information on how best to support their child.

This process has made a significant difference in enabling children with disabilities to access ECD. Previously, most of these children faced difficulties in travelling to the ECD centres or accessing them once they arrived. Moreover, the medical assessments at this crucial early age have ensured that children with disabilities are signposted to other services, enabling them to receive the support they need to enable them to thrive.



The power of play in education

Patuma is a bright six-year-old girl who lives with her mother in Malawi. Patuma's challenges started at a young age and a spinal condition meant that she could not stand or sit unassisted. There was no support available in their community and as other children began to play and learn together, Patuma was unable to join them.

Without the equipment or training to move on her own, Patuma was often left watching from afar, and she relied totally on her mother for assistance for everything from moving to eating. Patuma was in danger of being isolated from her peers and she began to fall behind in her early milestones.

In Malawi, as part of our inclusive Early Childhood Development programme with FEDOMA, **Patuma was identified in her community and was given the opportunity to attend medical screenings and to attend inclusive play scheme sessions at her local ECD centre**, run by community caregivers trained through our project in inclusive education practices.

As a result of the screenings, **Patuma was supported to access a wheelchair and was immediately able to move more independently than before**. Once she was enrolled at the ECD centre, the caregivers began assisting Patuma with her fine and gross motor skills through basic physiotherapy and play activities. Her coordination was soon improved, and she was taught exercises to help her into the future. The project also gave Patuma the opportunity to play alongside her peers through a series of structured and more informal play activities, where she was able to interact more with other children both with and without disabilities. **Her confidence grew and she began to thrive**, demonstrating the power of play in improving the all-round inclusion of children with disabilities.

Her confidence grew and she began to thrive, demonstrating **the power of play in improving the all-round inclusion of children with disabilities**

Through our current projects



We enrolled
385 children
with disabilities

Early Childhood
Education (ECE)



We enrolled
395 parents

of children with
disabilities into
Parent Support Groups



We trained
37 ECE teachers

in disability
inclusive teaching
methods

Zambia

We have been working in Zambia **since 2020** alongside **Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities** (ZAPCD) to understand and address the barriers that children with disabilities face when accessing education.

Zambia does not have a national inclusive education policy or statements that outline the need for inclusive education at any level. As few as 22% of children with disabilities in Zambia access Early Childhood Education (ECE), and only 12% go on to complete 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.

What we achieved this year

This year, as part of our three-year inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) project with ZAPCD, and with funding by the Vitol Foundation, we are embedding a culture of inclusive education in Chadiza, a district with some of the lowest levels of inclusive ECE provision in Zambia. We are working in six ECE Centres in the area, tackling the complex barriers children with disabilities face in accessing ECE. Through teacher trainings, Parent Support Groups, community awareness raising, and ongoing advocacy, the project has been warmly received, with extensive buy-in from local actors and government stakeholders.

We have made accessibility modifications to the six ECE centres, making them safer and more inclusive for children with disabilities to attend, and we are proud of the community involvement that has accompanied these changes. Members of the community have contributed their feedback, time and materials towards these works, indicating how much of an impression the project has had on them. The project has been regarded as a valuable investment in Chadiza's education system and this has encouraged many community members to consider inclusion as a priority for the first time.



Early Years Child Rights Clubs

As part of our inclusive ECE project in Zambia, we have established Child Rights Clubs at the ECE centres. These clubs educate children with disabilities on their rights and provide a safe space to talk about their experiences while learning and playing with other children with and without disabilities. In conjunction with the project's Parent Support Groups, which offer a similar opportunity for parents of children with disabilities to learn from and support each other, the Child Rights Clubs help children with disabilities and families to demand their rights.

Aimed at younger pre-primary children, these clubs offer age-appropriate and inclusive activities, focusing on the power of play, in addition to drama, poetry, singing and role play. This enables children with disabilities to understand important information in a fun and interactive way. Parents have remarked on how valuable the clubs are, with teachers also expressing the impact on the children's confidence and knowledge of their rights, with their newfound confidence translating to the classroom as well.



Through our current projects



We enrolled
97 children with disabilities

into early Early Childhood Education



We have facilitated trainings and meetings with

52 local government officials



We have made accessibility modifications to

6 Early Childhood Education Centres

to make them safer and more inclusive for children with disabilities

Helping to recognise the importance of safeguarding children with disabilities

Thomas is the chair of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at primary school in Chadiza. Thomas had little understanding or experience of disability previously, especially as few children with disabilities were enrolled at the school. After the school was enrolled in our inclusive ECE programme, Thomas took the opportunity to attend a community training held by ZAPCD. Thomas learned more about disability rights and inclusive safeguarding, including the potential risks that many children with disabilities face when attending school. Above all, Thomas learned that safeguarding children with disabilities is everyone's responsibility, and **he was determined to make the school more inclusive.**

Thomas began **delivering community workshops to share what he had learned** and after assessing the school, he noticed that the lunch area was cramped, on uneven ground, and with few places to sit comfortably. This posed a risk for all children, but especially for children with disabilities to be able to feed themselves safely and with dignity. While ZAPCD were already in the process of undertaking environmental assessments to determine accessibility modifications, Thomas also raised this concern with them, remembering that the responsibility of keeping children with disabilities safe should fall on everyone.

Alongside the accessibility modifications to the school made by the project, Thomas mobilised a team of parents and volunteers to build a new eating area constructed on level flattened ground, including accessible benches with enough room between them to accommodate wheelchairs. Thomas was pleased to have taken on the responsibility of better supporting children with disabilities in addition to the other benefits provided by the project, and **he continues to educate other parents and community members** on the importance of disability-inclusive considerations in the school.

Thomas was pleased to have taken on the responsibility of better supporting children with disabilities

Zimbabwe

We have been working with one of our newest founding members of the Able Child Africa Network, **Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children Association** (ZPHCA), **since 2023** to champion the rights and inclusion of children with disabilities in Zimbabwe.

After more than two decades of socioeconomic challenges in Zimbabwe, children with disabilities are among the most marginalised and under-represented. Due to facing several barriers alongside stigma and discrimination, they are routinely excluded from mainstream health, education and other services.

Introducing ZPHCA

Since their inception, ZPHCA has been actively involved in advocacy and lobbying for the rights of children with disabilities, and the rights of women. ZPHCA are made up of groups of parents of children with disabilities and bring about considerable change for children with disabilities through a network of parents living across the country. ZPHCA's work focuses on three key strands, with the aim of creating a supportive environment where children with disabilities can thrive. They actively lobby for legislative changes that ensure accessibility and equal opportunities for children with disabilities in education, healthcare, and housing. They provide a platform for parents to connect, share experiences, and access valuable information on various disabilities through parental support networks. And they advocate for the inclusion of children with disabilities into mainstream education, ensuring children receive the support and resources they need to thrive.





Looking ahead



Together, we aim to break down barriers and create a **brighter future for children with disabilities in Zimbabwe**.

Able Child is currently working on a project funded by Comic Relief with ZPHCA and other Able Child Africa Network members to develop a refined inclusive education toolkit. The toolkit will support members to implement robust inclusive education programmes that incorporate different approaches, such as Child-to-Child, inclusive play, Early Childhood Development, WASH and child protection.

Able Child is also working with ZPHCA to develop a project that combines Able Child and ZPHCA's experience of delivering inclusive education projects with ZPHCA's considerable understanding of the impacts of climate change on the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

In April 2024, ZPHCA facilitated consultations with children with disabilities in partnership with UNICEF and the Government of Zimbabwe, with the information shared by children with disabilities informing strategies to reduce climate change impacts on the health of children. By building the resilience of children with disabilities, who are disproportionately impacted by climate change, and using schools as the platform for this, we will ensure the voices of children with disabilities are heard in the fight against climate change.

We will ensure the voices of children with disabilities are heard in the **fight against climate change**



Malaika continues to learn and play well with her peers and is the **top of her class**. Science is her favourite subject, and when she is older, she wants to be a doctor.

Malaika's story

Malaika lives with her mother in Kenya and is the youngest of three siblings. Malaika has **cerebral palsy** which can **affect movement and coordination**.

➤ When Malaika was born, she showed no signs of having cerebral palsy and so identification at this crucial early stage was missed. It wasn't until seven months later that Malaika's mother noticed that some of her developmental milestones were not being reached.

Her mother took her to the nearest hospital, but the doctors were again unable to recognise the disability due to the knowledge gap in early identification and disability awareness among health care providers in the district. Again, Malaika went undiagnosed.

Malaika's mother waited for another six years for Malaika to walk but when it became clear that she could not walk unassisted, her mother sought further intervention.

After analysis of Malaika's bone chemistry, doctors found low calcium levels which explained why Malaika could not walk, and she was finally diagnosed with having cerebral palsy.

However, Malaika's challenges did not end there.

While Kenya has a system of free primary education, very few children with disabilities have access to early education, leading to lifelong educational inequalities. In turn, this means 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 with disabilities continue to face injustice, stigma and sometimes abuse and violence.



With our Network Member **Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY)**, Able Child rolled out its Early Childhood Education project where children with and without disabilities learn how to play together in an inclusive way, allowing for positive interactions between all children and equipping children with disabilities with the skills and knowledge to transition into primary education and beyond.

Malaika was given the platform to learn alongside her peers and **develop meaningful relationships around her**, aided by teachers trained in inclusive play sessions who tailor activities to the individual needs of children with disabilities.

Malaika's mother also benefitted from her local Parent Support Group which gave her **emotional support and the tools to face her family's challenges**. Malaika's mother has been able to start her own business which now provides crucial financial relief. This extra income has allowed Malaika to stay enrolled in a school near her home.

Malaika continues to learn and play well with her peers and is the top of her class. Science is her favourite subject, and when she is older, she wants to be a doctor.

Advocating for change

Able Child's advocacy efforts this year have been rooted in a commitment to amplify the voices of children with disabilities.

By harnessing the expertise and experience of the Able Child Africa Network, we have worked to **drive meaningful change for children with disabilities at both national and global levels**, challenging barriers to their participation, and equipping them to become leaders in their communities. We achieve this through three key strategies:



Supporting members to advocate locally by providing resources and data

Able Child Africa Network members have been instrumental in driving meaningful change at the local level. Through projects delivered together, network members have secured significant commitments from governments and other stakeholders to support the inclusion and well-being of children with disabilities.

In **Uganda**, **Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC)** has played a pivotal role in promoting the mainstreaming of a combined assessment and individualised learning plan tool nationally. By engaging with government officials and demonstrating the tool's effectiveness, USDC has successfully secured commitments for training more teachers and integrating the tool into national education policies.

In **Kenya**, **Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY)** has expanded its advocacy efforts beyond national borders, showcasing its community-based rehabilitation model at the African Summit on Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education and influencing disability-inclusive policy development across the region. **The Action Foundation (TAF)** hosted the inaugural caregiver awareness resource and empowerment (CARE) conference, providing a space for caregivers of children with disabilities to advocate for their rights and support.

In **Tanzania**, **Child Support Tanzania (CST)** has collaborated with the government to develop inclusive education guidelines and a new National Strategy for Inclusive Education. CST has also worked with the Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) to advocate for changes in education policy, ensuring a more inclusive approach to education.

In **Rwanda**, **Uwezo Youth Empowerment (UWEZO)** has empowered youth with disabilities to advocate directly to the government on issues of disability inclusion, inclusive child protection, and mental health services. During Able Child Africa Network's General Assembly, UWEZO showcased its youth mentorship model, inspiring other network members.

In **Malawi**, **Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA)** and **Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi (PODCAM)** have advocated for inclusive Early Childhood Development (ECD) services. Their efforts have led to commitments from government departments to the project's approach and to expand the programme into new districts.

In **Zambia**, **Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities (ZAPCD)** has been working to ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities in the government's new Education Policy. ZAPCD has also collaborated with local government to improve the provision of inclusive education in Chadiza district.

In **Zimbabwe**, **Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children Association (ZPHCA)** has been independently advocating for the inclusion of children with disabilities in Zimbabwe's 'Draft Climate Change Management Bill'. We hope to collaborate with them on future projects to build upon their advocacy efforts.

Securing a platform for the Network's voice to be heard internationally through participation in global forums and partnerships.

Able Child's advocacy team in the UK has been working tirelessly to ensure that the voices of our network members are heard at an international level.

By leveraging the evidence generated by the Network, we have been advocating for the UK government and international development sector to prioritise the inclusion of children with disabilities in their policies and programmes.

Able Child's Network Manager, based in Kenya, played a crucial role in representing the Able Child Africa Network at the International Development & Disability Consortium (IDDC) General Assembly in 2024, providing opportunities for securing further participation of children and youth with disabilities, such as at the 2025 Global Disability Summit.

This year, Able Child took on a Board role within the IDDC, further strengthening our ability to include local organisations' decision-making. We have been instrumental in establishing a new Children with Disabilities Task Group within the consortium, with the aim of ensuring that the voices of children with disabilities are included in global discussions.

We have also been working closely with The Bond Disability and Development Group to advocate for the inclusion of youth voices on the Disability Advisory Board for the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and ensured that engaging disability organisations was included as a commitment in the White Paper conducted by the former Minister for Development, Andrew Mitchell.

Lauren Watters, Co-CEO of Able Child, provided oral evidence to the UK Parliament's International Development Committee, advocating for the inclusion of children with disabilities in international development programmes. Her testimony highlighted the importance of inclusive safeguarding and emphasised the need to include the voices of organisations representing children and youth with disabilities.



Publishing and sharing resources, knowledge, and expertise to strengthen the wider sector's capacity to include children with disabilities.

Able Child has continued to share the knowledge and expertise of the Able Child Africa Network members with the wider sector through publications and events.

Able Child has leveraged the launch of our new strategy to host webinars discussing the redistribution of power to local disability organisations within the sector. Network members have contributed to the Momentum Panel Series, sharing their expertise on topics such as the Sustainable Development Goals and Early Childhood Development. We have continued these series throughout the year. Additionally, we have published comprehensive Project Impact Reports, identifying effective methodologies for driving positive change in areas such as Early Childhood Education in Zambia.

This year, Able Child Africa Network has worked with Accessible Surveys to collect data from over 1,100 children with disabilities across seven African countries on their human rights experiences. The results will inform advocacy activities and campaigns to ensure these voices are heard globally. This report will be published in late 2024.

Data underpins all our advocacy work, ensuring that our efforts are evidence-based and effective.

By leveraging the untapped expertise of network members, we are able to advocate for informed and **impactful initiatives** that **deliver tangible benefits** for children with disabilities.

Financial report

Overview

Able Child's total income this year was £947,412 which represents a decrease of 8% from the previous financial year.

This is comprised of £476,584 in restricted funding (including grants) and £470,828 in unrestricted flexible funding.

Total expenditure this year was £960,282 which is a 6% increase from the previous financial year.

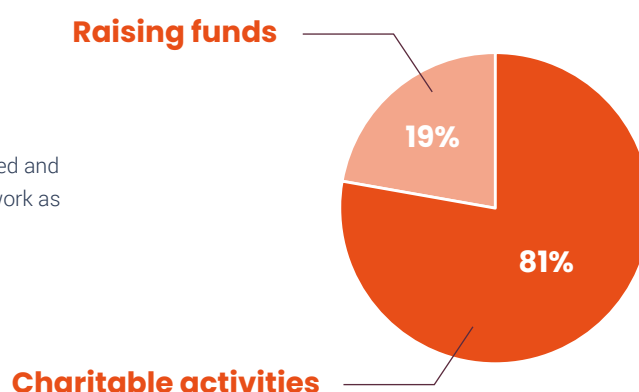
Income and expenditure

| Income and Expenditure | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total Funds |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Income | £470,828 | £476,584 | £947,412 |
| Expenditure | £470,884 | £489,398 | £960,282 |
| Net Income / (Expenditure) | -£56 | -£12,814 | -£12,870 |

Spending on charitable activities

| Expenditure Split | Charitable Activities | Raising Funds | Total Expenditure |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Total | £775,314 | £184,968 | £960,282 |

Expenditure on charitable activities amounts to **81p 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.



Our fundraising costs, **(19p in every pound raised)**, are kept as low as possible while still allowing us to raise sufficient funds to deliver against our mission. This year the cost of raising funds is slightly higher than previous years as we have invested in our staff team to secure future growth in our income levels.

Looking forward



Able Child is embarking on an exciting new chapter

A key priority for the upcoming year is to **strengthen and ensure the long-term sustainability of the newly formed Able Child Africa Network**. We are dedicated to listening to network members and while expansion, potentially into West Africa, is a possibility, our immediate focus is on deepening our connections and solidifying the foundation of the Network.

Building on our strong foundation of UK-based advocacy and in-country partnerships, we will seek to position network members on the global stage. By creating opportunities for network members to participate in high-level decision-making processes, we will ensure that the voices of children with disabilities are heard, and their needs are prioritised. Our aim is to establish the Network as a leading authority on children with disabilities in Africa, driving change through their meaningful participation in global advocacy.

The publication of data and sharing best practices will be crucial in the Network's first year. This knowledge exchange will inform our work, challenge the status quo, and elevate the Network's profile, ensuring our members are heard and taken seriously. By generating data on emerging areas like climate change, we will ensure children with disabilities are not omitted from key decisions on financing and design in key development areas.

Investing in our people is essential. We will prioritise recruiting from regions where the most qualified candidates reside, which will likely lead to increased hiring in Africa to support delivery and restricted fundraising. We will invest our advocacy capacity towards the end of the year to strengthen our voice. We will continue to foster a supportive and inclusive workplace where everyone is valued and feels part of our collective mission.

Recognising the need for a robust unrestricted funding base to support a six-year strategy that demands flexibility in spending, we will prioritise growing this portfolio by diversifying income streams, focusing on increasing corporate partnerships and fundraising events. This adaptability will empower us to support the Network in ways they define and require, while building resilience amidst evolving international development funding challenges.

As the last few years have demonstrated, the global context is increasingly uncertain. But we are confident that a strong team coupled with a bold strategy will position us to withstand these challenges and navigate a fast-changing context, to create lasting impact for children with disabilities.



Celebrating you

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 fantastic 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 and we look forward to working together during 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 family.

Our corporate supports

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 Exile - 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. Exile 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 once again for not only continuing 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 invaluable, 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 challenge takers

Every year we are 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 an incredible team of 29 runners who raised crucial funds for our work. We want to thank each and every one of you. As always, your commitment to fundraise for our cause throughout your journeys is hugely appreciated.

We also want to say a special thank you to a few of you who went even further this year. Firstly, to Beatrice and Clara Gogarty who together raised an incredible sum of over £11,000 – thank you. To Peter Slot who raised nearly £5,000 in the UK along with a matching gift in the US. This is Peter's third marathon for Able Child. We could not be more thankful for all your outstanding support.

To Anton Mauve, Gregory Emanuel, Jamie Axford, Shezan Hirjee and Sarah Lingard who all ran for Able Child for the first time and exceeded targets. And to David Howell, Joe Kohut, Jeff Brunstrom and Steve Leighfield who all returned to the Able Child marathon team for the second time and doubled their contributions.

Thank you.

Our individual supporters

There are so many of you that support our work from regular monthly donations to spreading news of our work. You are all 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 our Champion donors Cath Ford and Tony Shubrook, Heather Barr, Jim Sellars, John Ingram and Paul Harrison for your ongoing support to help us achieve our mission.

And to all our long-term individual supporters, who for over a decade and in some cases more, have supported Able Child

Celebrating you

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!

through regular donations - thank you for your commitment to our cause. As we reach our 40th year, we thank all those who over many years have enabled us to support children with disabilities in Africa.

A final special thank you to the late Joyce Bondziwa Gibson who granted £1,000 to Able Child in her final wishes. Born in Accra, Ghana, Joyce found Able Child and chose to leave a bequest after our programmes in her home continent resonated with her. Thank you.

Our Trustees

The past year has been transformative for Able Child, and our Board of Trustees have played a key role in steering us through this exciting period. They guided us expertly in the launch of our ambitious new strategy, bringing enthusiasm and insightful perspectives to the process and their unwavering commitment to staff wellbeing has made Able Child a secure and supportive place to work.

Jim Sellars recently stepped down as Chair of the charity. We want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude for his exceptional leadership during this pivotal time. Jim's dedication and commitment have gone above and beyond, and his support has been invaluable.

We are delighted to announce Mitul Shah, our former Treasurer, as the new Chair of Able Child. His leadership and expertise will be invaluable as we continue to work towards our goals.

We are also incredibly grateful to Martin Hill, Mitul Shah, Maria Omare, Miir Michael and Jim for making the journey to Rwanda for our inaugural Network General Assembly, which was instrumental in the launch of the new Able Child Africa Network. Their presence and support were invaluable.

We warmly welcome Abigail Viljoen and Hannah Loryman to the Board and look forward to their contributions.

Our US Board, led by Paul Harrison, Liz Macfadyen, Rachelle Gregory, and Neil Hankinson, continues to be an invaluable asset as we expand our reach. Their support and guidance have been instrumental in building our presence in the US.

Our staff

And finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to our incredible team for their dedication to Able Child. Together this year, we've embarked on an ambitious journey and one we can be proud of. We have launched a new strategy that has pushed the boundaries of what we can achieve, and your passion, patience, and innovative spirit have been instrumental in making this possible.

We celebrate your courage in challenging the status quo and holding ourselves to account to high standards. You have created a positive, inclusive, and welcoming workplace culture that is the fundamental to our success. Thank you for making Able Child a place where new ideas thrive, and everyone feels valued.

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

American Century Investments
Azad Ayub Ltd.
The Bartlett Foundation
Catholic Relief Services
Cargill
The Cheruby Trust
Comic Relief
Educational Opportunity Foundation (formerly BFSS)
Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust
Euromoney Institutional Investors
Exile Group
Government of Faroe Islands
Hassell Inclusion
James Tudor Foundation
Leggatt Trust
Network for Social Change
PenCarrie
Rangoonwala Foundation
The Rest-Harrow Trust
Souter Charitable Trust
The Marr-Munning Trust
Tula Trust
Vitol Foundation



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Able Child is a registered charity (no. 326859) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 1861434) in England and Wales under the name Able Child Africa.