

Statement of ChildFund Alliance: Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

15 June 2022

Agenda item 4: UNICEF Humanitarian Action

Mr. President, Executive Director Katherine Russel, and distinguished members of the board, I would like to express ChildFund Alliance's appreciation for the opportunity to address you today.

As Secretary General of ChildFund Alliance, I speak on behalf of 11 child-focused humanitarian and development organizations, working in 70 countries and reaching nearly 23 million children and their families. We are grateful for UNICEF's ongoing leadership in humanitarian action and response to help affected children and families realize their rights.

At ChildFund, we are committed to providing expertise in humanitarian crises in order to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity. In 2022, the world is witnessing immense challenges to the safety and wellbeing of children worldwide, with the Global Humanitarian Overview saying more than 274 million people will be in need of humanitarian services.

In the Sahel region, children and families are suffering from deteriorating humanitarian conditions, food insecurity, and climatic effects—all exacerbated by an underfunded humanitarian response plan. In particular, conditions are complex and extreme in the Sahelian countries of Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali.¹

Three ChildFund members—Children Believe (Canada), EDUCO (Spain), and WeWorld (Italy) operate in the Sahel. They support coordinated and integrated life-saving services for those affected by emergencies and chronic needs. Through our work in the region, we deliver programs for children in education, health and nutrition, protection, food security and livelihoods.

Specifically, ChildFund has provided critical protection services, as well as vocational education, and entrepreneurship training and coaching to more than 35,000 children in 2021 in the Centre-North and Eastern regions of Burkina Faso. We assisted over 6,000 households (more than 45,000 people)—directly targeting 1,092 children at risk of malnutrition through screening activities, medical care and education. We are currently working with nearly 400,000 children and adolescents, as well as 1.5 million adults, addressing child protection issues related to forced mobility, violence, and insecurity.

In Mali, we are implementing multiple projects addressing quality and safe education. We reached 25,000 people—including more than 6,000 children—through a project funded by Education Cannot Wait. Additional projects led by ChildFund in Mali reached more than 160,000 people. In Niger, ChildFund adapted its programs to ensure access to quality education in safe spaces for children affected by the security crisis, reaching more than 10,000 children and families.

Despite implementation challenges, we continue to deliver services for children and their families in the region through strong partnerships with the government, UNICEF, and local organizations. Continued efforts by ChildFund, UNICEF, and other civil society organizations are of the utmost importance to address the urgent needs of this region. As such, we urge stakeholders not to forget this crisis. Doing so will put millions of children and their families further into poverty.

¹ The Burkina Faso: Hunger Crisis - Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) DREF Operation no. MDRBF017