



Save the Children

NIGERIA COUNTRY OFFICE

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2026

FROM THE **COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S** DESK



The year 2025 was marked by profound challenges but also extraordinary resilience for children and families across Nigeria. The effects of major economic reforms implemented between 2023 and 2024 continued to shape daily realities, triggering record inflation, currency instability, and declining household purchasing power. Even as inflation began to ease in early 2025, the poorest families struggled under persistently high food prices, rising living costs, and weakened access to essential services. At the same time, insecurity in the Northcentral and Northwest regions intensified—disrupting livelihoods, displacing communities, and straining already fragile systems. These conditions defined the scale, urgency, and complexity of Save the Children’s work this year. The humanitarian operating environment grew even more challenging as funding declined across the sector. Reduced donor support forced difficult choices and led to the suspension of critical services in some locations. Yet the needs remained immense. Millions of children required urgent, life-saving support across health, nutrition, WASH, education, child protection, and shelter. In this context, the ability to respond quickly, innovate, and deepen partnerships became more essential than ever.

Despite these pressures, Save the Children in Nigeria delivered significant and measurable impact across 16 states and the Federal Capital Territory. We responded rapidly to emergencies while investing in long-term systems and advancing policies that protect children’s rights. Our programmes **reached 2,200,332 people directly** (including **1,320,984 children** and **674,311 girls**) through education, health and nutrition, WASH, child protection, food security and livelihoods, and child rights governance interventions. These efforts addressed urgent humanitarian needs while strengthening systems, building resilience, and promoting policy reforms that place children at the centre of national priorities.

Our humanitarian response was particularly crucial this year. Through the Early Warning System and our Roving Rapid Response mechanism, we delivered integrated services, from treatment for severe acute malnutrition to quality education for out-of-school children, as well as psychosocial support for those affected by conflict and displacement. We expanded anticipatory action approaches and invested in an innovative flood early-warning application that improved the country’s ability to translate risk data into timely action.

This year also marked a milestone for localisation. We supported 21 community-based organisations through a major capacity-strengthening programme. Our child rights governance work reached new heights with the establishment of the Child Advisory Group and strengthened Children’s Parliaments, ensuring children’s voices influence decisions shaping their lives.

As we reflect on a year of adversity and progress, we witnessed resilience, innovation, and hope. I extend my deepest appreciation to our dedicated staff, partners, government counterparts, and donors. Together, we remain committed to ensuring every child survives, learns, and is protected—and to building a safer, fairer, more hopeful future for every child in Nigeria.

Duncan Harvey,
Country Director

WHO WE ARE

Save the Children is a global movement guided by our vision of a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development, and participation. In Nigeria since 2001, we work to ensure every child survives, learns, and is protected. Operating across both humanitarian and long-term development contexts, we deliver programmes in health and nutrition, education, water sanitation and hygiene, child protection, child rights governance, and livelihoods, reaching communities from the grassroots to national level. SC is also guided by a Triple Nexus approach that integrates humanitarian response, development programming, and peace-building. We collaborate with government, communities, and a wide range of donors to tackle the root causes of poverty, improve access to essential services, and safeguard the rights and well-being of Nigeria's most vulnerable children. SC has a dedicated workforce of over 400 staff in Nigeria, operating across multiple field offices. This strong organisational footprint enables us to reach vulnerable children and communities through impactful programmes nationwide.

Our Corporate Governance:

At SC Nigeria, our governance framework is anchored in the global standards of Save the Children International, ensuring that every action we take reflects our commitment to children's rights, transparency, and organisational excellence. The global board provides oversight on strategy, compliance, risk management, and ethical operations across all country offices ensuring our work in Nigeria meets both international expectations and national priorities. Our local governance aligns with these principles, promoting strong internal controls, safeguarding, accountability to children and communities, and continuous improvement across all programmes implemented nationwide.

MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Rolake Akinkugbe-Filani: A distinguished corporate executive and strategic leader with several years of cross-sector experience in financial services, energy, infrastructure, and development finance. As an SCA/SCI Board of Director, she has contributed her expertise to the audit & risk committee as well as people & organisation committee, strengthening operational effectiveness and governance.



Amavi Akpamagbo: A seasoned humanitarian and development practitioner. Amavi brings extensive leadership experience from multiple Save the Children country offices across West and Central Africa. His portfolio spans programme management, operational leadership, and security management all contributing to strategic direction and organisational resilience.



Duncan Harvey: Currently the Country Director for Save the Children Nigeria. Duncan Harvey brings over two decades of humanitarian leadership across many countries. He oversees one of SCI largest and most dynamic country offices, spearheading strategic planning, safeguarding, programme quality, and team development in Nigeria.

WHAT WE DO – OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

Save the Children implements multisectoral and integrated programs in Nigeria; working with donors, government, implementing partners, civil society organisations, children and communities to ensure that children fulfil their right to survive, learn & be protected. *Below is a summary of what we do:*

Humanitarian | **Development** | Nexus Programming



EDUCATION

- Basic Education
- Early Childhood Care & Development (ECCD)
- Education in Emergencies (EiE)



HEALTH & NUTRITION

- Mother Infant & Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN)
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)
- Maternal, Newborn & Reproductive Health
- Child Health
- Adolescent Reproductive Health (ASRH)
- HIV



CHILD PROTECTION

- Appropriate care
- Protection of Children from Violence
- Protection of Children from Harmful Work
- Strengthening Child Protection Systems



CHILD POVERTY

- Food Security & Livelihoods
- Adolescent Skills for Success Transition
- Child Sensitive Social Protection



CHILD GOVERNANCE

- Monitoring & Demanding Child Rights with Children
- Good Governance Delivers Children's Right
- Public Investment in Children

Cross-Cutting Themes: Advocacy & Policy | Child Participation | Climate Resilience | Disability Inclusion | Gender Equality

IMPACT FOR CHILDREN AND APPROACHES IN 2025

In 2025, Save the Children accelerated impact for children in Nigeria by leveraging innovation, evidence, and locally driven solutions across all programme areas. We embraced new ways of working that improved quality and accountability while ensuring that the most vulnerable children and communities benefitted from timely and impactful support. Our programs directly reached a total of **2,200,332 people**; **674,311 girls**, **646,673 boys**, **542,764 women** and **336,584 men** in 2025. Below are some more details on our approaches, impact and innovation across the 2025-2027 Strategic Goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 – CHILDREN HAVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE QUALITY HEALTH, NUTRITION AND WASH SERVICES

Partner States – Adamawa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Kano, Katsina, Kogi, Lagos, Plateau & Yobe States

Funders - Berglund Family Foundation, Glasgow SmithKline (GSK), Global Affairs Canada - International Humanitarian Assistance (GAC-IHA), Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), Procter & Gamble (P&G), United States Government - Office of Humanitarian Assistance (OHA), World Vision (through Core Group Partner’s Project).

Direct Reach for Health, Nutrition & WASH **1,268,520**

	319,672		298,755		397,873		252,220
	GIRLS		BOYS		WOMEN		MEN

- » **1,462** health workers trained.
- » **198** health facilities supported.
- » **214,424** children screened for malnutrition.
- » **64,158** zero dose children immunised.
- » **86%** of children treated for acute malnutrition recovered.

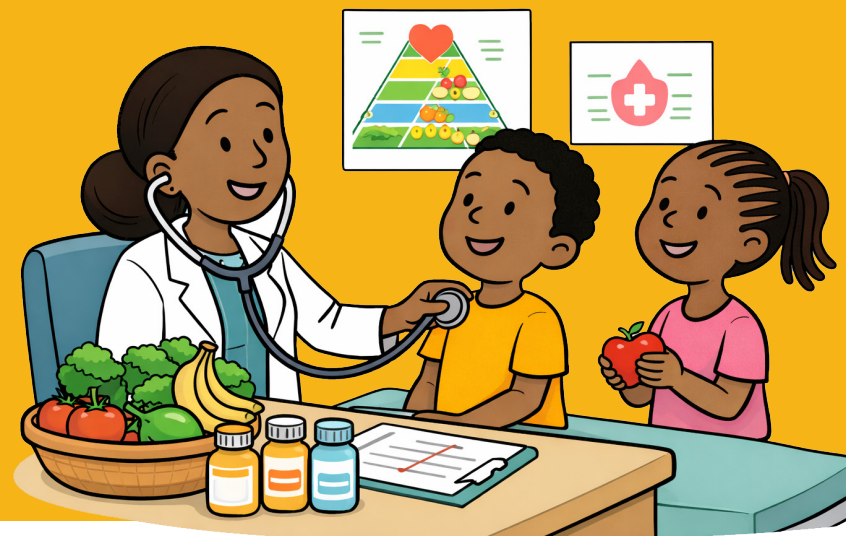




Photo: Save the Children / Penn Musa

OUR APPROACH & INNOVATION

Save the Children continued delivering lifesaving, integrated, and inclusive health, nutrition, and WASH services aligned with its strategic goals and the government priorities to improve child and community wellbeing. At facility level, interventions included essential primary healthcare services, maternal and child health, outpatient and inpatient treatment for severe acute malnutrition, case management for disease outbreaks, upgrading health infrastructure, and conducting joint supportive supervision with state authorities. In communities, SC promoted positive health and nutrition behaviours among women's and men's groups. We also promoted immunisation, conducted regular screening for early detection of malnutrition with timely referrals, supported treatment for moderate acute malnutrition and facilitated hygiene and sanitation awareness.

Save the Children also implemented an innovative digital first immunisation initiative that combined askNivi—an automated WhatsApp first immunisation initiative, with community outreach to increase confidence and uptake of routine childhood immunisation and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines. Users received tailored information on immunization, referrals to nearby facilities, and vaccination reminders.

We advanced menstrual health and hygiene by ensuring girls and women accessed appropriate menstrual materials, accurate information, and safe practices. Using the Choices, Voices & Promises approach, we helped adolescents build menstrual literacy and confidence to challenge harmful gender norms.

We expanded access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services by constructing and rehabilitating boreholes, solar powered water systems, disability powered water systems, disability inclusive and gender segregated latrines, handwashing stations, and waste management systems across communities, Internally Displaced persons (IDP) camps, and health facilities. Also, Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was strengthened using behaviour change initiatives to reduce open defecation and improve hygiene practices.

A STORY OF CHANGE: MUSA'S JOURNEY FROM CRITICAL ILLNESS TO NEW BEGINNINGS



At just 26 months old, Musa was critically ill, unable to eat, sit, crawl, or walk. His mother brought him to a Save the Children supported Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) centre, where he was diagnosed with Severe Acute Malnutrition and urgently referred to a Save the Children supported stabilisation centre. There, Musa received lifesaving medical care and therapeutic feeding. Within weeks, he made a remarkable recovery and was discharged, able to eat well and walk again. To support Musa's continued growth, Save the Children provided his mother with a startup grant. She used it to launch a small rice processing business, earning enough income to buy nutritious foods like milk, eggs, and soybean cake, ensuring Musa stays healthy and strong.

Grateful for the transformation she share:

"I almost gave up on Musa, but Save the Children restored my hope. Now my child is healthy, thank you for the timely support."



Musa's recovery and his mother's support show how lifesaving care and timely support can transform a child's future.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 – CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO UNINTERRUPTED GENDER SENSITIVE QUALITY & INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Partner states – Adamawa, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara

Funders – Global Affairs Canada - International Humanitarian Assistance (GAC-IHA), Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Education Above All (EAA), European Union (EU), Education Cannot Wait (ECW), NORAD Humanitarian Strategic Partnership Agreements (NORAD HUM-SPA), Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Cuppy Foundation, Whitehurst Family Foundation, European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO).

Direct Reach for Education

357,913



- » **291,553** children enrolled in informal and formal learning centres.
- » **5,396** teachers & volunteer teachers/facilitators trained to improve pedagogy.
- » **561** schools supported.
- » **3,189** children with disabilities provided with assistive devices.
- » **80%** of targeted children achieved foundational levels in literacy in-line with appropriate curricula.





OUR APPROACH & INNOVATION

Save the Children advanced transformative education strategies that expanded access, equity, and improved learning outcomes for children in crisis affected and underserved communities. Using evidence based, child centred approaches including Literacy Boost, Numeracy Boost, and Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL). Our programmes strengthened foundational literacy and numeracy, improved teacher competencies, and enhanced school leadership across formal and nonformal settings. A strong focus was placed on the most marginalised groups, including girls, children with disabilities, and out of school adolescents.

In 2025, Save the Children scaled up Accelerated Basic Education Programme (ABEP), providing flexible, community-based pathways for out-of-school children to enrol, stay in school, and complete primary education. Catch Up Clubs further supported children at risk of dropping out by offering play based remedial learning and psychosocial support. Early childhood development was strengthened through capacity building for Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) facilitators and teachers on inclusive, play based pedagogy, safeguarding, and foundational learning. Classrooms were renovated and upgraded with disability inclusive designs, age-appropriate learning materials, and stimulating indoor and outdoor play spaces.

The programme also transformed teaching practices through sustained coaching and Teacher Professional Development (TPD). Teachers now demonstrate stronger lesson planning, more structured child centred instruction, and improved responsiveness to diverse learning needs. School leaders increasingly provide real-time, supportive instructional coaching rather than compliance driven supervision, resulting in improved school culture and teacher confidence.

To advance Safe Schools and climate resilience, Save the Children strengthened school safety systems in conflict and climate affected areas through risk assessments, safe school protocols, and community led crisis-sensitive planning. Climate education, environmental stewardship activities, and community preparedness trainings enhanced resilience, while investments in climate resilient infrastructure including Temporary Learning Spaces, rehabilitated classrooms, and inclusive WASH facilities are restored safe, dignified learning spaces for children affected by conflict, displacement, and climate shocks.

A STORY OF CHANGE: HOW TWO BROTHERS FOUND THEIR CONFIDENCE THROUGH LEARNING



Haruna dreamed of becoming president, but in Primary 5 he could only identify words, not read full sentences. The gap between his dreams and his skills left him frustrated and discouraged. His younger brother, Hussaini, who loves football and hopes to be a doctor, struggled similarly, by Primary 4, he could only recognize alphabets.

Everything changed when both boys joined the Save the Children supported Catch Up Club (CUCs). Over 12 weeks, they received targeted literacy support along with writing materials, books, and encouragement. Haruna soon progressed to reading full sentences confidently.

“Joining the CUC has really changed my life... “Honestly, if I hadn’t joined, I wouldn’t have been able to read sentences,” he shared.



Their mother noticed the transformation immediately - greater understanding, improved reading, and better academic results. *“Truthfully, there is a difference between then and now,”* she said

The impact was remarkable: in their school, Haruna ranked 1st out of 83 pupils, while Hussaini moved from midclass positions to 2nd out of 43. Their confidence soared, and both boys now approach learning with pride and excitement.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 – CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE INCLUDING EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE

Partner states – Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Ondo, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara

Funders – Global Affairs Canada - International Humanitarian Assistance (GAC-IHA), Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Education Above All (EAA), Education Cannot Wait (ECW), NORAD Humanitarian Strategic Partnership Agreements (NORAD HUM-SPA); Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Cuppy Foundation, European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Obama Foundation, The Hershey Foundation, United States Government Office of Humanitarian Assistance (OHA).

Direct Reach for Child Protection 79,810



- » 8,620 children received child protection case management.
- » 7,661 individuals attended Safe Families positive parenting group or children’s sessions.
- » 32,298 children attending safe spaces.
- » 80% of supported children reported an improvement to their situation (e.g. safety and/or wellbeing) as a result of their needs being addressed through case management.





OUR APPROACH & INNOVATION

Our child protection programming achieved major progress in protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect. We strengthened case management systems by building the capacity of caseworkers and supervisors, updating referral pathways, and improving coordination across sectors. A strong focus on disability inclusive programming enhanced collaboration with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, ensuring children and caregivers with disabilities were actively included in community decision-making spaces.

Community based child protection mechanisms were expanded through the establishment and revitalization of child protection committees. These committees were trained on child rights, confidentiality, early identification, and referral processes, enabling communities to detect high-risk cases earlier and lead initiatives such as awareness sessions and dialogues to address harmful practices including child marriage and child labour.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions were strengthened through integrated psychosocial assessments, Psychological First Aid within case management, structured support activities, safe space programming for children, and caregiver sessions focused on stress management and positive parenting.

The rollout of Child Protection Information Management System Plus (CPIMS+) improved digital case management by standardizing data entry, enhancing data protection, enabling real time caseload monitoring, and supporting safer interagency information sharing for evidence-based decision-making. Cash for Protection was integrated into case management to provide urgent, needs based support to children at high risk, guided by detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) and a clear cost estimation framework.

Our child protection programming also advanced the prevention and reduction of child labour through a strengthened Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) and improved household resilience. Through systematic identification of children at risk and those already engaged in hazardous labour; we carried out comprehensive case assessments and linked them to appropriate services. This enabled timely remediation and sustained follow up to ensure children were safely withdrawn and protected against child labour.

In 2025, Save the Children piloted the Girls Decide approach to strengthen the agency, voice, and decision-making power of adolescent girls (ages 10–19) in conflict affected and displacement prone communities. The initiative engaged girls, caregivers, community leaders, and service providers to challenge restrictive gender norms, reduce early and forced marriage, address violence and psychosocial distress, and improve access to education and overall wellbeing.

A STORY OF CHANGE: BREAKING THE CYCLE OF CHILD LABOUR: HOW FAVOUR’S FAMILY FOUND SAFETY, STABILITY, AND HOPE



Favour*, a 43 year old widow, has battled overwhelming hardship, losing her husband, suffering a stroke, and becoming solely responsible for raising eight daughters and two grandchildren. With no income and growing pressure to provide, she turned to strenuous labour in cocoa farms, taking any work she could find simply to survive. But the most painful part was watching her children bear the weight of this struggle. For years, three of Favour’s school aged daughters accompanied her to the farms, trekking long distances daily in search of labour. Out of school and exposed to hazardous working conditions, they worked Monday to Saturday for meagre earnings. Favour lived with constant fear for their safety and deep worry about the future they were being denied.

A turning point came when a neighbour referred her to one of Save the Children programmes aimed at reducing child labour in cocoa communities. Favour didn’t know what to expect. However, a caseworker was assigned to the family, an assessment was conducted and a care plan developed. This included supporting her children to return to school. The moment Favour was told her children would be supported to return to school, she cried tears of relief.

She said “I prayed it would be true. I was very happy when they told me my children would be going back to school.”



For one of her daughters, the impact was immediate.

she shared “I want to become a barrister, and I can only do that if I stay in school.”



As part of the care plan, the family also received Safe Family sessions, aimed at strengthening family dynamics and Cash Voucher Assistance to strengthen their stability and reduce the risk of harmful coping strategies. With the financial support, Favour has started a small palm oil business and hopes to venture into foodstuff sales to sustain her household. Favour’s journey is a powerful reminder of how timely child protection interventions can lift children out of unsafe labour, restore their right to education, and give families the chance to rebuild with dignity.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 – CHILDREN LIVE IN HOUSEHOLDS THAT HAVE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS, ARE RESILIENT AND HAVE FOOD SECURITY

Partner states – Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Jigawa, Kano, Ondo, Taraba and Yobe States

Funders – European Union (EU), Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Global Affairs Canada - International Humanitarian Assistance (GAC-IHA), Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC), The Hershey Foundation, United States Government - Office of Humanitarian Assistance (OHA).

Direct Reach for Child Poverty 504,848



- » **276,053** Individuals received Cash or Voucher Assistance.
- » **12,640** adolescents & youth who are trained in transferable life skills.
- » **702** VSLA groups supported by SC programs.
- » **1,602** participants were trained on reducing locally determined climate and/or environmental risks
- » **56%** of households had acceptable access to food.





OUR APPROACH & INNOVATION

Our Child Poverty programmes made strong progress in building the resilience and economic independence of displaced persons, returnees, and vulnerable host communities. To tackle unemployment and economic exclusion particularly among youth, women, and persons with disabilities, we expanded vocational training and entrepreneurship support through the Youth Learn, Youth Act, and Youth Connect models. Environmentally friendly livelihoods such as charcoal briquette and biochar manure production were promoted, offering both income opportunities and nature-based solutions that reduce deforestation. Microenterprises were strengthened through life skills, business management, and financial literacy training, while revitalized safe spaces supported skills acquisition for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) further improved access to financial services, boosted savings culture, and strengthened household economic resilience.

Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) interventions equipped farmers with improved agronomic practices, conservation agriculture techniques, agroforestry skills, and climate adaptive crop choices, delivered in partnership with Agricultural Development Programmes. Livestock based livelihoods were enhanced through training on small ruminant management and improved access to community animal health services. Communities also received training on soil and water conservation for economic tree planting, while water point rehabilitation improved safe water access for households, livestock, and agricultural use.

Multipurpose cash assistance supported newly displaced households to meet urgent needs with dignity, using secure Near Field Communication (NFC) smartcard systems aligned with the Minimum Expenditure Basket approach. Complementary market strengthening initiatives supported local economic recovery.

In 2025, Save the Children expanded the multi-hazard Early Warning System (EWS) to ensure timely, accessible risk information for vulnerable communities. Through collaboration with Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA), Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMET), and community contributors, high risk populations, especially in flood prone or conflict sensitive areas, received early warnings that enabled rapid action and safer evacuation. Community Early Warning and Anticipatory Action Committees (CEWAACs) developed localized early action protocols, shifting communities from reactive crisis response to proactive, risk informed preparedness.

Household Economic Analysis (HEA) provided deeper insights into how families earn, access food, and cope with shocks such as inflation, rising food prices, and reduced crop production. By developing livelihood baselines for different wealth groups, HEA strengthened national food and nutrition security forecasting and was integrated into early warning systems for timelier, evidence-based decision-making.

A STORY OF CHANGE: HOW ONE MOTHER REBUILT HER LIVELIHOOD AND HER CHILDREN'S FUTURE



Tinu*, a mother of four, has always carried the hope that her children would one day enjoy a better life—one filled with opportunities. But despite her determination, her reality made that dream seem distant. She earned a living hawking cooked food, yet the income was barely enough to support her household, let alone send her children to school.

Then everything began to change! Through one of Save the Children supported programmes, Tinu received a cash grant and joined a VSLA group. With access to savings and small loans, she was able to invest in her future. She expanded her business by opening a modest shop where she now sells provisions, soft drinks, and food items. Her income grew steadily, and with it came the joy she had longed for, her children returned to school, this time in good schools she could proudly choose. Reflecting on her journey, Tinu shared:

“I am grateful to Save the Children for their support. Before, I was hawking just to survive. But after joining the VSLA and receiving financial support, I was able to open a shop. I now sell food, soft drinks, raw food... and my income has increased. I’m sending my children to school—good schools. We are grateful.”



Tinu’s story is a powerful reminder that with the right support, resilience can transform hardship into hope and hope into opportunity.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE: BEING THE FIRST RESPONDERS

In 2025, Save the Children remained a fast and dependable responder to emergencies across Nigeria, activating rapid responses nationwide with support from the SC Internally pooled Humanitarian Fund and guided by timely alerts from the Early Warning System (EWS).

Save the Children played a major role in the Adamawa State cholera response, delivering largescale WASH interventions. This included chlorinating major water points and treating water for safe consumption, alongside environmental decontamination and cash support. In Benue, we supported conflict displaced families with child friendly spaces, psychosocial support, WASH supplies, cash assistance, and trucking of clean water to IDP camps. In Katsina, Save the Children strengthened community-based nutrition systems by training frontline actors and providing support in preventing and manage malnutrition. In Plateau, displaced households received multipurpose cash and WASH items and adolescents were also provided with and dignity kits. Following the devastating Mokwa flood in Niger State, we rapidly assisted affected families by providing cash and WASH supplies. In Borno, Save the Children implemented extensive lifesaving responses, including providing nutritional support, cash, non-food items under the multiple crises' response,

Save the Children advanced anticipatory flood actions, reaching communities in Adamawa, Benue, and Kogi States with early warning information and supporting households with preventive cash assistance. This effort reduced disaster losses. Save the Children further contributed to the development of an innovative flood early warning application that strengthens national capacity to turn early warning data into rapid, coordinated early action.

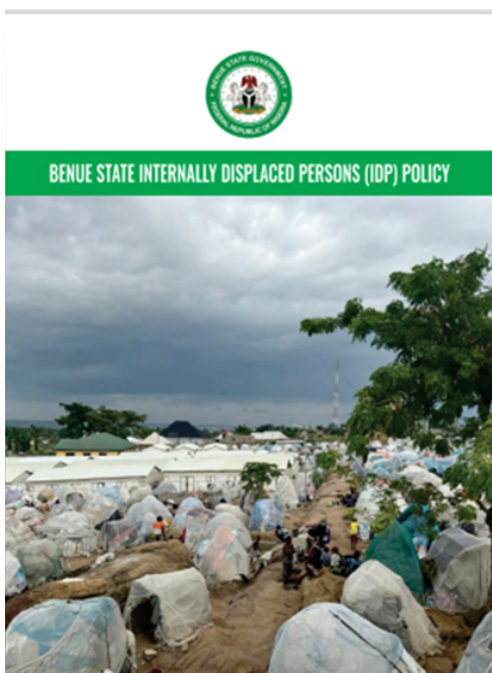


BEYOND THE GOALS: **STRENGTHENING VOICES, EVIDENCE, AND IMPACT FOR CHILDREN**

ADVOCACY & POLICY WINS

In the past year, Save the Children, strengthened its leadership in shaping policy, advancing evidence-driven advocacy, and influencing key decision-making spaces across national and subnational levels. Through strategic engagements, coalition building, and targeted messaging, we contributed to notable policy shifts and commitments that enhance outcomes for children and communities. Below are some of the key advocacy & policy wins

Benue Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Policy: Working closely with the Benue State Government to address the protracted displacement situation across the state, Save the Children provided technical support to the state in development of the IDP Policy by facilitating consultations, providing policy drafting expertise, and ensuring alignment with national and international standards on internal displacement. Through this collaborative process, the Benue State IDP Policy was successfully developed, validated, and officially launched by the Benue State Government. The policy now serves as a foundational framework for coordinated, rights-based, and durable responses to the needs of internally displaced persons across the state.



NATIONAL POLICY ON SAFETY, SECURITY AND VIOLENCE-FREE SCHOOLS (NPSSVFS):

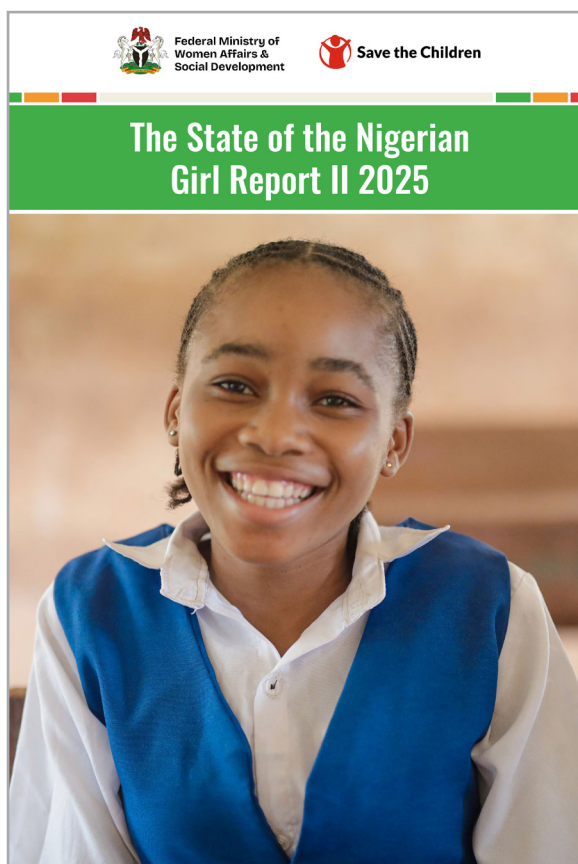
Save the Children continued to play a leading role in advancing the implementation of the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (NPSSVFS) in Nigeria. In recognition of this leadership, the Nigeria Police School Protection Squad (NP-SPS) presented Save the Children with an Award of Excellence.

In Katsina State, the Commissioner for Education received a copy of the National Policy on safety Security and Violence Free Schools (NPSSVFS) from Save the Children with a request to domesticate the Policy in the state. The commissioner committed to domesticate the Policy in the state.



STATE OF THE NIGERIA GIRLS REPORT 2

Save the Children, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, conducted follow-up research to the *State of the Nigerian Girl Report* to assess the evolving situation of girls across the country and generate evidence for advocacy and policy engagement. The findings indicate significant progress, particularly the decline in national child marriage prevalence from 44% (2016–2020) to 28.6% in 2025. This improvement reflects the sustained efforts of government institutions, civil society organizations, development partners, UN agencies, the World Bank, and other stakeholders who have expanded access to education and intensified advocacy to end child marriage. However, rates remain high in several regions, underscoring the need for stronger political leadership, increased investment, and deeper community-level ownership to confront challenge and accelerate progress toward eliminating child marriage nationwide.



DRIVING CHILD PARTICIPATION

In 2025, Save the Children strengthened meaningful child participation across its programmes by ensuring children's voices informed project design, implementation, and review. Through child-friendly consultations, feedback mechanisms, and engagement with child-led structures, children contributed insights that improved programme relevance, accountability, and overall impact. Investments were made in children's leadership development, structured participation platforms, and mechanisms that promote their involvement in decision-making.

SC supported children's engagement in major national and global commemorations, including Children's Day, International Day of the Girl Child, International Day of Education, the Day of the African Child, and Universal Children's Day. A significant milestone in 2025 was the establishment of the Child Advisory Group (CAG), comprising 18 children selected from schools and community structures to ensure gender balance and inclusion. Members were trained on child rights, safeguarding, advocacy, and communication, and later engaged with the Senior Management Team to present priority issues around education, protection, health, and participation.

At national and state levels, Save the Children strengthened Children's Parliaments by providing training on child rights, democratic processes, leadership, and public speaking. Mentorship helped outgoing members transition into youth parliamentarian roles, ensuring continuity in advocacy. Adolescent girls' leadership was also enhanced through the Girl Champions initiative, which equipped girls with skills in strategy development, project management, teamwork, and community advocacy. These efforts contributed to tangible results, including increased recognition of children as credible advocates, for example, the Katsina State Government's allocation of funds for child participation initiatives. Throughout the year, Save the Children's leadership in child rights governance was publicly acknowledged by the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs, reinforcing the organization's position as a champion of children's participation in Nigeria.



ENSURING OUR PROGRAMMES ARE SAFE

Save the Children sustained commitment to creating safe, inclusive, and accountable programmes by embedding protective measures across programme design, partner engagement, and routine operations. Staff integrated safeguarding milestones into workplans, improving coordination leading more timely delivery of trainings, community sensitization, and partner monitoring, as well as clearer roles and stronger compliance with safeguarding standards. Expanded awareness-raising with staff, partners, children, and caregivers increased use of safe reporting channels and community confidence in identifying concerns. Improved internal documentation, faster referrals, and strengthened case-management processes contributed to quicker, more effective responses and safer environments for those at risk.

Systematic safeguarding risk assessments across thematic areas enabled early identification of context-specific risks and incorporation of mitigation measures in programme delivery. Programmes reported stronger supervision, safer child-friendly spaces, and improved planning for high-risk activities, reducing preventable incidents. Significant investments in partner capacity building, aligned with Save the Children's Partner Safeguarding Framework, enhanced due diligence, reporting, and safe community engagement practices. Partners demonstrated improved ownership and compliance with minimum safeguarding requirements.

EVIDENCE GENERATION & LEARNING

Save the Children as a learning organization, developed a learning agenda for the strategic period based on identified knowledge and information gaps affecting programme quality across thematic areas. A mixed approach is being used to answer the learning questions with findings synthesized into actionable insights. We continued to strengthen our evidence generation systems to ensure that programmes are informed by high quality data, rigorous analysis, and community driven insights. This year saw the development of research briefs, learning studies, assessments, and evaluations that deepened our understanding of what works for children and why. Key learning products, apart from project baseline and endline assessment, included State of the Nigerian Girl Report II, SMART+ survey, Multi Sectorial Needs Assessments (MSNAs). Labour market Assessments, Early Learning Assessments, Barrier Analysis, Gender Assessment etc. These were disseminated across various platforms and leveraged to refine programme designs, advocate for policy change, and support fundraising efforts. We also had opportunities to present our work at state, national and international platforms. These products are available at the Save the Children Resource Centre - <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/>

Routine monitoring systems were enhanced through digitized data collection tools and strengthened MEAL capacities at state and field levels. These improvements enabled programme teams to track performance more efficiently, identify implementation gaps, and take corrective actions swiftly. Evidence from feedback mechanisms, including post distribution monitoring directly shaped programmatic adjustments, ensuring interventions remained responsive to the needs and priorities of children and their caregivers. Overall, evidence generation in 2025 played a critical role in enhancing programme quality, driving adaptive management, and demonstrating impact, ensuring that Save the Children's work in Nigeria remains both effective and firmly anchored in the best interest of every child.



OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025

Advancing Localisation

Save the Children launched a Localisation Strategy (2025-27) informed by a comprehensive evaluation of the previous strategy. The review generated strong insights from staff and partners, confirming increased awareness, engagement, and ownership of localisation principles, as well as growth in both the number of local partners and the volume of funding directed to them. Localisation was further embedded into the Nigeria Country Strategy, the humanitarian–development–peace nexus, and internal capacity-strengthening systems. Stakeholders emphasised the need for holistic institutional strengthening, particularly in governance, financial management, resource mobilisation, digital literacy, and advocacy, to enable partners to meet donor requirements and lead sustainable, high-quality programmes. They also highlighted the value of engaging partners early in programme design and improving transparency, joint monitoring, simplified reporting, and feedback mechanisms. These recommendations shaped the new Localisation Strategy, which prioritises equitable funding, institutional sustainability, locally led programming, and organisation-wide culture change.

As part of the strategy implementation, Save the Children supported 21 nascent and low-capacity organisations through a four-month capacity-strengthening programme. Pre- and post-assessments showed marked improvements across governance, financial systems, procurement, and programme management, with several organisations already securing new funding partnerships with Save the Children and other international organisations and donors.

Building an Inclusive and Safer Workplace

Save the Children strengthened the diversity, equity, and inclusion culture in 2025 through targeted investments in staff capacity, institutional processes, and governance. Staff received training on the Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Framework and Anti-Harassment Policy, while DEI, gender equality, and disability inclusion were fully integrated into the Global Induction Programme. Tailored DEI sessions were also delivered in field and project offices.

Organisational culture was reinforced through commemorations of key global days and the 16 Days of Activism, which focused on digital violence against women and girls and enhanced staff understanding of emerging risks and safe reporting pathways. At systems level, the Country Office Safety and Travel Policy were revised to include gender and disability considerations.

The Country Office Save the Children International Women's Network (SCIWN) launched a six-month mentorship programme involving 61 female staff and 21 mentors, supporting women's leadership development and career progression. The Gender Equality Technical Working Group (GETWG) was also reactivated and expanded to include disability inclusion, providing coordinated technical guidance and ensuring alignment across programmes, advocacy, and operations while tracking progress and accountability in gender equality and disability inclusion integration.

Accelerating Digitalisation and Data Protection

In 2025, Save the Children accelerated digital transformation across the Nigeria Country Office, improving programme quality, operational efficiency, and data-driven decision-making. Programmes expanded their use of digital platforms for monitoring, surveys, attendance tracking, and feedback management, resulting in more accurate data and faster reporting. We strengthened digitalization of the child protection systems by transitioning from the previous Child Protection Information Monitoring System (CPIMS) platform to the more advanced CPIMS+, enabling secure, standardised, and harmonised child protection case management across projects. We also advanced our web-based multi-hazard Early Warning System, which integrates community contributions, predictive modelling, and real-time data from national agencies to detect risks and trigger timely early action. Digital health efforts progressed through the deployment of askNivi, an automated WhatsApp-based tool supporting vaccine awareness, reminders, and referrals, integrated with community-led outreach.

Our National / Local Implementation Partners in 2025

- » Catholic Diocese of Makurdi Foundation for Justice, Development and Peace (FJDP)
- » Center for Information Technology and Development
- » Community Support Development Initiative
- » Ekkilisiyar Yan'uwa A Nigeria – Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN) Project
- » Gender Equality Peace and Development Centre (GEPaDC)
- » Global Village Healthcare Initiative for Africa
- » Green Concern for Development
- » Heal the Land Initiative in Nigeria (HELIN)
- » Healthcare and Education Support Initiatives (HESI)
- » Hope for Village Child Foundation
- » Kishimi Shelter and Care Foundation
- » Lake Chad Peace and Development Initiative – LCPD (formerly YOPCODI)
- » Life at Best Development Initiative (LABDI)
- » Life Helpers Initiative (LHI)
- » Mediatrix Development Foundation
- » Nkafamiya Rescue Mission
- » North East Youth Initiative for Development (NEYIF)
- » Pioneers Reproductive Health and Youth Association (PREHYA)
- » Popular Theatre and Health Education Association (POTHE)
- » Restoration of Hope Initiative (ROHI)
- » Save Mothers and Children Initiative (SMACI)

Operational functions also benefitted from digitalisation, with automation of key workflows such as salary advance requests, transport bookings, and recruitment planning. Enhancements to the staff communication allowance system further improved efficiency and user experience. These initiatives strengthened process standardisation, improved turnaround times, increased transparency, and reduced manual work, contributing to Save the Children's sustainability and paper-reduction goals.

In 2025, the organisation strengthened its data protection and regulatory compliance framework, completing formal registration with the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDPC) and achieving a strong score of 5 out of 6 in the annual Data Protection Audit. This performance earned the organisation an NDPC trust badge, demonstrating the maturity of its data governance systems. These milestones enhance regulatory standing, reduce institutional risk, and reinforce donor and stakeholder confidence in the organisation's data handling practices.

Improving Procurement and Fleet Performance

2025 marked a year of strengthened systems, greater safety, improved efficiency, and enhanced financial stewardship. This led to significant improvements across procurement, fleet, and compliance, strengthening operational efficiency and accountability. A total procurement spend of \$7.54 million was processed through 25,621 transactions and 474 suppliers, with 93% of spend routed through Framework Agreements and standard purchase orders—demonstrating strong adherence to SC processes. The team also secured Global Team approval for \$111,581.79 in verified savings, with over \$100,000 in additional potential value identified.

Fleet performance advanced substantially with the deployment of 20 new vehicles, reducing average fleet age from 6.84 to 3.88 years and improving efficiency and reliability. Enhanced in-vehicle monitoring system (IVMS) and rigorous driver engagement contributed to a 99% reduction in over-speeding incidents within nine months, significantly strengthening staff safety and asset protection.

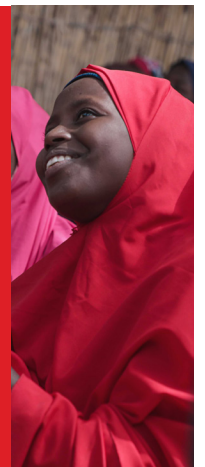
UPHOLDING FINANCIAL EXCELLENCE

Save the Children achieved a major milestone in Nigeria by completing multiple donor audits with minor or zero findings, demonstrating strong financial stewardship, transparency, and compliance. This performance reflects the strength of the organisation's financial systems and commitment to integrity; giving donors and partners confidence in how resources are managed.

In total, the Country Office spent:

 **\$32.9 Million**

in 2025, with **85% (\$27.8 million)** directed to programme delivery and **15% (\$5.1 million)** to support costs, reinforcing its focus on high impact results for children.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2025 was marked by significant milestones across our programmes and operations. Our programmes reached children and families across multiple states, delivering not only broad coverage but also meaningful, systemic change at national, state, and community levels.

These achievements were made possible through the commitment of our partners and stakeholders. The Federal and State Governments, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Partners both International and local, community-based organisations, local actors and traditional institutions all played critical roles in enabling us to deliver life-changing services and strengthen systems for children. We express our deepest gratitude to the children, families, and communities whose courage, engagement, and partnership drive our mission every day. Their voices guide our interventions and ensure that our work responds to the realities and priorities of those we serve.

We also extend profound appreciation to our donors, bilateral and multilateral agencies, foundations, private sector partners, and individual philanthropists, whose generosity and trust made our progress possible. Your support enabled us to protect children, expand essential services, and contribute to long-term, sustainable change where it matters most. Your partnership remains central to our shared vision for every child.

Finally, we acknowledge the dedication of our volunteers and staff, who demonstrated resilience, adaptability and optimism. Your commitment, resilience, and professionalism made 2025 a year of meaningful impact for children across Nigeria.



Photo: Save the Children / Fem Musa



Plot 512, Cadastral Zone B09, Kado
District, Abuja, Nigeria. Next to the NAF
Conference Centre.

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