



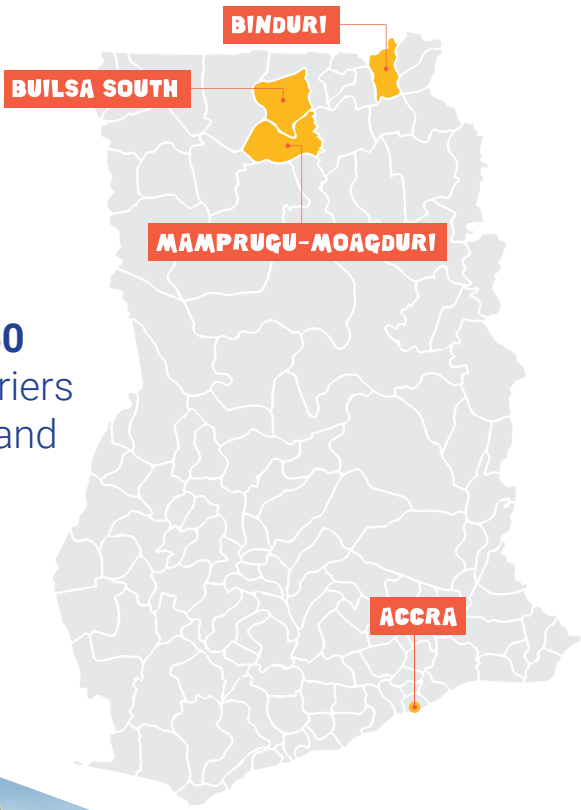
# STORIES OF CHANGE

Your Impact In 2025



# WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE

This year, we supported **115,604** people across **60 communities** in northern Ghana to overcome barriers to their children's education, improve livelihoods, and build brighter futures for their families.



**44,928** CHILDREN RECEIVED LIFE-CHANGING SUPPORT TO STAY IN SCHOOL



That's almost half of Wembley Stadium filled with young lives transformed!

## AND IT'S DRIVING REAL CHANGE...

Four years into our five-year programme to keep children safe, in school, and supported by sustainable systems, we've recorded significant progress – with independent assessments showing that AfriKids-supported communities are driving meaningful change.



"It's family here. When you go into the community, you meet mothers, talk to them, and you become part of their lives. They recognise you in the markets and everywhere you go. That connection, that sense of being part of the family, is why this work is so rewarding."

- VALERIA, AFRIKIDS DISTRICT MANAGER, BILSA SOUTH

"Over the past five years, we've loved working alongside the AfriKids team. The work they do to help disadvantaged children is truly amazing. We're grateful for our long-standing partnership and successful collaboration."

- THE LANSLOWNE EUROPEAN LONG ONLY MASTER FUND AT LANSLOWNE PARTNERS



**2.5X MORE**

primary school children are now literate and numerate



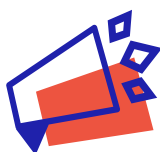
**ALMOST DOUBLE**

the number of girls are passing their Science and Maths exams in Junior High



**3.5X MORE**

teachers are demonstrating equitable, inclusive and quality teaching practices



**4-IN-5**

traditional leaders are now actively promoting children's rights



**ALMOST 4X MORE**

children can now accurately and confidently explain what to do if they or another child are being abused



**OVER 1/3<sup>RD</sup>**

reduction in violence, exploitation, and harmful practices against children

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

936



education providers (including teachers, headteachers and Ghana Education Service staff) were trained in play-based and inclusive learning, creating classrooms where every child can participate and thrive.

45,023



community members showed improved knowledge and attitudes towards ending harmful socio-cultural practices that keep children out of school, including child labour and early marriage

## AFRIKIDS IN THE NEWS



SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH!

We were proud to see AfriKids featured on Ghana Broadcasting Corporation's News Hour, highlighting our work to support children and families in northern Ghana. From keeping girls in school to training child protection champions, this feature shines a light on the power of community-led change.

3,753



children were provided with school supplies, home visits and access to social and health services, helping them stay healthy and in school. This is 8% less children than last year, reflecting positive progress as more children move out of at-risk situations and into greater stability.

£96,176



Thanks to you, we smashed our fundraising target for the Big Give Match-Funded Christmas Challenge, raising £96,176 to help keep thousands of girls safe, in school and learning.

19,375



children benefited from enhanced education through improved school management, early years support, STEM clubs and teacher training- up from 18,862 last year.

27%



more girls thrived in our STEM clubs this year, with 1,274 gaining the skills and confidence to pursue future careers in science, technology, engineering and maths, up from 1,002 last year

1,700+



More than 1,700 women continued to grow and strengthen the small businesses they started through AfriKids' microfinance support, building sustainable incomes to support their families and keep their children in school.

ThirdSector Awards

2025 charitytimes Awards  
Recognising leadership and professionalism



In 2025, our community-led model and impact was recognised by Finnish organisation HundrED as one of the top 100 education innovations in the world. Our new brand won a 'Highly Commended' award at the Third Sector Awards, and we were shortlisted for the International Charity of the Year at Charity Times Awards.



# LITERACY AND NUMERACY: REAL PROGRESS, REAL CHANGE.

**Four years into our five-year programme** to keep children safe and in school, we're seeing powerful gains in learning outcomes.

## LITERACY HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED

We've recorded a **115% increase** in primary school children achieving minimum level literacy proficiency. Scaled across all primary schools we work in, this means **5,000 more children** are now able to read.

## NUMERACY IS RISING EVEN FASTER

There's been a **173% increase** in primary school children achieving proficiency in numeracy. This means 7,600 more children across our supported schools now have essential maths skills.

## HOW DO STUDENTS IN AFRIKIDS-SUPPORTED SCHOOLS COMPARE?

Published data on literacy and numeracy across the regions where we work is limited, particularly when comparing results between schools. To better understand student progress, AfriKids works with partner schools to collect its own attainment data.

In 2025, AfriKids-supported primary pupils averaged 65% in literacy and 83% in numeracy in their school assessments.

Comparable data is not available for students in non-AfriKids schools. However, the most recent government data from 2023 shows that students of a similar age across the region scored significantly lower in the National Standardised Test (similar to UK SATs), averaging **30.5% in English and 58% in maths**.

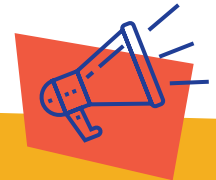
## WHAT DOES THIS TELL US?

These results suggest that, despite limited resources and challenging learning environments, AfriKids-supported students are performing at levels comparable to pupils in more affluent areas of Ghana such as the capital, Accra, where national exam averages are 54% in English and 68% in maths.

## BUILDING A STRONGER SYSTEM

AfriKids is working alongside Ghana Education Service and District Education Oversight Committees to improve the availability and use of education data. This is key to helping communities and other actors understand what works, advocate for change, and strengthen accountability in local schools.

**WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT, CHILDREN AREN'T JUST STAYING IN SCHOOL - THEY'RE LEARNING, THRIVING, AND EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS.**



# SUPPORTING FAMILIES SO CHILDREN CAN LEARN

**IN NORTHERN GHANA, 7-IN-10 FAMILIES LIVE IN MULTI-DIMENSIONAL POVERTY.**

**This creates pressures at home that often force children out of school and into work to support their households.**

Even when education is free, the cost of uniforms, books, meals, and transport can be a barrier. As a result, 1 in 4 children are out of school, and half of women and girls have never set foot inside a classroom.

By equipping families, especially mothers, with business and skills training, together with microfinance, we're helping them secure livelihoods so they can support their children and manage the costs of education - giving every child the best chance to stay in school and thrive.

**We particularly focused on supporting mothers of children most at risk of dropping out of school due to financial constraints.**

**900+**

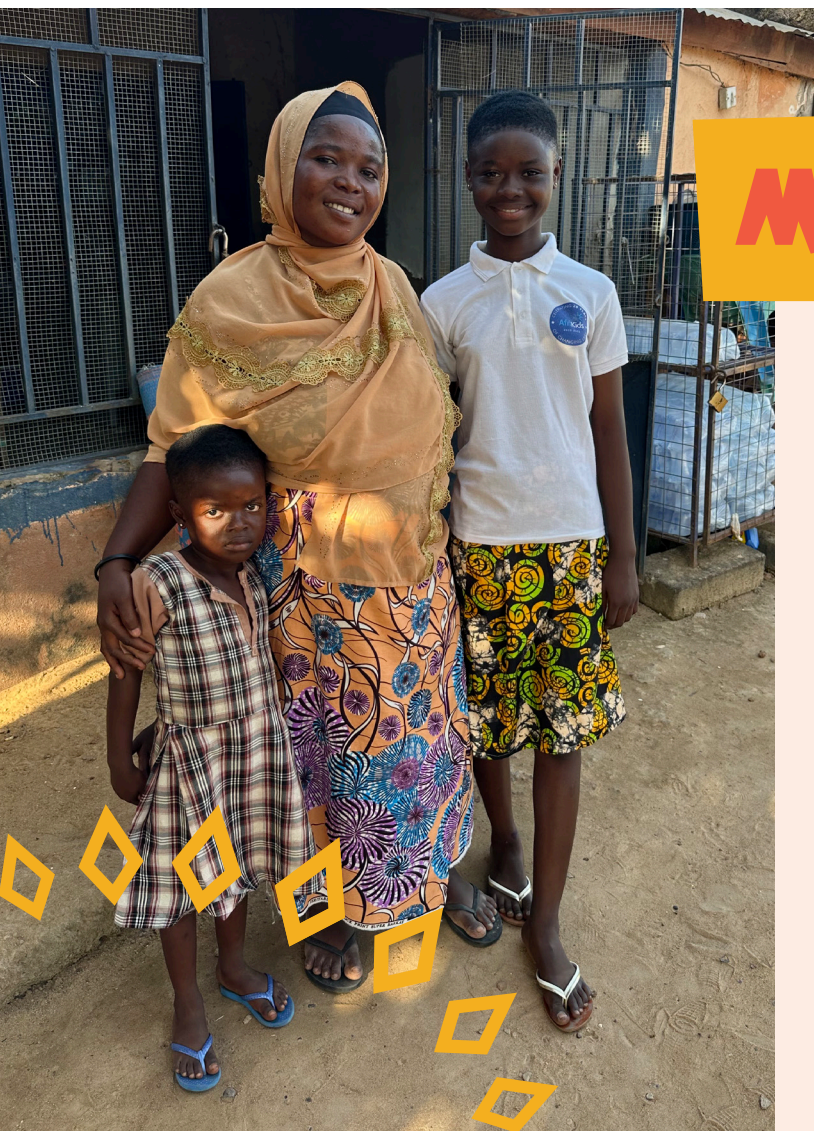
women strengthened their financial resilience by saving regularly through Village Savings and Loans Associations (cooperatives for shared saving and investment).

**3-in-4**

women involved in our Livelihoods Improvement Initiatives are now able to manage their child's education costs themselves, marking a significant step toward keeping more children in school.

**3,783**

children are now more likely to be happy, healthy, and in school as a result of strengthened caregiver livelihoods.



## MEET ESTHER

**ESTHER LIVES IN MAMPRUGU-MOAGDURI, ONE OF THE MOST REMOTE DISTRICTS THAT WE WORK IN.**

Today, she can feed her children, send them to school, and provide the resources they need to learn and thrive. Her daughters attend school regularly, and Esther dreams of them both becoming doctors who will one day give back to their community.

Every day, the mother-of-two wakes up early to sell tomatoes, cassava, sugar, shea butter and biscuits at the local market. She rarely takes a day off.

Working alongside other women in her village has created a growing sense of unity, encouragement, and shared progress.

Running a business alone and managing the costs of keeping her children in school was a real struggle - until she joined other mothers in her community for business training and microfinance support from AfriKids. With guidance and a small loan, Esther was able to grow her shop and start increasing her profits.

**This is what happens when a community comes together to support children's education.**

# HOPE GROWS HERE



**THIS YEAR, 60% MORE WOMEN WERE TRAINED IN CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE AND GOOD AGRONOMIC PRACTICES...**

...equipping them with climate-resilient crop varieties and advanced farming techniques to grow food more sustainably.

**IN NORTHERN GHANA, AROUND 70% OF PEOPLE DEPEND ON FARMING FOR THEIR LIVELIHOODS.**

**Yet changing weather patterns and declining soil quality are putting both food security and incomes at risk, particularly for families already facing economic hardship.**

For many families, these financial pressures make it difficult to afford the costs of keeping their children in school. To help address this, AfriKids brought together mothers of children at risk of dropping out and formed supportive groups where they received training in climate-resilient farming techniques.

To ensure these new skills translated into sustainable income, we teamed up with ORGIIS Ghana, a non-profit championing sustainable agriculture and locally-led solutions.

Through this partnership, the women were trained to grow sorghum, a hardy, drought-tolerant grain well suited to the conditions in Builsa South and Mamprugu-Moagduri. Nutritious and already a staple in local diets, sorghum is also used by major brands such as Guinness in beer production.

Alongside this, the women learned to cultivate shea nuts, a high-value product that originates from the fields of northern Ghana.

Crucially, ORGIIS also helped open access to international markets for both sorghum and shea. The organisation purchased sorghum and shea nuts directly from the women at a Fairtrade price and sold them to international buyers.

As a result, the women saw significant economic gains: average incomes increased by 80%, while savings grew by 20% through the Village Savings and Loans Associations established within their groups.



## MEET RABBI

**RABBI IS A 22-YEAR-OLD MOTHER OF THREE.**

Every other day, she spends 4 hours collecting shea nuts, carrying them back to her home where she carefully dries, prepares, and bags them in the courtyard.

Once ready, ORGIIS Ghana collects the bagged nuts directly from her home, giving her a Fairtrade price and sells them on to international customers.

Her income has doubled, strengthening her ability to meet household needs and effectively manage the costs of sending her children to school.






**EARLIER THIS YEAR, CONFLICT IN PARTS OF BINDURI DISRUPTED MANY OF OUR ACTIVITIES.**

**Curfews, school closures and travel restrictions required us to adapt, prioritising staff safety while keeping programmes running.**

Despite these challenges, the community's resilience shone through. Teacher training, learning resources, and women's livelihoods groups continued under local leadership. Families and teachers took precautions, sometimes keeping children home, yet their commitment to education and each other remained strong.



“What I found most fulfilling was seeing the community stand together for children’s education, even in difficult times. **That resilience is what makes my work meaningful**”

- CECELIA, AFRIKIDS DISTRICT MANAGER, BINDURI

# BUILDING BELIEF IN THE POWER OF EDUCATION


**In northern Ghana, widespread poverty means many families must choose between sending their children to school or relying on them to help support the household. As a result, only 25–30% of children can read by the age of 12.**

Harmful gender norms and early and forced marriage also continue to prevent thousands of girls from completing their education. Girls in rural communities are particularly vulnerable, including in districts where AfriKids works to strengthen child protection systems.

We work hand-in-hand with schools, Ghana Education Service, and local communities to change this. Without urgent action and community buy-in, children risk being locked out of education, and with it, have the opportunity for a brighter future.

Our work focuses on breaking cycles of harmful social norms and showing how education can transform lives, lift up families, and strengthen entire communities.





**180**

schools were partnered with to organise PTA meetings, strengthening accountability for every child's learning.



**STRENGTHENING SCHOOLS**

We work with schools and parents to ensure everyone shares responsibility for ensuring children learn. Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) mobilise communities to address poor infrastructure, absenteeism, teacher attendance, and ways to encourage learning. This year, activities included digging wells, building desks and chairs, and paying volunteer teachers and cooks to keep children learning and fed.



**ENGAGING COMMUNITIES**

Children, parents, chiefs, and local leaders joined campaigns to highlight the importance of education. Local news media amplified the message, helping communities tackle barriers to learning.



**WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

We collaborate closely with local and national government partners to strengthen education systems from within. By aligning with district priorities, supporting teacher training, and sharing evidence from our programmes, we help ensure sustainable improvements that can reach more children, for the long term.

# FOLLOWING OUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL CAMPAIGN:

Partnering with local media and Ghana Education Service, our Back-to-School campaigns increased awareness on term dates, boosting school enrolment and attendance. Home visits and distributing school supplies ensured every child had what they needed to make a strong start in the classroom.

86%

of caregivers affirmed that the Back-to-School campaign played a key role in their decision to enrol their children

4,458

children enrolled on day one of school across three districts – our highest Back-to-School enrolment on record. 40% were new or returning learners who had previously dropped out

81%

of school authorities reported higher enrolment figures than the previous year





## REACHING FAMILIES WHERE THEY ARE

**AS PART OF OUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL CAMPAIGN IN SEPTEMBER, WE MET 45-YEAR-OLD RUHIANA, A MOTHER OF FIVE FROM THE FULANI COMMUNITY.**

Ruhiana's daily life centres on milking cows, fetching firewood, and selling milk at the market, while her husband tends the family's herd. Their home, a cluster of round mud huts with thatched roofs, is typical of Fulbe settlements. Water is collected from a nearby stream, cooking is done on open fires, and income depends almost entirely on cattle rearing.

For families like Ruhiana's, education has long felt out of reach. Economic pressures mean children are often expected to help with farming, while traditions shaped by a semi-nomadic lifestyle can make schooling difficult.

With so few Fulani children in school, there are also limited role models with education to inspire others.

Through our Back-to-School campaign, AfriKids reached families where they were, in markets, mosques, churches, and on farms. Using loudspeakers, radio, and local advocates, we shared information about school reopening times and reassured Fulbe parents that their children would be supported to overcome barriers to education.

After hearing the campaign at her local market, Ruhiana and her husband made the decision to enrol their 10-year-old twin girls, Warahana and Rakia\*, in school for the first time.

**Awareness campaigns like this can be instrumental in opening doors for marginalised families and offer hope and a pathway out of poverty and exclusion.**



WHEN COMMUNITIES COME TOGETHER TO STAND UP FOR GIRLS, REAL CHANGE CAN TAKE ROOT.



# COMMUNITIES STANDING UP FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION

**Matthew Abagna oversees AfriKids' projects in Mamprugu-Moagduri, a remote district where early and forced marriage has long deprived many girls of the chance to complete their education.**

He shared that in some communities, the practice was once openly supported by local leaders, and those who spoke out risked insults and intimidation. Even starting a conversation about child marriage was difficult.

Through child protection training and community campaigns highlighting the value of girls' education, attitudes are starting to shift.

Parents, traditional leaders, and community members are increasingly standing together to challenge harmful practices and protect girls' right to learn.

The impact is already being felt. Over the past year, community leaders have stepped in to address cases of child abduction, working alongside the Department of Social Welfare and the Police Service to rescue four girls who had been taken for marriage.

**Today, all four have been safely reunited with their families and are back in school, continuing the education that once seemed out of reach.**

"Each week I meet children and families who are living better and happier lives thanks to the work your generosity has funded. From all of us here, thank you."

- MATTHEW ABAGNA, AFRIKIDS DISTRICT MANAGER, MAMPRUGU-MOAGDURI



# ONE CHIEF, LEADING THE WAY

CHIEF OF LOAGRI



## RESPECTED AND INFLUENTIAL, COMMUNITY LEADERS SUCH AS CHIEFS AND QUEEN MOTHERS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN SHAPING RURAL LIFE.

**They set local laws and uphold the cultural traditions that guide daily life. This Chief in Mamprugu-Moagduri has taken bold steps to challenge traditional beliefs and advocate for every child's right to an education, paving the way for lasting change.**

His district has the highest rate of child marriages in the Northeast Region, with the number doubling that of the national average. Recognising the impact that child marriage, teenage pregnancy, and Kayaye (head portering) are having on his community's success, the Chief has taken a firm stance, issuing a community-wide ban on sending girls away for Kayaye and the unaccompanied migration of minors to cities like Tamale, Kumasi, and Accra.

To ensure lasting change, a committee was formed to monitor and prevent girls from being transported to cities for such work, personally overseen by the Chief himself.

He is relentlessly working to break down barriers to girls' education. He is encouraging students to stay in school and showing them how education can open doors to a brighter future. He also attends AfriKids' Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights clubs and STEM clubs to urge girls to focus on their studies.

The results of his tireless efforts have been extraordinary. Today, more girls are enrolled in school at the pre-secondary level. The number of girls in primary and Junior High Schools has more than doubled, and in some cases, they now outnumber boys.

Exemplary leadership like this is essential to unlocking girls' potential and driving economic success.

This Chief is turning the tide on generations of gender hierarchy and paving the way for a future where women play a central role in leadership, economic growth, and community development.

## WHAT IS KAYAYE?

Kayaye is a form of head portering where girls and young women migrate to cities to carry heavy loads on their heads for a living, often in unsafe and exploitative conditions.



“Supporting AfriKids has been a truly uplifting and rewarding experience. Seeing children thrive with the help of education has shown me the tremendous difference I can help make to whole communities when these are channelled via wonderful staff who listen and respond to local needs.”

- JOHNNIE, AFRIKIDS DONOR





## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

**Our main approach to creating lasting change is by strengthening the quality of services delivered by government agencies, such as Ghana Education Service, Department of Social Welfare, and Ghana Health Service, so that those responsible for children are supported to maximise their impact.**

We also work directly with children and young people aged 4–16. We help younger children develop a love of learning by facilitating teacher training in play-based approaches and strengthening the teaching of literacy and numeracy at primary level.

As children grow older, we continue to support them, particularly girls, through school clubs that broaden their horizons and deepen their understanding of their rights and potential.

In 2025, our two school programmes were STEM clubs for girls and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR) clubs. Both are designed to expand young people’s sense of what is possible, not only during their education, but beyond it, by helping them see clear pathways into further study and employment.

This year, we organised a field trip for 50 participants to visit an irrigation plant and one of northern Ghana’s few specialist STEM secondary schools. For many, it was the first time they had left their communities to see what a future in STEM could truly look like. The experience was transformational, turning ambition into something tangible and achievable.

**19,375**

children experienced stronger, more inclusive education through improved early years schooling and strengthened school leadership.

**60**

schools were equipped with play-based learning guides and classroom stationary, strengthening lesson preparation and increasing student participation

# MEET REBECCA

**AT A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN NORTHERN GHANA, ONE TEACHER IS CHANGING THE WAY GIRLS SEE THEMSELVES AND THEIR FUTURES.**

As both a teacher and mentor for her school's Girls' Sexual Rights Club, Rebecca is helping her students build confidence, understand their rights, and dream big.

**"We've been talking about empowering girls and taking up roles that are often seen as only for boys. We discuss things like being assertive, how to prevent teenage pregnancy, and how to prepare ourselves for the future."**

Through open discussions about women's rights, equality and leadership, she's helping her students see beyond the limits society often places on them.

**"People have said that a girl's place is in the kitchen, but I know the girl child has a lot more to do."**



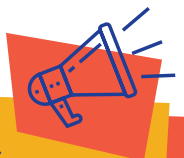
**I want to see my girls take up powerful positions, maybe even become the first female president of Ghana. I hope they will go on to educate other girls and change the world at large."**

Through mentors like Rebecca, and with the support of AfriKids' programmes, girls across northern Ghana are gaining the knowledge, confidence, and belief they need to lead the way.



## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS WITH PLAYERS OF POSTCODE LOTTERY

Over the past 10 years, Postcode Lottery players have helped AfriKids raise over £5 million to create brighter futures for children and families in northern Ghana.



THEIR SUPPORT MEANS...

# 350,000+

children are kept safe, in school, and learning to reach their full potential.

# 17,000+

mothers are equipped with skills to build sustainable incomes, helping to break the cycle of poverty.

# 600

communities are strengthening networks of parents, teachers and leaders who nurture children's growth.

# WHAT'S NEXT?



**BUILDING ON OUR PROVEN, COMMUNITY-LED APPROACH, RISE UP IS AFRIKIDS' NEXT CATALYTIC INITIATIVE TO UNLOCK A BREAKTHROUGH IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING.**

It will test and refine a low-cost, scalable model that places parents, caregivers, and community leaders at the heart of change.

**We aim to answer a critical question for the future of global education: What happens when the entire community, not just schools, mobilises to support children's learning?**

With your help and support, we will launch a two-year research pilot across 12 communities, reaching an estimated 3,000 children and adults.

Beyond the classroom...

**RISE UP WILL TAKE LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM,** putting communities at the heart of change to unlock every child's potential...

It will focus on children from ages 4 to 11 when formative learning shapes future success. We will focus on increasing the time a child is learning for by working with parents and communities to increase learning opportunities inside the classroom and beyond.

Work began last year to develop our Theory of Change and logframe, alongside community consultations. We will also convene a committee of education experts to guide the pilot and ensure the model is relevant, robust and scalable.

## WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

**By 2050, Africa will be home to one-third of the world's children, yet 9 in 10 in Sub-Saharan Africa are not learning to read by age 10.**

With global education budgets shrinking, UNICEF warns that millions more could be out of school by 2026, with West and Central Africa hit hardest.

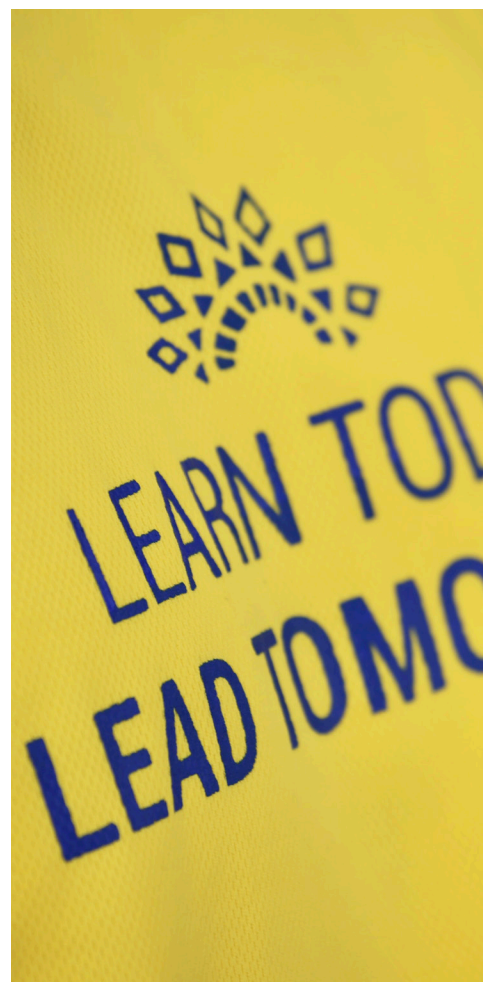
The world is searching for the most effective, affordable solutions. Most current efforts focus on the supply side, but that's only part of the picture. Instead of asking how to build more classrooms, we're asking how to support communities that fill those classrooms and support every child to learn, including girls, children with disabilities, and minority groups.

Evidence for demand-side investment is thin, and awareness of scalable models is lacking. Rise Up aims to change that. Our learnings from the last two decades give us key insight into what shifts learning outcomes:

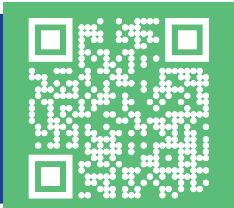
- 1** When parents understand the value of education, attendance stabilises and dropouts fall.
- 2** When communities are mobilised, they protect children from exploitation, early marriage, and chronic absenteeism.
- 3** When teachers receive the right support, learning outcomes rise swiftly, even in the poorest settings.

Rise Up builds on these proven successes but goes further, moving from dependence on under-resourced schools to unlocking the hidden value of communities increasing opportunities to learn. In places where governments face resource constraints, community-led models are not just impactful, they are essential.

With your support, we'll test our belief that mobilising communities is critical to give every child the chance to learn today, lead tomorrow. **Together, we can reimagine education and change lives for generations to come.**



**JOIN US ON THIS TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY.**



**M'PUSIAH!**  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



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#### ABOUT AFRIKIDS

AfriKids is a proudly locally-led child rights organisation working in northern Ghana to make sure every child is safe, in school and thriving. For over 20 years, we have championed a community-driven approach that supports children and families to build brighter futures.