

WAR

child

**PREPARING FOR A NEW WAY
OF WORKING IN
ANNUAL PLAN**

2023



**Responding to the
challenges of our time**

**Sharing our
unique story**

**Getting ready for the
Global Shared Platform**

**All with the aim to support many more children
affected by conflict around the globe**



According to new data, the number of children living in active war zones has risen by 9% to total 230 million. This figure - collected over the course of 2021 - is expected to rise significantly due to the war in Ukraine, meaning the need for War Child's existence has never been greater...

In fact, the war in Ukraine cannot go un-mentioned as we share our plans for 2023 with you: our followers and supporters. Not only has this deadly conflict cost thousands of young lives, with many more irreversibly damaged, it has also had a global impact - seen in everything from food shortages to soaring inflation - forcing other major war-affected countries to significantly reduce their humanitarian budgets.

This has resulted in what we call "the forgotten conflicts" - in other words: the forgotten children. Meanwhile, the ongoing effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic are continuing to hit these same children the hardest.

We said it a year ago and we meant it - we need new ways of working; faster ways of growing if we have any hope of making a difference in the lives of the next generation. Having spent 2022 dedicated to figuring out what this new way of working would look like, 2023 will be a pivotal year. You might remember us talking about the "Global Shared Platform"? The year ahead will see us leverage our learnings and take the final steps to ensure this new structure; this global network of War Child entities and partners is fit for purpose. If we pull it off, the platform will become operational early 2024, reducing inefficiencies and allocating more decision-making power to the people directly responsible for implementing our projects and interventions.

In this way, we can not only improve the quality of the aid we provide, we also have a unique opportunity to multiply our impact on children affected by conflict. While the journey won't be free of road bumps, we're excited about what we can achieve by working together and doing things differently. **Because no child should be part of war. Ever.**



RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME

- Scaling our evidence-based methods for children
- Localisation in action
- Working on longer-term projects

War Child works exclusively to improve the resilience and wellbeing of children living with the effects of violence and armed conflict. And with 230 million children waking up in active war zones, the need for our existence is only getting greater. Yet, we are not alone in our mission. There are countless other actors working to make a difference in children's lives. What is our unique selling point? How can we add value in a crowded space? These are the questions we will seek to address across our work in 2023.

So what is War Child's USP? Alongside our global project portfolio - based on humanitarian best practices - we're also developing a suite of interventions backed by **scientific evidence**.

While we may not be able to compete with organisations twice our size, with triple our income - and just to be clear: we don't want to - we can offer this unique specialism. Even better - we can stimulate closer collaboration, working with and through a network of partners to share and scale these methods and ultimately reach many more children.

2023 will see our programme offices prioritise the adoption of a set of **five key evidence-based methods and tools**. The roll-out of action plans to scale and integrate these methods within regular programming will also be firmly supported by our Research & Development and Programme Quality departments. In the **occupied Palestinian territory** we will accelerate our collaboration with the Ministry of Education to integrate ReachNow - a tool to detect mental health problems among children in conflict-affected settings - in the school system. Across the **Middle East** the rapid adoption of our Caregiver Support Intervention - a nine-session programme to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of parents and caregivers - will take centre stage. In **South Sudan** we will initiate new partnerships with social enterprises and non-profits to explore ways to scale our Can't Wait to Learn and TeamUp programmes - even going as far as to hand over implementation to these local expert partners.

In fact, **localization** will be an underlying theme across all our activities in 2023 - spearheaded by a dedicated working group. In **Syria**, our partner forum - made up of around 14 local actors who directly implement our projects - regularly comes together to evaluate their partnership with War Child and identify areas of improvement. In **Colombia**, the development of a co-created youth programme will accelerate, seeing young people take the lead in addressing the topics that matter to them - everything from racism to gender-based issues.

Once again, while we may not be the biggest player in the NGO space, by working through local organisations and **sharing expertise** we can deliver lasting change for the children we seek to help.

On the topic of sustainable change, **longer-term nexus programming** will also be a theme steering our direction in 2023. A piece of thought leadership developed by the sector, the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding nexus will see us work to enhance interaction between our humanitarian and development projects.

One way in which we will attempt to do this is through further discussion with donors regarding longer-term grants - grants with a minimum lifetime of two to five years. Due to the short-term nature of humanitarian funding, only 20 out of the 72 grants acquired in 2022 were for longer than one year.

With both localization and the nexus in mind, and drawing upon key learnings from our Ukraine Response, we will also invest more in the evolution of [Fast Aid](#). This will be driven by a **Head of Humanitarian Programming**.





SHARING OUR UNIQUE STORY

- Spotighting our evidence-based approach
- Building the War Child brand
- Supporting our scaling journey

From emergency education to child protection, War Child's work spans many areas. Yet, at the core of our work there is one main goal - to contribute to the improved wellbeing of children affected by conflict. What's more, we have a distinct approach - a growing number of our interventions are based on scientific evidence. This is the story we'll be sharing with the world in the year ahead.

Like we said, we are not alone in our mission. If we are all operating in the same space and approaching the world with the same message, how can War Child distinguish itself from others and, more to the point, inspire people to really buy-in to our story?

2023 will see us actively promote and support the War Child network as well as external stakeholders to share our [Care System](#) and accompanying methods and highlight our innovative approach and expertise. Effective and meaningful **media outreach** will be at the core of our activities with a focus on specialist mental health and humanitarian publications as well as major international broadcasters who can give our story traction. More engagement with donors and partners - to explain the Care System and how it works - will also be key to the process.

In addition, encompassing all our work for children, we will continue to position ourselves as experts in the field of improving the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children. Our **global advocacy** efforts will seek to influence power holders to allocate more funding to this important area ensuring accountability for rights violations and further implementation of child rights frameworks.

All these efforts will not only highlight our expertise - and show where we can add value - it will also support our scaling journey and ultimately our aim to reach many more children.

You might remember our **Scaling Ambition** - a high-level objective to bring quality programming to scale for the children who need it most? 2023 will see us embark on the next phase of our scaling journey - starting with a deep dive into how we intend to share our interventions with our global network of agencies and partners. This will be an open conversation with those partners and comes hand-in-hand with our internal preparations for the launch of the Global Shared Platform.



GETTING READY FOR THE GLOBAL SHARED PLATFORM

- Formalising agreements for the shared entity
- Supporting staff through a major change period
- Leveraging cost advantages for long-term growth

It's official - War Child will take on a new structure. We call this structure or new way of working the Global Shared Platform. While it's been in the pipeline for years, 2023 marks a critical development - it's the last year before the transition. To prepare for this change process we'll be working against a set of key priorities - focused both on the change itself as well as the impact on our people.

The Global Shared Platform is our way of ensuring we can achieve our scaling ambitions. If we choose for a strategy of going it alone, it will take decades for us to reach the children who need us most - time we simply don't have. That's why we are moving to transform ourselves into a networked organisation operating through a shared **de-centralised mechanism** where all War Child entities can work effectively together with other organisations, agencies and governments.

From putting the systems and structures in place to ensure a smooth transition to formalizing the agreements of a **new legal entity**, 2023 will be a year where we really build the foundations for the Shared Platform. In the first half of the year, a new legal entity will be set up to house the platform. While this international body will legally be registered in the Netherlands, it will be supported by a Network Agreement that connects our public fundraising offices - in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, US, Sweden and Germany - to our programme countries around the world. The agreement will lay out everything from financial flows to the governance of the platform and the mandates of its members. A Supervisory Board will also be set up to supervise the activities of the Shared Platform with representation from the Global South.

With programmes in six countries and a major fundraising and communications hub in London, we are excited to formalise collaboration with **War Child UK** under the new structure. **War Child Netherlands**, **War Child Sweden** and **War Child Germany** will also become an integral part of the platform and work closely with War Child UK and our American counterpart, **Children in Conflict** to share best practices and fill the gaps.

From the get-go, the **wellbeing of our staff and representatives** will take on fresh importance. While the change process creates a buzz that can be felt everywhere from Goma to Amsterdam, it can also take a toll on our people. A People Transition Plan will guide managers on how to - you guessed it - manage the impact on their team members with extra support for those who will transition to a new position as well as the small percentage of individuals whose positions will become redundant. While we're proud of our plans to move to a shared way of working, we're far from giving ourselves a pat on the back. The work of our **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)** team will accelerate with commitment to sustainable change in this area.



OUR FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Investment in the transition process will also have an impact on our financial planning. With this in mind, our planned income for 2023 represents a year-on-year increase of **€5.7 million** to total €50.7 million.

Our reserves will remain above €5 million to cover these costs and we will also budget for a deficit of €0.4 million across the year as a whole. Through the integration of our operational activities with War Child UK and projected lower spending once the Shared Platform is operational, **economies of scale** will ensure that we recover this amount in future years.

This deficit will also give us room to further our strategic objectives amidst soaring inflation and a very unfavourable exchange rate between the euro and the dollar.

In other words, our financial outlook will continue to be impacted by the external environment. The **Ukraine war** and ongoing **COVID-19 pandemic** are two key factors - and have also had a significant impact on our country offices some of whom will be forced to downsize.

In response, we will put more time and energy into rallying our loyal friends and supporters to raise funds and contribute directly to a better future for all conflict-affected children - with efforts to expose the “forgotten conflicts” to a wider audience. The return of key fundraising events will greatly support these efforts. As always, our fundraising offices will support this push, working hard to secure a total of **90,000 ‘Friends’** by the close of the year.

Collectively, all of this will ensure that we set ourselves up in such a way that we can grow rapidly as an organisation and ultimately reach many more children with quality support.

**We are the small ones that dare to dream big.
We are War Child.**



South Sudan

ANNUAL PLAN 2023