

WAR

child

**LAUNCHING AN AGILE,
RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE
GLOBAL ALLIANCE**

ANNUAL PLAN

2024





SOME 468 MILLION CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE CURRENTLY EXPOSED TO THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE AND ARMED CONFLICT - FACING PROFOUND THREATS TO THEIR SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

UN figures show that a record 339 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance and protection - a significant increase from the 274 million people recorded at the beginning of 2022. The ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, Syria and DR Congo have all contributed to the surge in the numbers of vulnerable people.

And these terrible numbers are set to increase further in 2024 as a result of the conflict between Israel and armed forces in Gaza - one of the worst escalations of violence seen for a generation.

Fears are high that the scope of the violence will expand beyond Gaza - bringing with it violations of international law, human rights abuses and direct threats to the safety of children.

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING SHORTFALL

The number of children affected by war and violence is reaching new highs - and the available funds to meet their needs are in real terms shrinking. UN figures show that \$55 billion was required at the start of 2023 to meet the needs of 249 million of the 362 million people in humanitarian need. Yet at the close of the year just \$18 billion of these commitments have been funded - representing just under one third of all needs met.

This funding shortfall means that new approaches are required - **which is why 2024 will see five War Child entities form a Global Alliance.** They will unite to pool resources and enhance efficiencies - all with the aim to reach many more children affected by armed conflict around the globe.

Here's how it will work...



FORMING A GLOBAL ALLIANCE TO MEET DEEPENING NEEDS

The needs of vulnerable children and youth are increasing in scope and urgency - yet the available funds to meet those needs are shrinking. New approaches and innovations are required to help address this shortfall - together with renewed emphasis on increased operational efficiency and scaling capacity.

This all means that organisations like War Child must adapt and evolve to continue to meet children's needs. Our ambition is to become an innovative and agile organisation with international reach and relevance - which is why the start of 2024 will see us come together to form the **War Child Alliance**.

The War Child Alliance is a global network of organisations formed in pursuit of one shared goal: to ensure that no child is part of war. Ever. The network will be made up of a series of members - five fundraising bodies in Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States and our [14 international country operations](#).

The various members of the Alliance will work together through the War Child Alliance Foundation - a new international body that will provide a strategy to guide our operations together with ongoing management and oversight.

How it will work

The structure of the Foundation will be gradually implemented over the first half of 2024 - in an iterative process allowing for learnings and staff feedback. This process will see a fresh emphasis placed on 'scaling' and 'localisation' - to help increase the reach of our interventions and deepen our collaboration with local organisations in the countries where we work. Our staffing plan involves moving some global roles to regional offices by the end of 2024. At the governance level the board of the new War Alliance Foundation will be joined by new trustees who are citizens of countries affected by conflict. This is in line with our ambition to transform power relationships within War Child structures.

The process will see some upheaval to our staffing structure and a temporary strain on available resources. Yet this short-term pain comes with the ambition to establish a new way of working that will allow us to pool resources and reposition decision making for increased impact - all in the name of the children we support.

Ukraine Response



WORKING TO MEET URGENT NEEDS

War and conflict continue to threaten the physical safety and mental wellbeing of some 468 million children across the world. The past year has seen an increase in the number of **attacks on schools and hospitals** - particularly in the war in Ukraine - and unrelenting aerial bombardment by Israeli armed forces on locations in Gaza.

All of this means that - while we look to renew and expand our operations in the future - we must continue to adapt and strengthen our efforts to meet the needs of children now. This means that the current organisational strategies for War Child Holland and War Child UK will remain in operation.

Our **programme portfolio** is set to expand to 14 countries during 2024. Activities for children and youth in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, the Central African Republic, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territory, Burundi, DR Congo, South Sudan, Uganda, Colombia and Ukraine will now fall under the Alliance umbrella. Our programmes in Syria and Jordan will be combined and run out of our Jordan office.

Our **humanitarian programme teams** will continue to provide psychosocial support and emergency education and put in place child protection safeguards and mechanisms. We will also continue to support young people and caregivers with the skills they need to find apprenticeships and employment through our livelihoods programming and empower them to advocate for their rights.

OUR RESEARCH AGENDA

2024 will also see the ongoing development of our Care System - a set of **core methodologies** that together make up an integrated care and support system to address the various needs of conflict-affected children.

Our Research & Development (R&D) team will continue to develop the evidence base to ensure each methodology meets quantifiable standards of quality - and allows for cost-effective and sustainable scaling through partner organisations. The year will also see formative research undertaken in three new areas and efforts to secure a significant increase in funding - particularly for **CORE**, **STRETCH** and **Seeds**.

Our **Advocacy** team will deepen its collaboration with partner organisations in the countries where we work and support them to be visible in the international spaces where War Child has access - with the strategic ambition to secure increased flexible multi-year funding from the global donor community.

SCALING OUR PRESENCE AND IMPACT

War Child reaches tens of thousands of children and youth every year - along with their caregivers and other important figures in their lives. Yet, worldwide there are some 468 million children living with the effects of armed conflict.

We cannot reach these children on our own - which is why we will place efforts to **scale up our impact** at the heart of our strategy for the coming years. This will see us continue to develop a set of humanitarian methodologies that can be easily replicated and rapidly rolled out - delivering quality care through organisations that can reach out to greater numbers of children and youth.

Research shows that it is possible to 'scale up' humanitarian actions and ensure their positive impact can be replicated - when they are simple to deliver and easy to adapt to different local contexts.

Many of our methodologies have been designed with scale in mind - and tested in different contexts and conditions. This testing process has suggested that five in particular have a positive impact on children's wellbeing - and over the course of 2024 we will further adapt them for rapid scaling.

The five methodologies that will make up our initial scaling programme are our flagship EdTech programme **Can't Wait to Learn**, **TeamUp**, **Reach Now**, **WeACT** and our dedicated caregiver support intervention **Be There**.



South Sudan



OUR SCALING FOUNDATIONS

Three pillars inform this scaling strategy: Reach, Quality and Influence.

- **Reach:** We intend to scale the number of children and caregivers we reach by implementing through partner organisations who can reach an increased number of children beyond our current areas of operation.
- **Quality:** We intend to raise the quality of care available to children via the implementation of our contextualized, evidence-based interventions.
- **Influence:** We will strengthen our ability to advocate for quality care by leveraging both the evidence of our impact and the potential of our scaling partnerships.

This approach will enable us to improve our emergency response capabilities and intensify our collaboration with local organisations - delivering relevant, quality care rapidly when it's needed most.



MAKING OUR WORK MORE RELEVANT AND EFFECTIVE

The best humanitarian actions are frequently designed to meet the specific needs of people and communities where they live - thereby ensuring outcomes are relevant, sustained and effective. These outcomes can be positively influenced by empowering local organisations to both deliver and lead humanitarian assistance programmes - a process known as **localisation**.

War Child has identified localisation as a key strategic priority for the next ten years - both as a means to further increase the relevance and effectiveness of our in-country programmes and also to indirectly support our scaling ambitions. So how will we go about deepening our collaboration with local organisations in the countries where we work?

PROGRESSING LOCALISATION

Moves to increase direct funding to local humanitarian organisations - and build more equitable partnerships - will be intensified under the War Child Alliance. An executive steering committee and a localisation working group have both been formed to develop our localisation strategy in line with three key criteria: -

1. To **define** localisation according to War Child's vision and mission.
2. To **align** War Child with a progressive and principled localisation standard.
3. To **reshape** our organisational structure in a manner that embeds leadership, representation and participation by local actors at its core.

A **robust vision on localisation** will be developed over the course of 2024 - one supported by input from our country and regional teams.

Our team in Uganda will develop a strategic vision for localisation and a comprehensive, long-term engagement plan involving 15 community-based organisations (CBOs) and national organisations. In Syria and Jordan our team will expand its network of partner organisations and work to ensure that local actors play an increased role in both programme implementation and strategy development.

In Afghanistan our team will work to further transfer programme implementation to partner organisations. And, as part of our shared platform, the global humanitarian team will work to **reduce bureaucracy** and simplify processes to help bring about increased collaboration with local actors.





CREATING A CULTURE TO EMPOWER EVERYONE

Creating an organisational culture where everyone feels seen, heard and acknowledged is a highly sensitive process. Yet delivering on this process has taken on paramount importance in recent years with calls for **justice and equitable treatment** from different populations around the world.

This process is particularly sensitive for an international NGO. Issues surrounding gender, race, **the decolonisation of aid** and structural power disparities all have to be considered - and any failures could undermine our attempts to place integrity and justice at the heart of all our activities.

The launch of the Alliance will see renewed emphasis placed on building our organisational culture - with new efforts to both set out and fund our values, beliefs and commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB).

This process will see the HR, Safeguarding and Integrity teams come together as a single People and Culture team - led by a new Director of People and Culture.

PROPOSED INITIATIVES

The Anti-Racism Group in War Child UK and the DEIB Working Group in War Child Holland have united as a single team dedicated to advancing policy measures related to both DEIB and anti-racism initiatives. The incoming Director of People and Culture will work closely with the new DEIB / Anti-Racism group to ensure these initiatives are addressed and acted on. Measures proposed in the indicative 2024 DEIB plan include:

- **Leadership Training** - to provide War Child Alliance senior leaders with some of the necessary competences to become purposeful and transformative driving forces of change towards racial equity, diversity and inclusion within the new organisation.
- **Audit Process** - to analyse War Child's policies in each country of operation to ensure an approach to diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism has been incorporated.
- **Increased Country Office Funding** - to support anti-racism and DEIB initiatives such as incorporating anti-racist perspectives in programme design.





2024 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME PRIORITIES

War Child works exclusively to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of children affected by violence and armed conflict. Our integrated programmes combine psychosocial support, education and child protection for maximum impact - complimented with programming to boost youth empowerment and increase livelihoods opportunities.

Significant efforts to develop our programming efforts worldwide will be undertaken in 2024 - with a particular emphasis placed on enhancing our **scaling capabilities**. These efforts will see our innovative e-learning programme Can't Wait to Learn work to enhance its scaling capabilities by shifting from tailored programme content to modular solutions **adaptable to different contexts**, backed by renewed scaling efforts in test countries.

In DR Congo programme teams from both War Child Holland and War Child UK will work together to support local organisations to both deliver and lead humanitarian response programmes - allowing for increased geographical reach and progressing our localisation agenda.

Our regional team in the Middle East will work to address acute operational challenges through efforts to diversify its donor base - focusing on donor engagement and forging new donor relationships, particularly in the United States and Gulf countries. Efforts to boost emergency response capacity through the FastAid methodology will also continue.

GLOBAL STRATEGY AND AMBITIONS

The Humanitarian Programme Team will move to embed its **Theory of Change for Humanitarian Response** (developed in 2023) to provide the base for an expanded humanitarian strategy in 2024. This strategy aims to increase the speed, relevance and quality of our humanitarian responses and will see the roll out of both a framework for urgent actions and the set up of a Children's Emergency Fund for rapid responses.

Within our global programming we will also look to step up our efforts in the area of **environmental sustainability** - calculating our annual carbon footprint and facilitating positive actions on climate and environmental issues as part of our new organisational strategy.

We estimate that the first year of the War Child Alliance will see our global programme teams reach a total of **775,000 children and adults**. This figure includes 210,000 participants reached through Can't Wait to Learn interventions in Ukraine and a further 140,000 children reached through the continued scaling of TeamUp activities.

OUR FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

To achieve these ambitious goals, we are budgeting for a **total income of €56.4 million** in grants and donations in 2024 - **€55 million** of which will be spent on our objective: supporting children affected by conflict. €15 million of this will come in the form of **unrestricted contributions** from our fundraising members.

The expenses for finalising our transition to the new organisational structure will bring our net result to a deficit of €0.6m.

**WE BELIEVE NO CHILD SHOULD
BE PART OF WAR. EVER.**

Colombia



ANNUAL PLAN 2024