



ChildFund Alliance
Accountability Report 2020

Message from the Secretary General

I am pleased to submit the *first* Accountable Now report for ChildFund Alliance, a global network of 12 child development organizations working to improve the lives of 23 million children and their families in 70 countries.

ChildFund Alliance members recently adopted *Working Together as One*, a set of eight principles to guide our collaborative work. In the first principle, we recommit to the rights and safety of children and prioritize their protection from all forms of violence. In principle two, we recommit to transparency and accountability to all we serve—children, families, our donors and stakeholders.

This report details ChildFund Alliance’s collective efforts to work *Toward a Safe World for Children*, the Alliance’s five-year strategic plan for 2016-2021. Our plan was guided by the strategic intent: *we aim to become a global voice with and for children, to highlight the issues children care about, and to mobilize effectively to address threats to their lives, safety and well-being.*

In 2020, as we began our work on a new strategic plan, Alliance members responded immediately when COVID-19 became a global health crisis. We quickly developed and launched an ambitious COVID-19 Response Plan in April 2020, which by December 2020 enabled ChildFund to direct nearly \$80 million to relief efforts reaching more than 5.6 million children around the world.

The need remains great, however, as it will be a daunting process to approve, distribute, and administer vaccines to billions of people. Further, experts anticipate the pandemic will push as many as 115 million additional people into extreme poverty this year and continue to disrupt learning for hundreds of millions of schoolchildren.

Knowing this, ChildFund Alliance is intent on developing a strategic plan for years 2022-2025 that will include two campaigns to end violence against children, noting the uncertainty and the increased risks of violence to children that COVID-19 is likely to continue to play for an indefinite period. Our campaign outcomes will focus on policy change, programmatic improvement and funding growth for our sector.

As with the work outlined in this Accountable Now report, our work moving forward also will focus on the children and youth we affect through our collective action. ChildFund Alliance will continue to seek the participation of children and youth in matters affecting their lives and to reflect their input and experiences in our work deliverables and outcomes.

Although much uncertainty remains due to the pandemic, one thing is evident — our success, as a global community and as an organization, demands unified action. This report aims to provide a transparent account of ChildFund’s journey to fulfill our critical mission: Together with children, we create sustainable solutions that protect and advance their rights and well-being.

We look forward to the review of the Accountable Now panel and to its recommendations related to our activities.



Meg Gardinier
Secretary General
ChildFund Alliance

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CLUSTER A: The impact we achieve

1. What are your mission statement and your theory of change? Please provide a brief overview.

The vision, mission and descriptor for ChildFund Alliance are as follows:

Our Vision

A world in which all children enjoy their rights and achieve their full potential.

Our Mission

Together with children, we create sustainable solutions that protect and advance their rights and well-being.

Who We Are

ChildFund Alliance is a global network of 12 child-focused development organizations. We work with more than 21 million children and their families in 70 countries to overcome poverty and the underlying conditions that prevent children from achieving their full potential. ChildFund was founded in 1938. Our annual investment in children is over US\$580 million. We work in partnership with children and their communities to create lasting change. We support long-term community development, promote children's rights and child protection, prepare for natural disasters and respond to humanitarian emergencies.

The Principles of Working Together as One

ChildFund Alliance does not have a theory of change. Members of ChildFund Alliance operate according to eight principles that inspire us, keep us aligned, and guide our collection decision making so we can increase our impact by working together as one. **As members of ChildFund Alliance:**

We focus on the rights and safety of children first—we partner with children, and prioritize their protection from all forms of violence, while elevating their voices and promoting their development, well-being and participation; as evidenced by our collective missions that emphasize inclusivity of all children, their families and their communities.

We commit to transparency and responsiveness in our work with each other, and with others; as evidenced by all members conforming with independently audited shared standards, policies and codes of conduct, and accountability to those we serve, our donors, and stakeholders.

We leverage our global network to tackle the challenges facing children today; as evidenced by advocating for and with children at family, local, national, and global levels, and we work towards building a world that is safe for children.

We respect and listen to our staff and implementing partners, embracing the knowledge gained through diversity; as evidenced by empowering people to make and own decisions so

they can more effectively and efficiently deliver impact to children.

We grow through experimentation and learning, as evidenced by sharing our best practices, lessons learned, and insights from evidenced-based programs through inter-member working groups.

We respect individual identity, and over and above this, we see our combined greater strength when working together as one, as evidenced by honoring consistent messaging and brand guidelines for ChildFund.

We care deeply for the earth and how its health impacts children and future generations, as evidenced by programs and shared standards that care for the environment and mitigate against harm.

We drive collaboration over purely independent operating models, as evidenced by increasing bilateral and multilateral initiatives amongst members.

2. What are your key strategic indicators for success and how do you involve your stakeholders in developing them?

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

In September 2016, ChildFund Alliance launched *Toward a Safe World for Children: Five Year Strategic Plan* (2016 to 2021.) You can obtain a copy of the plan here: <https://childfundalliance.org/our-work/strategic-priorities/strategic-plan>.

In the Strategic Plan, ChildFund Alliance commits to **prevent** violence at all levels, **protect** children from violence and exploitation—especially in humanitarian emergencies—and enable children to **participate** in decisions related to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- In September 2015, the United Nations unanimously adopted *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which frames the global agenda through 2030.
- ChildFund Alliance played a key role in positioning a stand-alone target on violence against children in **The 2030 Agenda: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children (16.2)**.

The implementation of SDG target 16.2 largely provides the basis for the Alliance’s strategic priorities and its corresponding Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

Strategic Priority One:

Global Advocacy and Child-Friendly Accountability

- Advance Sustainable Development Goal target 16.2 and related targets through global, regional and

national advocacy and engagement

- Support children in holding their governments and local authorities accountable to their commitments in SDG target 16.2

Strategic Priority Two:

Improve our Capacity for Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

- Prioritize key CPiE interventions in all humanitarian responses
- Mainstream DRR into regular programming and community development
- Build on successful youth-led DRR

Strategic Priority Three:

Strengthen Membership Engagement and Growth

- Recruit at least three new members in the next five years

The Alliance Secretariat developed the Strategic Plan in consultation with CEOs, as well as with designated staff at headquarters and at national offices in the field, through an on-line survey. [Please see the Attachment in Drop Box for a summary of these results.](#)

Following the Strategic Plan's adoption in May 2016, the Alliance established Task Forces and Sub-Committees on each of the three Strategic Priorities: Advocacy Task Force, Child-friendly Accountability Task Force, Child Protection in Emergencies & DRR Task Force, and the Membership Sub-Committee. CEOs from our member organizations, designated staff from their headquarters operations and field offices are participants in these Task Forces, which are led or co-led by a Secretariat staff person responsible for the respective program area. They convene regularly scheduled meetings (via Zoom, WebEx and/or Skype) and meet one or more times each year in conjunction with other Task Forces and Committees of the Alliance to evaluate their work and develop a work plan for the following year. They are guided by a Terms of Reference (TOR) which are updated every other year. The Task Forces report into the Alliance's CEO Forum and Board of Directors at their meetings held in May and November of each year.

3. What progress has been achieved and difficulties encountered against these indicators over the reporting period?

Please see Addendum #1 for comprehensive details on the strides we have made in achieving our priorities, the challenges encountered, and lessons learned. What follows below is a summary from the Addendum. You will note that we are providing an assessment rating for each Strategic Priority given the fact that we have achieved higher in some areas (e.g., Advocacy) than others (e.g., Child Protection in Emergencies.)

Child-friendly Accountability

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

The Alliance is on track with meeting 50% of its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on Child-friendly Accountability, having received a grant from the Oak Foundation to expand it in 2018.

Global Advocacy

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

The Alliance is 90% on track with KPI#2: *Strengthening existing relationships with Member States and Government related bodies such as the European Union, the United Nations, and coalitions.*

The Alliance has met KPI#3: *Strengthen communications through the development of a new website.*

The Alliance has met KPI #4 *Conduct a series of joint actions to elevate children's voices within the High Level Political Forum in 2018.*

Child Protection in Emergencies and DRR

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

The Alliance has made progress in meeting KPI #1: *When large scale emergencies occur in countries where ChildFund is present, we respond with Child Protection in Emergencies interventions.*

The Alliance has struggled with meeting both of these KPIs:

KPIs #2: *In 50% of communities in high-risk countries selected by ChildFund members based on agreed criteria, meaningful DRR measures are included in community level development plans.*

KIP#3: *In 25% of communities identified by ChildFund Alliance members in high disaster risk countries, national offices will work with the government or relevant coordination body to promote meaningful engagement of youth-led community level DRR linked to national government systems.*

Owing to the scale of the emergency, available funds and the Alliance structure, there have been challenges in meeting KPI #4: *A decision on whether or not to respond to sudden onset large disasters in non-presence countries will be made within 72 hours.*

The Alliance has met 40% of its KPI#5: *ChildFund Alliance remains the head of the Advocacy Task Force of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and leads the publication of reports on the importance of child protection interventions at the onset of an emergency response.*

Membership Growth

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

ChildFund has met approximately 30% of its KPI: **ChildFund Alliance recruits three new members by 2021.** The Alliance recruited one new member, WeWorld Onlus <https://www.weworld.it/en/>. They officially joined the Alliance on 5 November 2020. The timeframe for this report precedes WeWorld joining the Alliance but there was significant work underway on recruitment during this reporting period.

1. **Have there been significant events or changes in your organization over the reporting period of relevance to governance and accountability?**

Self- Assessment Rating: 3

In an effort to respond to this accurately, it is useful to provide background on the history and purpose of the Alliance. Before the Alliance formed in 2002, there were 12 loosely affiliated and like-minded organizations. All were modeled after ChildFund (USA). They faced several challenges including:

- **Reputational risk.** There were too many organizations sharing a common name.
- **Territory disputes.** Several members were operating in the same country.
- **Inefficiency.** Members operating in the same region were duplicating resources.

In 2002, the organizations formed ChildFund Alliance to address these challenges. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were filed with the State of Virginia and a Board of Directors was established.

- The Board of Directors manages the business and affairs of ChildFund Alliance. Board members are elected and appointed by the Affiliated Organizations (namely the national Boards of ChildFund member organizations) for a four-year term (with one renewal).
- The Board appoints a Secretary General who serves as the chief executive officer of the Corporation and is primarily responsible for implementing the policies and procedures established by the Board of Directors.

In 2003, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) approved the Alliance as a 501 © (3) tax-exempt, charitable organization.

In 2004, the CEO Forum, comprising the CEO of each member organization, was established as a stand-alone group.

- The CEO Forum forms the strategic leadership team of the ChildFund Alliance with the primary role of executing the ChildFund Alliance strategic plan. It oversees working groups which support the plan and other objectives of the Alliance. The Forum also serves as a vehicle to promote collaboration amongst members on specific topics. The ChildFund Alliance Secretary General is a member of the CEO Forum and has all the powers and responsibilities of any other CEO in this forum.

From 2005 to 2009, the Alliance met on a regular basis, working primarily through Standing Committees on specific issues: Sponsorship, Fundraising, Communications, Programs, etc.

In 2009, the Alliance reviewed its accomplishments and agreed to a key foundational document, **The Alliance Foundations**, 2009 outlining its core objectives:

- To support the ChildFund mission, values and goals
- To improve the quality of programs and outcomes
- To help Members become stronger / more effective
- To raise brand awareness, credibility and profile
- To promote and monitor common standards
- To build effective networks connecting Members to funds, projects, countries, knowledge, ideas and experience
- To coordinate and support emergency responses
- To lead and manage international advocacy
- To help Members maximize and diversify revenue

Several developments ensued including the appointment of a Secretary General, the establishment of a lean Secretariat office and the adoption of time-bound strategic plans to guide its global work.

At the Board of Directors meeting in May 2018, the Board Chair led its Directors and Officers through an exercise to review three core issues:

- The **purpose** of the Alliance
- The level of **member satisfaction** with the Alliance
- The **efficiency** of the governance structures.

The key outcomes of the discussion were as follows:

Board members reviewed what they had accomplished as a governance structure:

- Convened regular meetings of the CEO Forum and the Board of Directors
- Established and maintained meetings of Alliance Task Forces and Committees
- Established a Secretariat in New York
- Expanded the benefits of the European Union Office (EUO) in Brussels for all members.
 - The European Union Office was opened in 2014 as a member-led initiative. In this configuration, only members who made a specific contribution could benefit from its grant-seeking mandate.
 - In October 2017, the EU Office transitioned to an office fully integrated in ChildFund Alliance's structure. The EUO has two main strategic goals: To advocate with key EU institutions for policies, programs and funding opportunities to promote children rights and to promote and increase access to funding opportunities provided by the EU. The office works to strengthen engagement and cooperation of ChildFund Alliance with EU institutions.

Members also discussed the benefit of the Alliance for their respective organization. For most members, the investments in the Alliance have clear returns:

- Advocacy and visibility
- Program development
- Fundraising opportunities
- The interconnectedness of business models
- Global engagement opportunities including access to larger coalitions within civil society and government

The following questions and comments were raised:

- Does the Board add value to the CEO Forum, the Secretariat and the other structures within the Alliance?
- Many members expressed that the Board could be more strategic. It was noted that while there is a lean Secretariat, the Alliance could benefit from a leaner and more efficient governance. The following improvements were recommended
 - Streamline governance
 - Limit costs associated with board meetings
 - Define a strategic and focused agenda for meetings
 - Accelerate decision-making

Major Agreements:

- The Board Chair would undertake a review of the Alliance’s governance structure, focusing on the role of the Board within that structure and report out at the next Board meeting in six months. The Board Chair subsequently presented this report and recommendations arising from it to the Board in November 2018. At that meeting, the Board recommitted to its original Board governance structure and proposed to convene in person on an annual rather than bi-annual basis.
- Members recommitted to the earlier Board agreement (November 2016) by which all members would apply to Accountable Now by FY 2022. This replaces the Alliance’s earlier internal Accreditation System which has been utilized to date. [Please see the manual in our Drop Box files.](#) The CEO forum was asked to consider the application of these standards and the relationship between these and the Accountable Now program.
- The CEO Forum, which met in conjunction with the Board of Directors, agreed to set up a CEO Futures Task Force to review the Alliance’s strategic priorities for the period FY 2016 to FY 2021, reflect on the accomplishments and learnings, assess current realities, and anticipate what is emerging to set a course through 2021 and beyond.
- A subsequent CEO Sub-Committee was established to guide the development of the new Strategic Plan, for the period FY 2021 through FY 2025.

CLUSTER B – Positive results are sustained

1. What have you done to ensure sustainability of your work beyond the project cycle, as per commitment 4 (lasting positive change)? Is there evidence of success?

Self- Assessment Rating: 3

The Alliance has made an effort to ensure **sustainability** of work through the following mechanisms:

- *Provide a structure for membership engagement to achieve the Alliance strategic priorities and support this engagement through development of resources and tools.* This has taken the form of Task Forces related to the Strategic Planning priorities on Advocacy, Child-friendly Accountability, Child Protection in Emergencies, and Membership Growth. More details follow.
- *Establish global committees to improve the effectiveness of programs for children.* This has taken the form of the Alliance Program Committee (APC) and the Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC). The latter focuses on building the ChildFund brand; sharing best practices, successes and failures in branding, communications, and fundraising; and promoting fundraising effectiveness by sharing ideas, strategies, tools, resources information and learning.

Task Forces

At the CEO Forum in May 2016, CEOs approved the establishment of Task Forces with specific objectives that would assist with the advancement of our Five-Year Strategic Plan:

- Task Force on Advocacy
- Task Force on Child-friendly Accountability
- Task Force on Child Protection in Emergencies and DRR
- Sub-Committee on Membership Growth (activated in 2017)

Task Force members include program directors and senior staff providing support to ChildFund programs at headquarters levels, staff from national country offices such as child protection experts, and others. The Task Forces have generated strategies and action plans for their areas, intended to secure long-term and sustainable outcomes.

Alliance Program Committee

Shortly after the Alliance was approved by the IRS in 2003 as a tax-exempt charitable organization, the CEO Forum established the Alliance Program Committee to:

- Promote common program standards and guidelines to improve the quality of programs in ChildFund Alliance member organizations, with particular emphasis on Alliance Strategic Goals.
- Serve as a network for sharing information and connecting member organizations to programs, countries, knowledge, ideas, experience, innovations, learning, research and trends so that they become stronger, more coherent and more effective in their program work.
- Support other divisions of Alliance member organizations (such as marketing, communications,

sponsor relations, and others) to ensure that their products and practices are consistent with our program standards.

- Actively share evidence of program work within the APC, and with other divisions, and promote exemplars more broadly to enhance ChildFund’s reputation as global experts.

Examples of Success

Advocacy Task Force

One of the primary roles of the Advocacy Task Force is to facilitate ChildFund members’ engagement in the national, regional and global advocacy processes to achieve SDG 16.2 by 2030, a 15-year deadline from the time the 2030 report was prepared.

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal set of goals, targets and indicators that UN member states will be expected to use to frame their agendas and political policies during a 15-year period. The UN officially adopted the SDGs in September 2015 and they came into force in January 2016. The deadline for the SDGS is 2030.

Examples of our global advocacy to advance SDG 16.2 with global processes:

The High-Level Political Forum 2018

The annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development is the main space for follow-up and review of the SDGs at the global level. The 2018 HLPF took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from July 9-18, 2018. ChildFund member organizations advocated for children during the HLPF. They participated in meetings with the UN Missions of Australia, Korea and Spain. They spoke at side events to the official meetings, promoting efforts to leave no one behind, protect children from violence and make cities safer for children, while advancing ChildFund advocacy priorities.

Advocacy around the Ministerial Declaration

The HLPF issues a Ministerial Declaration each year. Together with other child-focused organizations, ChildFund advocated with Member States to include strong language on children in the document. The final declaration touches on the three themes of prevention, protection, and participation that frame the work of ChildFund Alliance, including:

- Task Force on Advocacy
- Recognition of young people as agents of change
- Emphasis on the need to invest in children, adolescents and youth
- Commitment to including their perspectives in the development and assessment of strategies and programs designed to address their specific needs
- Affirmation of the importance of supporting young people’s participation in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda
- Assertion that children should be free from all forms of violence

ChildFund and the 2018 Voluntary National Reviews

Each year when the HLPF meets, governments can volunteer to present reports on national progress towards implementing the SDGs. As Member States prepare their national reports on the SDG progress, they are encouraged to hold consultations with a diverse group of stakeholders. ChildFund advocates that national SDG review processes should include space for the voices of children to be heard and the national reporting should cover the SDG targets that contribute to the prevention and elimination of violence against children. In July 2018 during the HLPF at the United Nations, 46 countries presented Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of SDG progress, including 15 countries where ChildFund members have a presence.

For more details on how we built the capacity of members to advocate for the HLPF in 2018, [please see our Report on ChildFund Engagement at the HLPF 2018](#).

Child-friendly Accountability Task Force

The Child-friendly Accountability Task Force, with the support of a consultant, developed a Methodology (translated into five languages to support member engagement), guided the development of a Manual (translated into three languages) and a Toolkit. The Manual and the Toolkit were revised based on the internal evaluation following the experiences of the pilot project (conducted in four countries.) These key resources, are “open source” and intended to be shared with child-focused agencies. This initiative is designed to endure through 2030, given the alignment with the SDG target 16.2 of the 2030 Agenda.

In August 2018, the Oak Foundation awarded a grant to ChildFund for this initiative. The objectives include:

- Strengthening the knowledge of at least 2,500 children from at least 10 countries about child rights and child protection systems, help them build skills for engaging with duty bearers and other stakeholders, and support them to work to improve local and national child protection systems.
- Strengthening information management systems by building, launching, and maintaining a web-based platform to improve knowledge management, support M&E and facilitate information sharing.

At the time that this report was finalized, five of the 12 members of ChildFund Alliance are now implementing Child-friendly Accountability Methodology in nine countries. To date, we have directly trained an estimated 9,000 children in 200 project locations. These include schools and communities in partnership with 23 local partners. An evaluator will be hired in early 2021 to assess the impact of the project and these results will be shared in the future Accountable Now Reports. Some highlights include: ChildFund Mexico is incorporating the initiative into their country program under the title My Voice Matters; Children Believe (Canada’s ChildFund member) in India has incorporated it into a child-friendly village project impacting more than 5,000 children; and Children Believe Paraguay has scaled up the approach through their local partners, adapting the material into more child-friendly local languages.

Child Protection in Emergencies Task Force

The Task Force on Child Protection in Emergencies agreed in 2018 to use Child Protection Minimum Standards (CPMS) as the framework for Child Fund Alliance “Child Protection in Emergency Capacity Development.” Launched in 2012, the CPMS sets out a framework of the standards, indicators and actions that organizations working on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) should use to ensure quality and accountability in their work.

Training Program on Child Protection Minimum Standards (CPMS)

As a key step in advancing its organizational understanding of CPMS, ChildFund teamed up with Terre des Hommes to convene a joint training of 25 trainers from 21 countries in July 2018 (Bangkok). Goals were:

- Train ChildFund managers and child protection practitioners on CPMS so that they could integrate them into their organizational strategic planning and capacity building efforts.
- Train CPMS Trainers / Focal Points who can support their delegations to meet quality standards for humanitarian child protection programming. The training also represented another opportunity for the Alliance to solidify its working relationship with Terre des Hommes, with whom we have developed a partnership to increase our effectiveness on emergency response.

The report out from the training indicates that there was an overall level of satisfaction with the Training of Trainers program. Participants appreciated the informal, constructive and friendly environment, the interactive and participatory sessions, and the use of different facilitation strategies. They liked learning the overview of the CPMS and its importance. Many participants felt that the training provided a good balance between theory and practice. Participants suggested more time to share experiences, additional group work, and more days to cover the material. For a summary of the Trainer’s analysis and an outline of the next steps for ChildFund, please see page 9 of the report: [*CPMS Institutionalization Training of Trainers, Bangkok, Thailand, 12-14 June 2018.*](#)

Alliance Program Committee (APC)

The APC consistently provides guidance to all members in the development and oversight of programs. To date, they have:

- Produced a set of global program standards on child protection, child development, human rights, monitoring and evaluation, financial reporting, accountability, and child safeguarding. <https://childfundalliance.org/resources/policies-guidelines>
- Developed a tool to measure how well ChildFund country programs are tracking against INSPIRE (a WHO package of evidence-based interventions on EVAC—ending violence against children). The INSPIRE evidence-based programs underpin child protection systems work, life skills, and parenting programs—all examples of programming for sustainable change. It is believed that the promotion of the INSPIRE framework has assisted sustainability of many ChildFund EVAC programming.

2. **What lessons have been learned in this period? How have the lessons been transparently shared among internal and external stakeholders? How do you plan to use these lessons to improve your work in the future?**

Self- Assessment Rating: 3

Child-friendly Accountability

Through our Child-friendly Accountability initiative, we have learned how members can support each other in program development. In this case, the Secretariat led the processes to develop the methodology and the training materials. Please see: <https://childfundalliance.org/cfai/key-documents>. *For example:*

Following reports from the Alliance Program Committee (APC) in which some members expressed concern that the Child-friendly Accountability initiative was at risk of replicating some programs already underway, we convened members of the Child-friendly Accountability Task Force and the APC to hear concerns and develop recommendations for an integrated approach. We later incorporated this into our proposal for the Oak Foundation, ensuring that we would have funding to hire a specialist to review existing programs and integrate core Child-friendly Accountability principles into an adaptive model. Please see the guidance: [Child-friendly Accountability \(CFAcc\) Brief – Integrating CFAcc into existing Programmes](#).

The Child-friendly Accountability initiative has improved how we jointly adapt good programmatic approaches on child participation across the Alliance. Through an internal technical group comprising field and headquarters staff, we have been able to coordinate this project to ensure consistency and learning across the Alliance. The Child-friendly Accountability Coordinator makes certain that this is accomplished by planning training sessions, sharing best practice materials, and coordinating regular quarterly meetings to keep all members updated on developments and new materials.

We learned from the development of the methodology to the first phase of implementation, that working together achieves greater impact for children and increases our reach. These lessons are shared in regular group meetings and via webinars that are organized by members and open to all staff.

Lessons from these reviews and meetings are integrated into the project cycle to improve our planning and delivery of our programs in the field. For example, during the implementation of the pilot phase in Paraguay, the country team realized that some of the materials needed to be contextualized based on recommendations from the local partner. Together with the local partner, Children Believe (ChildFund) embarked on a project to localize the materials calling it “backpack”. The backpack contains games to explain some of

the concepts – child rights, violence, and child participation – in the methodology around child rights, violence and children participation.

Educo’s El Salvador office visited Children Believe in Paraguay to learn about how they implemented Child-friendly Accountability with local partners, providing El Salvador with valuable guidance on program application.

CLUSTER C – We lead by example

1. **How does your organization provide national and/or global leadership on your strategic priorities?**
2. **What evidence is there that this leadership is recognized and welcomed by your peers and stakeholders, especially the affected populations?**

Self-Assessment Rating: 4

Please note: we have combined the responses to these two questions below.

Global Advocacy

Ending Violence against Children

ChildFund Alliance has actively positioned itself as an INGO leader in the field of child protection, with a focus on ending violence against children. In doing so, it has become recognized within the broader child-focused NGO community, among select Member States, specific inter-governmental organizations, (e.g. UNICEF) and UN designated focal points on the subject (e.g., the Secretary General’s Special Representative on Violence against Children.) In an effort to understand how the Alliance developed this niche within the global arena, it is helpful to review the following timeline:

2012. ChildFund launches the [‘Free from Violence’](#) Campaign to influence the process leading up to the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals*.

2012. ChildFund launches a global petition campaign to urge governments to include a standalone target on Ending Violence against Children in the SDGs. ChildFund secured close to 700,000 signatures from constituents and delivered these to member states.

2014. ChildFund releases [The Free Charters: Children’s Priorities for the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#), based on over 50 consultations with children in 40 countries across Africa, Asia Pacific, the Americas and Europe — more than 2,300 children in all. The study documents their views, aspirations and priorities for the post-2015 agenda. *“For me, children should be able to put their hands up and say something for older people to hear.” — 13-year-old girl, Liberia*

The Global Director of the Millennium Development Campaign remarked: *I give accolade to ChildFund for the work that they are doing to make sure young people are being listened to in this process.*

2014. [The Costs and Economic Impact of Violence Against Children](#), commissioned by ChildFund Alliance and conducted by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), is launched. The research reveals that the costs of physical, psychological and sexual violence against children can be as high as U.S. \$7 trillion, equal to 8 percent of the world’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), more than the GDPs of Australia, Canada, India and Mexico combined.

This figure has been integrated into a series of high-level presentations delivered by Member States, the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children, and the Executive Director of UNICEF. In this way, ChildFund’s research has influenced the global debate which makes the case for prevention. Other key messages include:

- *The annual costs of hazardous forms of child labor can be as high as U.S. \$97 billion, which is seven times the GDP of Iceland.*
- *The annual costs of children associated with armed forces or groups can be as high as U.S. \$114 million.*

2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. *The 2030 Agenda* comprises a set of universal goals (SDGs), targets and indicators that frames the global agenda from 2015 to 2030 including a stand-alone target on violence against children: *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children (16.2).*

As explained earlier, ChildFund Alliance actively contributed to securing target 16.2 on ending violence against children and supported the inclusion of related targets on safe learning environments (4.a); eliminate trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls (5.2); eliminating child marriage and other harmful practices (5.3); ending recruitment of child soldiers and worst forms of child labor (8.7); and providing birth registration (16.9). In doing so, ChildFund worked closely with a coalition referred to as the Child-Focused Agencies (CFAs): Save the Children, Plan International, SOS Children’s Villages, World Vision and UNICEF to lobby Member States. Specific CFAs, UNICEF staff responsible for the SDG portfolio and academics at leading New York universities all acknowledged that ChildFund had been instrumental in providing leadership on this stand-alone target noting that it did so in a spirit of collaboration and humility. Key relationships were cultivated with a cadre of Member States who formed UNICEF’s “Group of Friends” including Canada, Ireland and Japan. These representatives also expressed regard for ChildFund’s leadership.

2015. ChildFund seconds its United Nations Representative to support the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children (End Violence). Of particular interest to ChildFund is that End Violence includes national-level efforts in Pathfinding Countries that have made a commitment to accelerate action to end violence against children over a 3- to 5-year period. At the center of the End Violence approach in Pathfinding countries is INSPIRE, a package of seven evidence-based strategies for ending violence against children. The

UN Representative's secondment to the End Violence Secretariat lasted through June 2018 and provided internal organizational leadership to the End Violence Solution Summit.

2017. ChildFund participated in the **8th Milestones of a Global Campaign for Violence Prevention Meeting** hosted by the Government and the Public Health Agency of Canada on behalf of WHO. Approximately 250 international participants from some 50 countries attended including government officials, policymakers, professionals, researchers, NGO representatives and survivors of violence. This included a session on children's perspectives. The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children selected young people from their pathfinder countries to provide their perspectives on violence. The ChildFund Alliance secondi organized this effort and convened an impressive young persons' panel including representatives from ChildFund field offices. For a list of the key achievements and outcomes, please see:

https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/8th_milestones_meeting/en/

2018. On 14 February, the Government of Sweden, together with the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, and We PROTECT Global Alliance, hosted the Agenda 2030 for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit. The Summit convened governments, the UN, civil society, the private sector, foundation partners, academics and children. The UN Representative (the secondi) served as the primary focal point for organizing all aspects of the Summit under the leadership of the Chief of the End Violence Secretariat. The Summit was considered a success by all who attended. In the closing remarks, the President of the Oak Foundation who was on the Executive Committee for the End Violence Secretariat recognized the contributions of ChildFund to the Summit's success. More details on the Summit may be found here: <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/summit-commits-to-ending-violence-against-children-achieving-sdg-16-2/>.

Child-friendly Accountability

Grounded in our commitment to work with children to influence change, our Child-friendly Accountability initiative supports children in holding their governments and local authorities accountable to their obligations to end all violence against children, as per SDG target 16.2. Through the Child-friendly Accountability initiative, ChildFund Alliance:

In April 2018, an Early Impact Assessment was undertaken by an independent evaluator to explore how the initiative has made a difference in the lives of children and communities in the months following pilot projects in four countries. The assessment was based on survey responses in pilot countries, key informant interviews and a desk review. Testimonials from child participants and adults in the community reflect the value of this initiative, even in the preliminary stages:

"They should do this in more places and involve more kids. The changes are slow and it is a process. It takes a lot of time so we need to stick with it." **Child participant in Paraguay**

"I realised that in laws children are supposed to be protected but in reality not many people pay attention to

that... [this] is very difficult to change... [It would help] if youth like me can be a part of [the] change process.

Girl child participant in Vietnam

"I was very hesitant and nervous [about participating in the program]... But when I participated I learned many new things like child rights, I know better about policies and laws. I had never heard about child protection before... I am much better in communication and can explain to others about child's rights. I will ask my parents to listen to children; and will report when I see children being abused." **Child participant in Vietnam**

"Now children are heard and taken into account." **Parent participant in Mexico.**

"In the case of my daughter I have noticed that she has developed better, she shows more security in herself, she is more courageous, she is not afraid to express what she thinks." **Parent participant in Mexico.**

After participating in the program, a **16-year-old girl from Paraguay** decided to stop hitting her younger siblings when she was frustrated and convinced her mother to do the same. She also decided to make her school project about "corporal punishment" and used this as an opportunity to educate school authorities and the broader community about relevant national laws.

A **child participant in India** noted *"I talk [to other children] about the child marriage act, infanticide act and child rights act with my peer group. Previously, [they] were seeing me as a friend and now they also see me as a trainer because I talk about rights like that."*

A **male child participant in India** said, *"I created awareness among other children about their rights, legislations and violence against children and consequences of gender discrimination...Parents are [now] taking care of their children without discrimination based on gender."*

One parent in India said she was initially reluctant to let her daughters attend the workshop given traditional gender roles. Now she learns from her daughters about child rights and laws: *"It's very exciting and a new experience to me here in my community."*

A local authority in India noted: *"Now I am aware about child related laws such as sexual abuse of girl children, child marriage, child labor...I realize the potential of children. If any child marriage happens, we need to complain to [Child helpline service] 1098 to prevent the marriage."*

3. How does your organization practice a) being inclusive and protecting human rights, and b) promoting women’s rights and gender equality, in accordance with commitments 1-2?

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

Being inclusive and protecting human rights

One of the core values of ChildFund Alliance (The Alliance Foundations, 2009) is to promote and campaign for the rights and interests of all the world’s children. All members agree to respect and foster human rights within the framework of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. There are specific provisions of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda which strongly resonate with the Alliance’s Strategic Plan and initiatives:

- ChildFund members commit in particular to Article 13 of the Convention which states that children have the right to express themselves.
- A core tenet of the 2030 Agenda is *Children....are critical agents of change and will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world.*
- ChildFund’s strategic plan is guided by the following intent: *to become a global voice with and for children, to highlight the issues children care about, and to mobilize effectively to address threats to their lives, safety, and well-being.*
- This commitment translates into a strong focus on seeking children’s views on matters affecting them.

ChildFund Alliance collaborates with its members on the bi-annual report, Small Voices Big Dreams to consult children on issues that directly affect them. <https://childfundalliance.org/smallvoicesbigdreams2019>

Promoting women’s rights and gender equality

150 million girls and 73 million boys have been subjected to sexual violence in a single year. (ODI 2014). ChildFund recognizes that girls are at greater risk and also recognize that boys are at particular risk for different forms of violence. Every effort is made to promote advocacy and programming that addresses boys and girls. In May 2019, the CEO Forum approved the adoption of the APC Task Force’s gender paper outlining ChildFund Alliance’s position on gender equality. The paper defines how our commitment to support gender equality will be put into action and is inspired by ChildFund’s overarching goals and priorities. It reflects the experiences of ChildFund staff in the field. See ChildFund Alliance Gender Equality Position Paper.pdf.

<https://childfundalliance.org/resources/publications>

4. How do you minimize your organization’s negative impacts on your stakeholders, especially partners and the people you work for? How does your organization protect those most susceptible to harassment, abuse, and exploitation or any other type of unacceptable conduct?

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

Child Safeguarding Policy Guidelines

ChildFund Alliance is a member of Keeping Children Safe, a UK-based entity providing guidance and tools for non-profit organizations on international child safeguarding standards: www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/. The Alliance Secretariat hired a child protection specialist in 2015 to consult with all Alliance members and to develop international child safeguarding policy guidelines for the Alliance. This was done with the advisement of Keeping Children Safe.

In 2016, the ChildFund Alliance Board of Directors approved **Keeping Children Safe: Safeguarding Policy Guidelines**. Please see: <https://childfundalliance.org/resources/policies-guidelines>.

These policy guidelines recommend the minimum standards for compliance by members of ChildFund Alliance. Each member is responsible for developing its own contextualized safeguarding policy, using this document as its guide to ensure consistency across the Alliance. Responsibility for compliance lies with each member. The Board of Directors of each ChildFund Alliance member is ultimately accountable for child safeguarding. The CEOs of member organizations and national directors (or the person appointed to oversee implementation) at the country level are responsible for implementing child safeguarding procedures that comply with these Alliance policy guidelines. When members form local partnerships for the delivery of programs, they are urged to promote and provide support to these local organizations to ensure that corresponding standards are adapted to these programs.

Since the adoption of the **Keeping Children Safe Policy Guidelines**, at least two of our members – ChildFund International and ChildFund Korea – have used these policy guidelines to institutionalize their own international child safeguarding standards.

At the request of the ChildFund Alliance Board Chair, all members who become aware of a child safeguarding violation within their own organization are to inform the Secretary General who keeps written documentation of this on file at the office of the Secretariat. Lessons to be learned will be shared with the CEO Forum and Board of Directors, however, any identifying information will be withheld to ensure conformance with privacy standards and regulations.

About the Policy Guidelines & ChildFund Core Values

The Child Safeguarding Policy Guidelines, and its Procedures and Code of Conduct set forth our core values and commitments to children in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These values and commitments define ChildFund’s collective identity, establish our accountability, require adherence to the highest standards, and promote an organizational environment supportive of our work to ensure children’s protection, rights and well-being. ChildFund Alliance holds these core commitments to be inviolable:

Integrity and honesty

All ChildFund representatives must be forthright, transparent and accurate in their dealings with others; accurate and honest in their communications; and avoid any involvement in crime, corruption or practices

that could tarnish the reputation of ChildFund or impair its work, or place children and families at risk.

Sexual conduct

ChildFund representatives must create a work environment free of sexual harassment. They must not abuse their power and authority by tacitly or explicitly demanding sex from a subordinate or a beneficiary or by engaging in other forms of sexual exploitation, such as having sex with a prostitute in a program country. Relationships that are based on a tacit or explicit abuse of power will be regarded as violations of this code of conduct.

Promoting human rights

All ChildFund representatives must respect human rights including gender equity and non-discrimination. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and exploitation, including sexual exploitation, are expressly prohibited. These terms are defined in the ChildFund Child Safeguarding Policy Guidelines and are extended here to adults.

Reporting

All ChildFund representatives are obligated to report violations of the code of conduct in accordance with procedures established by their respective member organization and as required by local law.

The Code of Conduct & Secretariat Employees

The Keeping Children Safe Policy Guidelines include a Code of Conduct which all Secretariat members are required to sign when they are hired. All ChildFund Alliance employees are subject to the following checks in advance of hiring:

- A satisfactory police record check to include a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and/or International Criminal Record Check (if applicable)
- A range of pre-employment checks in conformity with ChildFund Alliance's Child Safeguarding Policy
- Proof of eligibility to work in the United States
- Receipt of Satisfactory References

ChildFund Alliance uses Automatic Data Processing (Adpselect.com), a member of the National Association of Professional Background Screeners to perform vetting services.

The ChildFund Alliance Personnel Policy Handbook

The ChildFund Alliance Personnel Policy Handbook is revised every 18-24 months. During our most recent revision in February 2019, we updated it to align with recent changes in New York State employment policy, which includes updated key provisions on sexual harassment. To better understand how Sexual Harassment is defined, [please see pages 12 and 13 of the Personnel Policy Handbook](#) which is included in the Drop Box.

If an employee believes that ChildFund Alliance's policy against discrimination and harassment has been violated, they are encouraged to complete a Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Form on page 58 of

the Handbook and submit it to the Secretary General. Once submitted, ChildFund Alliance will follow the investigation process described in its policy. Employees may also report complaints verbally if they are more comfortable doing so. If they have reason believe that the Secretary General is in violation of this policy, they may submit concerns in writing to the Violations Review Committee (VRC).

5. How do you demonstrate responsible stewardship for the environment?

Self-Assessment Rating: 2

ChildFund Alliance’s Secretariat has undertaken measures to increase recycling, reduce printing, and introduce more energy efficient measure such as utilizing lights and appliances more wisely. On the policy level, the Board and CEO Forum have begun to take this issue more seriously. The Alliance Program Committee is undertaking a programmatic position paper on Environment and Climate Change to provide an overview of the extent to which our current programming addresses the environment and climate change. Sustainability standards are being drafted in support of our Working Together Principle 7: “We care deeply for the earth and how its health impacts children and future generations, as evidenced by programs and shared standards that care for the environment and mitigate against harm.”

The Board Chair has requested future research on the link between ending violence against children and climate change. More information on these actions will be included in future reports of Accountable Now.

CLUSTER D: Key stakeholders are identified with great care

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

1. Please list your key stakeholders. What process do you use to identify them?

Of note: In responding to this question, ChildFund uses the following definition:
A stakeholder is an individual or group with an interest that the non-profit fulfills its mission. Anyone who is interested or affected by the nonprofit organization and its services is a stakeholder.

Members

Our primary stakeholders are the members who form the Alliance and support it by providing financial and strategic guidance to the Secretariat with the goal of maximizing their collective impact to achieve greater results for children. As explained earlier:

- ChildFund Alliance is a global network of 12 child-focused development organizations: Barnfonden (Sweden), ChildFund Australia, ChildFund Germany, ChildFund International (USA), ChildFund Ireland, ChildFund Japan, ChildFund Korea, ChildFund New Zealand, Children Believe (Canada), Educo (Spain), Un Enfant par la Main (France), and WeWorld Onlus (Italy).

- ChildFund Alliance’s members operate in 70 countries impacting more than 21 million children, their families and communities. The 12 members invest more than US\$580 million annually on behalf of children. For more information on our members including their websites, please click on to the following link: <https://childfundalliance.org/our-members>.

The Secretariat partners with a range of NGOs and actively participates in several networks to fulfill its mission. The two major networks with extensive reach are:

Joining Forces, A coalition of six Child-focused Agencies that was formed in July 2017 at the Rockefeller Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy to accelerate progress in ending violence against children. The focus is on two core initiatives which is further explained in question 3 below. As the founding document explains: *Our key value added is the long-standing presence in the field in over 150 countries, millions of supporters of our organisations, and the experience and skills of our combined over 100.000 committed staff members globally.*

[The International Civil Society Centre](#) supports international civil society organizations to maximize their impact for a sustainable and more equitable world. ChildFund Alliance is a Shareholder in the Center and currently sits on their board of directors.

Children

ChildFund Alliance’s ultimate target are the children, families and communities served by our 12 members in 70 countries. Members promote child sponsorship as a comprehensive and meaningful approach to child development. They commit to creating sustainable, child-focused, community-based development programs in areas where children are impacted by war, natural disaster, poverty and global health issues such as HIV/AIDS. At least 98% of the staff who conduct ChildFund’s work in the field are nationals with in-depth knowledge of the local environment. Local and grass-roots partners carry out much of ChildFund’s work. Each of the members identify local partners differently. For example, ChildFund Australia’s project implementation uses four different modalities:

- Direct implementation, together with local communities.
- Supporting implementation of projects by or through local government.
- Contracting local organizations to provide certain services, such as environmental action planning consultancies.
- Implementation by local civil society organizations.

2. How do you ensure you reach out to those who are impacted or concerned by your work?

Please see the section on Child-Friendly Accountability in C.1 and 2.

3. How, specifically, do you maximize coordination with others operating in the same sectoral and geographic space with special reference to national and local actors?

ChildFund has long recognized the value in working in coalitions, networks and in partnership with others to achieve a specific outcome. There are a range of benefits: maximizing influence, (particularly in global advocacy); utilizing scarce resources wisely; avoiding duplication of efforts; strengthening our means to communicate effectively; and demonstrating strength in unity – especially for governments who may otherwise be challenging to persuade.

ChildFund actively engages in a range of partnerships with NGOs, inter-governmental organizations and others to advance our strategic priorities: ending violence against children, protecting children in emergencies and promoting child rights, to name a few. This is becoming increasingly more important for a number of reasons:

The NGO sector is multiplying. In 2015, The Global Journal estimated that there were 10 million NGOs worldwide. As the issues NGOs address become increasingly complex and as the actors in the NGO sector increase, donors and governments are demanding a more collaborative NGO sector – instead of one that is highly competitive with each other.

ChildFund secures greater outcomes through memberships in coalitions or partnerships to achieve its objectives. Currently, the six largest child-focused NGOs are World Vision, Save the Children, Plan International, SOS, ChildFund and Terre des hommes. In 2019 ChildFund’s annual revenue was close to US \$500 million, while World Visions’ annual revenue for the same period was US \$1.14 billion. If we advocate in coalition with others – especially those NGOs that are larger, well equipped and well known– we garner more attention than if we act alone. We are often guided by the African proverb: *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*

Donors are increasingly demonstrating a greater interest in funding a coalition of organizations working toward a shared goal. This opens up fundraising options for ChildFund that it might not otherwise access on its own. For example, the European Union approached the child-focused agencies in Joining Forces with an RFP for 10 million Euros to address the child protection and child participation needs of African children during COVID-19. This request came after the Joining Forces CEO delegation, which included ChildFund, met with the EU Commissioners to make a case for greater investment in ending violence against children.

ChildFund does not have a written policy or guidance note for Alliance members encouraging them to work in partnership with others. However, it is useful to note that there are two core principles that have underpinned our partnership work to date.

A strong commitment to empowering the voices of children and youth at all levels.

Working in partnership with local actors to implement programs in the field is a core component of ChildFund’s programs standards. We therefore work with a range of partners, from formally established registered national and local NGOs to informal community structures, such as child welfare committees and children’s clubs. We also collaborate at the local and national level with our Joining Forces partner agencies to advance child participation and protection. At specific intervals during the year, we collaborate with Joining Forces to elevate the voices of children at the global level.

An honest assessment of what we bring to the table. Before engaging in a partnership, ChildFund is keen to analyze how our talents and resources intersect within the broader goals of our external coalitions, networks and partnerships. We attempt to discern when we can offer leadership, when we can apply technical assistance, and when we can leverage our other assets for the greater good. Our culture of collaboration is increasingly regarded amongst our partners who often remark that ChildFund has a high degree of respect for other actors in the space, routinely delivers on its promises, shares credit, and remains committed to the goals of the partnership long-term.

Below are examples of two partnerships in which we are currently active:

ChildFund Alliance is a member of the [CSO Forum to End Violence against Children](#). The CSO Forum facilitates civil society engagement with the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. The work of the Forum includes support for coordination of efforts at the national and local levels.

As noted earlier, ChildFund is a member of the [Joining Forces partnership](#), which has two work streams:

Joining forces to End Violence against Children

A national level effort focused on specific countries to increase program impact in protecting children from violence (SDG 16.2).

- It is guided by the following principles:
 - Develop innovative **child-led solutions** to end abuse, trafficking and all forms of violence against children in their own communities.
 - Support the implementation of these solutions and use the results to **influence national policies and legal frameworks**.
 - ❖ ChildFund’s **Child-friendly Accountability Methodology** is one of the approaches that will be adapted in a JF initiative.

Child Rights Now

A national and international level advocacy campaign in up to 20 countries to increase program impact in protecting children from violence (SDG 16.2).

- In commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Joining Forces partners collectively produced and launched: *A Second Revolution: Thirty years of child rights and the unfinished agenda*. Following this, each JF partner organization produced and launched **Policy Briefs**. Briefs published to date include **Ending Violence against Children and Covid-19; Achieving the Rights of Girls and Gender Equality; The Global Climate Crisis—A Child Rights Crisis; and Delivering Progress for the Most Excluded Children**. A policy brief on the rights of children to participate, led by ChildFund is planned for release in early 2021 and will be the subject of future reporting to Accountable Now. For more details see: <https://joining-forces.org/publications/>

The Joining Forces process has generated new forms of cooperation in several regions and countries among the six agencies because:

- More public trust is realized when we collectively reach out to government, policy makers and development partners.
- Shared learning builds stronger expertise of technical staff, translating to better services for children.
- There is a greater possibility of attracting more funding since Joining Forces combined has a bigger portfolio and greater reach.

CLUSTER E: We listen to, involve and empower stakeholders

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

Of note: For the purposes of responding to this section, ChildFund’s stakeholders are our 12 member organizations operating in 70 countries to advance the well-being of children.

- 1. What avenues do you provide your stakeholders to provide feedback to you? What evidence demonstrates that key stakeholder groups acknowledge your organization is good at listening and acting upon what you heard?**

The Secretary General of the Alliance works closely with the CEO Forum which comprises the 12 CEOs who represent the membership of ChildFund Alliance. The Forum forms the strategic leadership team of ChildFund Alliance, working with the Secretariat to ensure implementation of the ChildFund Alliance Strategic Plan. The Forum provides direction and oversight to the Alliance working groups to assist the implementation of this plan. It regularly meets twice a year (in May and November) and also convenes shorter check-in meetings. The Secretary General (SG) is a member of the Forum with the same voting rights as the CEOs. The CEO Charter sets out the composition, responsibilities and associated procedures relating to the CEO Forum. (Humberto: please add the CEO Charter to the Dropbox.) The CEO Forum provides a regular channel of communication between the Secretary General and its members. For example:

The SG is responsible for setting the agenda for each of the meetings in consultation with the CEOs who can specify their concerns and issues they wish to bring forward to the Forum.

The Alliance Committees (which were established by the CEO Forum) report to the CEO Forum at the May and November meetings.

Following each formal session, the CEOs meet “in camera” to assess their level of satisfaction with the Secretary General. Feedback is provided to the SG by a CEO designee immediately following the meeting. If follow-up action is required, the CEO designee and the SG agree to the most sensible way to proceed.

Minutes from each meeting are posted under the **Members Only** site of the ChildFund Alliance website. The minutes document all of the major decisions taken at the Forum including those which the CEOs have requested of the Secretary General. They are used as a guide for establishing the agenda of future meetings.

The CEO Forum routinely conducts their meetings in person and at a Member location (either in the field or at headquarters.) These meetings are an excellent opportunity to build strong relationships amongst the CEOs, the Secretary General, and the members of the Office of the General Secretariat, the Alliance Committees and the Board of Directors.

A relationship built on trust is the foundation for effective engagement with our stakeholders.

2. What evidence confirms a high level of stakeholder engagement in your activities and decisions from beginning to end? 3. What are the main likes/dislikes you have received from key stakeholders? How, specifically, have you reacted to their feedback? (The answers are combined.)

Several recommendations have surfaced as to how the Secretary General can better meet the needs and concerns of the CEO Forum members. These include: improving communications by establishing a Members Only section on the password protected site; setting up a CEO Futures Task Force to conduct a “mid-point” review of the Strategic Plan (2016-2021); improving on the planning and execution of the CEO Forum meetings; establishing a mechanism to improve the Alliance policies on child safeguarding, programs, communications and emergency response, and strengthening the resourcing of the Alliance Committees.

The dialogue between the SG and the CEO Forum is generally respectful, collaborative and productive. When concerns surface (such as budgeting and improved consultation) there is always an agreed to mechanism for follow-up. For example, the Five Year Strategic Plan (Toward a Safe World for Children) was prepared primarily by the Secretariat who then had to “pitch” it to Members for implementation. It was decided to conduct the process for the next Strategic Plan (FY 2022-25) very differently: a Strategic Planning manager was hired to work with the Secretary General; a framework for the Strategic Plan was developed, working

groups were established on key aspects of the plan, regular consultations were held with the field offices, and regular check in meetings were held with the CEOs to update on the progress so concerns could be addressed in real time. More details on this process and the new Strategic Plan (FY 2022-25) will be the subject of future Accountable Now reports.

3. How do you know that people and partners you worked with have gained capacities, means, self-esteem or institutional strengths that last beyond your immediate intervention?

We have addressed this in response to B.1.

Cluster F: Our advocacy work addresses the root causes of problems

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

1. How do you identify and gather evidence regarding the root causes of the problems you address?

We strive to ensure our work is evidenced based through research, assessment, and learning from our program interventions. The overall framework for ChildFund Alliance global advocacy is SDG 16.2 on ending all forms of violence against children and its related targets; safe education (4a); eliminate trafficking and sexual exploitation (5.2); eliminate child marriage (5.3); end recruitment of child soldiers and child labor (8.7); and promote birth registration. (16.9).

Members, based on their programmatic experience, developed the eight “Advocacy Asks” that guide ChildFund’s advocacy work and are outlined in the Strategic Plan for 2016-2021.

1. Strong and functional child protection systems
2. Targeted budget
3. Implementing legal frameworks to protect children
4. Data collection
5. Endorsement of INSPIRE
6. Implementing a regional approach to address transnational threats.
7. Place children at the center of climate change adaptation, DRR and peacebuilding
8. Prioritize Child Protection Emergencies interventions in all humanitarian responses

Advocacy positions are further informed via research that is:

- Commissioned by the ChildFund Alliance Secretariat (The costs and economic impact of violence against children—Overseas Development Institute, 2014);
- In consultation with partners (Counting Pennies: A review of official development assistance to end violence against children—ChildFund Alliance, Save the Children, SOS Children’s Villages, World Vision, and Development Initiatives, 2017);
- Undertaken by individual members (Unseen, Unsafe: The Underinvestment in Ending Violence

- against Children in the Pacific—ChildFund Australia, Save, Plan and World Vision), and
- Based on key findings from programs (Building Momentum: An overview of Alliance projects around the world that are working to end violence and exploitation against children, ChildFund Alliance, 2019.)

2. How do you ensure that stakeholders support your advocacy work and value the changes achieved by this advocacy?

In the lead-up to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ChildFund Alliance members consulted with more than 16,000 children from 50 countries to gather their opinions about violence against children and the related global priorities. Through the [Child-friendly Accountability Methodology](#), ChildFund is deepening this consultation with children in the communities where our member organizations are working. Throughout these consultations, children expressed their views to see an end to violence and a process to hold duty bearers to account. ChildFund listened and responded by developing a project specific to addressing SDG 16.2: Child Participation, a project that has been funded by the OAK Foundation since 2018.

For example, in Mexico, one of the countries where the Child-friendly Accountability project is implemented, ChildFund worked with children using the Methodology triple A approach - Assessment, Analysis and Actions- to identify the gaps in the protection systems at the community level. Through this process, the children identified unsafe gathering spaces in their community and decided to get the local authorities and other stakeholders to take actions to address the unsafe spaces. Based on a dialogue meeting between the children, ChildFund partner staff and the local authorities, the local police agreed to assess the situation and create a safer environment for the children to play and gather in that community. The children felt that this was a successful outcome of their advocacy actions.

Cluster G: We are transparent, invite dialogue and protect stakeholders’ safety

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

- 1. Are your annual budgets, policies (especially regarding complaints, governance, staffing/salaries and operations), evaluations, top executive remuneration and vital statistics about the organization (including number of offices and number of staff/volunteers/partners) easily available on your website in languages accessible by affected populations? Please provide links, highlight membership in initiatives such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative and outline offline efforts to promote transparency.**

Budget

ChildFund Alliance’s fiscal year is from 1 July – 30 June. In May of each year, the Board of Directors approves the Secretariat’s budget for the following fiscal year. Once the budget is approved, it resides under the sub-section for Board of Directors Meetings and CEO Forums in the Members Only section of the Alliance website which is password protected. The Secretariat members are provided a version of the operating budget once

it is approved. All information on the Alliance website is in English.

Personnel Policies

The ChildFund Alliance Personnel Policy Handbook (2019) is for all employees hired at the Secretariat in New York. All employees who join the Alliance are required to read it before they are hired and sign a statement indicating they have done so. The Handbook is updated every 18 – 24 months and on this occasion, employees are also required to sign the form indicating they have reviewed this accordingly. For a copy of the Handbook, please contact the Secretary General. The Handbook sets forth policies on Child Safeguarding, a Code of Conduct, Whistle Blower and Conflict of Interest under the section: Toward a Fair, Safe and Productive Working Environment.

Governance and Ethics

Please see the Governance and Ethics section of our website

<https://childfundalliance.org/about/governance-ethics> for the following:

- ChildFund Alliance Governance Standards
- Program Code of Ethics
- Child Safeguarding Policy Guidelines
- Fundraising Code of Ethics
- ChildFund Alliance Amended and Restated By-laws

Finances

For a list of ChildFund Alliance Financial Statements for the last five years (2015 -2020) please click here:

<https://childfundalliance.org/about/financials>

Annual financial information from each member is available upon request.

Staffing

A staffing chart is available on the Alliance website <https://childfundalliance.org/about/our-people/secretariat>. This information is also included in the ChildFund Alliance Handbook.

The Handbook is designed for all members and provides a range of information on the Alliance, including a directory of all the Alliance Committees. There are two versions of the Handbook, one for all members and one for the members of the Board and CEO Forum. The Handbook is in the Members Only section of the site and a [copy is provided on Dropbox](#).

Operations

Information on each of our members is available on the following link: <https://childfundalliance.org/our-members>. Here, you can click on a member's logo which directs you to a general summary page with a link to the member's website. A map of ChildFund Alliance provides an overview of where members are active. You can learn more about the member's work in-country, by clicking on to the **Watoto** icon on the map.

Annual Consolidated Data

For the last five years, Alliance members have submitted information on their operations, programs and staffing through a Consolidated Data exercise. Detailed annual data from the last three years (2017-2019) is available on our Members Only site and in addition we compile the topline figures into one graphic for posting on our external facing site. This information includes: the number of member program participants, the number of child sponsorships, the number of communities served, the number of countries served, the number of Alliance members, the staff at headquarters and the field, the number of volunteers (if available) and the global expenditures of all members. For information on 2019, please see:

<https://childfundalliance.org/our-members/our-reach>.

Membership in initiatives to promote accountability and transparency

Since 2013, ChildFund Alliance has been a shareholder in the [International Civil Society Centre \(ICSC\)](#), which contributes to learning and cooperation among organizations, establishing effective leadership in the sector and promoting accountability. The Alliance Secretary General currently represents the Alliance on the Board of the Centre.

2. **What policies do you have in place to ensure a fair pay scale? Do you measure the gender pay gap in your organization, and if so what is it? What are the salaries of the five most senior positions in the organization, and what is the ratio between the top and bottom salaries? If this information cannot be provided or is confidential, please explain why.**

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

The Secretariat is based in New York City and Brussels with a combined team of eight professionals, six in New York and two in Brussels. A salary range has been approved for each position, taking into account the organization’s budget, policies specific to national law, labor market data, relevant work experience, internal equity, educational background and prior salary history. The Board of Directors set the salary range for the Secretary General and following consultation with the Secretary General approves the salary scales for the Secretariat staff in New York. As a U.S. based tax exempt organization, the Alliance files an IRS Form 990 on an annual basis which includes an overview of the organization's activities, governance and detailed financial information. The salary structure for the European Union Office (Brussels) is also established by the Board in consultation with the Chair of the Steering Committee for the EUO. The Chair of the EUO is Educo, a member of ChildFund Alliance since 2015 and a member of Accountable Now.

3. **How do you ensure privacy rights and protect personal data?**

Self-Assessment Rating: 2

Employee data and personnel files are considered confidential and are maintained by the Secretary General. Employees may request access to their personnel files through a written request to the Secretary General. Sensitive documentation such as forms detailing social security numbers are generally kept offline and stored

in a file cabinet in a small separate room which is kept locked. The files may be accessed by the Program Administrative Assistant with the authorization of the Secretary General.

Furthermore, the employee letter of hire includes provisions on confidentiality, ethical practices and child safeguarding. Employees agree to uphold the ChildFund Alliance Child Safeguarding Policies and Code of Conduct, which they also sign upon hire.

- 4. Who are the five largest single donors and monetary value of their contribution? Where names of private individual donors cannot be named due to requested anonymity, please explain what safeguards are in place to ensure that anonymous contributions do not have unfair influence on organizational activities.**

The Alliance Secretariat is funded by Member dues contributions and not private individual donors.

Cluster H: Staff and volunteers are enabled to do their best

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

- 1. Provide evidence that recruitment, employment and staff development is fair, transparent and in line with your values.**

It is the goal of ChildFund Alliance to provide a supportive work environment and a solid economic foundation upon which employees can grow and prosper in alignment with our core values.

- Compassion and respect for all children and cultures
- Commitment to delivering the highest quality standards of integrity and accountability
- Collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Advocating for children's rights
- Optimism

ChildFund Alliance provides employment to all individuals in accordance with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) which refers to fair, unbiased treatment in the workplace. EEO employers are prohibited from discriminating against existing or potential employees based on protected characteristics, including: race/color; national origin/ethnicity; religion, age, sex/gender/sexual orientation and medical history. This corresponds with our core value of compassion and respect for all children and cultures.

ChildFund Alliance recruits for its open positions by posting on our website; our partners' websites and development platforms; and through employment agencies specializing in non-profits, networking and referrals. Following a Secretariat managed vetting process, the Alliance forms a recruitment panel of our members specializing in the position (e.g., communications, advocacy). A core function of our Alliance Secretariat is to serve our members. Our members must be assured that we select employees who are

professionally qualified, honest, hard-working and passionate about our mission. This corresponds to our second core value: commitment to delivering the highest quality standards of integrity and accountability.

Once hired, employees are introduced to a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing, the basis on which the Alliance operates and thrives and the third core value. We cannot achieve outcomes if we work in silos to advocate children’s rights – one of the major priorities of the Alliance Strategy and our fourth core value. The Secretariat team convenes on a regular basis to develop its work plan, establish priorities, seek guidance and technical assistance from other members of the team and provide information that will enable us to succeed in achieving our mission. Our small team comprises dedicated, subject matter experts who are diligent, and adaptable, given the competing demands of our workload. We strive to maintain an atmosphere of realistic optimism, our fifth core value – accepting setbacks and learning from our experiences.

2. What are you doing to invest in staff development? What indicators demonstrate your progress? What are your plans to improve?

Our workloads are so demanding there is very limited time to thoughtfully devote time to staff development. There are some opportunities that surface through our affiliation with the International Civil Society Centre and other networks, but this is an area of major improvement. Recommendations from other Accountable Now members who have a global Secretariat of similar size would be welcome.

3. How does your organization ensure a safe working environment for everybody, including one free of sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation or any other unacceptable conduct? What indicators demonstrate your progress? What are your plans to improve?

Our Personnel Policy Handbook clearly defines all forms of harassment including sexual harassment so that if it should transpire, we can promptly recognize and address it. Employees are aware that the Secretary General maintains an open-door policy so that issues such as these can be brought forth, without retaliation and promptly addressed.

Cluster I: Resources are handled effectively for the public good.

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

1. How do you acquire resources in line with your values and globally-accepted standards and without compromising your independence?

Each Member of ChildFund Alliance agrees to pay annual dues to support the operating budget for the Secretariat which the Board approves at its Annual meeting (May of each year.) Dues are payable on a semiannual basis. The dues are calculated according to a periodically-revised three-year schedule according

to declining revenue bands model. Revenue is defined as Total Cash Revenue comprised of total revenue from all sources, but excluding Gifts in Kind (the value of products and services contributed in lieu of cash and included in Total Revenue) and is based on the most recent available audited financial statement of the Member for the fiscal year preceding the determination of the new three-year schedule.

2. How is progress continually monitored against strategic objectives, and resources re-allocated to optimize impact?

The Board meets in a formal session twice a year to review the progress of the Secretariat's performance against the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. The Board Treasurer also presents the YTD budget which is approved at the May meeting of the Board. In advance of each Board meeting, the Secretary General meets with the Finance Committee of the Board. More on the Finance Committee's mandate is below.

3. How do you minimize the risk of corruption, bribery or misuse of funds? Which financial controls do you have in place? What do you do when controls fail? Describe relevant situations that occurred in this reporting period.

The Letter of Hire for all employees contains a specific provision on Ethical Practices:

You understand and accept your responsibility to oppose and not be a willing party to any wrongdoings, corruption, bribery or other financial impropriety in any activities. You shall take prompt and firm corrective action whenever and wherever wrongdoing is found among staff, contractors, volunteers and partner organizations and inform the ChildFund Alliance Secretary General or the board Chair as appropriate.

The Personnel Policy Handbook (page 51) specifies a Conflict-of-Interest Policy:

ChildFund Alliance's reputation for integrity is its most valuable asset and is directly related to the conduct of its officers and other employees. Therefore, employees must never use their positions with ChildFund Alliance for private gain, to advance personal interests or to obtain favors or benefits for themselves, members of their families or any other individuals, corporations, or business entities. This includes avoiding conflicts of interest in any Alliance directed relationships and contractual agreements by maintaining a standard that these relationships and agreements are clearly defined, impartially conducted and unencumbered by personal gain.

The Personnel Policy Handbook (page 50) clearly describes the reporting procedure for issues including violations. Violations are to be reported to the Secretary General and if employees are not satisfied with the response, they may submit their concerns in writing to the Violations Review Committee.

The Board has established a Finance Committee whose mandate includes:

- Ensure that the internal controls and financial reporting of the organization are in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles
- Monitor financial statements and related analyses and make appropriate recommendations based on current fiscal year performances.
- Review the annual audit reports from ChildFund Alliance’s independent auditor and address any relevant recommendations or findings. More details may be found in the [Finance Committee mandate in the Dropbox](#).

Cluster J: Governance processes maximize accountability

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

1. What is your governance structure and what policies/practices guide replacing and recruiting new trustees/board members?

A voluntary Board of Directors governs ChildFund Alliance. Board members are appointed from the national boards of each member organization. The Board, which provides fiscal and programmatic oversight, meets twice a year.

- A list of board members and their bios may be found here: <https://childfundalliance.org/about/our-people/our-board>
- The by-laws may be found here: <https://childfundalliance.org/about/governance-ethics/bylaws/document/viewDocument/1853>

Given the nature of the Alliance structure, Board of Director members are appointed by the member organization based on a range of criteria: knowledge of the sector, language capability, and availability to attend in person meetings and overall interest in the activities of the Alliance.

2. How does your board oversee the adherence to policies, resource allocation, potential risks and processes for complaints and grievances?

The Board of Director meets twice a year in formal in- person sessions (minus Covid-19 restrictions) and in select teleconference sessions (primarily Zoom) throughout the year. At each meeting, the Secretary General reports out on the overall operations of the Secretariat and the Treasurer reports out on the YTD expenditures for the budget. At the May meeting, the Treasurer presents the budget for the following fiscal year, following a pre-review from the Finance Committee.

For the period of this report, there were no formal complaints or grievances brought forward to the Board. However, if an issue is brought to the attention of the Secretary General, it is immediately reported to the Board Chair who will take this forward in a special session of the Board for resolution. The Board minutes

from the session would refer to the complaint or grievance, the action proposed and the timeline by which it would be addressed. The Board Chair with the assistance of the Secretary General would report out to the Board either in writing or verbally at a follow-up Board meeting, all of which would be documented and posted under the Board of Directors section of the Members Only site. If the complaint or grievance is brought against the Secretary General – either through the Violations Review Committee or the Board, the Board would meet in Executive Session to address the matter.

3. What processes and mechanisms does your organization have in place to handle external complaints including those relating to unacceptable conduct of your staff, volunteers or partner organizations? Please provide an overview of the number and nature of complaints in the reporting period, how many of those were valid and of those that were valid, how many were appropriately handled and resolved.

As mentioned above, the Personnel Policy Handbook (page 50) clearly describes the reporting procedure for issues including violations. Violations are to be reported to the Secretary General and if employees are not satisfied with the response, they may submit their concerns in writing to the Violations Review Committee. The VRC is composed of a Director of HR from a member organization, one member of the CEO Forum and one Board member. See the Handbook for more details on how these complaints are investigated.

If a complaint is leveraged against a partner organization through a general inquiry (e.g., the general website address) it is brought to the attention of their CEO. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Board member may be copied. If it is a legitimate complaint it is handled by the Board of the member organization. Should the matter affect the reputational risk of the Alliance, the Board member will inform the Board Chair of the Alliance. During our reporting period, no external complaints were brought forward.

4. How are internal complaints handled? Please provide an overview of the number and nature of complaints in the reporting period, how many of those were valid and of those that were valid, how many were appropriately handled and resolved.

Please see the two preceding paragraphs for mechanisms for internal complaints. During our reporting, no internal complaints were brought forward.

5. How do you make decisions about the need for confidentiality and protecting the anonymity of those involved?

Please see page Code of Conduct, pages 50-51 of the Personnel Policy Handbook.

CLUSTER K: Leadership is dedicated to fulfilling the 12 Commitments

Self-Assessment Rating: 3

1. How is the governing body and management held accountable for fulfilling their strategic promises including on accountability?

As explained above:

- The Secretary General works closely with a CEO Forum, which sets the Strategic Plan for the organization and meets at least twice a year to review the progress.
- The Secretary General reports to the Board Chair. As explained earlier, the Board meets at least twice a year for a high-level review of the progress against the strategic plan, the budget and finances, and the general operations.
- The Personnel Policy Handbook includes a Code of Conduct on Child Safeguarding and other procedures to ensure a safe, fair, productive and mutually beneficial working environment.

2. What steps have you taken to ensure that staff are included in discussing progress toward commitments to organizational accountability?

The Secretary General maintains an open-door policy so that all concerns may be addressed on a regular basis:

- There are weekly staff check-in meetings.
- There are weekly on-on- one meetings.
- The Secretariat team was consulted on the preparation of the Accountable Now report as it pertained to their area of oversight (Advocacy, Child-friendly Accountability, etc.)
- When the Personnel Policy Handbook was prepared, the team reviewed it in consultation with the SG for these provisions. There was a six-month introductory period for these provisions to be implemented by the team and following this, a team meeting was held to review their experiences and make any adjustments or clarifications as necessary.
- The Secretariat staff have been consulted in the overall preparation of the Accountable Now report.

3. What is your accountability report’s scope of coverage? Are you reporting for the whole organization of just the international secretariat? For secretariats of international federations, on which issues of accountability do you members report to you on and what frequency? Where there is no routine reporting, how do you use your coordinating functions to elevate attention to accountability issues throughout your federations?

This report covers the activities for the ChildFund Alliance Secretariat, based in New York City. Our members, operating in 70 countries, have committed to join Accountable Now within the next three-to-five-year period, per a mandate from the Board of Directors (2016). This means that individual members are obligated to complete their own Accountable Now report. Through the assistance of the Accountable Now secretariat, we have identified the most efficient means to share information for the report such as countries that are financially supported by other members. Updates are provided at the CEO Forum, where Accountable Now staff are periodically invited to respond to questions from our members.