



Strategic Plan

2021 - 2026



AfriChild
Research. Policy. Impact.
The Centre for the study of the African Child



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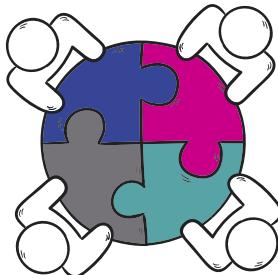
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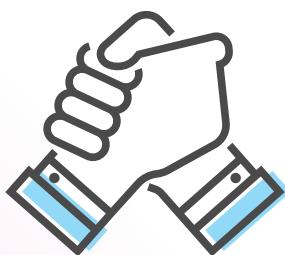


FOREWORD

On behalf of the Board of Directors, and the entire AfriChild Centre fraternity, I am pleased to present the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.



AFRICHILD will use the 2021-2026 period, to build a strong organisation that can withstand episodic shocks.



Building and sustaining partnerships is a key strategy in this plan.

The Strategic Plan was crafted at an important point in modern history, as the entire world grappled with the COVID19 pandemic. The pandemic illustrates the urgency to invest in strong institutions, to counteract shocks that threaten to erase progress made in different areas of human life. At AfriChild, we are learning from this, and will use the 2021-2026 period, to build a strong organisation that can withstand episodic shocks.

The development of this Strategic Plan was informed by the achievements and shortcomings of the organisation in the 2015-2020 period, and a careful analysis of internal and external factors that might have an impact on the organisation's ability to discharge its duties and deliver on its mandate.

The main purpose of this plan is to push for collective action towards using research evidence in policy and practice, to accelerate improvements in child wellbeing in Uganda and the region. Our vision and responsibility is to ensure that through our programmes, we can contribute to an Africa where children's wellbeing is realised for sustainable development. We acknowledge that this ambitious, yet achievable vision can only be realised, if we work together with others, at local, regional and international levels. As such, building and sustaining partnerships is a key strategy in this plan.

The AfriChild Centre is strategically positioning itself to focus on three strategic pillars – research generation, research use, and strengthening institutional capacity. In this period, AfriChild will leverage its internal strengths and draw from external opportunities to implement specific interventions designed to drive the strategic plan to its desired outcomes by 2026.



A researcher with Makerere University helps children answer a questionnaire during the data collection exercise.

AfriChild believes that all children in Africa have a right to enjoy their full survival, development, protection and participation rights. We are committed to effectively contributing towards this. This strategy therefore represents a strategic shift on how we do business. We shall expand our outreach beyond Uganda, to reach other parts of the region; and invest in quality and ethical research to generate evidence. We shall invest in implementation science to scale up interventions with demonstrable impact; and leverage partnerships to support evidence based policy making processes. We shall provide opportunities for actors, policy makers and researchers to access knowledge products that can impact on their work.

The Strategic Plan seeks to further define the research priorities, embrace new and innovative approaches to sustainable fundraising, and address organisational issues in need of re-alignment. It is designed to equip AfriChild to be more effective and have a greater impact on the lives of all children in the region.

I therefore call upon all stakeholders, to join hands with the Centre to fully execute the plan to enable the organisation, and the region achieve better results for all children.



Margaret Kakande,
Chairperson, Board of Directors



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of AfriChild's Strategic Plan is to provide a blueprint to guide the growth of the Centre and its desired impact through articulating clear direction and priorities for the years 2021-2026. Since 2013 the AfriChild Centre has positioned itself at the frontier of innovative child focused research, with the aim of catalysing relevant policy and practice, to improve the wellbeing of children in Uganda and the region. This strategic plan was developed in the context of an unprecedented crisis, the COVID 19 pandemic. This pandemic has both short term and far-reaching implications for the work that we do. In the next 5 years, we will take both a responsive and proactive approach to ensure continuity of business in the context of COVID.

Our Strategic Choices

Regional orientation:

The AfriChild Centre will adopt and test a continental outreach strategy initially starting with selected countries in the region.

at national, and regional level so that the skills and competences acquired can have direct impact on ongoing child focused research.

Rediscovering and Consolidating the Centre's Policy Niche:

AfriChild will embark on strategic partnerships with government to position itself as a vital policy research partner. We will also develop and nurture collaborative partnerships with local NGOS to develop and test models that produce results for child wellbeing in Uganda.

Defining Our Research Identity:

We will define and consolidate our niche within the research community. We will develop a model that will enable us realize our mission of bridging the gap between evidence, policy and practice.

Positioning AfriChild as the Regional Knowledge Manager on Child Wellbeing:

We will use the available technologies to increase access to child wellbeing resources in the region and position ourselves as a knowledge management organisation.

Furthering Research Capacity:

The research training programme will be reviewed, accredited and realigned to a child focused policy research agenda and opportunities

Investment in a stronger AfriChild Centre:

We will strengthen our human and financial resources, and improve our business processes and systems, including robust monitoring, evaluation and learning, to ensure effectiveness.

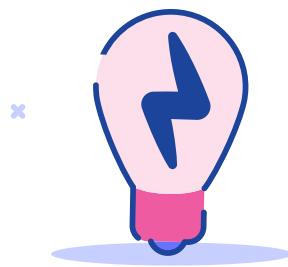
Management of COVID 19:

We will use our mandate to conduct research and synthesise evidence on areas that are identified as critical by policy makers and practitioners, and ensure availability and accessibility of evidence. We will prioritise prevention through raising awareness using accessible media.



PRINCIPLES

These following core values will continue to guide AfriChild's work in the implementation and monitoring of the strategic plan.

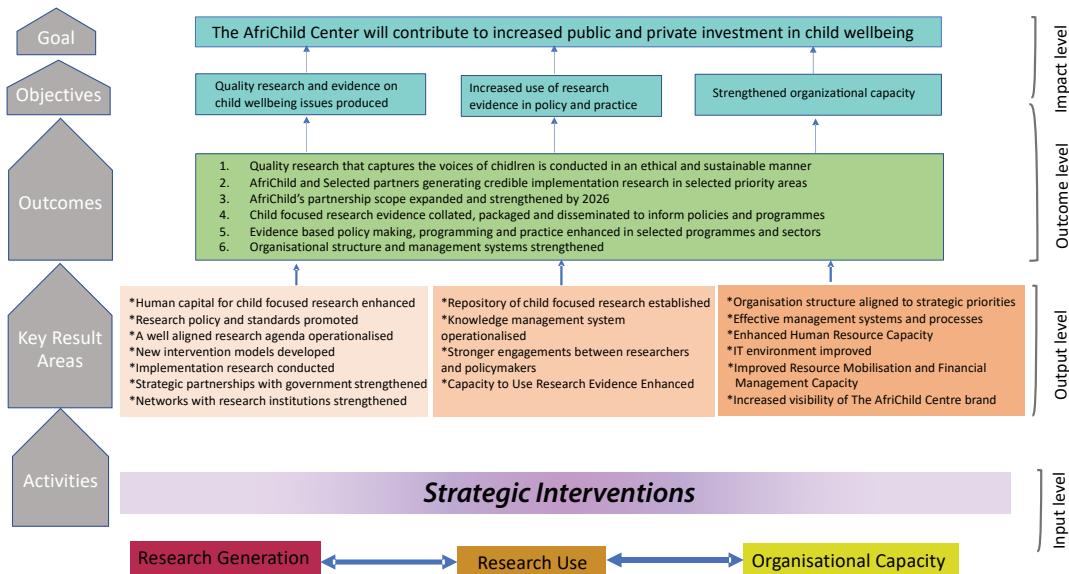


1. We are a Centre of excellence that puts children at the Centre of our work;
2. Our approach is ethical, respectful and based on the 'do no harm' principle;
3. We are committed to engaging in public-private partnerships to influence positive change;
4. We are committed to innovative interdisciplinary research to improve the welfare of the African child;
5. We are dedicated to developing and strengthening research capacities in Uganda and the region;
6. We are committed to translating research findings into practice and policy change for sustainable development and;
7. We seek to work within the framework of child rights that includes equity and diversity

THEORY OF CHANGE

This strategic plan builds on the previous progress to improve child wellbeing in Uganda and the region. The theory of change will guide the Centre towards building a stronger organisation for effective research generation and use.

FIGURE 1: AFRICCHILD'S THEORY OF CHANGE (2021-2026)



AfricChild will contribute to increased public and private investment in child wellbeing; this goal will be achieved through 3 strategic objectives namely quality research and evidence on child wellbeing issues; evidence-based child focused policies and programmes and strengthened organisational capacity of AfricChild.

The strategic plan has 6 anticipated outcomes, which represent the change we seek to achieve: ethical research that captures the voices of children; credible implementation research in selected priority areas; an expanded and strengthened partnership scope; child focused research evidence collated, packaged and disseminated to inform policies; (5)

evidence-based policy making, programming and practice enhanced; and strengthened organisational structure and systems.

We will achieve results in 17 output areas. Each of the key result areas has strategic interventions that are well aligned with our strategic objectives. Success in translating strategic interventions into the desired results is hinged on deliberate investment in building a strong AfricChild with adequate human and financial resources, as well as efficient and effective business processes and systems. Consolidation of partnerships at all levels is critical for the success of this strategic plan.

CORE PROGRAMME AREAS, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND INTERVENTIONS

Core Programme Area 1: Generation Of Research Evidence



AfriChild's overarching goal is to contribute to investment for child well-being by providing policy makers and practitioners with excellent research evidence to inform policy actions and interventions. This is aimed at bridging the gap of limited use of research evidence in policy making processes and in interventions targeting children.

In the last five years, our approach to research focused on capacity development for researchers and primary research to deepen understanding on particular issues. AfriChild in collaboration with key agencies spearheaded the development of a child focused national policy research agenda to guide the focus of research, and ensure that the evidence generated was relevant to facilitating achievement of national objectives relevant to child well-being.

LESSONS LEARNED (2015-2020)

1. There is need for greater clarity of the research focus or niche to build the AfriChild Research brand.
2. Greater quality control for AfriChild's research work is necessary, through intensive peer review of AfriChild's products, and adopting a research leadership approach that insists on the lead researcher's responsibility for quality control.
3. The need for balance between building researchers' capacity, research that meets scholarship needs for researchers and that which is aimed at knowledge generation for policy engagement.
4. Increasing the number and enhancing the skills of mid-level career researchers is a critical investment towards improving the capacity for child focused research.

Core Programme Area 2:

Increased Uptake and Use Of Research Evidence In Policy Making and Practice

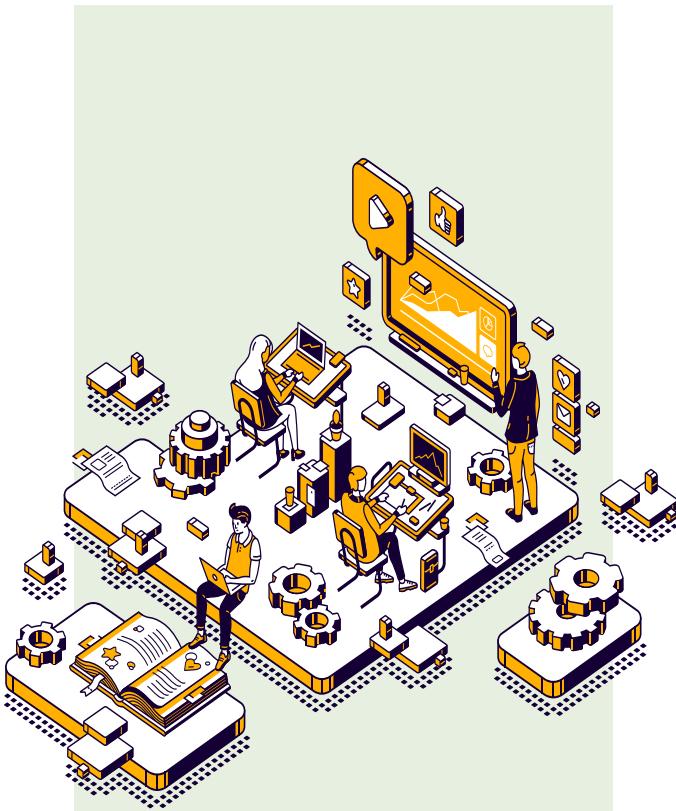
AfriChild Centre has a mandate to translate research into evidence that can be used by policymakers and practitioners in decision making.



LESSONS LEARNED (2015-2020)

1. Development and dissemination of policy briefs does not guarantee that issues get on the policy agenda. Ongoing engagement of policymakers is required to facilitate use of research evidence.
2. Integration of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism is necessary to assess progress and follow up on the use of evidence in policy and practice.
3. The AfriChild Centre needs to align its research dissemination and uptake strategy to the needs and agendas of policy actors.
4. Selection of NGO partners requires a consideration of their capacity and willingness to commit for sustainability.

Core Programme Area 3: Organisational Capacity



The AfriChild Centre will work towards strengthening resources and reforming systems to ensure seamless and efficient organisational processes. We will ensure that governance frameworks and administrative support required to efficiently and effectively implement the strategic plan are available. The organisation will attract and retain fit-for-purpose talent to deliver the anticipated results; continuous investment will be made to develop the human resources to ensure motivation and retention. AfriChild will develop and implement a fundraising strategy, and integrate a financial management system that ensures efficient use of resources, for maximum impact and sustainability. We will develop and integrate a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system as a major tool for continuous improvement and learning from interventions.

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Estimated Costs

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	TOTAL
Research generation	1,991,990,000	2,120,420,000	3,298,200,000	2,403,700,000	3,030,820,000	12,845,130,000
Use of research evidence in policy and practice	606,700,000	237,200,000	213,200,000	280,700,000	236,100,000	1,573,900,000
Organisational capacity	376,700,000	181,400,000	157,400,000	157,400,000	157,400,000	1,030,300,000
Governance, Personnel And Administrative Costs	2,288,859,982	2,689,828,379	2,715,743,256	2,857,168,282	3,223,413,064	13,592,612,966
TOTAL ANNUAL COSTS	5,264,249,982	5,228,848,379	6,384,543,256	5,698,968,282	6,647,733,064	29,041,942,966

Key success factors

1. Stable macro-economic environment
2. Sound governance
3. Effective management of the COVID 19 pandemic
4. Government commitment to improved child wellbeing
5. Partnership with government for policy influence.
6. Continued financial and technical support from donors
7. Alignment of human resources to organisational strategic plan
8. Collaboration and partnerships



Building a Commu

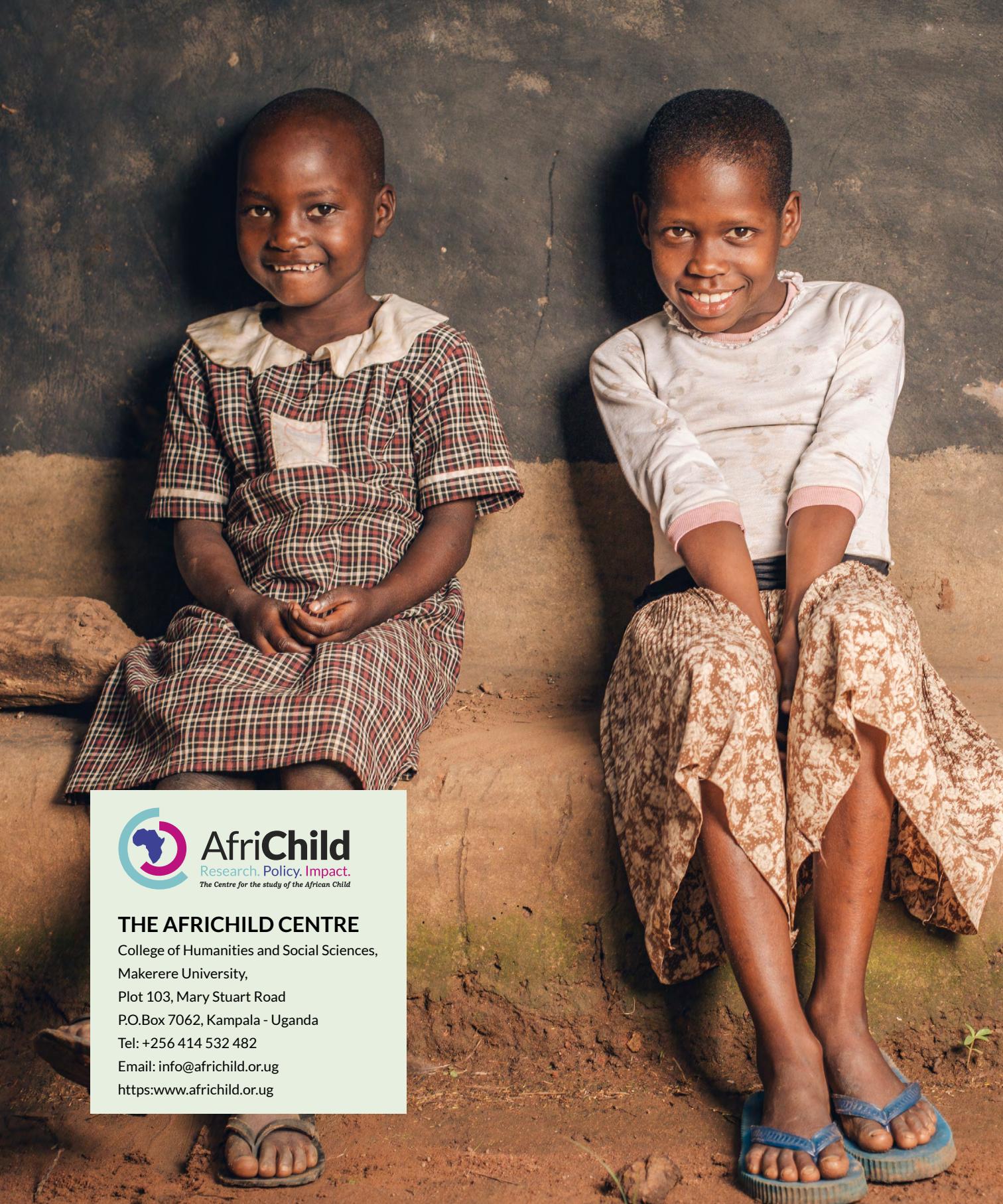


AfriChild
Research & Impact.
The African Child

CORE PRIORITY AREAS

1. Impact Research
on Projects
2. Capacity Building
3. Training AfriChild
Gender Researchers
and Practitioners
4. Knowledge Management
And Exchange Work





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