



Educating young
Zambians for a
better future

cecilysfund.org



ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

Building stronger communities from early childhood





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About Cecily's Fund

Cecily's Fund is an international NGO and registered charity based in the UK that has worked exclusively in Zambia since 1998.

Cecily's Fund has invested more than £7million in life-changing interventions that have helped the most vulnerable children in Zambia to improve their futures through access to education, economic empowerment, and psycho-social support. As our programmes have evolved, we have adopted a cross-cutting approach to programme development. This addresses a broad range of interlinked issues that support poverty reduction, improve livelihoods, protect health and well-being, and gender equality. Underpinning these activities is that access to education in all its forms, a holistic approach that supports the most vulnerable children, and strengthening communities in which they live can lead to better and more secure futures. This lessens dependency on external support, and enables communities to be self-reliant.



Building a legacy, embracing the future



Reducing inequalities is a key focus of Cecily's Fund's mission and programmes which begins with early childhood. Our holistic approach and circle of care focuses on interventions that help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children to succeed through access to education and training that continues into adulthood.

Our programmes are developed to support communities as a whole because we recognize that for vulnerable children to have equality of opportunity, a series of interventions need to address the multiple challenges poor communities face such as access to education, gender equality, good health, clean water and sanitation, and financial insecurity. Most, if not all these things, can help support a route out of poverty, and to a more equitable and optimistic future, for Zambia's most vulnerable children and young people.

Importantly, Cecily's Fund does not stay still and just continue to operate the same programmes and interventions year on year. We evolve, adapt, and flex our programmes to respond to new and emerging needs, and our small size enables us to do this with minimal bureaucracy, whilst maintaining high standards and impact. This does not mean that we change our programmes and focus for the sake of it: we develop new programmes by learning and adapting interventions that respond to new challenges that are hampering the ability for the most disadvantaged children to succeed.

In 2025 we hope to address the growing challenge of adverse climate change in the communities where we work. We will continue to use our youth-led approach to development through access to education and training with support from our growing alumni and Peer Educators across all our interventions. There is much work to be done, and funding is always needed to help support our work.

A sincere thank you to each of our individual supporters, grant-making trusts and foundations, schools, churches, and businesses that believe in us and make our work possible. We value the trust you place in Cecily's Fund to make a real difference, and we will continue to work hard to help the most disadvantaged children in Zambia to have a brighter future.

Cheryl Hooper

Director

Highlights 2023

Building a strong foundation – Early years

- 8,600 orphaned or vulnerable children benefited from schools being better equipped with additional teaching and learning resources.
- 2045 children received nutritious meals as part of their school day, often the only meal of the day.
- More than 87% of children supported in Kitwe and Chingola passed their Grade 7 exams and transitioned to secondary school.
- Cecily's Fund worked with 26 schools in Lusaka, Chingola and Luansobe to build capacity and improve the educational and social outcomes for children.
- 13 schools received a total of £24,000 in grants to buy essential items that supported teaching and learning resources, clean water provision, solar power, and equipment.
- 8 schools in Kitwe and Chingola improved their policies and processes for safeguarding, disability, and financial management.
- Additional homework and exam boosting sessions took place in 9 schools in Lusaka and Kitwe.

Helping children to succeed – Adolescence

- 7,400 children and young people benefited from peer education sessions.
- Approximately 400 sessions were delivered across 25 schools.
- 80 children in 2 schools received additional weekend remedial sessions to help them with exam preparation.
- 46 talented young people were recruited and trained to be Peer Educators and mobilized back into schools and communities to share information about basic rights, sexual reproductive health, HIV, and early marriage.
- Extra-curricular activities in sports, cultural dance, poetry, debating clubs, tree planting, recycling and school council meetings were established and supported with the help of youth Peer Educators to support children after school.

Preparing for life after school – Young adults

- 8 youth-led Sunshine Clubs supported 200 out-of-school youth living in 8 wards in Kitwe district.
- 200 young people benefited from peer support and vocational training.
- 32 young people operate their own small business or income generating activity.

Contributing to Zambia's development – Mature citizens

- More than 200 mature Cecily's Fund alumni actively participate in the development of their own communities.
- More than 200 mature Cecily's Fund alumni regularly engage in Cecily's Fund's digital platform that provides signposting to employment opportunities and mental health support.
- 883 individuals are now mature adults who were trained in their youth to be Peer Educators, and who continue to share their knowledge and skills in communities.
- Cecily's Fund alumni work in the fields of medicine and health, social welfare, education, government, mining, and business.

Creating independence & empowerment – Stronger communities

- 80 women were supported to be financially independent.
- 20 GROW savings groups benefited 560 women.
- More than 1 million kwacha in savings were accumulated by all GROW savings groups.
- 70 women learned tailoring skills and business development.
- 40 women learned about their basic rights and how to report gender violence and abuse.
- 6 campfire meetings were held to help reduce gender abuse through positive male engagement.
- 120 male community advocates were recruited to support men at-risk of abuse.



Leading with vision, inspiring success

Early Childhood

Childhood development and the importance of good nutrition and well-being should start from the earliest point in a child's life. For the poorest and most vulnerable children, who are often under-nourished and have weak health, their ability to learn, and develop socially and academically, is severely hampered.

The foundations of reading, writing and numeracy provide the catalyst for basic skills required throughout life. If children are given the opportunity to feel safe and secure at school, they are more likely to enjoy education and gain the many additional soft skills needed to succeed. During 2023 Cecily's Fund invested £121,000 to ensure that 8,600 orphaned and vulnerable children have access to education and are supported in the best way possible during these important formative years. Working with 26 schools in Lusaka, Kitwe, Chingola and Luansobe, we are building capacity through feeding programmes that provide essential food for severely under-nourished children; we equip schools with books and educational materials; we have supported the installation of bore holes for clean water, sanitation, and hygiene, and we have helped with salaries for some teachers where government support is lacking.

John's story

Twelve year old John Banda was enrolled into Bwafwano Community School in May 2024 after being identified by community caregivers that he was not going to school and was always found on the streets begging for money to buy food. John is an only child. His mother is a drug addict and out all day, mostly returning home late and drunk every evening. For this reason, John remains with his grandmother who is not able to provide enough food for the family.

Going to school and feeling cared for and supported, has helped John to feel secure and encourage him to reach his true potential.

'My grandmother is happy I am in school and I have lunch here at school. With the little that grandmother finds, we are able to eat in the evening, but sometimes we don't eat. So, if I eat here at school, it is fine. My grandmother is encouraging me to go to school as she does not want me to have bad manners that can make me start drinking beer and smoking. I love my teacher very much and they encourage me, especially the matron, who always encourages me to look clean when coming to school.'



Luyando Community School's story

Luyando community school is located in Luyando community a newly established settlement of approximately ten thousand people most of whom are peasant farmers and those who survive by doing odd jobs. The school was formed by community leaders who saw the need for local children to access education but who were not attending school. Classes were initially held under a mango tree before moving to a makeshift timber structure in 2017 with 60 vulnerable children attending. Seeing the impact of learning on children, the local community worked hard to construct a permanent building which officially opened in 2019 when Cecily's Fund identified the school as one that could benefit from our capacity building programme.

We assessed the school's needs and areas that would benefit from our input across a framework that would strengthen the school's ability to reach acceptable standards of school governance, pupil care, parent engagement, and support from the Ministry of Education.

Since our involvement, Luyando Community School has robust policies and processes in place for safeguarding children, managing school finances, providing appropriate care and support to pupils through Cecily's Fund's Peer Educators, and receiving government support through grants. Pupil numbers have grown to 1,849 and parents have greater involvement in the school and their children's education.

'I can say we have seen improvement on the reading levels, especially at grade 1, almost all the learners are breaking through because of the availability of learning and teaching materials, ECE class too, learners have improved. Teachers are motivated too because they now have at least books to use and the learners with challenges are asked to come back in the afternoon for remedial works.'

We are always excited to have you work with us and uplift our learning environment which has great impact to our school, we very much appreciate. We look forward to your continued support! God bless you always.'

Key facts*

- Girls are now enrolling in primary school in the same numbers as boys.
- There remains an estimated 800,000 school-aged children that are out of school.
- Access to early childhood education is low – only 26% of children enter Grade 1.

Highlights 2023

- 8,600 orphaned or vulnerable children were supported in school.
- Cecily's Fund worked with 13 schools in Kitwe, Chingola and Luansobe to build capacity and improve the educational and social outcomes for children.
- 8 schools improved their policies and processes for safeguarding, disability, and financial management.
- Over 87% of children supported in Kitwe and Chingola passed their Grade 7 exams and transitioned to secondary school.
- 2045 children received nutritious meals as part of their school day.

*<https://www.unicef.org/zambia/education>





Adolescence

As vulnerable children progress through school and enter adolescence, outside influences can lead them astray to try new experiences for fear of missing out and the need to be accepted. Children in Grades 8 and 9 in Zambian schools are especially at risk of dropping out and not completing education, with girls falling pregnant and boys being coerced into trying drugs and alcohol. Cecily's Fund's Peer Education programme tackles these challenges by training vulnerable youth who are in their final year at school, to be Peer Educators. The life-changing opportunity trains and teaches older teenagers essential life skills that build confidence, increase knowledge and understanding of how to avoid HIV and STIs, how to avoid anti-social behaviours, and be responsible citizens who can contribute to Zambia's development. These talented young people are then mobilized back into schools to teach their peers these essential lessons about life, whilst supporting them to find solutions to their own personal challenges.

Cecily's Fund has invested £7million over its 26 year history. This has supported the training and mobilization of 920 young Peer Educators and reached more than 45,000 children in school and communities. The success of the programme has led to its expansion into Lusaka and Luansobe.

Cecily's Fund has been working with Wusikili School for more than 11 years, training its school leavers to teach Peer Education at the school. Deborah and Tumelo both attend Peer Education sessions at school. Tumelo is 14 years and is now at Wusikili Secondary School in Kitwe. He is one of the younger pupils who attended Peer Education sessions at school.

Tumelo's story

This is what he says.

'Peer education plays an important role and has helped me academically. The sessions create a supportive environment to encourage healthy behaviours and helps us to make better decisions. We learn how to be culturally sensitive and inclusive, and how to be respectful, because there are many diverse backgrounds and experiences of pupils. Peer health education allows us to receive information and support from our peers, who are more relatable and easier to understand than information provided by adults or professionals.'

Deborah's story

'My Name is Deborah. I am 14 years of age, and I am in Grade 7. I am a double orphan, meaning that I lost both of my parents. We are four in my family and I am the only one who lives with my grandmother, while the other three after the death of our mother were taken by other relatives.

I am working extremely hard in class, such that even after missing so many classes, having no one to volunteer to take me into their homes, I managed to come number 13 in a class of 98! Orphanages too, could not take me in. Our Liaison Sister in Charge Sister Lucy Banda tried so hard to find a place for me in the Orphanage but failed. The Sister managed to convince my mother's Aunt to take me in, when Sister promised to contribute to my up-keep whenever she has the means to do so.

I have gone through a lot challenges but I am grateful for Cecily's Fund, the Sister and my Teachers who are encouraging me to focus on my Education, so that I can finish my Secondary Education so that I can have a bright future.'

Innocent's story

Cecily's Fund local partner BISO started implementing Peer Health Education sessions at Chibolya Combined School in John Laing compound in 2023.

Innocent was in Grade 12 and considered himself as one of the most senior pupils at school. Many grade 12s did not want to attend PHE sessions but one day he decided to attend a session, which that day, focused on peer pressure and drug abuse. The session resonated with Innocent and he was deeply affected and touched by the Peer Educators because their teaching was about things that he used to do. It seemed as they were only talking about his behaviour.

After the session, Innocent asked the Peer Educator where he could find them and get more information. Christine, one of the Peer Educators guided him to the John Laing community office. Since then he began to visit the office regularly and attend sessions at school and also started to encourage other Grade 12 students to attend sessions.

In 2024 Innocent was selected to be one of the Peer educators at Chibolya Combined School.

'I really thank the Peer Educators especially Christine for changing my life. I was influenced by friends and sometimes I can go with them to drink beer because that the way of life to many youths in John Laing. I really appreciate for the knowledge and skills I have acquired in the area of life skills and am able to use them to better my life and also help young people to change their behaviour. I am doing everything possible as a Peer Educator at Chibolya combined school to ensure that there is behaviour change, especially where drug abuse is concerned, and where many girls involve themselves in sex.'

A Peer Educator's perspective

Natalia's Story

Natalia is a newly trained Peer Educator living in John Laing township in Lusaka. Poverty is endemic and the area is densely populated. Few facilities and services exist, and there are high incidences of drug and alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy.

'I wanted to be a Peer Educator so that I can help the community and the country at large. Here at John Laing you will get guys who will sell drugs and who face unemployment. They just grow up with a single parent and they don't work, and are illiterate. Girls are sexually harassed, they are defenceless. As we were trained as Peer Educators, that gave me that confidence to say I will make a big difference in the community. I think I will be a role model and people will look up to me and want to be like me. Most of my friends when they see me doing this, will think I need to do this as well. They are excited because I've made a change, they are happy for me, and they are also changing as well. I just tell them that being a Peer Educator I don't do drugs. It made a difference.'

Key facts*

- 29% of women aged 20–24 years married before the age of 18 years
- Zambia has one of the highest rates of child marriage in Africa
- A government-commissioned independent study on child marriage found that child marriage in Zambia is often a union of peers and a reflection of deep social and economic inequalities.

Highlights 2023

- 46 talented young people were recruited and trained to be Peer Educators and mobilized back into schools and communities to share information about basic rights, sexual reproductive health, HIV, and early marriage.
- 7,400 children and young people were reached through peer education sessions
- Approximately 400 sessions were delivered across 25 schools
- Extra-curricular activities in sports, cultural dance, poetry, debating clubs, tree planting, recycling and school council meetings were established and supported with the help of youth Peer Educators to support children after school.

* <https://www.unicef.org/zambia/child-protection>



Young Adulthood

Vulnerable young adults who continually struggle with inequality, lack of opportunity and obstacles throughout their life, face a daunting future, and whilst there is a safety net during school, life after school presents new challenges. Cecily's Fund's Peer Education programme continues to support young people after they have left school through community-based Sunshine Clubs. The clubs create a safe space for young people to receive psycho-social support from Peer Educators, to make friends and socialize, to learn vocational skills that help them to find employment, or start their own business, and crucially, to feel safe, secure and not isolated.

Cecily's Fund invested £687,000 through our 'Connecting Communities' programme, originally funded by Comic Relief. Our Sunshine Clubs still continue to operate years after they were formed and are part of Cecily's Fund's continuous circle of care, ensuring that the most vulnerable young people are supported beyond school using our model of youth-led peer education.

Young people living in Ipsukilu, Butungwa, Kawemi wards, and Kitwe, meet regularly to learn vocational skills that support a route into employment, they form strong friendships, enjoy recreational activities, and have continued support through youth Peer Educators acting as Sunshine Club leaders.

'I feel more confident to address my fellow youth in the sunshine club after organising the club this year. It's an interesting and challenging responsibility.'

Collins Mutambo

'The training gave me an opportunity to identify my own business and contribute to my family's income. Right now, I am running a tuition centre where I charge a small fee to those students from well-off families needing extra tuition.'

Michael Mutale

Ipsukilu Sunshine Club's story

Ipsukilu Sunshine club continues after it was first formed in 2015. Talented youth with a flair for music combined their enthusiasm to get off the streets and put their passion into sharing lessons learned through Cecily's Fund's peer education sessions. The group formed with 3 girls and 20 boys and began writing songs and performing until they were noticed by a renowned music producer who decided to mentor them.

Together, the group produced and recorded their first ever song 'Girl Child' with lyrics that explain the many challenges a girl faces and the need for a girl to be educated. After recognition on ZNBC, Zambia's main television broadcasting network, the group recorded a second song 'Sunshine' expressing their feelings about the challenges young people face and how Sunshine Clubs have brought 'sun' into their lives.

Members of the group gained confidence and began to earn money through their performances with improving social and interpersonal skills that have continued to support their development as young adults.



Dalitso's story

Dalitso was given the opportunity to be trained to be a Peer Educator in his last year at school. He learned about how to stay healthy and take responsibility for his actions and decisions, as well as share accurate information about sexual reproductive health, relationships, gender equality, and how to avoid HIV. He gained confidence in sharing his knowledge with his fellow peers when he delivered peer education sessions at school and was an obvious candidate to be trained further to be a Sunshine Leader.

Through Dalitso's leadership, drive, and passion, Ispukilu Sunshine Club thrived as he volunteered to support other youth in the Sunshine group whilst earning an income by going on road shows and writing promotional songs for commercial products.

'By helping other youth in music, I realised that I could as well tap into the opportunity and start releasing songs. To date I have recorded almost 10 songs and have been featured on several shows/performances'

Dalitso Tembo

Key facts *

- 53.4% of Zambia's population is under the age of 18 years.
- The estimated median age is 17 years (2015) which is one of the lowest in the region and globally
- An estimated 54.5% of the population live below the national poverty line.
- 59% of children and young people live in poor households, with 45% living in extreme poverty.

Highlights 2023

- 8 youth-led Sunshine Clubs supported out of school youth in 8 wards in Kitwe district.
- 200 young people benefited from additional peer support and vocational training after they left school.
- 32 young people operate their own small business or income generating activity through skills gained at Sunshine Club training sessions.

*<https://www.unicef.org/zambia/social-policy-research>



From early adulthood to mature citizens

Consistent care and support provided by Cecily's Fund ensures that the most vulnerable children who are at risk of being overlooked, are recognized and given opportunities to succeed and reach their full potential. Our holistic approach and circle of care gives security to children from the earliest age that continues along a trajectory that often leads to personal success and achievement that would otherwise have not been possible.

Many vulnerable children who were supported by Cecily's Fund are now giving back to their own communities, sharing knowledge, motivating others, and being inspirational role models.

Saude's story

Saude became the Head Teacher at Kamfinsa Secondary School and is the proud father of 5 children who are progressing through school and university.

Saude was one of the first beneficiaries of Cecily's Fund and was identified as vulnerable when he was just 8 years old because of extreme poverty. Through Cecily's Fund's support, he progressed through school and teacher training college whilst supporting his siblings as head of the family after both parents had died. In spite of his challenges, he pursued further training and completed a Master's degree in education and is now hoping to begin his PhD.

In addition to teaching and his leadership role as Head Teacher, Saude also developed two businesses which provide additional income for his family. His route out of poverty was not easy, and there were many obstacles ahead of him but his success drives him to support and inspire other orphans and vulnerable children.

Nelson's story

Nelson was a vulnerable child supported by Cecily's Fund through school because of extreme poverty. His dedication and talent was recognised when he was given the opportunity to be trained as Peer Educator in his final year at school.

The life skills he gained continued to stay with him as he entered adulthood and he continued to help children by volunteering and helping the Head Teacher at Kawemi Community School near to his family home. Nelson went above and beyond expectations and became a well-known, respected and reliable young adult who both children and teachers appreciated.

The Peer Educator training he received years before, helped to nurture his natural talent and ability to communicate with children, inspire, motivate, and lead.

Nelson is now completing a teaching diploma, and is Head of Kawemi School. He is dedicated to giving back to his community and inspiring younger children through his success.



Key facts

- Only 1.6% of Zambia's population work in a professional capacity*
- 69% of the population were unemployed (2022)
- The Copperbelt Province had the highest percentage of unemployed persons (28%)
- Youth with basic secondary education (Grade 8–12) comprise the highest percentage share of unemployed persons (64.4%)
- Youth with basic primary education (Grade 1–7) comprise 21.2% of unemployed persons.

*2022 Labour Force Survey Report (p63)

Highlights 2023

- In the past year Cecily's Fund has been actively registering its Alumni from its original base of more than 48,000 supported children to engage and reach those who are now mature adults and sustain Cecily's Fund's network of support.
- More than 200 mature Cecily's Fund alumni actively participate in the development of their own communities.
- More than 200 mature Cecily's Fund alumni regularly engage in Cecily's Fund's digital platform that provides signposting to employment opportunities and mental health support.
- 883 individuals are now mature adults who were trained in their youth to be Peer Educators, and who continue to share their knowledge and skills in communities.
- Cecily's Fund alumni work in the fields of medicine and health, social welfare, education, government, mining, and business.



Empowering communities, driving results

Stronger Communities

Lessening dependency on external support and helping poor communities to develop and thrive is a key strategy for Cecily's Fund. Many parents, grandparents, and extended adult family members have low education levels because, as children, the opportunity costs of education were not possible for the poorest families. This resulted in many individuals not able to complete education and without the skills required for employment or entrepreneurship. Many girls in particular were not encouraged to attend school, and continued to marry at an early age or fall pregnant whilst a girl child.

Our holistic circle of care and approach continues into creating stronger communities where people are able to support themselves financially, understand their basic human rights, and work cohesively, respecting gender equality and people living with a disability. This helps communities to be more self-sufficient and empowered, and have greater control over their futures and the futures of the children in their care.

Financial independence, safety, and security for women at risk of gender abuse

Women oppressed by ingrained attitudes and expectations of men are often the subject of verbal and physical abuse. Without financial independence and knowledge about their basic rights, and where and how to get help, many women face a future of fear and uncertainty. Children growing up in such households can adopt learned behaviours from parents or feel fearful and have insecurities that continue into adulthood.

Cecily's Fund's 'Against gender abuse' programme, has developed into a successful model of how vulnerable women can learn new skills, and how men in the community can change their behaviours and attitudes towards women. This has led to stronger, more resilient, communities where women feel safer and able to navigate their way through challenges that may affect them.

Nora's story

When Nora could not complete her education and dropped out of school in 2017 in Grade 9, she stayed at home and helped her mother to sell vegetables, abandoning her plans to re-sit the grade 9 exams the following year. By 2019 she was married and hoping life would improve, and that she and her husband would be able to help support her mother. Little did she know that she would become a victim of gender-based violence, being physically and emotionally abused by her husband until 2022. Nora was identified by Cecily's Fund's local partner BISO and was offered training and support. She joined a group of women who had either experienced abuse or were at-risk, and together, they learned about their basic rights and where and how to get support if they were being abused. They were taught skills in tailoring and business development so that they did not have to be financially dependent on their husbands, and they developed friendships and support systems. through each other.



However, helping women victims alone is unlikely to change ingrained behaviour and attitudes of men towards women. Cecily's Fund's camp fire meetings, facilitated by our local partner, gets men together with respected community leaders and elders to challenge men about their beliefs, and encourage positive communication. This has led to a reduction in gender violence in the community, and an established victim support unit at the local police station where women at-risk are able to receive support without fear.

'From the time I started sewing, that was in February 2023 I have managed to buy a machine that enables me to increase my productivity. I am now working on establishing my private place of working, so that I can be displaying my designs to my potential customers.'

Nora

Twikatani GROW Savings Group's story

Accumulating wealth seems like an impossible challenge for people who live from hand to mouth and barely have an income to meet their basic needs. Women in particular can succumb to borrowing money from unscrupulous money lenders charging more than 200% interest, that leads to a spiral of debt and helplessness that makes many women vulnerable to exploitation and coercion.

Cecily's Fund's GROW (Grassroots owning wealth) groups enable the poorest women and men to come together as a group to save collectively. The discipline of meeting regularly forges friendships and support networks, and a sense of individual and collective responsibility to contribute to the savings pot over a set agreed period of time. Members of the group are able to borrow money to support small business development and loans are paid back with a small amount of interest. At the end of each term, money is shared out and a new cycle begins.

Saving money is not the end goal of GROW groups. Cecily's Fund works with groups, through our local partners, to train members to improve their skills in financial literacy, numeracy, and business development. This provides an opportunity for individuals to work together as a group on a shared business, and this helps to provide additional income for families and accumulate wealth. Many of Cecily's Fund's interventions are able to continue as local communities become more empowered and are able to take ownership of projects and use the lessons learned to improve their futures.

By involving men in some GROW groups, it is possible to break down barriers about inequality, and support women and men to work together for mutual benefit.

Estha's story

Estha is a member of 'Deeper Roots' GROW Savings Group based in Kawama, a rural outpost deep in the bush outside Kitwe district. The women in the group did not know each other before coming together through our local implementing partner CHEP. The group of women were taught how to set up a formal savings group that is properly constituted, and a secure way to save together. They learned how to record their savings each week, how to lend money out of the money pot with a small amount of interest, and how to conduct meetings.

Meetings go beyond saving money though as strong friendships are forged, they support each other and find solutions to their various challenges together. As the group became stronger, women were taught how to develop a group tailoring business and learned how to



make low-cost reusable menstrual hygiene towels. As skills have grown, they are now making clothes which are being sold in local markets.

'Before the menstrual hygiene business developed, we used to take our chitenge materials to other tailors to do the sewing for us, but after learning tailoring skills ourselves, we are able to design our own outfits and make finished products.'

The success of this model of community strengthening and empowerment through learning how to save, continues to surprise and delight us. As more people learn and see for themselves how people's lives have changed, new groups are formed, and they learn from each other.

'After the share-out which happened in Chimemwe with 'Hope GROW' group, a number of women became interested and wanted to join the group after seeing that most of their friends had saved huge amounts of money and had started small businesses.'

We encouraged them to mobilise themselves and reach the number 30 so that they could start their own group which they did within a short period of time. They started and they saved K35, 197 (£1,173 GBP) from the first share out and doing fine. Most of them are operating small businesses which are being boosted by the loans they are getting from the savings. The group name is 'Favour'. With the help from CHEP we helped the group to come up with the constitution and ran them through the GROW concept and they had an opportunity to choose their leaders.'

Key facts*

- Approximately 1 in 3 females and 2 in 5 males between the ages of 18–24 years experienced physical violence before the age of 18 years.
- 20% males and 16% females reported experiencing emotional abuse.
- 20% women and 10% men reported on experiencing sexual violence before the age of 18 years.
- Corporal punishment is high in Zambia's school system.
- Whilst birth registration is compulsory, only 14% of babies are registered at birth with only 5.9% having birth certificates, leaving them vulnerable.

* <https://www.unicef.org/zambia/child-protection>

Highlights 2023

- Cecily's Fund invested £36,000 to help strengthen and empower local communities to enable them to be more resilient.
- 80 women were supported to be financially independent.
- 20 GROW Savings Groups benefited 560 women.
- More than 1million kwacha in savings were accumulated by all GROW savings groups.
- 170 women learned tailoring skills and business development.
- 40 women learned about their basic rights and how to report gender violence and abuse.
- 6 campfire meetings were held to help reduce gender abuse through positive male engagement.
- 120 male community advocates were recruited to support men at-risk of abuse.

None of our work would be possible without the expertise and dedication of our three longstanding, reliable local implementing partners, CHEP (Copperbelt Health Education Project), BISO (Bwafwano Integrated Services Organisation) and Care Providers Foundation. We sincerely thank you for your continued commitment to working in close partnership with us.

Our circle of care



A sincere thank you and appreciation

Each year, we express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Cecily's Fund's loyal supporters who provide loyal and enduring support through grants, individual donations, community events, school fundraisers, and sponsored activities. We never take this support for granted and know that we would not be able to carry out this life-changing work without you, and we are truly grateful. Our monitoring trips to Zambia confirm the true impact of our interventions as we hope you will see from the stories in this report. Thank you for making our work possible.

Private Grant-making Trusts and Foundations

- Accentus Charitable Foundation
- Andrew House Trust
- Bartlett Foundation
- Batchworth Trust
- Beatrice Laing Trust
- Bright Funds
- Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust
- Cauda Trust
- Chalk Cliff Trust
- Charles Hayward Foundation
- DLM Charitable Trust
- Doris Field Charitable Trust
- Fulmer Charitable Trust
- James Tudor Foundation
- Mageni Trust
- Mercury Phoenix Trust
- St Marks Overseas Trust
- The Sarah Anne Chapman Trust
- SMB Trust
- Sterry Family Foundation
- Stockwell Charitable Trust
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Trading Post Trust
- Tula Trust Ltd
- WGFJM Charitable Trust

Schools

- Dragon School, Oxford
- King Edward VI Camphill School for Girls, Birmingham
- Southborough High School, Surrey

Churches

- Cotham Church, Bristol
- Holy Trinity Church, Amberley
- Portishead Church of England
- St James the Great Church, Witney
- United Church, Bradford on Avon

Staff

- Cheryl Hooper, Director
- Bob Gooderick, Finance Manager
- Steven Barlow, Programmes Manager
- Anne Cooper, Senior Fundraiser
- Lwiza Mulenga, Supporter Relations Officer
- Monda Konayuma, Zambia Administrator & Coordinator

Trustees

- Steph Harland, Chair
- Andrew Tacon, Treasurer
- Basil Eastwood, Chair of International Advisory Panel
- Philippa Tolmay
- Veronica Oakeshott
- Tom Childs
- Isobelle Jaques

Partner Organizations

- CHEP (Copperbelt Helath Education Project)
- BISO (Bwafwano Integrated Services Organisation)
- Care Providers Foundation

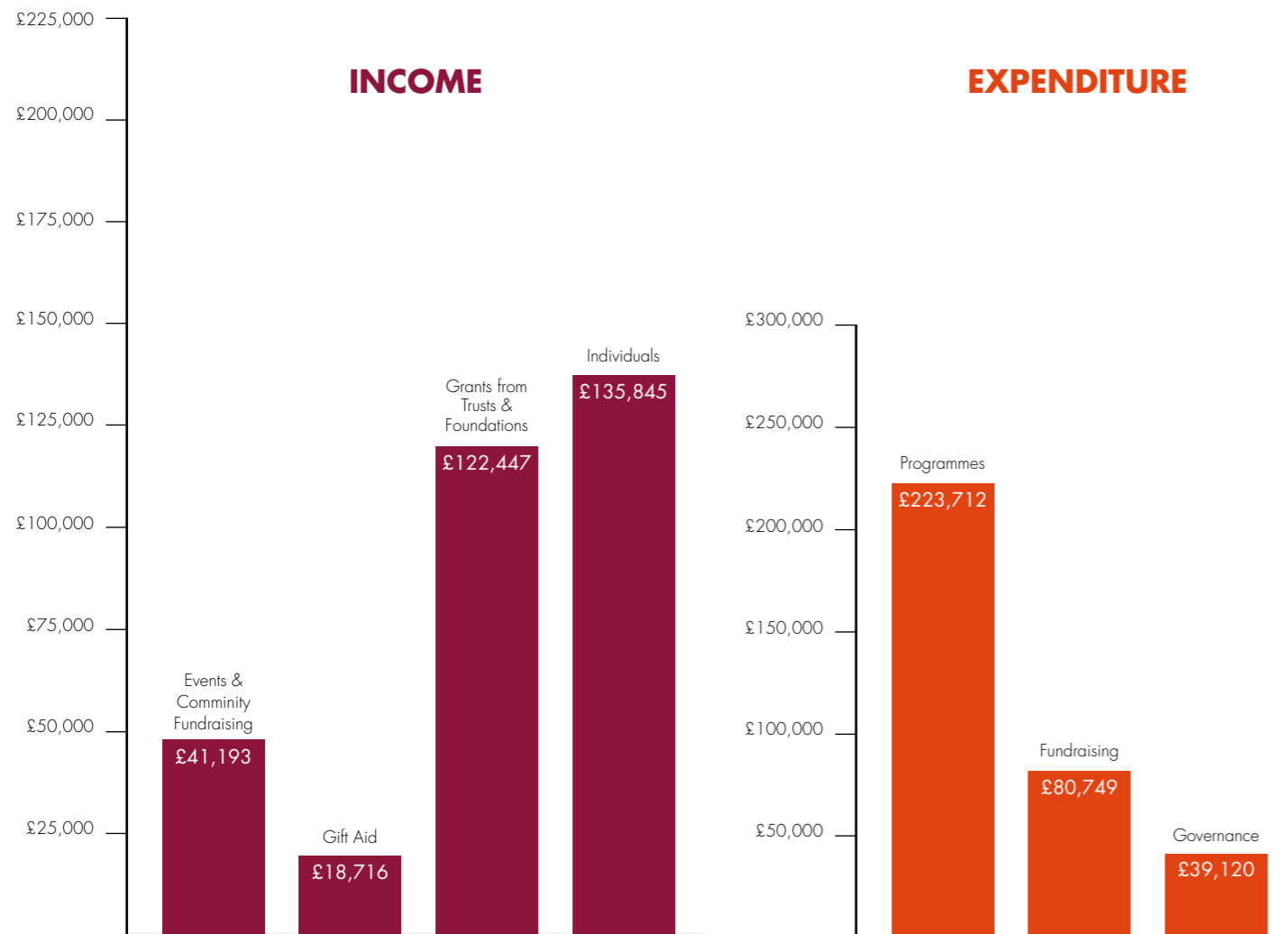
Affiliate Organisations

- Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund
- American Friends of Cecily's Fund



Financial summary

Another successful year. Throughout 2023 we continued to maintain a strong financial situation reflecting the benefits from having a broad base of donors. At December 31, 2023 reserves totalled £134,090 – unrestricted £66,578, restricted £67,512.





Educating young
Zambians for a
better future

cecilysfund.org



About Cecily's Fund

Cecily's Fund has invested over £7 million in life changing interventions that have helped the most vulnerable children in Zambia to improve their life chances through access to education, economic empowerment, and psycho-social support. Cecily's Fund helps children and the communities where they live to thrive and become self-reliant. At the heart of our approach is to adapt and be responsive to local need by listening, empowering, and working in partnership to develop sustainable solutions to on-going local challenges.

If you would like to get in touch, we are at:
PO Box 811, Banbury, OX16 6TQ
Tel: +44 (0)1755 291 424
www.cecilysfund.org

This Cecily's Annual Review 2023 is available online as a PDF at www.cecilysfund.org

With effect from 1 January 2025 Cecily's Fund's operations will be transferred to a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation and a new charity number (1208951) which replaces the original charity name (The Cecily Eastwood Zambian AIDS Orphans Appeal).

Cecily's Fund was formed in memory of Cecily Eastwood who died in Zambia during her gap year in 1997. Our smiley logo is how she signed her letters home. Since its formation Cecily's Fund has helped over 50,000 disadvantaged children to have a brighter future.

Charity registration: 1071660

Report written by Cheryl Hooper.

Designed by meadencreative.com

Names and photos have been changed to protect the identity of beneficiaries.

With thanks to Unicef Zambia, The World Bank, and Zambia Statistics Agency for data and background research sources.

