



Scotland's International  
Development Alliance



# STEPPING UP TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MAPPING GLOBAL SDG PROGRESS BY MEMBERS OF  
SCOTLAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

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# HALFTIME FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

At this key moment, half way to the 2030 target for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this report seeks to map the contributions of our members against all 17 SDGs across the globe. These 12 different member stories, help demonstrate some of the positive impact that is happening.

The global reality though is very different. The UN Secretary General warned the world earlier this year that progress on the SDGs has been weak and insufficient and that we are in danger of leaving half of the world behind.

Since Scotland's International Development Alliance (SIDA) last reported on our members' contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2019, global inequalities have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, whose repercussions are still being felt around the world with millions of children still out of education. Inequalities have also been exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine which has had devastating effects on the world's poorest as a result of escalating food prices. The global challenge of the climate crisis further threatens progress and highlights the interconnection between all the SDGs.

In light of this, the 'Stepping up to the SDGs' report reassesses how SIDA members are implementing the SDG Agenda. By mapping the contributions of our member organisations in different countries against all 17 SDGs, we hope to raise awareness of the 2030 SDG Agenda and show how the SDGs are shaping global efforts towards sustainable development.

Through 12 different member stories which showcase a diverse range of projects undertaken across the world, this report provides an insight into how the SDGs are being implemented by our membership, and what this work looks like on a practical basis. Of course, this is just a snapshot of all the wonderful work our members do. By emphasising the interdependencies which exists between the 17 SDGs, we have a clear intention of building understanding of the holistic nature of sustainable development.

The importance of the 2030 Agenda is clear to many – it is the closest we have come so far to an internationally agreed blueprint for sustainable development. The SDGs act as a guideline for action for all countries, with the ultimate aim of saving the planet and ensuring that all people in it live free from poverty and deprivation. As the only inclusive membership body for all global sustainable development actors in Scotland, it is essential for us, our members, and our supporters to have a complete understanding of our role in achieving the SDGs.

We now stand at a pivotal moment, the journey ahead calls for accelerating global cooperation and innovation to build a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient world for all. I extend my thanks to our members for their contributions and use this report to reinstate SIDA's unwavering dedication to the SDGs.

**FRANCES GUY**

Chief Executive  
Scotland's International Development Alliance



# OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE

OUR MEMBERS ARE ADVANCING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGS IN OVER 160 COUNTRIES

## TOP 20 COUNTRIES

Countries	Number of members working there	Countries	Number of members working there
Malawi	32	Ethiopia	12
India	17	Lebanon	11
Rwanda	17	Nigeria	11
Uganda	17	Pakistan	11
Zambia	15	Yemen	11
Tanzania	14	Syria	10
Kenya	14	South Africa	10
Bangladesh	12	Indonesia	10
Zimbabwe	12	Ghana	9
Nepal	12	Brazil	9

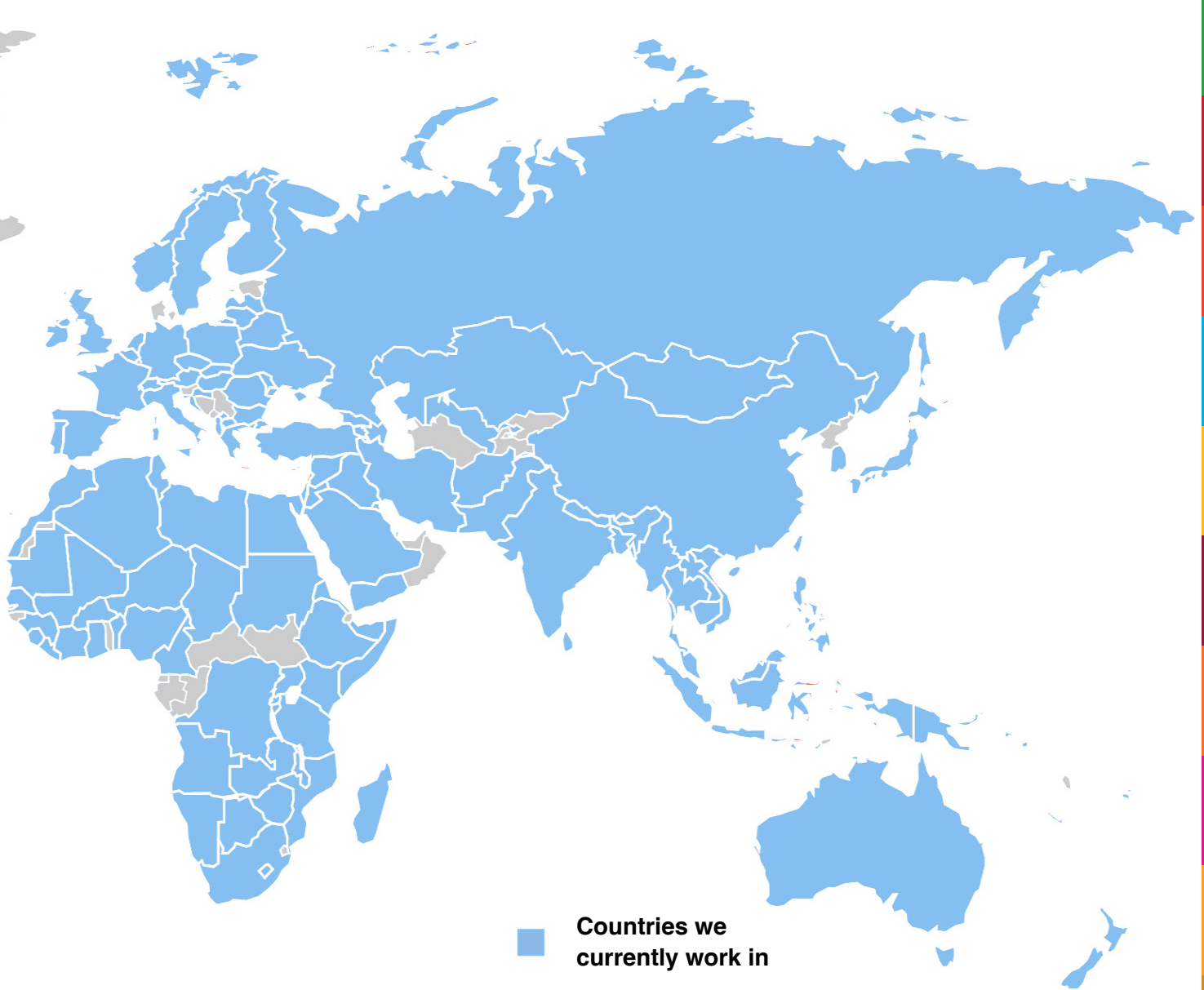
## STATISTICS

More members are working towards SDG4 than any other (54%)

SDG3 is the next most popular with our members (48%)

Outside of the UK, most of our members are working towards the SDGs in Malawi (23%)

For details of the research methodology visit: [www.intdevalliance.scot/research-methodology](http://www.intdevalliance.scot/research-methodology)



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	1 People	2 Zero	3 Good Health and Well-being	4 Quality Education	5 Gender Equality	6 Clean Water and Sanitation	7 Affordable and Clean Energy	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth	9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	10 Reduced Inequalities	11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	12 Responsible Consumption and Production	13 Climate Action	14 Life Below Water	15 Life on Land	16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	17 Partnerships for the Goals
SDGs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MEMBERS WORKING TOWARDS SDG	57	38	68	76	57	36	20	46	22	66	23	22	48	9	22	45	54

# THE SDGS

## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Despite their promise, progress towards the SDGs has been impeded by a combination of global events, including the climate crisis, conflict in Ukraine, a fragile global economy, and the lasting impacts of Covid-19. While progress lags globally, it's the world's most vulnerable who bear the greatest burden of these unprecedented challenges. This section highlights the need for urgent action to rescue the SDGs and deliver meaningful progress for people and the planet by 2030.



### 1 NO POVERTY

#### END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

For the first time in a generation, the number of people living in extreme poverty has increased. Recovery has been slow and uneven, compounded by various global challenges. By 2030, approximately 7% of the global population are expected to be in extreme poverty. Urgent action and investment are vital to expand social services, generate employment and empower marginalised communities.

SIDA members are working hard to progress SDG1; for example, Oxfam are confronting the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work to support women's economic empowerment (see more on p.40)



### 2 ZERO HUNGER

#### END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION, AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Between 2015 and 2021, the number of people experiencing hunger climbed from 589 million to 768 million. This rise in hunger and food insecurity is driven by a combination of challenges, including the pandemic, conflict, climate change, and growing inequalities. By 2030, approximately 8% of the world's population are expected to still be facing hunger, the same as in 2015. Attaining zero hunger by 2030 demands urgent action to transform food systems, guarantee food security, and foster the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices.

SCIAF are advancing progress towards SDG2 by enabling farming families to grow crops in an ecological and sustainable manner (see more on p.20)



## 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

Progress towards SDG3 has been hindered in recent years, with the pandemic and other ongoing crises worsening health inequalities and threatening the advancement of universal health coverage. This has been particularly challenging for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where health systems were already under-resourced before the pandemic. To overcome these setbacks, urgent action is needed to strengthen global health systems and tackle health disparities both within and between countries.

By delivering parenting programmes aimed at reducing preventable deaths among newborns in Turkey, Mellow Parenting are facilitating the realisation of SDG3 (read more on p.27)



## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION

### ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

While the pandemic has undoubtedly impeded progress towards SDG4, the world was not projected to meet its education targets even before this global crisis. Without further action, only a sixth of the world's nations are expected to achieve universal access to quality education by 2030. For the realisation of SDG4, it is vital that education systems are reformed, and educational investment is prioritised in every nation.

The Maitri Trust are advancing progress towards SDG4 by working with their funding partners to overcome the complex challenges faced within primary school systems in India and South Africa (see more on p.24)



## 5 GENDER EQUALITY

### ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Based on current projections, the world is unlikely to reach gender equality by 2030. Concurrent global crises have worsened existing gender disparities. Without further efforts to accelerate progress, estimations show that it might take 286 years to end discriminatory laws and 140 years to achieve workplace parity. To realise SDG5, immediate action is essential to dismantle the structures perpetuating these inequalities, requiring policy changes and shifts in political leadership that align with this transformative agenda.

SDG5 is a key driver of Link Education's work in Ethiopia as they focus on removing the barriers girls face in accessing education (read more on p.43)

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



6

## CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

### ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

Despite advancements in the provision of safe water, sanitation, and hygiene, these basic services are still inaccessible to a significant portion of the global population. Many parts of the world are experiencing increasing water shortages, with climate change and conflict only adding to the problem. This challenge has been further compounded by rising water pollution and its adverse impact on the health of people and the environment. If SDG6 is to be reached by 2030, swift action is needed with enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation, increased investment in infrastructure and further efforts to address climate change.

SIDA members are working hard to progress SDG6; for example, WaterAid are improving access to WASH facilities in Malawi (read more on p.46)

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



7

## AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

### ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

Although progress has been made towards the achievement of SDG7, 675 million people still don't have an established connection to electricity, and 2.3 billion people are reliant on unsafe fuels for cooking. Global energy prices have surged in response to the conflict in Ukraine and economic volatility, prompting some countries to increase their reliance on coal. This threatens the transition to renewable energy. Without action before 2030, approximately 660 million people will remain without electricity and almost 2 billion will remain reliant on harmful fuels for cooking.

Oxfam are addressing SDG7 by expanding the provision of fuel-efficient stoves in Zimbabwe (read more on p.40)

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



8

## DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

### PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

The cumulation of recent global challenges is threatening the global economy, thereby impeding the realisation of SDG8. This is putting people's jobs and pay at risk, particularly women and young people. If SDG8 is to be reached, our unjust financial system needs to be overhauled, with action needed to confront rising debts, restore economic stability and promote fair pay.

By training vulnerable young women to pursue careers in healthcare in Nepal, EMMS International are working hard to progress SDG8 (see more on p.30)



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



9

## INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALISATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

The manufacturing industry's recovery from the pandemic is still incomplete and uneven. Despite this, higher-technology industries have recovered faster and proved to be more resilient, highlighting the benefits of fostering innovation and technology transfer for all nations. The attainment of SDG9 is dependent on action to lower carbon emissions, increase global mobile broadband access, invest in advanced technologies and support the LMIC countries.

SDG9 is a key driver of Ripple Effect's work in eastern Africa as they are training farming families to harness their surplus produce and develop enterprises (read more on p.16)

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



10

## REDUCED INEQUALITY

### REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN & AMONG COUNTRIES

The cumulation of recent global events has augmented existing social, political and economic inequalities. This has exposed fragile social safety nets, with the poorest and most vulnerable communities bearing the greatest burden. The repercussions are especially pronounced for women and girls solely based on their gender. This vulnerability also extends to refugees, migrants, indigenous communities, the elderly, children and individuals with disabilities. Without further action, these groups are at the greatest risk of being left behind amidst these challenges.

Through their critical role scaling up surgical systems in LMICs, Kids Operating Room are reducing inequalities and advancing SDG10 (see more on p.34)

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



11

## SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

The pandemic, conflict, climate change, and escalating living costs have ignited substantial changes in migration patterns. This disparity is particularly pronounced in LMIC countries, with the associated expansion of slum populations. The number of countries implementing national disaster risk reduction strategies has more than doubled since 2015, showing increased awareness. To achieve SDG11, concerted efforts are needed to strengthen urban development planning, enhance public transportation accessibility, and elevate waste management practices.

The University of Strathclyde Centre for Sustainable Development is furthering progress towards SDG11 by working to help restore a sense of community in Townhead, an area of Glasgow close to the University's campus (read more on p.14)

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



12

## RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

### ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

The global economy is dependent on consumption and production, yet this foundation continues to have destructive repercussions for the planet. The convergence of the pandemic and other global crises has profoundly reshaped consumption and production patterns, disrupting supply chains and altering consumer behaviours. As we navigate recovery from these challenges, integrating responsible consumption and production is imperative. The attainment of SDG12 demands policies that ease the transition to sustainable practices and accelerate the separation of economic growth from resource use.

SDG 12 is a key driver of Ripple Effect's work in eastern Africa as they are training farming families how to implement more sustainable agricultural processes that have a climate-positive impact and develop food security (see more on p.16)

13 CLIMATE ACTION



13

## CLIMATE ACTION

### TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

The world is on the brink of a climate catastrophe, and current actions to address the crisis are insufficient. Without urgent action to curtail greenhouse gas emissions, the 1.5°C target hangs in the balance. This will lead to more extreme weather events, endangering the lives of more than 3 billion people. By 2030, emissions must be cut almost in half, an impending task with only seven years remaining. To combat climate change and its impacts by 2030, it is vital that the global response is strengthened in line with the commitments set out in the Paris Agreement.

SIDA members are working hard to progress SDG13; for example, WaterAid are contributing positively to the fight against the climate crisis by expanding the use of solar powered reticulated water supply systems and water pumps in Malawi (read more on p.46)

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



14

## LIFE BELOW WATER

### CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The ocean drives global systems that make the Earth habitable. Despite this, it is threatened by increasing acidification, eutrophication, dwindling fish populations, and increased plastic pollution. While there have been advancements in expanding marine protected areas and combating illicit fishing practices, more concerted efforts are needed to amplify these gains. With 2030 approaching, the need for urgent and coordinated global action is critical to save our oceans and accelerate progress towards the realisation of SDG14.

By protecting their habitats from floods and droughts, NatureScot are increasing the resilience of fish populations in Scotland and furthering progress towards the realisation of SDG14 (read more on p.38).



## 15 LIFE ON LAND

### **PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS**

Nature is critical to our survival, yet it is threatened by the effects of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. The proliferation of deforestation, land degradation and species extinction continue to endanger the health of both people and the planet. Without urgently changing our relationship with the natural environment, SDG15 will not be realised.

SDG15 is a key driver of SCIAF's work in Zambia as they are teaching farming families new farming techniques that improve the resilience of the land (read more on p.20)



## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

### **PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS**

Progress towards SDG 16 has been jeopardised by violent conflicts. As of May 2022, approximately 100 million people around the world had been forcibly displaced from their homes, a number that has doubled over the past decade. Peaceful and inclusive societies have been put further out of reach by ineffective institutions, structural injustices, inequalities and emerging human rights challenges. If SDG16 is to be met by 2030, urgent action is crucial to rebuild trust and strengthen the capacity of institutions to ensure justice for all.

Save the Children are advancing SDG16 by helping to ensure that future policy decisions are informed by children's needs in countries around the world (read more on p.12)



## 17 PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS

### **STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALISE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Progress towards SDG17 has been constrained by a decline in development funding, with donor countries falling short of their pledge to increase aid. This has been further compounded by geopolitical tensions and growing nationalism, impeding efforts to achieve international cooperation. In the midst of these complexities, LMIC countries are now grappling with soaring inflation, mounting interest rates, and impending debt challenges. Strong international cooperation is needed now more than ever to ensure that countries have the necessary resources to overcome current global challenges and accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

SIDA members are working hard to progress SDG17; for example, the University of Strathclyde Centre for Sustainable Development are fostering collaboration between university students and staff in countries across the world (see more on p.14)



Yareli

Fin de la pobreza...

Antes

Despues

en un futuro las  
pobres tendran una  
buena casa un trabajo  
fijo y suficientes recursos

Credits: Andrea Delgado/Save The Children  
Description: Yareli participating in child-informed VNR reporting In Ethiopia

# GIVING VOICE TO FUTURE GENERATIONS



## SAVE THE CHILDREN



Save the Children exists to ensure that the world's most vulnerable children survive, learn and are protected in over one hundred countries around the world. Lilei Chow, Global Technical Lead for the SDGs at Save the Children, told us how they're working to shift power directly to the hands of children and communities.

1

Credits: Lilei Chow/Save the Children

Description: Tatu speaking at the high-level political forum in New York, July 2023

## POWER TO THE CHILDREN

**“Children are agents of change and policy should be informed by what they want and need...this is how we make change happen for children around the world.”**

Save the Children believe that the SDGs are inextricably linked to the rights of children and mutually reinforcing. As part of their Child Rights Governance Programming and advocacy, they have facilitated the involvement of children in Voluntary National Reviews (VNR). This is a vital process which examines a nation's progress towards achieving the SDGs. According to Lilei, children's voices are being heard for the first time in all the countries where they've implemented this approach, thereby helping to ensure that future policy decisions are informed by children's needs.

**“Having children speak truth to power is the way we change the world.”**

**“Whether we're looking at climate change or poverty, the SDG agenda is the best framework we have to address the overlapping crises we face.”**

## FACILITATING A WHOLE SOCIETY APPROACH

Save the Children has been focussed on facilitating a broader range of partnerships to allow for power to be shared with smaller grassroots organisations. According to Lilei, this approach can allow for the inclusion of a more diverse range of views, especially from those who are the most impacted by inequality and discrimination.

**“The SDGs can't be realised without a whole society approach.”**

## SPEAKING UP IN NEW YORK

Although Lilei believes the SDGs do recognise children as agents of change, she stressed that many UN agencies don't know how to engage with children or truly realise that their participation is a means of meeting the SDGs.

To amplify the voices of children, Save the Children invited a 16-year-old advocate from Tanzania called Tatu to a UN conference in New York. Tatu is a Youth Advocate and Chair of the Central

District Uinguja Children’s Council. By speaking with policymakers directly about her experiences, Tatu was able to influence conference proceedings.

Tatu says that we need to increase the number of children in meetings so that the views, ideas and opinions of children can be heard loud and clear. She wants to be a good leader who can help children to grow well and attain their goals.

**“I want to see large numbers of children getting the opportunity to expose their challenges in front of the government officers so that they can be solved immediately.”**

## A CHILD’S PERSPECTIVE OF THE SDGS

Lilei shared some of the different ways children have approached the VNR process. For example, in Ethiopia, the children used drawings, while in Zambia, they had to communicate virtually and utilise video recordings due to the pandemic. According to Lilei, children have a less rigid way of thinking, which allows them to come up with unique perspectives and engage with the interconnected nature of the goals.

**“Children get the issues. They care deeply about climate change, they care deeply about inequality. I’m always amazed at how rich their perspective is.”**

# CONNECTING OVER CLIMATE

## UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



The University of Strathclyde Centre for Sustainable Development supports the University’s global socially progressive vision, of which sustainable development is an integral component. They’re bringing together their long-standing research and education work on sustainable development into a single strategic approach, with the SDGs providing focus and direction across the institution.

We spoke with Tracy Morse, Head of the Centre for Sustainable Development, to discover how they are integrating the SDGs into the University’s work.



**“We have a moral imperative to ensure that the work we’re doing is contributing to the world being a better place for everyone.”**

## SPOTLIGHT ON... CLIMATE CONNECT

**“It’s about learning to work with other countries, learning about other people’s perspectives, and learning to listen. Better understanding of climate science and the SDGs is definitely needed, but if we don’t understand how to work together effectively, then none of that matters.”**

With Glasgow playing host to COP26, Tracy and her team were determined to bring students into the climate conversation. This subsequently led to the creation of Strathclyde’s ‘Climate Connect’ programme, which enables Strathclyde students and staff to collaborate with their peers from universities in Canada, China, Malawi, South Africa and Sweden. Those participating in Climate Connect discuss the context of climate change and the sustainability agenda from the perspective of their respective countries. By fostering global collaboration, the programme enables participants to develop different disciplinary perspectives while also expanding their international outlook.

## CREATING SUSTAINABILITY LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

After participating in the Climate Connect programme, some students have been motivated to engage further with the SDGs. Tracy shared a story about one student involved with Climate Connect who went on to become the student executive for community and sustainability. Now entering her second year in the role, she continues to drive many of Strathclyde’s student sustainability campaigns.

## EDUCATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Integrating and mainstreaming sustainable development into educational offerings at the University has been a focus of the Centre for Sustainable Developments activities. As well as specific focused offerings such as Climate Connect, and their award winning Vertically Integrated Projects for Sustainable Development, the University has committed to ensuring that all programmes are teaching the skills and competencies our future graduates will need to tackle sustainable development challenges. Key to this is the support for staff to understand how Education for Sustainable Development aligns with work that they are already doing, and opportunities where this can be extended throughout the curriculum.

**“We’re not always asking people to do anything differently. We want them to reflect on what they are doing now and articulate it through a sustainable development lens.”**



## THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

The Centre strives to understand the needs of the people they are trying to support both in their research and their future careers, with Tracy emphasising the importance of listening for successful collaboration.

**“There is no point in developing solutions for people when we haven’t actually asked users/beneficiaries what the problem is in the first place.”**

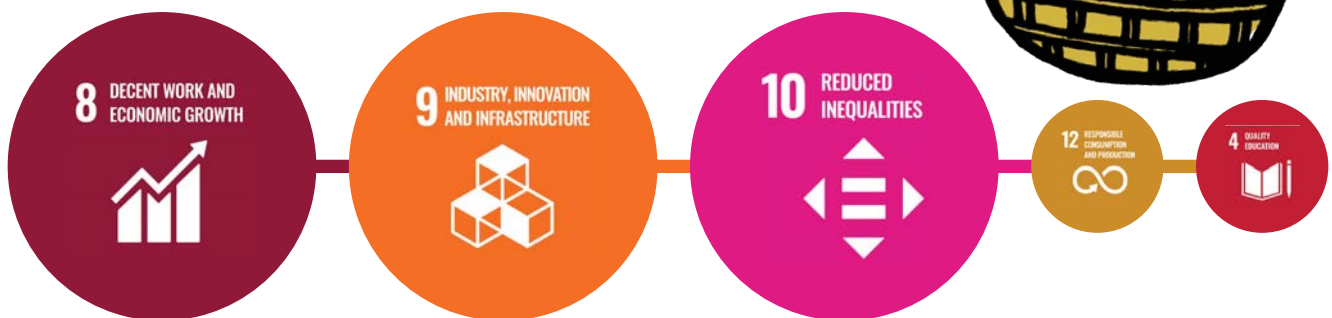
For example, Climate Connect has encouraged Global North students to think differently about the urgency of the climate crisis by allowing them to understand the impact it’s already having on their peers in different contexts. Students from Malawi emphasised the reality of climate change after explaining how their country now experiences the impact of extreme weather such as cyclones annually where they were previously less frequent and severe. By fostering international collaborations, they have enabled students and staff to understand sustainability challenges from a global perspective.

**“It’s important to understand that knowledge and understanding comes from lots of different places, and not just from textbooks and professors.”**

# FROM FOOD SECURITY TO BUILDING THRIVING COMMUNITIES



## RIPPLE EFFECT



Ripple Effect are fighting poverty and building sustainable livelihoods in eastern Africa. They work with farming families, training them how to implement more sustainable agricultural processes that have a climate-positive impact and develop food security. Ripple Effect actively recruit marginalised and excluded people to be involved in their projects. Once farmers are food secure, Ripple Effect encourage them to see their farm as a business that can generate income and create stable futures.

Deogratious Egeru, Enterprise, Development & Innovation Regional Coordinator at Ripple Effect, told us how they’re working to transform lives in eastern Africa.

**“Our mission is to inspire and equip African communities to transform their lives and protect their planet. We want to see a confident and thriving sustainable rural Africa.”**

**“In East Africa, we are faced with a lot of problems such as extreme poverty, inequality and climate change. We need to focus our efforts to address them and this is exactly what the SDGs have to offer.”**

## **BUILDING INCOME SECURITY**

**“We want to go beyond just food security with those people that we work with. We want the families to thrive and not just merely survive.”**

As soon as a farmer produces enough food to meet their own needs, Ripple Effect encourage them to get their surplus produce to market. As part of this enterprise programme, they train farmers to understand market systems and encourage the development of their business ideas, with a particular focus on expanding employment opportunities for young people.

**“In Africa, there are a lot of resources that could help people get out of poverty. What is missing is the expertise and knowledge required to harness these opportunities.”**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON... BURUNDI**

Deogratiou shared one story of a youth cooperative supported by the organisation. The Umoco Cooperative Youth Group in the Mwaro province of central Burundi have been training with Ripple Effect since August 2021: learning the techniques of agroecological farming and how to develop agribusinesses.



**Credits: Ripple Effect**  
**Description: Beninge Niyunkuru (far left) and members of the Umoco Co-operative Youth Group with the 2,500kg of potatoes harvested with their agroecological training**

Credits: Alex Turysingura  
Description: Maendeleo B Farmer Association

They have been supported in renting land for growing, and with improved seeds for potatoes, beans and wheat. They harvested 2,500kg of potatoes from 419 kg of potato seed. Beninge Niyunkuru (pictured, far left) says: “Before, we each used to eat once a day. From our harvest we got enough food to eat and with the surplus we earned 2,715,000 Burundian Francs (£757).”

**“We plan to rear goat soon, starting with 30 goats.”**

## SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATION

**“Our experience has shown that the communities we work with benefit more when organisations work together effectively.”**

Ripple Effect have an ambitious goal to reach 5 million more people by 2030, and Deogratious believes that partnerships are key to achieving this. According to Deogratious, Ripple Effect’s current partners have different areas of expertise, which ultimately benefit the project participants.

**“Long-term sustainable collaboration with local organisations has added value over and above what Ripple Effect could deliver alone.”**

## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN UGANDA

Uganda, a country the same size as the United Kingdom, currently hosts the largest refugee population in Africa. Support for this community has put the country’s resources at risk of being overwhelmed. Ripple Effect’s Enterprise work is providing refugees with opportunities to build sustainable livelihoods.

Deogratious explained how one group of refugees was supported by Ripple Effect’s Enterprise scheme. They had a beverage that was very popular in their home country made from milk, sugar and maize. With the local community growing the raw materials, Ripple Effect helped them turn this beverage into an enterprise. After providing the necessary training and resources, the group were able to produce a product that has given them another source of income, thereby reducing their reliance on other forms of temporary support.

**“If we can combat poverty and provide the opportunity for people to work and be included in their local economy, then we will be solving a lot of things.”**

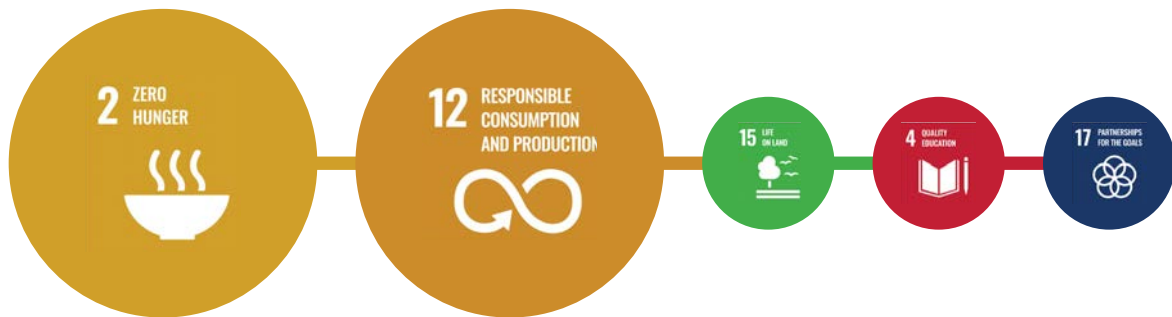


Credits: Colin Hattersley/SCIAF  
Description: Ruth Musonda, Kabwe, Zambia - June 2022

# TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH ECOLOGICAL FARMING



## SCIAF



The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) is the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland. SCIAF’s vision is to build a just and green world, with a particular focus on improving livelihoods, building peaceful communities, providing access to tools, training and education, and responding quickly to emergencies around the world. Alongside this international mission, SCIAF promotes an understanding of development issues at home in Scotland through partnerships with local schools and parishes.

We spoke with Ben Wilson, Head of Advocacy at SCIAF, to explore the impact of their work in Zambia.

**“SCIAF are relatively small in of ourselves, but we’re able to use our global network to make a big impact in the communities we serve.”**

## SPOTLIGHT ON... ZAMBIA

Zambia sits on the frontline of the climate crisis – a crisis that is beyond the country’s control, and which is having a devastating impact on its people. For communities that survive by farming, life is becoming increasingly difficult with changing weather patterns and an increasing frequency of floods and droughts.

SCIAF’s Kumena Project (funded by SCIAF’s supporters and the Scottish Government) has enabled 1,000 farming families in the central province of Zambia to grow crops in an ecological and sustainable manner. This improves the resilience and long-term productivity of the soil, while also making income and livelihoods more robust.

Before receiving support, Aggrey and his wife Ruth struggled to afford their children’s uniforms and books. Often, the family would eat just once a day. After becoming involved with the Kumena project, however, they learned a range of new farming techniques which enabled them to farm organically and grow more food. This has had a remarkable impact on their lives, providing them with more certainty for the future.

**“Before, it was very, very difficult to grow food for my family. From SCIAF and their partners, we received tremendous support, right from the beginning. We now grow soybeans, sunflowers, maize, tomatoes, kale and cabbage. We sell some and consume the rest.”**

## PROFITS OVER PEOPLE

In promoting agroecological farming methods, the Kumena Project decreases reliance on chemical fertilisers and hybrid seeds which need to be replaced every season. This helps local people to return to traditional socio-agricultural practices that better meet their needs. However, this project has been met with some resistance from large corporate interests. Ben worries this will be a challenge to creating long-term change in Zambia.

**“The biggest barrier to achieving the SDGs is corporate power. Sustainable development that meets the needs of people must be based on common good economics, not the pursuit of unlimited growth and profits on a finite planet.”**

## GOING FURTHER TOGETHER

**“If we recognise that there’s something that we don’t know – or we’re not total experts on – we find a partner who is an expert to help give us that advice.”**

SCIAF is part of Caritas Internationalis, a global network of Catholic relief and development charities around the world. Caritas have developed a set of partnership principles that help guide the way SCIAF work, with local partnerships being a central part of this.

In places like Zambia, SCIAF co-designs and implements projects together with local partners and promotes the further localisation of aid, building the power of grassroots organisations. According to Ben, this has fostered strong international relationships as it enables those involved to work towards global goals while still advancing their respective national objectives.



**“When we develop a project, we use participatory methods to make sure that it’s coming from the local communities. It helps you see things – and identify needs – that you wouldn’t know unless you did that engagement.”**

Credits: Colin Hattersley/SCIAF  
Description: Aggrey Luvila and Ruth Musonda in Kabwe, Zambia - June 2022



Credits: Image courtesy of Edufundi, South Africa.  
Description: A grade 1 teacher at Eskhuliliwe primary, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, using a 'teach like a champion' technique – threshold – to get learners ready to begin their lesson.



# EDUCATION FOR A FAIRER WORLD



## THE MAITRI TRUST



Established in 2006, the Maitri Trust believes that high-quality education for every child is the keystone to eradicating poverty and creating fairer and more socially responsible societies. By funding partners in India and South Africa, they are working to overcome the complex challenges faced within primary school systems. By improving education at this key early stage, the Trust aims to set children up for better lifelong outcomes.

We spoke with Luke Aspinall, Chief Executive Officer of the Maitri Trust, to find out more about their work supporting the transformation of education systems in South Africa and India. Luke is passionate about partnerships and believes the Trust has the greatest impact when its partners are supported to work effectively and efficiently within a collaborative ecosystem.

**“The earlier you intervene, the better. If you get in early, you’ve got a better chance of setting children on a different life trajectory.”**



Credits: Image courtesy of Edufundi, South Africa.

Description: Mentoring support in grade 2, Shembe primary, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa: one of our mentors supporting learners to keep the class engaged while the teacher writes on the board.

## SPOTLIGHT ON... SOUTH AFRICA

Since 2016, The Maitri Trust has been involved with a project in the Western and Eastern Cape provinces in South Africa called Public School Partnerships. This is a public-private partnership between government, civil society and the school community. The government identifies schools that operate in challenging socio-economic environments and partners them, individually or in clusters, with a not-for-profit operating partner. Although the school remains a government school, the partner shares accountability for the management of that school to transform the quality of education it provides. Operating partners support the school with its operations and finances while also providing coaching and training to the school's leadership team and its teachers.

**“The problem is not attendance. It’s the quality of the learning that goes on in those schools once the kids get into them. And that’s where the real crisis is happening.”** 

Through this process, the partner aims to turn the school around, with improvements in the quality of education leading to improved learning outcomes for pupils. According to Luke, the project has now supported 19 schools with approximately 300 educators and 10,000 pupils. While the project is currently being piloted, a Western Cape Government has set up a unit to oversee how this model can best be scaled across the province and potentially beyond.

**“The primary schools involved with this project are recovering quicker in their learning losses due to Covid-19 than comparable schools within the system.”**

## TAKING THE LEAD IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Luke shared a story about the impact the Public School Partnerships project has had on Boundary Primary in the Western Cape. The role of a school principal is tricky in South Africa, with a lack of resources often meaning that they spend most of their day pulled between teaching, administration, or providing compliance with government rules and regulations. This often leaves them with relatively little time to actually lead the school's educational delivery or to support and coach its teachers. Boundary Primary therefore teamed up with an operating partner called Common Good that helped the principal transform their role. As part of this, an extra teaching post was funded to free up some of the principal's time. Common Good also supports them with the administrative and financial side of operating the school and leadership coaching. Over a nine-month period, gradual changes have meant the principal is now focused on coaching staff and providing overall leadership to the school. According to Luke, they are now much more on top of their workload, which has improved results across the board for the school.



Credits: Image courtesy of Edfundi, South Africa.

Description: Grade 4 class at Sikhothina primary school, eastern Cape, South Africa: the application of 'teach like a champion' techniques help a class maintain discipline.



Credits: Rachel Tainsh  
Description: Mellow Parenting groups and facilitators in Tajikistan.

# EARLY INTERVENTION FOR LIFELONG IMPACT

## MELLOW PARENTING



Mellow Parenting envisions a world where every parent-child relationship can flourish and achieve the best possible outcomes for future generations. To achieve this, they train people through their parenting programmes. By working in partnership with organisations in the UK and internationally, Mellow Parenting are implementing their programmes worldwide.

Rachel Tainsh, International Programme Lead at Mellow Parenting, shared how they support parents in Turkey and Tajikistan.

**“There are a number of SDGs relevant to the work we do. It’s really interesting to see parenting framed through a public health lens, with parenting interventions reducing child maltreatment.”**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON...TURKEY**

During the pandemic, Mellow Parenting started delivering an online programme called ‘Mellow Bumps’ in Turkey. According to Rachel, the main purpose of the programme was to reduce preventable deaths among newborns. After conducting research with a local partner organisation named Sunflower, it was found that the ‘Mellow Bumps’ programme was able to reach remote areas of Turkey that wouldn’t have previously had access to antenatal support. Online groups were able to support expectant mothers, which resulted in improved mental wellbeing.

**“We don’t want to take our programmes and plonk them on people, that’s really not what we do. We work with our partners to think, ok, what’s going to work in your situation? It’s really important to build a good relationship with our partners and to understand where they’re coming from.”**

## **PUTTING FAMILIES FIRST IN TAJIKISTAN**

Rachel shared a story about how the programme has impacted one mother in Tajikistan. Her child was born with a disability, and she received very little support due to the associated shame and stigma. Mellow Parenting’s local partners were able to work with the mother and her little boy, preventing the baby from going into institutional care. Still dealing with negativity from her family, the mother undertook a 14-week group programme with Mellow Parenting, which provided her with the chance to share her story and feel listened to.

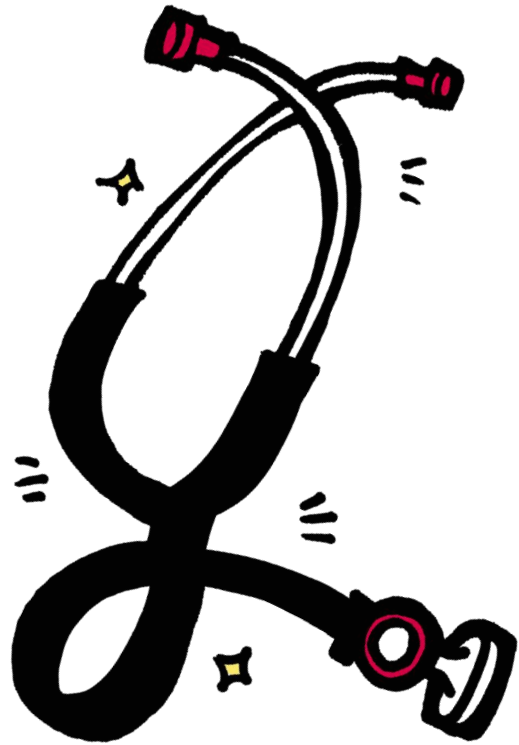
Rachel recently received a photograph of the son, who is now attending school. Without the early intervention facilitated by Mellow Parenting, the mother and son might not have reached this point together.

**“Supporting families and children in the early years gives them the best start in life and this contributes to the global goals.”**

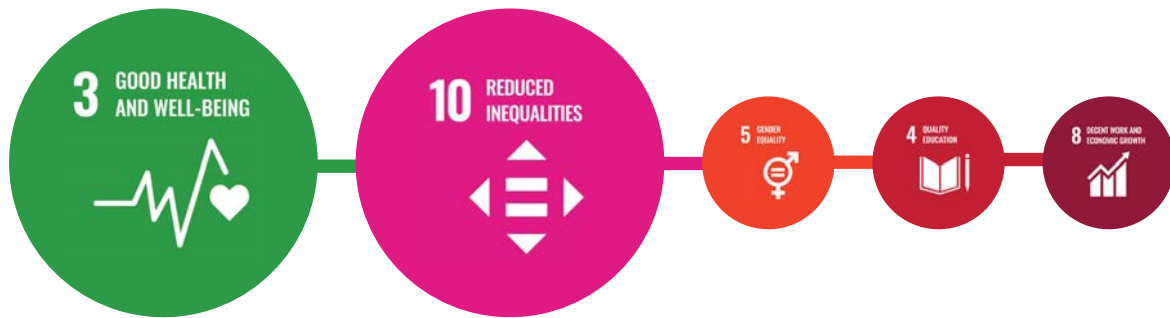


Credits: Ruth Russell  
Description: Palliative care training in Nepal.

# EMPOWERING WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE FOR OVER 100 YEARS



## EMMS INTERNATIONAL



Established in 1841, EMMS International is Scotland’s longest-serving international healthcare charity. They currently work in Malawi, Nepal, India and Scotland, helping families gain access to healthcare services that are both financially and environmentally sustainable.

We spoke with Cathy Ratcliff, Chief Executive Officer and Director of International Programmes at EMMS International, to find out more about their palliative care programme.

**“The SDG on health and well-being is the one that we major on, but everything we do also affects other SDGs. By helping young women into healthcare careers and ensuring hospitals are able to give good affordable care, we’re also helping to reduce poverty.”**



Credits: Kieran Dodds

Description: Nurse Annie on a palliative care home visit.

## PROVIDING CARE AT THE END OF LIFE

**“In its purely medical sense, we help ensure that people get the pain relief they need. We also try and ensure that the whole family is prepared for the fact that there is going to be a death.”**

EMMS International has established itself as an expert in palliative care, ensuring that some of the poorest people in the world have their medical needs met at the end of life. Cathy explained that the palliative care programme also alleviates the financial burden of illness and enables children to continue their education instead of taking on a care role at home.

**“When a family experiences a life-limiting condition, they spend all the money that they’ve got trying to find a cure. They get into debt. We can help stop that spiral into poverty just by recruiting people into a good palliative care programme.”**

## SPOTLIGHT ON... MALAWI

Working in partnership with the Palliative Care Association of Malawi, EMMS International facilitated the ‘Chifundo project’. This was intended to increase the number of people trained to deliver palliative care in hard-to-reach facilities across Malawi. Lameck Thambo, National Coordinator at the Palliative Care Association of Malawi, told us that when people are diagnosed with a terminal illness in Malawi they are usually cared for by family in their local village. With limited access to palliative care services in such rural areas, families assume the burden of care, with expensive travel often required to obtain medical support or pain medication. By improving access to palliative care in rural communities, the Chifundo project has helped to relieve some of this burden while also ensuring that patients are free from pain and distress.

**“Working in partnership, we have managed to achieve more than working by ourselves.”**



## SPOTLIGHT ON...NEPAL

In Nepal, only 1.7% of families needing palliative care have access to it. EMMS International has been working in partnership with the International Nepal Fellowship (INF) to support the development of palliative care. The project started in 2013 with just a few beds at Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara, Nepal's second-largest city. With the recent expansion of a dedicated palliative care unit, the introduction of a community support initiative, and the establishment of a training centre, Green Pastures Hospital has evolved into a centre of excellence for palliative care.

## IT FEELS LIKE FAMILY

Dr Ruth Powys, palliative care specialist at Green Pastures Hospital, shared one story of a man whose life was affected by the palliative care project in Nepal. The man had become quadriplegic after falling down a cliff. According to Ruth, he ended up developing some of the worst pressure sores she had ever seen. His son became his sole carer, so the palliative care team at Green Pastures Hospital has continued to support them both. They have even provided a carer allowance to the son, enabling him to continue his education. Without this support, Ruth explained that the son would have had to leave school and find work to afford food.

**“My father wouldn't be alive if there was no palliative care; there wouldn't have been any other options. The staff taught me how to take care of him.”**

**“The staff members in the palliative care are very special. It feels like a family.”**

## IMPROVING ACCESS BY REMOVING BARRIERS

Through the provision of healthcare training programmes, EMMS International enables vulnerable young women to further their education and obtain careers in healthcare. According to Cathy, many of those involved with the programme come from rural areas where the healthcare workforce is limited, and many return to work in their local communities once qualified. This has improved the provision of healthcare in these rural locations.

**“My favourite photos are of young women before they've gone to college and they really don't look confident, and then you see them in their uniform next to a patient's bed and it's just utterly transformative.”**

Credits: Ruth Russell  
Description: Palliative care training in Nepal.



Credits: KidsOR  
Description: Muhimbili National Hospital, Tanzania.

# A SURGICAL SOLUTION



## KIDS OPERATING ROOM



Kids Operating Room (KidsOR) believe in a world where every child can access safe surgery. To achieve this mission, they install operating theatres for children and provide specialised training to local surgeons. Formally established in 2018, KidsOR have installed over 70 operating rooms in hospitals across Africa Latin America and South Asia, thereby creating the capacity to realise timely, affordable, safe, and quality paediatric surgical care for over 100,000 children. Their goal is to enable the next 100,000 life-changing operations by 2025.

Maíra Fedatto, Director of Research & Advocacy at KidsOR, spoke to us about their critical role in scaling up surgical systems in LMICs.

**“It’s very important to highlight that today 1.75 billion children don’t have access to surgery and the majority of these children are in low-income countries. So, when you invest in surgery, you are also supporting the path towards reducing inequality.”**



Credits: KidsOR  
Description: Kamuzu Central Hospital, Malawi

## SPOTLIGHT ON... KENYA

Maíra told us that safe surgical care is not always a possibility for children living in refugee settings. Together with the UN Refugee Agency, the International Rescue Committee, and the Biltema Foundation, KidsOR installed the world's first children's operating room in Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp. This is the world's largest and most established refugee camp, with a population which includes around 40,000 children.

Led by Kenyan paediatric surgeon Neema Kaseje, the theatre is expected to care for around 1000 children every year. To construct the operating room, KidsOR shipped over 3000 components to Kenya. This proved more challenging than initially anticipated due to recent supply chain interruptions caused by the pandemic and other global events.

**“Refugees’ health profile is markedly singular. Paediatric populations have particularly high rates of burns, trauma, and orthopaedic injuries. And while being and staying healthy is a fundamental right of every human being, refugees are a commonly forgotten population in health strategies.”**

## THE 100KM JOURNEY FOR SURGERY

Without access to safe, quality and timely surgical care, children are at risk of experiencing lifelong disability or death from treatable conditions. Maíra shared a story of a mother and daughter who walked 100km to the operating room in Kakuma, the only way they could access surgical care. After receiving surgery, the child was able to attend school for the first time. There is a questionless link amongst good health and quality education. KidsOR collects data to understand the relation between surgical conditions and school absence. Out of nearly 2000 patients aged between 4 and 18 who underwent procedures in their operating theatres, a notable 34% were not attending school, with 51% of these cases attributed to their surgical conditions.

**“When surgical needs are properly met, not only can children attend school regularly, but it also reduces social stigma, bullying, and social exclusion.”**

## LISTEN TO THE LOCALS

**“To have an impact you need to listen to what people want and need. I can install an amazing operating room, but if I don’t talk to anyone, it might be in a place that people can’t reach.”**

Maíra told us that KidsOR won’t install an operating room until they first understand the priorities of the people it’s intended to help. By listening to local communities, governments and the surgical workforce, KidsOR are able to build contextual understanding which maximises the impact of their work.

**“Something that works in Malawi might not work in Kabul or Ecuador. There could be other barriers that hamper access. Without an understanding of the context, you might not be helping.”**



Credits: KidsOR  
Description: Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Nigeria



“Peatland ACTION is an opportunity to revitalise the rural economy. It’s a nature-based solution to a societal problem - a lot of our work over the years has emphasised the social and economic benefits that come with investments in nature.”

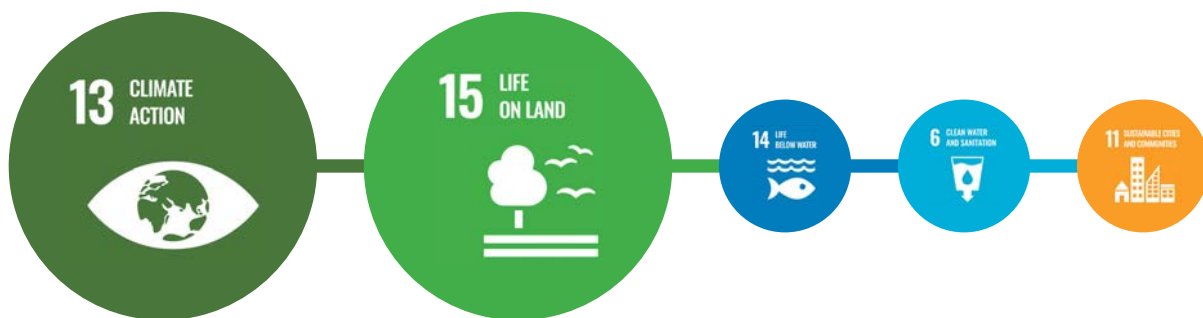
Credits: Lorne Gill/SNH

Description: Andrew McBride (SNH peatland restoration project manager) leading a peatland action demonstration day at Cairnmore of fleet national nature reserve, Dumfries and Galloway, October 2017

# THINKING GLOBAL, ACTING LOCAL



## NATURESCOT



NatureScot is Scotland's leading nature agency. They seek to inspire, enthuse, and influence others to manage natural resources in a sustainable way. While NatureScot acts locally in Scotland, the impacts of their work extends globally.

Clive Mitchell, Strategic Resource Manager at NatureScot, talked to us about how they are protecting the planet by restoring peatlands across Scotland.

**“Interpretations of the SDGs require a recognition of their coherence. Pursuing one SDG shouldn't negatively impact progress on another.”**

## SPOTLIGHT ON... SCOTLAND

Due to historical damage from drainage and overgrazing, peatlands are now one of Scotland's largest degraded ecosystems. When peatlands are degraded, they become sources of greenhouse gas emissions – contributing to climate change rather than mitigating it. Since 2012, NatureScot has been working to restore peatlands across Scotland through their 'Peatland ACTION' project. According to Clive, peatland restoration is one of the most effective ways of locking in carbon, offering a nature-based solution to both the climate crisis and biodiversity loss. The project supports Scotland's transition to net-zero while also strengthening the rural economy through the creation of jobs. Through the 'Peatland ACTION' Project, around 42,000 hectares of degraded peatland have already been set on the road to recovery.

### A NATURE-BASED SOLUTION TO A SOCIETAL PROBLEM

Peatland restoration has other benefits too. Clive explained that peatland plays a key role in the storage and purification of water. The 'Peatland ACTION' project has thereby contributed to improved water quality and a reduced risk of flooding. Not only has this enabled Scotland's water industry to reduce costs associated with purification and flooding, but it has also benefited marine life. While flood prevention reduces the risk of fish eggs being swept away, increased water storage capacity helps prevent river habitats from drying up during droughts. By increasing the resilience of fish populations, the project has supported the sustainability of salmon fishing, an industry which contributes £24m per year to the local economy and supports over 500 jobs.

**“Peatland ACTION is an opportunity to revitalise the rural economy. It's a nature-based solution to a societal problem - a lot of our work over the years has emphasised the social and economic benefits that come with investments in nature.”**

### UNITING SECTORS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Implementing the Peatland ACTION programme illustrates the need for collaborative approaches, with NatureScot working in cooperation with partners across the third sector, public sector, and private sector. According to Clive, partnerships have always been hugely important to NatureScot's work, and they are vital to the advancement of the SDGs.

Similar approaches will be needed to restore other habitats, including woodlands, grasslands, hedges, scrub, coastal and seabed habitats at the pace and scale required necessary to address the climate-nature crisis.

**“We are a relatively small organisation with a relatively small footprint in Scottish terms, so we have to work in partnership, not only with different sectors but also the local communities impacted by our work.”**

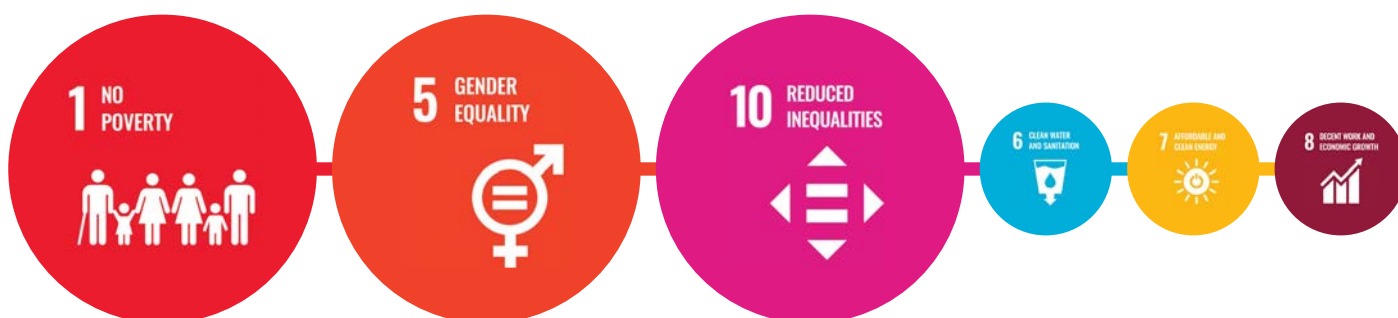


Credits: Cynthia Matonhodze/Oxfam

Description: A portrait of Catharine and her son Tino at their home in Hatcliffe, Harare, Zimbabwe. Catharine is part of Oxfam's WE-care programme where she volunteers in her community to raise awareness of the benefits of women and men sharing care tasks. For Catharine, these conversations began at home with her youngest son Tino.

# REWRITING NORMS: PAVING THE PATH TO GENDER EQUALITY

## OXFAM



Established in 1942, Oxfam is a global confederation comprised of 21 member organisations. They work together with thousands of partners and allies across regions in 86 countries, challenging the injustices and inequalities that keep people locked in poverty.

Regis Mtutu, Oxfam's Women's Rights and Gender Justice Coordinator told us about their work tackling the inequalities that face women in Zimbabwe.

**“Ending poverty, ending hunger, ensuring that men and women have access to clean water and sanitation are some of the main challenges that the world faces. The SDGs are very important in that they give a good framework globally, regionally and at country level to address such challenges.”**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON...ZIMBABWE**

Oxfam believe that the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work creates barriers for sustainable development. Women living in poverty shoulder the heaviest responsibility for this type of work. An unequal, and often arduous, care and domestic workload robs them of their time and limits their access to opportunities outside of the home, hindering progress towards the SDGs. Active since 2014, Oxfam’s Women’s Economic Empowerment and Care (WE-Care) programme addresses unpaid care and domestic work as a key driver of gender inequality. Oxfam’s work in Zimbabwe includes practical solutions such as providing new infrastructure, and initiatives in communities to challenge social norms.



## **GIVING EVERYONE A CHOICE**

Inadequate water systems, fuel and cooking facilities result in women and girls having to make long and backbreaking daily trips to collect water and firewood, while under-funded health services mean many must walk miles to get essential medical care for their families. As part of the WE-Care initiative, Oxfam are implementing practical solutions to these challenges, including the provision of fuel-efficient stoves and other improvements in water and energy infrastructure.

Regis explained that with support from government and international funding partners, Oxfam have improved infrastructure in rural areas, with piped water schemes that mean women now only walk 500 metres for water, freeing up time for them to do other things.

**“It might not seem very high impact, but everybody in life wants to have choices. We are giving women a choice.”**

## **AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF WOMEN**

Regis talked about the narrative shift and change in social norms that is needed in order to rethink what counts as women’s work.

**“In Zimbabwe, and most of Africa, women are having to fetch water, cook, wash and take care of children. This is never recognised as work, but it is what maintains family and it’s passed from generation to generation. If a man was to do this work, he would be mocked, he would not be seen as ‘man enough’.”**

According to Regis, there is a prevailing narrative that women are responsible for unpaid care and domestic work, and this sustains the unequal distribution of such work. As part of the WE-Care programme, Oxfam have been working with institutions and communities to shift gender norms in Zimbabwe.

Oxfam have trained local men and women to act as community champions. They go from door to door, educating people in the local area about social norms. Since starting the initiative, they have seen men begin to cook, fetch water and do laundry. They have also been taking innovative steps to challenge existing views of who should be responsible for care work.

**“You find that all cleaning products when they’re advertised, it’s usually a woman. We are working with institutions to shift public discourse around care work. Social media has been a very useful vehicle for amplifying the voices of women.”**

## GOVERNMENT ACTION

Restrictive social norms mean that women are rarely represented in budget-setting and policy-making processes. Regis believes that a lack of understanding from policymakers has challenged the sustainability of the WE-Care programme. Without an appreciation of the problem, strategies aimed at reducing and redistributing unpaid care and domestic work aren’t prioritised in government budgets or policy commitments.

**“One of the Members of Parliament asked us what unpaid care and domestic work has got to do with government.”**

Over the past 5 years, Oxfam have been trying to persuade governments to recognise the importance of unpaid care and domestic work. Regis explained how Oxfam’s ongoing engagement with policymakers and local community organisations eventually prompted the Government of Zimbabwe to undertake the first public inquiry into the issue. This has resulted in further investment commitments, with one local council now funding the expansion of Oxfam’s piped water scheme. For Regis, it’s essential that the government take responsibility for the ongoing development of this work.

**“Oxfam has provided the model to show that the piped water schemes works, saving time and reducing the drudgery of fetching water. We now need the Government to take over because it has the primary responsibility for providing this infrastructure.”**



Credits: Cynthia Matonhodze/Oxfam

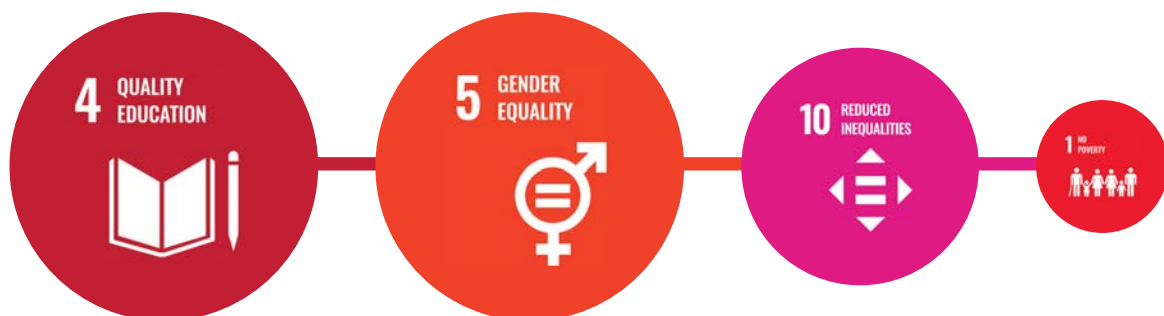
Description: Catharine and her son Tino share a light moment at home in Hatcliffe, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Credits: Tsehay promotion and production plc

Description: Girls' agency is one of the things Link want to contribute through their education programming. They do so by applying a gender-responsive pedagogy that enables girl learners to increase their self-confidence to speak up in class, among others.

# EDUCATION: THE KEY TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

## LINK EDUCATION



Link is Scotland's leading international education charity. For over 30 years, Link has been improving education for children and communities in some of the poorest rural areas of Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda and Malawi. Samantha Ross, International Programme Director at Link Education, shared the importance of Link's work to the achievement of the SDGs.

**“Education is at the centre of achieving most, if not all, of the SDGs. If you have an educated population, people are then able to engage with the other broader issues encapsulated within the SDGs.”**

## SPOTLIGHT ON...ETHIOPIA

Since 2007, Link has improved the education and life chances of almost 98,000 children in Ethiopia, especially girls. Nicolò Di Marzo, country representative for Link in Ethiopia, spoke to us about Link's Girls' Education Challenge projects. These aim to remove the barriers girls face in accessing education, with around 61,000 girls enrolled in schools thanks to Link's projects.

**“We focus on the most marginalised, providing every child with access to a basic education. By focussing on the most marginalised, you benefit the whole population.”**



## RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER 13 YEARS

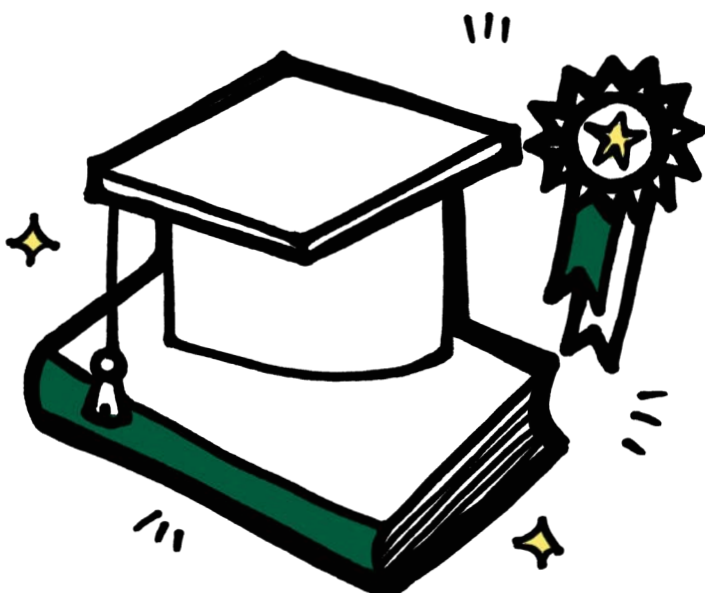
To improve access to education for girls in rural areas of Ethiopia, four secondary schools have been built as part of the project. Nicolò shared a heart-warming story of one girl who, after a 13-year hiatus, was able to return to school and complete her secondary education thanks to one of these new schools.

Nicolò also highlighted the project's emphasis on training more teachers and school leaders across Ethiopia - training in maths and literacy but also in social emotional skills which build the confidence and self-esteem of vulnerable learners. This not only increases girls' access to education but also ensures a higher quality of education for every student.

## ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

Community engagement remains an integral part of Link's work. This is exemplified by their efforts to strengthen Parent Teacher Associations, informing members of their role supporting their children's education, and sharing messaging around the importance of sending all children, including girls, to school. Nicolò firmly believes that without the community's support and involvement, no initiative could truly succeed.

**“Nothing can work if we don't have the buy-in of the community.”**



## TRANSFORMING GIRLS LIVES

A shining example of Link's impact is seen through the transformative journey of one student. Initially, her parents believed that women would not achieve much through education, insisting that she focus on household tasks instead. However, Link have provided the resources her family couldn't afford, including financial assistance, school supplies, and other essentials like sanitary products. Freed from the barriers that held her back, the student has flourished in her education, and her aspirations are now soaring.

# 11

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

When the pandemic hit in 2020, schools across Ethiopia were forced to close. Nicolò shared the disheartening reality that 72 girls from Link projects were forced into early marriages, and 18 became pregnant during this period. However, Link Ethiopia rose to the occasion, providing social support, child protection knowledge and building the capacity of parents and local structures to protect girls, enabling most of these students to continue their education.

**“How can we talk about sustainable development when so many kids are actually out of school.”**

Conflict in Northern Ethiopia has posed significant obstacles to education’s progress over the past three years. Distressingly, it is estimated that 2.8 million children face educational disruption due to this conflict alone.

## A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Despite these challenges, Link remain undeterred in their mission. Their unwavering dedication continues to inspire hope and transform the lives of thousands of children in Ethiopia. Through education, they believe that each child holds the power to shape their destiny and contribute to a brighter future for themselves and their communities.



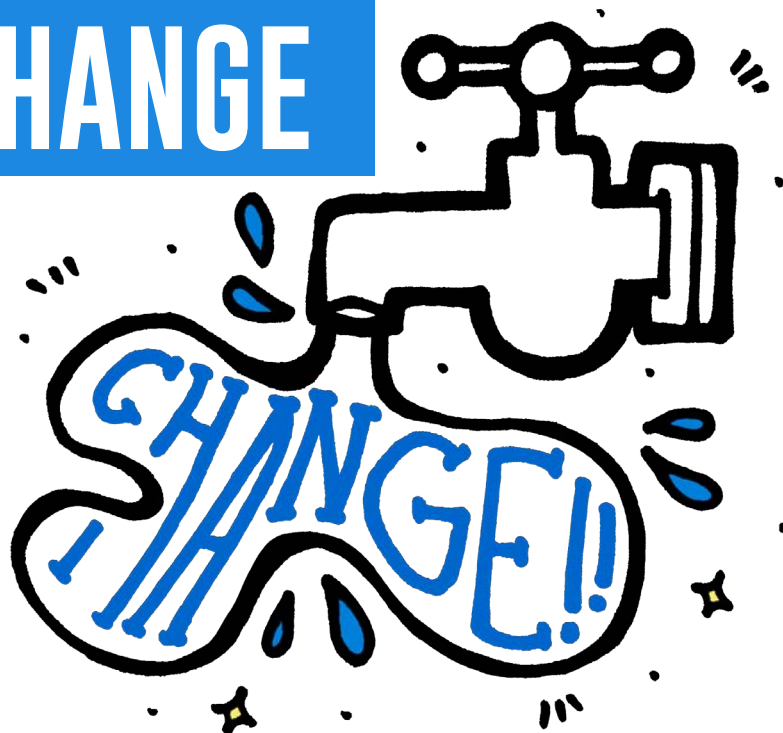
**Credits:** Tsehay promotion and production plc.

**Description:** Early and forced marriage is a harsh reality for girls living in rural Ethiopia, which has further increased during Covid-19. It is encouraging to see though that some girls have come back to school even after having given birth.



Credits: WaterAid/ Francis Chipanda  
Description: Kawinga Health Centre, Machinga, Malawi, December, 2021

# WAVES OF CHANGE



## WATERAID



WaterAid is an international NGO working across 27 countries. They change millions of lives every year by improving access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). WASH underpins progress on a whole range of Global Goals, including those on health, education and gender equality.

We spoke to Natasha Mwenda, WaterAid Malawi's Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Advisor, to discuss the role of sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene as the foundations of good health and quality healthcare.

**“There’s a lot more to WASH beyond taps and toilets. WASH services cut across all of the SDGs, with impacts on climate change, the depletion of water reserves and even public health emergencies.”**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON...MALAWI**

In Malawi, around 1 in 3 people lack access to clean water, while more than half of the entire population don't have access to a toilet. The absence of accessible WASH within rural communities of Malawi fuels a vicious cycle of poverty. According to Natasha, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the lack of WASH services in Malawi, with cultural norms dictating that women shoulder the responsibility of water collection. Without clean water close to home, women often have to travel long distances for water, thereby curtailing their ability to attend classes or engage in productive work.

The insufficient provision of WASH in healthcare settings contributes to healthcare-associated infections, while also hindering the delivery of services, including maternity services. Natasha explained that these challenges collectively undermine efforts to improve maternal and newborn health across the country.

**“You can’t provide quality healthcare without water, sanitation and hygiene services.”**

WaterAid Malawi's 'Deliver Life' project is enhancing health outcomes for women, adolescent girls, and young children in low-income rural areas of Malawi by increasing access to sustainable WASH in health centres, early childhood development centres and surrounding communities in the Zomba and Machinga Districts of Malawi.

## **DELIVERING LIFE AT KAWINGA HEALTH CENTRE**

Natasha shared how the Deliver Life project, with funding from the Scottish Government's International Development Fund, has been implemented at Kawinga Health Centre in Machinga.

Before the project, the facility lacked running water and was therefore unable to provide quality maternity services. According to Francis Nthonga, the medic in charge of Kawinga Health Centre, the maternity ward depended on the use of water buckets. As a result, mothers in the area would have to travel 35km to the next hospital, Chikwewo - which the project had already reached with improved WASH facilities, in order to access care. Healthcare workers would also frequently transfer to areas with access to basic WASH services.

**“The health centre serves over 30,000 people; you can imagine how hectic it was for them to travel to the next facility which is more than 35 kilometres away.”**

WaterAid Malawi soon changed this, establishing a water supply which enabled the centre to start providing maternity services. Women now no longer have to worry about travelling long distances to collect water or access medical care. Natasha told us that the project has increased the retention of healthcare workers, with the water supply now connected to staff housing. The introduction of WASH facilities at Kawinga Health Centre has also strengthened infection prevention and control measures, a provision which was particularly valuable during the pandemic and recent cholera outbreak. These cumulative benefits have broadened the project's impact, further improving health outcomes for mothers and children.



**“We received support from WaterAid for the construction of toilets and a water supply which has been very crucial in the containment of this [cholera outbreak] because patients were able to wash, where previously they used to go to the river. There would have been chaos if that was the same case today.”**



## SOLAR-POWERED SOLUTIONS

Natasha explained that the impacts of the climate crisis have also challenged the long-term sustainability of the project. With more variable weather patterns, the country has experienced abnormal droughts. Not only has this threatened the supply of water, but the variability has also led to irregular outbreaks of cholera. This can be easily transmitted among communities without WASH essentials, further burdening already stretched local healthcare facilities. In response, WaterAid Malawi have fortified the reliability of their WASH infrastructure by expanding the use of solar powered reticulated water supply systems and water pumps. This not only enhances the project’s capacity to weather challenges but also reduces its carbon footprint, contributing positively to the fight against the climate crisis.

## A GROWING DEMAND FOR UNIFIED ACTIONS

As Malawi’s population continues to rise, the demand for WASH services is also growing rapidly. Natasha highlighted the critical role of collaboration in addressing this issue, advocating for the consolidation of resources to effectively address the county’s heightened demand for WASH services.

**“As a country, we are growing at a very fast speed. The demand for services is therefore increasing by the day.”**



Original analysis conducted by WaterAid has highlighted that major donor funding to support the provision of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) to the poorest and most vulnerable communities has fallen by a third since the SDGs were agreed.

In fact, aid to the water supply and sanitation sector fell more than aid to any other areas of development during the first years of the Covid-19 pandemic, despite the importance of handwashing as a preventative measure.

Canada, France, Germany and the UK are amongst the top donors to cut their WASH-specific funding, despite calling it essential to achieving universal health coverage in this year’s G7 Leaders’ Statement. In contrast, WaterAid highlights that if just the first two aims of SDG6 are to be achieved by 2030, this funding actually needs to be increased by a factor of four.

WaterAid is calling on donor countries to close the gap between what’s promised and what’s delivered, and to honour the commitments made under international treaties on the SDGs.



**Credits: Scottish Government / Niall McCumesty**

**Description: Natasha Mwenda, (WaterAid) and Niall McCumesty, (Scottish Government) with WaterAid partners and staff, outside a new toilet block at Chikwewo Health Centre, Machinga in 2022.**

## PAVING A PATH TOWARDS 2030

In a world confronted by unprecedented challenges, the resounding message of this report is clear: the commitment of the members of Scotland's International Development Alliance to the SDGs is unwavering. Since we last assessed the contributions of our members to the SDGs in 2019, there has been a period of extraordinary change punctuated by a series of interrelated global crises.

SIDA will continue to support and champion its members contributions to the SDGs, with this report highlighting just some elements of our wider memberships' collective endeavour. The stories of our member organisations, vividly depicted through 12 diverse projects spanning the globe, embody the essence of action.

From Oxfam's efforts to advance gender equality, to the critical role of KidsOR scaling up surgical systems: these stories illustrate the tangible impact of our combined efforts towards the SDGs. They serve as beacons of inspiration, showing that even in the face of adversity, meaningful progress can be achieved. This report presents the SDGs as an interdependent whole rather than 17 isolated goals, a concept that is key to ensuring their realisation. Recognition of the existing synergies creates opportunities to impact multiple goals simultaneously, while potential trade-offs arise when we focus exclusively on each goal in isolation.

This holistic approach can amplify the impact of our efforts. This is exemplified by the stories presented in this report and should inspire us to go further in the future. More than halfway towards 2030, it is now crucial that we expand our reach and promote awareness of the SDGs to a broader audience. By doing this, we are more likely to forge new partnerships and foster enhanced collaboration between different sectors of society, ultimately accelerating progress toward the goals.

Together, we have the power to translate the ideals of the SDGs into a lived reality for all.

## ABOUT SCOTLAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

Scotland's International Development Alliance is the membership body in Scotland for everyone committed to creating a fairer world, free from poverty, injustice and environmental threats. Our membership brings together a diverse range of organisations and individuals including NGOs, businesses, academic institutions and public sector bodies that operate in over 150 countries.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scotland's International Development Alliance would like to thank all the organisations who responded to our survey and participated in interviews that form the foundation of this report.

Researcher and report author: Christopher Walker

Editor: Louise Davies

Designer: Sarah Ahmad

## CONTACT US

Email: [admin@intdevalliance.scot](mailto:admin@intdevalliance.scot)

Telephone: 0131 281 0897

Website: [www.intdevalliance.scot](http://www.intdevalliance.scot)

Social media: [@intdevalliance](https://www.instagram.com/intdevalliance)

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Registered Office: CBC House, 24 Canning Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EG

