



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

# ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

Generating evidence, improving policies and building capacity to improve the wellbeing of children and families in Uganda.

[www.africhild.or.ug](http://www.africhild.or.ug)



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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

I am pleased to share with you our annual report covering the period 2018/2019, during which the focus has been on implementation of the vision, mission and objectives as laid out in the strategic plan.

This period has been marked with both achievements and challenges.

The year in review highlights strong partnerships and new collaborations, new areas of research, building research capacity, and ensuring uptake to influence both policy and practice.

In line with the objective of building local capacity to undertake child focused scientific research, 30 mid-level researchers from seven Ugandan universities were trained in research methods. The training extended to equipping 30 policy makers and practitioners with knowledge and skills to make meaning of research findings and translate research into practical policy and program interventions.

Effort was directed towards strengthening our communication portfolio through a newly revamped website and deliberate engagement with the media. Eleven media practitioners from print and electronic media were trained in reporting child focused research findings. The Centre's visibility has been enhanced through newspaper articles and electronic media features highlighting AfriChild's research work and its relevance to topical issues affecting children.

Progress has been registered in building valuable south to south partnerships that have allowed the centre to expand our work to the region, reaching Tanzania, Lesotho and South Africa. Strong collaborations have also been established with

partners in the north such as the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, The Brown School at Washington University and National Foundation for Education Research UK.

My sincere gratitude is extended to the Executive Board and Advisory Board for their invaluable role in governance and institutional development of the Centre. They have steered the Center through difficult situations, changes in leadership, as well as streamline operations and management practices.

Finally, I applaud all staff at AfriChild for their commitment and unwavering effort in contributing towards all the achievements registered. We are also appreciative of all our partners and the donors without whom this work would not be possible.

Sincerely,

**Timothy Opobo**  
Executive Director

## ABOUT AFRICHL

AfriChild Centre is a child-focused multidisciplinary research institution based at Makerere University in Uganda. Established in January 2013, AfriChild undertakes multidisciplinary research, evidence-based knowledge building, skills development and influences policy and practice for the wellbeing of the African child. The Centre fits squarely within the ensuing global initiative aimed at promoting learning, advocacy, and building human resources capacity to promote child protection. It also fits in the efforts pursued by the Uganda Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), and development partners in building an effective national response to children in adversity.

The Centre was founded by Makerere University College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MOGLSD), and the Care and Protection of Children (CPC) Learning Network at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health partners in Uganda, including: ChildFund International-Uganda, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Columbia University, and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Uganda. The Centre is managed by a Secretariat headed by the Executive Director. The Secretariat is governed by a Board of Directors, which reports to the Annual General Meeting (AGM), composed of founding organizations.

### OUR VISION

A world where society invests well in children as a key element of sustainable development.

### OUR MISSION

The AfriChild Centre generates research that contributes to the evidence base to improve the lives and wellbeing of the African child. It does this in collaboration with public and private sectors, academia, and civil society.

### OUR GOAL

AfriChild aims to be a multidisciplinary research Centre that contributes to evidence-based knowledge building, skills development and influences policy, programming, and practice concerning the wellbeing of the African child.

### OUR PRINCIPLES

The Centre, through its mandate to improve the lives and wellbeing of the African child, adheres to the principles of:

- Excellence
- Ethical Conduct
- Partnership Building
- Fostering Innovation
- Capacity Building
- Translating Research into Action and Child Rights.

### AFRICHL'S LEADERSHIP TEAMS ADVISORY BOARD

- Mr. Patrick Onyango
- Prof. Edward Kirumira
- Mr. Simba Machingaidze
- Dr. Diego Angemi
- Dr. Fred Ssewamala
- Mr. Mark Canavera

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Margaret Kakande (Chairperson)
- Prof. Lynn Atuyambe
- Emily Gakiza
- Penninah Kyoyagala Tomusange
- Judy Kamanyi
- James Sembatya Kabogozza

# AFRICHILD'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

During 2018-2019, AfriChild's activities aimed to scale impact through the following core program areas:

- 1) **Building Local Child-Focused Research Capacity.** The core of AfriChild's work is to strengthen research capacity within higher education institutions in Uganda to better understand the determinants of children's well-being and welfare; and to more effectively support and influence relevant policies and practices.
- 2) **Generating Evidence for Child Protection and Wellbeing.** AfriChild is committed to utilizing sophisticated research methods to conduct rigorous research and generate evidence on what works in child protection in Uganda.
- 3) **Building a Platform for Collaboration and Knowledge Management.** Being a learning organization, AfriChild is continually leveraging its multi-stakeholder connections to build and operationalize the platform for cross-sector collaboration and knowledge exchange.

## OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

### Building Local Child Focused Research Capacity

At the core of AfriChild's work is strengthening research infrastructure and capacity within higher education institutions in Uganda to better understand the determinants of children's well-being and welfare, and to more effectively support and influence relevant policies and practices.

#### 30 mid-level university lecturers trained to conduct child-focused research

With funding from OAK Foundation, AfriChild has trained 30 mid-level researchers from seven Ugandan universities in child-focused research methods. The Uganda Child Focused Research Agenda 2015-2020 provided thematic areas that guided participants in their topic selection. All seven universities were successful in securing seed grants from the Centre to undertake child focused research, and the studies are now concluded.

**Below we highlight the seven child focused research studies that have been conducted by the universities**

No.	NAME OF INSTITUTION	RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN
1.	Makerere University	Children's Experiences and Perspectives on Parental and Community Involvement in their Schooling
2.	Nsamizi Training Institute of Social Development	Rights Based Approach to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Utilization of Services by and Adolescents in Iganga District
3.	Uganda Christian University	Menstrual Hygiene Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices in Primary Schools in Mukono District: A Girl Child's Perspective
4.	Uganda Martyrs University	The effects of child labour on the education and health of children working in stone quarries in Kabale District
5.	Muni University	Child Labour and Learning Outcomes in Fishing Communities in Pakwach District
6.	Kyambogo University	Views of children on parental roles in promoting primary school retention in Busoga region
7.	Gulu University	Examining Household Socio-Economic Status and Parenting Style on Adolescent Development



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



A pupil participates in generating caricature during the research process.

These below testimonies from some of the participants of the inter-university research methods program:



**Dr. David Onen -  
Makerere University**

The training has given us a unique opportunity to focus on a special part of our population - children.



**Dr. Christine Mbabazi -  
Makerere University**

The shift that I notice currently is that I am more conscious on the entire process of doing research with children.



**Dr. Kenneth Olido -  
Gulu University**

There are a number of things that I used to take for granted and perhaps there are many that we may have done wrong because at the university there is a tendency of us knowing it all. However, you can know it all and know it wrongly. Therefore, what we learnt during the three phases of training with AfriChild was to know it right so that we could impact the right knowledge across the board.



**Dr. Odama K. Modest-  
Uganda Martyrs  
University**

Before the training, very few of us were conversant with research with children. So the training made us learn how to involve children in the research that we do. It is not only academics that should be involved in the research process. Children are also part of it.



**Kamashazi Stella -  
Nsamizi Institute of  
Social Development**

We have been conducting social research with the usual research methods and were not focusing on the children. The training equipped us with competencies to conduct research with children.



**Sr. Dr. Kaahwa Maria  
Gorreti - Kyambogo  
University**

Studying more about the methods of doing research with children has equipped me with more skills as a trainer.

## Training of practitioners and policy makers in evidence-based interventions to address violence against children in Uganda

During 12-15 November 2018, AfriChild held a capacity-building training to address violence against children in Uganda with specific focus on child abuse and sexual exploitation (CSAE) for 35 multi-disciplinary practitioners and policy makers from NGOs and government bodies who work on evidence-based interventions. This training is part of AfriChild's project: 'Building the Next Generation of Researchers' which aims to empower academics, policy makers, and practitioners to conduct and utilize rigorous child focused research. Participating organizations included REPPSI, Retrak, Dwelling

Places, World Vision Uganda, Parenting Uganda, Men-Engage Federation, and TPO-Uganda.

Government participants represented the Ministries of Health, Education, Gender and Justice. At least 60% of workshop participants committed to using available evidence and research to inform their work on addressing violence against children with focus on CSAE. The research undertaken by AfriChild will inform and influence the development of child-focused policies and practices in Uganda.

## FACTS & FIGURES

NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPATING  
ORGANISATIONS



NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPATING  
MINISTRIES



NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPANTS



NUMBER OF  
TRAININGS HELD



COMMITMENT  
TO USE CHILD  
RESEARCH



## Generating Evidence for Child Protection and Wellbeing

Inadequate research evidence has disastrous implications on policymakers and practitioners' capacity to ensure that children reach their full potential. This weak evidence base creates inefficient resource flows by allowing for the continuation of ineffective and sometimes harmful practice. Therefore, AfriChild has taken steps to fill these glaring gaps through rigorous relevant research. These are some of the research projects that AfriChild has embarked on:

### The Impact of Active, Positive Presences of Fathers in the Lives of Children

In July 2019, AfriChild received a research seed grant from the Heartlines Centre based in South Africa to conduct a study on the impact of men's active positive presence in the lives of children.



An ongoing discussion among the research assistants during the training.



Prof. Rosalind leads one of the sessions during the training.

The main study objective was to generate views from men, women, boys, girls, grandfathers, and grandmothers in five districts of Uganda to generate evidence on the nature of father's involvement and perceived short- and long-term impacts of fathering on the lives of children. The study was undertaken in the districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Iganga, Mbarara, and Gulu.

### Recruitment & training of research assistants

AfriChild recruited 10 research assistants to conduct data collection and they were trained for three days between 24th and 26th June 2019 on techniques and skills in qualitative data collection. The training also focused on fully understanding the qualitative data collection tools such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), In-depth Interviews, and Key Informant Interviews.

### Data Collection

Data collection was done from August 1st to 7th 2019. FGDs were held with the adolescents of 16-17 years, grandfathers, and grandmothers. On the other hand, key informant interviews were held with teachers, religious leaders, and technical personnel such as district officials, political leaders, and NGO representatives.

### Data coding & analysis

The Research team has developed a data-coding project using the Atlas TI Software to conduct a preliminary coding and analysis process. Coding is currently underway and there is an analysis and message development workshop scheduled for October, 2019.



Study enumerators undergoing rigorous qualitative research training

### Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC)'s Child Friendly Spaces Study, Arua District, Uganda

In an effort to address the growing need for an evidence base for Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs), World Vision Uganda, World Vision International, and World Vision UK are partnering with Columbia University and the AfriChild Centre in a joint research and learning project. The focus is on documenting the impact of CFSs on children's social and emotional well-being, sense of security, and protection, and where appropriate - acquisition of skills and competences. The study, "Randomised Control Trial of enhanced Child Friendly Space interventions for girls and boys affected by conflict and displacement" is currently recruiting study participants for the different arms of the study. Baseline data collection is close to completion and qualitative data analysis has started for the six study villages.

## Discussing R2HC at international conferences

Between September 8-18, 2019, Elrha's Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) held a Research Forum at University of London, Royal Holloway, United Kingdom. The Technical Committee of the R2HC research project nominated Denis Nono, the AfriChild Research Manager, for the event. The Forum focused various issues such as equity and inclusion, research rigor, ethical challenges, and influencing policy and practice. The AfriChild Research Manager presented a "Lightning Talk" on "South-North research partnerships: what works well?" The essence of this Forum was to encourage networking and synergies between individuals and organisations and across disciplines and thematic areas.



Denis Nono, AfriChild's Research Manager on the CFSs study makes his presentation in London.

## Firelight Foundation Evaluation in Lesotho

Firelight Foundation contracted AfriChild Centre to conduct progress evaluation in Tanzania and Lesotho. The progress evaluation was successfully completed while the donor requested AfriChild to re-conduct the progress evaluation in Lesotho. The donor also engaged AfriChild Centre to conduct an exit study with their CBO partners and Lead Partner in Lesotho.

### Data collection

The AfriChild evaluation team led by Prof. Rosalind Grace Lubanga and Mathew Amollo successfully completed data collection for the progress evaluation redo in Lesotho and exit study from 2-14 June 2019. Data was collected from all the 6 CBO partners, the lead Partner, Firelight Foundation, government officials, National organizations in the child protection space, project beneficiaries, communities, and local leaders.

### Data analysis

The AfriChild team received completed transcripts from the Firelight Foundation contracted translators and are currently completing data analysis. Thematic analysis was adopted because it would enable the team develop deeper insights in line with the needs of the donor.

### Report writing

Data analysis and report writing have been iteratively conducted. The final report has been submitted to Firelight and the team is travelled to Lesotho for a validation meeting.

## Good School ToolKit-Secondary Study (GST-S)

The Good Schools Toolkit-Secondary Study is a collaboration between AfriChild, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Raising Voices. This study is a pilot controlled trial and will be conducted in selected secondary schools in Wakiso and Kampala districts. The study aims to measure the feasibility of adapting the GST-P with additional modifications in secondary schools. AfriChild Centre is the local Research Partner of the project.

### Cognitive interviewing

In order to refine measures for the pilot trial, the research team led by Mathew Amollo has conducted cognitive interviews in selected schools including Nakasero Secondary School and Mulago High School. The purpose was to help identify questions that may need improvements in wording, applicability, and understandability.

## Building a Platform for Collaboration and Knowledge Management

### National Research Dissemination Conference

AfriChild held a dissemination meeting for its interuniversity research methods team in Kampala on May 17th 2019. The overarching aim of the conference was to provide a platform for researchers from different universities who participated in the training programme to share scientific evidence in order to strengthen policy and programming for children in Uganda. The conference brought

together researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to discuss strategies for strengthening child-focused research, identify common challenges in the field, and explore approaches to overcome these challenges.

The theme of the conference was: "Putting Ugandan Children at the Heart of Sustainable Development: What is the Evidence?

Studies that were disseminated include: Sustainable Menstrual Hygiene Management: The Girl Child's Views in Selected Schools in Mukono by Uganda Christian University; Rights Based Approach to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Utilization of Services by Adolescents in Iganga District by Nsamizi Institute of Social Development; and Children's Experiences and Perspectives on Parental and Community Involvement in their Schooling by Makerere University.

Mr. Mukwatampola Muzamir from the Ministry of Education was the chief guest at the event. Other dignitaries included: Prof. Fabian Nabugoomu, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Kyambogo University; and Innocent Byaruhanga, the assistant commissioner for Family Affairs at the Ministry of Gender.

The conference closed with a ceremony where all the researchers were awarded with certificates, and plaques were awarded to the lead trainer and mentors.



A panel discussion was held during the one-day conference.



The Uganda Christian University team launch their report during the conference.



Dr. Chris Opesen leads one of the training sessions



Dr. Godfrey Ejuu leads a training session during the Journalists training.



Prof. Fred Wabwire (L) receives a plaque from the chief guest during the conference.



Mr. Mukwatampola, the chief guest of the conference, launching one of the reports.

## Journalists' Training

In a bid to engage national media to address children's issues (such as child protection and access to justice), AfriChild reached out to media editors to nominate top-notch journalists to be trained on reporting children's issues, especially those embedded within research reports. Eleven journalists from NTV-Uganda, The New Vision, Daily Monitor, The Observer, UBC TV, and CBS Radio were nominated and participated in a two-day training. The training covered topics such as: How to find the news in a child-focused research study, journal or scientific paper and How to find an eye-catching story in statistical tables.

Key discussion points from participants centered around: Prioritizing children issues in news among other competing news items that are either financially better or political in nature; How to deal with people's perception of putting children later and not now; Dealing with issues of evidence-based data that may not be easily available, and Ethics of working with children who are perpetrators of certain crimes.

## Seed grants for journalists

After the training, AfriChild awarded seed grants of UGX 1.6M to 10 of the journalists. This grant program aims to highlight AfriChild's research on children and to encourage journalists to develop well-investigated stories that stakeholders may use to increase public awareness and disseminate research findings.

Below are some of the stories that have been published and aired:

1. Resettle street children to Karamoja sub region. This aired on NBS TV and here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3ANT1v8Dms>
2. Primary School Learners in Mubende cope with shortage of sanitary towels. This aired on NTV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuckJL9x4g>
3. How child care homes abuse, trap children. This was published in The Observer newspaper <https://www.observer.ug/news/headlines/61723-how-child-care-homes-abuse-trap-children>
4. Online bullying, the silent child killer published in The Observer newspaper: <https://www.observer.ug/news/headlines/61724-online-bullying-the-silent-child-killer>

5. Why there is need for more awareness on menstruation in primary schools published in the Daily Monitor on August 18th 2019. This can be accessed on the AfriChild website at: <https://www.africhild.or.ug/why-there-is-need-for-more-awareness-on-menstruation-in-primary-schools/>
6. The effect of child labor on children's health and education. A case of Wakiso stone quarries' aired on CBS FM from 12-16 August 2019.

## Revamp of the Website

The Centre has a fresh and vibrant new outlook. The revitalized website that can be accessed at [www.africhild.or.ug](http://www.africhild.or.ug) has the following new and interactive features to it:

- Social media interactivity for both Twitter & Facebook
- A knowledge hub / database of AfriChild's research reports
- Optimization for mobile handsets
- Subscription portal for the Centre's newsletter
- A blog
- Media Gallery
- Google analytic tool



A snapshot of the website's home page

## Documentary Production

The Centre hired HotShot Ltd-Uganda and the team visited the participating universities and interviewed key lecturers who had been trained. A 13-minute long documentary was produced and showcased at the Interuniversity dissemination conference held on May 17, 2019. The video has also been uploaded onto the Centre's website and YouTube page.

Currently, the communications officer is leading the production of an infographic video that exclusively highlights the history and achievements of the organization.



A videographer in action during the shooting of the inter-university documentary.

## Participation in International Dissemination Fora

In December 2018, AfriChild participated in the Viable and Operable Ideas for Child Equality (VOICE) conference held in Bali-Indonesia. The event brought together over 300 participants from almost 20 countries to initiate a global conversation about transforming scientific evidence on the challenges of the modern world into actions that benefit lives of children, families, and communities. With the theme of 'Finding scientific answers to the 21st century challenges for families, communities and public policy', conference discussions were centered on: children, climate change and migration; social norms that underlie harms for children; and children and technology.

Dr. Richard Wamimbi, a research associate with AfriChild presented two research studies on: 'Understanding the role of social norms to prevent and respond to violence against children in Uganda' and 'Utilizing Information and Communication Technology to prevent violence against children in Uganda.'



Dr. Richard Wamimbi (second left) during a panel discussion in a break away session.

## Staff Capacity Building

As AfriChild continues to mark key milestones towards becoming a Centre of Excellence in child-focused research, it has also taken huge steps in investing in its staff. A couple of capacity-building trainings have been conducted for staff and these are:

### 1. Training in Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)

In pursuit of their work, AfriChild sought to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation function, build staff capacity to carry out M&E activities, and set up an M&E and Learning system.

#### Issues of significance to AfriChild's MEL function were identified as:

- The experience of mapping AfriChild's journey to date signified the necessity of having mechanisms for building AfriChild's institutional memory.
- AfriChild is undergoing a human resource review process with implications on the organizational structure.
- MEL function is yet to be provided for as an organ in the organizational structure of AfriChild. Doing so would be important for the process of enhancing the MEL function from a reality perspective. In addition, in case of both a mid-term and end of strategic plan evaluation, revising the strategic plan document would have an actual position of AfriChild's undertakings accurately reflected for these undertakings.



Staff during the M&E training at AfriChild

### 2. Training in communication skills

AfriChild staff also received skills in key areas of documentation and effective use of social media during a communications skills training held in March 2019. Among the skills staff attained were: identifying proper communication channels for research; presenting research to different audiences; using Twitter and Face Book; and use of Kinemaster, a video recording and editing application. Out of this training, staff have been able to produce content for the Centre's social media pages and kept them active.



*Staff pose for a group photo after the training.*

## LESSONS LEARNED AND NEXT STEPS

- Demand for Scaling Up Evidence-Based Programmes. There is growing demand for evidence-based programming amongst CSOs and government. AfriChild is in a unique position to leverage its experience and expertise to support the scale up, implementation, and uptake of evidence-informed programming in Uganda. Furthermore, the Centre will work closely with the INSPIRE Implementation Working Group to support diffusion, uptake, and monitoring of evidence-based interventions highlighted in the INSPIRE package in Uganda.
- Need for Multisectoral Actions and Coordination. There is a growing realization among practitioners and government bodies in Uganda that not one single actor can achieve a meaningful change alone. AfriChild will continue to catalyse its platform to foster multisectoral coordination by building on the increased interest from a number of local and international partners to work with the Centre around child protection issues.
- Gaps in Local Research Capacity. The training program has demonstrated the gap and need for more investment in building local research capacity as it relates to not only conducting research but also translating it into practice. Building on its pilot training program and already strong inter-university partnership, AfriChild will seek to continue investing in the next generation of researchers and practitioners working on child protection issues in Uganda.
- Ongoing Advocacy with Government. There is need for ongoing advocacy at different government levels to shape and implement policies based on best available evidence. The Centre will seek to constantly reinforce the need to translate evidence generated through research into meaningful policies and programs.

## AFRICHILD CENTRE LIMITED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

Income	Ushs
Firelight Foundation Evaluation Study	109,008,000
Strenthening communications Activities	96,878,000
World Vision CFS	72,133,000
MAAP Study	8,857,000
The Good School Tool kit (Secondary Schools Pilot Trial)	1,869,000
Firelight Foundation Exit Study	29,788,000
Research Ethics Support	15,693,000
Regional Rollout of Uganda National Action Plan O	365,623,000
UGA-Violence Against Children Study (Qualitative)W	149,225,000
Regional Rollout of Uganda National Action Plan W	1,097,792,000
Restatement of Customary Practices for child protection and securing the rights of Education in Buganda	232,987,000
UGA-Violence Against Children Study (Qualitative)O	59,507,000
VACS Prevention, Response and Refferal	4,805,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,244,165,000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Personnel	- 974,723,956
Programme	- 972,055,238
Administrative expenses	- 297,385,806
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>-2,244,165,000</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>-</b>



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