

We contribute to:



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

“Peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” SDG16 is at the heart of Help a Child’s vision.

In our community development projects, we rely on key principles such as participation and inclusion. Everybody needs to be able to join and be part of the change needed. Across ethnic, generational or other divides, we focus on building trust, reconciliation and a sense of togetherness. Another key principle is sustainability, the ability of communities to face the future after a project ends. In addition to socio-economic empowerment, we focus on what participants need in order to respond to crises and shocks around them. Whether this is empowerment against gender-based violence, for climate-resilient farming skills or on ways to make a livelihood despite being a refugee.

In the innovative Empowered2Protect programme in the DRC and Burundi, we have combined direct prevention against sexual and gender-based violence with mitigation through community dialogue. In South Sudan we have used the national sport, Boruboru, to empower the skills of young people and support peacebuilding between neighbouring communities. Under the Pride! programme, cofunded by the EU, we have supported the inclusion of women with and without disabilities. In Burundi we have nearly completed the Building Bridges in Burundi programme to address root causes of armed conflict, instability and migration. We are grateful that we have been able to harvest so many results and lessons.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Key statistics:

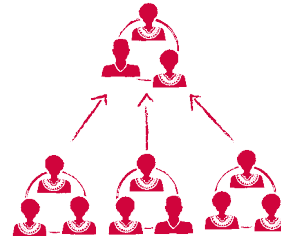
2,511

Self-help groups and farmer groups supported



248

Cluster Level Associations supported



Topics of community dialogues

facilitated by Help a Child in 2021 included:

child rights child marriage

peacebuilding conflict

personal safety resolution

inclusion of people with a disability sexual and gender based violence

girls **healthy environment**

rights child protection

positive parenting



SOUTH SUDAN

Sport for **peace** and **empowerment**

It is widely known that sports are good for your health and well-being. But they can bring much more. In the past couple of years, Help a Child has reintroduced Boruboru as a tool for empowerment, development and peacebuilding.

Boruboru is a revived traditional South Sudanese sport similar to dodgeball. The new way of playing Boruboru is aimed at using the sport to promote peace among young South Sudanese. Fair play is advocated and more focus is placed on capacity building. Boruboru is now being used by Help a Child as a powerful tool to mobilize children and communities, build peace, empower girls, increase women's participation and

build confidence. So far, only Help a Child has integrated and implemented Boruboru as a development tool in South Sudan.

In 2021 Help a Child linked Boruboru tournaments with protection and social cohesion campaigns at four locations: Wau, Bagari, Tonj South and Tonj North.

23,000 community members reached
with peace and protection messages

1,600 state and government officials reached
with peace and protection messages

720 girls (aged 10-18)
have gained life skills (non-violence, leadership, teamwork etc.)





SOUTH SUDAN

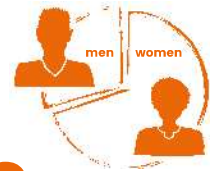
Lifting barriers to inclusion

Together with Dorcas Aid International and Light of the World International, Help a Child shares a vision for inclusive and prosperous communities in Wau and West Gogrial counties.

The Pride! Consortium is addressing the main barriers to the participation of women (including those with disabilities) in community activities, local political decision-making and

broader society. At the same time, the programme stimulates their participation through vocational and skills training and by creating access to microfinance. Pride! is co-funded by the European Union. The role of Help a Child is to develop and facilitate community sessions with various stakeholder groups, using our proven and innovative What's Up?! approach. Through these sessions, the community can

identify barriers to and opportunities for the inclusion of women with and without disabilities.



1,370 adults involved in the programme



DRC AND BURUNDI

Breaking the silence around SGBV

In the DRC and Burundi, Help a Child is working on the upscaling journey for Empowered2Protect (E2P), an innovative approach to prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). E2P combines two elements: the Invi Bracelet as a non-violent self-defence tool and an inclusive community programme. When activated, the Invi Bracelet releases a foul odour to repel attackers in the event of an assault. The community-awareness sessions provide prevention strategies and build knowledge to empower women and men to take an active role in preventing SGBV.

Supported by the Dutch Relief Alliance Innovation Fund (DIF), E2P was piloted in the DRC in 2020. With follow-up funding from DIF, the main objective in 2021 and the first quarter of 2022 is to overcome barriers of scale. This includes improving the E2P Manual for the community sessions and a new design to reduce the price of a single Invi Bracelet.



In Burundi, E2P was launched during the '16 Days of Activism against SGBV' campaign in Bujumbura. Help a Child has cooperated with a number of top Burundian female singers to release a song called *HAGARIKA AMABI*: 'Stop violence against women'. The track made Burundi's hit list, reaching many thousands of people. In Fizi (DRC) and at Musasa refugee camp (Burundi), a total of 270 people (30 per cent of them men) have participated in E2P sessions and received an Invi Bracelet. This project has been implemented in cooperation with two national NGOs: Social Action for Development (SAD) in Burundi and CODEVAH in the DRC.

KENYA

Moving on to **support new communities**

Two CCCD projects in Kenya came to an end in 2021. After years of cooperation between the communities and Help a Child, the people of Matuu and Tamu organized a phase-out ceremony to celebrate the improvements made in recent years and their confidence to carry on the development by themselves.

At the same time, two new projects have been started: one in Kitui and one in Bomet. During the newly designed Community Challenge phase, time has been taken to discuss the needs and strengths of the communities involved in order to design the project well. Self-help groups have been established, as well as parent and farmer groups.

These community structures are expected to lay a strong foundation for sustainable child-focused development interventions in the coming years. With the start of the new projects, we have also welcomed two new implementing partners: for Kitui the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) and for Bomet Anglican Development Services (ADS).



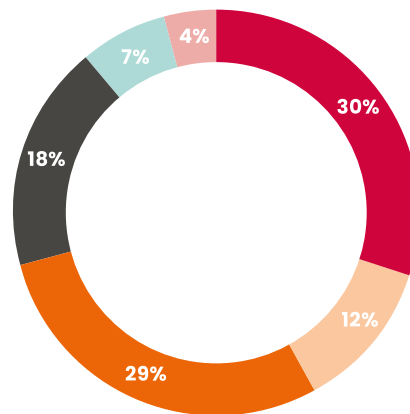
“We will ensure that none of the programmes started by Help a Child will stop. We shall continue well”

- Matuu community member

Women in Matuu showcasing the skills they have acquired and selling their products during the phase-out ceremony.

Purpose of loans in Kenya

In all its development projects, Kenya kept track of the purpose of loans from self-help groups received by households in 2021. Data shows that children benefit directly from the loans through school fees and medical expenses. Another observation is that at least 25 per cent of the loans are used for investments in agriculture and other income-generating activities, which means that households have space to plan ahead.



- % of loans for School Fees
- % of loans for Medical Expenses
- % of loans for Household Requirements
- % of loans for investments in Agriculture
- % of loans for other (individual) Income Generating Activities
- % of loans for other purposes



Bridging barriers for youth in post-conflict Burundi

5 lessons learned



Broken trust, lack of economic opportunities, polarization, unhealed trauma and a justice system deeply affected by reprisals, corruption and civil war. This is the challenging decor facing young Burundians looking for a livelihood, a future. The Building Bridges in Burundi (BBB) programme, led by Help a Child, has offered them a multidimensional approach to overcome those barriers.

Photo: Roleplay and narrative theatre allowed people who used to live in conflict to explore their problems and abilities together.

Funded through the Addressing Root Causes (ARC) programme of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Building Bridges in Burundi put young people from 15–25 years at the center of peaceful change. Besides impactful results, the programme has delivered many valuable lessons. Here we share five of them.

1. Mixed youth groups are bridge-builders par excellence

BBB established self-help groups as a structure for training, savings and loans know-how and joint income generation. Where possible, the groups were composed of youth from various backgrounds. This approach turned out to be a key strategy in allowing these youngsters to

meet household needs, strengthening social resilience and reducing negative interactions.

2. Informal justice systems have the potential to foster the rule of law

The BBB programme supported various traditional bottom-up mechanisms to play a role in conflict

“Before BBB, I hated anyone of this other ethnicity following my family’s painful experiences in the past. But once I started to participate in the programme, everything changed in me. I have now given myself the task of changing my friends who see things as I saw them in the past.”

BBB youth group participant

resolution. Independent research conducted in 2021 showed these informal justice systems make a significant contribution towards restoring the rule of law. Where the judicial system is broken, informal justice “reduces the distance between communities and judicial services in many aspects” and “allows for the acceptance of a certain order and feeling of a common belonging”.

3. A peaceful future can only be built upon a healed past

BBB linked community members to trauma healing and reconciliation services (THARS), helping youngsters and communities to deal with the legacies of a violent past. From participants, we received reactions like: *“This programme proves that together we can build something solid. United, we are the living force for the development of the country.”* This shows that psychosocial care and peacebuilding are interconnected in enabling sustainable community development.

4. Putting learning above log-frame opens ways for meaningful adaptation

Adaptive programming, which responds to a changing context and lessons learned, has allowed the programme to be highly relevant and to capitalize on new insights. In the original design of BBB, for example, trauma healing was a marginal element. As the programme progressed, however, it came to be emphasized much more strongly. The external evaluation report was positive about this learn-

ing-while-doing attitude, resulting in greater impact by “engaging more directly with reconciliation efforts at the community level”.

5. Patience in participatory approaches pays off

Improving the social contract between local authorities and civil society has been another focal area. Amongst other structures, BBB established and trained community-based mediators, transitional justice focal points and local committees for good governance. In all, 11 different stakeholders were involved in intergenerational dialogues. This long-haul commitment

to bottom-up mobilization was definitely rewarded by the willingness and confidence of the participants.

Despite fragile circumstances, the BBB programme was able to identify some solid foundations suitable for building bridges. These can serve as starting points for youth and community empowerment, both in Burundi and abroad. They support our vision for youth to be resilient, confident and ready for work. And they underline Help a Child’s drive for communities to gain social cohesion, to participate in economic development and to be able to cope with crises.

BBB established:

894 Self-Help-Groups


99 Cluster Level Associations

92% of project participants have confidence to address injustices within their communities.

154 Psycho-Social Assistants trained

15 Local Committees for Good Governance trained that raised awareness among **58,307 people**

11 different stakeholder groups involved in inter-generational reconciliation dialogues



In cooperation with: ALM, Biraturaba, CEJP, Centre Ubuntu, Fecabu, Geste Humanitaire, Help Channel, Kaz’o’zah, and THARS.

